

Uki Garden Club

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<http://ukigarden.club/wp/>



Now that we have all been mostly confined to home for nearly two months, our gardens should be looking quite spectacular if not well cared-for! I hope you have been spending time outside in them enjoying the beautiful Autumn weather. I do really believe that we are very fortunate to be living in this beautiful paradise that is the Tweed Valley. Confinement here just doesn't compare with that being experienced by our city-based counterparts, many of whom find themselves locked up in concrete towers of flats or apartments with little greenery to relieve their stress. We do have a lot to be thankful for when you think about it.

I do hope you have all been making an effort to keep in touch with each other by whatever means is available to you. The

Facebook page has been quite active I see with some great photos of special plants as well as questions being answered. I imagine some of you have been "Zooming" or "Skyping" your friends and loved ones. Email and phone contact are still good ways to connect if you don't have access to any of the more modern technology. It is at times like this that we come to realise how important relationships are to us in our everyday lives.



It is sad to see some small businesses being forced to close down in Murwillumbah. The nursery/café in Wollumbin Street near Coles is being dismantled I see. Hopefully not too many shops will be lost. The Burringbar Rainforest Nursery is still open and sells veggie seeds and seedlings as well as natives and I believe the Landscape Supplies business has been run off their feet trying to keep up with all those who are renovating/rejuvenating their gardens since they've had more time at home. Ron the Fruit Tree Man on Numinbah Road is also closing on June 30th (planned pre-COVID-19). Swings and roundabouts as they say

As I write this, the PM has just announced stage 1 of easing COVID-19 restrictions. And now our NSW Premier is allowing us into most of this stage on May 15th, so it may mean our UGC committee can meet outside in person (as we are fewer than 10 people) to plan our way forward through this unusual year of 2020. We need to be in Stage 3 before we can even consider Garden Gatherings or Food Group meetings – that is, allowing more than 20 (up to 100) people. Even so, this is going to be difficult with physical distancing being a requirement of such gatherings. Obviously 'normality' is still a fair way in the distance – but at least we can look forward to gradually resuming some degree of interacting with each other. In the meantime just enjoy the calmer pace of life without all those dates in your diary!

If any of you out there do have creative ideas on ways our Club can resume functioning within government rules in the near future, you are welcome to email or phone us your thoughts. Just contact a committee member or email us at ugcnews@gmail.com. Your ideas would be very much appreciated and will be discussed at our next committee meeting which I hope to organise within the next few weeks, COVID restrictions permitting.

Keep up all the things that remind you how lucky we are – gardening, exercising, relaxing in the outdoors in beautiful weather and spending time with those closest to you. Out in public, keep your distance, wash your hands, sanitise, sanitise, sanitise ... and just stay healthy!

Best wishes, Gillian

A Wander Around Couzn Lynn's Garden

I have just been spending time out in the garden enjoying the beautiful weather, and watching thousands of "Blue Tiger" butterflies heading north overhead.

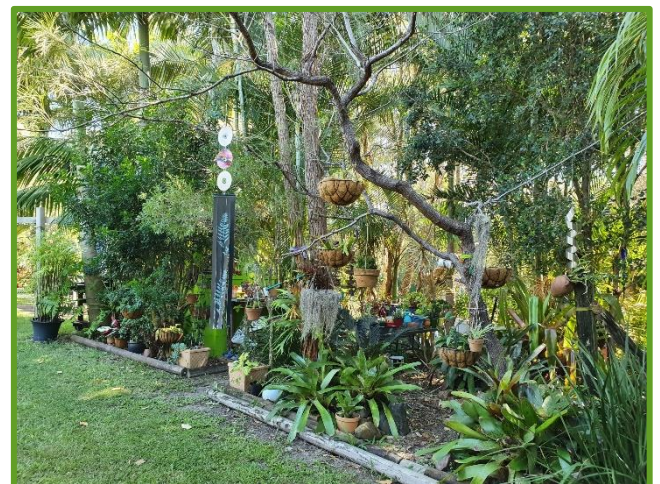
John and I were to host the Garden Club on Saturday 25th April – ANZAC day—and had been looking forward to doing so. We have used our time in social isolation in getting it all looking great despite the fact you can't come over, and it does.

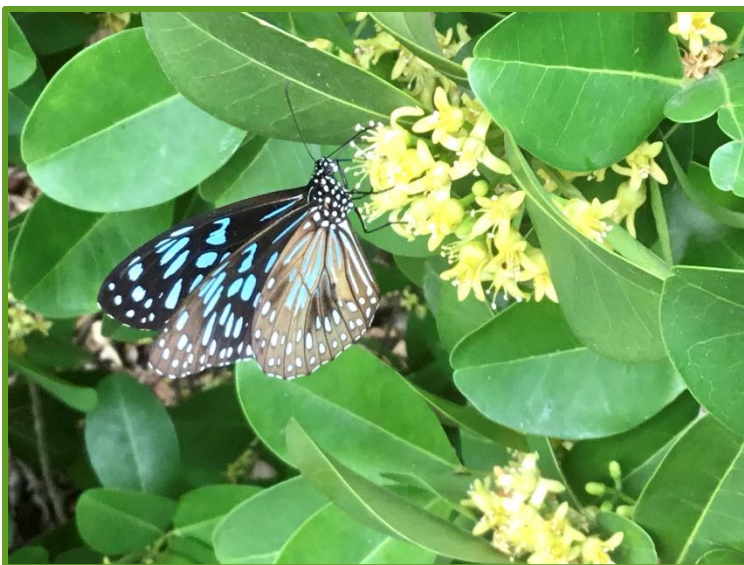
We put up a sign as you enter thru an arch into our place and called it MACCAHARA SANCTUARY (our surnames...McDougall and O'Hara) I had to give him top billing...it sounded better.

I have taken photos for the newsletter to show you our garden...that you would have seen and hope you can enjoy a virtual wander around our garden.

Hope everyone is safe and well during these strange times. Looking forward to seeing everyone soon

Best wishes from Couz'n Lynn O'Hara and John





Pic of Blue Tiger butterfly enjoying a snack along the beach path at Casuarina – kindly provided by Kate Botham

Recycling Used Coffee Grounds – Dot Francis

It's a wonder that everyone is not using this valuable resource, with its multitude of uses, and not beating a path to all the cafes around town and fighting for the right to grab all their used coffee grounds!

Offered the chance this week, I grabbed it, then decided to investigate exactly *what* all these virtues were. I knew there were benefits, but the list went on and on. Before I got totally swamped with information, I called it a day! So, here's a potted sample to choose from.



As a fertiliser

- ☺ It contains some key elements for plant growth - nitrogen, calcium, potassium, iron, phosphorus, magnesium & chromium.
- ☺ It's said to absorb heavy metals that contaminate soil. Sprinkle it around plants and dig it in.

In the compost heap

- ☺ It's not surprising that when added to the compost heap, compost made with coffee grounds, is superior to compost made without. Some sources suggest 1/3 each of coffee grounds, grass clippings and dried leaves. Another source recommends only 20% of coffee grounds to be used. However, a larger amount can be used if applied as mulch. The addition of a nitrogen fertiliser speeds up decomposition of the coffee grounds. Using a larger amount of grounds can deter weeds.
- ☺ The use of coffee grounds decreases greenhouse gas emissions of compost heaps.
- ☺ Use as a liquid fertiliser. Make a 'tea' using 2 cups of coffee grounds to a 20-litre bucket. Allow to steep a few hours or overnight. It can be used for the garden or pot plants, including use as a foliar spray.

As a soil improver

- ☺ It improves drainage, increases water holding capacity for poorly constructed soils and soil aeration.
- ☺ It assists the soil in retaining more nutrients and water.
- ☺ It encourages growth of microorganisms.

Worms – the benefits

- ☺ Coffee grounds attract worms, a bonus for the garden. They of course, play their part in soil aeration & improvement. Add a cup of coffee grounds to your worm farm each week. They'll love it!

Pests, large and small

- ☺ Certain compounds found in coffee can be highly toxic to insects, therefore it repels bugs. It's also a barrier to slugs and snails so put rings of grounds around any vulnerable plants. Ants don't like it so put it in areas where you don't want them.
- ☺ It's a deterrent to mosquitoes, fruit flies and beetles. Set out bowls of grounds around seating areas.
- ☺ If neighbourhood cats regard your nicely tilled and planted patch as their go-to litter box, put grounds around the area. They will leave you in peace.

Main sources of the above information were:

- Onegoodthingbyjillie.com/usesforcoffee grounds/ (20 Useful Things You Can Do With Old Coffee Grounds)
- practicalselfreliance.com.uses-for-coffee-grounds (40 Practical Uses for Spent Coffee Grounds)
- healthline.com/nutrition/uses-for-coffee-grounds#section18 (16 Creative Uses for Used Coffee Grounds)

Another one I found just now from www.farmersalmanac.com headed "Steroids for your carrot crop" stated that carrots are much sweeter and stronger with coffee grounds sprinkled alongside rows of young carrot seedlings. Maybe more of our group will have their eye on their favourite coffee haunt to collect the grounds, make use of this valuable resource and save money as well. It seems such a pity that so much is thrown away as it is such a useful addition to the garden.



Quarantine has turned us all into dogs. We roam the house all day looking for food. We are told 'no' if we get too close to strangers. And we get really excited about car rides.



I am passing this on to you because it definitely worked for me today, and we all could probably use more calm in our lives. Some doctor on TV this morning said the way to achieve inner peace is to finish all the things you have started. So I looked around my house to see things I'd started and hadn't finished so I have managed to finish off a bottle of Merlot, a bottle of Chardonnay, a bottle of Baileys, a bottle of wum, a package of Pringles, the rest of the chesecake and a box of chocolates. You have no idea how bloody fabulous I feel right now.



Above pic shared by Linda Rees in her very first attempt at sending a photo – you nailed it Linda!

10. Rachel has 16 chocolate bars.
Tracey takes 4 from her and asks for the remaining quarter.
What would she end up with?

A slap
X

*Not the answer
I was looking for*

I was visiting my daughter last night when I asked if I could borrow a newspaper.
"This is the 21st Century" she said – "we don't waste money on newspapers. Here – use my iPad."
I can tell you this – that fly never knew what hit him!

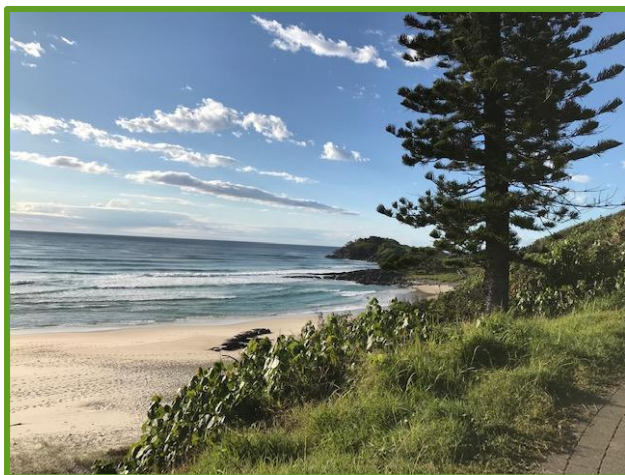


From the Mountains to the Sea

As we continue with the new COVID way of life, as Gillian mentioned in her report it is always good to remember how fortunate we are to live in such a beautiful place. Below are a couple of snaps taken on my regular walks, supplemented by the early morning views of Murwillumbah supplied by Nellmary.



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Life at Cat Hill Allotments – Richard Stile

Who would have thought that life would have changed so much since my last contribution to your club newsletter (early March) which will, quite frankly, never quite return to what was normality for many years.

None of us can remain unaffected, but here in Europe we have seen very stark figures.

Here in the UK, as we all learnt what the “lockdown” and self-isolation meant, visiting the allotment was not considered essential. Fortunately, after only 10 days the advice changed and we could visit for our 2 hours exercise each day.

The site has provided a very welcome escape to all our plot-holders and it is easy to remain at the recommended social distancing with all plots being 5m wide. Of course, precautions still need to be taken on entering and leaving the site and all common areas are out of bounds, the site shop is closed and equipment (mowers, strimmers, rotovators etc.) cannot be lent out.

Suppliers of seeds, compost and plants are closed countrywide. A problem, but we hope that common sense will prevail and rather than have all the bedding plants and vegetables already in the garden centres going to waste restrictions will be eased. So, if you planned early you will reap the benefits.



We have enjoyed our first pickings of asparagus – very early in the season and providing a simple lunch with a poached egg and dressed with mayonnaise, a little lemon juice and a sprinkle of parmesan – delicious and on the plate 1 hour from picking.

All other autumn and winter plantings have been very slow although the broad beans are racing ahead now and established soft fruit is looking like producing a bumper harvest.

Unfortunately, the new raspberry canes planted earlier in the season when we had to wait so long for better conditions have failed miserably. The new cherry looks destined to provide a decent crop in its first year – if we

can keep the birds off! And the blueberries are laden with flowers.



Our potatoes have been earthed-up to protect against any late frost which can strike until early May. The time we have been able to be at the allotment has, quite honestly, been no different to any other year. As we expected to be in Belize in the last 3 weeks of April we had made our sowings of tomatoes, peppers, aubergines and squash early. This means they are all well-advanced, strong plants and have been planted up in the greenhouse and the polytunnel.

Unprecedented times –we are all living through a crisis. The community spirit that exists on allotments is now even more important. We need to look out for each other. Our thoughts go out to those less fortunate who perhaps have no garden or space of their own to retreat to for exercise or just to get away for a while.



(Ed: thanks Richard – we appreciate your contribution and thoughts)



Former member Judy Stanhope has passed these lovely pictures onto us from her new home town of Ballarat.



First pic at left is of autumn leaves in Ballarat and then the other three are from the Begonia Festival which was held in early March.

Thanks Judy!

R: These sedums were covered with honey bees. And it is so good that they grow really easily from leaf cuttings.





Date Scones – Marilyn Gough

(makes approx. 12 scones) (Ed note: I can attest to the deliciousness of these scones!)

Ingredients

- 3 cups Self-Raising Flour
- Pinch salt
- 2 tspns Caster sugar
- Approx. 1/3rd cup butter
- 1 cup chopped dates
- 1 ½ cups buttermilk (or full cream + 1 tspn.white vinegar)

Method

1. Preheat oven 230°C. Lightly grease and flour-dust a 23cm (9") square pan.
2. Into large bowl sift flour, salt, & sugar.
3. Use fingertips to rub butter through flour till mix resembles breadcrumbs; stir the dates through
4. Add milk, using a knife in a cutting action to make into soft sticky dough.
5. Turn dough onto a lightly-floured board, knead gently to bring dough together.
6. Pat (or gently use rolling pin) into 2cm high disc. Use floured cutter to cut rounds & place side-by-side in pan.
7. Bake on top shelf of pre-heated oven 10-12 mins. until golden or sound hollow when tapped. Turn out onto clean teatowel, cover with another teatowel to keep warm.



And what better to go with them Kirsteen Hornick's recipe for Rosella Jam?

Rosella Jam - Kirsteen Hornick

Ingredients

- Rosellas (a colander full of the calyxes (when separated) is the rough amount I used)
- Sugar
- Water
- 1 good teaspoon butter
- juice of one lemon

Method

1. Separate red calyxes from the seed pods & wash and drain each separately.
2. In a saucepan add seeds and water until the seeds are just covered. Bring to the boil and cook covered for 30 minutes.
3. Strain and reserve the juice in a second saucepan. The seeds can now be discarded.
4. To this juice add the red calyxes which have been thoroughly washed and drained. The calyxes may not be completely covered with juice but will boil down.
5. Boil for 20 minutes until a pulp is formed.
6. Measure the volume of cooked pulp and return to the pan.
7. Add one good teaspoon of butter and the juice of 1 lemon.
8. Add an equal amount of sugar to the cooked pulp (eg 1 cup pulp to 1 cup sugar). Stir until the sugar is completely dissolved.
9. Boil quickly uncovered for 20 minutes or until setting point is reached.
10. Pour into warmed jars and seal.



On the Road Again – Travellers' Tales

Perth, March 2020 – Marilyn & Graeme Gough

In early March we had a very quick trip to Perth and popped into Araluen Gardens and the Perth Botanic Gardens which were both well worth the visit.



The Crepe Myrtle and blue Hydrangea were taken at Araluen Gardens and the others were taken at the Perth Botanic Gardens.



May Job File – Julia Hancock

- ✿ Prune dead and excess branches off shrubs and trees.
- ✿ Tidy up dahlias as they finish flowering.
- ✿ Divide daylilies and replant in compost-enriched soil, applying a little trace elements around the soil before you water them in.
- ✿ Rats are likely to be a problem as winter draws in. If you must bait outdoors, place the bait inside a T-shaped piece of plastic plumbing pipe where it will be protected from rain and domestic pets.
- ✿ Still got caterpillars nibbling your plants? Try a new product from Yates called Success, which is synthesized from a natural soil extract and has respectable green credentials. Dipel also works.
- ✿ Don Capner says this is the time of year to cut back Kangaroo Paws and remove all dead and blackened foliage. Old clumps become unproductive so they can also be divided up now. Unlike other natives they are gross feeders and enjoy dynamic lifter or blood and bone.
- ✿ All the summer perennials can be cut back now and if you haven't already done so, remove the last of the summer veggies to make way for later plantings. Dig in the leguminous plants like beans as they enrich the soil.
- ✿ Tie-in shoots of climbing roses to prevent them from being tossed round in strong winds. It's important to gather up rose leaves as they fall because they usually carry the fungal spores of black spot.
- ✿ Mend fences! Broken palings, saggy chicken wire, rusted star pickets etc are all best fixed when the weather is cooler.
- ✿ If you have the luxury of owning a large veggie patch, pile up all your waste material from large veggies such as pumpkins, broadbeans, cabbages and Asian veggies in a corner out of the way and cover them with a hessian bag or some weed-control matting and leave them to decompose in situ. It won't take long and next season you'll have a lovely compost spot in which to plant tender veggies like lettuces, English spinach and rocket.



Did you know?

- ☺ Vinegar, diluted 1:20 with water can be used as a drench to prepare soils for acid loving plants. It also removes rust from tools and nails. Just soak for 3 days and then wash in soapy water.
- ☺ Don't throw away those supermarket plastic cake containers! They can be used as mini green houses or seed raising hot houses. Eat the cake and then put some kitchen paper in the bottom half, dampen, spread with seeds or cuttings, close lid and keep lid closed until they are ready to transplant. Don't open until then and keep out of the sun or else they will cook.
- ☺ And – coffee cups make great temporary plant containers. Fill 'em with your favourite potting mix and plant seeds or cuttings into them. They make a great gift and you are 1) reusing something that would otherwise go to landfill and 2) you don't have to worry about getting your container back. Here are some that Sue Holzknecht used for blue cornflower seedlings in a modified soya milk container (thanks Karen, Mooball coffee shop!).



Seeds Still Available from the UGC Seed Box

The window for planting before the soil becomes too cold is closing fast.

There is still time to plant beans (bush and climbing), peas, broad beans, lettuce, coriander, brassicas, capsicum, chilli. Some things need to be planted continually, a couple of weeks apart, like coriander, lettuce, rocket to ensure a continuous supply.

The post is very slow at the moment: we are allowing at least 10 days from posting seeds out to arrival, so let us know in good time what you want. Sadly, some seeds posted to us have not arrived yet, but we remain optimistic that they will turn up!



Hartmut's email address for ordering seeds is: hartmutholzkecht215@gmail.com – don't forget these are FREE seeds.

However in return, members are asked to save seeds from their crop of Club or other seeds and keep them to return to Hartmut so we can ensure the long term sustainability and viability of the seed box.

Hartmut has updated the list of the available seeds and the list follows.

PLEASE NOTE:

- ☼ Please email Hartmut to order your packets of seeds - hartmutholzkecht215@gmail.com
- ☼ Seeds are available via email ONLY – no phone calls please.
- ☼ Orders will be filled on a first in, first served basis
- ☼ There will be a maximum 2 packets per member. In your email please indicate your name, full postal address and please list up to 5 preferences in order of priority in case your first or second or third choices are not available.
- ☼ Hartmut will send them to you in the mail.
- ☼ If you have excess seeds please send or deliver to Sue and Hartmut for redistribution to club members. Email Hartmut to arrange.
- ☼ List will be updated each Newsletter edition

List of seeds available from UGC Seed Box – May 2020

Note: + indicates many more packets can be made up.

Plant	Date	Provider	Any details	No. of packets left
Vegetables				
Red Amaranth	11/2019	JH	Sow in spring in full sun. This is a cereal crop which is rich in protein and minerals	3
Beans, climbing or bush	08/2019	FO	Sow in April, in garden beds. Full sun.	2
Beans – Bush Pioneer	2020	Williams	Flat, stringless bush bean	1+
Beans – Bush Simba	2020	Williams	Round stringless bush bean	3+
Beans – Climbing Blue Lake	2020	Williams	Green, stringless climbing bean	7+
Broad beans	2019	LMR	Sow autumn, full sun	2
Broccoli	11/2019	JH	Sow in April in full sun, in rich soil	1
Capsicum, Red mini	2/2019	JB		1
Carrot, 'Top Weight'	Use by 8/2020	Yates	Plant in sunny well-drained position. Cover and moisten, then after 4 weeks	4
Chilli, 'Big Jim'	?	?		2
Sweetcorn, 'Bi colour'	5/2019	PW	Sow in spring	1
Sweet corn	2020	LMR	Sow in spring	5

Plant	Date	Provider	Any details	No. of packets left
Daikon Radish	10/2019	JH	Sow any time, full sun	2
Lettuce, Asian Stem	3/2018	PW	Notation: 'Chook Food'!	3
Lettuce, 'Lambs Tongue'	12/2019	JH		2
Lettuce, 'Green Leafy'	12/2018-2/2019	JH		2
Lettuce, Frilly Leaf	?	PH		1
Luffa	2019	HN		3
Mustard Greens	2019	DF		1
Parsnip	2018	JB		1
Peas – Massey Gem	2020	Williams	Standard, quick maturing, dwarf bush type 60-75cm, pods 3.5-5cm	4+
Snow Peas – Oregon	2020	Williams	Dwarf plants to 90cm producing flat, light green, edible pods growing to 10cm.	5+
Spinach, Southern European	2020	LMR	Sow all year round	3
Squash, Appalachian Yellow	2019	?	Notation: 'Trombone Bush'	3
Squash, Spaghetti	2020	HF	Sow spring	4+
<i>Silver beet</i>	2019	<i>KW Eden seeds</i>	<i>Sow April-May (Lost in the post)</i>	
<i>Silver beet 'Ruby Red Chard'</i>	2019	<i>KW Eden seeds</i>	<i>Sow April-May “</i>	
<i>Kale, Red</i>	2019	<i>KW Eden seeds</i>	<i>Sow April-May ”</i>	
<i>Micro greens</i>	<i>(Jan 2020)</i>	<i>KW</i>	<i>Sow in punnets anytime “</i>	
Herbs				
Sacred Basil	9/2019	JH	Sow in Spring in full sun	2
Thai Basil	2/2019	JH	Sow in spring in a sunny position. Snip off spent flowers regularly to promote bushy growth	5
Calendula	6/2019	JH	Pot marigold. Sow in winter/spring in full sun	2
Coriander	9/2019	KH	Sow autumn or spring, full sun	3
Coriander	2020	JW	Sow autumn or spring, full sun	12
Dill	11/2019	JH	Sow in full sun in autumn for spring planting. Use fresh leaves or seeds in cooking	4
Fennel	2018	JH		1
Motherwort	2019	HN	[Ask Dr. Google!]	3
Perilla (Japanese 'Shiso')	2019	JB	Aromatic salad leaf	3
Fruit				
Capsicum	6/2019	KH		3
Capsicum	2019	K		3
Cayenne Pepper	2019	KH		1
Chilli	2019	K		2
Ghost Chilli	2018/19	K		2
Ghost Chilli	6/2019	JH	Creamy white large round chilli. Hot. Sow in spring in full sun	2
Red Chilli	6/2019	JH	Heat factor #5, 4 cm long. Sow in spring in full sun	3

Plant	Date	Provider	Any details	No. of packets left
Orange Chilli	6/2019	JH	Medium heat. 3 cm long. Sow in spring in full sun	6
Shishito Japanese chilli	04/2020	PW		6+
Melon – Desert King	04/2020	PW		6+
Mouse melons	?	KH	Seeds dried on kitchen paper	3
Orange papaw	3/2019	BW		3
Mini passionfruit	2019	K		1
Flowers, Natives, Other				
Asarina barclayana	1/2018	JH	Twining climber with purple trumpet-shaped flowers. Prune lightly to promote new growth	4
Dietes grandiflora		JH	White variety. Useful grass for hot areas.	2
Pink Euodia (Melicope elleryana)	2019	DF	Tall tree, attracts birds	2
Coreopsis	11/2018	BW	Yellow flower, sow in Spring	3
Tree Dahlia	7/2019	JH	Tall perennial with mauve daisy flowers. Sow in spring. Plant in summer in full sun. Flowers in autumn.	3
Helichrysum - Paper Daisy	11/2018	JH	Scatter on prepared soil in full sun in late winter	3
Scarlet Hippeastrum	12/2019	JH	Sow in autumn in punnets. Plant out in full sun when bulbs have formed	3
Water Iris	5/2018	SH	Blue or mauve	1
Leopard Lily	3/2019	DF		3
Ornamental Passionfruit	2019	DF	Pink/red/white	2
Oriental Poppies	6/2019	JH	Sow direct onto the soil in winter and in full sun	1
Queen Anne's Lace ['Ammi Majus']	11/2018	JH	Scatter on prepared soil in late winter in full sun. Major attractant of beneficial insects	4
Black Sunflower Seeds	2019	MB	From chicken feed but planted ones all came up normally!	3
Zephyranthes (Storm lilies)	2018	SH	Pink flowers, sow in punnets or in situ	1

Bean Some Success for Penny Riley



L: I'm excited! Pioneer on the right and Simba on the left. Have to report the grasshoppers and grubs have a penchant for the Simba bush beans.

R: Also have to keep an eye on this Hawk Moth larvae – he's a guts!

Thanks for sharing your pics Penny.



Get Well Soon

Two of our dear Club members have recently had to spend some time in hospital - Barbara Waters and Nellmary McEwan. Both are thankfully on the mend.

So this comes as a big bunch of virtual flowers to you both to let you know we are thinking of you.



Dave Hancox will be outside JuJu's cafe in Murwillumbah on Wednesday mornings with organic veggie seedlings for sale. Get in quick as he doesn't have a real lot (probably 100 punnets total) – however, I did see them last week and they looked absolutely beautiful!

Dot Francis has spare seedlings of Asian Greens. If anyone would like to collect some, please phone Dot on 0427 552 757.



That's all Folks for This Month...

We really want to hear from you over this trying time – please please please send us your hints, tips, recipes, travel stories, bragging photos to ugcnews@gmail.com

And thanks as always to our printer – Sandra and Alan Guthrie at **Poster Paradise, Murwillumbah** who are still open for business.

Last Word

Chief hole-digger at Bunya Bunya House having a little rest after a busy day in the garden – thanks Mark.

