



**Meetings:** 1<sup>st</sup> 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)  
[helen.flockton6@gmail.com](mailto:helen.flockton6@gmail.com)  
**Club Email:** [dvgenz@gmail.com](mailto:dvgenz@gmail.com)  
**Website:** <http://dvgc.co.nz/>  
**Bank Account #** 030905051590600  
 (Please include your name as a reference)

**Next Club Meeting:** Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> April 2023

**Q & A:** David

**Club Talk:** David – on crop rotation and succession planting

**Guest speaker:** Robyn Bazsika – Home Preserving

**Garden visit:** Green Island Community Garden

	<p><b>April competition:</b>          Personal Best Autumn Veg/Fruit</p> <p><b>March competition winner:</b>          Marion &amp; Joe - Hybrid Tomato          Heather Wilson - Heirloom Tomato</p>	<p><b>Things to look forward to in April:</b></p> <p>Garden visit</p>
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Hello Everyone,

Here is the planting guide for April and reports on three interesting visits: a garden, a nursery, and a heritage orchard. Our perennial and self seeding plant section has some useful Winter additions. There is a recipe for using tomatoes and tips on keeping produce fresh for longer.

**Garden tasks for April** – by David Neill

Last chance to sow:

Lettuce seed – should be in by mid-April (try Lolla Rossa, Little Gem or a Mesclun mix).

Last chance to plant: Seedlings of Kale and Silver beet

Still a bit of time to sow: Corn Salad (Mache)

Pea seeds until the middle of May (Peas and Broad beans are good cover crops)

Broad bean seeds until the end of May – plant by Anzac Day for Christmas.

Asian Vegetable seeds (until end of May)

Plenty of time left to plant:

Garlic now and until Christmas – earlier plantings grow larger by next Summer.

Seedlings of Cabbage (until the end of June)

## Visit to Margaret Scott's Garden – by Sue Novell



Margaret's garden is undergoing a transformation. There are already no lawns. The whole garden is extensively terraced, with steps and tools handy in several places. The upper garden is bound by a huge overhanging eucalyptus tree and an Oak; and lots of convolvulus keeps creeping in. So those previously very productive vegetable growing areas will be left to retire, with berry bushes under the walnut and plum trees.

Other areas lower down by the house are given a new purpose, such as a stone garden which is now composted and has pumpkins and other vegetables growing. Every Autumn Margaret plans where to put her next year's pumpkins and puts compost and manure in those spots to rot down. By Spring the soil is just right for planting in. Many bean vines climb up supports and have already been picked to dry for hearty Winter meals. The garden has two hen runs for moving the animals around every three months to combat the mite problem. Plenty of weeds and fallen fruit keep them happy. In front of the house, high beds are backed by stone walls with espaliered dwarf fruit trees. Margaret has carefully planned a succession of trees coming into fruit by planting pairs of varieties close together with each plant given one side to fan out on. Underneath them are yams, beans, celery, lettuce, parsnips, a lemon tree etc. The blueberry bushes thrive in an acidic peat and bark soil. The lower garden is an orchard of Feijoas, pears, hazelnuts, plums, and a cherry tree in the middle. The hazelnut bushes have produced well this year after having had some branches taken out to keep them to a vase shape. There are many interesting plants in Margaret's Garden: horse radish in a tub, Wasabi by a water tap, Vietnamese Mint ("great eaten with peaches"), Lemon grass and a perennial chili plant in pots on the front porch. The numerous potted tomato plants and the sweet stevia look like they are thriving there too.

It is interesting to see how a garden transforms in the process of adapting to the needs and circumstances of the gardener and her surroundings. Many thanks for sharing your insights, Margaret. And thanks for your generosity in giving us many cuttings, seeds and a taste of wonderful blood peaches as a welcome present.

## Habitate's Tree Nursery Visit - 20 March – by Helen Flockton

Jason Ross, owner of the nursery, gave us a talk and demonstration on the planting and care of fruit trees. He emphasised some important parts of the process and I have made a few bullet points of them:

- Tree roots grow horizontally and down, so the hole for them should be twice the diameter of the root ball and only 50mm deeper.
- In the base of the hole use some top soil and no more than 10% compost.
- The uppermost roots should be just under the soil level.
- Place two stakes in ground before planting for stabilising the tree.
- Use hands to place soil around roots esp. if bare rooted.
- Keep trunk clear of grass and weeds.
- Make circle of organic matter ie compost, seaweed, manure etc. about 80cms out from tree and cover with bark.
- Although it is very difficult to do PLEASE don't allow your tree to fruit for the first 2 years. This gives it a chance to stabilise and grow strong branches.
- Trees benefit from mulching and surface feeding esp. in winter. Ground cover like comfrey can also be used.

Jason has fruit trees on sale which can be ordered now. He grows 3 different sizes of trees and about 25 varieties. They are grown with our region and conditions in mind, so look up his website and see if any take your fancy.

A grafting workshop will be run by Jason Ross, Habitate, early September 2023.

### **Jim Dunckley Heritage Apple Orchard - Open Day of the Coastal Otago Branch of the Tree Crops Association NZTCA – by Sue and Tim**



Way up and around Mt. Cargill, mostly exposed to cold winds and misty clouds, tucked in the side of the hill, is an apple orchard, looked after by a small group of hardy enthusiasts. On this lovely sunny day though, the public was invited and streamed in great numbers onto the grassy hillside paddock, keen to learn about this collection of heritage apples. It consists of rows and rows of carefully documented apple and some plum varieties. Collected from NZ areas, all information is captured on a data base. Some

varieties are grown experimentally and still on trial. The trees, on semi dwarf rootstock, are kept low and bushy, with grass underneath that needs regularly mowing. The fruit was at various stages of ripening. Members of the association freely gave out information about specific varieties, grafting tips, samples of their quarterly magazine and simple recipes for making apple cider and codling moth traps:

#### Apple cider vinegar:

Fill 20L bucket half full with chopped, different sorts of apples/peelings/cores. Cover with cold filtered or boiled water. Put in a handful of raisins, mash down, cover with tea towel. Every so often mash it down again. You know by the smell when it is ready.

### Codling moth trap:

Early Spring mix 1Tbs cider vinegar + 1Tbs treacle + 1 Tbs water + slightly more water. Put in a container and hang it on a tree. The moths are attracted to the smell and drown. Do this regularly every year and your orchard should be largely codling moth free.

The NZTCA is also planning to run a grafting workshop north of Dunedin, in Spring 2023.

For more information on the NZ Tree Crops Association: <https://treecrops.org.nz/>

### **Recommended reading/watching**

Are you wishing to increase your space for growing food instead of mowing lawns? Here is a link to an article, with excellent video, on creating no dig garden beds that you can plant straight into, using cardboard and compost/mulch:

<https://ecofamilylife.com/garden/mulching-with-cardboard-the-ultimate-beginners-guide/>

### **Food Security with Perennial Plants – by Sue**

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 March 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.

### **Perennial Leeks**



are tasty, small leeks that are harvested in the Winter months, by cutting the fattest ones at ground level. They send up tall stems with a pink flower ball in Spring and Summer, loved by bees, and die down. The plants come up again in Autumn. The main bulbs grow small bulb-lets around them. The trick to keep the plants coming year after year is to not forget where they are and disturb the bulbs too much, other than transplanting them. After some years in the same spot, the plants crowd each other and get thinner. Just divide the bulbs up, replant again and give some away to friends and family. Plant offshoots 5 cm deep in full sun or part shade. When grown in fertile soil with more space around them, the bulbs grow fatter. In Spring you can sow beans in between, which die down in Autumn, to have the space in use all year. Delicious in stir fries, quiches etc. but also chopped finely in salads in place of onions. Surplus can be blanched and frozen for summer use.

## Red Mizuna Lettuce



Mizuna means “water greens” in Japanese, and is traditionally grown in the cooler, wet climate of the Kyoto prefecture in Japan, cultivated in shallowly flooded fields. There are several varieties with soft, feathery leaves. They are a mild mustard in the Brassica family that grows well here, becoming more peppery as the season progresses. Sow in a sunny part of the garden at the end of Summer and keep well watered. Harvest the leaves full of vitamins and minerals by the handful, as a spicy and decorative addition to salads or at the end of cooking a stir fry or soup. Cut back to a stump several times and it will sprout again until it begins to flower. It self seeds easily.

## Lambs Lettuce / Corn Salad / Mache / Nuessler



is a small leaved lettuce that grows slowly in cold temperatures, even in frost and snow. It is mild tasting, without ever getting bitter and is therefor revered in European cuisine for creating healthy and delicate, nutty salads. You can sow just a few or large areas in empty Autumn beds for Winter eating and cover crops. Cut the biggest leaves or whole rosettes at the base, leaving the smaller ones to grow on. If you let a couple of the plants go to seed, next Autumn you will find lots of baby

seedlings underneath to spread out in your vegetable garden for Winter eating and to pass on to others.

For more information: <https://www.growveg.com.au/guides/growing-lambs-lettuce-mache-or-corn-salad-for-winter-salads/>

## Tips on how to keep your picked fruit and vegetables fresh for longer – adapted from Grey Power Otago, Issue One, Autumn 2023

Tomatoes: Store them at room temperature, not in the fridge, as the cold affects their texture and flavour.

Eggplants: Keep them out of the fridge somewhere cool, to stop browning.

Potatoes and onions: Keep them separate in a cupboard, as they cause each other to sprout.

Carrots: To extend their life up to 10x, store carrots in an airtight container lined with a dry reusable cloth.

Leafy Greens: To stop them going slimy/limp, store in airtight container or bag in the fridge.

Lettuce: Wrap in a cloth or tea towel and place in airtight container or bag. Revive limp leaves by soaking them in cold water for up to 20 minutes in the fridge.

Apples: Last 8x longer in fridge or similarly cold place.

Bananas: Keep out of the fridge to ripen, and in fridge to slow down ripening.

Avocado: Keep at room temperature, next to bananas if you need it to ripen faster, then move to the fridge. Store with the stone in, in an airtight container.

## From Garden to Table - Tomato Kasundi Recipe – by Ruth Bayne



Our tomatoes have done well this year, slow to ripen at the start of summer but with more still to come on in this long warm autumn we are having. We have eaten plenty of fresh tomatoes and have frozen batches of pasta sauce to use during the winter to come. And yet, the tomatoes keep on producing, and

now splitting, so the pressure is on to make good use of them and not have them go to waste. If you also have some extra tomatoes, why not try this recipe for Tomato Kasundi; this is an Indian spiced sweet and sour sauce with a major chilli kick that seems to go with everything. We enjoy it with any dish where you might want a sauce – veggie fritters, poached salmon, fried fish, burgers, roasted veggie salad, or simply by the spoonful.

I used cherry tomatoes, because that is all we grow, and put them through a mouli once cooked to remove the skins; but if you have large tomatoes you may want to peel them first.

The quantities in this recipe are guidelines only, use what you have and adjust the spices or chilli to suit yourself. I used Rocoto chilli as these are what we have grown, and they give a warm fruitiness to our Kasundi that is hot, but not overpowering to our tastes.

This made 9 medium sized jars:

- 3 kg tomatoes
- 1 C oil
- 1/4 C black mustard seeds
- 2 T cumin seeds
- 200g ginger grated
- 100g garlic peeled
- 4 fresh chilli/ 4 Tsp chilli (or less to your taste)
- 2 T turmeric powder
- 2T coriander powder
- 1 ½ T salt
- 500 ml cider vinegar
- 225 g brown sugar

Heat the oil to quite hot in a large saucepan. Add the mustard and cumin seeds and allow to cook for a minute. Remove pan from the heat and add remaining spices, stirring.

Using a stick blender puree the ginger, garlic, and fresh chilli if using, to a paste with some of the vinegar.

Return saucepan to medium heat and add all other ingredients. Simmer for an hour or so until the mixture cooks down and reduces to thicken a bit. Put through a mouli if needed to remove skins once tomatoes are first cooked.

Bottle into sterilised jars

## **Trading Table**

We love to have our trading table full of interesting plants, seedlings, seeds, cuttings, produce, gardening items of interest etc. A big thanks to those who contribute!

## **Club talks**

We welcome club talks given by members: Feel free to offer a five-minute talk about, or introduce, something gardening related to the club at one of our meetings.

## **DVGC 2023 Subscriptions**

Note that subscriptions of \$15.- are now overdue for 2023. If not already done, please pay into above DVGC bank account with your name, or at the welcome desk at the DVGC meeting. Doing this ensures your continued receipt of our newsletter as well.

## **Supper goodies**

We would like to expand our club activities to showcase local seasonal produce in our supper spread. We therefore welcome all members to bring along, and add interest to our table with some home-made supper snacks or baking, using fresh or dried fruit or vegetables, nuts etc. from the garden. There might be some interesting recipes to discover and share!

We thank our supper supervisors, Janice McCraw, and Beverley Livingstone, along with those who volunteered to help this month: Pam Kennedy and Jenny Neill