

# GARDEN NOTES

## BRUCE DEMONSTRATION

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#### CNR BATTYE ST & PURDIE ST BRUCE



27-28 MARCH  
2021

The Bruce Demonstration Garden was established by a group of dedicated members of the Horticultural Society of Canberra (HSOC) and the garden development and maintenance is continued by members. In 2010 the site, approximately  $\frac{3}{4}$  acre was covered with long grass and weeds and there were a number of trees at the back of the block. The site had clay soil so large quantities of soil and mulch were bought in to build up the beds. There are 4 compost bays in use and most of the garden waste is composted on site and the compost used in the gardens. We are lucky to have a supply of straw and manure delivered by some members and this is used to mulch the beds. Neutrog has been a sponsor of the garden from the beginning and provided products such as Seamungus and Who Flung Dung.

The first shrub planted was a callistemon (bottlebrush) located to the right of the front gates. Initially hedging plants were established around the perimeter and were hand watered by members. These had to be netted to stop birds and animals pulling the plants out. The hedges are now pretty much self-sufficient and provide a lovely green backdrop to the rose garden.

As you walk in the gate, on the righthand side, you will see a large raised garden bed of dahlias. Members of the Dahlia Society of NSW and ACT plant seedling dahlias for growers and report on the quality of the plants to growers and their members. If you are interested in joining the Dahlias Society please go to their web site.

On the left-hand side are several raised garden beds containing a variety of vegetables. There are some herbs and perennials such as asparagus, rhubarb and artichoke. On the left of the vegetable beds heritage apple trees, a pear tree, and a persimmon tree have been planted. These trees were relocated from our Weston garden in December 2010. The produce from these trees is available to members of HSOC and the trees are used for pruning demonstrations which are held on the last weekend in July. These workshops are advertised on the HSOC website and can be attended by HSOC members and the general public.

Behind the Dahlia beds and compost bays there are multiple raised garden beds in which daffodil bulbs are planted. These beds are used by the Daffodil Association members who grow new varieties of daffodils and other types that do well in Canberra. Daffodil bulbs are available for sale at the HSOC Autumn Show in March. Daffodils here are also cross pollinated and the seed is then grown on to develop new and better daffodils, hopefully. If you are interested in the Daffodil Society please go to their web site.

Behind the daffodil beds are the berry beds which hold three varieties of raspberries. Marionberry, loganberry, tayberry and thorn less blackberry plants are grown on fences. Two sloe berry plants and two red current plants are growing near the front gate.

Under the gum trees are a variety of native plants including Rhodanthe anthemoides, Acmadenia, Westringia, correas, Adenathos and callistemons.

Walking further to the left on the other side of the apple trees there is a clematis walk featuring clematis armandii at each end. The clematis flower spectacularly in spring. There are other assorted spring flowering clematis along the walk.

The central rose bed contains rose bushes which have been donated by Treloar Roses and they flower magnificently from Spring through to late Autumn. The rose bushes are pruned at pruning demonstrations held for members and the general public in July.

The garden beds bordering the rose bed contain perennial plants such as tree peonies, salvia, agastache, iris, perennial phlox, lavender and anigozanthos (kangaroo paw). Many of the perennial plants such as the salvias, lavender and hellebores have been donated by PGA. PGA is kept informed about which plants are doing well and the which plants have struggled to grow or haven't survived.

Two small shade houses are used as propagation houses where seeds are germinated for the vegetable garden and plants are propagated to be sold at the plant stall at HSOC flower shows.

The garden is used by the Society to show which plants grow well in Canberra conditions and are suitable for Canberra gardens and surrounding areas with a similar climate. Information about plants is recorded for inclusion in future editions of *The Canberra Gardener* published by the society.

A small cohort of HSOC members meet most Wednesday mornings to work in the vegetable gardens, turn the compost and carry out general maintenance. There is a working bee on the last Saturday of each month for any HSOC member who wishes to attend to carry out garden maintenance and we chat over morning tea.

The highlight plants in the garden are anigozanthos (kangaroo paw), roses, lavender, salvia, tree peonies, clematis, fruiting berries, dahlias and daffodils. As you can see, the Bruce Demonstration Garden cultivates a love of gardening, promotes community and show cases the plants which thrive in the ACT. We hope you enjoy our garden and you may find a plant to purchase, from the garden stall, which will suit your garden conditions. HSOC members will be available to answer questions regarding the garden.