

WINTER 2013



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NEWSLETTER



Sure it's harder to get out of bed at the moment but I find it a joy to be outside in the garden warming up and breathing in the cool, fresh air. Now is a perfect time to get your garden ready for spring by composting, pruning, repair jobs and general garden maintenance. Re-pot and fertilise plants in containers and hanging baskets so they will be ready for the growing season in a few months time. Get on top of those pesky weeds and mulch the garden beds or plant some hardy groundcovers to outcompete them.

If you didn't plant out the winter veges in autumn it's not too late. Cauliflower, broccoli, cabbage, snow peas etc. are easy to grow and will taste great in stir fries and soups on those cold, dark nights. You can also grow the regular veges (tomatoes, capsicum, lettuce) at this time of year providing there's no frost. Try adding a splash of winter cheer around the garden or in pots with annuals such as pansies, violas, snapdragons and many more. Who said winter can't be full of colour? Come down and look around our potted colour section for a full range of annuals, perennials, herb and veges and more importantly inspiration.



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Grevillea Simply Sarah has been around for a while now and for those of you that have one in your garden you will know it for the amazing plant it is. It is a hybrid between *G. beadleana* and *G. longifolia* and originated at Forestdale, Qld. Reaching around 2 or 3m high by a similar width this dense bush will reward you with beautiful burgundy coloured flowers, about ten centimetres long, for most of the year. It will prune back quite well and can even be used as a hedging plant that will provide dense screening. By staking the plant and pruning off the lower branches as it gets taller it can be grown into a small tree. The cut flowers have a long vase life for floral arrangements. We currently have a number of grafted Simply Sarahs in stock in 140mm pots for \$24.99.



The ever-popular NSW Christmas Bush now comes in a dwarf form. This *Cerapetalum gummiferum* is a compact shrub and grows as fast as its taller relations, however once it reaches its full height of a metre or so it will stop growing. The flowers are creamy-white and appear in prolific clusters in spring. Once these blooms die off the calyx on each flower will turn a deep shade of red. This display occurs around Christmas time, hence the name. Due to its dwarf nature it makes a perfect pot plant or gap filler in the garden. An occasional light prune and application of a slow release fertiliser is about all the maintenance it needs. Cerapetalums require a well drained soil so if the water takes a while to drain away when it rains this isn't the plant for you. Plant into a full sun or part shade position. And like *Grevillea Simply Sarah* the cut flowers will last for quite a while in an arrangement.



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It's no secret, I'm a big fan of *Myoporum parvifolium* or Creeping Boobialla. This attractive, native groundcover will form a low, dense carpet of small green leaves and is smothered in small white flowers from winter to summer. It also comes in a pink flowering variety. As it keeps on spreading it's great for covering large areas or for stabilising slopes. It is frost and drought hardy and will tolerate salty and coastal areas with ease. The growth rate is quite fast, however it can be pruned back if it creeps into areas it shouldn't. I often recommend planting it in between shrubs to form a natural weed suppressant that requires very little looking after. We have a few different varieties planted in our front display gardens if you want to see how it looks. Just ask one of the staff to show you.



If you're looking for a fast growing screening plant and want something a little different *Stenocarpus Doreen* could be the one for you. Growing around 3 metres tall by a similar width a quick prune will keep it lower and bushier. In fact by regularly pruning back Doreen you can keep it as a stunning hedge that will look like nothing anyone else will have. It has soft, fern-like foliage which florists often use in arrangements. However, don't be fooled by its dainty appearance as Doreen is a very hardy plant that can take long periods of drought. In the warmer months you'll see creamy-white flowers which can attract the birds. This plant can also be grown successfully in a pot and can even tolerate a fairly shady position. As it's in the Proteacea family of plants it will need a low phosphorus, or native fertiliser. This form of *Stenocarpus angustifolius* is a must for any garden.



Another plant that can be hedged or used as a stand-alone specimen shrub is *Murraya Min-a-Min*. Most people know or have at least seen the taller Mock Orange growing around Brisbane, however this charming dwarf variety will only grow around 1m tall. It makes a superb hedge or border plant and can be grown in pots and pruned back to nearly any shape imaginable. *Min-a-Min* also is a fantastic bonsai plant. Foliage is small, round and glossy and the fragrant, white flowers are prolific in spring and summer but it can spot flower at other times of the year. Once established it is a very hardy shrub with just an occasional feed with a good slow release fertiliser being recommended to give the leaves a nice deep green. Unlike the taller growing *Murraya*, *Min-a-Min* won't get out of control and isn't likely to throw viable seed. In other words it won't become a weed.



Red Fountain Grass is a pennisetum that is as hardy as it is beautiful. This ornamental grass will reach a height of about one metre with long, weeping, burgundy coloured leaves and fluffy flowers all year round. It is an excellent plant for a border, screen or pot, and looks stunning in a mass planting. It does best in full sun or part shade and will need a well drained spot. Every few years it can be pruned right to the ground and within a few weeks nice fresh growth will appear. By doing this you can keep it looking healthy and clean year after year. I said it was hardy and it is. Drought will not affect this plant in the slightest and frost and coastal conditions won't bother it either. The word unkillable comes to mind.



Plectranthus “Mona Lavender” is a wonderful solution to growing in shady areas of the garden where a bit of colour is required. This is a particularly attractive form of Plectranthus (despite its name it isn't a Lavender at all) reaching about 80cm high by 60cm wide and unlike other forms it won't spread. It's a neat shrub with an upright, dense habit with numerous lavender coloured flower spikes occurring from spring through to autumn. The flowers are complimented by the foliage which is dark green on top and purple underneath and along the stems. This hardy shrub can be grown in pots and hanging baskets and makes for an ideal plant around entertainment areas where things can be a bit tricky to grow. Prune back lightly after flowering and fertilise with a general slow release plant food. Something high in potassium is recommended to ensure optimum flowering.



While “Mona Lavender” is a bit of a misleading name we do actually have a good range of real lavender at the moment. These favourites worldwide can be grown in very well drained soil in a sunny and warm spot. Lavender enjoys a slightly alkaline soil so if planted into acidic soil add some garden lime to sweeten the ground. They come in a huge range, however varieties such as French, Allard's and Sidonie are better suited to our climate. The height will vary depending on which one you choose but they generally get to around one metre high. Prune back lightly after flowering otherwise they can get a bit woody over time. By planting near a pathway, front door, window or entertainment area you will be rewarded with a heady fragrance that's guaranteed to put a smile on your face.



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Troforte fertiliser is a new product that will change the way you look after your garden and vegetable patch. It has up to 60 minerals and up to 24 strains of beneficial soil microbes including fungi. Your plants will have greatly improved drought resistance due to improved root growth and increased earthworm activity means greater aeration and drainage. One application every 5 or 6 months will see greatly improved foliage, flower and fruit production as well as enhanced protection from disease. Troforte comes in a variety of flavours depending on what you'll be needing it for. Sound too good to be true? Try it and see for yourself.

Here's a shot of a Ladybeetle on a bit of grass in the nursery. The wonderful world of macro photography.



Happy gardening all!Eliot Holzworth