

# Leaflet

## Simply Living Community Garden Newsletter

**The garden is located at Port Melbourne Uniting Church, 144 Bridge St Port Melbourne**

### Contacts

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### Diary Dates

#### Gardening

*Working bee:*

3rd Sat, 10-11am

*Social gardening:*

Mondays, 1-2 pm, term time

*Playgroup:*

Fridays 10-12, term time

#### Make & Mend

1st & 3rd Wed, 1-4 pm

#### Subscribe to Leaflet

If you would like to be added to the "Leaflet" email list (get it first, in colour, save paper and get monthly updates about activities) please send a message to: janet.hoare@southportuniting.org.au

### Garden update

The recent rain has been great for the garden, giving it a good deep soak to help the plants cope with the heat to come.

Our tomatoes, planted out at the November working bee, are growing well and starting to flower. We planted seven different heirloom varieties so look forward to a great mix of sizes and colours.

The broad beans are sending up shoots for a second round of flowers and pods. Zucchini seeds have been sown in the same bed so will take over when the beans finish.

The leafy greens have mostly gone to seed. The perpetual spinach has been full of ladybirds and at least two species of native bees and hoverflies have been seen visiting the coriander and radish flowers.



The variable weather has played some havoc with seed germination. Some seeds have been very slow to germinate or have not come up at all, which has put our planting a bit behind.

Although the parsley is flowering there is still some to pick. Rosemary, mint, oregano are all plentiful.

### Fruit news

The plums are fruiting. One tree has already finished. The lorikeets had a wonderful feast on the high-up fruit and the blackbirds enjoyed what fell to ground.

The blood plum has lots of fruit but the other big tree had very few flowers and now not much fruit. These will ripen during the next few weeks. The lorikeets are already on the look out!

A couple of the plum trees have struggled with some fungal disease this year. They have also had a large number of tiny beetles in the leaves. After some investigation and correspondence with the Department of Agriculture the beetles were identified as *Latridiid* beetles or minute scavenger beetles (pictured).

These beetles feed on fungus and mould and are an indicator that there are other problems with the tree. There is no easy fix but we will start treating the trees when they have finished fruiting.



If you would like to share your fruit tree care knowledge, or learn alongside us, please come along to one of the summer working bees!

### Compost

We appreciate your kitchen scraps! Our home made compost has been put to great use in the garden. The worms continue to be a great delight to our child gardeners.

### Wildflower garden

We added a few new wildflowers to the front garden, including some ruby salt bush and more cut leaf daisies (*Brachyscome* species). Quite a few plants of *Wahlenbergia*, pelargonium and houndstooth have self sown too.

### Plant biosecurity

Good news from Citrus Watch - the samples sent in by us and other volunteers from around Australia were all free of the pests and diseases that the Early Detection Network monitors for.

We look forward to participating in the Autumn CitrusWatch program.

The plum trees are now hosting fruit fly traps. These contain pheromones specific to fruit flies so are less likely to attract other insects, including beneficial ones.



Uniting Church  
ST KILDA SOUTH PORT

The Simply Living Community Garden was built in 2008 with support from the City of Port Phillip Community Grants Program



### **Skill sharing opportunities**

Whether it be gardening, sewing, jam making, re-purposing items or helping our environment—we love to share skills, learn new things and spend time with other people.

Come along to any of our regular activities to learn, share, enjoy.

### **Garden working bees/social gardening**

10-11 am, 3rd Saturday of the month & 1-2 pm, Mondays (not school hols) Each month there is a special focus on a garden skill or seasonal job as well as routine garden maintenance.

Please wear suitable clothing, including enclosed shoes and sun protection. Bring your own water bottle and hand tools/bucket if you have them.

### **Family Gardening**

Fridays 10.30 am, term time alongside Playgroup. Gardening activities for pre-schoolers and their adults.

Playgroup gardening will finish on 22nd December and resume on 2nd February.

### **Make & Mend**

1-4 pm, 1st & 3rd Wednesday of the month in the church hall. Drop in sewing, crafting, mending, jam making and more. Bring your own project or help make something for our community. Sewing machines are available for use and afternoon tea is provided. You are also welcome to just drop by for a chat.

There will be no Make & Mend on 20th December or 3rd January.

### **Other learning opportunities**

We are planning to run some talks and workshops in and around the garden in 2024.

Is there something you would really like to learn more about or would really like to share your knowledge about? Possible topics include soils, seeds, compost & worm farming, bee-friendly gardening, container gardening, identifying weeds, useful apps for plant and insect identification.

If any of these sound interesting to you or you have a suggestion please get in touch with Janet.

### **Feature plant— String Beans**

String beans, French beans, bush beans, climbing beans, green beans, snap beans, butter beans - these are all beans that are harvested when the pods are immature and eaten whole.

Beans are legumes so have nitrogen-fixing *Rhizobia* bacteria in their roots. This provides nitrogen to the plant and also to the soil when the plant dies off.

Beans are good source of Vitamins A, C and K and also of folic acid and fibre. They can be eaten raw, blanched or fully cooked.

This year we have planted three varieties of climbing beans along the fence beside the compost bays. Kentucky Wonder is a green bean, Kentucky Wonder Wax is

yellow and Purple King is (you guessed it) purple, but turns green when cooked.

We've also planted bush beans, which are smaller plants that don't climb, in the wicking bed. This year we are growing a butter bean (Cherokee), which has yellow pods.

### **Green bean salad ideas**

Use green beans as the base for a delicious crunchy summer salad.

Bring a large saucepan of water to the boil, add beans and cook for 2 minutes until bright green, drain and refresh with cold water then pat dry.

Make a dressing in a bowl and drop beans in to coat or go to next step and drizzle dressing over the salad before serving.

Dressing ideas:

- 1/4 cup each lemon juice & olive oil, 1/2 tsp mustard, 1 tsp crushed garlic, pinch caster sugar
- 2 tbs olive oil, 1 tbs red wine vinegar, salt & pepper

Arrange the dressed or undressed beans on a platter or on a bed of leafy greens (you can include some red leaves for contrast).

If you like, add some other salad ingredients:

Roasted pumpkin, sweet potato or carrot;  
Slices of pear,

Sprinkle over some chopped nuts (eg walnuts, almonds) or crumbled fetta, or add some sweetness with currants or colour with pomegranate seeds

### **Thankyou**

Thanks to everyone who has been part of our garden community in 2024.

Wishing you a Happy Christmas and more great gardening in 2024!

### **Christmas at St Kilda South Port**

Our Christmas services will be held our South Melbourne church, 325 Dorcas St, South Melbourne:

Sunday 24th	Christmas Eve	5.00 pm
Monday 25th	Christmas Day	9.30 am

Regular Sunday worship is at South Melbourne 10 am

### **Picking from the garden**

*Everyone is welcome to pick from the garden for their personal use. The only things we ask are that you:*

- *pick only what you need for your family today,*
- *take care with the plants so that they can continue to grow and produce more for everyone. The only whole plants that may be taken are the root vegies, (radishes, carrots, beetroot), onions and cabbages.*
- *contribute to the garden in some way, such as: bringing shredded paper for composting, watering the garden, helping out at working bees, or making a donation (which could be cash, plants, manure, garden stakes, wire mesh, tools, etc.)*