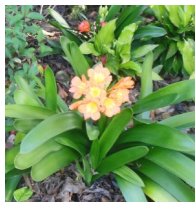


The Gentle Gardening Guide — Janet Stone

A new year and another opportunity to grow something, or do something in the garden that you haven't done before – grow a much-admired flower or shrub; cultivate fresh vegetables, a tomato in a pot will do; build a shady trellis or pergola; or maybe redesign an area which just doesn't work at present: join the Potty Potters! Choose at least one new project and give it a try this year.

A new season: as summer transitions into autumn, and the soil is still warm and damp from heavy rains, it is the ideal time to recondition garden beds with all-purpose fertiliser as annuals and perennials finish flowering; prepare vegetable beds; replenish agapanthus, hellebores, hibiscus and fuchsias with liquid manure or blood and bone; deadhead all flowers and neaten or cut back unruly shrubs, climbers and trees; and take the last semi-hardwood cuttings of woody-stemmed plants. Order Spring bulbs now to get the best choice of desirable varieties, and clean last year's bulbs ready for the refrigerator in the next few weeks if they need a boost from their dormant period.



Summer-dormant cyclamen can be revived now by crumbling the dried soil from around the corm, and replanting it (right way up) into fresh potting mix with the top of the corm sitting above soil level. Moisten and keep in a cool place until the leaves begin to grow, and then move into bright light for flowers during the cooler months.

Bare patches: in lawns or under trees and shrubs will have shown up during the hotter weeks of summer and those areas may need easier management solutions. Gravel, deep mulch or paving may be better surfaces for high traffic areas; heavy, exposed root systems under trees or shrubs can be



disguised with common ivy, nepeta or massed bromeliads; agapanthus, clivia and renga renga lilies make attractive displays in shaded spaces with fairly bright light. If the problem is caused by a water hungry eucalypt, plant hardy grevilleas, westringias and shrubby wattles which grow well in poor conditions, and will fill out the bare spaces.

Is it a pobblebonk?

After periods of summer rainfall, the burrowing Eastern Banjo frog (*Limnodynastes dumerilii*) and Northern Banjo frog (*Limnodynastes terraereginae*) are often found in large numbers at night in mulch or leaf litter in the garden. They make a distinctive short "bonk" call repeated every few seconds. Both are large frogs, growing up to the size of a clenched fist, with dark grey to brown backs. Dark blotches are sometimes present on the back and the skin can appear warty. This warty skin texture, thick short legs, round heads and upright posture often result in these frogs being mistaken for cane toads. On closer observation, the frog's sides and upper arm can be yellow to reddish in colour. *L. terraereginae* also has a red patch in the groin and red along the hind edge of the thigh, giving it the common name of scarlet-sided pobblebonk, but *L. dumerilii*, lacks the red thigh and groin colouration making it more likely to be mistaken for a cane toad.



If in doubt, leave it where it is, cover it overnight with a weighted down bucket, keep listening and hope that it goes "bonk", so it can be released back into the garden – toads of course are destined for the freezer before being disposed of in the wheelie bin. Google "compare frogs and toads" to find the Toad/Frog comparison chart compiled by the Kimberley Toad Busters.



TAMBORINE MOUNTAIN GARDEN CLUB INC.

PO Box 63, North Tamborine, 4272 ABN 281 058 436 76 www.tmbotanicgardens.org.au

NEWSLETTER

Editor: Bernadette Stacey - bernadette1859@gmail.com 0409 759 838 **February 2016**

Springtime awarded Event of the Year

The success of our garden club's *Springtime on the Mountain* festival was recognised at the Scenic Rim Australia Day Awards held in Beaudesert on January 22. The club received the **Community Event of the Year award** from a strong field of events across the Scenic Rim. It is very pleasing to know that the widespread benefits of this very professionally run annual event are acknowledged and appreciated by the wider community.

The Springtime on the Mountain festival was the largest single community event on Tamborine Mountain in 2015, bringing about 3,000 visitors, including 17 bus groups. Visitors travelled from as far away as northern New South Wales, the Sunshine Coast and even Blackwater in Queensland's central coalfields.

Accepting the award, Di Howard said the award recognises the hard work over many months by a large team of club volunteers as well as the efforts of the garden owners who selflessly work to prepare their private gardens to open the public over the three-day weekend.

As, our members well know, Springtime on the Mountain raises much-needed funds to enable the continuing administration, development and maintenance of our famed Tamborine Mountain Botanic Gardens, one of the major tourism drawcards for the mountain.

The award plaque was accepted by Club Vice-President Di Howard, Springtime Convenor Margaret Pile and Club Member Geoff Hurling who prepared the winning nomination documents.



Left—Garden club members accept the Event of the Year award from Scenic Rim mayor John Brent. From left, Margaret Pile, Geoff Hurling, John Brent and Di Howard.

What's on today

Guest speaker—Fire Ant information session
Competition table
Plants sales, Raffles, Library
(Melainie Wright - Cottage Garden plants and Salvias postponed until later in the year)

CONTACTS: President - Margaret Bell 5545 0797 | Vice President - Di Howard 5545 2628
Secretary - Robin Pope - 5545 2205 | Treasurer— Di Fenton - 5545 026 | Springtime Convener - Margaret Pile - 5545 0869 | Patron - Mary Wallace

March 2016 Meeting

From the President

Tuesday November 11th at 9:30 AM

Vonda Youngman Community Centre Main Street, North Tamborine

Guest Speaker Roy Bilbie - Fragrant Rhododendrons. Roy is a member of the RHS Rhododendron, Camellia and Magnolia Group and recently won two sections of their 2015 photographic competition.



R.Strawberry Parfait—Roy Bilbie

Competition table

- a flowering native,
- an exotic tree or shrub
- a flowering bulb or corm,
- a vegetable / fruit,
- an arrangement of foliage
- a dahlia flower,
- a climber flower

Specimen table

Bring along a specimen; unusual, interesting, beautiful, unknown. Include a question if you like.

Question and answer segment

Get the answers you need to all your gardening questions. Use your experience to help with someone else's problems.

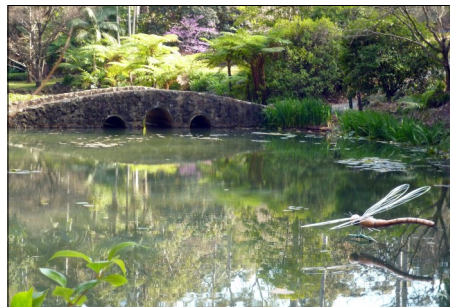
Club membership subscriptions due

\$40 couple \$25 single. Payments can be made on the website or at the next meeting.

There was great excitement on the night of the Australia Day Awards when 'Springtime' was announced winner of the SRRRC Event of the Year 2015. This is such a well earned accolade for a fantastic effort by so many members of this club and community and in particular our convenor Margaret Pile. The event is a huge undertaking. When receiving the Award, Di Howard summed it up perfectly, *"the award recognises the hard work over many months by a large team of club volunteers as well as the efforts of the garden owners who selflessly work to prepare their private gardens and open to the public over the three-day weekend."* Congratulations everyone.

Next month is our Annual General Meeting, please don't stay away in fear of being seconded into a job, that doesn't happen (we get you well beforehand!). What we do need is offers of help in the following areas and I'd like to hear from some volunteers today or in the next few days after reading this. Our Morning Tea convenors are retiring and we need one or two to take on that role.

Ron and Pat have done a fantastic job and will happily help their replacements learn the ropes. Monthly Morning Tea helpers are required too and the list will be circulated today. Elsa may need a hand with the Competition Table too. All other positions are filled and my thanks to everyone for continuing with those duties. *Margaret*



ABUTILONS

Abutilons, often referred to as Chinese Lanterns, are evergreen shrubs with attractive maple-like leaves and an open, pendulous habit. They grow between 2 and 3 metres tall, with flower colours including orange, pink, red, salmon, white and yellow, produced from September to December, but will spot flower at other times.

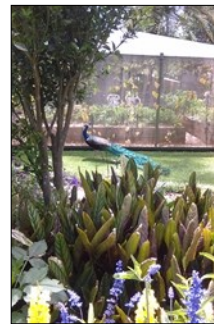
Abutilons are often overlooked as garden plants as they have a tendency to become leggy and need regular pruning to maintain a compact shape, but are actually very adaptable plants if trained early to achieve an attractive drooping habit. They can be trained over hoops to create an obelisk, or planted in a large hanging basket with stems trailing down to provide a mass of blossoms. On an arbour or trellis, abutilons can be trained to arch over so their dainty blooms hang down. An effective feature standard can be created by plaiting three abutilons of different colours together and training them up a secure stake. The plants can be placed in a sturdy pot with good premium quality potting mix or planted directly into the ground. Remove unwanted lower branches and foliage but keep the leaves on the top third of the Abutilons as they will need these to grow. Gently plait the three stems together, continuing the plaiting as the plants grow until the "trunk" reaches a desirable height - about 1.5 metres to allow the upper branches to arch and the flowers to create a pendulous halo of colour.



Abutilons produce flowers on the current season's growth, so should be pruned in late winter or early spring. Selectively shape the abutilon by cutting back bare, straggly or old stems just above a strong, vigorous shoot near the plant's base, or completely remove them at the plant's base. Hybrid abutilon specimens respond well if new growth is tip pruned after at least six new leaves appear on the young shoot.—Janet Stone

November garden visit

Our last garden visit was in November to Noel Hovelroud's beautiful two acre garden. Noel's son Peter was very pleased to welcome us to his father's garden. The property used to be an avocado farm and many hours have been spent building the garden beds, digging down 12" to put in a weed barrier to stop the grass invading. The productive garden was full of citrus, tamarillo and rhubarb, not to mention the vibrant impatiens, which do exceedingly well here. There was also a lovely shadecloth enclosed vegetable garden. A true gardener's paradise. – Glenda Sullivan



February garden visit

Tuesday Feb 16, 10am
Margaret Pile & Denby Browning
26 Elbert Court, Eagle Heights, BYO tea/coffee