



NEWSLETTER

Horticultural Therapy Association of Victoria Inc.

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Issue 2, 2010

Note from the President

Our Garden Festival was held on Saturday, 20th March as a part of National Horticultural Therapy Awareness Week. It was a lovely day and it was great to see members and be able to talk about some of the projects that they are involved with.

There was also a considerable amount of gardening tips and advice given out by Peter Brown (horticulturist) to the public, along with talks about therapeutic gardening and the ways in which gardening can assist members of our community. Thank you to the volunteers that assisted on the day.

Also in this issue there is an article on our next drought tolerant therapeutic plant, which is the Silverbush (*Convolvulus cneorum*).

We have some interesting articles from the National Institute of Health in Sweden, and another Activity sheet from Diane Relf.

If you have any stories to tell, and I know there are many out there, please let us know.

Good reading and best wishes

Paul de la Motte

HTAV Biennial Conference

28th – 30th October, 2010

Health and Horticulture

at

**Holmesglen Institute
585 Waverley Rd,
Glen Waverley, Vic**

Put it in your diary today

Expressions of interest are invited for presenters at the Conference.

See more details inside.

Drought Tolerant Therapeutic Plants

By Paul de la Motte

Common Name: Silverbush

Botanical Name: *Convolvulus cneorum*

Family: Convolvulaceae

Convolvulus is a large genus of about 250 species which occur in a wide range of Temperate regions around the world. *Convolvulus cneorum* is a small perennial shrub that originates in Southern Europe and is characterized by its shiny silver and slightly satin like leaves. The Silverbush, as it is commonly called grows up to 1 metre wide with a maximum height of around 60cms. It adds a special foliage contrast when mixed with other perennials.

Masses of white trumpet shaped flowers are produced from Spring into Summer.

The Silverbush is closely related to a number of other shrubs and climbers which range in colour from mauve, violet, blue, pink and sometimes yellow. Many of these can become weedy such as the Bindweed (*Convolvulus arvensis*) and the Morning Glory (*Ipomoea indica*).

Silverbush prefers full sun, is frost tolerant and grows in most soil types. Ideally it can be used for garden borders and rockeries. Its colour and texture makes it an attractive addition to a relaxing , meditative or spiritual garden setting. Silverbush is also frost tolerant, so is suitable for most areas of Victoria. It can be grown easily from cuttings which gives it another valuable attribute. It needs very little care, just an occasional light trim to keep it in shape

Silverbush is a great drought tolerant addition to any therapeutic garden.



The following Articles are excerpts from

The significance of the outdoor environment

for older people and persons with disabilities living in special service accommodation

National Institute of Public Health, Sweden 2005

Healing gardens

Gardening, growing things and other activities in the garden often have a positive impact on health, not least to alleviate stress. Being outside in a garden can help both patients and staff at special service accommodation centres to feel better, particularly if they suffer from stress. Alzheimer disease sufferers have also displayed fewer symptoms after having spent time outdoors in a garden.

If the green area is used by dementia sufferers or others who find it difficult to orientate themselves, it is also important to think about the following:

- Paths should have a clear beginning and end.
- Bright colour contrasts in surfaces can be mistaken for hollows and should be avoided.
- It must be easy to distinguish what different places are for.
- Landmarks are needed so that people can orientate themselves in the area.
- The way back and the outer door must be well marked.
- There should not be too many crossings and turnings.
- Blind alleys should be avoided.
- The border between the green area and adjacent outside areas must be clear. Any gates should be locked and preferably out of view. Fences should be camouflaged by hedges or bushes so that patients don't feel closed in.
- Benches, lighting, plantations and other fixed elements in the garden should be positioned so that it is obvious how they should be used.
- Plants fulfill an important function but must not be poisonous.
- Symbolic pointers, i.e. things that people can recognise, help dementia patients to keep in touch with their memories.



THE HEALTH EFFECTS OF BEING OUTDOORS

- It enhances skeletal strength and combats osteoporosis.
- It preserves musculature and mobility.
- It combats excess weight.
- It improves sleep quality.
- It combats depression and anxiety.
- It increases resistance to infection.
- It heightens stress tolerance.
- It alleviates cardiac complaints (though not in very cold weather).
- It promotes social life and combats loneliness.
- It reduces muscle strain.
- It brings about positive changes in brain activity.
- It lowers the pulse.
- It lowers blood pressure.
- It relieves pain.
- It reduces consumption of medicines.
- It shortens hospital stays.
- It improves concentration and attention span.
- It enhances well-being.
- It improves hormone balance.



HEALTH EFFECTS OF OUTDOOR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

- It combats chronic diseases.
- It enhances physical capacity.
- It improves fitness.
- It doubles bone strength in the very old.
- It provides the skeleton with more minerals.
- It increases lung capacity in men.
- It reduces the risk of physical disability.
- It reduces the risk of premature death.
- It increases leg muscle strength.
- It increases bone calcium levels.
- It reduces the harmful effects of lipoproteins.
- It combats cardio-vascular disease and stroke.
- It reduces the risk of dying from cardio-vascular disease.
- It reduces the risk of dying from cancer.
- It may increase healthy life expectancy by 5–10 years.



Horticultural Therapy Association of Victoria

2010 State Conference

Health and Horticulture

The Horticultural Therapy Association of Victoria (HTAV) will be holding its Biennial Conference from Thursday 28th - Saturday, 30th October, 2010.

This year's theme is "Health and Horticulture"

The Conference will be held at the Holmesglen Institute of TAFE, at 585 Waverley Road, Glen Waverley, Victoria, Australia.

The HTAV is calling for presenters at this years Conference.

If you are interested, please complete the attached expression of interest application form and lodge it to this office by 25th June, 2010.

Contact details –

HTAV

PO Box 369

Balwyn North Vic 3104

Email: contactus@htav.org.au

Telephone: 61 3 9836 1128

**Horticultural Therapy Association of Victoria Inc
2010 Conference 28th - 30th October.**

Presentation Proposal

Presenters Details:

Name: _____

Organisation (If applicable): _____

Presenters qualifications/title/experience: _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Postcode _____

Country (if other than Australia) _____

Tel: _____ Fax: _____ Mobile: _____

Email _____ Web: _____

Title of Presentation: _____

Description of Presentation: - _____

Length of Presentation:

20 Minutes

30 Minutes

40 Minutes

Equipment provided:

Whiteboard, Datashow projector and Windows PC will be provided.

Note: Presentation proposals will be accepted up until 25th June, 2010

Activity: Herb Propagation from Cuttings

Recommended staff/client ratio: 1 staff with 1 volunteer for every 6-12 participants

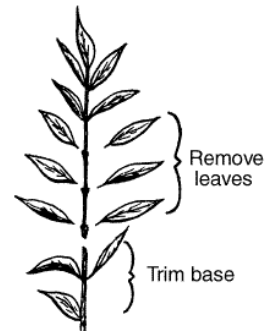
Estimated time to conduct activity with clients: 40 minutes

Estimated time to set up/clean up: 20 minutes/20 minutes

Month for activity: Spring or summer, when plants are healthy and growing vigorously

Materials

- Herb cuttings- 8 per client (choices include lemon verbena, lavender, oregano, mint, catnip, rosemary, sage, thyme).
- Clean, coarse, river sand (avoid very fine sand because it has poor aeration, which retards root formation). A mixture of equal parts sand and peat moss, compost or sphagnum moss is also a good rooting medium. Another option is pre made commercial propagation mix, which is available from most garden centres.
- One 140mm plastic pot per participant.
- Plastic bags to cover pots.
- Gloves if desired.
- Small size scoops for each client
- Large containers for propagation mix.
- Black permanent marker
- Tray for bottom watering

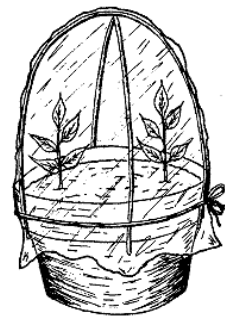


Preparation and Set Up

1. Gather cuttings from selected plants. Cuttings should be taken from the softwood tips (when you bend the tip of the branch, it is relatively flexible to a point but then snaps and breaks). Cuttings should be approximately 80 - 120mm long (include about 3-4 leaf nodes on each cutting).
2. Set up materials and supplies for participants before they arrive.

Procedure

1. Demonstrate procedure before participants begin.
2. Fill pots with moist rooting medium.
3. Use tag inserted into soil to make a slot for the cutting.
4. Prepare a cutting to be stuck in the rooting medium by re-cut stem just below lowest node and removing leaves from lower ½ of cutting (Figure 1).
5. Place cutting into pre-made slot in the medium up to the remaining leaves and gently firm soil around cutting.
6. Water thoroughly to settle the medium around the base of the cutting.
7. Write person's name, plant name and date on the tag and put into pot.
8. Cover the pot of cuttings with larger plastic bag or freezer bags to hold in moisture. (Figure 2) Since cuttings don't have a root system, high humidity must be maintained.



9. Place flat in warm humid place with filtered sunlight. Never place plastic-enclosed containers in direct sunlight, as excessive heat will build up.
10. Monitor the plastic bags for condensation, and water if condensation disappears.
11. Allow 4-10 weeks for rooting to occur. Length of time for rooting depends upon the particular species of plants propagated.

Special Considerations

- ❖ Provide gloves or baby wipes for easy clean up.
- ❖ Make working area accessible for all participants.
- ❖ Pre-moisten propagation mix.
- ❖ The best time for taking cuttings is usually spring or early summer.
- ❖ If plant is very leafy, some of leaf material from the tip of the plant may be removed to encourage more activity in the rooting area.

Suggestions for Interactions

- ❖ Discuss the participant's previous use of herbs.
- ❖ Have participant choose the plants they want to propagate.

Key Questions

1. Have you ever gathered fresh herbs to use in a recipe?
2. Have you ever taken cuttings to start plants?

Horizontal Programming

- ❖ Many different herb cuttings may be used.

Vertical Programming

Downward Extension

- ❖ Participants with difficulties may be in charge of easier tasks such as watering in the cuttings.

Upward Extension:

- ❖ Participants with more capabilities may assist those others that need help.
- ❖ Some participants may assist with the gathering of cuttings.
- ❖ Individuals may enjoy helping with the set up and clean up procedures.