

Macarthur Rose News

Month **2025**

Volume: 31, No: 9

Congratulations

To David and Lorraine Hawke who recently achieved 25 years as members of the Macarthur Rose Society. Lorraine and David have always been strong supporters of the Macarthur Region ready to volunteer, participate and contribute. David has always been one of the first to volunteer and turn up when needed. We have greatly appreciated David's volunteering over many years and his sage and practical advice.

Lorraine has been a keen exhibitor under the mentorship of Rosalie Vine. For many years she was the unbeatable C Grade Champion at the annual Illawarra show.



Their hospitality has been expansive, hosting the Rose Society for several events over the years in their beautiful rose gardens.

For many years Lorraine organised the Christmas Hamper for our annual raffle. She is a superb organiser and fund raiser, spending many hours fund successfully fundraising and taking leadership with these activities. Lorraine and David have been generous and committed rosarians. The Macarthur Region is fortunate to have such wonderful members in our region. Thank You for your many years of membership. It has greatly enriched our



At Macarthur
Rose Society

Dear Rose Friends

Autumn has arrived with much shorter days, daylight saving finishing next weekend and the temperatures starting to cool. Our roses are in the middle of the beautiful autumn flush and the rose year is drawing to a close.

As the final rose shows are held over the next few weeks, it is also time to start to get ready for the next season.

Part of our preparations for the next season includes checking our soils and reinvigorating them for the new season. The soil has worked hard over the last few months and it is now time to replenish and repair and get ready for our new rose plantings. Gary Wootton gives some practical advice on how to start replenishing our soil to prepare for the new season that will soon be upon us.

As we review our activities in the garden over the last nine months, it is worthwhile thinking about what we have done with pest management. This month there is an article about Integrated Pest Management with advice about how we might go about managing pests next year. The article has useful links on where and how we might learn more about managing our pests in such a way to make our gardens more sustainable.

There was a good attendance at the Miniature Rose Show in Mittagong. Many Macarthur members supported the rose show and were successful. Gary Wootton entered the show with one of his own roses see Page 5. The show had a good range of interesting and new miniature roses on show. It was a great live demonstration of Gary's work with us on teaching us of the rewards of propagating your roses.

The Camden Show is on this week and all Macarthur members should consider participating in the show. Arrival time for preparation is at 6:00am on Friday 4th April with exhibits having to be on display before 8:30 am. Page 3 of this newsletter has more information.



Remember that our next meeting will be held at Macarthur Park. We are unable to use the CWA rooms because of the Camden Show. We are meeting at the Rotunda in Macarthur Park at 1:30pm for a start time of 2:00pm. Bring one of your favourite roses to share with us all. Fine weather is forecast. Further

information is on Page 3 of this newsletter.

Several of our valued members have been unwell over the past few weeks. We wish them a speedy recovery and return to good health.

I look forward to seeing you all at Macarthur Park.

Judith



Highlight

Did you know that the Rose was the first flower whose perfume was recorded. Many other scented flowers existed prior but being inferior they were discarded. Proving that perfume has always been an important characteristic.

Rose Propagation

We are at the best time for propagating by cuttings and the time when you are likely to achieve the most success. Start to propagate our best roses by taking hard wood cuttings. Everyone with an opinion will tell you the best way to propagate a rose by cuttings. Get on the internet and find a way that suits you or modify one method to suit your local environment and conditions. If you have any, it is time to collect and propagate your understock.

Don't forget to maintain your visual checks on the rose hips that are still growing. If they are still growing leave them to mature on the parent plant, until mid to late July. Continue to maintain the moisture checks and application on the seeds in stratification, and plant them up as required

Mulching

As mentioned in last month's Cultural Notes the soil is starting to cool as the cooler weather starts and the root zone is preparing for dormancy. It is a good time to enhance the garden mulch by placing new mulch over the existing mulch. Remember the existing mulch is breaking down and leeching out its minerals and nutrients and we do not want to interrupt this process. Stock up on your seaweed-based fertilisers such as Seamungus ready to maintain the soil over winter with its manure, humic acid, fish and seaweed.



At Macarthur
Rose Society

April Cultural Notes

Gary Wootton

Autumn has officially arrived even if over the last few weeks we have experienced a small mid-summer like heat wave. It is time to start planning and preparing for when our roses are at their lowest activity level. After the mid-summer heat slumber, autumn is the ideal time to increase our activity in the garden. Soil preparation and care are best done in the autumn and early winter so that we are ready for any new plantings and to assist the soil to replenish after the rigours of the outgoing season. Here are the tasks that need your attention now.

Soil pH

You may notice that some of your roses have not weathered the season well. One reason could be an out of balance soil pH. The pH stands for potential hydrogen and is a very important measurement for our roses. The best pH for roses is between 6 and 7, with 6.5 being ideal. If the soil pH is not right, your roses may not be able to take up nutrients properly.

Acidic soils usually have a pH of 4.0-6.5, and alkaline soils have a pH of 7.5-9.0. A pH of 7.0 is neutral.

Soil pH Testing is important. Buy a soil testing kit from the local hardware shop or you can use a professional soil testing service.

If your soil test indicates a pH reading of 7.0 or over, it means your soil is alkaline. Your roses will struggle in soil with this level of alkalinity. Adding sulphur, organic matter like compost or mulching will help to lower the pH, improve soil structure and make it more suitable for plant growth. To effectively add sulphur to alkaline soil, apply elemental sulphur (not gypsum) and incorporate into the soil.

Applying this in autumn will allow time for the soil bacteria to convert it into sulfuric acid, which in turn lowers pH.

Avoid over application because this can lead to extreme soil acidification, which is also detrimental to plant growth. After testing the soil, apply the sulphur at the correct dose and dig it through with a shovel or garden fork. Be cautious when applying sulphur around your new rose plants as it can cause damage.

On the other hand, if your soil pH reading is under 6.0 (like my gardens are), then we would need to increase the soil pH. To do this, you can use lime (calcium carbonate) or dolomite (calcium and magnesium carbonate), which are

common and effective soil amendments.

Lime neutralizes soil acidity by reacting with the hydrogen ions that cause acidity, raising the pH level. Agricultural lime is a common and readily available option for raising soil pH. Dolomite contains both calcium and magnesium, which are beneficial nutrients for plants.

Liquid Lime and pelletised lime are good options for quick pH adjustments or maintaining pH during the growing season. However, they are often not sufficient to achieve long term pH adjustments.

Changing the soil pH is a slow process and you will need to keep testing and treating your soil over the

autumn/winter to ensure the best soil pH for the spring growing season.

Changes will be slow. Work on a four-to-six-week, testing/treatment cycle. AND DON'T FORGET to test your potted roses too.

Yours in gardening *Gary*



For decorative uses, full-petalled roses may be left on the plant until half open. But thinner types e.g. Fairytale Queen, are best cut when only the outer petals have unfolded.

Camden Show

The annual Camden Show is on once again this week. Starting on Friday 4th April and continuing on Saturday 5th April.

Roses are featured in the Pavilion Flowers and Pots Schedule. Entries must be in before close of business on Monday 31 March.

Enter your lovely autumn roses in this show. It is an easy stress free show to enter and great way to support the local community. Do come prepared because last year the facilities for roses were cramped.

Set up begins at 6:00am with judging beginning at 8:30am. Rose classes are detailed on pages 5 and 6 of the Schedule. They are easy classes for everyone to enter. Come along and enjoy yourself with other rosarians and feel the joy of having one of your own roses on show in the local community.

Autumn Easter Show

Autumn in the rose garden is when the rose year starts to wind down. By now your beautiful autumn blooms will be starting to appear. Autumn blooms are usually better blooms than spring blooms. Their colour is deep and rich as the cooler weather creeps in and the days become shorter. The colour is better because the roses take longer to bloom allowing the colour to deepen.

Take the time to enter your roses in the local shows. The Easter Show is coming up and volunteers are needed. If you volunteer, you will be given a day pass that includes public transport to and from the show.

Enter your roses, volunteer and enjoy watching your beautiful autumn blooms being admired by all of Sydney when they visit the Easter Show.



At Macarthur
Rose Society

April Rose Notes

Integrated Pest Management

Rosarians have one unifying priority - we all want beautiful roses. We should also be unified in being growers who protect the environment. These two priorities can coexist. Gardeners make many decisions every day - what roses should we buy, where to plant them, how and when to fertilise and whether or not we should spray.

This last question invites us to consider our pest management. We can't just 'wing' it when it comes to growing roses.

Ask yourself whether you want to follow the same method you used last year. Sameness is familiar and comforting and it is so much easier not to make changes. We have it on good authority (Einstein, no less!) that insanity is doing the same thing over and over and expecting a different result. Or to put it in garden terms, do we really want to step on that same rake again?

Take Time to Learn About Pests and observe and 'Read' Your Plants. In our roses' growing season, all serious rosarians should commit to a daily garden walk-through so we can observe and remove pests and in the case of 'invisible' pests like hibiscus beetles, deal with pest damage

immediately. Vigilant, attentive gardeners learn to 'read' plants and catch the first lacy leaves, first cluster of aphids, first red spider web and first signs of blackspot.

This attention spares our plants from pest and fungal stress. Every rosarian, even those who use pesticides, should be doing this because pesticides don't manage or kill all pests, and pest damage stresses our plants.

I attribute my first successful year without a plague of spider mites during summer to mercilessly cutting out any and all leaves and blooms that looked like they had red spider damage.

In the two previous years they visited in plague proportions. This year after their first visit, I changed my approach. I believe eagle-eyed observation can continue to help me without reliance on pesticides.

The credit is not all mine. The beneficials in my garden are taking a few years to establish but they are gradually cultivating a taste for my pests.

How to defeat pests

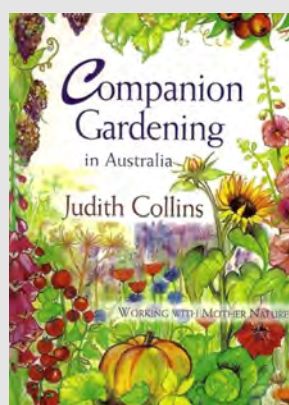
There is a method that can help us manage our pests and achieve a

healthy garden and the best roses, while protecting the bees and beneficials.

The answer is Integrated Pest Management (IPM). It is a simple gardening practice that was developed in the 1950's by agricultural scientists. However for thousands of years gardeners and cultivators have been using IPM even if they didn't call it this.

IPM has four components:

Cultural, **Mechanical**, **Biological** and **Chemical** controls to achieve sustainable and environmentally sound integration to keep pests below damaging levels.



At first glance you might wonder how this same method can satisfy the standards and needs of all growers. The term 'below damaging levels' is subjective and leaves a lot of wiggle room for the amount of damage we tolerate.

Many avid rose show exhibitors have a necessarily low tolerance for damage and high standards of perfection. They have used pesticides for years and wonder if they can grow exhibition quality roses with IPM.

News

A reminder that our next meeting on 5th April is being held at the Macarthur Park. Use the Menangle Road entrance and make your way to the Rotunda. Bring a chair to sit on, a cold drink (the weather will be warm), and bring along one rose that you can share with everyone else.

You can see the Rotunda from the Menangle Road entrance. There is parking along Menangle Road. Remember that the Camden Show will be on, which means that there will be increased pressure on parking spaces. Try to car pool if you can.

The rose beds in this part of the Park are not in the best condition but it will be good to see the roses before the Council landscaping people begin their renovations of the rose garden.

Don't forget your HAT!



Chocka Blok is the latest product available from Neutrog. It is a compost to enrich your soil.



At Macarthur
Rose Society

Month Rose Notes

How to choose new roses among the online extravaganza of new releases and old favourites

The answer is another resounding 'YES'.

The fourth and last rung of IPM provides for a thoughtful and cautious use of pesticides, which target pests and spares pollinators and beneficials. Using chemicals as a last rung helps meet our goal to grow great roses. The beauty of IPM is that it can help us avoid the use of pesticides altogether. IPM promotes a healthy garden and roses that are protected by a robust and active beneficial population.

1. Cultural Control

which means giving plants what they need. Garden success starts with with researching roses before you go to the nursery to buy roses. Select only those that are described as disease resistant. Each plant at the nursery has a tag with the name, description and a planting guide. Like us, plants are happiest when their needs are being met, so read the tag! It details the conditions the plant needs to grow well. For instance, the tag attached to a rose plant states that roses perform best when they receive at least six hours of full sun per day and to choose a well-drained location in your garden. Buy the plant only if you can meet its specified needs.

Roses should be properly spaced, pruned annually to open them up to air and sunlight and fertilized and watered adequately and appropriately. Fungal disease should be removed from the garden, and the soil amended annually with organic compost or worm castings topped with several inches of an organic mulch. You might think only those born with a green thumb can be good gardeners. But give plants the cultural conditions they need and observe and learn to 'read' them and you earn green thumb status with healthy roses as proof and minimal pest damage as your reward.

2. Mechanical Control

Attentive gardeners are like the happy early bird that catches the worm. Pests? We are on it! We learn which months or season to expect each pest and we purposefully look for them.

We squish the pests we see or remove them with our fingers or our pruners. We blast some of them with water from the hose and we cut out and remove the damage caused by the 'invisible' pests. This early detection prevents a pest infestation and avoids the use of pesticides.



The first pests in spring are clumps of aphids on our new foliage and buds.

Caught early, these soft-bodied nuisances are no biggie. You can annihilate hundreds of them with just a few quick squishes between your thumb and forefinger. But then keep checking daily because aphids reproduce very quickly since most are female and born pregnant.

So, what is our commonsense approach to lacy leaves which are another common spring occurrence? We turn the leaf over and look for tiny spider specks and dark flicks of thrip on our petals. We squish, hose and ruthlessly cut them out.

When done immediately the life cycle is interrupted and we save ourselves many months of work dealing with the pests.

Thrips show up like clock work in late spring. They usually prefer our lighter coloured blooms. We catch them with our fingers and squish them or drown them in soapy water. What about tattered and chewed leaves and blooms? We look for caterpillars, grasshoppers or beetles and our fingers, pruners and a bucket of soapy water is all we need.

Flower containers should be subservient to the blooms and of simple shapes with firm bases and good capacity for water. Opaque containers are preferred because they conceal the stems.

News

Gary Wootton was a first place winner at the recent NSW Miniature Rose Show held in Mittagong. His beautiful miniature red rose Nemesis is a rose that Gary has bred himself, proving that you can be a winner with your own special roses. This is the first time that Gary has shown his roses at a Rose Show. Congratulations Gary on taking your rose from an idea right up to being a winning rose at a Rose Show.



At Macarthur
Rose Society

Feature Page

Integrated Pest Management

Experienced rosarians know to step up observation in summer. This is the main time to watch for and nip infestations of thrips, spider mites and hibiscus beetles. Mechanically put the pests you see out of their misery and cut out the damaged foliage, buds and blooms.

3. Biological

Control is when we invite our friends over. We have friends in the garden, and they help us with all the pests. This important tenet of IPM should not be underrated. Don't worry too much about missing

some pests as you patrol your rose garden. They are the 'good eats' that will draw the beneficials to our garden. https://bugsforbugs.com.au/?srsltid=AfmBOoq4nTYBT3jVf2_8RS9G2HrddxPwKmhBd0f3Yj_Hi4B2vMibSaGp

When we don't disrupt nature's balance, we discover there are birds, spiders and a world of hungry insects like lady beetles, minute pirate bugs, and the larvae of syrphid flies and tachinid flies looking to feast on aphids, thrips and other 'unfriendliest'.

Add a birdbath or other water feature and grow a variety of pollen and nectar-rich plants, such as marigolds, parsley, nemesis, daisies, sweet alyssum, dahlias, petunias, borage, snap dragons, salvias and fennel and you have set the stage for the 'good guys' to keep on holding their parties in your garden. Growing a wide variety of plants among your roses will entice and attract more of these insect beneficials.

4. Chemical Control Pest issues come back even bigger and messier with the indiscriminate use of pesticides and with the use of broad-spectrum pesticides.

As a last rung, IPM allows the use of pesticides, but it does specify the grower must first identify and target just the pest e.g. Dipel for caterpillars. Try to use the least toxic products (marked 'Caution') for personal safety and for minimal negative impact to our pollinators

and the environment. Labels must be read, and all directions on the label followed including the warning not to spray during hours of bee activity.

We rosarians love to say that roses

are hardy and yet many growers feel compelled to spray roses with pesticides as their first and only form of pest management. Much of an insect's life consists of eating and trying not to be eaten. Some of these insects do eat our roses, but 97% of insects in our rose garden are not targeting our roses and we should strive to not harm them.

We must avoid jeopardising our gardens' 'super-heroes', the insects, birds and spiders that are specifically patrolling to eat pests that are eating our roses. What happens when a gardener fears insect pests and mites in the garden so much that he or she kills all the insects?

The NSW EPA has some great information to help you start IPM. Remember it is the keen observation and readiness to act will ultimately help us to have a sustainable and pest free garden along with beautiful roses.



Our Meetings

5th April 2025

3rd May 2025

7th June 2025

5th July 2025

2nd August 2025

6th September 2025

4th October 2025

25 October Spring Show 2025

1st November 2025

6th December 2025 - Christmas Party



We usually meet at the CWA Camden Hall on the first Saturday of each month. This month - April - we will meet at the Rotunda at Macarthur Park. You can access the rotunda through the Menangle Road gate.

Parking may be difficult because of the Camden Show but there is parking on Menangle Road. Bring one of your favourite roses to share with us.

Our Buy, Sell and Swap table has home grown produce and other goods we may want to share. Our library of rose books is also available at our meetings. But these will not be available for the April meeting as we are meet outside.

Come along, enjoy great conversation, beautiful roses and meet new friends. All are welcome. For further information telephone: **0410 444 562**



Next meeting:
Saturday 5th April

April Birthdays

5th Ian Thackeray

7th Graham Wright

17th Judith Carl

21st Adam Pearce



Happy Birthday

