



GREENS~LEAVES

Dunedin Vegetable Growers Club Newsletter.
March 2019

Meetings: 2nd Monday of the month at 7pm

Venue: St Kilda Bowling Club,
33 Royal Crescent, St Kilda

Membership: Heather Wilson (4764607)

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(Please include your name as a reference)

Next Club Meeting: Monday 11th March

Q & A: David

Club Talk: Replaced by Annual General Meeting

Guest Speaker: Robyn Bazzika on freezing

Garden Visit:



Vegetable competition winner

Congratulations to Ross for his
'dance worthy' garlic

Competition for March

3 tomatoes (same type), hybrid
and/or heritage

Things to look forward to in April

Lots of great things.

Hello Everyone. It's been a bit dry lately so it's important to keep the water up for all those plants and trees producing their wonderful bounty. I'm sure everyone is harvesting like mad and thinking about how to preserve the extra. Luckily Robyn is going to show us how to successfully freeze our produce this Monday. This follows on from her and Jim's awesome presentation on canning last year. We are planning to visit Rory's property on George Street to see his urban homestead and learn all about water harvesting. There will be a cost involved and when a date has been finalised we will ask to see how many members will be interested in going.

Annual general meeting

During the March club meeting we will be having our annual general meeting which usually doesn't take too long.

Subs

Subs are due now. They are \$15 per person, if paid before 31st March. From April 1 they will be \$20. If you want your newsletter posted, not emailed, then subs are \$20 (unfortunately we cannot get a newsletter to you by post before the club meeting). You can pay at the meeting or use electronic banking (details above).

Kindred Day

There was a lot of support shown at a previous meeting for our club to host the Kindred Day in autumn 2020. Thank you to those who have volunteered their time,

however, we still need more members to go on the organising committee. It may also be time to start thinking about growing plants to sell on the day as we will need quite a few. Margaret will talk more about this at the next meeting. Thank you Marg for supporting the club in this endeavour.

Garden visit to Ruth and Warrens'

A couple of weekends ago we hosted a DVGC garden visit at our home. As the opportunity to "volunteer" for this came up at the last minute we were saved preparation work getting ready and our visitors got to see our garden as it is. Warren did run around madly with a hedge trimmer on the day to make some room for people to get through overgrown paths. Warren and I enjoyed the afternoon showing people around our garden, looking at the successes and failures of this season, fielding questions, and generally having a very sociable time.



Thank you to everyone who came along as we enjoyed your company and learnt some things from you also. I can recommend the experience of hosting a garden visit to anyone else who is thinking of putting their name forward. For those of you who were unable to come on the day I will tell you something of our garden. We garden on a half-acre section of steep south facing clay, so we have a good but short summer garden and a welcome break over the winter when not much is happening due to the cold and shade. Roughly one quarter of our section is a veg garden made up of terraced beds, another quarter is an orchard, and the remainder is planted out as flowers, shrubbery, and woodland. We did not know anything about permaculture design when we initially set up our garden and we put our vegetables as far away from the house as they could possibly go and up many steps. Over the years Warren and I have kept fit trotting up and down steps to the veg garden and glasshouses and lugging compost materials up and down the hill.

Radicchio growing for the winter



I love to grow edible plants the best because I love to eat, and I am interested in trying out new or different edible plants. I like to grow edible plants/weeds that will self-seed or propagate themselves so that the garden does the work for me. As you can imagine ours is not therefore a very tidy garden instead it has wild areas and many seeding plants. Plants that grow themselves in due season in our garden include miners' lettuce, corn salad, beet, jerusalem artichoke, Chinese artichoke (these are more of a weed than an opportunity in my opinion), nasturtium, kale, various cross bred brassicas, and strawberries. I am very interested in trialling new perennial edible plants also. Warren likes to grow things that you can't eat and has told me that the vegetable garden (my biggest passion) may not extend any further than its' allocated quarter. The many pots of zucchini, tumbling tom tomatoes, basil and other herbs that surround our house are therefore decorative planters rather than vegetable garden.



I was given an exemption this year for a new pumpkin plot as I had germinated seed from DVGC's winter seed exchange. The pumpkins have grown wonderfully in their purpose-built bed beside the driveway where Warren used to park his boat trailer – thank you Warren. Warren

and I share a frugal take on life and gardening, collecting compost materials and recycling and repurposing. Warren has made a cold frame from a shower door I got at the dump, a moveable seedling frame from an old BBQ, a liquid manure container from our old water cylinder, a sprinkler extension from a swing ball stand, plastic cloches from recycled awnings, and compost bins from pallets – way to go.



Plants that are doing well in our garden at the moment include scarlet runner beans, butterfly beans, pepino, cherry tomatoes, fennel, radicchio, daikon radish, nashi pear, and plum (Coe's Golden Drop). Warren and I are in the middle of harvesting and preserving now and looking forward to a continuing fruitful harvest season.

New books for the library

Four new books have been purchased for our library. They are:

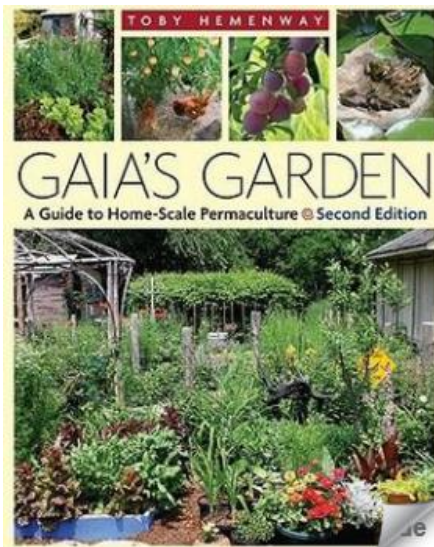
The organic gardener's handbook of natural pest and disease control.

Gaia's garden: A guide to home-scale permaculture.

The vegetable gardener's bible.

No-dig organic home and garden.

Book Review by Ruth Bayne



Gaia's Garden: A Guide to Home-Scale Permaculture 2nd Edition

Author: Toby Hemenway

I didn't know much about permaculture before reading this book which focuses on permaculture ideas, and systems for creating sustainable, ecological home gardens. Permaculture concepts include planning zones of planting so that work is minimised, increasing soil fertility through less digging, and conserving water. The author argues passionately for increasing diversity of plants, wildlife, and soil organisms even within small urban

sections. I found the book very interesting and I felt more educated in general after reading information about plant communities and ecosystems, how plants grow, and what makes soil fertile. One small drawback is that the book is an American publication, so temperatures are in Fahrenheit rather than Celsius and plant choices are not always NZ relevant.

What I liked most were the authors' ideas for making your garden do the work for you and for increasing soil fertility in organic sustainable ways. The concept of weeds being opportunistic plants that a canny gardener could use to their advantage appealed to me as I already allow wild edible weeds to colonise the far corners of my vege patch. After reading this book I am going to try several new ideas in my own garden, including sheet mulching and burying rotting wood under my pumpkin patch next time to provide a moisture source.

I recommend this book as informative and inspiring for anyone who is planning a new garden, or who is interested in reducing their impact upon the planet and in getting more results for less effort from their garden.