



The Experts' Choice



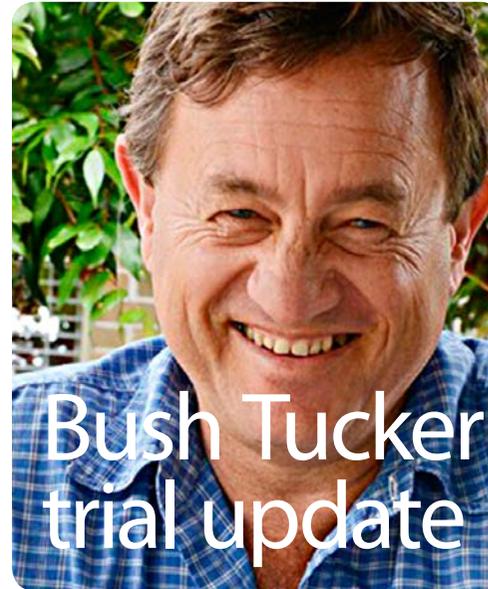
# e-feedback

YOUR REGULAR GARDENING NEWS FROM NEUTROG

SPRING EDITION #1



Mt Lofty Botanic Garden  
~ Rhododendron Gully



Bush Tucker  
trial update

Milk as a  
fungicide!

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Lawn Care  
Revolution  
by Graham Ross



*Rhododendron kesangiae* is one of the iconic Rhododendrons from Bhutan and currently in bloom in the Rhododendron gully.



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Mount Lofty Botanic Garden is a cool-temperate garden overlooking the Piccadilly Valley, located on the eastern slopes of Mount Lofty in the Adelaide Hills. Since its opening in 1977, 65 of the total 97 hectares of native bushland have been transformed into a garden of breathtaking beauty.

The many plant collections within the Mount Lofty Botanic Garden come from both Australian states and various regions around the world including South and North America, China, East Africa, South East Asia and New Zealand. It is also the only public garden in South Australia where many of these particular plants are featured.

The gardens have been established with a number of walking trails for the public. Native flora that dominated the Mount Lofty Ranges before European settlement is featured on the Bank SA Nature Trail. The Valley View walking trail features camellias and rhododendrons, and the iconic Heysen Trail, which spans 1,200 kilometres from the Fleurieu Peninsula to the Flinders Ranges, passes through the oldest section of the garden. Streams meander through a woodland garden and lead to several waterfalls, and the collection of rose species in the Heritage Rose Garden include many of the parents from which modern garden roses have been bred over hundreds of years.

September through to November is the best time of the year to experience the incredible displays of rhododendrons, camellias, roses and magnolias. Many visitors to the garden rate the experience with glowing comments such as 'Wonderful...the scenery is gorgeous', and "Absolutely breathtaking, beautifully kept, amazing grounds and so much to see." In particular, the diversity and magnificence of the Internationally-renowned collection of rhododendrons in 'Rhododendron Gully' is simply stunning. One of Australia's best collections, this rhododendron garden is nestled amongst an extensive range of Chinese trees and shrubs. It is a spectacular location for a picnic or somewhere to relax and just appreciate the colour and beauty.

Rob Hatcher has been supervisor of Rhododendron Gully (along with other sections of the Botanic Garden) for 8 years. Having also held positions in the past as National and State President of the Australian Rhododendron Society, he has been recently re-elected as State President after taking a break. Rob's inspiration for rhododendrons came from a senior gardener he trained with at the Botanic Gardens in the 1970's, and they are plants he's very passionate about. "They are always evolving and changing, they can range from a 4" plant to a 30-metre high tree, they cover every habitat on earth and are located on every continent except Antarctica...and, to add to the appeal, there is an ongoing investigation as to whether there are 1, 2 or 3 different species" says Rob. He has travelled extensively to fulfil his passion, recently returning from Nepal and Bengal, where he saw 12 varieties in flower and several not in flower, but still recognisable by their unique foliage and form.



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Neutrog's Kahoona is the fertiliser chosen for Rhododendron Gully, and as Rob says "It feeds the needs of the plant and provides good health and balance, while at the same time being organic based - not a harsh chemical fertiliser". He also uses it on his plants at home. The garden receives two applications a year - in spring after flowering, and again in January or February before dormancy. Seamungus is used to establish any new plantings.

If you visit the gardens and get the chance to talk to Rob, he is more than keen to pass on his tips on how to grow rhododendrons successfully at home. Australian Rhododendron Society meetings are also a great resource. Check the SA branch website at [www.sarhodo.org.au](http://www.sarhodo.org.au) or find a branch in your State. The Australian Rhododendron Society plays an important role in supporting the Rhododendron Gully by way of seed, donating funds for projects and supporting the garden's framework.

The Mount Lofty Botanic Garden is located at 16 Lampert Rd, Crafers, South Australia. Free guided walks are held every Thursday of the year, and notes for self-guided walks are available including an audio tour. Visitor information can be found on the Botanic Gardens of South Australia [website](http://www.bgsa.org.au). 

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## Visit from Vietnam



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This past week we have been host to the distributor of Neutrog products in Vietnam. Director of Vietrade, Nguyen Tien Anh made a trip to Neutrog operations in South Australia with his son, Ahn junior. Neutrog's leading commercial product, Rapid Raiser, has been exported to Vietnam since 2004 and 400 tonne of Neutrog products is heading there this month.

This photo was taken in front of one of the twenty shipping containers being packed, when Managing Director, Angus Irwin took the pair on a tour of the factory.

To read a recent article about Neutrog in Vietnam click [here](#).

## From the Ground Up tip: Milk as a fungicide

Believe it or not, milk is an effective fungicide in the war against a number of fungal diseases, including powdery mildew, black spot and rust. A number of studies both here and overseas have confirmed this, and have suggested this completely non-toxic spray may even be better than conventional chemical fungicides. It has been found to be effective on grapevines, roses and a wide variety of other plants, including pansies and violas, hydrangeas, zucchinis and cucumbers.

It is believed that milk works in two ways – firstly it has a germicidal effect (killing the fungal spores), and secondly, stimulating the plant's immune system so that it becomes more disease resistant.

For the treatment of black spot and rust (where the fungal spores penetrate and develop within the leaf surface), it appears that milk is only effective as a preventative fungicide. As both are related to long-term leaf wetness, if milk is to work effectively it must be applied before the damp and wet weather conditions occur, before new growth has become infected, and the plant must be sprayed thoroughly to achieve the maximum possible leaf coverage.

Mix one part milk with ten parts water and thoroughly spray over the rose or other infection-prone plant. This needs to be applied every five to seven days for three applications. Re-apply after rain. **N**

### Other tips to minimise powdery mildew, black spot and rust:

- Remove and dispose of any diseased leaves into the rubbish bin (not the compost)
- Apply a layer of mulch so there can be minimal splashing of remaining fungal spores from the soil to the lower foliage of the plant
- Ensure plants are happy, healthy and well-nourished with regular fertiliser applications.
- Apply GOGO Juice monthly



*GOGO Juice trials on roses resulted in significantly less foliage affected by Black Spot.*

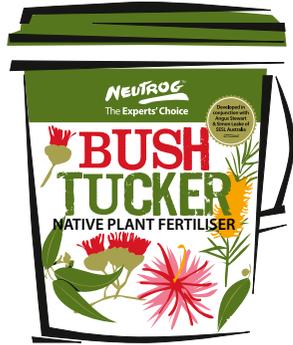


## What to plant now in your garden

- Plant cold sensitive plants such as citrus, passionfruit, bougainvillea and hibiscus as the ground starts to warm up.
  - Plant petunias and salvias for summer colour in sunny positions. Alternatively plant drought tolerant annual varieties such as Californian poppies, Alyssum and portulacas.
  - Now is the time to plant Christmas colour, as seedlings from punnets require 8-10 weeks to get them up to size.
  - Plant impatiens in shaded areas for a mass of colour over the warmer weather. Although classified as annuals, they will continue for many years in frost-free areas.
  - Plant tomatoes. In cooler regions, grow seedlings in pots where you can better position them to be better protected from any late colder weather.
  - Plant out your main crop of summer vegetables, protecting cold sensitive varieties if required.
- Use 100% organic products such as Bounce Back, Rapid Raiser or Seamungus when preparing beds and planting.

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# BUSH TUCKER TRIAL UPDATE



“Bernie and Marion at Jilliby on the NSW Central Coast have been trialling Bush Tucker through the 2015 winter and their plants are already showing a good response in spite of the cool winter we have had. The beautiful bronze new growth of the dwarf lilly pilly *Acmena* ‘Allyn Magic’ is testimony to the nutritional balance of the new Bush Tucker formulation.”

*Angus Stewart*



Bush Tucker is an organically based fertiliser for Australian plants that has been fortified with trace elements to ensure that it will provide the specialised needs of our native plants.

Bush Tucker is currently being trialled by the Botanic Gardens Adelaide and Wittunga, the Urrbrae Campus of Tafe SA, the Commonwealth Golf Club in Victoria, and numerous native plant nurseries around Australia including State Flora in South Australia. Also busy trialling in their home gardens are some members of specialist native groups including the Australian Native Plant Society branches in Victoria and NSW.



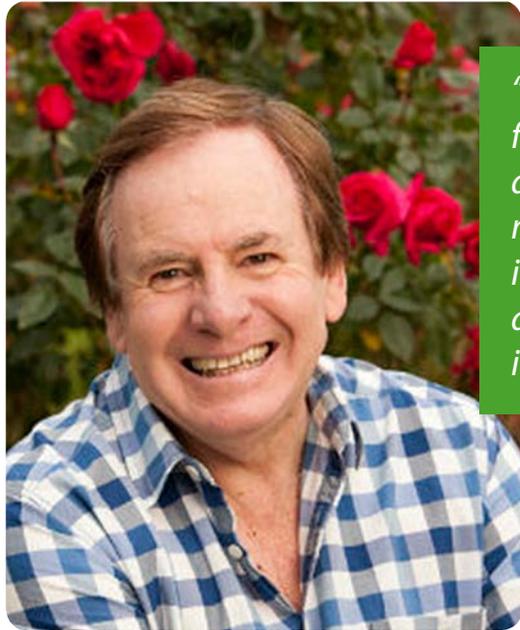
*Acmena Allyn Magic - Before Bush Tucker*



*Acmena Allyn Magic - 5 weeks after application*



# Lawn Care Revolution by Graham Ross



*"I've used Sudden Impact for Lawns on my own lawn and plants. The ratio of nitrogen and potassium is ideal for promoting growth and it has boosted levels of iron and magnesium."*

*Graham Ross*



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Home garden and professional lawn care has changed greatly since I trained as a greenkeeper 50 years ago. We no longer use toxic, carcinogenic herbicides to control weeds and insects. Sulphate of ammonia is no longer the fertiliser of choice, the annual top dressing of lawns is a thing of the past and spring is not the only season for encouraging a beautiful home garden lawn.

Also changed are the attitudes to the environmental benefits from encouraging an attractive, lush green grass groundcover around your home. It is now accepted as sound ecology that a good grass cover acts as a 'moisture trap' absorbing light to heavy showers of rain dramatically reducing runoff and soil erosion. Over time the absorbed moisture also helps tree roots and encourages essential tree health. The temperature on a hot summer's day will be reduced around your home when a lush, green lawn is present, it can be this cooler air that can be drawn into the home, especially if trees are also present, reducing temperatures indoors.

Of course there is also the well-documented real estate 'street appeal' - when a beautiful lawn surrounding a home, helps increase the sale price of a property by 13-18%.

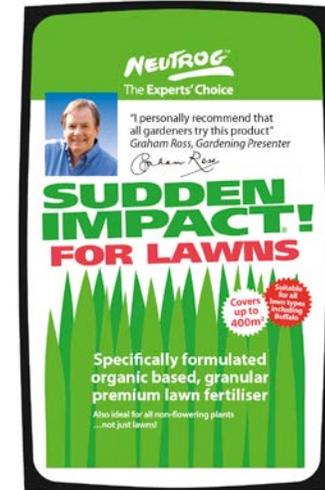
We know that the best way to fight weeds and disease is to 'not give the suckers an even break' and have a strong healthy lawn. Sulphate of Ammonia, 100% nitrogen, will green- up your grass for sure 'overnight' but do little for anything other than the leaves. It can also turn grass leaves soft and prone to traffic damage from kids and pets, leading to annual weed infestation. Remember annual weeds like bindii (Jo Jo or Bindi-eyes), summer and winter grass and Cape, cud or flat weed are all opportunistic and love a weakened grass with the odd bare patches to colonise.

In the last 35 years, alongside climate change, I now receive many calls on our national Garden Clinic radio show and on the Garden Clinic Club helpline about moulds, mildews and other fungal diseases attacking grass. Apart from changes in the weather patterns, 'soft' grass encourages pathogen or disease attack.

The answer to the majority of grass problems is a complete lawn fertiliser. Research was showing this during my horticultural teaching days in the 1970's when the Turf Grass Institute was set up. Nitrogen is only one part of a ten-fold solution. Healthy leaves are obviously important as they produce food from the sun to grow strong grass but stems, rhizomes and roots also need phosphorous and potassium to remain strong, thick and vigorous. Alongside the main balanced N:P:K nutrition are low doses of minor or trace elements. Research now shows calcium and sulphur are just as essential for plant and grass health as the big three. That's how you achieve a lush, thick attractive green grass cover without the weeds and diseases that also ticks all the appearance boxes too.

For a decade or more now, organic based fertilisers have been successfully used in the garden for providing balanced nutrition to roses, trees, flowers, citrus, stone fruits and vegetables. Now lawn care has caught up leaving the old so-called fertilisers behind. If that sounds like Sudden Impact for Lawns you'd be correct. I apply it year round, every 2-3 months.

Incidentally I also apply Sudden Impact for Lawns to my bamboo hedge and palms. Read more about Sudden Impact for lawns [here](#). 



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# Online Store

[Click here](#)

## Acid Lovers sample pack

Do you have Camellias, Gardenias, Rhododendrons and other acid loving plants in your garden? As they finish flowering trim and tidy, then apply Kahootna and water in with GOGO Juice. Seamungus is a health tonic for plants, is 100% organic and can be applied all year round. Try our Acid Lovers Sample Pack from the [Online Store](#).



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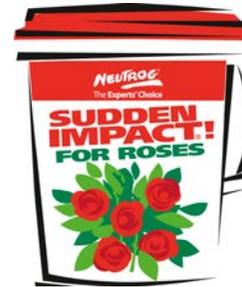


## Mailbox

### The 'Lazarus' effect

“ Hi to all the clever people at Neutrog,

Just had to tell you that four years ago, Alan and I did a long house sit for a lovely couple in Harvey. A one acre garden with over 100 roses including lots of climbing roses over arches, trellis, fences and walls, but sadly neglected for ten years due to busy life style. The poor roses were in dire need of t.l.c., with so much dead wood, die back etc. However we got to work with our trusty secateurs, and after a few weeks work things were on the improve. We fed all the roses with “Sudden Impact”. WOW, come November the garden was transformed - so much so that we invited the South West Rose group to visit. They were astounded at the colour and form of the old roses. The rose group of which we were members had been trialling “Sudden Impact” but the results were much greater than expected. People kept asking the names of individual roses, we told them we had named them all “Lazarus” as they had come back from the dead. The owners on return were astounded. Needless to say we always have this wonderful product on hand, and recommend to all.



P.S. We now live in Lakelands near Mandurah, and have joined the Mandurah Garden Club which celebrated its 35th birthday this year. We are a pair of oldies 76 and 82. Our new garden gives us much delight and we use your products all the time, with awesome results. Your devotees, June and Alan ”

We'd love to hear of your gardening successes.  
Send your comments for us to share with other gardeners.  
Photos welcome! [info@neutrog.com.au](mailto:info@neutrog.com.au)



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