



Riverside Gardens

at Emerald Bank

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The Riverside Leaf-letter January 2012

From everyone at Riverside Gardens, we wish you all a very happy New Year. May 2012 be a great year for you and your families.

Of course, if your New Year's resolution is to spruce up your garden we'd love to help you out.

We have been witnessing an interesting battle in our shop between our resident family of Willy Wag Tails and three



Indian Myna birds which are an introduced pest. It has been good to see the plucky wag tails get the upper hand against the much larger intruders. Indian Mynas were first introduced to Australia in the 1860's to control insect pests but have become a pest in their own right. They are brown with a black head and have yellow bare skin around the

eyes, a yellow bill and legs, and in flight they have large white patches under their wing. They are a member of the starling family and are also known as the Common Myna. They are very easily distinguished from the Noisy Myna which is a native honey eater that is mostly grey and slightly smaller. To help limit their spread, try and stop Indian Mynas from nesting and roosting in your garden.

Upcoming New Releases

Earlier in December Larry, Murray, Simone and I attended Hortivations held at Ball Australia. Hortivations is an industry event where a group of growers and producers get together and showcase their new products and up and coming new release plants. This year Hortivations celebrated its 10th year and is a credit to all those involved with organising such an event.

Hortivations allows Retailers such as ourselves a sneak preview of new and soon to be released products. We are constantly looking for new inspiration to pass on to our customers and Hortivations gives us exactly that.

Although some of what we saw will be released for sale to the public as early as January this year, some of the others are still undergoing testing and may not be available to the public for at least another three years. This alone gives you some indication of the painstaking efforts that go into producing new breeds of plants.

One to look forward to hopefully this month is the stunning Euphorbia 'Lipstick'. The sample plants that we received on the night are doing extremely well and haven't stopped flowering.

Is your elm tree looking mottled half eaten with holes through the leaves? Then you had better call in and speak to us about your elm beetle problem. Elm leaf beetles can damage the look of your tree and destroy its health and vigor if left unchecked. Even if your tree shows no sign of damage it is still worthwhile doing some preventative work each year. The treatment for Elm leaf beetle depends on the stage of growth of the insect. Now is the time for trunk banding. This is a very simple, inexpensive and environmentally gentle way of interrupting the breeding cycle of Elm Leaf Beetle. Call in and ask us how it is done.

Friends of Riverside

Our Christmas barbeque get together was held on the 14th December at the Nursery. The weather was perfect, food was delicious, company was lovely. There wasn't a mosquito in sight nor did I see a single pesty fly.

Just a reminder that there will be no **Friends of Riverside** in January and the next day time get together will be on Wednesday 8th February at 2pm.



Judged Best Medium Garden Centre of Victoria 2008, 2009 & 2010

Something a little different! Here's some New Year and Gardening quotes which I'm sure you'll enjoy. Happy New Year from Rosalie

- We will open the book. Its pages are blank. We are going to put words on them ourselves. The book is called Opportunity and its first chapter is New Year's Day. ~Edith Lovejoy Pierce
- People are so worried about what they eat between Christmas and the New Year, but they really should be worried about what they eat between the New Year and Christmas. ~Author Unknown
- Good resolutions are simply checks that men draw on a bank where they have no account. ~Oscar Wilde
- Gardening is a matter of your enthusiasm holding up until your back gets used to it. ~Author Unknown
- The greatest gift of the garden is the restoration of the five senses. ~Hanna Rion
- God made rainy days so gardeners could get the housework done. ~Author Unknown
- I know that if odour were visible, as colour is, I'd see the summer garden in rainbow clouds. ~Robert Bridges, "Testament of Beauty"
- You can bury a lot of troubles digging in the dirt. ~Author Unknown
- Gardening is cheaper than therapy and you get tomatoes. ~Author Unknown
- Plants give us oxygen for the lungs and for the soul. ~Linda Solegato

Notes _____

Congratulations to this month's winners of our \$50.00 gift vouchers

**Jonathan Sullivan
and
Annie Johnson**

Be sure your name is registered with us to have the chance to win one of two \$50.00 gift vouchers. All accumulated sales of \$150.00 for the month automatically go in the draw.

In Stock Now

Choisya 'White Dazzler'

This recent release plant makes a beautiful low hedge or border plant. Covered with scented white flowers during spring over fine, dark green foliage this low shrub is a great addition to most gardens. Choisya 'White Dazzler' is a dense compact plant to 1.2m high and 1.2m wide. Call in and check it out while stocks last.

**The Windmill Cafe &
Chocolate Shop**
Open Mon—Fri 9am—4pm
Sat—Sun 9am—5pm

Lloyd's Produce Store

Open 7 days a week
10am—5pm

Call in and be surprised by the amount of produce available from our region.

Mini Golf Prices
Adults \$8.50 Children \$6.00
Family \$25.00 (2 adults and 2
Children Under 16)

Last start 4pm daily

Don't forget to bring a hat, sunscreen and a drink.

Australia Day 26th January 2012

We will be open
9am—5pm

Want to join our email list and receive our monthly 'Leaf-letter' electronically? Simply send us an email to info@riversidegardens.com or give your details to one of our staff members.

School Holiday Ideas by Simone

With the school holidays now under way and the kid's home for the whole month of January, finding something to entertain them each day can be a struggle but sometimes the simple things that they can create are right at your back door. Making things from bits and pieces around the house or a trip to the cheap shops can sometimes bring the most fun and entertainment.

Here are a few creative ideas for you to spend some time with your children or grandchildren.

Build a scarecrow If you have a veggie garden that needs some personality, scarecrows are great fun. Simply start with a piece of wood for the centre pole and one across the middle for arms. Check out our example in the seedling area at the nursery. Dress your scarecrow in some old clothes and give it a name.

Mini Greenhouse This is a great way to teach children how to propagate new plants from cuttings of plants in your own garden or growing from seed. Give them the responsibility of watering and caring for the plant as they grow. Mini green houses and seeds can be purchased from the nursery, the "how to" advice is free.

Plant some Cress We had fun doing this last summer holidays. Buy a few packets of seed cress and prepare a pot or flat seedling tray with potting mix. We have plenty of old seedling trays here at the nursery, just ask us. Then draw a simple shape such as a smiley face or star shape in the potting mix and gently sprinkle the packet of cress along the lines of the shape. Keep the moisture up to it being careful not to water to an overflowing point, using a mist spray is good. Within just a few days the seeds will begin to shoot in the shape of the design you have created. Sprinkle any left over seeds in half egg shells filled with cotton wool and keep moist. Put some funny faces on the shells and watch their hair grow.

Plant up a succulent garden Succulents are an easy plant to grow and not expensive to buy. They look great planted up in some spare pots you may have lying around at home or as we have done at home, when the sand pit was no longer being used we turned it into a big succulent garden.

Flower pressing You can choose some flowers and leaves from your own garden to press and preserve. Choose flowers such as pansies, violas, lavenders or dianthus and place between two pieces of paper and then stack some heavy books on top of the paper to flatten. Leave for between 2 to 6 weeks. Use the flattened flowers to make a card for someone special.

Make a Fairy Garden This one is for the girls. Prepare a quiet shady position in your garden and let your imagination go wild. Use such things as some left over Christmas tinsel and solar butterfly lights to give it a bit of sparkle. Have a look around home for spare tea sets and make some fairy furniture out of logs. Use some spare material to make a few fairy table cloths and flags. Buy some cute fairies and move them into their new home.

Make a Garden wind Chime Make up a wind chime to hang in a tree outside. Either buy a cheap wind chime and pull it apart and add to it your own bits and pieces or use the following ideas to make your own special wind chime.

Good items to use are: Old CDs hung at different lengths, beads, shells, bells, small terracotta pots, large buttons or spare keys. Maybe you can use each of these things all in one big wind chime. That would be fun!

Fly a kite We have new stock of kites in the nursery at the moment which range from the small fun lady bird kites right up to the double stringed stunt kites. With all the windy weather we have had lately there is sure to be plenty of chances to have some fun flying a kite.

And lastly, we can highly recommend as a great boredom beater a game of mini golf at Riverside Gardens. A round of golf usually takes approximately an hour to complete, depending upon the size of the group and is a great way to have fun and get some exercise at the same time.

Hope you enjoy your summer break!

Colouring Competition

Kids, colour in the picture on the back page of our Leaf-letter and bring it into us and receive a packet of Yates A or Mr Fothergill's AA range of seeds. Attach your name and phone number to your picture for a chance to win a Mini Greenhouse, a pair of Twigs gloves and a packet of seed raising mix valued at \$35.00.

Fruiting Pomegranates by Deyon

The fruiting Pomegranate is a deciduous tree that will grow between three and seven metres high depending on the variety. Pomegranates are self fertile and won't require a pollinator. Attractive glossy green leaves are accompanied by large showy red flowers from late spring and early summer. Red leathery skinned fruit will develop towards the ends of youngish branches. The segmented fruit contains shiny red seeds covered in thick red juice. Autumn foliage will display tones of yellow and orange.

Native to Iran, Pomegranate's like a warm and sunny position in a loamy soil. They are considered to be quite drought tolerant, however they will produce better fruit with regular watering. These plants will also tolerate short periods with wet feet and are suitable potted specimens as well. Fertilise in late winter or early spring and prune to shape in winter, removing old or congested growth.

Juice made from the Pomegranate is known to be extremely nutritious, containing a wide range of vitamins and antioxidants. The juice can be consumed fresh or made into a sweet syrup called grenadine which can be used for ice creams, cakes and baked apples just to name a few. The pulp/seeds can also be used in salads, desserts or with your morning cereal. Pomegranates are also a popular addition to Middle Eastern food. Dried seeds can be used as a seasoning in dhal, fried samosa, stuffing and chutney.

Varieties –

- Eleche – A Spanish variety with pink blushed fruit growing to five or so metres.
- Ben Hur – Enormous sized fruit sometimes exceeding 15cm in diameter.
- Seedling – A good all rounder
- Kezake – Very juicy red fruit. Hardy.

Colouring Competition
See middle page for details

