



LEURA GARDEN CLUB INC
 friendship through gardens since 1955
 MAY 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 Time to prepare for those wild winds that help defoliate our deciduous trees that have given us so much 'colour' pleasure during Autumn. Leaves that dance in the wind before finding all those hiding places that are hard to reach, like gutters ... if only leaf litter would simply fall into the compost bin. Spring bulbs need to be planted, and now is the time to shop for bare rooted trees, plant hellebores and chrysanthemums as we say Happy Mother's Day. All this work before the wintry weather descends on us with ice and snow. Let us enjoy the last of those colourful dahlias, roses and summer vegetables.

Rhiannon Phillips was so encouraging in sharing about her market gourmet garden at Lawson. I will now take up the challenge to re-establish my own vegetable garden and move all the accumulated compost and put it into a productive mode. Did you plant a Rosemary to show honour to our Anzacs past and present, if not remember to do so 2025.

Finally the weather gods smiled on us and members were able to appreciate the autumn beauty of Joan and Kevin Brown's garden and a big thank you to **Gynea Favot** and **Trish Willoughby** for joining the committee.



From Milton's Song on May Morning - *Hail, bounteous May, that dost inspire mirth, and youth, and warm desire!*
 Yours in gardening ... **Lorraine**

APRIL GUEST SPEAKER	APRIL GARDEN RAMBLE
Robert Trinajscic from Hedge and Arbour - <i>How water features can transform your garden</i>	Ramble through Roz and Neil Sing's garden at Spencer Street, Leura followed by lunch at The Lily's Pad, Leura.
RAFFLE WINNERS	WELFARE
Helen Benezon A selection of Begonias Sue Harris Myoporum	If you know of someone who needs a card please contact Kerrie Lee 4757 3176



URGENT An **ASSISTANT TREASURER** is needed before Marian travels overseas. You will support the treasurer and learn the treasurer role. You will receive and receipt monies and bank them once a month and learn how the Excel cash book spreadsheet works so you can fill it in when the treasurer is on leave. You will also be added as a signatory to the club's Bendigo bank account to cosign payments and attend the committee meeting on 2nd Tuesday of each month.

A **VICE PRESIDENT** is also needed. Please contact **Lorraine McMiles** to volunteer for either position.



LEAFMOULD is a product you can make but it's not something you can buy. We all know leaves can be added to the compost heap but do you know they can be composted separately to make a special product called leafmould which is ideal for ferns, orchids, palms, aroids and your precious pot plants.

Leafmould is made purely from leaves. Successful decomposition involves consistent moisture and the work of fungi and bacteria over time. Time to compost is increased by inconsistent, erratic moisture levels and ambient warmth (much slower in cold weather).

How to make it

Bag it The easiest way to get started with leafmould is to fill large plastic bags with leaves, punch a few holes in them and then place the bags in a shady spot. Keep the leaves moist and you will have a fantastic useable leafmould in around 6 -12 months. Remember, the bags can break down, so it's important to check regularly.

Tarp it The same as bagging up the leaves, but on a larger scale. Think large leaf-filled bonbon, in a shady spot.

Cage it If you try making leafmould in an open container (eg made from chicken wire) be sure to turn it and keep it moistened. The significant downside of this method is dryness on the outside of the heap guarantees uneven composting.

How to speed it up Sprinkle lawn clippings (a compost activator) over every 30cm depth of leaves, tread this down underfoot, and repeat adding layers until your heap is complete. Run over the leaves with the lawn mower or through a mulcher before bagging and sprinkle a little pelletised poultry manure over the top before watering well. Keep the lot evenly damp. Turn or fork the pile every month.

It takes slightly longer for tough evergreen leaves like holm oak, cork oak, pine needles, eucalypts than liquidambar, but the end result is brilliant.

How to use it Leafmould is low in nutrients but high in carbon, making it an ideal mulch or potting mix improver. Being low in nutrients means leafmould can be used around Proteaceae. Leafmould is porous enough to encourage air and water movement through soil and potting mix. In the garden a mulch of leafmould soaks up water like a sponge, making light showers of rain last longer.

Seed raising mix Unlike compost, leafmould rarely contains viable seeds, making it ideal for homemade seed raising and potting mixes.

Using a spider-strainer or homemade soil sieve, process two large trowels of leaf mould, setting aside any large particles for another mix. To the sieved leafmould add one trowel of washed sand and one trowel of worm castings. Add a small sprinkling of Dolomite and combine well. This is a low nutrient mix as the seed has all the nutrients needed to germinate and produce the first set of leaves. Once this occurs, the seedlings need to be planted out or potted on using a mix with a higher nutrient content.

General purpose potting mix Combine two parts leafmould, two parts washed sand, one part homemade compost and one part organic slow-release fertiliser.

Making leafmould is an exceptionally easy way to end up with a valuable product from a free resource. While it will take time, apart from making the pile and giving it a water, you don't need to do anything except reap the rewards.

Thanks to Liz Cunningham for information about leafmould ... Newsletter Editor.