

TOPIC: "JUST GERANIUMS"

GUEST SPEAKER : WENDY SKELTON

MALENY GARDEN CLUB MEETING : 27 JUNE, 2017 UNDER THE OLD WITTA SCHOOL

- Wendy is a specialist Geranium and Pelargonium grower from the Lockyer Valley
- There are seven basic types of Pelargonium for the average gardener
- Creating new plants for your garden saves \$'s and is very rewarding, a great form of stress relief, reduces depression, improves mental health and self esteem
- Very important to have clean, sharp secateurs. Sap left on blades can carry disease so clean with WD40 or cooking oil or soap and water. Scrub with a wire brush and wipe off with paper towel. To keep sharp lay open secateurs on palm of hand and use a small sharpening stone. Check for sharpness by cutting stiff paper
- Store bought Propagation Mix is very good or make your own with (a) Coarse River Sand – air and good drainage very important for root development (b) Perlite from Chillagoe – retains moisture and aids drainage and air circulation (c) Coir Peat which is ground coconut husk – just as good as natural peat and very economical (d) Vermiculite – insulation comes from MICA used for insulation in toasters and refrigerators and maintains temperature (e) Pine Bark Fines add air and drainage (f) Potting Mix – must be good quality – look for Australian Standards information on bag
- The easiest method of propagation uses $\frac{1}{3}$ Potting Mix, $\frac{1}{3}$ Washed River Sand, $\frac{1}{2}$ Coir Peat with some added Perlite, Vermiculite and Pine Bark Fines. This will suit seeds, soft tip cuttings, semi-hard wood cuttings, hard wood cuttings, divisions, bulbs and tubers, leaves and leaf sections
- Propagation from seed is also called A-sexual Propagation – does not always produce the same plant or tree. Some seeds need light and some need darkness
- Pansy and Viola need darkness initially. Broccoli and Cabbage need heat/coolness
- Some natives need scarification or fire e.g. Banksia and Grass Trees
- Freshness is essential with flower seeds – be sure to check use by date
- Fill seed tray to top and level mixture before placing seeds on top. Cover with more mixture to a depth of the size of seeds. Cut pieces of plastic milk container and use a permanent marker pen to name seeds in punnet or tray
- Putting fertiliser in propagation mix is not necessary and is wasteful
- Soft tip cuttings for propagation are usually taken from Spring and Summer growth e.g. daisies and lavender. Lower strike rate in Winter. Cut leaves in half for photosynthesis
- Nodes are the only places for roots to develop so make a level cut directly under node e.g. mulberry, otherwise rot can prevent propagation. Always a straight cut, not slanting, for root but use a slanting cut for top so any moisture will run off
- Hard wood cuttings should be 10cm long with leaves removed. Often used on deciduous plants – mulberry, grapes, crepe myrtle and maples which take longer to root
- Place cuttings to $\frac{1}{3}$ of length in pot. Wendy doesn't use striking powder or gel or honey
- Ferns are easy to grow from spores. Put fronds in brown paper bag in sun until spores drop off. Make flat bed of propagation mix in tray and sprinkle spores on top. Mist with fine spray twice a day until green spots appear then pot up
- Division is easiest way to propagate e.g. Mondo Grass – separate, trim roots and tops and pot or replant separated clumps

- Some bulbs should be kept in fridge until planted. Dahlia bulbs can be separated. Nerine bulbs (yellow flower) can be separated and replanted with trimmed tops – leave crowns out of ground
- Lay succulent leaf on top of propagating mix as can rot if poked in
- Make sure centre of begonia leaf touches mix – can use hair pin to ensure. Leaf can be sliced into eight pieces as long as part of the central vein touches mix
- Aftercare – plants need to be kept moist but not soggy. Check for rotting and pests and remove promptly. Place in warm, sheltered spot away from full sun. Spray weekly with Seasol or other liquid fertiliser. Look for active growth and roots coming out of pot bottom
- If leaving cuttings in water change it regularly as slime will prevent water uptake
- If drying poinsettia or frangipani don't overdo – when sap stops running, plant

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WEB : <http://justgeraniums.weebly.com> for geranium information, plant purchase and delivery to your door

FACEBOOK: www.facebook.com/justgeraniums for local markets and garden events selling Wendy's products

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