

HORTULANUS

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

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OCTOBER 2026

COMING EVENTS

- Oct. 2-5** Leura Gardens Festival, 10 Gardens open from 9.30am - 4.30pm.
Cost: \$40 for all 10 gardens. Info: www.leuragardensfestival.com
- Oct. 6** KHS Meeting and Trading Table. Speaker: Glenn Smith on plant photography
- Oct. 18** KHS Members' Garden Ramble. Three gardens open from 1.30pm-4.30pm (see below)
- Oct. 15-18** Berry Gardens Festival. 7 Gardens open 10am-4pm. Cost: \$25 Enq.
<https://www.berrygardens.org.au/berry-garden-festival>.
- Oct. 24-25** Hartley Valley Garden Festival & Plant Fair, Little Hartley 10am-4pm. Four gardens open.
- Oct. 24-25** Bundanoon Garden Ramble. 8 gardens open 9.30am – 4.30pm. Cost: \$30
- Oct. 24-** Artisans in the Garden. Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney – Lion Gate Lodge.
- Nov. 1** Open 10am-4pm. Entry: free.
- Oct. 31-** Bathurst Spring Spectacular. Tickets available from Bathurst Visitor Centre.
- Nov.1** Eight gardens open - Cost \$25. Gardens open 9.30am – 4.30pm.
- Nov. 3** KHS Meeting. Speaker: Ian Hook will speak on Bromeliads

MEMBER NEWS

It was another cool evening for our September meeting but despite this, 50 members and visitors ventured out to enjoy the activities.

Jenny Watsford who looks after our suppers is looking for a few more volunteers. Jenny reminds us that if there are enough helpers, you are only needed every couple of months. The job entails arriving by 6.45pm and helping to set up the kitchen and supper table, serving the tea and coffee and tidying up afterwards. Jenny brings the milk and biscuits and is always there to assist. We need two people on duty. It is not an arduous task and a great way to get to know fellow members. Please contact Jenny on 0422 146786 or email to jenny.watsford@gmail.com.

The Society will be holding its Christmas lunch on Friday, 27 November 2026 at the Monash Country Club, 256 Powderworks Road, Ingleside from 12.30pm to 2.30pm. Everyone is invited to attend and the cost will be \$65 per person for a wonderful two-course lunch. A booking form is included with this month's newsletter.

The Society has received two invitations to join outings organised by the Rose Society of NSW Inc. and the Northern Sydney Region branch of the NSW Rose Society.

1. **The Rose Society of NSW Inc.** is hosting the Australian National Championships on 17th and 18th October and as part of this, there will be a one-day excursion to the Southern Highlands on Monday, 19th October. Our Society has been invited to take part in this with a coach leaving Camden Civic Centre at 8.30am and visiting Red Cow Farm and Harpers Mansion as well as attending the opening of a Rose Garden dedicated to Australian-bred roses. The cost is \$75 (lunch not included). For further information, contact either Stefica Bikesh nswrossec@gmail.com or Jackie Tweedie jackietweedie@hotmail.com who will assist with making a booking.

2. **The Northern Sydney Region branch of the NSW Rose Society** has organised a visit to Rookwood Cemetery to view some of the old roses. This will be under the direction of Glennis Clark, Sydney Coordinator of the Heritage Rose Society, and will be on Saturday, 10th October. The participants will meet at the Rookwood Necropolis at 10am and the outing will finish around 2pm. All the details of how to take part are included on the attached notice.

MEMBERS' TRADING TABLE

The Trading Table will be operating at our October meeting. Members may bring in a maximum of 30 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 good condition, pots should be clean with no soil, roots or stains.
- * 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. In addition, a paddle pop stick showing the owner's initials, the plant number and the price required should be put in each pot.

On the form provided 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 10. The third column is for the plant name – if you don't know the name then a short description. The fourth column is the price you wish to receive for this plant and the fifth 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 the payment you will receive.

If you want to bring more than 10 plants, then simply use another form but continue the numbering, e.g. the next set of plants will be numbered from 11 up to 20 and if you bring more the plants will be numbered 21 up to 30. You will receive your payment at the November meeting. You will be handed back the first half of the form 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 paperwork 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. **Remember - this is a cash only sale** and you will need to bring your own bags or boxes for your purchases.

GARDEN TABLE

The Garden Table will not be operating at the October meeting as the Members' Trading Table will be in operation instead. However, it will be up and running again at the November meeting and members are invited to bring their potted-up plants, cuttings and bulbs, etc. Don't forget to check out what's on offer as you will often find some wonderful treasures.

RAFFLE

There were three very nice plants donated by the Society on offer as well as other prizes, donated by members. Many thanks to those people for their donations. Your donations are always welcome - something nice that you wouldn't mind winning yourself. \$2 gets you three tickets so don't miss out.

MAIN SPEAKER SEPTEMBER

Unfortunately, the main speaker, Ian Thompson, who was scheduled to speak to us on Garden Insects: Friend or Foe, did not turn up and was unreachable on the phone. This does happen from time to time when speakers are held up for various reasons but fortunately Ted Shaw had an already prepared presentation on his and his wife Nancy's trip in June of last year by river boat from Amsterdam to Budapest. Whilst still in Amsterdam, they visited the Floating Flower Market with its lovely selection of cut flowers as well as great array of bulbs and seeds. The trip saw the boat navigate the Rhine, Main and Danube rivers, stopping each day at places of interest along the way.



The Floating Flower Market in Amsterdam



Schoenbrunn Palace Garden in Vienna



Museum of Ethnography in Budapest Rooftop Garden

Main Speaker October: This will be Glenn Smith, a notable photographer who has made a photographic study of all the plants in the Mt Annan Botanical Garden.

MEMBER SPEAKER SEPTEMBER

Our member speaker this month was Denis Tamsett who gave us a wonderfully descriptive picture of a trip he undertook to visit places along the Nile River in Egypt. The title of his talk was 'Romancing the Nile'! During his trip, Denis visited the Museum of Egyptian antiquities in Cairo which houses over 170,000 items. Denis also visited the Valley of the Kings which is where the tomb of Tutankhamun can be found.



Temple of Esna



Tomb of Tutankhamun



You can't go to Egypt and not have a ride on a Camel!

Denis visited quite a number of the notable sites of historical significance along the Nile and would recommend the trip to everyone.

GARDEN HYGIENE by Virginia Fischer

One of the most important gardening skills is practicing good garden hygiene. The purpose of good hygiene is to prevent the spread of pests and diseases. There are several ways to do this.

First, we should aim to keep everything as clean as possible, ideally by sterilising our tools such as secateurs and other equipment, including recycled pots. You can use a mixture of 70% alcohol (such as methylated spirits) with 30% water or a mix of 10% chlorine to 90% water. Alternatively, you can wash pots with soapy water and dry them in the sun. It is important to sterilise tools between plants, such as when pruning. We should also sterilise our workbenches before propagating and again when finished. And of course, we should always wash our hands after gardening activities.

In some cases, foot baths using the above chlorine recipe may be useful to kill pests and diseases carried on our shoes, such as fungal spores and weed seeds. Indeed, in some bushland areas, this practice is mandatory in an attempt to stop the spread of diseases into the bush via visitors' shoes.

A second way to prevent the spread of pests and diseases is to isolate plants that are new to our gardens - whether we have bought them or propagated them - for a period of up to three months. This form of quarantine can help us to be sure plants are pest and disease free. In a similar way, we should take care to only propagate from healthy plants that are pest-free. Also, it is best to avoid taking cuttings from material growing close to the ground to prevent the spread of fungal disease.

Third, we should always ensure that potting mixes - whether bought or homemade - are sterile; that is, all the ingredients have been sterilised.

Finally, we need to remember to dispose of all waste carefully. Diseased leaves or prunings should be placed in the rubbish bin, not the compost. Similarly, weeds that may harbour pests should be binned not composted. When propagating, always use fresh seed-sowing mix: never re-use. Other waste should be properly disposed of. For example, used potting mix can be added to a garden bed or else thrown out.

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IN THE VEGIE PATCH IN OCTOBER by Christine Rethers

Now is the time to plant out seeds and seedlings for spring and summer vegetables. Try to get your tomatoes into the ground by early October. The advantage in not leaving this until later is that you will very likely be picking tomatoes by Christmas time and before the fruit fly starts to affect the fruit. Don't forget that you can grow a good tomato crop in pots – one plant per pot with a suitable stake to fasten the plant to as it grows.

As far as fertilising is concerned, it is appropriate to repeat a tip given to us by Ted Shaw a couple of years ago about matching levels of N:P:K elements with the crops planted. Leafy greens (e.g. lettuce) need higher N (nitrogen) and chicken manure is a good source. Root crops (e.g. carrots) need higher P (phosphorous). Flowering crops (e.g. tomatoes, corn, cucumbers, zucchini) need higher K (potassium) and potash and wood ash are good sources. The N:P:K figures are always printed on the containers that contain fertiliser so have a look next time you are in your garden centre. It is worth having more than one type on the shelf in the garden shed.

YOUR OCTOBER GARDEN by Christine Rethers

The most important advice that I can give at this time is to make every attempt to protect your garden from the impending hot and very dry conditions that have been forecast for the rest of this year and for next year also. The secret is in how and when you water and how and when you mulch your garden. The two activities go hand in hand.

The rule of thumb is to first water deeply the area you are protecting. This is best done early in the morning or in the cool of the evening. Then apply the mulch you are using. This can be any of the following: For the vegetable and flower garden – lucerne hay, sugar cane, pea straw and home-made organic compost. For shrubs and trees – wood chips, pebbles and crushed rock.

It is important not to apply the mulch too thickly as otherwise any rain that falls will not penetrate the mulch to reach the soil below. So, about 5cm is probably enough. However, it is important to keep an eye on it and as it settles and decomposes, remember to top it up from time to time.

Mulch has a definite effect on soil temperature. Thick organic mulches have lots of air pockets and therefore act as insulators. This results in cooler soils in summer which is what we are after. This is why it is best to apply mulch at the end of winter and the beginning of spring before the soil heats up.

BENEFITS OF A GOOD VOCABULARY!
I RECENTLY CALLED AN OLD ENGINEERING BUDDY OF MINE AND ASKED WHAT HE WAS WORKING ON THESE DAYS.
HE REPLIED THAT HE WAS WORKING ON "AQUA-THERMAL TREATMENT OF CERAMICS, ALUMINUM AND STEEL UNDER A CONSTRAINED ENVIRONMENT."
I WAS IMPRESSED UNTIL, UPON FURTHER INQUIRY, I LEARNED THAT HE WAS WASHING DISHES WITH HOT WATER UNDER HIS WIFE'S SUPERVISION.

