



Meetings: 1st Wednesday of the month, 7pm
Venue: Caversham Baptist Church,
 239 South Road, Caversham
 (Corner of Surrey St. and South Rd)
Membership: Helen Flockton (455 1816)
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Club Email: dvgcnz@gmail.com
Website: <http://dvgc.co.nz/>
Bank Account # 03-0905-0515906-000
 (Please include your name as a reference)

Next Club Meeting: Wednesday 1st February 2023

Q & A: David

Club Talk: 'Why this is my favourite gardening tool' (members to bring own examples)

Guest speaker: Ross Gilbertson – Gardening in Japan

2 Garden visits – Sunday 29th January, 2 pm, Jim and Robyn Bazsika, Waldronville, gently sloping section, no steps, plenty of parking along street

+ **Saturday 11th February**, 10 30 am, Greta Doo & Ruth and Warren, Ravensbourne, hilly sections, steps, details to be advised



February competition:

3 alliums, 3 of the same or mix of onion varieties

December competition winner:

Alan Savell – Silverbeet in a bucket

Things to look forward to in January and February:

Three gardens to visit

Hello everyone,

This newsletter has information on the February garden visit and garden tasks. We introduce you to additional perennial and easy self seeding food plants (incl. a versatile sauce recipe) and the technique of propagating strawberries from runners. We review a new DVGC library book and remind you that the DVGC subscription for 2023 is now due.

Garden visit in February – by Ruth

We have two gardens to visit in Ravensbourne, from 10.30 am in the morning of Saturday 11th February - those of neighbourhood friends Greta, and Ruth and Warren.

Start at Greta's and afterwards walk or drive down the hill to Ruth and Warren's.

Both gardens are on a hill so there are steps. Highlights are Greta's amazing fruit cage and home built glass houses. Ruth's raised beds and orchard all with wonderful harbour views. Tea coffee and cake at conclusion at Ruth and Warren's.

Garden tasks for February - by David

Too late to sow: any seeds except kale, lettuce, onions, perennial spinach, silver beet and turnips.

Last chance to sow: seeds of kale, radish, perennial spinach and especially turnips by mid-February.

Last Chance to plant: seedlings of Green Spouting Broccoli (by mid-month) and Asian Vegetables by the end of the month.

Plenty of time left for: seeds of Asian vegetables, silverbeet and lettuce and seedlings of kale and perennial spinach.

Remember to sow: Onion seed should go in before the middle of March. St Patricks Day (17th) is a good reminder.

Too early yet for: seeds of Broad Beans and Peas - though these can go in from the beginning of March until end of May.

Tip for the month: drape and secure frost cloth over your brassicas to keep white butterfly caterpillars away.

Food Security with Perennial Plants – by Sue and Tim

Try growing these easy care, easy to propagate vegetables and herbs that come year after year without much fuss in your garden or in pots. No annual sowing or buying of seedlings needed. For those who are interested in the idea of continued sharing by planting, dividing and giving surplus plants to neighbours, friends and family, free plants and/or seeds will be available at our February meeting.

If you already have surplus seedlings, cuttings or seeds of the plants we are introducing, or have previously introduced, we greatly appreciate you bringing some along for sharing.

Parsley



Originally from the Mediterranean, Parsley thrives in a moist, free draining soil with lots of organic matter, in a full sun or part shade (when hot) position. Water and harvest regularly, never removing more than half the plant at a time. Grow it by the back door in a pot or fill a space in the garden close by. There are two types of Parsley: flat leaf (Italian) and curly leaf. Italian Parsley has a stronger flavour and is perfect for cooking and in salads as all parts are edible. It is a low-calorie, nutrient-dense herb: Being particularly rich in vitamins K, A, just half a cup of parsley can provide 53% of the recommended daily intake of vitamin C. Parsley is

biennial and self seeds readily, with new plants popping up ready to transplant when very young. Parsley can withstand frosts and snow, and is one of the most easy to grow herbs all year round.

From Garden to Table – Parsley recipe

Chimichurri - Chimichurri is an incredibly versatile Argentinian sauce that can be used on just about anything and transforms any dish from boring to fantastic.

1 cup extra-virgin olive oil
2 cups fresh Italian parsley leaves
3 garlic cloves
1/4 cup hot & spicy fresh oregano leaves (or regular with a large pinch of red pepper flakes)
1/4 cup red wine vinegar
1/2 teaspoon salt (or to taste)
freshly ground black pepper

Directions:

Place all ingredients into a high-powered blender and blend until very smooth. Allow it to sit at room temperature for at least 30 minutes to allow flavours to meld.

For 20 ideas on how to use Chimichurri sauce, see:

<https://www.thewickednoodle.com/how-to-make-chimichurri-sauce/>

Heirloom Potatoes



were bred from wild potatoes of South America and are naturally disease resistant. They can grow in the garden year after year, providing a nourishing source of carbohydrates. Try planting in mulch:

Put a thick layer of mulch down (mature wood chips, pine needles, hay or layers of grass clippings and leaves), pull back and put a potato on some compost in the hole

and cover up again. When green leaves appear layer on some more mulch. The important thing is to keep a light-blocking blanket of organic material between the shallowest tubers and the sun. When planting in soil: The best time to start mulching potatoes is when the plants are ankle high. First add two inches of soil or compost. Then start layering on the mulch (grass clippings, leaves, comfrey leaves, seaweed etc.) and keep adding more until the plants begin to fail. Keep moist. After flowering you can feel around beneath the mulch for some tender new potatoes, and start harvesting the largest potatoes from your most advanced plants. After stems have died back, take out the rest. Reposition one of the nice big potatoes on or in the ground and repeat the cycle. This way, heirloom potatoes can be harvested over many years.

Borage



is an annual plant, native to the Middle East. The young leaves and the blue flowers are edible, lovely in salads. The leaves taste of cucumber and can be eaten cut up raw or cooked like spinach. Borage can grow in poor soils and is drought tolerant. It is very valuable as mulch and compost ingredient. By cutting the plant back before it flowers (use gloves) the voluminous biomass suppresses weeds and enriches the soil, thus eliminating the need for importing material. When letting some of the plant set flowers, these are magnets for bees to the garden.

The rate of pollination increases (tip: grow borage beside strawberry plants - see <https://strawberryplants.org/strawberry-plants-borage/>). It self seeds readily.

Propagating strawberry plants by runners – by Sue

There never seem to be enough strawberries to pick in our garden. Runners are now developing that I either need to cut off to prolong the season, or let grow into new plants. I plan to propagate the strongest runners now, to plant out in Autumn and get established before the new growing season:



All I have to do is direct the strongest, first nodes on the runners to grow down into separate, moveable containers filled with sandy loam soil (hold the runner and its node portion in contact with the soil by a pile of dirt, a rock or a couple of sticks). Or let the strongest first node on some runners root into a space in the bed and nip off the weaker ones. In Autumn these new plants can either be left in place or transplanted.

Instead of occupying a separate bed, a space saving way to grow strawberry plants is among higher and more upright growing plants such as asparagus. They keep the weeds down as a living mulch. Their roots and foliage do not compete (<https://joybileefarm.com/how-to-grow-strawberries-asparagus/>).

More information on propagating strawberries:

<https://strawberryplants.org/strawberry-plant-propagation/>

New Library Book Review – by David



Jim Bazsika recommended we purchase the NZ Gardener supplement “Grow More Spend Less”:

This large format magazine suggests you can beat the cost of living by growing your own veggies, fruit and herbs. Tips have been collected from “hundreds of NZ gardeners”.

The 130 pages are divided into seven chapters and give advice on: planning your garden, 30 best value vegetables, 20 money saving herbs, year-round fruits, creative DIY, practical advice and harvest recipes.

There is an emphasis on the difference between the cost of a packet of seeds and the cost of the produce – the practical skill of turning seeds into produce is summarised by advice to keep a garden diary.

The articles are written for the whole of NZ so look for advice from southern gardeners, Rory Harding & Bell Murphy, Craig and Jo Inch, Marion Thomas, Rodney McDonald and Robert Guyton – among others - and be aware that good tips from Whangarei may not be appropriate for Dunedin conditions.

The South Island Planting guide is not as appropriate for us as the Star Garden Guide.

However, this is an encouraging magazine with lots of useful advice.

Borrow it and be inspired.

Trading table

Bring along any spare plants, seeds, implements, cuttings, etc. to the trading table where they will be gratefully received by Collette Blockley, who has offered to look after the trading table at our meetings from now on. We thank Ray Wade for doing this job for many years.

DVGC 2023 Subscriptions

Note that subscriptions of \$15.- are now due for 2023. Please pay into above DVGC bank account with your name or at the welcome desk at the DVGC meeting.

Organic Blueberries

Pick your Own at Blue Willow Blueberries, Fairfield, Dunedin

Bluewillowblueberries@gmail.com

027 248 6166

Workshop with Michele Cox – Organics Unearthed



FEBRUARY 12th 1-5PM \$75*

SEE HOW CITRUS, TOMATOES, CHICKENS & MICROGREENS COME TOGETHER IN AN AMAZING YEAR ROUND INDOOR PARADISE

The collage includes three small images on the left: a greenhouse with hanging tomatoes and cucumbers, a row of green plants in a greenhouse bed, and a large glass greenhouse structure. The background of the main section is a close-up of a variety of colorful cherry tomatoes (red, yellow, green, and purple).

GLASS & PLASTIC OPTIONS - IRRIGATION - PEST CONTROL - VENTILATION - SOIL MANAGEMENT - SUITABLE PLANTS - YEAR ROUND PLANTING SCHEDULES

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