



# The Pooh Bah News

## Dear Pooh Bah Club subscribers,

The change of season feels like it is well and truly here and we're excited to welcome autumn with a new format for our regular newsletters. Making the change has been a process not dissimilar to starting a garden, it began with the seed of an idea and will take time to grow and shape over the course of 2021. Each month we'll continue to focus on putting together a range of information that we hope you'll enjoy.

This month, we take a closer look at Seamungus, one of our most popular products, Dr Uwe explores the idea behind what weeds can tell you about your soil, we feature an amazing kitchen garden in Margaret River, congratulate Graham Ross on a well deserved honour and our year round fertilising guide will help you feed your garden in autumn to set your plants up for a thriving spring.

We look forward to your input as we update our newsletter and encourage you to also visit our social media for more news and stories. And if you know of someone that you think would enjoy reading our newsletter, please consider forwarding this email to them so they can join the "Pooh Bah Club".

Happy gardening!

**The Neutrog Team**



## Photo of the Month / Lemon Myrtle, *Backhousia citriodora*



**A new introduction to the newsletter is the Photo of the Month. At Neutrog we love seeing photos of your garden and we'd like to share more of these. And what a beautiful image to start with from an establishing garden in the Adelaide Hills.**

This Australian shrub naturally occurs in the wetter coastal areas of northern New South Wales and southern Queensland. A rainforest species that ideally prefers a warm, sunny, or partially shaded spot that is sheltered from frost and cold winds - although it can be encouraged to grow in other climates, such as the Adelaide Hills!

In optimum conditions it can grow from 3-8 metres in height with graceful hanging branches of soft green leaves. In summer, it has clusters of feathery, cream leaves that create a spectacular fragrant display.

As a native Lemon Myrtle responds well to year round fertilising which will help to promote resilience to any climate and pest stress and encourage beautiful blooms. Our product Bush Tucker has been specifically developed in consultation with native plant expert Angus Stewart and soil scientist Simon Leake, to meet the needs of all Australian native plants.

It's development and trial over a number of years resulted in a unique product that is recommended by the Australian Plant Society of Victoria. An organic-based boosted fertiliser, specifically developed to meet the specialised needs of all Australian native plants it contains trace elements that have been added to lock up phosphorus, making Bush Tucker ideal for even the most phosphorus-sensitive plants such as grevilleas, banksias and proteas.

**As native expert Angus Stewart says,  
"Whilst native plants are great survivors in the garden, regular feeding helps them to thrive and reach their full potential. The benefits of doing so are not only enjoyed by yourself, by insects, bees and birds, but perhaps more importantly, the environment benefits - the greater the plant growth, the more carbon is captured."**



## Product Profile / Diving into Seamungus

**On returning from a summer break, our Managing Director shared this photo from a fishing charter (a successful one by all accounts!) and what followed was the story of how Seamungus was developed over 20 years ago.**

Product development can come in many forms. Sometimes from a specific identified need, other times from a discovery in our R&D lab and, in the case of Seamungus, an event occurs that presents an opportunity that spurs a new product into life.

In April 1996, in Boston Bay, South Australia, organic wastes and nutrients from the caged tuna farms contributed to a phytoplankton bloom. This large-scale bloom - or "Red Tide" - reduced oxygen levels and caused extensive gill damage to the tuna. The bloom, together with weather events that stirred up the waste, resulted in 75% of the tuna stock being killed.



In response to this catastrophic event for the then \$90 million dollar tuna industry in the area, the Port Lincoln council set up a process to compost the tuna with the aid of Flinders University and the late Dr Nick McLure. Neutrog sourced and utilised some of this tuna compost and combined it with poultry manure, humates, seagrass and kelp to produce a product to be known as Seamungus.

The combination of ingredients created a product that delivered a diverse range of nutrients with numerous natural growth stimulants. Stimulants that encouraged growth both above and below the ground. Following product development and testing, the first batches of Seamungus were produced in the early 2000's and it has since become one of our most widely used products in both home garden and commercial applications.

**Seamungus contains three individual varieties of kelp. Bull kelp from Tasmania, Brown kelp from South Australia and kelp powder from south-east Asia. Each of these varieties has individual attributes which when combined with fish, humic acid and manure, make it a potent tonic for your garden.**

Seamungus will hold up to 70% of its own weight in moisture - significantly increasing your soils ability to retain water and nutrients. Seamungus is available in a liquid, pellet and crumble and can be found at your local hardware store or garden centre.



[Click here to learn more about Seamungus.](#)

### **SEAMUNGUS APPLICATION RATES / Pellet or Crumble GARDENS**

Established - apply 100g per square metre every 6-8 weeks throughout the year, including winter, or as required.

Planting - apply 50g per plant to base of the hole and cover with 1-5cm soil.

Pots - apply 50g per 8" pot every 6 weeks with relative increases or decreases depending on the pot size.

### **LAWNS**

Established - apply 100g per square metre every 10-12 weeks throughout the year or as required.

New - incorporate 100g per square metre into the soil prior to planting or laying. Always water in well.

### **SEAMUNGUS APPLICATION RATES / Liquid**

Shake well before use. 40ml (1 capful) of Seamungus diluted in 8-10 litres of water will treat up to 8 square metres of soil. For optimum results, apply every month. Use diluted product within 1 week. 1 litre will make 120 litres

### **HINT**

A litre container will hold approximately 600g of Seamungus and 1 cup will hold approximately 150g

**Most of us find weeds to be the bane of our gardening lives, but ultimately, weeds are just another species of plant, the question is, have they been given a bad rap? We challenged Dr Uwe Stroehrer, to see if he could look at weeds from a different perspective!**

I have to admit that I found the concept of looking at weeds from a positive; a challenge. As a passionate gardener, I feel satisfied when there are little to no weeds present in my garden, but as I put this article together it was interesting to consider what weeds actually contribute to our garden eco-system.

We know that plants across the spectrum can be classified as a weed in one place and not in another. Soursobs are a great example of a plant that was originally introduced as an ornamental plant from South Africa and now is a prolific weed. Paterson's Cure (or in South Australia, Salvation Jane) was also an introduced plant which has since become a weed.

***My mother-in-law calls weeds "pioneer plants", as they are the first to colonise a bare patch of soil and what's fascinating about that, is what those individual weeds can tell us about the soil in our garden.***

At Neutrog with all the fertiliser around at the factory we do get some Stinging Nettles. Stinging Nettles are actually an indicator of a healthy rich soil, which is one of the reasons you see so many of them in places like Europe where the topsoil is deep and rich. Weeds like Knapweed, grow very well in acidic soils.



Sorrel and Dandelion grow in low fertile soils, particularly those lacking potassium and phosphate. Others such as Capeweed indicate high soil fertility. Many people think of Clover as a weed yet it fixes nitrogen and enriches the soil for this nutrient thus allowing other plants to benefit from higher soil nitrogen levels, this is especially the case if you keep the clover under control and don't allow it to spread and set seed.

So, before you roll up your sleeves to tackle some weeds, consider what they could be telling you about the soil underneath and what plants would suit that area of your garden – or what you need to do to the soil before you start planting.

Weeds can also be contributors to your garden – and I don't mean in extra work! In winter they stop nitrogen loss from the soil, as they take up the nitrogen. If they didn't, soil microbes would liberate the nitrogen into ammonia or nitrous oxide. So here weeds help nutrient loss. In other cases, weeds add organic carbon to the soil both by their root system and the sugars they secrete add this valuable element into your soil. The root secretion from weeds will in turn feed soil microbes thus enhancing the biological activity of your soil.

Weeds growing on sloping and/or nutritionally poor soil, reduce erosion of what little topsoil there may be. Even the root system of weeds helps to break up soil clumps making it easier for other plant roots to penetrate and establish themselves.

So, a certain level of weeds may actually enhance your gardens ecosystem however, it still needs to be balanced and they do need to be controlled. Nothing is worse than when you keep your weeds under control and the next-door garden is an overgrown weed carnival.

Managing weeds can be done a few different ways. The first is by good old fashioned 'weeding'. If you do this, remember to tackle them before they set seed and put them into your compost. Secondly, depending on the weed, you can also work them back into the soil. Both these methods allow you to utilise their organic content making the physical labour at least somewhat worth it!

And finally, mulching is a good way to control weeds and to keep their numbers in check. Mulching with an organic mulch like Whoflungdung chokes out or suppresses the weeds by creating a stable, organic layer and those weeds determined to poke through, will be easier to pull out as the mulch will improve the soil friability.

An old saying goes that "a weed is just a plant growing in the wrong spot", but after further thought, perhaps that weed is there for a reason. And I'm going to try and remember that next time I have the urge to pull one out!



**If Uwe still hasn't convinced you on the benefits of weeds, remember that Whoflungdung is not only weed free, but it's also fantastic at suppressing weeds while still feeding your soil.**

**[Click here to listen to Dr. Uwe and Graham Ross on Radio 2GB.](#)**

## Garden Story / Margaret River Primary Kitchen Garden

**We are lucky at Neutrog to be invited to see community gardens and kitchen garden programs (aka KGP) around Australia, but it was hard not to acknowledge that the Margaret River Primary Kitchen Garden sets the bar pretty high. Truly embodying what a school based KGP is meant to be, we were thrilled when Brian, our Customer Relationship Manager in WA, made a trip to visit the garden.**

Those with a vegetable garden know that it can be an incredibly rewarding, productive, fascinating and at times frustrating, journey. So just imagine going on that journey with an entire school of children! At Margaret River Primary school their Kitchen Garden program has been so successful it has extended outside the walls of the school to include involvement from the wider community.

The prolific garden underpins many elements of the education program with kitchen challenges encouraging children to devise and cook recipes with ingredients sourced from the garden, mini “journalists” reporting to the school community on the activities in the garden, budding entrepreneurs manning the Roadside Honesty Stall, and science classes exploring how the ecology of a vegetable garden works.

Each grade level are involved in the garden in some capacity and through their involvement they learn about seasons, soil, plant types, environment and different gardening practices. In the garden they have the company of some much loved bantam chooks as they grow an amazing abundance of plants from the satisfyingly easy through to the genuinely time consuming and tricky. This past year has seen ginger, water chestnuts, pomegranate, as well as favorites like tomatoes, chard, corn, sunflowers and zucchini (and many many more!)

At Neutrog, our passion for fertilising vegetable gardens year round and understanding and improving soil quality was reflected in what we saw at Margaret River Primary. We're looking forward to following their journey on Facebook and continuing to watch this great program thrive – just like their vegetables!



[Click here to find out more about Margaret River Primary Kitchen Garden.](#)

## Rare Fruit Arboretum / The Importance of Nets!



**In our last newsletter we highlighted that the Rare Fruit Society had been out for a working bee to apply nets to a collection of trees in the Arboretum. And from the abundance of fruit on the trees under the nets, it is clear the effort has been rewarded.**

Netting these rare trees is hugely important prior to fruit set, (not just to ensure that we have the opportunity to sample the beautiful fruit produced by the trees!), predominantly to allow the trees to come into full production which facilitates accurate identification. This may seem like an odd statement, surely The Rare Fruit Society know the identity of the plants in the Arboretum, but in a few cases it is not that simple.

Within the Arboretum, there are trees that have not formally been identified. Trees may have been grafted from an orchard where historical records have not been kept, a tree may have previously not produced fruit or, in some cases, trees have been donated as part of a deceased estate.

With the abundance of fruit on this tree, there should be no problem in identifying its variety, but now we just need to identify what to do with all that fruit!

In the next newsletter we are looking at a rare variety of fig in the Arboretum.

**[Click here to find out more about the Rare Fruit Arboretum.](#)**

## The Expert's Choice / Congratulations Graham Ross!



**At Neutrog we are proud to work with experts across the entire gardening, horticulture, viticulture and agricultural industries and to that end, we are looking forward to featuring these people in each of our newsletters and what better way to kick off than with Graham Ross.**

You'd be hard pressed to find an Australian gardener who hasn't heard of Graham. His down-to-earth, warm, practical and knowledgeable approach to gardening has been a feature of our Australian media landscape as far back as the late 1970's.

As well as writing for newspapers and magazines, Graham has established himself as the voice of one of Australia's longest running radio programs on 2GB with The Garden Clinic (featuring our own Dr Uwe Stroehrer) and also the presenter of over 2,000 individual gardening stories on Channel Seven's Better Homes and Gardens!

Graham's success as a media personality, stems from his lifelong love of plants and his desire to encourage people of all ages to explore the extraordinary scope of gardening. His own love of gardening began at the age of four and by eleven he was working at the local nursery. From there he went on to train and graduate in agronomy, horticulture, park administration, greenkeeping, landscaping and teaching. He's also worked as a seedsman, arborist, landscaper, nurseryman and park superintendent. And it's this breadth of combined knowledge and practical experience, along with genuine passion that allows him to offer advice that resonates with the full spectrum of gardeners from the novice, to the professional.

In 2011, he was presented with London's Royal Horticultural Society's Veitch Memorial Medal (VMM) in recognition of his contribution to gardening and horticulture in Australia - being only the fourth Australian in history to receive this prestigious honour. In January this year, the entire team at Neutrog were rapt to hear that Graham has now been made a Member of the Order of Australia for his services to broadcast, horticulture and community. We have been lucky enough to work with Graham and his family over many years and that working relationship, would now be better described as a friendship.

Our Managing Director still loves telling the story of being invited to a function at the Ross' home and a sneak peak into Graham's garden shed found Neutrog products on the shelf. We congratulate Graham and his family on this well-deserved honour.





**In South Australia roses are a favourite choice for the garden because they are easy to grow and maintenance is relatively simple. The frequent balmy days, particularly later in autumn, are ideal for producing a magnificent autumn flush of high quality, colourful flowers. Here are a few tips to care for your roses.**

March often sees a continuation of summer-like conditions with some very hot days and lower rainfall. Milder days generally appear in April and continue into May. Seasonal opening rains often occur in late April or early May, heralding the onset of the wetter, colder months.

The average daily temperatures in Adelaide in March are 26.5°C, April 22.8°C and May 19.0°C. Average rainfall in autumn is about 26mm in March, 40mm in April and 61mm in May. Evaporation rates decrease from their summer highs and daily sunshine hours reduce from around 10 hours per day in January and February to 8.6 hours in March and continue to decline to 5.4 hours in May.

So, what does this mean for our roses and how can we care for them during autumn?

## 1. Watering

It is essential to maintain a regular and thorough watering regime. We can be easily misled by milder days and cooler nights. However, the average March and April rainfalls are generally insufficient to maintain healthy Autumn growth in our roses. Like summer, it is best to look at the forward weather forecast for the next 7 days. If the weather forecast is for warm to hot and dry conditions, hydrating roses with a weekly thorough irrigation is recommended. If rain accompanied by lower-than-average temperatures occurs, irrigation may be halted for a period and recommenced when a dry, warm to hot period is forecast.

Generally, irrigation is needed until the opening seasonal rains occur late April – early May. If unsure whether watering is required, scratch down 3 to 5cm below the ground under a rose plant. If dry at this depth, apply water immediately. Remember, the rose has many roots just below the surface and these can dry out, hindering optimum performance.

Roses in pots also require regular watering during the autumn months.

## 2. Mulch

The mulch which was applied late spring or early summer will be breaking down in autumn and its thickness reducing. Providing sufficient mulch was initially applied, adequate cover will remain to reduce evaporation, continue to cool the roots and feed the earth worms and beneficial microbes in the soil during autumn. However, if all mulch has disappeared, a fresh application of Neutrog's Whoflungdung (a certified organic mulch) in early autumn is recommended. This mulch is biologically activated, nutrient rich and weed free. It comes in convenient 20kg compressed bales and can be taken to and easily spread where it's needed.

### 3. Flowering

Autumn is an excellent flowering period for roses. A light, late summer or early autumn trim will ensure a great flush of flowers around 55 days later. This trim is simply removing the spent summer blooms and a portion of the stem down to a healthy pin-head sized bud nestled between the leaf and stem. Stem removed is generally around 15 - 30cm. Importantly, this is a trim and not a prune and sufficient foliage must remain to avoid exposing the stems to sunburn.

The summer – autumn trim is far more effective if it is completed two or three weeks after an application of Neutrog Sudden Impact for Roses. Don't be concerned if autumn colours are different to spring colours of the same variety. The on-set of cooler nights and less sunlight through autumn often produces more intense colours in some varieties.

### 4. Fertilising

If an application of Sudden Impact for Roses was not applied in February, ensure the rose plants receive it in March. Once applied, it should be "watered in". If possible, and given favourable weather, apply just before forecast rain, which will assist in ensuring the fertiliser is taken to the root zone. If you can't rely on rain or a sprinkler system, use Sudden Impact for Roses Liquid Fertiliser applied in fortnightly applications until the end of March. Neutrog GOGO Juice will certainly provide an additional boost to plants after enduring a long hot dry summer.

### 5. Pests and Diseases

Our autumn seasons are generally warm to hot and dry until the end of April and these are favourable conditions for rose growing. As far as pests and fungal diseases are concerned, usually no preventative or curative remedies are required. With the change in season to wetter weather, cooler nights and even heavy dews, in late April or early May, some fungal diseases may emerge. You can choose to do nothing and tolerate some infected foliage or apply a preventative organic oil or fungicide spray mid to late April to ensure plants remain clean well into late autumn and early winter.

### 6. New Rose Plantings

Autumn is the best period to commence soil preparation for new rose plants, including the removal of underperforming old plants. Where a rose plant is to be removed, commence the process in April or early May by removing the old plant. Endeavour to dig-up as many of the old rose roots as possible. If you can, take a half a barrow of old soil out and replace with soil from elsewhere in the garden which has not grown roses. Then apply an application of 10cm of Whoflungdung plus Neutrog Seamungus and GOGO Juice to the area to be planted with the new rose(s). This should be dug into the ground to at least the depth of the spade or even deeper if possible. If the soil is lumpy from a high clay content, an application of gypsum maybe required.

Repeat the application of GOGO Juice every few weeks until the end of May. Keep on digging over the soil to reduce weed growth and to encourage the earth worms and beneficial microbes to remain very active.

New rose beds or locations should be prepared in the same way, except the removal and replacement of soil is not required. These should be in full sun and free of root competition from trees or shrubs. Preparation should commence on or before Easter.

### 7. Recommended Specialist Rose Retailers

Autumn is also the best time to pre-order new rose cultivars. Rose plant producers and specialist retail nurseries release their catalogues listing and describing the varieties available. Order early to ensure you don't miss out on the roses you wish to purchase. Watch out for release information on new varieties in garden magazines and on social media.



**Autumn is a great time for roses and gardeners who provide the care necessary to maximise performance will be rewarded.**

**Click here to find out more about GOGO Juice**

# Year Round Fertilising Guide / Winter

**The plants in our garden are just like animals and humans - they grow best when they are well-nourished and fed regularly. Happy healthy plants don't get sick and are less likely to be affected by heat, frost, pests or diseases, which is going to make you a much happier gardener too!**

Year round fertilising is not about applying more fertiliser but rather applying smaller amounts more regularly. Consider taking the quantity recommended for feeding your plants for the season and dividing it into equal parts, and apply 1 part in each month of the season.

At this time of year when there's not much happening above ground, we recommend applying Seamungus to your entire garden (there's still plenty happening below the ground). There are numerous benefits for doing this - Seamungus contains natural plant growth hormones which encourage strong root development (resulting in a greater root surface area for plants to take up nutrients), it encourages beneficial bacteria to populate and stimulate activity in the soil, and the seaweed component helps strengthen plant cell walls to cope with winter stress - particularly frost.



**Year round fertilising for year round health**

Like humans and animals, plants require regular feeding throughout the year - at least once in each season.

Happy, healthy, well nourished plants are more resistant to pests, diseases, heat stress and frost.

## PLANTING IN WINTER

Winter is the perfect time for planting! Use Seamungus, Rapid Raiser or Rooster Booster for any new plantings. Make sure the hole is at least twice the size of the root ball. Throw some pellets into the hole and mix through the soil, and water in with liquid Seamungus or GOGO Juice.



## NATIVES

Established Australian natives, including phosphorous-sensitive natives such as grevilleas, banksias & non-natives in the Proteaceae family will all enjoy being fed during the winter.



There are some gorgeous grevilleas, acacias and hakeas to choose from now - your local nursery has an ever-increasing range of these beauties.

## HEDGES

Hedges love a fertiliser which has a higher nitrogen to potassium ratio, so during the growing season we recommend applying Sudden Impact for Lawns. In winter however, it's best to apply Seamungus, watered in with GOGO Juice. This will ensure great growth when spring arrives.



Once it is released, our new product 'BANG BANG for Hedges' will be recommended for fertilising your hedges.

## ACID LOVING PLANTS

Now is the time to feed azaleas, magnolias, rhododendrons and blueberries with Kahoona, as they are either in bud or coming into bud over the coming weeks. The higher potassium to nitrogen ratio within Kahoona plays a crucial role in enhancing flower development, whilst the boosted levels of iron and magnesium help maintain healthy green foliage, aiding in preventing the yellowing leaves which are often seen in late winter and early spring. All other acid loving plants such as camellias, daphne & gardenias will benefit from an application of Seamungus now, and followed up with Kahoona in spring.



# Year Round Fertilising Guide / Winter

## ESTABLISHED FLOWERING PLANTS

Now is the time to give your flowering plants (including roses, carnations, daisies, lavender and all other flowering plants) their winter feed of Seamungus before spring arrives. It will give them a boost when weather warms up. Make sure you water in well with GOGO Juice to activate the microbes in the soil.



## ESTABLISHED FLOWERING, FRUITING PLANTS AND ORCHIDS IN POTS

Sprinkle some Strike Back for Orchids over any plants in pots that flower in winter, such as begonias and hellebores. For your plants in pots that don't flower in winter such as fuchsias, they will appreciate a feed of Seamungus.



Many Cymbidium orchids are setting flower spikes now. Begin to feed 2 months prior to flowering and continue to do so whilst they're in flower. The pelleted version is used monthly and the liquid fortnightly.

## ESTABLISHED NON-FLOWERING PLANTS INCLUDING LAWNS

To get that beautiful lush growth which will be the envy of all, feed and water regularly. As we move into cooler weather, you can set your mower a little lower if you wish. Fertilise with Sudden Impact for Lawns and water in with GOGO Juice; sit back and wait for the compliments!



Now is a great time to fix bare patches in your lawn. Top dress the patches with Seamungus and spread lawn seed over the area. Water it in using GOGO Juice.

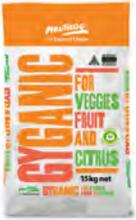
## VEGETABLES, FRUIT AND CITRUS

Some winter vegetables that grow well in drier parts of Australia include broad beans, broccoli, cauliflower, lettuce, peas, potatoes, garlic and spinach.

An application of Seamungus will give your veggies and herbs a great start. You can also incorporate Gyganic for Veggies Fruit & Citrus throughout the soil at planting. Cover the treated area with fresh untreated soil and allow the roots to grow down into the fertiliser. Apply Gyganic for Veggies Fruit & Citrus every 8 weeks and GOGO Juice fortnightly.

Winter is a perfect time to be selecting fruit trees for your garden. There are so many available including dwarf varieties which are ideal in large pots. At planting time, dig the soil to a depth 1 and 1/2 times the depth and twice the width of the pot or root ball of the tree you have chosen.

Dig plenty of organic matter through the soil. Rapid Raiser and Seamungus are perfect for this. Keep them well watered once they start to leaf up. Water in with GOGO Juice and apply monthly thereafter.



## SOIL CONDITIONING

GOGO Juice provides a huge boost of the living microbiology necessary for your soil and plants to perform at their optimum level, increasing their ability to resist pests and disease, and to withstand heat and frost stress.

The microbiology in GOGO Juice promotes plant growth as well as stimulating and improving root growth and development



## MULCHING

There are numerous benefits of applying Whoflungdung during winter, such as:

- It introduces a wide diversity of beneficial bacteria.
- Beneficial bacteria act as a deterrent to pathogenic bacteria.
- Weed suppression.
- Moisture retention.
- Encourages earthworms that aerate the soil and move nutrients deeper in the soil profile.
- Improves water and nutrient-holding capacity.
- Reduces, if not eliminates, nitrogen drawdown.
- Puts organic material into the soil.
- Regulates soil temperature.
- Prevents erosion from heavy rain.

Improves water absorbancy.



