

feedback

spring 2010

WANG WANG & FUNI
THE WINNER IS ROCKET FUEL
WIN FROM THE GROUND UP NSW
GEORGE THOMSON
A GROWING LEGEND





Wang Wang and Funi are two names that don't need an introduction. These amazing creatures are the only Giant Pandas in the Southern Hemisphere, and the first to live permanently in Australia. Only about 1,600 of these rare animals live in the wild, while another 120 are in Chinese breeding facilities and zoos.

In November last year, Wang Wang (*Net Net*) and Funi (*Lucky Girl*) brought with them a flurry of excitement when they touched down at Adelaide Airport and were escorted by police in a climate-controlled semi-trailer to deliver them safely to their new home at Adelaide Zoo.

With almost a year past, Wang Wang and Funi have both shown to be big characters. Funi is the star of the show, very happy to strike a pose for the cameras and is quite a playful little girl when working with her trainers. Wang Wang on the other hand, is adventurous and quite relaxed; he is very bright and easy to train. In his outdoor environment he does a little exploring, eats a lot and then flops for a nap.

Years of preparation were done in readiness for these Giant Pandas; both Wang Wang and Funi enjoy an \$8 million state-of-the-art accommodation. The pandas each have their separate areas, and have recently swapped enclosures. This is something the zoo has wanted to do for quite a few months and it went without a hitch, with both panda's settling nicely into their new environments, exploring new areas laced with each other's scents. The exhibit is specially designed so the pandas can be moved around easily and this is where Wang Wang and Funi will be introduced together in the future for breeding.

The Giant Panda has adapted to live on a diet of 99% bamboo. As the nutritional level of bamboo is low, Wang Wang and Funi eat a huge 20kg of bamboo each per day, and prefer the tender parts which have more nutrition and less fibre. A bamboo plantation has been established at Bolivar in South

Australia to ensure a reliable source could be grown to provide a continual supply of food for the Pandas. It has been in operation since September last year, and visiting Chinese delegates were very impressed with the growth rates so far.

The extensive plantation covers 14 hectares, and nine different species of bamboo are cultivated to not only feed Wang Wang and Funi but also for the Zoo's red pandas, as well as the vast variety of ornamental bamboo for the Zoo grounds.

The bamboo is also sourced from private homes in Adelaide and replanted at the site. It takes bamboo about three years to get established, and can take anything from 4 to 15 years for different species to reach their maximum size, depending on the species, soil, sunlight, climate and watering conditions.

Neutrog has been assisting Adelaide Zoo with their bamboo fertiliser requirements under the direction of Jason Copeland, who is the coordinator at the Bolivar site. Seamungus is used when transplanting the bamboo which, due to its formulation greatly assists in establishing the plants, Rapid Raiser is used to help with ongoing growth and to enrich the soil, and Sudden Impact for Lawns is applied to established plants "to kick them on" as Jason says. The high Nitrogen level in Sudden Impact for Lawns is ideal for all non-flowering plants such as bamboo. Jason's comments could not be more positive, "The results we are getting from all of the Neutrog products are absolutely awesome – they are fantastic to not only condition the soil, but for growing great healthy plants".

For more information on Wang Wang and Funi, visit www.adelaidezoo.com.au or phone 08 8267 3255.



AND THE WINNER IS... ROCKET FUEL!

Thank you to everyone who entered the 'Name the Fertiliser Competition'. We had so many wonderful, creative names sent in, it was extremely difficult to choose...

Congratulations to Stephanie Rockliff who won \$500 for submitting the winning name 'Rocket Fuel'. Stephanie also nominated the Elizabeth Downs Primary School to be the recipient of the \$2,500 prize.

We had the privilege of visiting the Elizabeth Downs Primary School - participating outside in their garden session, then into the kitchen to assist with the food preparation and sat down to a wonderful meal enjoyed with the children - which they had grown, harvested, prepared and shared. Angus Irwin (MD Neutrog) and Stephanie Rockliff presented the prize to Peter Dunstan (Principle), Sue Proeve (Garden Specialist) and Kate Harbison (Kitchen Specialist) which the school will use with great pleasure to maintain their kitchen garden under the Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Program.

Be sure to look out for Rocket Fuel, a specialist organic fruit & veg fertiliser... Coming soon!



GOGO JUICE IS GOING BANANAS!!!



Try it and see for yourself... we'd love to hear your results... Are you on [facebook](#)? If so join us on the Neutrog facebook page and "like" us. All comments, questions, photos and feedback are welcome!!

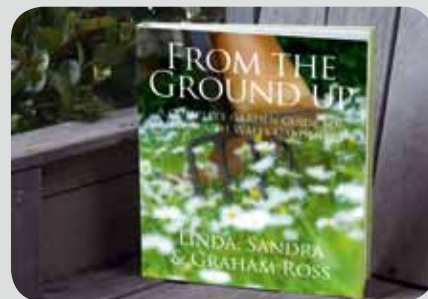


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COMING SOON! **HUMUNGUS!** SOIL TEST KIT

GEORGE THOMSON A GROWING LEGEND

George Thomson is a name that is renowned in the rose world, both here in Australia and overseas.

Now living in the picturesque town of Willunga, 44km south of Adelaide, George's childhood began in Scotland in 1938.



After studying genetics and graduating with a Bachelor in Chemistry and Botany at the University of Dundee in Scotland, George completed an apprenticeship at Kew Gardens in London and then went on to work in Scotland with renowned rose hybridiser Alex Cocker.

After moving to Australia when he was 20 years old and whilst working as a shearer, George bred roses, gladioli and chrysanthemums in his spare time. As the years passed, his interest in breeding grew to become a full time passion.

George breeds plants that are ideally suited to Australian conditions, and says "Rose breeding is a bit like a lottery... the more seeds you put in, the more chances you have. After planting thousands of seeds, you might end up with two good roses if you're lucky."

George has won medals for his roses that have been trialled at the National Rose Trial Gardens, including a bronze medal for a shrub rose 'Lady Phelia' in 2005, and in 2006 he won the Certificate of Merit for the Most Fragrant Rose for 'TOMstory'.

Tasmania's Crown Princess Mary of Denmark has had a delicate cream-and-honey coloured rose named after her, which was also bred by George. Under an agreement with the Danish royal family, \$1 from the sale of each rose plant for the next 20 years will be donated to the Heart Foundation. George started work on this variety in 1983, breeding in heat resistance to ensure suitability for Australian conditions, whilst also preserving its delicate appearance. Among his other accomplishments, George is also the Growers Representative for the South Australian Chrysanthemum and Floral Art Society.



Now also breeding chrysanthemums, George focuses on getting the most out of the plants by trying different ways of growing, including which fertilisers work best. Over the years he has trialled and tested many products, creating his own 'mixes' using various combinations including Seamungus, Sudden Impact for Lawns and of course Sudden Impact for Roses. These products, along with George's techniques in rooting, potting, staking and all other aspects related to breeding and growing plants have ensured that he is still creating top quality plants.

George says "Neutrog has made it so easy to fertilise as the products contain all of the necessary ingredients for optimal growth, and with a far better outcome than other products on the market...and the Seamungus is a 'world beater' when used on Chrysanthemums".

There are no hard and fast rules with George – he says it's all trial and error, but is confident that the use of Neutrog's products gives him a distinct advantage. He is excited about trialling GOGO Juice on his chrysanthemum cuttings – we will keep you posted on the results.

Neutrog's Spring Fertilising Programs

It is Neutrog's philosophy and belief that plants perform at their optimum level when regularly fed right throughout the year – at least once in each of the four seasons.

All Garden



To view more programs and find out which of Neutrog's Year Round Fertilising Programs are right for your garden needs visit our website www.neutrog.com.au

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