

THE ARMIDALE GARDENER
NEWSLETTER OF THE ARMIDALE GARDEN CLUB
ISSUE NO. 583 AUGUST 2020

The next meeting of the Garden Club will be held on
Thursday 27 August 2020 at 7.00 pm in the
Uniting Church Lounge.
Please submit your display table entries before 6.50 pm to allow
for the counting of voting tokens before the meeting.



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DISPLAY TABLE

Display Table Competition Categories – August

1	Camelia (1 Cut)	6	Flowering pot plant
2	Flowering narcissus (1 cut)	7	1 brassica – cabbage, cauliflower, etc (1 cut)
3	Flowering bulbous – not narcissus (1 cut)	8	3 leaves of a leafed non-brassica vegetable eg spinach
4	Flowering annual or perennial – not bulbous (1 cut)	9	3 of one type of any other fruit or vegetable
5	Flowering tree/shrub/climber (1 cut max length 60cm)	10	Bonsai

11	<i>New Category</i> – Massed display of a single species
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Note that this new Display Table category is intended to better display a single species that has limited impact as a single stem but greater impact as a multi-stem collation or otherwise to display a single species where multi-coloured forms could be displayed together

WATTLE DAY

Tuesday 1st September is Wattle Day in Australia. Wear a sprig of wattle and take a little time to notice the beauty of these iconic native plants. (Or alternatively, commiserate with those people whose noses and eyes are sensitive to the wattle pollen!)

Golden Wattle (*Acacia pycnantha*) is the national floral emblem of Australia and since 1992 Wattle Day has been celebrated on the first day of September, being the official start of Spring in this country.



In Australia the *Acacias* are our largest plant genus with about 750 species. The Australian name of *wattle* is an early colonial term which relates to the use of the springy stems as wattles (ie interlaced rods) in wattle-and-daub huts.

NOTEWORTHY –

Level 3 water restrictions imminent for Armidale

And 1st September this year will be a significant day for Armidale residents apart from its being Wattle Day – for on that day, water restrictions will be eased from Level 5 to Level 3. This action does not signal the end of the drought but watering of lawns and gardens can resume with a hand held hose fitted with a trigger nozzle for two hours on Sundays and Wednesdays between 5 pm and 7 pm. Garden watering with a bucket can be carried out at any time.



Malpas Dam in the Good Times

Consistent rainfall so far this year coupled with low evaporation rates during winter – and of course the water consciousness of the Armidale residents – has allowed the water level in Malpas Dam to rise to almost 70% of capacity. Over the eight months of this year to date, a total of 660 mm of rain has been recorded in Armidale as compared to a long term **annual** median value of 765 mm (Armidale Tree Group 23 year recording). However even with the easing of these restrictions, it behoves us all to:

REMAIN WATER-WISE

PLANT OF THE MONTH

Bellis perennis ‘Double-flowered form’ (Also known as English daisy – native to Europe)

With its name meaning ‘beautiful perennial’, this plant is often considered the archetypal species of the daisy name. A lovely little 15cm high x 20cm wide perennial, most often treated as an annual in our climate, this double-flowered *Bellis perennis* with a flattened rosette of small spatula-shaped dark green leaves has masses of mostly-double pink, red or white multi-petalled flowers for 3 months – from August to October non-stop.

Our Australian summer is too hot for them after that and even though technically they are perennial, it is best to remove them then and to replant with new seedlings the following autumn when they are usually readily available and inexpensive in multi-plant punnets.

Not frost-tender or prone to any disease or insect pests, these flowers are lovely as bedding, in pots, as under-planting for bulbs or in clumps in the border as a feature in their own right, adding a simple, happy feel wherever they are grown. They also last for weeks in a small vase as a posy.

In Armidale, *Bellis perennis* can be grown in full winter sun or dappled shade in good friable soil.



Feed with fortnightly doses of weak liquid fertiliser and remove dead-heads regularly to promote further flowering. As is true with most annuals, soil preparation and plentiful watering pays dividends. Good companion plants are Forget-me-nots (*Myosotis sylvatica*).

Story: Susan Cantrell

LOOKING GOOD NOW

			
Primula vulgaris Primroses	Helleborus 'Anna's Red'	Iceland Poppy Papaver nudicaule	Muscari armeniacum Grape Hyacinths
			
Rosmarinus officinalis	Narcissus 'Warbler'	Narcissus 'MartINETTE'	Sparaxis elegans
			
Cyclamen repandum	Prunus bleiriana	Emerging Paeony foliage	Tulipa saxatilis
			
Viola wittrockiana Pansies	Euphorbia characias wulfenii	Euphorbia martinii 'Ascot Rainbow'	Helleborus Double white spotted
			
Ipehon uniflorum 'Rolf Fiedler'	Tulipa kaufmanniana 'The First'	Forget-me-not Myosotis sylvatica	Helleborus niger 'Marbled-leaf form'
			
Viburnum burkwoodii	Daphne odora	Primula vulgaris	Prunus

AT LAST MONTH'S MEETING:

The Socially Distanced Meeting



The Display Table



THIS MONTH – IN THE GARDEN IN AUGUST

Please consider these gardening chores taking into account Armidale's current water restrictions. The suggested lists of tasks were compiled assuming more normal seasonal conditions.

AUGUST

- 1 Prune roses from the first week of August up to the first week of September. Roses could be sprayed after pruning; take care if using a lime sulphur spray as it can damage new shoots.
- 2 Plant new roses and other shrubs and trees.
- 3 Top-dress garden beds with complete fertiliser and well-rotted manure, if available. Feed daffodils with a light dressing of complete fertiliser or liquid fertiliser.
- 4 Top-dress lawn when soil is moist and water in.
- 5 Remove dead heads from winter iris.
- 6 Spray for leaf curl on peaches and nectarines. It is important that the spray for leaf curl be applied at bud swell – once buds begin to open it is too late.
- 7 Apply complete fertiliser to established shrubs and trees and water well.
- 8 Prune summer-flowering shrubs – abelia, buddleia, crepe myrtle, veronica, etc.
- 9 Hardwood cuttings of japonica, pyracantha, abelia, forsythia, tamarix, etc may be struck in sand from May to August. Cuttings can be dipped in hormone powder or honey to improve chances of good root formation.
- 10 Do NOT prune spring-flowering shrubs and trees, such as prunus, spiraea, japonica, pearl bush; forsythia, ribes (currants), banksia rose, etc until after flowering.
- 11 Divide perennials such as delphiniums, perennial phlox, michaelmas daisies, shasta daisies, heuchera, erigeron, campanula, solomon's seal, red hot poker, winter iris, etc. Avoid extremely frosty weather and water well. Do NOT leave this too late as new shoots can be damaged.
- 12 Plant out peony roses and tuberose. Strike chrysanthemum cuttings in sandy loam from August to the end of October.

LOOKING AHEAD – IN THE GARDEN IN SEPTEMBER

SEPTEMBER

- 1 Divide chrysanthemum clumps and discard old stems
- 2 Prune sweet peas if desired, leaving one or two basal shoots and tie plants to supports.
- 3 Start planting gladioli (120 days to flowering in a good season); dip or dust corms with fungicide.
- 4 Water stored dahlias lightly to promote shooting, but keep sheltered from frosts.

- 5 Plant out delphinium and lupin seedlings (from May seed planting) – this may be done in August also.
- 6 Prune spring-flowering shrubs and trees (including wattles) immediately after flowering.
- 7 Inspect roses closely for aphids and treat if they are found. This can be done by simply hosing them off or by applying a spray.
- 8 Plant out onion seedlings – this can be done most months for selected varieties (see November).
- 9 Sow seeds of beetroot, carrots, lettuce, peas and radish. When frosts ease, plant celery, parsley, potatoes, turnips and tomatoes. Use empty milk cartons around tomato plants and protect well from frost.
- 10 Harvest asparagus spears when they are young and tender – do not let them advance.
- 11 Mow lawns – not too low. Use grass clippings to start a new compost heap.

And finally, this Month's Gardening Tip:

Armidale does seem to have experienced quite a number of dull grey days during this current winter period.



HAPPY GARDENING!

