



Everything grows better with TLC

NEWSLETTER - MARCH 2015



READY ... SET ... GO!!!



**Garden Open Day/Sale**

**Come and enjoy the  
delights of the garden**

**Saturday March 7, 9am - noon**

[www.tlcgarden.org.au](http://www.tlcgarden.org.au)



## TEENAGE VISITORS

You may have noticed two teenage lads, Roland and Josh, in our garden for the past several Saturdays.

They are completing the Bronze level of the Duke of Edinburgh Award. They certainly have plenty of strength, enthusiasm and commitment. It seems

we are quite successful in supplying a venue for young boys and girls to experience community involvement ... so congratulations to all but especially Paul who has supervised the lads this time. Next month we will see another new participant and Roland will continue to do the Silver level of this award. Great work boys.

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## ROSEVILLE GIRLS IN THE GARDEN

Roseville College teachers have designed a learning program for their Year 8 students in Design and Technology involving designing, planting, harvesting and marketing.

Students have been visiting our community garden to see a garden in action. They then plant their own vegetables in nine raised beds on return to their school. Their visits to us are always full of enthusiasm, questions and giggles as we explore our garden together.

Julie, Sue and John assisted on the 'Show and Tell' days and we are looking forward to receiving an invitation where the students will show us what they have learnt and use their harvest and marketing skills in an interesting manner.

Can't wait!



Tina



# SAN FRANCISCO

While on holidays in San Francisco at the end of last year, we visited Bernal Heights Community Garden. There are about 35 community gardens throughout San Francisco, provided by the Urban Agriculture Program, and the Bernal Heights Community Garden is open to any San Francisco resident on a first-come, first-served basis. To be a member of this garden only costs \$20pa but they have a 2 year waiting list.

Bernal Heights Community Garden is 225.48 sq. m; yes, tiny and on a steep slope. They have about 20 plots and when we first arrived the garden was locked because there had been pilfering of vegetables. Seems it's a problem wherever there is a garden and also interesting that they had their disappointed note in 3 languages.

As we were admiring the view a member arrived and opened the garden up so we could have a look.

The plots are very small but members are very keen. Given the small size there was no community area as we have at TLC. Vacant land next door had a bee hive but was in the process of being developed into several town houses. The garden members were concerned about the shade the development was going to cast over the plots as, given the position of the garden on the side of a steep hill, sunshine onto the garden was limited anyway. Rules of the garden were that you could leave your plot vacant for a few months and if not worked



after that it had to be given up.

Talking to the member it was interesting to learn that the desire to grow your own veg, meet people, work in a nice environment and know where some of your food comes from was the same interest that keeps us coming back for more and the problems of theft, water and sunshine were also the same as we have.

Talking to our AirBnB Host, it seems some people in the USA were concerned about food deserts in the big cities. These are areas with poor access to healthy and affordable food e.g. no supermarkets and efforts were being made to grow fresh food in small gardens in these cities. I don't know how widespread Community Gardens are throughout the USA but there seems to be a need for them. It would be nice if residential development could always be combined with garden areas.

*Kerry Stirton*



## VISIT TO THE GARDEN

The Council's Welcome To Ku-ring-gai Bus Tour visited the Garden Feb 10th.

Around 30 new visitors to the area were involved and John met them and gave them a tour of the Garden



## SYDNEYS TOMATO FESTIVAL

John and Sue recently attended Sydney's Tomato Festival amidst the magnificent surroundings of the Botanic Gardens, and tasted the many varieties on display.

Hungarian Ox heart was the pick on the day.



TLCG were recently approached by the

## FRESH TRACKS FOUNDATION

[www.facebook.com/freshtracksfoundation](http://www.facebook.com/freshtracksfoundation) who do good inspirational things with people with brain damage.

They are keen to incorporate a Garden as part of their track facility out at St, Ives, as per the photos.

They have a lot of land that can be utilised for raised garden beds, a sensory garden etc.

Julie, John and a garden design friend of Julies visited the site on Feb 24 and provided some input.

We will see if we can assist further as their ideas progress.



Our Demo Garden crop of corn today,

## NATIVE SNAILS

On Saturday 27th December I was delighted to find a native snail in my plot.

The native snail is a gardener's friend as it is a solitary carnivorous creature of leaf litter. It does not eat vegetation and prefers fungi and other creatures of the leaf litter. It is flattish in appearance.

There are over 1000 species of native snails and slugs. They are gastropods from the mollusc family.

From [www.Wildthings.org.au](http://www.Wildthings.org.au) programme run by Ku-ring-gai Council, there is much information about them and about a rare native snail found in Sheldon Forest.

The species of snail varies with the habitat, some are poisoned by weed species such as Camphor laurel, Privet and Ochna .

*Janet Fairlie-Cuninghame*



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## ROASTED FIGS WITH POMEGRANATE MOLASSES AND ORANGE ZEST

- 3 tabs pomegranate molasses
- 1 tab lemon juice
- 3 tabs dark brown sugar, 1 for marinade / the rest for sprinkling
- leaves from 4 thyme sprigs
- rind from 1 orange, finely grated
- 8 ripe figs cut in half lengthways, about 400g

Suggested accompaniment is to mix together:

100g mascarpone  
100g Greek yoghurt  
1 tab icing sugar

But simply plain yoghurt or cream are good too.

Place molasses, lemon juice, 1 tab brown sugar, thyme, 1 tab water, orange rind in

a mixing bowl and stir well to dissolve the sugar. Stir in the figs and mix well. Set aside for 30 minutes.

Remove figs (keeping the marinade) and arrange them snugly cut side up in a shallow oven proof dish. Sprinkle with remaining sugar. Place under hot grill for about 10 minutes or until sugar has caramelised and the figs have softened.

Meanwhile pour the marinade into a saucepan, bring to boil and simmer for 2-4 minutes until the consistency of runny honey. (If the molasses is thick you don't really need to do this.)

Transfer the hot figs to serving dishes and spoon over the marinade and any leftover syrup from the grilling dish. Serves 4.

Enjoy

From: *Yottam Ottolenghi's Plenty More*

# FLOWERS REPLACE INSECTICIDES IN LETTUCE PRODUCTION

January 21, 2015 - Research generated by the USDA's Agricultural Research Service in the heart of America's Salad Bowl is showing how lettuce growers can control pests without the use of insecticides, by allowing a few flowering plants to grow among the salad greens.

Organic farmers have long known that planting sweet alyssum throughout a lettuce field effectively controls aphids, a major pest of salad crops. Sweet alyssum attracts beneficial insects including hoverflies, whose larvae each chomp down as many as 150 aphids per day.

The trade-off for this type of chemical-free pest control used to be the loss of up to 5 percent of yield, due to lettuce being displaced by the alyssum plants.

But thanks to a technique of "additive intercropping," developed by USDA researcher Dr. Eric Brennan, growers can now plant enough alyssum for pest control without displacing any lettuce, or reducing crop yield. A well-respected crop researcher, Dr. Brennan is a former OFRF grant recipient.

"I see additive intercropping as a sustainable, win-win approach for dealing with major insect pests," Brennan said. "Farmers can provide the beneficial insects with the resources they need to control aphids, without giving up any valuable lettuce-growing area."

Brennan's planting guidelines were developed over a period of nine years, on certified organic research plots, while producing romaine lettuce on a commercial scale. Additive intercropping involves planting one or two alyssum plants per every 50 lettuce plants. The alyssum are planted between regularly-spaced lettuce starts, where they thrive without crowding the lettuce, or reducing its size.

Hoverfly adults feed on alyssum's nectar and pollen, while the larvae feed on aphids and other insects.

Lettuce is the most economically important crop grown in the Salinas Valley, with annual production values of \$1.2 billion in 2013. Aphids are a constant threat to the crop, and are difficult to control, because they often hide in the cozy, protected interior of the lettuce head.

Conventional lettuce farms typically fight aphids with systemic pesticides, which are taken up by the plant and kill the insect when it sucks the plant's juices. Systemics can reach sucking pests in areas of the plant where sprays do not reach. Growers can also plant lettuce varieties that resist certain aphid species.

Sweet alyssum, a common garden plant of Mediterranean origin, is particularly useful as an insectary plant in the Salinas area because it flowers year-round in California's mild Central Coast region. Lettuces also grow year-round here, with prime farmland producing multiple plantings, and commanding some of the highest rents in agriculture.

Brennan's research results are free and available online. He has also produced a lively, interactive 18-minute video that describes his research, shows various experimental planting patterns, and includes graphic footage of a hoverfly larva sucking down a fat aphid.

See the video at [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KVLgt2\\_J1Wk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KVLgt2_J1Wk)

- See more at: <http://ofrf.org/news/flowers-replace-insecticides-lettuce-production#sthash.t4IsfeQU.dpuf>

From the website:

<http://ofrf.org/news/flowers-replace-insecticides-lettuce-production>





### March 7th

Garden Open Day 9:00 - 12:00

### March 14th

9:00 am - 12:00 noon

Working Bee

### March 21st

9:00 am - 12:00 noon

Working Bee

Garden Talk/Workshop

### March 28th

9:00 am - 12:00 noon

Working Bee

**WE LOOK FORWARD TO YOUR  
ACTIVE INVOLVEMENT!**

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### May 9th

TLC Garden to visit the Wentworthville  
Community Garden

**PLEASE**, if you  
open the **SHED**  
or **GREENHOUSE**  
at any time  
ensure they are left  
**LOCKED**  
when you leave!!!



## RAINFALL



FEBRUARY: 32MM

Thanks to Janet and Ian Pollock for taking the  
rainfall readings at the garden!

**Wedding Day**

Congratulations to

**Beth and Phil**

they will be getting married on March 28

## NEW MEMBERS

Welcome to the following new members  
who have joined in recent times:

Andrew Alder from St. Ives  
Bruce Donnelly from Turramurra (and good  
wishes to Bruce, as he recovers from leg  
surgery)  
Yin Yu from South Turramurra  
Wendy Porte from Wahroonga  
Kathleen Smith from Wahroonga  
Jim Burke from Wahroonga  
Monica Matsumoto from Hornsby  
Elizabeth Fergus from Turramurra

We hope you all really enjoy your  
involvement with the Garden

[www.tlcgarden.org.au](http://www.tlcgarden.org.au)

[www.facebook.com/pages/TLC-Garden/318635698227162](https://www.facebook.com/pages/TLC-Garden/318635698227162)

# AUSTRALIAN CITY FARMS & COMMUNITY GARDENS NETWORK

Like many people, you would have been greatly disappointed at the recent announcement that the *Open Gardens Australia* organisation will close its doors in June this year. It has been an institution in Australia for 27 years and those who were selected to open their gardens drew respect and admiration from all who visited.

If you have opened your garden to the public you will understand what a rewarding experience it is to share your garden with others. For visitors, these open gardens can be a wonderful source of inspiration and discovery. Of course these events were also important fund raisers to support the garden, local communities and for charity.

We couldn't sit by and see this important connection between gardeners disappear. That's why we decided to launch *My Open Garden*, a new online service that acts as a 'one-stop-shop' for garden owners and visitors across Australia. It's a free service to visitors and we are publishing as much information as we can about all the *Open Gardens* and other gardening events. Now community groups, special interest groups and garden clubs have a place to promote their event and importantly everyone can get free and easy access to the information.

.. and that's why I am sending this email to you so you can let your members know about this new website. It's a new way of supporting *Open Gardens*, and a timely move into the future for all gardening enthusiasts.

I would like to invite you to browse our site [www.myopengarden.com.au](http://www.myopengarden.com.au). You'll find more details about this new scheme and be able to see some of the gardens we are

working to present on the site.

If you have any other questions, please contact me directly via email [andrew@myopengarden.com.au](mailto:andrew@myopengarden.com.au) or on 0419 228 434.

I look forward to welcoming you to the *My Open Garden community!*

Warm regards,

Andrew Mowat  
Managing Director *My Open Garden Pty Ltd*



## THE WORLD'S LARGEST VERTICAL GARDEN

In land-scarce Singapore greenery too is going sky-ward, with a 24-storey condominium earning a Guinness record for boasting the world's largest vertical garden.

Tree House condominium, completed in 2013 by property firm City Developments Limited, has covered its façade in nearly 2,300 square meters of greenery. [...]

The condo uses the plants as natural insulation to help filter pollution, absorb heat and reduce the amount of energy needed to cool individual units. — [blogs.wsj.com](http://blogs.wsj.com)

<http://archinect.com/news/article/101705491/singapore-sets-a-record-for-world-s-largest-vertical-garden>



# PHOTO ALBUM - CHRISTMAS 2014

