



Volume 2 Issue 5, May 2021

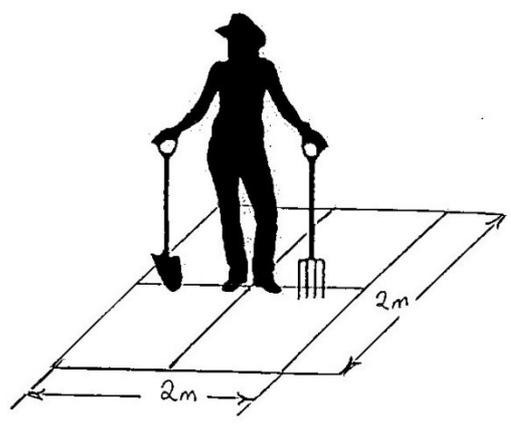
May Birthday Celebrations

Wendy Bridges 21-May

Stan Rupnik 21-May

Wishing; Wendy and Stan a very happy birthday.

The COVID – 19 Virus and social distancing



If we keep in the centre of a 4-metre square this should give about a 1.5 metre distance between gardeners.

Do the three:

- 1. Wash your hands.**
- 2. Maintain a 1.5 metre distance.**
- 3. If sick stay home.**

What's happening in Newcastle community garden space

The Co-ordinator regularly meets with Council to discuss what is happening in the community garden space in Newcastle. In early 2020 the COVID virus shelved the planned joint community garden workshops which were going to happen on our lawn. As we all learn how to work with the COVID virus the workshops at this stage will be taught by Council staff on subjects such as composting, propagation, worm farming and soil enriching. There are a few hoops Council and our garden need to jump through as we are still potentially in a pandemic. We may need to reduce the class size and hold more than one class on each subject.

Hedge and Roses

You may have noticed some of the new hedge plants have died. Council have noticed the problem and are purchasing replacement plants and they will be supplying the roses for the centre of the hedge. **A big thank you to Newcastle City Council.** It has also become apparent that our local neighbours are using the grassed area for picnics, with one family holding a reunion, in what they called "our secret garden". One local commented to me, the garden looks in better shape these days. The compliment is due to the hard work put in by our members in cleaning up the garden site as a whole.

Weeding of paths

The weeding of the paths is always ongoing with a big task ahead of removing the weeds in the far lane next to the wall.

Community beds

Many thanks to Daniel Kennardy for his valuable help in removing the weeds from the community beds.

Camellia beds

The middle camellia bed has been rejuvenated with new topsoil with red ruby (*Alternanthera*) being planted to form a colourful back row. Many thanks to Bob Lee for the donation of the 25 plants.

Article by Angela Tonks:

Between the camellias, I have planted echinacea which is a perennial plant. Hopefully they will flourish for many years to come. I have also planted a variety of bulbs ranging from a mixed daffodil/jonquil bag in front of the echinaceas. Seedlings of nigella and mixed double calendula have been scattered randomly as well as anemones and ranunculus. Gentlemen's buttons and pink amaranth have been planted to the right of the bed so they should mingle in the middle. I also improved the soil with chook manure. The garden was topped off with sugar cane mulch. All these flowers will give a wonderful visual beauty and great bee health. Nigella seeds are used in cooking and combined with the benefits of the black oil derived from it is a "super food". Calendula is also a medicinal as it boosts the immune system. The petals can be used raw on salads and added to hearty winter soups. They also add a healthy colour to broths. The petals can also be used as an ingredient for skin care products. For this the whole flower is harvested and dried. Linarias are also edible and add such gorgeous colour to things. They are also great in any natural dying. I have used them in handmade paper and often harvest them for a fibre artist friend. They are possibly my all time favourite flower and the first I ever grew as a child. It came in a Yates packet called Bambi mix and I was amazed at the "miniature snapdragons".

Thanks Angela for writing this article as well as the plants and the well thought out garden plan.

The cleaning of the orchard area

Richard has been keeping the orchard area free of weeds. Great work Richard, thank you.

Spice of the month

Cinnamon

Cinnamomum Verum (True Cinnamon)

Cinnamomum Casi



Cinnamon is the wonder spice that not only sweetens deserts and adds flavours to Indian and Sri Lankan curries; it also makes a refreshing tea. Cinnamon has been used for millennia with the Egyptians buying imported cinnamon via Arab traders from India and Ceylon around 2000 BC. It was used in the embalming process for the dead. Some historians are quoted as to say the spice the Egyptians were using was the *Cinnamomum Cassia* which actually comes from China. This is one of the types of this spice you will find on the supermarket shelf today. During those times Arab traders never ventured to China for spice. The first notable record of the spice being used in Europe was around 301 AD by the Romans, who were selling 327 grams which is a Roman pound (a measuring cup) for 1500 denarii which was the wages for a labourer for fifty months. The spice was so expensive it was said the Emperor Nero burnt a year's worth of the city's supply at the funeral of his wife Poppaea Sabina in AD 65. Cinnamon quills are made from the inner bark of the cinnamon tree. When we say tree, it's only 4 metres tall when the trees are harvested. This is the traditional method of harvesting the bark but there are other methods of harvesting the bark without cutting down the tree. The outer bark is very carefully scraped off to reveal the inner bark. The inner bark is then gently peeled off with the use of a knife.



The peeled off bark is usually cut in lengths of 1 metre long. The bark is then dried and bundled and sold throughout the world where it's ground or sold as 75mm long sticks.

In the last 20 years, cinnamon has been investigated by drug companies for the use in the treatment of high blood sugar. At this stage the trials have a long way to go but the medication appears to work in the laboratory.

What to plant now in our temperate zone

- Silverbeet
- Lettuce, Leek
- Broad Beans
- Cabbage, Cauliflower
- Radish
- Turnips
- Swedes
- Kale

Recipes of the Month



Lentil and Cauliflower Pilaf (Vegetarian And Low-Fat)

Ingredients

- 2** teaspoons vegetable oil
- 1** small onion, finely chopped
- 1/2** (about 450g) cauliflower, cut into florets
- 1 1/4** cups (250g) Basmati rice
- 2** tablespoons mild Indian curry paste (such as korma)
- 3** cups (750ml) vegetable liquid stock (such as Massel)
- 2** bay leaves
- 1** cinnamon quill
- 400g** can lentils, drained, rinsed
- 2** tablespoons finely chopped coriander leaves
- Mango chutney, to serve (optional)

Directions

Heat oil in a large frypan over medium heat. Add onion and cook for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add the cauliflower and rice and cook, stirring, for 2 minutes. Add curry paste and cook for a further minute. Add stock, bay leaves and cinnamon, then bring to the boil. Reduce heat to low, cover and cook for 15 minutes until rice is cooked and all liquid has been absorbed. Fluff rice with a fork, stir in lentils and heat through for 1 minute. Sprinkle over coriander, and serve with chutney, if desired.



Apple and Cinnamon Cake (Italian-Style)

Ingredients

BATTER

3/4 cup butter

1 cup sugar

1 teaspoon vanilla

3 eggs

3 1/2 tablespoons vegetable oil

3/4 cup + 2 tablespoons milk

2 1/2 cups plain flour

1 teaspoon cinnamon

2 teaspoons baking powder

TOPPING

2 apples - Golden Delicious or other firm type
(peeled and thinly sliced)

2 teaspoons lemon juice

4 tablespoons sugar

1 1/2 teaspoons cinnamon

Directions

Pre-heat oven to 180°C (160c fan forced). Grease and flour a 24cm spring-form cake pan.

In a medium bowl toss together sliced apples and lemon juice, set aside.

In a small bowl mix together cinnamon and sugar for topping and set aside.

In a medium bowl cream butter and sugar, then add eggs one at a time, mix well, then add oil, vanilla and milk and beat till smooth.

Sieve flour, baking powder and 1 teaspoon cinnamon into batter and beat until smooth.

Spoon batter into the prepared cake pan, top with sliced apples (do not press down), sprinkle with cinnamon sugar mix. Bake for approximately 50-60 minutes or until toothpick comes out clean. Let cool or serve warm. Enjoy!

Check out this month's seed collection website.

www.theseedcollection.com.au