



# Horticultural Therapy Association of Victoria Inc

Newsletter – 2017 – Autumn



## **Autumn in Melbourne**

The amazing colours of Autumn in Melbourne are some of the best you will see in the country.

Now is the time to start transplanting and moving shrubs as the weather gets cooler.

Inside this issue is a story on a “Community Patch” in Box Hill, as well as a pop-up garden in NSW and a significant public “Secret Garden” created by Wendy Whiteley at Lavender Bay on Sydney Harbour.

Enjoy your garden

Paul de la Motte

# Plants for Sensory and Therapeutic Gardens

By Paul de la Motte

**Common Name:** Maples

**Botanical Name:** *Acer japonica*  
*Acer "Autumn Blaze"*  
various others

**Family:** Aceraceae

Possibly some of the most striking autumn colour trees are the large range of maples.

The Acer family is a large group of deciduous trees native to North America and Europe

Valued for their Autumn colours, ranging from yellow, orange, deep red to burgundy maples prefer cooler climates and are ideally suited to southern parts and higher altitudes of Victoria.

There are around 150 different species

of the maple family (Acer), which include Japanese maples, sugar maples and sycamores to name a few.

Most maples have palmate leaves. The most recognizable being the emblem on the national flag of Canada. The red and sugar maples (among others) are also the source of maple syrup.

Maples grow in a variety of settings, the larger ones in full sun and the Japanese maples in part shade. They are frost tolerant but need water, particularly when being established.

The major therapeutic use of maples is its value as an indicator of the changing of the seasons. This is particularly relevant in aged care and dementia settings.

The leaves are also valuable for collecting, pressing and drying and used in craft work for laminating as coasters, place mats, bookmarks and other decorations.

Japanese maples and the dwarf hybrid red maples can be grown in smaller gardens but the larger species may need more space



**Red maple hybrid**

# Community Patch

While walking around Box Hill in Victoria, a small front yard garden was discovered that provides a “Community Garden” for the neighbourhood.

A sign in the front yard of the address states that the front garden is a “COMMUNITY PATCH” – “Plant what you like and Pick what you need”.

After knocking on the front door it was discovered the garden was developed by the owner “George”, who thought he had a wasted garden that could be utilized by the local community.

George initially planted some herbs to start it off, and now it contains many different herbs, flowers and vegetables including parsley, oregano, thyme, rosemary and basil.

As we were discussing the garden, a neighbour walked past with their child and picked some parsley.



George even installed some sleepers on his front fence so passers by can sit and enjoy the garden.



**George's Garden-with parsley, rosemary, curry plant and more**



**The sleepers at the front fence provide seating**

## **Pop up Community Patch in Coogee, NSW**

A community patch installed on the nature strip in the Sydney suburb of Coogee includes a sunken bathtub garden and an old toilet planted out with convolvulus.

The garden had many tomato plants flourishing, as well as potatoes, broccoli and silverbeet planted amongst the sculptures.

At the rear of the garden were a number of compost bins that seemed to be utilized by the local community for recycling. It is unknown who specifically manages the area, but a local resident said the garden is shared by the local community and is not maintained by any one person.



**Garden artwork in Coogee with some raised herb beds**

# Wendy Whiteley's Lavender Bay communal garden

Wendy Whiteley was artist Brett Whiteley's wife, muse and model. An artist herself, Wendy also created the interiors of their Lavender Bay home on Sydney's lower North Shore.

After Brett's death in 1992, Wendy and her daughter Arkie worked on channeling their grief and creativity into making an enchanting hidden oasis on a derelict State Railways-owned piece of land at Lavender Bay, adjacent to her home. It became known as Wendy's Secret Garden.

When Arkie died in 2001, Wendy toiled on the garden even more devotedly.

Wendy knew very little about horticulture. However as a highly visual person, her knowledge of color, shape, texture, design and balance led her to design the garden like a painting.

Over 20 years the garden has grown into a giant, living, work of art.

Wendy has paid for the entire garden and its upkeep by her dedicated gardeners.

In 2015 the NSW Premier Mike Baird decided to grant a 30 plus-30 year lease, with a trust to secure the ongoing care of the Secret Garden, to maintain Wendy's vision.

Premier Baird said of the garden: "This garden is a gift of Wendy's to the people of Sydney – it truly is a living Whiteley that is bursting with life and creativity. I'm delighted that a place which brings such joy to residents and visitors, has now been secured for future generations to enjoy."



**Garden artwork**



**A rustic track through the garden**



**Wendy's house overlooking the garden**



**A meeting / picnic area at the bottom of the garden**



**View through garden to the harbour**



**Some artwork next to a pathway**

## **Therapeutic Gardening Short Courses in 2017**

### **Therapeutic Gardening (One Day)**

Saturday 17 June, 2017 9.00am – 4.30pm

Saturday 12 August, 2017 (.00am – 4.30pm

### **Advanced Therapeutic Gardening (One Day)**

Saturday 24 June, 2017 9.00am – 4.30pm

Saturday 19 August, 2017 9.00am – 4.30pm

### **Therapeutic Gardening Basic and Advanced Combined (Two Days)**

Saturday 17 June and 24 June, 2017 9.00am – 4.30pm

Saturday 12 August and 19 August, 2017 9.00am – 4.30pm

Holmesglen Institute, 595 Waverley Rd, Glen Waverley Registration: (03) 9564 1546

<http://www.holmesglen.edu.au> Short Courses, House and Garden.

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