

HORTULANUS

Official Publication of Ku-ring-gai Horticultural Society Inc.
OCTOBER 2019



President: Doreen Clark, 19 Parkwood Grove, Pymble 2073 (9498 1677)
Secretary: Christine Rethers, 1 Wolsten Ave, Turramurra 2074 (9449 6245)
Treasurer: Robyn Brown (0408 295 601)

Website: www.khsgardenclub.org.au

MEETINGS COMMENCE AT 7.30PM
ST IVES COMMUNITY HALL, MEMORIAL AVE, ST IVES

COMING EVENTS

**TRADING TABLE at the
October meeting (see below
for further details)**

Sept 28/29	Rivendell Flower & Garden Show, Entry: \$15 Enq. rivendellflowershow.com.au
Sept 28/29	Plant Lovers Fair, Kariong Mountains High School, Kariong Sat: 8-4pm, Sun: 9-3pm Enq. www.plantloversfair.com.au . Entry—\$14 on the day, \$12 online
Sept 28/29	Gosford Open Gardens, 10 gardens to visit, Enq. gosfordopengardens@gmail.com
Oct 1	OCTOBER MEETING: James Carrick—'All about Trees, Wild and Tame'
Oct 5-7 and Oct 11-13	Leura Gardens Festival, 9.30-4.30pm, 10 Gardens, \$30 all gardens. Enq. 0431 095 279
Oct 13	Maureene and Keith Smith's Huge Plant Sale, 45 Parklands Ave, Lane Cove North 10am
Oct 17-20	Berry Gardens Festival 10-4pm Enq. www.berrygardens.org.au
Oct 18-20	Galston Open Gardens 9.30-4.30pm 9 gardens for \$25 Enq. www.galstongardenclub.com.au
Oct 26/27	Bundanoon Garden Ramble, 8 gardens for \$20. Enq. www.bundanoongardenramble.org.au
Oct 26/27	Bathurst Spring Spectacular 9.30-5pm Enq. 0499 049 299
Nov 2	African Violet & Gesneriad Show, Burwood RSL, 96 Shaftesbury Rd, Burwood 10-4pm
Nov 6	NOVEMBER MEETING

The Annual General Meeting of the Ku-ring-gai Horticultural Society was held at the St Ives Community Hall on 4 September 2019.

The President, Doreen Clark, opened the meeting with a summary of the year's activities and announced that after 8 years she would be stepping down from the position of President. She has offered to stay on as Acting President until a new president can be found. The Treasurer then gave a short report on the financial state of the Society. The President thanked the committee for their work during the year and she and the committee then stood down. Ian St Clair took the chair, thanking the president for all her hard work over the past year. Ian then called for nominations for the position of president. Doreen Clark was nominated and there being no other nominations, she was elected as Acting President and resumed the chair. The election of the new committee then proceeded with all members of last year's committee offering themselves the re-election. An additional nomination to fill the position vacated by Penny Whipp earlier in the year was received for Evelyn Mason. There being no further nominations, all those nominated were elected. The new committee is now: Acting President - Doreen Clark, Vice-President - Ted Shaw, Treasurer - Robyn Brown, Secretary - Christine Rethers, Committee - Fiona Arnott, Peter Fisher, Helen Gilkes and Evelyn Mason.

Hi

It was still very cool for our September meeting but 70 members, friends and visitors turned out to enjoy themselves and exchange notes on how their gardens were standing up to the weather.

MEMBERS' NEWS

Christmas Dinner—Friday, 22 November 2019 at the Terrey Hills Golf and Country Club, 116 Booralie Road, Terrey Hills, commencing at 6.30 pm. Cost—\$60 per person. This will be a very pleasant evening with fine food and good company. There will be drinks served on arrival followed by a two course dinner with wine included. Again this year we will be able to select our meal ahead of time from a choice of two main courses and two desserts. Please let Helen Gilkes know (9144 4826) if you would like to make up a table (8 people) otherwise a table will be arranged for you. A booking form is included with this newsletter.

Garden Clubs of Australia Magazine 'Our Gardens': This coming year's subscription is now due for renewal. The cost is \$15 a year for four issues and they will be posted to you directly. If you wish to subscribe or to renew

your existing subscription, we need to have your payment as soon as possible. Please have your money ready at a meeting or post or drop in your subscription to Penny Whipp at 51 Yarrara Road, West Pymble 2073. Don't miss out on this very good offer. At the meeting Penny will have a box on the front table where you can put your subscription money, in an envelope please, with your name on the outside.

Garden Clubs of Australia—2020 Calendar: The 2020 calendar is now available and Penny Whipp will be co-ordinating our order. If you would like to order one or more calendars, please bring an envelope with the correct cash or cheque inside and your name, number of calendars you wish to order and amount enclosed on the front of the envelope and place it in the bag on the sign-on table at the next meeting. The cost per calendar including an envelope is \$10. They should be ready to pick up at the November meeting.

Member's Garden Ramble: The ramble this year will be on Sunday, 20 October starting at 1.30 pm. A special thank-you to the members who have volunteered to open their gardens. The gardens are listed below and should be visited in the following order:

Patricia and Winton Gibson's garden, 16 Tallong Place, Turramurra

David and Helen Pratt's garden, 86 Grosvenor Street, Wahroonga

Yvonne and Warwick Wilson's garden, 66 Carrington Street, Wahroonga (not before 3pm)

Afternoon tea will be at the last garden and we ask that you bring something small but delicious to share. The Society will provide tea, coffee and cold drinks.

Maureene and Keith Smith's Huge Plant Sale—Sunday, 13 October, 10am-3pm at 45 Parkland Avenue, Lane Cove North, raising funds for the National Breast Cancer Foundation. Not to be missed!

The Rose Society of NSW—Upper North Shore & Hills Regional Branch, are holding their Spring Show on Sunday, 10 November at the Galston Community Centre, 37 Arcadia Road, Galston. Whilst some exhibition classes are for members only, quite a number of classes are open to the public including classes in the Horticultural and Culinary Sections. A schedule for this show will be available at the October meeting, please help yourself. KHS member and chairperson of the show, Kate Stanley will be available to answer any questions. This is a very beautiful show with so many wonderful roses on display, plus other interesting things to see and possibly purchase.

OUTINGS

Southern Highlands Trip—Thursday, 24 October 2019: This trip is now full but we are happy to take names for the waiting list should a place become available. Please contact Ms Helen Gilkes, 20a Normurra Avenue, North Turramurra - phone 9144 4826, if you are interested.

SHOW BENCH

Camellias are now finishing up after their excellent season. The daffodils were gorgeous with a fine display of flowers. Natives put on an excellent show as did the native and exotic orchids. Unfortunately, the Vegie section was looking a bit sparse. In the Decorative section, the spring blossoms were beautiful. The Father's Day exhibits would have pleased any father.

GARDEN TABLE

As usual the Garden Table was loaded with goodies and the herb section looked good with Thyme, Dill and Chocolate Mint on offer. There were some good healthy Saxifraga and a number of other small plants also looking for new homes. The prices are very reasonable so go along and have a look you, never know what you will find.

TRADING TABLE

The Trading Table will be operating at the October meeting. Members may bring in plants to sell and 10% of the proceeds will go to the Society with the rest to the member.

Traders are reminded of the following requirements: only plants can be sold, all items should be in first class condition, pots should be clean with no soil, roots or stains on the outside of the pot. The plant must be disease- and insect-free with no damaged or dead leaves and weeds should be removed. The plant should be named with a label or sticker and a paddle pop stick showing the owner's initials, the plant number and the price should be put in each pot. On the form there are two sections, the first half is your record. The first column will be ticked off by the sales team as the plant is received. The second column is for the number of the plant so each plant will have a number from 1 to 11. The third column is for the plant name – if you don't know the name then a short description. The fifth column is the price you wish to receive for this plant and the sixth column is the price that the plant sold for. On the second half of the form you should repeat this information so that the sales team can keep a record which they use to process your payment. If you want to bring more than 11 plants, then simply use another form but continue the numbering, e.g. the next set of plants will be numbered from 12 up to 22. You will receive your payment at the next meeting. They will hand back the first half of the form to you at the end of the meeting. Please take home any of your unsold plants. Paddle pop sticks and extra forms will be available at the table.

Plants will be checked in on arrival at a table outside the hall and the paper work will be signed off. As the wonderful team who run the Garden Table will be looking after the Trading Table, **there will be no Garden Table for this meeting only.**

The form to be completed is available with this newsletter—just print out a copy, fill it in and bring it with you when you bring in your plants that you want to sell.

RAFFLE

This month we had five fine prizes on offer and all you need to do to win one is to give the man at the door \$2 for three tickets. The lovely protea 'Blushing Bride' was donated by our speaker, Mark Massey. The Boronia megastigma was purchased by the Society from Mark's Mother Earth Nursey. Thank you, Julie St Clair, for your beautiful prize. Thank you also, Anonymous, for your two prizes. These are all good prizes and all money goes to your Society.



MAIN SPEAKER

This was Mark Massey from the Mother Earth Nursery on Annangrove Road, Kenthurst. Before becoming a nursery owner, Mark worked on the design and setting up of large horticultural establishments. In his spare time, he is an avid plant collector and specialises in Clivias on his own small block. Much to the joy of members, Mark brought along what was probably one of the finest collection of rare and unusual plants for sale that the Society has seen in many a day. Needless to say many were promptly snapped up by members. Amongst those items for sale were many different kinds of Japanese maples at very reasonable prices. He told us that he has a wide range of customers at the nursery ranging from an 80 year old who is very interested in bonsai down to teenagers who are just feeling their way into the gardening business. The nursery carries a wide range of orchids many of which were on display and

available to be purchased by members. If the opportunity presents itself, Mark checks the gardens of old houses that have been sold and are due to be demolished for rare old plants and if possible digs them up and brings them to his nursery. Mark had some unusual Lobelia on offer and for the native plant enthusiast there were several unusual waratahs available such as 'Mallee Boy', a beautiful red, 'Georgie Girl', an unusual gold coloured waratah as well as a white one. There was a collection of mini bromeliads for those who have only a very small area available. A beautiful grey-leafed and rare begonia fascinated our president, she has its brother. For the Clivia lovers there were seven different cultivars available. At the nursery there is a wide range of fertilisers including the Black Marble range for roses as well as organic potting mixes for orchids and low phosphorus fertilisers for natives. The Nursery is open 7 days of the week, opening at 8.30am on weekends and 9am on week days.

Main Speaker—October: Our main speaker will James Carrick who will speak on 'Trees, Wild and Tame.'

Member Speaker—September: There was no member speaker because of the AGM.

Member Speaker—October: Our guest member speaker will be Daniel Low who will speak on the recent Camellia Congress held in France. This is a gathering of camellia growers from all over the world and was held in 2018 in Nantes in northern France with side trips to various parts of France to see camellia gardens. Camellia growers should not miss this talk.

HUGH'S CORNER WHAT SHOULD I BE DOING IN MY GARDEN?



► Keep an eye on any wisteria that you have growing as they will be starting to put on a lot of new growth. Both foliage and the long shoots will wave in the breeze seeking something to get a hold on. If you don't want to have more growth, cut off these shoots near where they start. If left to

grow, wisteria can get very big and difficult to manage.

► One for the tulip growers. Keep the soil damp but not wet until the foliage turns yellow or has dried right out. By then all the nutrients will have gone back into the bulbs and you can lift the bulbs, clean them up and store them on trays on a cool dark shelf in your garden shed until time to plant again in autumn.

► If you are growing cacti, now is the time to start watering them again. Even though they usually come from hot dry countries they still need water. Once you resume watering, give them a good drink and then let them almost dry out before watering again - nothing kills cacti quicker than wet feet.

► Many of us have a hedge for a front fence and by now it will be putting on new growth. Have a look along it and see if it needs a light prune. If it does, prune it so that the top of the hedge is slightly narrower than the bottom. This will enable the sun to reach the lower part of the hedge and the foliage will be even top to bottom.

► How are your Hibiscus going? Are they showing a lot of yellow leaves? If so, it can be corrected by scattering some iron chelates under the plant and watering in well. While you are at it, fertilise the shrub well with a good quality all round plant food. If possible, use one with trace elements in it. Hibiscus are hungry plants so you may wish to give more than one application over the season.

► Aphids are on the move so keep an eye on your leafy plants, checking under the leaves as well as on top. Spray with a fine hard jet of water to knock them off your plants or spray with a soap-based insecticide like Natrasoap or Eco Neem to kill them.

► Now is the time to be fertilising your azaleas. When you have finished, spread a good thick layer of mulch over the bed. This will keep the roots cool in the hot weather and help retain moisture. Keep it away from the trunk or you could cause collar rot. Leaf litter, sugar cane and your own compost are all suitable.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS



Question? I have a Murraya in a large pot that normally gives no trouble but every now and then a lot of the leaves turn yellow or go all mottled. What is going on and what can I do to fix it?

Answer: For a container grown Murraya to have its leaves turn yellow is not unusual. It is caused by a shortage of nitrogen and certain trace elements in the soil. Every few weeks give it a liquid feed with a high nitrogen fertiliser like Thrive or Aquasol. Also, get hold of a packet of Manutec Trace Elements and give it a feed once a month for a couple of months. Follow the directions on the packet.

Question? I have a lovely camellia and would like to have a couple more of the same plant. Can I grow more plants from the seed of my original plant?

Answer: Growing camellias from seed can be a bit of a gamble as you cannot guarantee that the new plant will come true to the old plant. You are better off taking a semi hardwood cutting from the original plant in mid to late summer. Make the cutting about 10 cm long. Dip the end into a root forming gel and plant it in a pot of top quality seed raising mix and water with a seaweed solution. Put the pot in a semi-shaded position where it will be out of direct sunlight. Keep the soil damp but not wet.

Question? I have a conifer in my backyard that has got way too tall. Can I cut it back by a half and let it grow back to the height I want.

Answer: No, if you cut it back to half that is the height the trunk will stay. You will get a lot of young branches going sideways but the main trunk will stay exactly where you cut it off and will not go any higher.

Question? I have been told that I can put banana skins behind the fronds of my Staghorn and they will fertilise it. Is this true?

Answer: Yes, it is true banana skins are loaded with potassium and magnesium and your Staghorn would be very happy to have them. Just put one or two at a time and as they rot away, put a couple more. Don't turn your Staghorn into a compost heap.

Question? Can I put Citrus peelings in my compost heap I have been told I should not?

Answer: There are two points of view on this matter, some say "Yes" and some say "No". I have never had problems with putting citrus peelings in the compost heap. If you cut them up into little pieces, they will break down quicker.

Question? Why have the leaves of my tibouchina gone brown along the edges and are starting to look a bit on the dry side?

Answer: Tibouchina prefer a soil that is a bit on the acid side and when the pH goes too far on the alkaline side, the leaf edges burn. Scatter some sulphate of ammonia out along the drip line and water in well.



Regards
Hugh