

Thriving through **connection** in the community since 1988

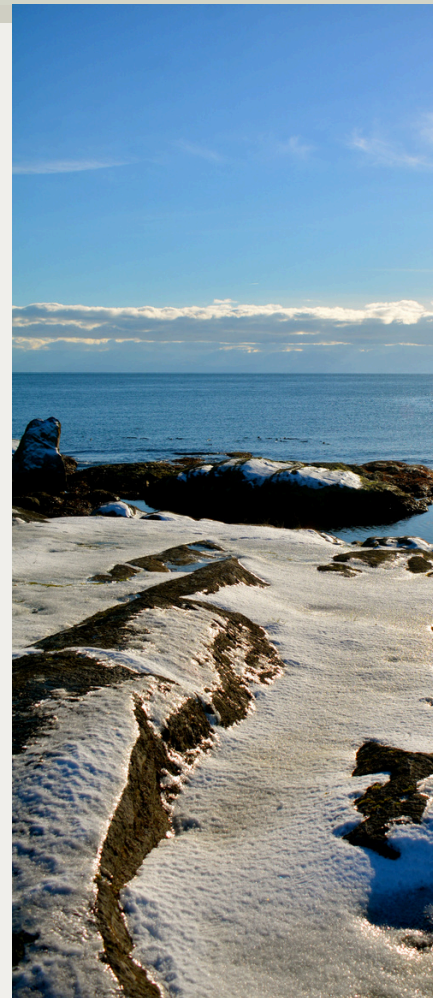
The latest news and announcements from Easy Care Gardening



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City of Ryde Sustainability Festival

The annual City of Ryde Sustainability Festival was on again in June in celebration of World Environment Day. The event promotes sustainability, resilience and environmental awareness, giving the community a chance to be part of something bigger, showing how each one of us can make a difference, while we work towards restoring the world we live in together.

In spite of wet weather, the event went ahead on Sunday 2nd June. Held in the car park of West Ryde Leagues Club, although not as picturesque as Anzac Park originally planned, it was a great way to get the family out of the house on a wet day.



L-R: Volunteers Mary Ellen Housego and Jane Keneally with ECG Gardening Coordinator Dushan Punchihewage and his daughter Hanna

Four dedicated volunteers came along and helped out Easy Care Gardening (ECG) staff on the day. Coralie Jensen, ECG Volunteer Manager was assisted by Mary Ellen Housego, Peter Delbridge, Pamela Rees and Jane Keneally. Together they engaged with like-minded people about creating and maintaining sustainable gardens, and explained the “How and Why” of mulching a garden. They also promoted the need for more volunteers to continue the important work of the organisation.



Volunteers Peter Delbridge and Mary Ellen Housego preparing to talk about the importance of mulching

Some great connections were made on the day, which is a by-product of engaging with the community through crucial topics of discussion such as caring for the environment. The benefit of having our own volunteers present at these event is their ability to share their own experience of volunteering with ECG.

The festival was educational, engaging and thought-provoking with plenty of activities for all ages. We look forward to being involved again next year.

Bush Medicine Workshop

Tuesday June 11th
10am-2pm.

Presented by
proud Wiradjuri
woman Diyan Coe.



Bush Medicine Workshop, Tues 11th June - The Ryde Aboriginal Women's Group invites the female community of the City of Ryde to a bush medicine workshop. Learn about Aboriginal medicinal bush plants which have been used for thousands of years. Learn how to make Lemon Myrtle bush balm, and enjoy bush herb infused delights. More information [here](#).

My Aged Care Talk (Online via Zoom) - Learn more about My Aged Care program with Carers NSW. Topics covered include what is aged care?, services and supports available, how to access services, choosing a provider and where to get help. More information [here](#).



Community Expo, Thurs 20th June - City of Ryde is holding a Community Expo with different government departments and community organisations in June. Come and have a chat with different stall holders and get some useful information on general government services. More information [here](#).



Figtree Park Grand Re-opening, Hunters Hill. The Mayor and Councillors invite you to explore the newly upgraded Figtree Park as they cut the ribbon for the official grand re-opening on Saturday June 15 at 10.30am. There will be free face painting, giant bubbles and live music by King Olav. More information [here](#).



Term 2 Introduction to Tai-chi - Active Ku-ring-gai's 10-week beginner Tai-Chi program will introduce you to the basic principles and movements of the free-flowing form of ancient Chinese martial art. Improve flexibility, balance, and learn relaxation techniques such as visualisation and deep breathing. More information [here](#).



Hornsby Twilight Market - Enjoy a night of great food and music at our inaugural Twilight Markets in Hornsby Mall. The lively night out, complete with live music and delicious food stalls is the first of the regular markets, to be held on the second Saturday of each month until December. More information [here](#).



2024 NSW Seniors Local Achievement Awards

The NSW Seniors Local Achievement Awards program is run as part of the 2024 NSW Seniors Festival and awarded at a local level. The award provides an opportunity for MPs and communities to recognise the seniors that help make their community a diverse, active and inspiring place to live. In June this year, one of our own volunteers, Ian Stuart was nominated and won the 2024 NSW Seniors Local Achievement Awards for his service to the community. Congratulations to Ian for a well-deserved award!

“When I first started with ECG I had no idea that I’d still be doing it 16 years later! ECG gives me a great opportunity to make a tangible contribution to the wellbeing of our clients. They love the work we do which shows on their faces and in their gardens. To be recognised with a Senior Local Achievement Award is an unexpected honour”.

Ian Stuart, winner of 2024 NSW Seniors Local Achievement Awards



Ian (left) presented with the 2024 NSW Seniors Local Achievement Awards, by Alister Henskens SC MP, Member for Wahroonga

Tip of the Month

HOT TIP

We're well and truly into winter, but that doesn't mean we must stay inside, twiddling our green thumbs. There's plenty to do to prepare for the gardening year ahead. Here's a few things you can do to tackle the boredom this winter.



Build raised beds, paths, and hardscaping - Winter is the perfect time to build projects for the garden. Create raised garden beds, garden paths, rose arbors, sheds, or plant supports like berry trellises. Minimise the stress of getting these types of projects done when you're trying to grow crops at the same time. Build them as a winter gardening project, and you'll be ready for spring growth.

Make Newspaper Plant Pots - If one of your goals is to recycle more and use less plastic, make newspaper plant pots. The paper and ink are safe for growing plants, and the pots last just long enough before they begin breaking down. This is also a fun one to get the kids involved.

Clean your tools - Most of us keep our tools in reasonably good condition but aren't disinfecting and oiling them throughout the year. Winter is a great time to wipe them down, buff off rust, and oil them. WD-40 is a popular option but to keep things natural, use natural vegetable oil. Olive oil and boiled linseed oil work well. Some winter gardening activities can be fun but some are just necessary and this is one of them!

T.E.A.M in FOCUS



While others are enjoying their Saturdays as a day of rest, our Saturday volunteer teams are busy working hard in the garden. Saturday teams are usually large, consisting of 10-12 volunteers.

Because of these numbers, larger gardens are scheduled to accommodate the number of volunteers so everyone can work accordingly.

On this particular day only 4 volunteers turned up. Even with the size of the garden and the task ahead, their reduced numbers didn't seem to phase these



L-R: Rowena Hubble, Malinda Frazer, Karen Wheeler, Julia Hsiang ladies as they got stuck in and got the job done.

These four incredible volunteers are Malinda Frazer, Karen Wheeler, Rowena Hubble and Julia Hsiang.



L-R: Before and after the gardening session, 28 garbage bags of garden waste waiting for collection.

“They cleared the weeds in the front and back garden, transforming it into a beautiful space. We filled 28 bags for council pickup on this day.”

Dushan Punchihewage, ECG Garden Coordinator

The client's home was in Putney with a large garden area to clear. Before and after shots show the front garden alone with the 'before' shot heavily infiltrated with weeds. At the end of the session a whopping 28 garbage bags of garden waste were collected. Dushan Punchihewage, ECG Garden Coordinator was amazed at the effort of these four volunteers, “They cleared the weeds in the front and back garden, transforming it into a beautiful space. We filled 28 bags for council pickup on this day.”

Thanks to the dedication of these volunteers, client Joyce Slattery can enjoy her garden once again.

Support Us



Easy Care Gardening is a not-for-profit organisation that relies on volunteers to ensure its work in the community can continue. If you can spare 3 hours of your day to volunteer, click [here](#) for more information.



Whilst we do receive funding from the Commonwealth Government, it is not sufficient to cover all of our administrative costs and the purchase of new tools and equipment. Your donation today will help countless older residents keep living longer in their own home.

To donate now to Easy Care Gardening click [here](#). Donations of UD\$2 or more are tax deductible.

Recipe Corner

Vegan leek & potato soup by Sara Buenfeld, BBC Good Food

Ingredients

- 1 tbsp rapeseed oil, plus a drizzle to serve (optional)
- 2 large garlic cloves, chopped
- 500g leeks, thinly sliced
- 500g potatoes, cut into cubes
- 500ml vegan vegetable stock, made with 1½ tsp bouillon powder
- 500ml unsweetened almond milk
- chopped chives and bread, to serve

A dairy-free, plant-based twist on the classic leek and potato soup. Ideal for lunch or a starter, topped with chopped chives and enjoyed with crusty bread

STEP 1

Heat the oil in a large pan over medium heat and fry the garlic and leeks, stirring, until the veggies start to soften. Add the potatoes and stock, then cover and simmer for 15 mins until the leeks and potatoes are soft.

STEP 2

Pour in the almond milk, then remove from the heat and blitz using a hand blender until almost smooth, with a slightly chunky texture. Or, if you prefer, blitz until completely smooth. Reheat over low heat if needed, then ladle into bowls and scatter with chives, drizzle with a little oil and serve with bread. Can be frozen for up to three months.



Image: www.bbcgoodfood.com



We want to hear from you! Send us your recipes, tips and tricks to be featured in the newsletter. Write to us at info@easycaregardening.org.au or Phone (02) 9983 1644