

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

12 March 2015: Edition No 280

*From the President ...*

I think Autumn is on its way. I have just noticed that the apricot tree I planted two years ago has started to drop its leaves. I 'summer pruned' it for the second year in a row. It's getting a good shape and hopefully it will remain a manageable size. It bore one apricot this year (which the birds enjoyed), so fingers crossed that next year will be a bumper crop!

Last month we introduced a new form of Garden Clinic, consisting of a five-minute presentation followed by Q & A. Janine gave us a very informative and enlightening insight into her garden record-keeping. I suppose knowing her beautiful garden, which is packed full of roses and clematis, and the rich organic soil that she has developed over the years, it is no surprise that she is meticulous with her planning. As part of our commitment to the members, we will continue with this rejigged format.

Sharon and Lynton have once again planned a year packed full of places to visit. Thank you to those gardeners who have volunteered to open their gardens to us after the meetings. Janice Light was delighted to welcome over 30 members to her garden last month and today we are privileged to be invited to Karen and Les Handicott's garden. Please remember that it will only be open until 1.30 pm if you are planning to visit them. Next month we have another garden to ramble around in – for me it is one of the nicest aspects of our club. See you there!

*Celeste*

**The Guest Speaker for today is *Peta Trahar* MAIH MAILDM**

**Peta Trahar** was raised in Tasmania where her parents were keen gardeners. For the last 30 years she has called Woodgreen Angus Stud, at Bilpin, home.

After a teaching career, Peta graduated with Honours from the Ryde School of Horticulture. Her experience includes working as a landscape lecturer and designer.

Peta's garden at Woodgreen contains hundreds of rare and unusual plants collected over many years. Her career as a landscape designer has given focus to the development of her small nursery. Time is now spent propagating and marketing her interesting plants.

Along with Dr Beth Stokes and her husband, Peter, Peta runs the highly regarded Collectors' Plant Fair in April each year. The 2015 Fair, which is the tenth, is on 11 and 12 April at the Hawkesbury Race Club. The Fair has been described as Australia's Treasured Gardening Event.

In 2005, Peta and Beth were awarded NSW Horticulturists of the Year for 'promoting the use and conservation of rare and unusual plants'.

Peta is currently Secretary of the Iris Society, NSW branch. She is a Member of the Australian Institute of Horticulture and The Australian Institute of Designers and Managers. Writing horticultural articles illustrated with her photography is currently a particular interest.



## Dates for Your Diary

|                      |  |  |
|----------------------|--|--|
| Thursday<br>12 March | After the meeting today we are invited to view Karen and Les Handicott's garden at 43 Claines Crescent, Wentworth Falls.   | <b>Viewing till 1.30 pm</b><br><b>Maps available</b> |
| Friday<br>20 March   | <b>Behind the Walls – Darling Point.</b> Cost \$65. This includes transport, entries, light morning tea and lunch at Lindesay House, the 1834 Scottish Gothic house with its formal parterre. Discover the secluded harbourside gardens, rarely seen, hidden behind the gates and walls of Carthona Ave.<br><b>IMPORTANT – You must wear your Garden Club badge for catering purposes.</b> | <b>Departure is 8 am</b>                             |
| Thursday<br>9 April  | Garden Ramble after meeting.   | <b>Viewing till 1.30 pm</b>                          |
| Saturday<br>11 April | <b>Collectors' Plant Fair at Hawkesbury Race Club, Clarendon.</b> Cost \$38. This includes entry, transport and lunch at Norman Lindsay Gallery of gourmet sandwiches, cake, tea/coffee. Please pay today.   | <b>Departure is 7.30 am</b>                          |

### Guest Speakers

**Today's Meeting:**

**Peta Trahar,**  
Horticulturist: "**Garden Inspiration from France and Italy**"

**Next Meeting:  
9 April 2015**

**Greg Bourke,**  
Curator Manager, Blue Mountains Botanic Garden, Mt Tomah:  
"**Plants with bite!**"

### Morning Tea

**Today: Ronah and Vic Tuite**

**9 April: Annabelle Fraser and Janice Light**

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

### Club Information

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

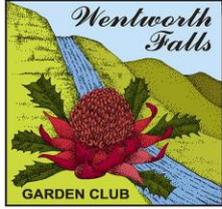
Members are asked to wear their club name badges to all club meetings, tours and functions. To take part in club functions and tours you must be a bona-fide club member.

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 Lea Nelson:  
Ph 4784 1101**

Club Secretary: Gai Horrocks.  
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## ***March Gardening Tips***

Welcome to Autumn! We have cooler days ahead and the wonderful array of autumn colours as the leaves turn and drop. There is plenty to do in the garden this month but if you haven't managed to do February jobs there is time to catch up. For February Garden Tips refer to the Garden Club's website.

Every garden is different with varying needs, but generally, this is what is suggested to do in March:

- Prune fuchsia, geraniums and deadhead roses. Prune off all dead flower heads on perennial plants to encourage stronger flowering next season.
- Feed lawns with a slow release fertiliser and water in. Top dress if required.
- If you haven't done so already, prepare garden beds for bulbs by adding compost and bags of manure. Bulbs are for sale in the nurseries now.
- Use a complete fertiliser or blood and bone around trees, shrubs, vegies and annuals, ensuring you water before and after fertilising.
- Feed your azaleas, rhododendrons and camellias with camellia and azalea food.
- Prune hedges such as box and gardenia once they have flowered and water well.
- Cut back your pelargoniums hard if the bushes are lanky or untidy.
- Any herbs you have that flourished in summer need a trim this month.
- Remove spent summer annuals and vegies that are coming to an end.
- Pick your basil, marjoram, chives and other herbs for drying or freezing.
- Check the roots of your spent tomato bushes for nematodes. If there are large numbers of small galls, do not plant them in the same spot next year.
- Crop rotation. Tomatoes (acid lovers) like a lower pH, and the pH usually drops (becomes more acidic) as more compost and manure is added to soil, so lime should be applied after they are finished ready for a crop that enjoys a higher pH.
- Crop rotation reduces pests and diseases. Plant leafy green vegetables like lettuce and silverbeet after tomatoes and other fruiting vegetables.
- For vegetable beds that have been successively planted with crops, take an organic approach by adding compost, then rest the soil for a season. Alternatively, or in addition if you have the space, make a 'fallow' bed by planting a 'green manure' crop such as a legume or a legume-fibrous grass combination, like vetch and oats. These are grown then slashed just on flowering and left as mulch or turned into the soil to add organic matter, to increase nutrients and help retain moisture in the soil.
- When summer vegies have finished, scatter a complete plant food or blood and bone before planting the next crop.
- If you have deciduous trees, water them deeply this month. The leaves on well-watered trees tend to turn more vibrant shades of orange and red before falling. Even though we have had a lot of rain, the roots of trees and plants under trees may not have had sufficient water.
- Check citrus for aphids and citrus leaf miner and spray with PestOil if there is a problem.
- Watch for pests such as aphids on roses and caterpillars on tomatoes.
- Aphids on roses and chrysanthemums can be sprayed with MaxGuard.

### **Here is a list of what is in flower now:**

**Trees and shrubs:** abelia, azalea (early varieties), banksia, crepe myrtle, fuchsia, gordonia, roses.

**Annuals and perennials:** chrysanthemums, dahlia, aster daisy, petunia, phlox, plectranthus, rudbeckia.

**Bulbs:** belladonna lily, canna, daylily, nerine.

### **The following can be planted or sown in March:**

**Flowers:** ageratum, alyssum, calendula, candytuft, Canterbury bells, cornflower, dianthus, lobelia, lupin, marigold, pansy, poppy, primula, polyanthus, snapdragon, verbena, viola, wallflower.

**Shrubs:** camellias, rhododendrons and azaleas.

**Bulbs:** anemone, bluebells, daffodils, Dutch iris, freesias, grape hyacinth, hyacinth, ixia, jonquils, ranunculus.

**Vegetables:** broad beans, beetroot, broccoli, cabbage, carrot, cauliflower, kohlrabi, leek, lettuce, spring onion, parsley, parsnip, peas, radish, silverbeet and spinach.

**Herbs:** coriander, parsley, rosemary, sage, thyme and oregano.

## **Growing Fuchsias**

Fuchsias are very rewarding plants – they flower for long periods and are mostly trouble free. They look good in hanging baskets, pots or in the ground. Autumn is a good time to plant fuchsias as the weather is mild and the plants can become established before next summer. It is important to find the right position in the garden to grow them. Fuchsias need morning sun with strong filtered light and plenty of fresh air. They do not like too much heat and need protection from afternoon sun, frosts and hot winds. They also need to be planted in free draining soil, kept moist but not wet and in summer they like to be mulched. Fuchsias are not troubled by very many insect pests; however, they can be attacked by caterpillars and thrips. Do not prune during the heaviest frost period as new shoots are tender and will burn. Pruning time is also the time to fertilise as pruning encourages new growth and feeding is important for healthy plants.



#### **Sources:**

<http://flowerpower.com.au/information/garden-diary/march-april-may/>

<http://www.hortico.com.au/garden-diary/#march-diary>

[http://www.abc.net.au/gardening/vegieguide/crop\\_rotation.htm](http://www.abc.net.au/gardening/vegieguide/crop_rotation.htm)

[http://communitygarden.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2009/08/crop\\_rotation.pdf](http://communitygarden.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2009/08/crop_rotation.pdf)

<http://www.heyne.com.au/gardencentre/factsheets/factsheet.php/fuchsias.htm>