



LEURA GARDEN CLUB INC
 friendship through gardens since 1955
JANUARY 2024
leuragardenclub.org.au

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Meetings are held on the third Tuesday of each month at St Alban's Hall, Megalong St, Leura from 9.45am

PRESIDENT'S REPORT Participants in the November garden ramble inspected the newly installed bird bath at the Leura Primary School, an initiative of Leura Garden Club.

In December life suddenly became a complicated hustle and bustle in preparation for family and friends coming to celebrate Christmas. There were food, gifts, cleaning and decorating to organise and, of course, the garden in need of a spruce up before the friendly invasion.

Garden Club members celebrated Christmas lunch at *The Bunker*, Leura. It was a happy time of laughter, eating and drinking together. Individual "thanks" were given to each member for their contribution to the life of Leura Garden Club.

During 2023 we welcomed several new members to the club and we look forward to getting to know them better in 2024.

I WISH YOU ALL A HAPPY, HEALTHY NEW YEAR

We will return on 16 January for our first meeting of 2024, mark this in your diary. Your \$20 Subscription 2024 will be due for payment on that day.

Happily enjoying Summer in the garden... **Lorraine**



Advance notice is given for 9:45am Tuesday 20 February ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING to be held at St Alban's Hall, Megalong Street Leura. Neil Sing will have nomination forms for the 2024 committee positions available at the January meeting. Please consider how you can serve Leura Garden Club.

JANUARY GUEST SPEAKER	JANUARY GARDEN RAMBLE
Members of Blue Mountains Wild Plant Rescue Katoomba Native Plant Nursery.	Ramble through Joan and Kevin Brown's home, Queen Street Leura followed by lunch at Lily's Pad Café, Leura.
RAFFLE WINNERS	WELFARE
Trish Willoughby \$30 Longview Nursery Voucher Kerry Lee GCA Calendar Liz Cunningham Plant Gynia Favot Yates Garden Guide Luke Zoglmeier Christmas pudding	If you know of someone who needs a card please contact Kerrie Lee 4757 3176



SUMMER COLOUR IN THE GARDEN

What was the wheel-like red flower included in the table decorations at *The Bunker* Christmas lunch?

Alloxylon pinnatum - Dorrigo waratah

This spreading, evergreen small tree will tolerate heavy frost. It likes loamy soil, either sandy or clay, acid to neutral soils, a sunny to moderately shady position in the garden and moderate to good drainage. It will flower from Spring through to Autumn.

Dorrigo waratah complements the low maintenance garden. Bees, nectar-eating birds, butterflies and other insects love it and, as we saw on 12 December, it makes an interesting addition to a cut flower arrangement.

SUMMER GARDENING TIPS

Take care of budding plants Does your camellia drop its buds and flowers? As camellias initiate budding in summertime, sudden loss of buds and flowers is often a consequence of the plants drying out, particularly when they are growing in containers. Mulch and water deeply once or twice weekly during hot, dry weather to limit this common and irritating problem.

Help pots to stay cool Potted plants, especially those in terracotta pots, are vulnerable to overheating. Lightly mulch and, where possible, position them out of hot western sunshine. Remember that standing potted plants in saucers of water encourages root rot and mosquito breeding. Instead, stand them in saucers filled with sand, and keep the sand moist. This ensures roots stay cool and plants remain healthy. If potted plants dry out to the point where re-wetting is hard, soak them in a bucket of water for half an hour, then drain.

Water early to avoid mildew Water in the cool of the day. The best time to water your garden is morning but if you water in the afternoon allow enough time for foliage to dry out before sunset. This reduces the risk of mildew and other fungi attacking leaves, and there's less chance you'll get caught by the evening shift of mosquitoes. Mildew frequently attacks roses, pumpkin, melon, zucchini and cucumber. Spray plants weekly with a solution made from one part cow's milk to 10 parts water. Repeat after heavy rain or irrigation. This remedy won't reverse mildew damage, but it's an effective preventative.

Add nutrients to the water If you can only water occasionally, try to water plants deeply and use that opportunity to simultaneously feed and correct mineral deficiencies. Apply a soluble fertiliser with added seaweed. Water in potash around the base of fruit trees, especially citrus, to improve fruit flavour and juiciness. The potassium in potash (potassium sulphate) helps to improve plant vigour and resistance to foliar fungi.

Keep the lawn long and lush Caring for your lawn during summer and drought conditions while using minimal water is possible. Brown, bare, weed-infested lawns are symptoms of scalping, which means cutting lawns too low. It's a misconception that cutting lawns low reduces the cutting frequency. Instead, mow lawns as high as your mower permits. Longer turf wears better, but most important of all, a thick sward suppresses pernicious weeds.

Fresh lawn clippings are great for activating compost heaps and mulching shrubberies, but only when applied in a thin layer, up to 5cm deep. Thicker layers can burn leaves and encourage collar rot on trees and shrubs. Keep lawn lush by foliar feeding with seaweed tonic once monthly and applying one handful of poultry manure per square metre each season, before rain or irrigation. Allow two weeks for this to green your lawn – and for the odour to disappear before having a garden party!