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What has been Happening in March

What's Happening March 2023

Autumn is here. Looking forward to a new season. Getting into the garden to rejuvenate it with compost and manures ready for the winter vegetables.

Again another busy month, but lots to look forward to in the next couple of months.

DATE CLAIMERS

Mushroom Workshop – Sunday, 2 nd April. Go to Eventbrite. Will fill quickly.

Bunnings Sausage Sizzle – 16 th April. Roster in the shed.

Tool Maintenance Workshop – Mid May. To be Advised.

General Meeting – 21 st May.

We started March with our Open Days which coincided with Parks Week. The visitors I spoke to were amazed at all the exciting things that were happening.

Thank you to the members who took the visitors around on the tours. As part of the Open Days, we were selling seedlings and donated plants. There are still some available for your winter planting.

Thank you to Debbie Bassingthwaite for leading the workshop on RetroSuburbia. It was a very worthwhile workshop. What I got out of it was by making small changes to my thinking and behaviours, I can make a difference.

Be a Fun Guy (Fungi) and come to the next workshop on mushroom growing. Ken, from Top of the Range Mushrooms, will be leading it. Attendance is free BUT if you wish to take home a mushroom kit it will only cost you \$20 (cash only) on the day. Please book a place on Eventbrite. Spaces are limited so do book ASAP.

We held a raffle as part of the Open Days with great prizes donated by Springs Garden World and Jess (a member). Thank you to everyone who took tickets to sell. The lucky winners are Joanne McClelland 1 st prize, Tam 2 nd prize. All proceeds will be put towards projects at the garden. At the next meeting the Committee will be reviewing the action plans, our own and one to be submitted to the Toowoomba Regional Council. Many of the projects have been completed; some of them are ongoing. Much of it depends on the Grant applications that we submitted. We should hear about them shortly, I hope. The suspense... We are asking members to have a think about what they would like to see achieved at the garden over the next 12 months. Ideas will be discussed at the general meeting, Sunday, 21 st May. Please be a part of it.

Also at the general meeting, there will be an explanation of the new handbook, our Governance Rules (in line with The Office of Fair Trade), new membership forms, grievance procedures, and the Management Plan. These items need to be voted on.

Another good reason to come to the meeting on 21 st May.

If you have not paid your membership and plot hire fees, best get in quick as they are now overdue.

Stay well and Safe. Happy gardening. See you all soon.

Joanne.



April

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
<p>Workshops at Mappins nursery and aquarium, west end this month 2nd april - Succulent glass gardens and 30th april Miniature Japanese gardens</p>						<p>1st -Cobb and co farmers Markets Lindsay st -Toowoomba Royal Show until 2nd April, toowoomba showgrounds, glenvale -Native plant market, Samford Showgrounds</p>
<p>2nd Grow your own mushrooms workshop - TCOGA</p>  <p>PCYC Markets</p>	3 rd	4 th	5 th	6 th	<p>7th Good Friday</p>	<p>8th -Easter Saturday -Glenrock Open Autumn gardens day, 84 Robinsons Ln, Tenterfield</p>
<p>9th Easter Sunday Easter egg hunt at TCOGA</p> 	<p>10th Easter Monday</p>	11 th	12 th	13 th	14 th	<p>15th Wondai Garden expo until 16th april, Wondai sports ground -Cobb and co Markets</p>
<p>16th</p>  <p>Bunnings Sausage Sizzle PCYC Markets: Near the TCOGA gardens</p>	17 th	18 th	19 th	20 th	21 st	<p>22nd -Cobb and co farmers Markets</p>
<p>23rd PCYC Markets & Queens park markets, Toowoomba -Make your own Garden sculpture- Raw earth clay shed, 53 maple st, Maleny</p>	24 th	<p>25th Anzac Day</p> 	26 th	27 th	28 th	<p>29th -Cobb and co farmers Markets</p>
<p>30th Cabarlah Markets</p>						



The pomegranate (*Punica granatum*) is a fruit-bearing deciduous shrub in the family Lythraceae, subfamily Punicoideae, that grows between 5 and 10 m (16 and 33 ft) tall. The pomegranate was originally described throughout the Mediterranean region. It was introduced into Spanish America in the late 16th century and into California by Spanish settlers in 1769.

The fruit is typically in season in the Southern Hemisphere from March to May, and in the Northern Hemisphere from September to February. As intact sarcotestas or juice, pomegranates are used in baking, cooking, juice blends, meal garnishes, smoothies, and alcoholic beverages, such as cocktails and wine.

Cultivation

pomegranate is grown for its fruit crop, and as ornamental trees and shrubs in parks and gardens. Mature specimens can develop sculptural twisted-bark multiple trunks and a distinctive overall form. Pomegranates are drought-tolerant, and can be grown in dry areas with either a Mediterranean winter rainfall climate or in summer rainfall climates. In wetter areas, they can be prone to root decay from fungal diseases. They can tolerate moderate frost, down to about $-12\text{ }^{\circ}\text{C}$ ($10\text{ }^{\circ}\text{F}$).

Insect pests of the pomegranate can include the butterflies *Virachola isocrates*, *Iraota timoleon*, *Deudorix epijarbas*, and the leaf-footed bug *Leptoglossus zonatus*, and fruit flies and ants are attracted to unharvested ripe fruit.

Pomegranate grows easily from seed, but is commonly propagated from 25 to 50 cm (10 to 20 in) hardwood cuttings to avoid the genetic variation of seedlings. Air layering is also an option for propagation, but grafting fails.

Culinary use

After the pomegranate is opened by scoring it with a knife and breaking it open, the seeds are separated from the peel and from the internal pulp membranes. Separating the seeds is easier in a bowl of water because the seeds sink and the inedible pulp floats. Freezing the entire fruit also makes it easier to separate. Another effective way of quickly harvesting the seeds is to cut the pomegranate in half, score each half of the exterior rind four to six times, hold the pomegranate half over a bowl, and smack the rind with a large spoon. The seeds should eject from the pomegranate directly into the bowl, leaving only a dozen or more deeply embedded seeds to remove.

Pomegranate juice has long been a popular drink in Europe and the Middle East, and is now widely distributed in the United States and Canada.

Grenadine syrup originally consisted of thickened and sweetened pomegranate juice, now is usually a sales name for a syrup based on various berries, citric acid, and food colouring, mainly used in cocktail mixing.

Pomegranate seeds are used as a spice known as *anar dana* (from Persian: *anar* + *dana*, pomegranate + seed), most notably in Indian and Pakistani cuisine. Dried whole seeds can often be obtained in ethnic Indian markets. These seeds are separated from the flesh, dried for 10–15 days, and used as an acidic agent for chutney and curry preparation.

Dried pomegranate seeds, found in some natural specialty food markets, still contain some residual water, maintaining a natural sweet and tart flavour. Dried seeds can be used in several culinary applications, such as trail mix, granola bars, or as a topping for salad, yoghurt, or ice cream.

Nutrition

Pomegranates are an excellent source of vitamin K to assist in faster wound healing, vitamin C to strengthen the immune system, fiber to regulate the digestive tract, and folate to develop red blood cells. The fruits also contain potassium to balance fluid levels within the body, manganese to maintain a healthy nervous system, and antioxidants, including punicalagin, that protect the cells against free radical damage and reduce inflammation.

The edible portion of raw pomegranate is 78% water, 19% carbohydrates, 2% protein, and 1% fat (table). A 100 g (3.5 oz) serving of pomegranate sarcotesta provides 12% of the Daily Value (DV) for vitamin C, 16% DV for vitamin K, and 10% DV for folate (table). Pomegranate seeds are a rich source of dietary fiber (20% DV) which is entirely contained in the edible seeds.

Companion Planting for Orchards

What grows well with fruit? Companion planting with fruit trees isn't only about planting a lot of pretty blooming plants in the orchard, although there's certainly nothing wrong with planting nectar-rich flowers that attract pollinators. Compatible plants for a fruit garden also serve as living mulch that eventually decompose and enrich the soil. Fruit tree companion plants help keep weeds in check, conserve soil moisture and may even discourage pests – all with very little extra work for you.

Benefits include:

- Providing nutrients to your fruit trees
- Preventing weeds from competing with your fruit trees
- Attracting pollinating insects and other beneficial insects
- Adding colour during winter
- Providing more food from less space
- Providing a wind-break to reduce stress to your fruit trees

Examples of companion plants

Comfrey/Borage – Comfrey roots grow deep into the ground, helping to pull nutrients and minerals from the soil. Because it's such a vigorous grower, comfrey out competes weeds. Freshly cut comfrey serves as rich, nitrogen-rich mulch. Be sure to plant comfrey where you want it, because once established, it's probably going to be there for a very long time.

Marigolds – Marigolds attract pollinators, but that's just the beginning. These cheery plants also discourage nematodes in the soil and a variety of other pests above the soil. Marigolds tend to self-seed, so you may need to plant them only once.

Lupine – Lupine is a member of the legume family and, like all legumes, it fixes nitrogen in the soil. As an added benefit, the beautiful blooms attract several species of butterflies.

Other types of legumes, including peas or beans, can provide the same results.

Nasturtiums – Nasturtiums are believed to discourage codling moths, a scourge that can plague several fruit trees, including apples. Plant nasturtiums seeds at the base of trees.

Hyssop – Hyssop is an attractive herb with a bitter aroma that discourages pests. Hyssop makes a great companion plant for all types of fruit, including berries.

Chives – Chives produce pretty blooms that attract bees and other pollinators, but the onion-like smell keeps pests at bay. Garlic provide similar benefits.

Echinacea – Echinacea is a pretty, drought-tolerant daisy cousin. The long taproots loosen the soil and make deep nutrients and moisture more available to fruit trees.

Lavender – Lavender smells great, but the aroma confuses pests and often sends them packing. Rosemary has a similar effect, and both attract pollinators.

Fennel – Fennel is an herb that attracts parasitic wasps, beneficial insects that help control a number of pests. Dill, mint, basil and coriander provide similar effects, and you can also snip a bit of these herb plants for use in the kitchen.

Read more at Gardening Know How: Companions For Fruit – Learn About Compatible Plants For A Fruit Garden
<https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/edible/fruits/fegen/compatible-plants-for-fruit-garden.htm>



What to Plant in April



Beans-Broad
 Beetroot
 Borage
 Bottlebrushes
 Broccoli
 Brussels Sprouts
 Buckwheat
 Cabbage
 Calendula
 Camomile
 Callistemons
 Catnip
 Carrots
 Cauliflower
 Celeriac
 Celery
 Chervil
 Chickory
 Chickpea
 Citrus
 Coriander
 Daikon
 Dandelion
 Dill
 Endive
 Evening primrose
 Feverfew
 Fennel
 Fenugreek
 Garlic
 Grevilleas
 Kale
 Kohl Rabi

Leeks
 Lettuce
 Linseed
 Lupin
 Marjoram
 Mizuna
 Mustard
 Nasturtium
 Onions
 Oregano
 Parsley
 Parsnip
 Pea-Climbing and
 Dwarf
 Radish
 Rhubarb
 Sage
 Salad Burnett
 Salad Rocket
 Salsify
 Shallots
 Silverbeet
 Spinach
 Swedes
 Thyme
 Turnip
 Vetch
 Watercress

**What to look for
 Harvesting
 (Toowoomba -Darling
 Downs) approximate:**

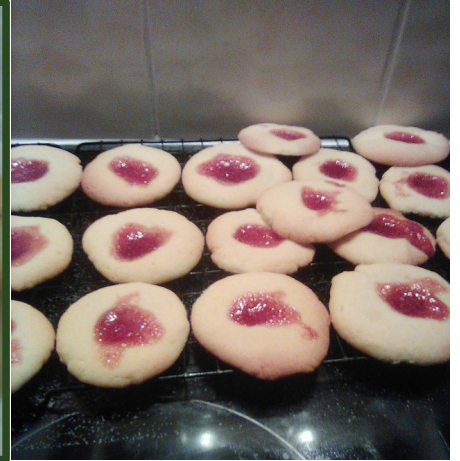
Apples
 Avocado
 Beans
 Beetroot
 Cape Gooseberries
 Cucumbers
 Capsicums
 Carrots
 Chickpeas
 Chilli
 Corn
 Eggplant
 Figs
 Grapes
 Lettuce
 Melons
 Pears
 Pomegranates
 Pumpkins
 Raspberries
 Spring onions
 Strawberries
 Sweet Potato
 Tomatoes
 Zucchini

Recipe of the Month -Jam Drops

INGREDIENTS

- 180 g butter softened to room temperature
- 220 g (1 cup) caster sugar
- 1 egg
- 300 g (2 cups) plain flour sifted
- ½ tsp baking powder
- Jam any flavour such as Strawberry *see notes

Jam drops are perfect in using different leftover jams that are almost empty(or not enough for that spread of toast).
Made with basic ingredients that are already in your fridge and pantry.



METHOD

Step 1-Preheat

Preheat oven to 170 degrees Celsius (fan-forced). Grease and line two baking trays with baking paper.

Step 2-Mixing and Adding

Beat the sugar and softened butter with electric beaters or a stand mixer until light and fluffy. Can also use a hand whisk if you don't have an electric beater.

Add the egg and continue to mix until combined.

Sift in the plain flour and baking powder. Stir gently to combine.

Step 3-Rolling

Roll the mixture into small balls (2 teaspoons of mixture per ball).

Place the cookie balls onto the baking trays and use the tip of your little finger to create an indent in the middle that goes approximately one-third to one-half of the way down).

Step 4-Adding the Jam and baking

Place a very small amount of jam into each indent.

Place the trays into the fridge and chill for 30 minutes. This will prevent your jam drops from cracking when they cook in the oven.

Bake the cookies for approximately 10 minutes or until lightly golden.

Leave the cookies on the baking trays for 10 minutes and then transfer to a wire rack to cool completely.

*Notes-Grape jelly was used as one of the fillings for this recipe using the organic Isabella black grapes from the Gardens. Prepared a little differently from jam but using the same principles for setting.

Ingredients

1kg red grapes, preferable with seeds (stripped from the stalks)

450g jam sugar (with added pectin)

juice 1 lemon

Method

STEP 1

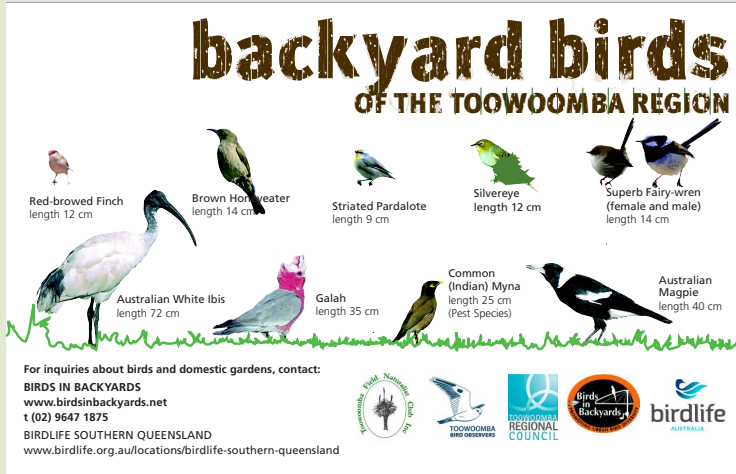
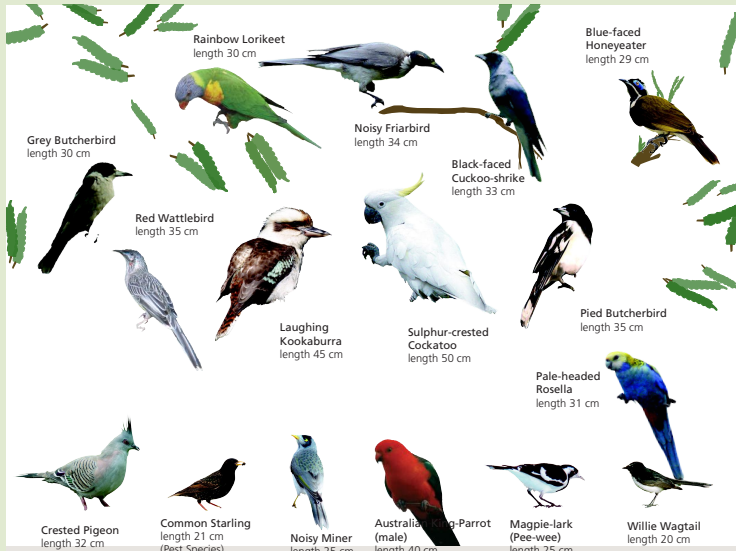
Tip the grapes into a large saucepan set over a low heat, then cover and leave to gently cook for 5 mins until the juices start to run. Take a potato masher or fork and mash up the grapes. Leave to cook for about 10 mins more, mashing every now and again until the grapes are falling apart. Place a clean tea towel or kitchen cloth in a sieve set over a bowl, then pour the grape mixture into this. Let the mixture drip through for at least 1 hr or preferably overnight.

STEP 2

Measure out the juice (you should have about 600ml) and pour it into a pan along with the sugar and lemon juice. Set the pan over a high heat and bring to the boil. Skimming any scum as it boils, let the mixture bubble until the temperature reaches 105C on a sugar thermometer. If you don't have one, put a small plate in the freezer for 5 mins, then pour a little of the juice onto the cold saucer. After 1 min, run your finger through; if the jam wrinkles slightly, it's ready. Pour the hot jam into a sterilised jar. Will keep unopened for up to 3 months.

Quiz

What is the bird most likely to 'demolish' our Pecan Trees in March? Here are some examples of some birds you may find in Toowoomba.



Answer in next months newsletter.

Working Bee



2nd Sunday of every month

9am

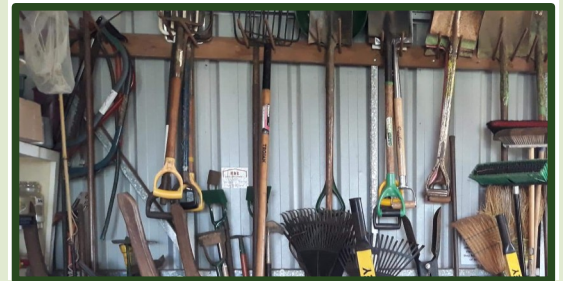
Bring along your hat, sunscreen and sturdy footwear-lets team up to some of the bigger jobs around the TCOGA patch!

Each month, we will have a delicious lunch, with everyone free to contribute, BYO plates, cutlery etc.

Other bits and bobs that may come in handy:

- Cardboard for weed smothering
- Seeds or Seedlings
- Extra garden tools
- Your wonderful ideas

Please let the committee know if you have any ideas or feedback for making these days fun for everyone and great for the garden!



Committee and Contact

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