




**GREENS~LEAVES**  
Dunedin Vegetable Growers Club Newsletter  
April 2024

**Meetings:** 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday of the month, 7pm  
**Venue:** Dunedin Lawn Bowl Stadium,  
 38 Tahuna Rd, Lawyers Head, Dunedin  
**Membership:** Helen Flockton - phone 0274222364  
[helen.flockton6@gmail.com](mailto:helen.flockton6@gmail.com)  
**Club Email:** [dvgcnz@gmail.com](mailto:dvgcnz@gmail.com)  
**Website:** <http://dvgc.co.nz/>  
**Bank Account #** 030905051590600  
 (Please include your name as a reference)

<b>Next Club Meeting:</b> Wednesday 3 <sup>rd</sup> April 2024 <b>Q &amp; A:</b> David <b>Club Talk:</b> Melanie Aicken – Making Kimchi <b>Speakers:</b> Club discussion – Drying Fruit, Vegetables, Herbs and Seeds <b>Garden visit:</b> Gabby McKenzie, 7 <sup>th</sup> April 2024, Mornington – details sent closer to time		
	<b>April competition:</b> Personal best autumn fruit and/or vegetable	<b>Things to look forward to in April:</b>  Garden visit Wild Dunedin Festival
	<b>March competition winners:</b> Heirloom tomatoes – Victoria Vivian Houston with Hamlot, Moonglow, Vintage Wine Hybrid - Eddie Christensen with Midnight Blush	

Hello Everyone,

Here are the April garden guide, reports on the latest garden visit and on the DVGC stall at the South Dunedin Street Festival. There is a tip on how to get help with your garden. We have an article on the upcoming Wild Dunedin Festival with a list of gardening events to visit.

### Garden guide for April – by David

Last chance to sow: Lettuce seed – should be in by mid-April

Last chance to plant: Seedlings of kale and silver beet.

Still a bit of time to sow: Pea seeds until the middle of May.  
 Broad bean seeds until end of May – by Anzac Day for December

Still a bit of time to plant: Seeds of Asian Vegetables.

Plenty of time left for: Seedlings of Cabbage (until the end of June).

### Trading Table

We love the variety of plants, cuttings, seedlings and seeds you bring to the trading table. Thanks to all who contribute, very much appreciated.

## Report on our garden visit to Ann Robinson, 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2024— by Sue

High up the hill in Opoho, we were welcomed into the Robinson's garden. Over the last twenty years, many rhododendrons made way for a highly productive food garden. Carefully constructed beds and paths are now surrounded by numerous small fruit trees, interspersed with seating and whimsical sculptures. We admired the peach tree (Dwarf Honey Babe) full of beautiful ripe fruit, pear tree (double grafted Beurre Bosc and Packham) and the dwarf Stella cherry tree espaliered against the wooden fence. There is a small Luisa/Omega plum tree, a Morepark apricot, and other small fruit trees and bushes along the edge of the garden, all kept low for easy maintenance.

High raised beds are brimming with a large variety of vegetable plants, even transplanted carrot thinnings are thriving. The soil in the beds was created following the Esther Dean no-dig gardening method (different organic materials such as pea straw, lucerne, animal manure, finely-chopped prunings, kitchen scraps, compost is laid down in layers over each



other to create what is essentially a thick, flat composting system that fills a garden bed. To plant seedlings or plants into such a garden bed, small 'pockets' or holes were made that hold as much compost as a small pot that you could grow the plant in, they are then filled with compost, and the plants planted into them).

The glasshouse is lined with different tomato plants that Ann had grown from seed.

She keeps a record of their performance. One of her favourites this year is Early Girl. Basil and marigolds line the beds.

Ann showed us her worm farm, how she has set it up and keeps the worms plentiful. She puts their castings and the diluted worm water to good use in new plantings. A small beehive is kept in a corner; and some of us were fascinated to watch bees successfully fighting off a wasp trying to get into the entrance. We had the opportunity to have a go at making newspaper planters using a wooden dowel. We came away very inspired to fit in even more into our gardens - many thanks to the Robinson's!

## Get Your Garden Weeded and Make New Friends – by Suzanne Middleton

Does that sound too good to be true? Well, there's a fun way to do this if you're a kind person and you're open to giving a bed to a young stranger. Over the last six years I've hosted young





people from Germany, Hong Kong, France, Canada, UK, Argentina, China, Singapore, Czech Republic and Belgium. They've stayed for between one and four weeks and done everything from weeding, hedge cutting, window cleaning, cooking, defrosting the freezer, sorting out the pantry, housework, house sitting and dog minding.

In exchange for 4 hours work a day I've given them a bed for the night and three meals a day, and if they don't have transport, I've often taken them to visit various wildlife and scenic attractions around Dunedin.

Without exception they've been honest, hardworking and great company. Like Trade Me, there are reviews, so you can write references for your helpers; and they can do the same for you. All you need to do is to create a profile for yourself on the website and refresh it regularly to bring you to the top of the list for Dunedin. I use [www.helpx.net](http://www.helpx.net) but there are other sites.

I've just hosted a guy from the Czech Republic for a week and my garden and backyard are unrecognizable after he weeded and tidied up everything and cut the hedges. The great thing about this arrangement is that the visitors love staying a week in a Kiwi household, and we appreciate their youthful energy.

Please catch up with me at a meeting or open garden if you have any questions about this.

### **South Dunedin Street Festival – by Don Pearson**

DVGC had a stall at the South Dunedin Street Festival on Saturday 16 March. There was a nice array of winter greens seedlings, perennial vegetables and herbs donated by club members.

Initially we were positioned in the middle of King Edward Street facing southwest down Carey Ave. This proved less than satisfactory due to the cold SW wind funnelling up Carey Ave and blasting plants and gear to the point we were concerned for our own comfort. So, we packed up and moved in front of Instant Finance, sunny, sheltered from the wind and facing

the NE. Veggie growing 101, choose your site well!



There was a lovely carnival atmosphere to the street festival. Many people were interested in the presence of the DVGC and there were many new expressions of interest in the club. A highlight was the interest expressed by some children and younger adults. Incidental to this community outreach and demonstration, we raised \$165 for the DVGC, a truly worthy cause.

Thanks to Sue, for organising,

and members for plants, staffing and the loan of gear.



## **The 9<sup>th</sup> Wild Dunedin Festival is Coming in April** – by Suzanne Middleton

The Wild Dunedin team are thrilled to announce that our popular Festival is on again in the school holidays 19 – 28 April.

This year our Festival is focusing on huarere/weather. What makes Dunedin's weather special? How can I plan my vegetable garden and orchard for the changing weather? Why are clouds important for Orokonui Ecosanctuary? These and many other questions will be answered for you along with the opportunity to visit many home and community open gardens, including Sue Novell's garden, a native plant sale at Tomahawk, workshops on composting and permaculture, deals on wildlife tourism trips, and much more.

Sue Novell, Rory Harding and Jason Ross will be speaking on Growing your own in a Changing Climate, and Jason from Habitate at Waitati, and Rory from the George St Orchard will be giving tours of their gardens. Hereweka Garden at Hoopers Inlet will be giving tours and the garden at Puketeraki Marae, Puketeraki Māra Kai and Nursery are having an open day and workshops.

Because it's in the school holidays, the Festival is a great opportunity for friends and family to visit Dunedin for 10 days of fascinating events celebrating Ōtepoti as the wildlife capital of Aotearoa.

Old favourites such as Suzy Cato's event for children with the Wildlife Hospital, Wildlife ER, sessions on bees, yoga, plogging, diving in a kelp forest, deals on indoor bouldering, a tramp around Sutton Salt Lake, bird watching and sessions on bird photography – there's something for everyone at this year's Festival.

A highlight of the 2023 Festival, the hugely popular Art Play in Nature at Chingford Park is on again, bigger and better. Artists Janet de Wagt, Pamela Brown and Kerry Mackay will work with all ages to create a giant tapestry/collage on the Bridal Lawn using nature's materials such as autumn leaves, twigs and cones. Conservation groups, musicians, displays, and food and coffee will make for a wonderful day celebrating nature.

Libraries, Tūhura Otago Museum and Toitū are all hosting many events, there will be fine dining at three restaurants, boat trips, a session on making gin, and opportunities to help yellow-eyed penguins. Bookings are open for a Wild Night Masquerade at Larnach Castle with transport provided from town, in support of yellow-eyed penguins.

To book for the Wild Night, and other events, go to [www.wilddunedin.nz](http://www.wilddunedin.nz)

Programmes are available at all public libraries and mobile libraries.

To keep up to date and see the programme, become a Friend of Wild Dunedin on the website. Follow us on Facebook NZ Festival of Nature.

## Gardening Events at the Wild Dunedin Festival 19-28 April:

### **Workshops with Michelle Ritchie/Organics Unearthed**

19 April Compost, Bokashi and Worm Farming at Sawyers Bay

20 April Compost, Bokashi and Worm Farming at Outram

26 April Organic Greenhouse Growing at Macandrew Bay

27 April Permaculture: Resilience by Design at Macandrew Bay

### **20 April**

NEV Community Garden Open Day and Tour (also on 28 April)

Green Island Community Garden Open Day – Shand St behind school

Weathered to the Ground sale of drought resistant native ground cover at Ocean Grove (also on 24 April)

Gardening with Climate Change: join Fiona Eadie at Larnach Castle, includes a Sandymount gin

### **21 April**

Hereweka Garden Tours with restored native forest, rare exotics, Gondwana plants and fruit trees in a micro-climate – Hoopers Inlet

Edible Garden Open Day and Tours at Jason Ross from Habitate's home garden including permaculture design or fruit growing – Waitati.

### **22 April**

From Garden to Plate locally sourced multi-course dinner at No7 Balmac with gardener Harley Howes

### **23 April**

Growing our own in a Changing Climate: illustrated talk and discussion on growing local in a regenerative way with Sue Novell, Rory Harding and Jason Ross at the City Library

### **24 April**

Perennial Vegetables and Fruit Tour of Sue Novell's garden in Tainui (also on 25 April)

### **25 April**

Peninsula People Plants and Pets bus tour of four fab Otago Peninsula gardens (also on 26 April)

### **27 April**

Puketeraki Māra Kai and Nursery at Karitane – Open day and workshops on designing food gardens and growing native plants. Plants for sale.

George St Orchard – Tours of Rory Harding's urban food garden with organically grown plants for sale (also on 28 April)

Composting with Pete Ryan at Upper Botanic Garden – hands-on two-hour workshops showing how to turn waste into food for your garden

### **28 April**

Community Fruit Harvest Festival at the Valley Project NEV – apple pressing, music and fruit stalls

### **Daily During the Festival**

Larnach Castle Plant Detective: kids find clues using a map. Kids go free and entries go in a draw for a children's high tea for the winner and three friends

## **From Garden to Table – by Ruth Bayne**

Here is a recipe for a delicious toasted cluster muesli that uses up the stewed apples and dried fruit you may have made this harvest season.

### Cluster Muesli with dried fruit

Thoroughly mix

4 C rolled oats

1 C mixed seeds eg sunflower, pumpkin, linseed, buckwheat etc

with 1 C of apple puree (or apple juice if preferred) and ¼ C honey until well combined.

Spread out thinly on oven trays and fan bake at 150 degrees Celsius for 35 mins or so turning half way through. You will have dried crunchy muesli clusters.

Add 1 C very lightly toasted nuts of your choice eg walnut, hazelnut or almond

Add a generous quantity of any dried fruit you have made eg apple slices and plum leather chopped into small pieces, or chopped apricots and plums

A 1/3 C coconut flakes is a good addition

## **Our Food Network**



Check out their useful brand new website with up-to-date events page, resources for gardeners, lists of Dunedin seed libraries and community gardens etc.

Website: <https://www.ourfoodnetwork.org.nz/>

## **Supper**

Thanks to all who bring along a plate to share and help out.

April helpers: Katarina Miscewy, Kevin Markham