NSW Camellia Research Society NEWSLETTER

ISSN: 2207-6883

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In Our Garden This Month

WOW:

Well that was March. Autumn Neutrog delivered. The first Bloom Competition since 2019. Not a great number of entries but some excellent sasanquas on show with a few in the other limited classes.

Bill Fleming's Fabulous 'Takanini' (Photo D. Low)

APRIL EDITION

It was great to meet up again and to see some renewing members whom we had not seen since 2019.
Our guest speaker, P.P. Richie Griffiths spoke and demonstrated on soil science. Read all about it further on in this edition. Be sure to come to the next meeting as we will have some lucky door prizes provided by Manutec.
Next month our Guest Speaker will be Brian Roach talking about native plant propagation.
Remember the Annual Show will be upon us soon and Richie Griffiths needs your help.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT-APRIL 2021

It was good to see a couple of tables of Blooms for judging and the smiling faces of our members at the March Meeting at Gordon Baptist Church Hall. It was our first Bloom Competition on the tables for over a year. How good was that?!! Thanks to Richie Griffiths for his talk on the "essence of soil". There was plenty for us all to be aware of and to take into account during our gardening. Following on from Richie's demonstration of pH testing, we have some pH Test Kits and other soil additives (courtesy of Manutec) that will form part of our Lucky Door prizes over this and coming months.

Thanks also to Chris Chapman and Marion Moyes for judging the blooms and to Helen Wallace and Juliet Muras preparing the results certificates. Thanks to Daniel and Carolyn Low for their help with the setup, organising the tables, photographing the blooms, helping to tidy away. Daniel has further details, including the Bloom Competition results, later in this Newsletter.

We are looking forward to continuing the Bloom Competition on the tables throughout the season. Our next meeting is on **Monday 19th April** and we are expecting an interesting talk from Brian Roach. We would like to see more members in attendance, and more blooms on the tables. Let's see you there.

You will be asked to sign the Attendance Form on entry to the Church Hall, listing your contact mobile number (or landline if no mobile) and email address so that **Contact Tracing** can be carried out in the unlikely event that it is needed. All the usual Covid Safe precautions will be required as a condition of our use of the Halls: hand sanitising, social distancing, and wearing of face masks is encouraged, but is not mandatory.

Tea and coffee will be served after the meeting. If you could bring a small plate of something to accompany the drinks, that would be appreciated.

On a sad note, some of us attended the funeral service of our member, Freddy Appleton. It is amazing how much you can learn about someone you have conversed with at meetings over the years; in my case at North Shore Railway Modellers Association; when celebrating their life and achievements.

Bruce Walker
President

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Carolyn and Daniel,
Thank you for all your help during 2020. I hope you will call in if you are passing and have time.
Unfortunately the arthritis has deteriorated greatly. I will not renew my membership because my activities will be limited.
I am enclosing a donation, along with my best wishes to all.
Mary Doughty AM
Ed. Note: Mary only joined recently but she does have some fine examples of rare and large camellias. Her generous donation is greatly appreciated by the Society.

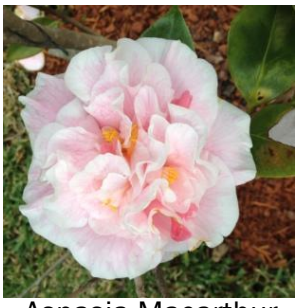
A IS FOR APRIL . . .

PHOTOS NSW CRS

Akashigata

Ace of Hearts

Alice Morgan


Aspasia Macarthur

Adorable

Alba Plena

Al Gunn

Ardoch

EXTRACTS FROM THE APRIL COMMITTEE

D. LOW

MEETING, TUESDAY 6TH APRIL 2021

Memberships to date:
Single: 41, Household 18, = 36, Complimentary: 3, Total: 80.
Special thanks to Mary Doughty for her generous donation on resignation.
Capitations are now due and will be paid to CA by month's end.
Next meeting at Gordon Baptist Church—Brian Roach Guest Speaker.
Future Meetings; a number unfilled for guest speakers and a suggestion one meeting be devoted to all members who enjoy photographing Camellias. They should come along and join in a "Round Table of Tips for better Results".
Neutrog Delivery all complete.
Daniel and Carolyn Low have resigned as Delegates to Camellias Australia and the Membership are asked to consider being a delegate to the National Congress in Glorious Gippsland later this Year.
Next Committee Meeting 03/05/2021, venue to be determined.
Meeting Closed 9.30pm.

ON THE SICK LIST

Our thoughts are with the following members who are recuperating from recent surgery:
Judith McGill, Margaret Levick and Lesley Saddington.

Camellia Grove Nursery

ESTABLISHED 1939

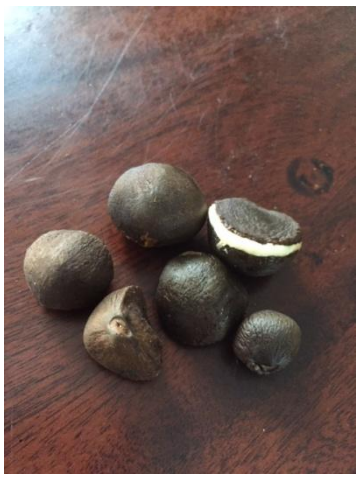
OUR NURSERY: 8 Cattai Ridge Road, Glenorie NSW 2157
Phone: (02) 9652 1200
Fax: (02) 9652 2740
NURSERY TRADING HOURS
OPEN 7 DAYS 9am-4pm

Browse our website at: http://www.camelliagrove.com.au

THE HACKETTS COME TO THE CITY

On the 10th of March Fran and Bob Hackett, who were down in Sydney from Alstonville, called in to see us and our garden as well as to drop off Camellia Seeds from her retics and japonicas. Fran has been collecting them this season to give to our members. What a lot of huge seed pods (of course they weren't up to the size of Pam's *crapnellianas*).

San Marino Capsules


San Marino Seeds

Tyrrhenian Gown

AND A RECORD YEAR FOR SEED SET

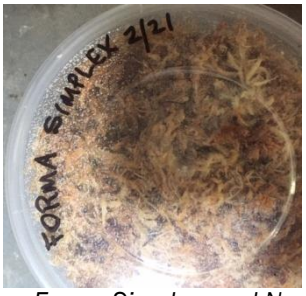
D. LOW

This year we seem to have had a superabundance of seed setting on our Camellias.
Of all types ; it did not seem to matter. However, the most prolific have been Cho Cho San, Hagoromo, Baby Bear White and our beautiful Seedling of Hanafuki. We hope to get seedlings from *yuhsienensis, grijsii* and *kissii.* Our Melissa, Unryu and Egao also look promising.
Collecting, cleaning and bottling is now complete. The seeds have been laid out in Peat Moss [and we now await germination] and germination has begun.

A Selection of the Seeds Collected This Year

Sorting the Seeds

Bottled Up



Forma Simplex and New Roots Have Begun to Develop

Remember, Neutrog Products Are:

'Sparkling Burghundy', Just a Small Bush but Masses of Blooms

and matched UP with sinensis

MONTHLY MEETING SCHEDULE 2021

April 2021	
Monday 19th	NSWCRS Monthly Meeting (Always 3rd Monday of Month) *Gordon Baptist Church, 20-22 Park Ave, Gordon 7pm benching of blooms for 7.30pm meeting* Speaker Brian Roach—Native Plants for the Sydney Region
May2021	
Monday 17th	NSWCRS Monthly Meeting (Always 3rd Monday of Month) *Gordon Baptist Church, 20-22 Park Ave, Gordon 7pm benching of blooms for 7.30 meeting.* Speaker TBA
June 2021	
Monday 21st	NSWCRS Monthly Meeting (Always 3rd Monday of Month) *Gordon Baptist Church, 20-22 Park Ave, Gordon 7pm benching of blooms for 7.30 meeting.* Speaker TBA
July 2021	
Saturday 10th and Sunday 11th	NSW CRS Annual Show. Details to follow
Saturday 17th and Sunday 18th	Illawarra Annual Show and National Show
Monday 26th	NSWCRS Monthly Meeting (Deferred for Show Month) *Gordon Baptist Church, 20-22 Park Ave, Gordon 7pm benching of blooms for 7.30 meeting.* Speaker TBA
August 2021	
Saturday 21st	NSWCRS Monthly Meeting *Keep date in Diary. Afternoon outing meeting at Camellias R Us, Glenorie with Bloom Competition. More details later.*
September 2021	
Monday 20th	NSWCRS Monthly Meeting (Always 3rd Monday of Month) *Gordon Baptist Church, 20-22 Park Ave, Gordon 7pm benching of blooms for 7.30 meeting.* Speaker TBA
October 2021	
Monday 18th	NSWCRS AGM 7.30pm. *Gordon Baptist Church, 20-22 Park Ave, Gordon.*
November 2021	
	Annual Dinner and Presentations. Date and Location TBA

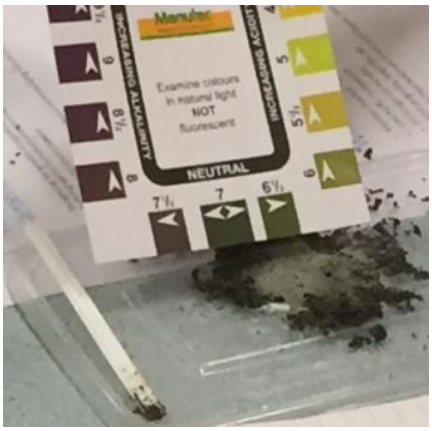
SOIL—WHAT'S THE DEAL?

RICHIE GRIFFITHS

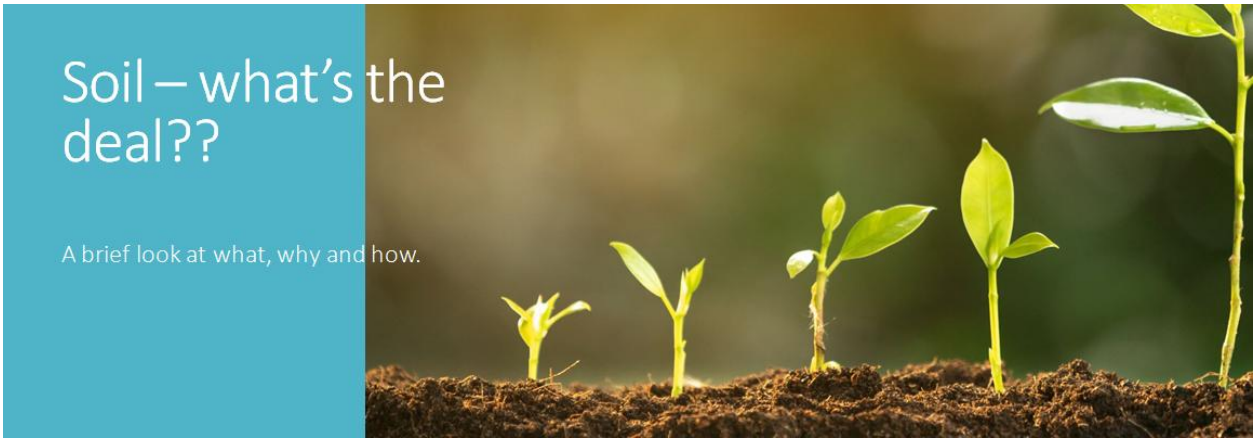
At our March meeting Richie Griffiths, PP, Public Officer, Doubly Qualified Horticulturist and Parks and Gardens Manager, gave members a good outline of just what your garden soil all is about. With samples and demonstrations including carrying out a "Manutec" pH Test members were both educated and entertained. His notes with reference to "Growing Media for Plants and Turf" Handreck and Black, were handed out and people could follow his talk step by step.

Richie Explains

Preparing for a pH Test



pH Test Result



What does soil provide?

A store of water and air

The nutrient supply for growth in solution

Habitat for soil organisms

An anchor for plants to grow

What is soil texture?

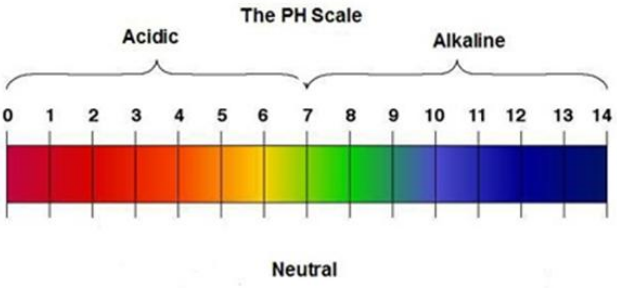
- The ratio of mineral particles present in the soil (ie sand, silt, clay) determine the character of the soil
- It can be determined through feel – rubbing, kneading, stretching, cracking, moist samples will determine your soil texture
- The texture is important as it will determine the behaviour of the soil – drainage, capacity to hold moisture and nutrients, ability to be cultivated and many other characteristics

What is soil structure?

- The arrangement of soil particles into aggregates or crumbs (or peds)
- Structure is based on the formulation of these peds that result from organic matter presence along with microorganism activity
- Structure develops over time through the interaction of organic material, soil organisms and plant growth
- Also chemistry is important in bonding crumb structure (ie Calcium / Magnesium ratios, etc)
- Presence of clay will also bond with organic material

What is pH?

- Simply it is the measure of acidity or alkalinity of the soil
- Measured on a scale of 1 – 14; 7 is neutral



Why is pH significant?

pH effects the following

- Nutrient availability to the plant
- Ability of the soil to hold certain nutrients
- Soil microbe / fungi activity
- Toxicities of specific elements may develop

What is organic material?

- Materials that contain carbon along with hydrogen, oxygen, nitrogen, sulphur and are or were parts of plants, animals or fungi, etc
- Sources of organic material include
- Dropping plant parts (leaves, flowers, fruit, stems, bark,)
- Animals and their droppings
- Dead plants and animals
- Roots of living and dead plants
- All soil microorganisms and fungi

Why is organic material important?

- Improve soil structure by binding mineral elements
- improving Oxygen and water to root zone
- Source of nutrients – released as material is decomposed
- Food source for microorganisms that breakdown organic material – reducing the impacts of disease pathogens
- Encourages macrofauna (worms, cockroaches, slaters, etc) that turnover aerate and release nutrients
- Increase presence of colloids and humic acid (sites for storage of nutrients)
- Provides a buffer (a blanket) to fluctuations in nutrients, pH, temperature and moisture

What is humus?

- The end product of organic material decomposition
- Provides the dark colour to soils rich in organic material
- Has a major effect on soil structure and nutrient holding capacity
- Can survive for several thousand years – appears to be derived from lignin in plants
- When broken down it releases elements that provide nutrients (a few percent each year)
- Must be replaced to avoid depletion (adding carbon to soil)

What are plant nutrients?

The elements required for plant growth

- Carbon, oxygen, hydrogen sourced from air, water and the soil
- 16 major and minor elements needed for growth
  - Nitrogen (N), Phosphorus (P) and Potassium (K) – (typically shown on fertilisers)
  - Calcium (Ca), Magnesium (Mg), Sulphur (S) are other macro elements
  - Minor or trace elements include Iron, Zinc, Copper, Manganese, Boron, Molybdenum

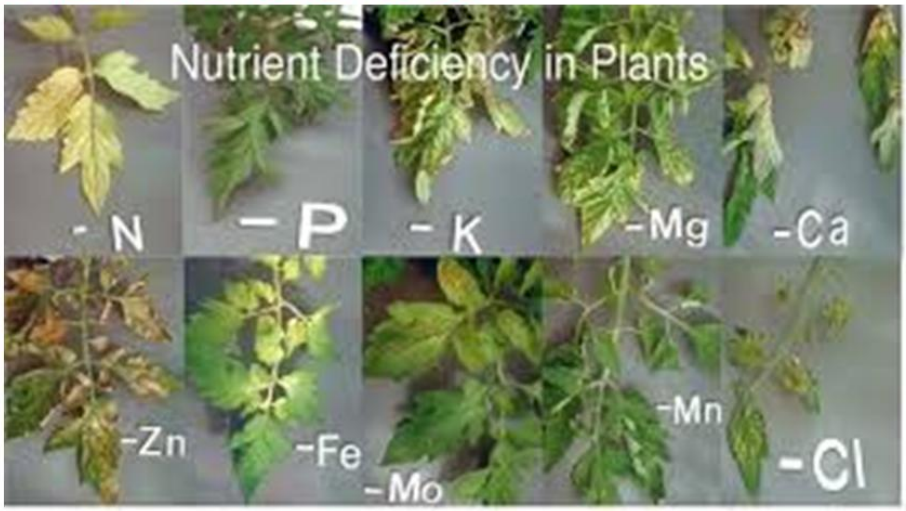
Why are there deficiencies?

- Nutrients not present (leaching)
- Organic material breaking down slowly
- Too much brown organic material (ie carbon, nitrogen ratio)
- pH related
- Imbalances of elements locking up others
- Other causes include waterlogging, salinity, drought, disease, light intensity, herbicides, wind damage, air pollution

What are the signs of nutrient deficiency?

- Retarded growth, flowering, fruiting, fruit-set
- Obvious stunting
- Off-colour, distorted, mottled, dead, 'burnt'
- Premature leaf loss
- Twisted, distorted stems
- Poor root systems
- Wilting

Nutrient deficiencies



How does all this help me grow better camellias

- Recognising the benefits of organic material in improving nutrients, soil moisture retention, buffering against fluctuations and encouraging healthy microbial activity
- Improving natural soil processes
- Avoiding compaction
- Recognising the basic needs of the soil and encouraging natural processes.

What are simple rules to follow?

- Maintain mulches
- Limit traffic / compaction
- Encourage soil microbes
- Avoid pesticides, fungicides, etc
- Tolerate imperfection and threshold of disease / pests

Manutec
GARDEN CARE PRODUCTS

SOIL PH TEST KIT
Product Information Guide

What is Soil pH?
In simple terms, measuring soil pH is determining how acid or alkaline your soil is? It is measured on a scale of 0 to 14 with a neutral value of 7. Acid soils have pH values less than 7 and alkaline soils have pH values more than 7. Normally a pH in the range of 6 to 7 is considered ideal for optimum plant growth.

Why Soil pH is Important?
Soil pH directly affects root activity and the absorption of essential nutrients, which in turn affects growth of plants.

- All nutrients are easily available & readily absorbed when pH is in the neutral range of 6 – 7.
- Under alkaline conditions, trace elements such as Iron, Zinc and Manganese are locked up and become less available, resulting in deficiency symptoms.

For deep rooted plants such as fruit trees & large shrubs, take sample at a depth of 25 – 30cm. Remove any debris like leaves / bark or mulch before sampling.

- When sampling potting mixes or compost, try to remove any large undecomposed material such as bark.
- We recommend taking a sample size of about half a tea spoon. Taking a larger sample will be wasting liquid and powder.

Using Manutec pH Test Kit
The four steps illustrated below will provide a quick guide for testing soil pH. Please note that this is an illustration only, the actual colour you may get will vary depending on pH of your soil.
For more information please visit www.soilphtesting.com.

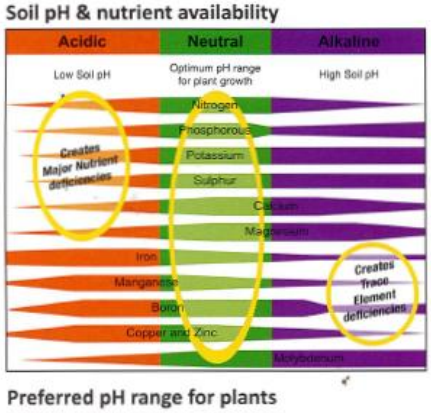
Place a small soil sample on the white mixing plate and add a few drops of indicator liquid.

Then mix the indicator liquid with the soil sample to make a thick paste.

- Similarly, under acidic conditions, major nutrients such as Nitrogen, Phosphorus, Potassium & Magnesium become less available, resulting in deficiency symptoms.

Without the correct soil pH, fertiliser applications can be ineffective and result in wastage, as nutrients will not be available for plants to absorb.

Soil pH & nutrient availability



Preferred pH range for plants
Most plants grow best in soils that are either slightly acidic or in the neutral range of 6 – 7. Some plants which are native

Lightly sprinkle white powder from the puffer bottle on to the top of moist soil paste.

The white powder changes to a different colour. Compare the new colour against closest colour on the colour chart to obtain a pH reading.

Changing/Adjusting soil pH

Lowering pH of alkaline soils:
We recommend to use Manutec Sulphur which is the most common & economical soil acidfying product for lowering pH.

To lower the pH by one unit (eg. from 7.5 to 6.5) use following amounts per square metre of soil surface, depending on soil type.
Sandy – 25g/m² Loamy – 50-70g/m² Clay – 100g/m²
These amounts will lower pH of top soil by one unit, to lower the pH by more than one unit, multiply the above amounts accordingly.
Note: Sulphur is gradually converted to acid over a period of 4 - 6 weeks depending on soil temperature and microbial activity. It is most important to test the pH after this period and repeat the application if necessary.

to an acidic soil region (referred to as acid loving plants – such as Azaleas, Camellias, Blue Berries, Rhododendrons etc), can tolerate acidic pH between 5 and 6.
Note: Although a few plant groups prefer slightly acid or alkaline conditions as listed below, they still can grow effectively in the neutral pH range of 6 – 7.

General Plants preferring (pH 6 to 7)	Acid loving Plants preferring (pH 5 to 6)	Only a few Plants can grow in slightly alkaline (pH 7 to 7.5)
Most fruit & citrus trees	Azaleas & Camellias	Lilac
Most vegetables	Gardenia, Blue berries	Figs
Rose & most flowers	Rhododendrons	Pink Hydrangeas
Lawn & most garden plants	Blue Hydrangeas	Black Currents

Testing Soil pH
Soil pH can easily be tested using the Manutec Soil pH kit. Developed by the CSIRO, this kit is accurate, instant and economical. It is widely recommended for home gardeners, professional horticulturists and farmers. This kit can be used to test soils, potting mixes and compost.

Taking soil sample

- Collect a small sample of soil from the area to be tested. If the soil is hard & lumpy, crush to make it finer for easy mixing.
- For shallow rooted plants (most common plants), samples should be taken at a depth of 10 – 15cm below soil surface.

Lowering pH of bulk soil/potting mixes
To lower the pH of bulk potting mix / compost by one unit, add approx. 500g of Sulphur per cubic metre (i.e.1000L) of soil, or 5g (1 heaped teaspoon) per 10 litre of soil.
Mix through thoroughly.

Increasing pH of acidic soils:

We recommend to use either Garden Lime or Dolomite Lime. Both are effective in increasing soil pH, but the difference is Dolomite has a higher Magnesium content which is ideal for highly acid soils.
To increase the pH by one unit (for example from 5.5 to 6.5) use following amounts per square metre of surface area, depending on soil type.
Sandy – 100g/m² Loamy – 200g/m² Clay – 300-400g/m²
These amounts will raise the pH of top soil by one unit, to raise the pH by more than one unit, multiply the above amounts accordingly.
Note: Soils that are naturally acidic or alkaline need regular monitoring and correction.

For further details on soil pH kit & related products, visit our specific web site www.soilphtesting.com or contact Manutec on 08 – 8260 2277

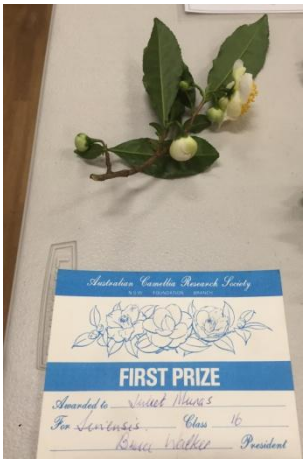
Note: For longer shelf life and effectiveness of this product, please ensure to store in a cool and dry condition, closing the bottles tight after use and avoiding direct exposure to sunlight during storage.

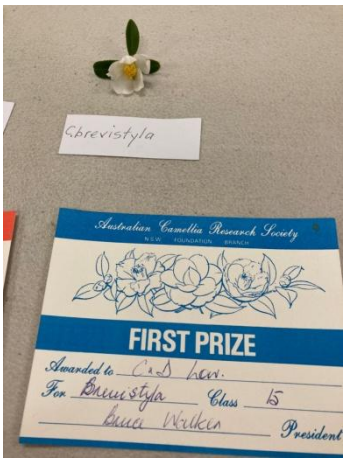
6

MARCH BLOOM COMPETITION

Novice Champion, Pure Silk', Bruce Walker

Open Champion, 'Paradise Diana', C&D Low





MONTH	MEMBER	PTS	SAS	SPR/MINS	RETICS	GRADE	TOTAL/MNTH	TOTAL
MARCH	B. Walker	3	14			N	17	17
	J. Muras	3	15	5		0	23	23
	C. & D. Low	14	3	1		0	18	18
	W. Fleming	5				0	5	5
	H. Wallace		1			0	1	1

NSWCRS COMMITTEE CONTACT DETAILS 2020-2021

Patron:	Her Excellency Professor The Honourable Dame Marie Bashir AD CVO	
President:	Bruce Walker	T: 0412 588 719 E: bfwalks2@tpg.com.au
Vice President:	Rachel O'Conor PO Box 9 Killara NSW 2071	T: 9498 2227
Secretary:	Helen Wallace	M:0404 721 572 E:helen_wallace@optusnet.com.au
Treasurer:	Julie Hood	T: 94118569 E: jhoodmazlin@gmail.com
Public Officer:	Richie Griffiths 39 Hazelmead Rd, Asquith NSW 2077	M: 0418 200 139 E:rgriffiths@ryde.nsw.gov.au
Newsletter Editor:	Daniel Low	T: 99883280 E: nswcamellias@hotmail.com
Librarian:	Bill Fleming	E:wfleming@primusonline.com.au
Membership Sec.	Carolyn Low	T: 99883280 E: nswcamellias@hotmail.com
Committee:	Bruce Walker (President)	Helen Wallace (Secretary)
	Julie Hood (Treasurer)	Juliet Muras
	Daniel Low (IPP, and Newsletter Editor)	Margaret Levick (Fellow NSW CRS)
	Richie Griffiths (*Public Officer)*	Carolyn Low (Membership Secretary)
	Judith McGill	
National Councillors:	Yet to be nominated	
ABN:	16 873 158 367	
Incorporation No.:	Y17693-47	

NSWCRS MONTHLY BLOOM COMPETITION 2021

Should all go according to plan; the Church Hall will be open from 6.45pm for Covid Clean and Benching. The Judging will start at 7.30 as the Meeting begins.

Class	Description	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
1	Sasanqua Single	✓					
2	Sasanqua Formal Double & Elegans Form	✓					
3	Sasanqua other forms	✓					
4	Sasanqua any form		✓	✓			
5	Japonica/Hybrid Single	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
6	Japonica/Hybrid Semi-double	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
6A	Japonica / Hybrid Irregular Semi-Double	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
7	Japonica/Hybrid Elegans Form	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
8	Japonica/Hybrid Informal Double	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
9	Japonica/Hybrid Formal Double	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
10	Japonica/Hybrid Miniature	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
11	Japonica/Hybrid any form						
12	Reticulatas & their hybrids	✓	✓	✓			
13	Reticulatas & their hybrids up to 130mm				✓	✓	✓
14	Reticulatas & their hybrids over 130mm				✓	✓	✓
15	Other not listed	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
16	Clusters & sprays of multi-flowered species & hybrids	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
17	New seedling or sport (1 to 3 blooms)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
C1	Collection: Sasanqua, any form, 3 blooms	✓					
C2	Collection: Any camellia, any form, 3 blooms	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Classes

Classes 1 to 15: one bloom, with a maximum of 2 attached leaves
Classes C1 & C2: a collection of 3 blooms, with a maximum of 2 attached leaves

Competition

A 'Novice' exhibitor has not won the annual 'Novice' championship, nor have they scored 20 points in a monthly 'Open' competition. The competition year starts in March, and a 'Novice' in March remains so to the end of that year. A bloom exhibited by a 'Novice' can win in 'Open' classes.

Points

'Open' and 'Novice' Classes 1 to 16: 1st = 3 points; 2nd = 2 points; 3rd = 1 point (if required)
'Open' and 'Novice' Collections Classes C1 to C2: 1st = 6 points; 2nd = 4 points; 3rd = 1 point (if required)
'Open' and 'Novice' Champion bloom (from the winning blooms): Extra 3 points.

LETS KEEP OUR GARDENS IN PEAK CONDITION

Seasoned performers for Spring

Whoflungdung is a biologically activated, nutrient-rich, weed-free, absorbent super mulch that introduces a wide diversity of beneficial bacteria to the soil.

Certified Allowed Input ACO CERT. NO. 58

Kahoona is ideal for all acid loving plants such as Camellias, Gardenias, Azaleas and Rhododendrons

GOGO Juice is teeming with beneficial microbiology and is essentially a pro-biotic for your soil and plants. GOGO Juice combines the "catalystic" power of the billions of beneficial bacteria with the well documented benefits of applying kelp, seaweed, fish and humic acid.

performance of each application.

Join the Pooh Bah club

Year round fertilising for year round health

Follow us for regular updates on facebook

Follow us for regular updates on instagram

NEUTROG® Biological Fertilisers

www.neutrog.com.au

0720

IN OUR GARDEN THIS MONTH

PHOTOS C. AND D. LOW

Chansonette

Class of '73

Exquisite (Waterhouse)

Kanjiro Seedling

Kate's Cascade

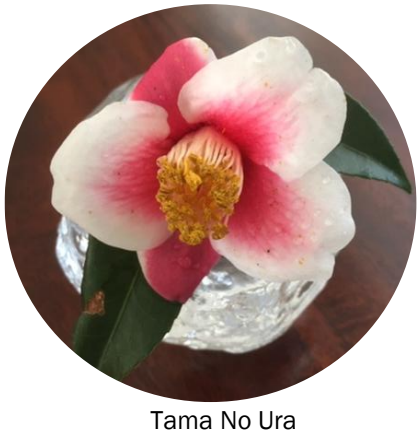
Lady Loch

Lammertsii

Marge Miller

Minato No Akebono

Stan Jones


Tama No Ura

Unknown Seedling