



The Pooh Bah News



Dear Pooh Bah Club subscribers,

Cooler mornings and evenings have us swapping our short sleeves for something a little warmer, but what about your garden? While the soil is still warm, it's a great time to add a 'blanket' of Whoflungdung to help suppress weeds, retain moisture, and regulate the temperature.

Across April and the Easter break there so many fantastic garden events on around Australia including the Melbourne International Flower show this weekend, the People's Choice Awards at the National Rose Trial Garden in Adelaide and the last ever open garden at Sophie Thomson's property, Sophie's Patch. Not forgetting the array of open gardens through the Open Garden Scheme.

This month we celebrate dahlia season by taking a look at the dahlias in Hiromi Waring's cut flower garden as well as the Dahlia Garden at Adelaide Botanic Garden. Harvest The Fleurieu invite us into their 'pick your own' strawberry patch in Mount Compass SA and Matt and Georgina of luxury garden maintenance company Living Areas, provide a glimpse into their business so far. And if you'd like some expert tips on growing a Phalaenopsis orchid, look out for a detailed article by Trevor Gerrard from the Orchid Society of South Australia

In between newsletters, we encourage you to visit our social media pages for more news and stories. You can also invite your friends to join the 'Pooh Bah Club' by forwarding this email so that they can also enjoy this newsletter.

Happy gardening!
The Neutrog Team



Photo of the Month / Hiromi's Dahlias



Dahlia season is here, and what a beautiful season it is! Dahlias have a reputation for creating stunningly colourful displays both in and out of the garden, and if you haven't already, you should soon see them making an appearance at your local florist. These flowers are a gardener's dream and a florist's friend when creating the perfect arrangement, with blooms of all sizes in every hue imaginable.

Hiromi Waring from Victoria has a range of dahlias in her cut flower garden that are currently thriving, and she kindly shared with us her journey to creating her business 'Hiromi's Garden Flowers'.

After marrying an Australian man and moving from Japan to Australia, Hiromi has led a busy life raising her three children, driving them to school, soccer practice, swimming, piano lessons and ballet, leaving little time for herself. Her children are now all grown up, leaving Hiromi to finally let her passion for gardening 'bloom'.

"I have always been interested in flowers... The more flowers I grew the more I wanted to learn, so I started watching a lot of YouTube garden channels and reading blogs, books and newsletters (including The Pooh Bah News of course!)" says Hiromi.

With endless learning resources at her fingertips, Hiromi came across the founder of Floret Flower Farm, Erin Benzakein, and became more inspired than ever to grow her own cut flowers. "Reading her books and taking her course was the best thing I have ever done! I learnt about achieving good soil health, how to grow different varieties of flowers, how and when to cut them, and how to run a business."

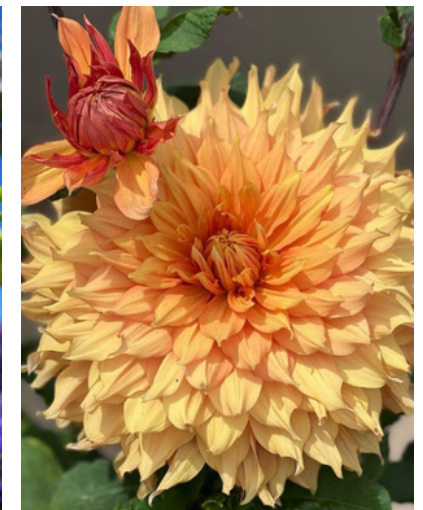
Since investing in her knowledge of flower growing, Hiromi has spent the last couple of years establishing her cut flower garden and has recently started her own small business called 'Hiromi's Garden Flowers'. Hiromi creates beautiful flower arrangements that make the perfect gift for any celebration using blooms grown herself.

Each season paints a different picture in her garden, and currently dahlias are the star of the show. Hiromi also has zinnia, cosmos, scabiosa, roses, celosia, amaranthus, Japanese anemone, hydrangea, black-eyed susan, echinacea, larkspur, delphinium just to name a few. She also grows a range of natives including leucadendrons and proteas.

To achieve such a floriferous garden, Hiromi uses Seamungus at planting and when turning over the soil in preparation for new plants, when she also adds Rooster Booster, GOGO Juice, manure and compost for a well structured soil. All flowers are fed with Sudden Impact for Roses to ensure they are receiving the appropriate nutrients needed for strong, quality blooms.

"Having these trusted gardening products gives great confidence to a small grower like me. I am only new to the world of gardening, but I am absolutely in love with flowers.

It is such a joy to grow flowers, arrange them and give them to people. Flowers have such a power to make people so happy."





New Education and Research Centre at Kanmantoo

Almost 18 months ago, Neutrog announced plans for an on-site Visitors Centre at Kanmantoo and since then, those plans have evolved into an more significant project that demonstrates our passion and commitment to be the most technically and biologically advanced fertiliser company in the world.

The Visitor's Centre has now changed to an Education Centre with the facilities to host industry training, school excursions, farming groups, agronomists and garden clubs. We currently host tours of the Neutrog factory and use every opportunity to educate, but the addition of this dedicated space will allow us to expand this offering significantly.

The most significant change to the original plans is the location on our site and the inclusion of a substantial upgrade of our existing laboratory into an expanded Research Centre. This expansion will allow the Neutrog R&D team more direct access to our brewing and liquid storage facility, create dedicated space for our increased inventory of laboratory equipment and ultimately increase our overall biological capability.

These two spaces will be visually linked through the extensive use of glass giving visitors in the Education Centre an 'inside view' straight through into the Research Centre and brewery.



Tour with the South Australian Geranium and Pelargonium Society

In March we had the pleasure of hosting the South Australian Geranium & Pelargonium Society for a tour of the Neutrog factory and laboratory in Kanmantoo.

The South Australian Geranium & Pelargonium Society has been established for over 50 years where they continued to promote and encourage the growing of all members of the Geraniaceae family of plants, in particular, Pelargoniums and Geraniums.

Over 30 members of the society travelled from far and wide to learn about the processes behind our locally made biological fertilisers and garden products. With plenty of exciting R&D projects and new products around the corner, it is a pleasure to host groups like the South Australian Geranium & Pelargonium Society and share our passion for healthy gardens and soils.

If you are part of a group and have an interest in gardening, we encourage you to get in touch with our team to organise a tour or a talk at an upcoming meeting! Bookings can be made by contacting our office on 08 8538 3500.

Growing Great Fruit & Veg / Harvest the Fleurieu



At the end of 2021, data indicated that when it comes to berries Australians are most fond of blueberries and of course, the humble strawberry.

'Pick Your Own' strawberry patches are a lovely way to connect with growers and pick quality fresh produce straight from the crop. Family business, Harvest the Fleurieu have a fantastic Pick Your Own field that has grown into a tourism hub worthy of a visit.

Harvest the Fleurieu belongs to the Sherry family who started their farming journey on a family property in Blewitt Springs originally purchased by Stanley Sherry after the second world war. His son, Brenton, started working the land as soon as he could hold a pair of snips in his hands before studying at Roseworthy College where he discovered his passion for agriculture and business.

Since 1987, Brenton and his wife Vanessa have been growing strawberries and selling the produce to local shops and markets. They quickly developed a reputation for growing high quality produce, increasing demand and enabling them to expand their operation. 65HA of land at Kuitpo was purchased, an expansion which allowed them to accommodate interstate markets.

Vanessa and Brenton continue to pour their heart and soul into the Harvest the Fleurieu operation but are slowly handing over the reins to the next generation Adam, Megan & Ryan. Growing up in and around the strawberry patch, the siblings are staying true to their strawberry roots but also diversifying to ensure the future of this small family business, with 'quality over quantity' as their family motto.

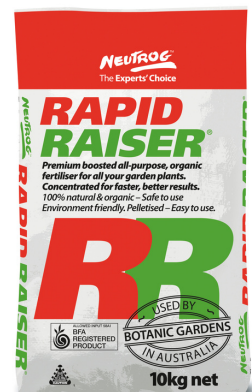
Harvest the Fleurieu rely on well-structured soils high in beneficial microbiology and crop rotation to achieve highly productive crops to satisfy the popular 'pick your own' market and to continue to provide a high standard of produce for their on site market shop.



Megan Sherry says "We put a lot of care and planning into the way we operate and a critical part of that is care of the soil. To that end, we had Neutrog make up a special custom blend for us, based on Rapid Raiser. Growing a high-quality strawberry product is something which we are all extremely proud of and the use of a premium biological fertiliser is a critical part of what we do".

Ryan Sherry is the Farm Manager at Harvest the Fleurieu, had this to say about Rapid Raiser:

"Rapid Raiser has been huge for the patch at Mount Compass. The new plants seem to be fruiting earlier, which is great because the earlier we can get customers into the patch and picking the fruit - the better."



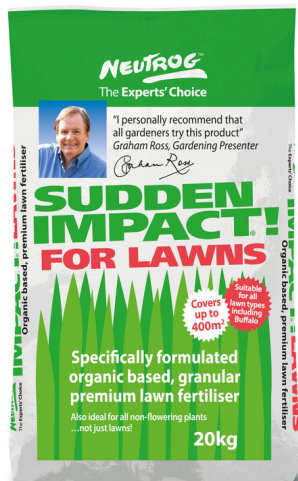
Living Areas / High End Landscaping & Garden Maintenance

Based in Belrose in Sydney, Living Areas was created by Matt and Georgina through the love of the outdoors and the garden. Both with a passion of the garden and entertaining, they took Matt's 20 years of experience in the Landscape industry and Georgina's business knowledge and love of creating a styled outdoor space, to bring their clients a unique and reliable landscape company.

"Matthew and I started Living Areas in 2015 when I was pregnant with our second child, Lily, and Matt was working for a landscape construction business in a maintenance manager role. Matt is qualified in landscape construction and has a love and passion for the garden that is so uplifting it makes everyone smile. He loves the complete juxtaposition that the garden brings, so full of life yet tranquil and calm and is constantly inspired by the architecture of nature and its ability to completely transform the harsh modern world we surround ourselves with" says Georgina.

With Matt's enviable passion for outdoor spaces and Georgina's interest in business development, they founded a business encompassing each of their passions perfectly.

"We both agreed it was not going to be "just another landscaping business" and that we were determined to lift the perception of trade from the unreliable to the skilled, professional, and trustworthy. So Living Areas was born, and so too was our daughter Lily not long after, in fact Matt left me in the hospital to quote a job!"



Their aim has been to become the premium choice for garden maintenance and landscaping services, not due to elaborate budgets, but because they treat each client's garden as their own and respect that people choose to spend their hard earned money on their services.

"As we further developed this concept and created relationships, we found a niche in upgrading for sales in the high end of the property market and with this formed connections with stylists such as Coco Republic. This led to the array of services we have available today such as plant rental, upgrades for sale, balcony and courtyard designs and our new online store."

Autumn / Planting Citrus

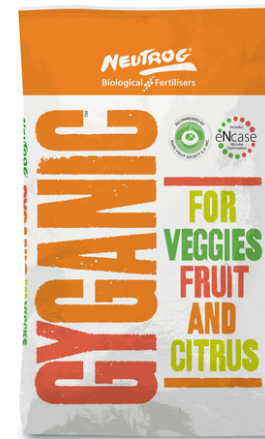
Citrus form the largest fruit crop in the world and autumn is a fantastic time to introduce one of the members of the citrus family into your garden. Most people associate spring with planting, but autumn is a fantastic time for planting citrus because the soil is still warm enough to stimulate root growth and give the plant a head start coming into winter.

There are many different types of citrus from those that suit experienced growers to those that are almost fool-proof for a new gardener. Dwarf varieties also mean that citrus can now thrive in a smaller garden or a pot.

When planting citrus in the garden:

- Choose a spot that gets a good amount of sunshine.
- If you don't know the PH of your soil, test and if required adjust to make it PH neutral.
- Add a capful of GOGO Juice to a bucket of water and soak the entire root-ball for a few minutes to prevent transplant stress.
- Dig a hole twice as wide and deep as the pot your citrus is in.
- Add a handful of Seamungus in the bottom of the hole which will help improve with moisture retention and add diverse nutrition and organic matter to the soil.
- Position the plant in the hole, making sure it's straight and if grafted, the join sits well above the top of the soil.
- Mix Seamungus or Rooster Booster through the existing soil and backfill.

Water it in well and mulch with Whoflungdung leaving a 5-10cm gap away from the trunk.



TIP: If you're planting in a pot, check for a variety that has been grafted onto dwarf stock. Choose a large pot or half wine barrel and add rocks in the bottom so the plant drains well. Make sure to use good potting mix with the addition of Seamungus or Rooster Booster. Water in well with GOGO Juice.

Once your citrus is established, Gyganic for Veggies Fruit & Citrus is the ideal product to suit their heavy nutritional requirements.

Product of the Month / Sudden Impact for Lawns



APPLICATION RATES

Established Lawns — Apply Sudden Impact for Lawns at 50gm per square metre (500kg per hectare) and water in well. Apply every 6-8 weeks throughout spring, summer and autumn. Apply Neutrog's Blade Runner in winter.

New Lawns — Apply 100gm per square metre (1000kg per hectare). Spread evenly and incorporate into the top 10cm of soil prior to seeding or laying.

Non-flowering Plants — Apply 50gm per square metre and water in well. Apply every 6-8 weeks throughout spring, summer and autumn. Apply Neutrog's Seamungus Crumble in winter.

Keeping the lawn in your front or backyard looking good all year can be a challenge, but for sports ovals and public parks it is a huge responsibility. Keeping a large area consistently healthy with high amounts of impact traffic from people and vehicles (football, cricket, soccer, and public events), means that soil health plays a significant part in helping the turf to recover quickly. Choosing products that are safe for staff to use and people to be in contact with - is obviously paramount.

Horticultural teams from councils, schools, botanic gardens, public parks, race courses and suburban ovals from around Australia use Neutrog products to achieve these results, particularly Upsurge, Blade Runner and our dedicated turf product - Sudden Impact for Lawns.

Sudden Impact for Lawns has an NPK breakdown of 12:1:6, a ratio ideal for promoting growth, but more specifically, in addition to the full range of secondary nutrients and micronutrients in a natural form - the levels of iron and magnesium have been boosted. These particular elements play a crucial role in the formation of chlorophyll, which is the substance that makes plants green. This happens because the chlorophyll molecule has the unique capacity to turn the energy of the sun into chemical energy through photosynthesis.

And obviously - everybody wants a bright, lush green lawn.

But while the bright green lawn is satisfying, the reason that Sudden Impact for Lawns is chosen by so many people is that it's made from a nutrient dense, organic base. That means that it contains the beneficial bacteria and fungi that help improve the soil below the lawn. With a soil that has a balance of microbes, nutrient cycling is improved and your lawn can make better use of water, sunlight and fertiliser.

Dr Uwe often uses the analogy that turf is like an iceberg, in that you only see the very tip, most of the activity and health of turf comes from what is happening underneath.

Sudden Impact for Lawns works brilliantly as a standalone product, but consider combining it with regular applications of the NEW Advanced Biological Formula GOGO Juice which will pour billions of beneficial bacteria into the soil.

We're confident that your lawn probably doesn't have to deal with the stress of an AFL oval or Flemington Race Course, but it would still appreciate the products that keep those places ready for anything.

R&D / An Opportunity to Trial POPUL8

There are few things as frustrating for a gardener than a near perfect lawn – with an unexplained “patch”! And Neutrog's own Managing Director had exactly this situation on his lawn in Adelaide and decided to do a trial of POPUL8 on the affected area.

POPUL8 is currently being used in trials by commercial growers of grapes, tomatoes, capsicum, apple, pear and lettuce with our R&D partner Elders. As our most advanced biological product to date POPUL8 is designed to literally "populate" the growing environment with individually chosen beneficial bacterial and fungal genera.

And if ever there was a question about what 'good' bacteria and fungi can do, here is a perfect example. It took only five days for our MD to see a result on his "patch" of lawn.

ABOUT POPUL8

Developed and manufactured exclusively by Neutrog, POPUL8 is an Advanced Biological Formula, that contains a base microbiome of 200+ naturally selected species of bacteria and fungi.

In addition, a further 40 specially selected bacteria and fungi have been identified, isolated and added for their specific purpose and beneficial characteristics. These include bacteria and fungi capable of suppressing plant pathogens, producing plant growth hormones and enhancing the liberation of nutrients such as potassium and phosphorous.

POPUL8 is designed to not only enhance plant growth and nutrient cycling but also to populate and occupy the biological space in the soil and on the plant roots which may otherwise be an available space for plant pathogens to inhabit...Hence it's name POPUL8.



Before POPUL8.



Day 3 after POPUL8.



Day 5 after POPUL8.

The R&D team at Neutrog have spent a number of years examining and screening soils from around Australia seeking microbes capable of increasing nutrient use efficiency, plant health and disease suppression. In particular, the ability to suppress diseases using biocontrol agents has been a major focus of our work.

During our screening process we have found over 50 different isolates capable of reducing or in many cases completely suppressing the growth of numerous fungal pathogens including *Fusarium oxysporum*, *Rhizoctonia solani*, *Sclerotinia sclerotiorum* and *Colletotrichum coccodes* amongst others as well suppressing the growth of oomycetes pathogens such as *Pythium* and *Phytophthora*.

Our latest commercial product (POPUL8) currently undergoing trials in conjunction with Elders contains 8 of the most effective and broad ranging biocontrol agents according to our laboratory tests. An example of the laboratory test is seen in the picture below, where a very clear zone of growth inhibition against the pathogen *Colletotrichum coccodes* is seen for isolate C1 but not C2 (overgrown by the pathogen).

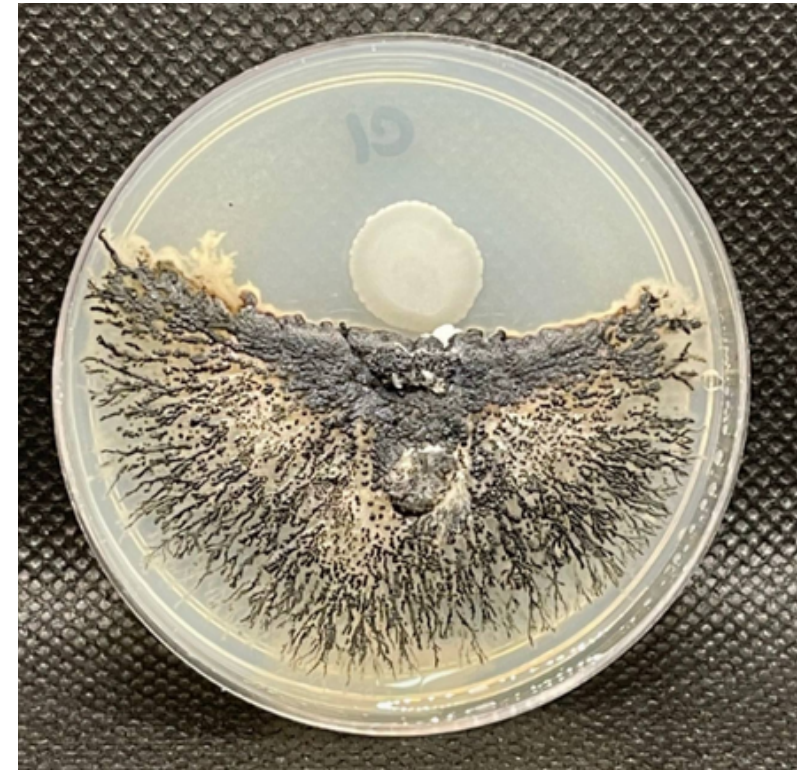
In amongst the black fungus, you can almost see the second bacteria isolate which is having no impact on the fungus at all. Interestingly C2 does show some level of inhibition against another fungal pathogen namely *Rhizoctonia*, which clearly shows that there are no single isolates capable of attacking and inhibiting all fungal pathogens.

At Neutrog we have a philosophy that using diverse inhibitors gives the best chance of success. These types of results in laboratory testing are not unusual, so the real question is how does this translate into farms and gardens?

We decided to use the knowledge we gained in the laboratory to carry out some recent field trials to examine the ability of biocontrol agents to suppress a disease in potatoes known as Black Dot caused by *Colletotrichum coccodes*.

This trial encompassed an area of 85 hectares over 5 sites and a single application of our disease suppressing microbes resulted in showed a reduction in disease burden. The amount of black dot as determined by PREDICTA-Pt peel test was reduced in the order of 3 to 4-fold. This resulted in a 19% increase in marketable yield of premium grade potatoes.

As we continue to conduct more tests, each of the beneficial bacteria and fungi that are identified are being stored at Neutrog. They will be used now and in the future as we continue to produce the most advanced biological products in the market.



The top of the plate shows that the isolate C1 demonstrates growth inhibition against the pathogen, in comparison to the bottom half of the plate with C2 does not and has become overgrown by the pathogen.

Bacterial & Fungal Genome Sequencing at the University of Queensland

The Neutrog R&D team have been busy 'packing' in the laboratory, preparing bacterial and fungal isolates to send to The Australian Centre for Ecogenomics (ACE) at the University of Queensland for genome sequencing.

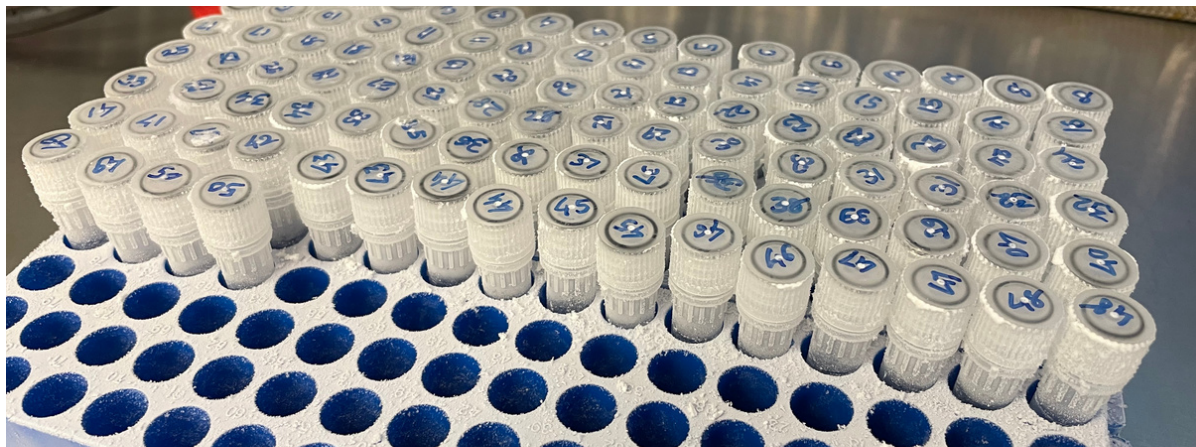
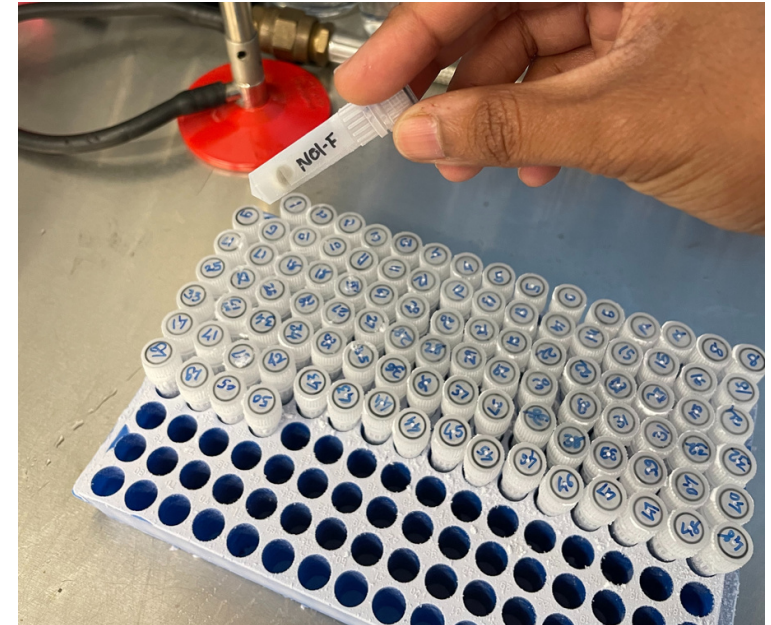
By obtaining a complete genome sequence for these organisms, we can take a deeper look into the genetic makeup and identify genes that have beneficial functions that we can use in our products, such as the ability to produce plant hormones.

It also allows us to identify the exact species of bacteria and fungi that we have, which opens doors for exportation of our biological products to international markets.

The process taken is similar to the sequencing of human genomes, the difference being that our genomes compared to bacteria or fungi are much more complex.

To get the complete genome sequence the bacteria and fungi are first grown in culture. The DNA is then extracted and chopped into small fragments – much like cutting a book into individual pages, allowing us to read one page at a time – and are placed in a machine to record the sequence. These 'pages' are then reassembled into a whole book (or in our case, a genome) that contains all of the genetic information for these organisms.

The process will take approximately 8 to 10 weeks to complete, but once completed holds numerous potential benefits for both home gardeners and commercial growers.



The Expert's Choice / Sophie's Patch Easter Open Garden



The Easter long weekend is just around the corner and preparations are currently underway for the 15th and FINAL Easter Open Garden at Sophie's Patch.

Sophie's Patch is a three-acre property in the Adelaide Hills which Sophie Thomson has transformed into a lush garden. The garden reflects all of Sophie's passions: a kids' garden, an 'obsessive-compulsive' gardener's treasure trove, a recycled/repurposed garden, a haven for beneficial insects & bees, and a productive garden supplying her family with fruit, veg and eggs year-round.

Each year thousands of locals and interstate visitors travel to Sophie's Patch in Mount Barker Springs for an opportunity to enjoy great food incorporating Sophie's Patch produce, shop and learn from local nurseries, and enjoy a fun day out in the garden. The event is also family friendly with plenty of free activities for kids.

Easter Open Garden at Sophie's Patch runs from the 16th to the 18th April 2022 from 10am to 4.30pm. This is a ticketed event, so be sure to secure your spot by visiting their website.



Trevor Garard / Growing Phalaenopsis Orchids



Trevor Garard is a passionate orchid grower and member of the Orchid Club of South Australia (OCSA). He shares his knowledge of growing Phalaenopsis orchids as part of an initiative run by OCSA called the 'Orchids in Schools' Programme, teaching high school students about orchid culture. Trevor has kindly provided the below article about Phalaenopsis orchids with his best tips for growing success:

"This article will give a bit of background information about the plants and some general growing tips. The name Phalaenopsis comes from the Greek word phalaina which translates as 'type of moth' and opsis part means 'having the appearance of', thus giving us the plants' common name of Moth Orchid. There are about 70 species in the genus that occur in nature from China, India, the Philippines, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea and Australia. Interestingly, the Australian species, *Phal.amabilis* is in the background breeding of nearly all of the white flowered plants produced.

First up, let's meet the genus that is part of the largest group of flowering plants on the planet and that is, orchids. The first species of genus Phalaenopsis was first described in science by Linnaeus in 1753 and the first plant was shipped from Java to the United Kingdom in 1846. That plant was Phalaenopsis pallens named because of the pale lemon colour of the flowers. Fast forward about 175 years and how things have changed.

Dedicated hybridisers have been hard at work bringing the world new flower shapes, sizes and colours. These new hybrids have ensured that this plant has become one of the most popular pot plants on the planet with huge plant producing nurseries in Europe, Asia and elsewhere producing millions of plants a year.

The author of this article has been both a hybridiser and grower of Phalaenopsis for about 20 plus years, growing both the large standard type and the more colourful, smaller flowered, 'novelty' plants.

As mentioned earlier in this article I will give a few tips on growing the plants successfully. More detailed information can be found by going to the website of the Orchid Club of South Australia and downloading the cultural notes. There are notes for other orchids as well. If you prefer, contact the club and have your questions answered in person. You can also contact an orchid club and make arrangements to attend a meeting with your plant for expert advice. Now to those tips.



Tip 1.

Phalaenopsis are tropical plants and as such prefer not to be cold. In Northern Australia this is not a problem. I have seen plants growing outside in Queensland and doing very well in those conditions. In the more temperate and cooler climates of Australia these plants are grown inside the house. Try and maintain a minimum of 15 degrees C. Typically if a person is comfortable with the ambient temperature these plants will thrive.

Tip 2.

Water in the morning. This is to avoid water lying in the 'crown' of the plant thus risking fungal or bacterial infection in the growth area of the plant. New leaves are generated from the crown area. Simply use a piece of kitchen towel to dry any water in the crown or on the leaves. Water when the growing medium is just starting to dry out and give enough water so that it flows from the drain holes. Leave the plant to drain then return to its normal position.

Tip 3.

If you suspect your plant has a problem, act fast. Either fix the problem or contact someone who can help. A phone call or email to an orchid club is a good place to start. This tip applies to all orchids not just Phals. The main problem encountered with these plants would be root rot due to over watering.

Tip 4.

These plants need light but never direct sunlight. The light available in a well lit room will be enough. They can be grown on an East facing windowsill getting only morning sun or, if carefully positioned, in other rooms ensuring that they do not get direct light.

Tip 5.

Phals like to grow in a pot that is as small as possible. The pot the plant is purchased in will usually suffice for a couple of re-pottings . Please use only good quality composted bark nuggets for the growing medium. A few growers use Sphagnum moss but great care must be taken not to over water when using this. There are various 'orchid mixes' on the market that are not really suitable for most orchids.

Tip 6.

Growing Phals indoors means you probably will not have too many pest or disease problems. When you first purchase your plant keep an eye on it to make sure that no pests hatch from the growing mix. If you do see something, try to identify the bug and then take the appropriate course of action.

Tip 7.

Remember to feed your plants. Most people will water their plants but then forget that the plants need nutrients. As most of these plants are grown inside the home a good quality soluble fertiliser is recommended. Neutrog Fertilisers has come to our aid in this respect with a great fertiliser manufactured with orchids in mind. Specially formulated to suit orchid growing, Neutrog's Strike Back for Orchids is my go to fertiliser. The product is also available in pellet form if that is your preference and an enhanced liquid formulation will soon be available. I have used Strike Back For Orchids ever since trialling it and after the public release.

Try growing a Phal orchid, the popular misconception that they are delicate and fragile should be laid to rest. I have had a group of students at an Adelaide High CBHS School growing a Phal, pollinating a flower and having the seed germinate successfully. The plant is kept in a classroom and is going well after more than 12 months. Age is no barrier to growing orchids as can be seen with the success of the Orchids In Schools programme (OIS) run by the Orchid Club of South Australia.

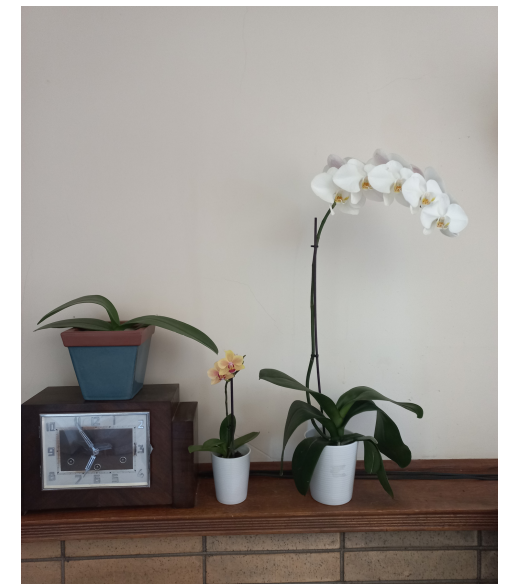
My young radio co host Amber (Emcee Blaze) joined the Orchid Club of South Australia in 2021 and has already hybridised a Cymbidium orchid. She is pictured admiring a Phal and she has one at home after receiving one as a birthday present. Some school students in the Orchids In Schools programme also have a Phal collection at home.

Phals are available in many hardware and furniture stores, even super markets stock them from time to time. At the price of about a small bunch of flowers these plants just keep on giving.

If you become hooked on these addictive plants (or any other orchids) consider joining an orchid club and maybe winning some prizes on the show bench or at least meet with people with the same with the same passion for these plants. Having mentioned orchid club competition show benches it would be remiss of me to not give a few tips on selecting a 'show bench' plant. Try to find a plant that is capable of producing at least 10 or more blooms each time it flowers. Look for petals that touch or overlap at their uppermost point and floral segments that are broad so that no light should be seen when looking through the lip. Flowers should have a good rounded shape and the colours should be clear without blemishes and present themselves an even distribution on the flower spike. Please bear in mind that most clubs have a 'holding period' of around 6 months before you can put your plants on a show bench for judging. Remember that the smaller flowered plants often do not have the rounded shape of the larger type and are usually judged in a separate class.

Standard or Novelty type or both the choice is yours. Most people looking for a pot plant will choose a plant that appeals to them or matches the home decor. Others will pick a plant that presents itself as a potential competition plant. Phalaenopsis plants can be bought in flower at most times of the year.

For whatever reason you buy a plant, the elegance and beauty of the Phalaenopsis orchid is hard to understate."



Rare Fruit Arboretum / Mulberry Tree Cuttings



Regularly readers may remember we introduced you to the fascinating story of the mulberry tree found at Kingscote on Kangaroo Island. With a plan to preserve this tree's legacy for as long as possible the Rare Fruit Society of South Australia have been working to achieve this - with a role to be played by The Rare Fruit Arboretum adjacent to Neutrog at Kanmantoo.

The Rare Fruit Arboretum is home to over 500 rare fruit trees including apples, pears, peaches, nectarines, figs, loquats, plums, cherries, apricots, quinces, and soon we will also be finding a suitable location for mulberries from Kangaroo Island.

The Rare Fruit Society provided this update:

The first European settlement was established on Kangaroo Island in 1836 off the coast of South Australia, and during their settlement they planted mulberry trees. Amazingly, 185 years later one of those original trees is still alive.

Penelope Schulz, a member of the Rose Society of South Australia, visited Kangaroo Island early September in 2020 when she took a walk to Reeves Point to see the mulberry tree and a grave stone of her ancestor.

"The mulberry tree was looking very sad, but it was winter and it is quite old. We had some free time in Kingscote and I enquired at the council about the mulberry tree. The receptionist was very helpful and printed off the the council minutes regarding the tree.

In February 2021 on a visit to Joe's Connected Garden, I noticed Dr Brenton Kortman, president of the Rare Fruit Society of South Australia, and introduced myself. I told him about the mulberry tree and my connection to it and was very worried about the state of it. Brenton was very interested."

Over the next couple of months, Brenton contacted the Kangaroo Island Council and was granted permission for the Rare Fruit Society of South Australia to take four cuttings from the tree.

"I met Brenton at his home to have lessons in taking and wrapping cuttings to bring back to the main land. On the 31st August I left Tanunda at 5:30am to take the ferry to Penneshaw. Brian Paget from the Kangaroo Island Council met me at the mulberry tree and accompanied me while I took the cuttings. It took me a while, but I wanted to make sure that I was looking after the cuttings. I put the precious cargo into my esky and headed back to the ferry. I didn't have time for lunch, but found some time for honey ice cream and also picked up a bottle of Mulberry gin! (not made from mulberries from this tree)." Penelope took the cuttings to Brenton, and then continued on home, arriving at 8:30pm.

Since then, Brenton has grafted and propagated the cuttings and has reported that they have taken well. Over summer they have been kept in a shaded position to protect them from the heat, and we hope to have them planted in the arboretum in winter.

Recipe / Vegan Ratatouille

This recipe has special meaning for Neutrog team member Paul and his wife Kris as they recently welcomed their son Matt, home from the UK after a “covid-enforced” three year absence.

Matt has been living in the UK and during that time has become an established chef of vegan cuisine. By Paul's own admission, he is more of 'meat and potatoes' man and so while having Matt home is pretty exciting, the thought of a change to the household menu was a little less so.

That is, until he came in and told us about a dish that Matt made last night. "It was so good I took a photo!" Paul said.

We originally posted this recipe on our Facebook page earlier in the month and response was incredible so knowing that we have a host of passionate vegetable growers here, we thought we'd share the recipe in case you're inclined (as many of us are) to give it a try.



INGREDIENTS:

- 2 small potatoes (boiled for 10 mins)
- 2 yellow squashes
- 1 eggplant, zucchini and capsicum
- 400g tin of crushed tomatoes
- 1tbsp mixed herbs (or go fresh if you'd prefer!)
- Balsamic vinegar
- ½ onion (diced)
- 1tsp minced garlic
- 1tbsp vegan butter
- 1tsp vegetable stock powder
- 1tbsp plain flour
- 1 cup unsweetened soy milk (or any other dairy/dairy free milk)
- ¼ cup coconut cream

METHOD:

1. Preheat your oven to 180C. Thinly slice your eggplant, zucchini, capsicum and squash roughly 2mm, and then do the same with the potato once cooled.
2. To make your white sauce, sauté the onion and garlic with a little oil until lightly golden. Add the butter and once melted, add the stock powder and flour Stir to combine for a minute and then slowly add the milk. Whisk well after each addition, once combined take off the heat and whisk in the coconut cream, and a generous pinch of salt and pepper.
3. Assemble the ratatouille by coating the dish in oil. Add the crushed tomatoes and white sauce to the bottom of the pan. Use a spoon to ripple the tomato mixture and the white sauce together.
4. Working from the outer edge, layer the vegetables on top of the sauce in a pattern (ex: eggplant, squash, zucchini, potato repeat).
5. Drizzle generously with olive oil and a little balsamic vinegar. Cover with foil and cook in the preheated oven for 1 hour. Uncover and bake for a further 20 minutes.

Year Round Fertilising Guide / Autumn

While it still feels like we are in the midst of summer, preparing for feeding plants in autumn means you will have everything to hand when then temperature begins to dip. 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 apply 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.

This approach when used in autumn will allow your plants to benefit from the warm sunny days, warm soil temperature and cool dewy mornings. However, look out for those random warm days that March can bring that can still lead to heat stress in your garden. Any stressed plants would love some help to recover, so applying products rich in seaweed and organic matter like GOGO Juice or liquid Seamungus can help improve your soil's water-holding capacity and the plant's ability to recover from stress.



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 AUTUMN

Soils are generally still warm in March, which will help any new plants to develop roots and get a good head start on winter. More importantly, the roots they develop now will be the ones they rely on when summer comes around again, so you want them to develop well.



When planting during autumn, use 100% certified organic Seamungus, Rapid Raiser or Rooster Booster in the bottom of the hole and then water in well with GOGO Juice.

NATIVES

Australian natives, including phosphorous-sensitive natives such as grevilleas, banksias & proteas will all enjoy being fed during the autumn. Apply Bush Tucker to your winter flowering natives and water in with GOGO Juice to promote root development.



Winter-flowering natives include heathland plants, grevillea, hakea and wattle will bring some colour to your garden and the birds and bees will love them too.

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. Water in well with GOGO Juice, which will ensure you are populating your soil with beneficial bacteria. By “embracing the bugs” with GOGO Juice, you'll be making sure that the bugs eat the organic fertiliser, which will ensure an even better result.

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



Year Round Fertilising Guide / Autumn

ACID LOVING PLANTS

Camellias, gardenias, rhododendrons, azaleas and gardenias are all acid loving plants and feeding now with Kahoona will satisfy any their nutritional requirements without altering the pH of your soil. Kahoona is an organic based, chemically boosted fertiliser, specifically developed to enhance the growth and flower development of all acid loving plants. It's also great for blueberries!



ESTABLISHED FLOWERING PLANTS

Including roses, carnations, daisies, lavender and all other flowering plants. Now is the time to feed your roses and all other flowering plants (except natives) with Sudden Impact for Roses. Watering in with GOGO Juice will encourage a faster uptake of the nutrients by the plant. Pop some around your perennials too.



Sudden Impact for Roses is ideal for all flowering plants, not just roses. The balance and ratio of nutrients combined with the very best of raw materials are the secret to its success.

ESTABLISHED FLOWERING, FRUITING PLANTS AND ORCHIDS IN POTS

Including orchids and any flowering plants in pots, sprinkle some Strike Back for Orchids over any potted colour this season, as it's suitable for all potted fruiting and flowering plants, not just orchids. If you do, you'll be rewarded with cascades of colour over autumn and winter.



VEGETABLES, FRUIT AND CITRUS

Lightly tip-prune citrus trees to encourage new growth and spread Gyganic for Vegies, Fruit and Citrus around the drip zone of the plant. Apply Gyganic again after 8 weeks.



Gyganic for Veggies Fruit & Citrus is specifically developed to enhance fruit size, quality and taste. It is a premium organic based, chemically boosted complete fertiliser with the full range of nutrients in an organic form, coupled with boosted levels of nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium, iron and magnesium.

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.

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. GOGO Juice should be applied monthly to all garden and lawn areas.

MULCHING

Applying mulch to your garden at this time of the year will not only help prevent new weeds from growing and keep the soil temperature more constant, but it will also give your plants a gentle nutrient boost.

- It introduces a wide diversity of beneficial bacteria.
- Beneficial bacteria act as a deterrent to pathogenic bacteria.
- Weed suppression.
- 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 absorbency.



More From Neutrog / Find out more and what's in store!



In addition to our newsletter there are plenty of ways to keep in touch with us or to find out more. Below you will find link buttons to our Neutrog TV page (which is hosted by Youtube) where you can find a range of video's as well as copies of Dr Uwe's weekly chats with Graham Ross.

On Facebook we regularly post gardening tips, stories from gardeners who use Neutrog products to stunning effect, like Hiromi and her dahlias. We also feature staff news and videos from around the site. If you visit the page, make sure you click Like and Follow to ensure you keep seeing all the updates.

In the next newsletter we will be looking at preparing our gardens for winter, planting bare rooted roses, winter fruiting trees and plenty more.

See you in May!

The Neutrog Team

Our Partners

Over the years Neutrog has collaborated with many plant societies that have trialled and subsequently endorsed some of our products. These product endorsements provide retail staff and home gardeners with the confidence to use and recommend Neutrog products.

With a combined membership base of over 10,000, some of these endorsing societies include (click on a logo to head to their website):



and The Orchid Club of South Australia.

We never have enough room in our newsletters to share all of our inspirational stories and tips from our gardening community, but they do appear on our Facebook and Instagram pages regularly...why not join us there?

