



Macarthur Rose Newsletter

Vol 30, No: 10, June 2024



Neutrog Update

The opportunity to make a Neutrog order is still available.

However, be aware that orders will close in early August for our Spring delivery in September. The exact date for the order pickup will be advised close to the time. In the meantime, get your orders in for the Spring.

Membership Renewal

We are now at the end of the financial year and our Rose Society annual membership fee is due.

If you have already renewed THANK YOU. We look forward to enjoying another year of sharing everything roses with you again.

For those of you not renewing, we are sorry to see you go. We trust that you have enjoyed your membership of the Macarthur Rose Society and hope that you may rejoin in the future once again when you are ready to enjoy all things roses with us again.

Free Roses

I have been contacted by a local very experienced, rose grower who is doing what we all do at this time of the year and reorganising the rose garden. He has two roses that he will be digging up next weekend and is keen to find a good home for them. The roses grow too tall for where they are planted. The rose grower is happy to give the roses away to anyone who is interested. The roses are two years old - one hybrid tea Dark Desire a beautiful deep red rose with spectacular fragrance and Summer Romance - a pretty pink floribunda rose.

Please contact me if you are interested in acquiring these roses and I will put you in contact with the rose grower.

Dear *Rose Friends*

Winter really has arrived in the Macarthur region with the cold, frosty mornings, cool days, bright winter sun and now in the following week we can look forward to persistent rain. This is good weather for our busy time in the rose garden without the heat of the sun. Remember to keep the rose garden clean, picking up dead leaves and other debris to discourage the wintering over of black spot spores and pest insect eggs.

Congratulations to June Hickey and Adam Pearce on winning the show bench competition for last season. A well deserved win with their beautiful roses.

Next week we will hold our annual pruning session at the Vitocco residence. Address details, a map and an aerial view of where to go are on Pages 4 and 5. The pruning session will be held instead of our usual meeting. I look forward to seeing you all there. This is a good opportunity to sharpen up your pruning skills before you start on your own roses. We should all be preparing to prune our roses over the next month to six weeks in time for blooms for our show on 20 October.

Our next meeting time will begin with our Annual General Meeting followed by our August general meeting. If you can contribute in some small way to the functioning of the Rose Society, it will be greatly appreciated and help share the workload.

Gary Wotton has continued his contribution on how to have the best soils for our roses. Part 2 of his very learned and interesting article is on Page 3 of this newsletter. His contribution in terms of the time and effort he has made to identify the best places to buy the products discussed and to ensure the information suits the Australian gardener is greatly appreciated. Graham Wrights' efforts are always appreciated too and he has provided our Cultural Notes on Page 2.

It is with great sadness that I report that one of our long term members Cheryl Moore passed away recently. While Cheryl had not been a member for several

years, during her membership she contributed greatly to the Macarthur Regional Rose Society. She was an outstanding photographer and spent many hours teaching other rosarians how to photograph their roses. She volunteered as secretary to the State Council for several years and was a keen exhibitor. Her generosity was reflected in her paid work too, advocating and supporting people with disability, especially those that found it particularly difficult to connect with necessary supports. Cheryl will be greatly missed.



Image Above: Sarah Anne the first miniflora bred by an Australian rose breeder. Allan Read from Wollongong bred the rose and named it after his wife. Photo by Cheryl Moore. Several bushes of this rose can be viewed at the Wollongong Botanic Gardens.

We will be looking for volunteers to support us when holding our annual spring rose show in October. Any help you can offer will be greatly appreciated. This year we are hoping to hold the show at a venue in Camden. Please save the date. Your next edition of the Rose Journal should be arriving within the next few weeks. Keep an eye out for a link in your email inbox and then your letter box for the hard copy.

Yours in Roses *Judith*

July 2024



By now we are increasingly aware that the seasons certainly offer different tasks in the garden. The cooler temperatures make it easier to work outside but the days are shorter. We have to maximise our time outside and make use of that period.

Our news services have kept reminding us that the rainfall totals are well above average. That has meant that less watering has been required for our garden but the weeds have been a threat. Regular mulching should help to control the weeds and hopefully provide some residual nutrition. In my earlier times with roses I used cow manure which I gathered from farm paddocks. This was rich and effective but carried many weed seeds which had passed through the cow. Hence, there was still more work to do.

Later I gained access to a duck farm which produced large amounts of manure which spread very easily to a good depth. There, I had to make sure that the surface remained loose so the water could penetrate. I moved on to composted cow manure from a large landscape supplier who delivered it in a truck. That worked well too but I was always careful not to overdo the application as I didn't want the soil to develop a pH imbalance because of the wash that is applied to cows when they are being milked. I never tested that theory but was wary.

In more recent times I have turned to sugar cane mulch. It is easy to obtain, cost effective and spreads easily. Probably the best of all the mulches is WhoFlungDung from Neutrog. Its nutrient value would be higher than any of those listed above. It can prove costly if you have a large area to cover and it is heavy for those who have physical limitations.

We are often asked about eucalyptus mulch. It looks good and spreads well but it is claimed that it draws the nitrogen out of the soil. It is cheap because tonnes of it are produced from all of the tree clearing at development sites.

July is usually seen as the pruning month but if there is a delay until August that is not a problem. Tools should be in good order. A sharpener, some emery paper and a little oil will help. Over twenty years ago I was fortunate to win a pair of Felco secateurs and, despite the thousands of cuts which they have made, they still work like new. This company is a sponsor of the World Federation of Rose Societies. A pair of loppers and a pruning saw are invaluable. If you are straining to make cuts, not only may you injure yourself, you may also damage the rose. Appropriate clothing is very important. You need to feel confident and safe.

To me, pruning is one of the most pleasurable tasks in the rose year. A pruned rose can be a thing of beauty and it is easy to visualise the good blooms which will come from our work. The number one aim of pruning is to rejuvenate new growth. A tired rose with old growth will not give us the number of blooms which we seek. Cut out old, spindly growth to allow for the new stems to develop. Try to avoid stems crossing over as they will rub and that is unhealthy. Ideally buds which we prune to should face outwards but I would still choose an inward facing bud than none at all. With some cultivars it is easy to find desired buds but with others we really have to search.

Opinions vary about the amount to remove from a bush. I would tend to average about 50% from a rose but I know of heavy pruners who could take up to 70%. In a way, the plant will tell you. A massively vigorous rose could stand a much heavier prune. There are numerous books and computer articles which demonstrate the art of pruning. Those illustrations can help. Alternatively attend a pruning day with our Regional where you can help and learn. Such days are traditional in Victoria and SA.

It is still likely that the shops will be carrying bare rooted plants and probably at a reduced rate. Be on the lookout for bargains and make sure that the plants are still healthy.



Best wishes to all rosarians,

Graham



Image Right: Maureen Thackeray's vase of Hilton Edward shown at the June 2024 meeting.



Soil Health Part 2 - Gary Wotton

“ Soil amendments are products we add to our soil to help the roses grow better. Soil can have several issues which prevent roses from reaching their peak performance...”

Now that spring is approaching, our attention is turning back to the rose garden and getting ready for the growing season. Since we are always looking for new products for growing our roses better, we are always checking catalogues, garden centres, home and garden shows and local hardware stores to see what is being sold.



Image Above: My Yellow a compact floribunda bred by Bruce Brundett. Can be viewed at the Wollongong Botanic Gardens.

Occasionally we'll also do online search for 'Soil Amendments' or soil improvers to see what is new for gardening that isn't being sold in our area. Soil amendments are products we add to our soil to help the roses grow better. Soil can have several issues that can prevent roses from reaching their peak performance, including poor drainage, insufficient levels of macro or micronutrients, suboptimal soil pH, lack of beneficial microorganisms, etc. Newer products are also always coming onto the market, so let's look at a few products that were new or unfamiliar.

Biochar

One newer type of commercial soil amendment that would likely be unfamiliar is biochar. Biochar is a charcoal-like material that is made from a wide variety of waste products, including wood, crop waste, grass clippings and even manure. Although relatively new to the commercial market, using a charcoal-based product in agriculture to improve soil is not new and can be traced back thousands of years to South America where early Columbian natives used charcoal from their hearths to amend their soils. Biochar is made by heating organic waste materials at temperatures ranging from 350°C to 700°C in a low oxygen atmosphere, a process called pyrolysis. During this

process, water and volatile organic materials are removed, and the residue remaining is a carbonized material known as biochar. Biochar has an alkaline pH, tends to be porous and has both fixed and available carbon.

Biochar produced at higher temperatures (>500°C) is better for absorbing heavy metals and other organic pollutants in the soil, while lower pyrolysis temperatures produce a biochar that provides carbon to soil microorganisms. The porous nature of biochar helps with water retention and the surface area of the particles helps prevent leaching of nutrients from fertilizer applications.

There are several reports that biochar can help rejuvenate soil, particularly clay and/or acidic soils. Since charcoal products decay very slowly, they remain in the soil for hundreds of years. One concern that has been expressed about biochar is that because of its ability to absorb or bind a wide range of substances, it can also bind up other chemical soil amendments. The beneficial effects of biochar specifically for roses in a home garden are less clear than for agricultural soils. However, if you decide to try a biochar product for your garden, there are a few of those available in Australia, either online or in store; Triple R Enhanced Biochar, from Enfield Produce. Charboost Biochar, from the garden. Biochar Soil Conditioner, from Seasol, just to mention a few.

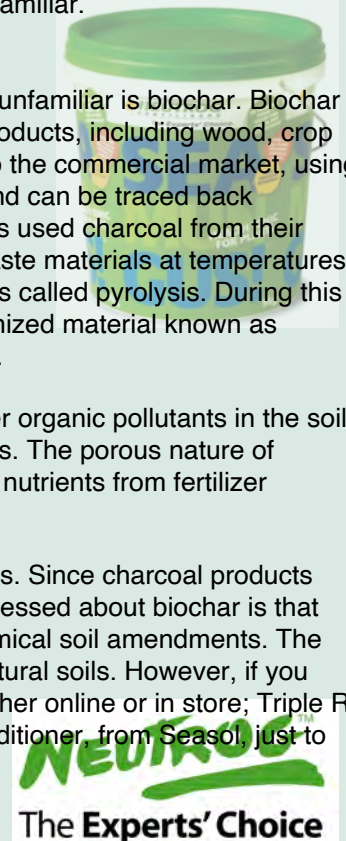
Humic Substances

Another trend we are seeing in soil amendment products is the inclusion of humic substances. These organic compounds are found in all soils and are produced through the decomposition of organic matter such as leaves. These compounds are normally divided into hummin, humic acids and fulvic acids, with their salts known as humates or fulvenes.


One good source of humic acids is leonardite, an oxidation product of lignite found in deposits near the surface of the ground. Leonardite may contain up to 90 percent humic acids. The benefit of humic and fulvic acids lies primarily in their ability to bind (chelate) and bring essential cationic substances, such as magnesium, calcium and iron, to the roots of the rose bush and present them in such a way that the plant can readily absorb them.

Rose roots have a higher affinity for these cations than the humic acids, so these nutrients are 'transferred' from the humic and fulvic acids to the rose, along with some water. Humic acids also contain about 60% carbon, which is beneficial for the sustainability and growth of soil microorganisms, and can be a source for nitrogen, oxygen, hydrogen and sulphur. In addition, humic acids can stimulate the production of plant growth hormones such as auxin and cytokinin. There are also several interactions between humic acids and soils that are beneficial for the plants, although these soil interactions are often complex.

Overall, humic acids and humates are beneficial and can help promote healthy development and growth of roses. Humic acid can be purchased as a sole ingredient or can be found as a component of soil amendment products. Humic acids are available in liquid or granular formulations. There are several available in Australia, either online or in store. Some Humic acids that can be purchased as granules are, *Humate/Humic Acid* from the Plant Doctor, or *Humic Acid Granular* from ActiveVista. In a liquid form they are sold as *Quantum H*, also from the Plant Doctor, or Humic Acid as *Humic GLS Pro*, from Greenlawns Supplies. Using these products according to the label instructions can provide beneficial effects to your rose garden. Many new products to amend your garden soil and help you grow healthier rose bushes come onto the market each year. As always, some products will work better in your microenvironment than others, but it is worth trying some of these new products to see if they can help in your garden. **Adapted from the American Rose Society Journal May 2024**



Free Webinar



NATIONAL ROSE SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA INC.

Invites Rose Society financial members to a Zoom webinar.

When: Sunday August 18, 2024
Time for the 1 hour webinar
3.30pm EST;
3:00pm Adelaide;
1.30pm WST

Topic: Dr Uwe Stroehrer - Keeping Diseases in Check

Register in advance for this webinar:
https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_c8IJBp3QqCp94dU7pSCbQ#/registration

The webinar will be recorded and can be shared with members after the event.

Those who wish to attend will need to register their attendance in order to receive the link that will let them 'in'.

This will also allow you to send questions during Uwe's talk. Members are also welcome to send questions in advance.

A reminder about the free webinar that the National Rose Society is holding for all members of the state Rose Societies. If you are a financial member of the Macarthur Rose Society you are eligible to join the webinar. Click on the blue link in the above notice and register to get the link to join the meeting.

This is a great opportunity to listen to Dr Uwe from Neutrog. He has been the leading scientist in the development of many of Neutrog's recent products. He has a wealth of knowledge and is more than happy to



Image Above: Hannah Gordon is highly rated by rose lovers due to its attractive blooms, excellent disease resistance and repeat flowering qualities. The very attractive flowers are in shades of white with pink or light red edges. The blooms have a mild fragrance and 20 to 25 petals with multiple heads of up to 5 or 6 blooms produced in flushes throughout the season.

REMINDER



This month is time for our annual excursion to learn about, brush up on and practise our pruning skills. Mrs Irene Vitocco has once again made her rose garden available for us to visit and prune the roses. This is an excellent garden for a pruning excursion because it has good examples of all types of rose cultivars including - minifloras, roses in pots, roses planted as landscape hedges, single colour beds, climbing, standard, hybrid tea, floribunda and old fashioned roses.

This week is a good time to sharpen your secateurs before you arrive as it makes cutting and trimming much easier. If you need help with this, call me and I will assist where I can. Bring a damp cloth with you to wipe your blades down as you go. The sap will wipe off easily and it will make your trimming and clipping better.

There will be plenty of jobs available that allow you to work at your own pace and strength. As the garden is very large, there is room for you to sit on your chair and watch and contribute in any way that suits you. Afternoon tea will be provided for us at the end of the pruning session.

Bring along your:

- Gloves
- Wear sturdy shoes and strong clothing
- A hat
- Secateurs
- Pruning saw if you have one
- Chair if you think you may need one
- Wear layers of warm clothing
- Be prepared to enjoy yourself
- All your questions and answers about pruning.

We will gather prior to the pruning session from 1:30pm at

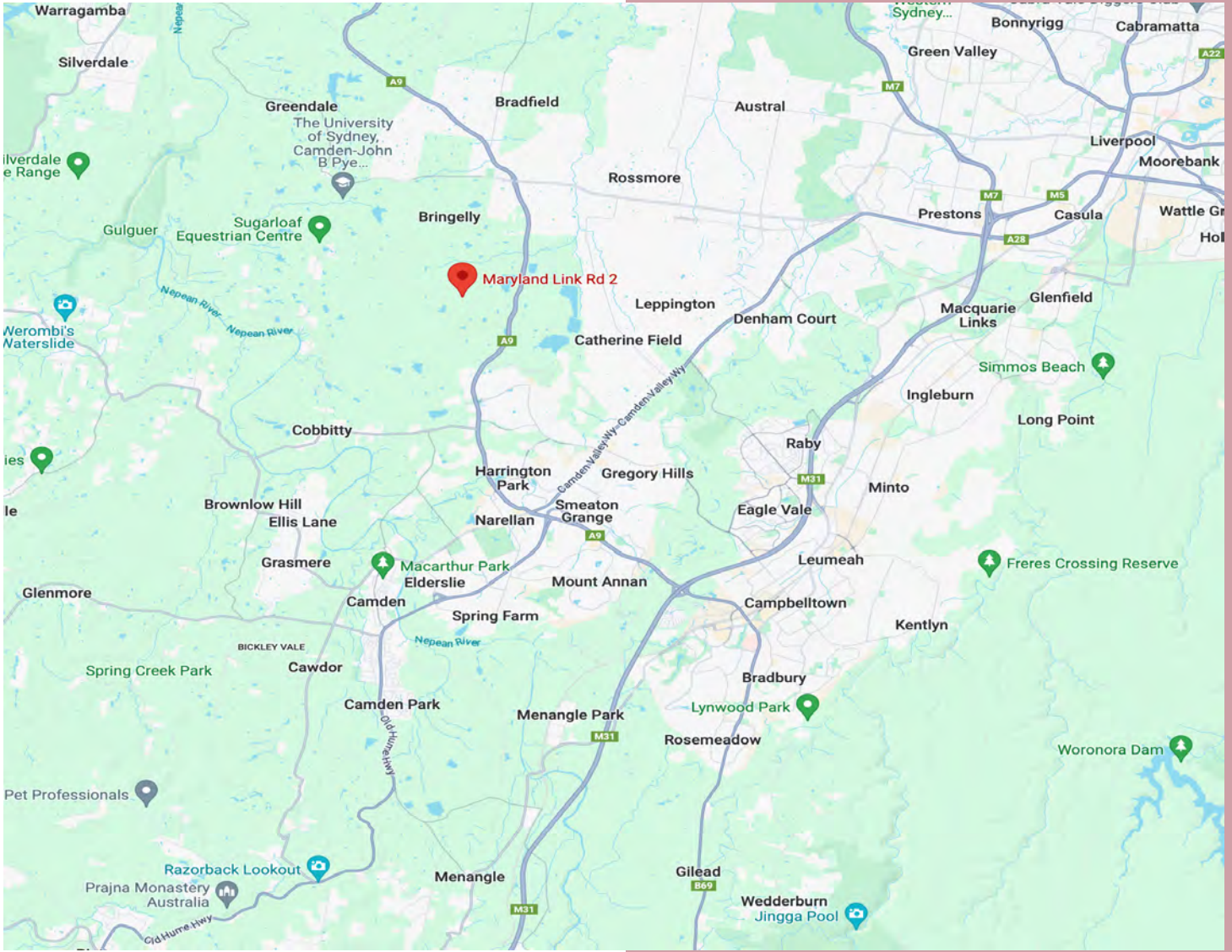
751 The Northern Road, Bringelly

Accessed through the:

**Marylands Link Road 2
Bringelly**

See the map and guidance overleaf

Pruning Venue Directions





22nd July Bob Stibbard



Macarthur Diary

01		02
03		04
05		06
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6 July 2024 - Pruning Day
3 August 2024 - Meeting
7 September 2024 - Meeting
Neutrog Pick Up - Early September
5 October 2024 - Meeting
20-21 October - Macarthur Rose Show
2 November 2024
Visit to Wollongong Botanic Gardens
7 December 2024 - Christmas Party

We meet at the CWA Camden Hall on the first Saturday of each month (other than January) at 2:00pm. You can access the venue via the Coles carpark. Coles Camden is at 19 Murray Street, Camden.



Camden CWA Hall

NEUTROG™
The Experts' Choice

Alternatively, the carpark of the CWA can be accessed from the first roundabout on Cawdor Road opposite the Camden Bowling and Sports Club.

We are open from 1:30pm to give you time to arrange your roses for the show bench prior to the meeting. Oasis can be purchased at the show bench preparation area for \$1 per block.

There is also a Buy, Sell and Swap table for our home grown produce and other products we may want to share. Our library of rose books are available at our meetings.

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