



Newsletter December 2018

Hi Member

This newsletter comes out the week before the vegie swap each month and serves as a reminder of that event.

Macleod Vegie Swap

The next Macleod Vegie Swap is on Saturday 15 December 11 am - 12 noon in Macleod Park opposite the Macleod Village shops in Aberdeen Road. For GPS we are opposite the Macleod Newsagency at 62 Aberdeen Road.

Roster for set up and clean up:

As many people as possible by 10.30 am.

November swaps: 20.36 kg fruit and veg, 38 herb bunches, 53 packets of seeds, 17 jars of preserves, 168 plants, fertilizer, bottles, seedling pots, egg cartons and miscellaneous items.

NB there was an extra 10 kg fruit and veg in October than reported making over 19 kg.



Ripening peaches at MOCG

Upcoming Events Calendar

- Friday 14 December from 7 pm CHRISTMAS PARTY at MOCG (see below).
- Saturday 15 December 11 am - 12 noon Macleod vegie swap
- 31 December from 7 pm, New Year's Eve party at the Macleod Organic Community Garden. Please bring a plate of festive food to share for dinner, and your own drinks

NB There is no Potluck Dinner and meeting in December

Sustainable Macleod Christmas Party!



Friday December 14, from 7.00 pm
Macleod Organic Community Garden

All Welcome!

Please bring savoury or sweet food to share
and your preferred drinks



Chris, Dianne, Robin and Paul receiving the grant for 240v Solar Off-grid Power system for MOCG from Mayor Wayne Phillips, Cr Peter Castaldo and Cr Tom Melican

Sustainable Macleod



Monday December 31, from 7.00 pm
Macleod Organic Community Garden

All Welcome!

Please bring savoury or sweet food to share
and your preferred drinks

Events of the past month

We have had a very full program.

- Macleod vegie swap
- Potluck dinner and general meeting
- Rosanna Fire Station Neighbourhood House Wednesday group
- Macleod College pizza evening
- Macleod Christmas Fair
- Pop-up market at the rotunda

Donations of tomato plants

Open House

Rosanna Fire Station Neighbourhood House

Watsonia Neighbourhood House

Mahalang Festival - vegies and herbs for the

T3081 vegie swap, and cooking demo by Mikoto.

Visitors to the Garden

Bruce Plain

Macleod College for a pizza evening and

welcome to summer celebration

Wednesday group from Rosanna Fire Station

Neighbourhood House

Community Garden Opening hours

Wednesdays 1 pm - 5 pm

Saturdays 1pm - 5 pm

Mondays 5.30 pm - 7.30 pm

Olive Oil

We sold 100 L of Hildebrand Grove extra virgin olive oil. Thanks to David and Ann Strutt for supplying us

News from the shops

Stainless steel straws at Mr Macleod

Ned has been using stainless steel straws for over a year. These are washed in the dishwasher and come with a pipe cleaner tool for making sure the inside is dry. Not only a tremendous saving for the environment but a much cheaper alternative to disposable straws.

Touchstone to open soon

A new eatery is to open in the new year on the corner of Aberdeen and Erskine where Jason's ice cream shop was previously. Touchstone is looking for kitchen and floor staff right now. It is rumored that the owners are a former Masterchef contestant and her husband.

No parking on the school oval!



The school has rightly requested that people visiting the community garden do not park or turn on the oval. This is for the safety of the students and protection of the turf.

Confusion between calamint and oregano

A couple of years ago, some calamint was brought to the vegie swap which looks very like oregano and has a not dissimilar fragrance. It is now coming back marked as oregano. Calamint is used for respiratory ailments by natural therapists whereas oregano is primarily a culinary herb. Calamint has delicate mauve flowers and is very invasive as it seeds prolifically. Oregano on the other hand rarely seeds and is spread through clumping or creeping roots, and is not invasive. If you see clumps coming up everywhere that look like oregano with small mauve flowers, hold the leaves to the light and if they appear stripey, that's calamint.

Calamint in photo at left. Note the ridges on the leaves which are quite different from the smooth leaves of oregano



Sustainable Living Festival Workshop

The Art of Watering

Robin and Paul Gale-Baker

Learn in this demonstration, at the Macleod Organic Community Garden, how to assess the watering needs of vegetables, herbs, fruit trees and bushes, and plants in pots. Both under watering and overwatering are a waste of water and it is important to water so plants grow healthily but also to conserve water as much as practicable.

Robin is a cofounder of Sustainable Macleod and the Macleod Organic Community Garden. She also founded the first herb nursery in Tasmania, running it for 10 years. Robin is currently Victorian Senior of the Year 2018, for Active and Healthy Living.

Paul is president and cofounder of Sustainable Macleod, a lifelong edible gardener and a builder of wicking beds.

FREE event for Sustainable Living Festival

Saturday, 16 February 2019, 3:00pm - 4.30pm

Macleod Organic Community Garden

Somers Avenue, Macleod

(150m north of the NETS Stadium - look for the sign on the nature strip).

Macleod Organic Garden News

Garden tasks

We have continued to clear the garden beds and spread compost, and completed our plantings for summer. The asparagus bed which has had soil added as the asparagus has grown, is filled to the top. Compost has been spread along the herb border, and the poppies have been removed.

Garlic harvest.

This is in progress and we are pleased with the size of the garlic. The heads will be dried and then divided among the members in 6 - 8 weeks.

Planting

We have planted dozens of tomatoes interspersed with basil, plus peppers and eggplants in the last month, and they are growing exceptionally well. Pumpkins have been planted in the garden nearest the tap. Zucchini, watermelons, cantaloupe and water chestnuts have been planted in crate beds along the fence of the Meditation Garden. 3 wicking beds are about to become available for new crops. We have planted blueberries, and chillis that last for 7 years in the passionfruit bed.



Pests

We have identified plum borer on our peach tree. Fortunately, they are dead. We think their death resulted from garlic spray which we administered for aphids.

Harvest for November

3.5 kg beetroot, 6.1 kg beetroot leaves, 29.5 kg broad beans, 200 gm broccolini, 29 kg parsnip, 700 gm herbs, 3.7 kg leeks, 12.9 kg lettuce, 800 gm mixed greens, 1 kg red veined

chicory, 1.8 kg rhubarb, 3.65 kg silverbeet, 5.2 kg spinach, 1 kg spring onions, 2.3 kg strawberries.

Seed Harvest

Already we are harvesting seed for sowing next season and for packaging for the vegie swap. Note the signs in the garden asking people not to pick or pull out certain plants that are going to seed. Polytunnel 2 has been cleaned and prepared for seed drying.

Tool library

See our website for a list of what is available www.mocg.club. Also 2 marquees and the trailer available to members.

Still needing small pots - please collect from nursery recycle bins!

Pots are available over summer so this is when we need to collect them for the following spring when we need them. Trays as well.

We need lots of small pots and punnets but please no medium or large pots. Maximum diameter 9cm. Please bring them to the garden when we are open or drop them over the fence on Somers Avenue next to the sign, if we are not.

Sustainable Macleod Inc News

Membership stands at 160. Welcome to Anne, Hendrik and Annabel.

Membership fee

Membership renewals for 2019 are due on 1 January 2019 for those joining prior to 1 October.

This is \$25 per adult and makes you a member of Sustainable Macleod and therefore also the Macleod Organic Community Garden. Membership is from 1 January to 31 December. You can download a form at www.mocg.club or ask for a paper form. Payment either in cash or bank transfer to: Sustainable Macleod Inc BSB 633 108 Account no. 153226782 - and put your family name on the deposit

Plant sales

At the Christmas Fair and the pop up market last Saturday, we sold \$930 worth of plants. This brings our total for this year to over \$2500. This money supports the everyday costs of running the community garden. The sale of the plants give locals well-adapted seedlings as vegetables are grown from seed collected at the community garden.



Urban Shepherd
Sustainable edible gardens

For Sale

Paul is retiring and looking for a good home for Urban Shepherd. Reasonably priced. Training and mentoring in wicking bed construction included. Call 0408 733 683

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Garden Hints

Summer watering - plan your strategy in advance!

If you are staying home over the summer, be very observant about your garden's needs in general and individual plants specifically, and make a plan for regular watering. Not all plants require the same amount of water whether in the ground or in pots. Mints, lemon balm, tansy, and watercress, for example, require much more water than most herbs or vegetables, and

grasses and natives require much less. Potted plants especially those mentioned above that require a lot of water, should be placed in deep saucers of water. When tansy is planted in the garden and begins to wilt, this is a sign that the whole garden needs a water.

If you are going away for any period of time, you need to make preparation in advance. This might involve installing irrigation and a timer or arranging for someone to water regularly. If the latter, make sure you instruct them well about what to water, how much to water and how often, and remember that it is the roots of plants that need water not the leaves. Watering onto the soil and counting to 10 or 20 or whatever you think appropriate works well. Mulching is essential. However, make sure that the soil beneath the mulch is very well watered. In fact, deeply soak the whole garden before going on holiday, and prior to very hot weather. Playing catch up works badly for plants. Additionally, erecting shade cloth is a very useful technique to protect your garden from high temperatures and scorching. Weeding also helps, as weeds or any spent plants, compete for moisture.

Move pots into the shade and off hot surfaces such as bricks whether you are staying at home or going away.

Under watering is a serious waste of water! If you under water, plants will be damaged or die, and all the watering previously done will have come to nothing. If you are watering pots, you need to give them sufficient water for it to drip out the bottom because that is where the roots are and it is the roots that take water up into the plant. If you want to conserve water then place a container beneath to catch any excess. If a plant has dried out and the soil has shrunk from the edge of the pot, you need to hydrate the soil otherwise the water will run down the inside of the pot and straight out. If in doubt, tap the plant out of its pot and observe how far down the water has penetrated. Very often it will be a few centimetres from the top and the majority of the pot will be quite dry.

Snippets

(all the things that happened outside the community garden hours)

- Sandra packaged seed and made signs and tags for our plant sales
- Robin and Paul wrote the newsletter
- Paul did the photos for the newsletter
- Chris did the banking and paid the bills
- Ross updated the membership list
- Ross and Gaylynn tallied the November produce from the community garden
- Norma, Gaylynn and Paul washed the crockery from the garden at home
- Jenny did the minutes and agenda
- Louise updated the website with our monthly vegie swap and community garden harvest statistics
- Robin, Penny, Chris and Paul watered the community garden and the pots
- Lily and Paul made pizza dough, and Di made toppings
- Terry Wesselink opened the garden Monday evenings
- About 20 members sold plants at the Christmas Fair. Thank you all!
- Thanks also to Marsha, Margaret, Jenny, Ross, Gaylynn and Robin for selling plants at the pop up market this Saturday, and Paul for transporting plants, tables and trailer of plants
- Robin decanted 100L of olive oil and distributed it
- Chris and Di, with help from Lily and Mark, moved pavers from Viewbank to the community garden. These will be a floor for the shelter
- Paul handed out certificates of appreciation to businesses who supported the silent auction, and also tomato plants as a thank you
- Robin submitted a workshop for the Sustainable Living Festival to be held at MOCG as our contribution. It is called The Art of Watering. Marina did so too and will do one on composting
- Chris, Di, Robin and Paul attended Banyule City Council's Sustainability and Community Development Awards and accepted an award on behalf of Sustainable Macleod

Happy Christmas, happy New Year and all good wishes for 2019!

Good gardening and transitioning!

Robin and Paul

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