

AUTUMN 2013



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## NEWSLETTER



**F**inally the heat has subsided and with a load of beautiful rain (perhaps a bit too much) the gardens are ready to flourish once again. Now is the time to get out there and lightly prune back shrubs that have gotten a bit out of hand. Always apply a good slow release fertiliser around the base of the plants when doing this as it will promote a stronger flush of new growth to emerge. Everywhere I look at the moment I see lawns with a lush and verdant green colour. Remember try to not cut off more than a third when mowing. Not cutting as much off will force the roots to go deeper into the ground making for a hardier lawn. Also keep a look out for lawn grubs. Areas of brown will often indicate the presence of these little critters and an application of Lawn Grub Killer on and around the affected areas will clear it up in no time.

With the worst of the heat over, autumn is the time to get the winter veges in. Cabbages, broccoli, snow peas and cauliflowers will start to arrive in the nursery very soon so keep a look out and plant straight away to produce an early harvest of fresh, tasty goodies. Always water in your seedlings with a solution of liquid fertiliser such as Flourish, Fish and Kelp or Seasol as this will ensure your plants grow up with higher levels of disease and drought resistance.



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Native grasses are wonderful plants that can add a natural and relaxed feel to your garden. Mass plantings are quite popular as they produce a striking visual impact that will liven up any spot. This method can work especially well under trees as it highlights the tree itself making it stand out more. They also make fantastic borders, container plants and gap fillers. Apart from aesthetic appeal, grasses are extremely tough. Once established they are very drought tolerant and most can handle a high level of frost. And if they ever do suffer from the elements and start to look a bit shabby simply cut them back to the ground and they will reshoot with fresh growth. Dianellas and lomandras are the two genus that most people will know however there are other varieties we sometimes stock that work just as well, such as poa, carex and isolepis.



We currently have three different species of native gardenias in stock. The groundcover Gardenia "Glennie River" forms a beautifully dense coverage of leaves about 2m in diameter with a white, star flower in the warmer months. It can also be used to fill and cascade over a pot or retaining wall. Gardenia scabrella is a shrub about 2 or 3m high with an upright habit and similar flowers and leaves to the Glennie River. This popular shrub is a great addition to any garden but especially one with a tropical feel. The third form is Randia fitzalanii and at 4 or 5m tall is more of a small tree. Large, glossy leaves compliment the white flowers which are quite fragrant. The round, edible fruits that follow are an added bonus to gardener and birds alike. This has to be one of my all time favourite trees for a small suburban garden and is one I recommend often.



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The banksia is a genus that many know and love and typifies the rugged beauty of Australian flora. There are lots of varieties that grow to a range of different sizes but I'm here to talk about some dwarf species. "Coastal Cushion" is a form of *Banksia spinulosa* and is quite hardy if grown in a well drained spot in the garden. It will get to about 50 to 100cm high and 1.5m wide. It works well as a rockery plant, specimen shrub or in a large pot and has showy, yellow flowers with a touch of red. The similar but lower growing "Birthday Candles" and "Cherry Candles" are also worth considering although being a little bit more temperamental are best suited to pots and containers. As with all banksias fertilise with native food only and find a fairly sunny area.



The ever popular grafted eucalypts are in stock although they run out fast! We have *Eucalyptus* "Baby Orange", "Baby Scarlet" and "Fairy Floss". These forms of *E. ficifolia* grow to around 4m tall and 3m wide which make them ideal specimen or shade trees for gardens with limited space. The rounded crown of dense foliage is complimented by vibrant flowers in summer and autumn which are bird attracting. They make excellent screen or avenue trees and have non-invasive roots. Plant into a well drained soil in full sun to part shade and keep watered until established. Being grafted onto a specifically selected root stock ensures a hardier plant and one that will flower within the first year. By planting a range of shrubs nearby such as grevilleas, banksias and callistemons you can create a native oasis in your garden the envy of your neighbours. Feed with a native fertiliser 3 times a year and prune back if needed.



The Borderline series of dwarf roses come in three colours, Buttercup Yellow, Ruby Red and Blushing Pink. As the name implies they can be used as border plants as they only grow to a maximum height of 40cm. They also look effective as mass plantings, low hedges and pot plants. The flowering period is quite extensive, lasting throughout the warmer months. Plant into a sunny and use a specific rose fertiliser early spring and then mid-summer. An occasional spray of rose fungicide will keep the dreaded black spot at bay.



Crotons have been around in Brisbane gardens a long time but for a good reason, they are colourful and hardy and give a tropical garden a vibrant look. They come in a huge variety of colours and leaf shape to tempt your horticultural palette. Most varieties form small to medium shrubs but can be pruned back to almost any height. Plant them in full sun or full shade but they always do better with half a day of sun on them to really bring out the bright colours. They even make great indoor plants in a well lit room. For a low maintenance, insect and disease resistant plant it's hard to go passed the fantastic crotons.



Now is also the time to be planting those cool climate annuals such as pansies, sweet peas and violas. Plant into a rich, well drained soil with plenty of sun and keep moist. A good liquid feed every 2 weeks will keep them full of colour throughout winter.

Petchoas (petunia x calibrachoa hybrid) deliver the best characteristics of two top-selling species into one. From the petunia side of its family legacy, petchoas inherit strong roots (which provide good pH tolerance and helps leaves stay greener under stressful conditions) excellent plant vigor, large flowers and ease of growing. Its calibrachoa heritage is evident with its intense, vibrant flowers that hold up under severe weather and lush, non-sticky foliage that maintains a fresh, clean look without additional maintenance.

What really sets these plants apart, however, is their exceptional garden performance. Petchoas thrive under cool environments and conditioned plants can take temperatures in the lower 30s with no damage to the foliage. As the heat of summer rises and takes its toll on most cool-season annuals, you will find petchoas outperform traditional calibrachoa and petunias in their ability to maintain colour and tolerate the higher temperatures.



Dwarf varieties of fruit trees are extremely popular especially with gardeners lacking space to work with. We have the dwarf Bowen mango, the dwarf Wai Chee lychee and the dwarf Anna apple. All three will only reach around 3m high by about 2m wide and can be kept lower if necessary. They can also be grown in pots if the container is large enough (at least 60cm x 60cm). As with any fruiting plant make sure you keep up a regular fertiliser regime and dig in Searles 5 in 1 a few times a year around the base of the tree. If you do this and also make sure the tree doesn't dry out when fruiting you will have beautifully sweet fruit to enjoy.



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Our nursery has been supplying lemon myrtle soap and products for quite some time and it's always been a huge hit. Now Essentially Australia has come out with a new range of 100% purely native essential oils. This high quality selection of oils can be used in burners and some for skin massage. Spoil yourself or a loved one and pick up some today.



As I'm a bit of a photography buff I'm going to include in the newsletters from now on my favourite shot that I've taken in the nursery or display gardens over the last few months. I hope you enjoy. This one is a drop of water on a Norfolk Island pine in the early morning.



**Happy gardening all!** .....Eliot Holzworth