



Wentworth Falls Garden Club Inc
Affiliated with The Garden Clubs of Australia Inc

14 May 2015: Edition No 282

From the President ...

I hope that you have all been enjoying the longer financial and club year as we normally have our AGM and membership renewal in May. Last year we voted to bring our club year into line with the financial year. This has meant 14 months' worth of Garden Club and a slightly longer year for the hard-working committee.

In July all of the committee positions become vacant. The committee has been one member short for well over a year now, and whilst many of us are willing to stand for another term, we are sincerely seeking one or two of you to join us. It is so much easier to share the load, and it also means that we can take a break knowing that our share of the work will be covered for a short while. We are a very happy group and whilst we all have our own opinions, there is a friendly atmosphere at all of our meetings. The committee gets together at the Wentworth Falls Country Club at 10 am on the Tuesday the week prior to our general meetings. We keep the meetings to two hours and rarely exceed this, and occasionally a few of us head upstairs for a quick lunch together afterwards. So ... please consider how you might be able to help out. Many of you have held positions over the past years, but perhaps if you are new to the mountains it is a great way to get to know more members of the community. Come and see any of the committee members or give me a call on 4784 2321 and I will be happy to answer any questions you might have.

The AGM is in July but please don't avoid coming to this meeting as the official part is over and done with quickly, and we have a fabulous guest speaker together with her husband – don't miss them! – and I sincerely promise that no-one will be coerced from the floor into taking on a committee position. By that time all of the nominations will be in!

Enjoy the sunshine – and happy gardening.

Celeste

The Guest Speaker for today is
Stuart Read
Australian Garden History Society

Stuart Read was fortunate to win an overseas fellowship from the Pratt Foundation/International Specialised Skills Institute which allowed him to travel through Spain in 2005 studying the management of change in historic and new parks and gardens. In 2010, he led a tour of Spanish gardens for the Historic Houses Trust of NSW. Trained in science, amenity horticulture and landscape architecture in New Zealand, he has specialised since 1991 in World, Australian National and now NSW heritage areas, striving for acceptance of landscapes as an equally valid type of heritage place worth managing more sensitively. Particular passions are learning lessons from historic gardens, tracing plant movements around the globe, and promoting better management of cultural landscapes as part of our future identity and economy.



Dates for Your Diary

<p>Thursday 3 December. Note that this is the first Thursday in the month unlike our meetings.</p>	<p>Christmas Party at the Wentworth Falls Country Club. One guest per member welcome. Cost TBA.</p> <p>Spring “Dates for Your Diary” will be announced at the June meeting. Be prepared and bring along deposit money as names will only be taken on payment of a deposit.</p>	<p>12 noon</p>
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The cooler months from May to August are an ideal time to transplant trees, shrubs and perennial plants. The plants suffer less water loss and transplant shock is minimised as growth slows over autumn and winter. Many evergreens and most deciduous plants can be moved with a reasonably good chance of success providing the move is done carefully. The exception is most native plants which dislike root disturbance, and often die when transplanted!

Guest Speakers

Today’s Meeting: **Stuart Read,**
Australian Garden
History Society:
**“Paul Sorensen’s NSW
Gardens, 1930s-1970s”**

Next Meeting: **Dominic Wong,** Co-
owner of Chinoiserie B &
B, Southern Highlands:
**“Preparing the Winter
Garden for Spring”**

Club Information

All members and visitors are asked to sign in upon arrival.

Members are asked to wear their club name badges to all club meetings, tours and functions. To take part in club functions and tours you must be a bona-fide club member.

General Meetings are held on the second Thursday of each month, from January to November, at the Wentworth Falls School of Arts Theatre, Adele Ave (cnr Great Western Hwy), Wentworth Falls. Meetings commence at 9.45 am and finish around noon. The Library and Plant Stall are open before the meeting and at morning tea. \$5 entry fee.

Joining fee is \$30. Thereafter, annual subscription is \$20.

**For Club Welfare matters, contact Celeste:
Phone 4784 2321**

Morning Tea Duty

**Today: Christine Caton and Desley Hardwick
11 June: Margaret Peoples and Lucille Frank**

Bring a Plate

**Today: Lucille Frank and Carol Conway
11 June: Irene Jenkins and Merilyn Shields**

If you are unable to come on your rostered day, please call Jane Blackshaw on 4757 2887.

Club Secretary: Gai Horrocks
email: ghorrocks@iprimus.com.au
Wentworth Falls Garden Club, PO Box 37
Wentworth Falls NSW 2782
website: www.wentworthfallsgardenclub.com



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May Gardening Tips

- Prepare soil now for tree, rose and shrub planting next month. Aim for well-worked, fast-draining soil with plenty of compost.
- Bare-rooted roses will be available from the end of June until August. Roses need at least six hours of full sun per day.
- Allow dahlias to die down naturally in order for tubers to mature. Trim off stems to 30cm and leave tubers in the ground for a few more weeks. The tubers can then either be left in the ground or lifted from the ground and stored in a dry position for replanting next year. It is preferable to dig and divide your tubers annually or biannually to avoid rot, especially in high rainfall areas. We have dry winters in the Mountains so the risk is not as high for us. However, if they are not dug up there is a risk of clusters of shoots appearing in spring, resulting in a smaller plant with poorer quality blooms. As a general rule, dahlia tubers are planted out in November two weeks either side of Melbourne Cup day. It is advisable only to plant tubers when the soil temperature is on the rise and the risk of frost is over. When digging up dahlias, wash the clump so you can see where to cut and divide. When dividing the clump, split it in half and remove any damaged growth, reducing the chance of rot. Be sure to retain part of the old stalk containing the eyes. Do not damage the neck of the tuber and leave some of the tail. Mark the name of the tuber with a marking pen.
- Insert thin stakes in cymbidium orchid pots to support flower spikes. Keep the stakes away from the pot edge where most of the delicate root tips are located. Many orchids flower in late autumn and winter.
- Tidy perennial plants, although it can be useful to leave dead foliage around the plants to protect the crown against heavy frosts.
- Spring flowering annuals and perennials may be lightly fertilized to strengthen them before winter.
- Prune deciduous trees and shrubs after leaf fall, disposing of any diseased cuttings. Do not prune any shrubs that flower in winter and/or spring. Wait until after flowering.
- Prune *Camellia sasanqua* after flowering.
- Add mulch and compost or some blood and bone to improve soil after our very heavy rains.
- Cut off the dead growth of chrysanthemums, carnations, perennial asters and shasta daisies.
- Now is the time to finish sowing winter-growing lawns. Also blood and bone can be distributed on established lawns.
- Leave pumpkins to mature on vines as long as possible. Protect from first frosts by using leaves from the vine as cover. When harvesting, leave the stem attached. Store in a cool, dry place and protect from rats and possums.
- Swedes, turnips and parsnips are improved in flavour if exposed to frosts before harvesting. Carrots can be left in the soil and dug up as required, but do not allow them to be waterlogged if possible.
- Gardenias may have some yellow leaves as the weather cools. The cooler weather interferes with the plant's ability to make chlorophyll. The problem will solve itself in spring.
- Early planted bulbs such as freesias will be showing their shoots so protect them from snails.
- Plant onions, spinach and winter lettuce.
- Autumn leaves can be left where they fall under trees or under shrubs. They break down very quickly to about one-third the volume in a few weeks and their nourishment will be returned to

- the soil. They can also be put in the compost or piled in a heap in a sunny spot with black plastic over the top. Add blood and bone, lime and a shovel of soil to assist in the composting process.
- The white cabbage butterfly caterpillar eggs have been laid on a massive scale over the last few weeks and many plants, including brassicas, are under attack. Caterpillars can withstand frosts. Spray with Dipel. Note, however, that the white cabbage butterfly is territorial, so you can trick it into flying off to find a new territory by placing cubed styrofoam on stakes or white packing beads on fishing line, or pieces of white ice cream or yoghurt containers on stakes. The white objects deter the white butterfly and it flies off to find new territory. Place at a rate of approximately six per square metre. The down side is that this needed to be done some months ago before the white butterfly was looking to lay its eggs – but keep it in mind for next year!
 - It is a good idea to treat aphids now even though they are not active. The aphids that are around now in the soil will be the start of the new season attack. Treat with Confidor.

Sources:

Working Manual for Gardeners by Jane Edmanson
Seasonal Tasks for the Practical Australian Gardener by Peter Cundall
<http://flowerpower.com.au/information/garden-diary/may-gardening-diary/>
<http://www.abc.net.au/gardening/stories/s4081696.htm>
http://www.dahliasaustralia.org.au/growing_dahlias.php

“Save a Species”: The Blue Mountains Pine

Submitted by Celeste

Last month’s guest speaker was Greg Bourke, Curator/Manager of The Blue Mountains Botanic Garden, Mt Tomah. He brought along a beautiful specimen of a native conifer called *Pherosphaera fitzgeraldii* (or *Microstrobos fitzgeraldii*, a name that some of you were more familiar with). Its common name is the Blue Mountains pine, or dwarf mountain pine. The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) lists the Blue Mountains pine as “Critically Endangered”, the highest level of threatened species category, which means it is on the brink of extinction. The Blue Mountains pine is one of the subjects of the “Save a Species” initiative of the combined Botanic Gardens: the Royal Botanic Gardens, Mt Annan and Mt Tomah. It is known only from a few cliffs in the Wentworth Falls – Katoomba district within the Blue Mountains, New South Wales, with only 12 populations, containing a total of 755 individual plants being known in the wild.



As a result of fundraising, including a three-day sponsored walk, 16 threatened plant species, including our local pine, can now be collected and their seeds stored at the Australian PlantBank as an insurance policy against a growing number of risks, including climate change and urbanisation.

Our contribution helped in this initiative! Some of our members bought a carnivorous plant and all of the takings were put towards this project, along with Greg’s “speaker’s fee” of \$50 from our club.

The Blue Mountains pine
 (in not such a pretty pot as our guest speaker’s specimen)