

TAROONA NEIGHBOURHOOD GARDEN

Welcome to the Tarooma Neighbourhood Garden (TNG). We are pleased that you are choosing to garden with us and hope you will enjoy meeting the other members. Here are some introductory notes to help you get started.

COMMUNITY BEDS

In the centre of the garden are two, long community beds which are divided into 4 sections for crop rotation. These are planted according to an annual crop rotation plan and are sign marked. Crop rotation is about planting groups of similar vegetables together in a different part of the garden each year. This is to minimize build-up of pests and diseases. These beds are usually planted out at working bees.

The four groups of vegetables for planting out sections are:

1. Sweet corn and cucurbits (pumpkin/zucchini/cucumber tribe)
2. Alliums and root crops (onion tribe, carrots, beets, parsnips)
3. Brassicas and legumes (cabbage tribe and pea/bean tribe)
4. Solanums (tomatoes, capsicum, chilies, eggplant)

All members are welcome to weed and water as the need becomes apparent. On occasion, during dry spells, there will be a volunteer watering roster.

PERIMETER BEDS

Fruit trees are planted around the perimeter, but there is quite a bit of space around them where other crops can be grown. If you would like to plant in a neglected/empty section, please work-up the soil and do so. Be careful not to put a fork through the irrigation system along the fence and around the base of the trees. Make sure you place a sign with your name to indicate you are using the space, so no other member takes it. When you no longer wish to work the space, remove the sign. You could also use these spaces for excess seeds and seedlings.

It is best not to cultivate or plant within a metre of fruit tree trunks or in the 800mm irrigated zone next to the fence, in order to avoid root damage.

Fruit trees have been adopted by some members. If you would like to adopt a fruit tree, you can by contacting the committee. Crops grown on the inner perimeter are to be shared with all of the garden members, so when they are ready and you have harvested as much as you need, place the grey or green "harvest now" flag near to the tree. The flags are in the shed.

HERB GARDEN

Everyone, including the general community, is invited to pick herbs from the herb garden outside the perimeter fence. Herbs growing there include rosemary, thyme, marjoram, tarragon, bay leaves, mint, chives, lavender and edible geranium flower.

MEMBER'S PLOTS

Your own plot is exclusively for your use. The organic policies of the garden extend to member's plots. It is also a good idea to not plant trees in plots as these may end up impacting on neighbouring plots. If your plot is falling apart at the corners or bowing out at the sides, contact the maintenance crew and they will help you work out the best strategy to restore the plot to its former self.

To keep the mowing easier and so no-one gets their eyes poked out, you need to try to keep your plants so they do not hang out over the paths too much.

WORM FARM

There are two bins near the Chiton Chase entry gate. Look for signs to see which one is active and accepting worm food.

These are kept to provide some vermiculture compost for TNG plots. It takes many months for each bin to fill and mature. Many locals add their kitchen scraps to the active bin, and small amounts of well chopped garden waste can also be added from time to time. If you would like to add your household scraps, please make sure everything is well chopped. Do not add anything that is mouldy, and only small amounts of citrus and onions. Avocado pips take too long to break down so shouldn't be added. There is an acceptable list of scraps on top of the bin.

When you add scraps to the worm farm, please make sure you cover your scraps with grass clippings or dry material. We try to accumulate used coffee grounds for covering, also. If you have any, please bring them.

When indicated by a sign, you can harvest ready worm compost. If digging it into your plot, lift the lid on the bin for 20-30 minutes before you take it to allow the worms to descend. You will inevitably get some of the compost worms in your plot, so it is recommended you wait a few days before planting as the birds will disturb the soil until they have finished feasting on the worms.

GREENHOUSE

The greenhouse, between the worm farm and the shed, is for use of all members. Seedlings and cuttings in the greenhouse will need to be watered every day as they dry out quite quickly.

SHED

Please use the tools in the shed and clean and replace after use on hangers to minimize tripping hazards.

Other supplies in the shed are for member use – e.g. seed bank, bags, pots, hats, books and some organic pest control substances.

Please do not leave any valuable, dangerous, or flammable substances in the shed.

This is also where our pinup board is on the inside and whiteboard on the outside with inconspicuous donation box underneath. Please feel free to make suitable comments on the whiteboard with the whiteboard markers kept inside the shed. Do not use permanent marker.

TWITCH BINS

Please separate twitch (the grass with long ropey roots) and place it in the round bins next to the shed. It will be removed from the garden and fed to chooks. If we composted the twitch, it will result in further invasion of this difficult to remove pest.

DELIVERED SAND AND COMPOST BAYS

One or two bays will have compost ready for you to dig into your garden bed. TNG arranges for this to be delivered so there is a small fee per barrow load. Compost and other supplies are for onsite use only, not for take-away. One bay holds sand for you to dig into your plot (i.e. if soil is too clayey).

TNG ONSITE COMPOST BAYS

The top corner bays closest to the sea are reserved for our own compost making, and will be constantly filling up with green garden waste. Please chop up spent crops and weeds (ideally into 5 cm lengths) before adding them to the bay. If you chop your waste in this, compost be sure to move the irrigation nozzles out of the way so they don't get chopped by mistake. The compost crew will manufacture compost from the chopped garden waste, and TNG supplements that as required with purchased compost.

COMMUNICATION

News is posted on our website (<http://taroonatastas.au/tng>) and on notice boards inside and outside the shed.

The committee also sends out emails with news about TNG. Please feel free to use the notice boards and Facebook (TNG Group) for garden related messages.

Any other communication to you from TNG will usually be by email. You will be invited to join our email group. Please let a committee member know if your email address changes, or email tng@taroonatastas.au.

WHERE AND WHEN TO HARVEST

Members are invited to take ready vegetables from the community plots or perimeter beds when they are marked with a green "**harvest now**" flag, please leave a small donation in the box below the noticeboard on the outer wall of the shed.

WATER

Water is connected to six taps around the garden. There are 'gate switches' on the tap below the worm farm side gate (i.e. on the street side of the garden). If water appears to be turned off at your tap, you may need to turn it on at the gate switch. The switches operate so that water is either turned on to the tap at the street gate and off to all other taps, or is off at the street gate tap and on to all others. When you are finished, make sure to turn off taps tightly.

DO NOT WASTE WATER. Do not water foliage in the heat of the day as it will burn the plants. Watering in early morning or evening is best. Make sure to turn off taps tightly.

GARDEN RULES

1. Cover the children's sand pit after use to keep animals out.
2. Keep the gates shut and if you bring a dog into the garden, keep it restrained on a leash and off the vegetable plots.
3. After using hoses, turn the water off at the tap tightly and rewind the hose around the tap stand.
4. Do not waste water. Before watering, do the 'finger test' – poke a finger into the soil and if it is moist under the top 10 mm, you do not need to water.
5. Do not use poisons. We are an organic garden. This means we do not use any **Artificial Substances** in our garden. A suggested list of insect controls is on our website.

MEMBER OBLIGATIONS

In order to keep the garden thriving and producing, each plot holder is expected to contribute a minimum of 5-6 hours labour per year on general tasks (mowing, compost making and weeding etc.) You can make your contribution at working bees which are held from time to time (usually on a Sunday afternoon) or just do a task as you see it and at a time that suits you.

We also have occasional social gatherings and informative workshops. Plenty of notice of these will be given in posters on the shed and in email newsletters and Facebook.

Membership dues are due in January. The treasurer will send you an email a notice about how to pay.

We do not have a strict structure. We welcome member participation in all aspects of the garden's activities. If you have knowledge or skill in any suitable area, please tell a member of the committee. We would love you to share your expertise through workshops, working bees or by taking on tasks and maintenance around the garden.

All members are also invited to attend committee meetings. These are generally held in the Taroona Cottage on the evening of the second Tuesday of the month. Occasionally they are held somewhere else, so if you are thinking of coming, it is best to check location with a committee member.

Our Mission

TNG aims to provide a sunny open space for local residents and students to learn organic gardening skills, grow nutritious food and engage in healthy outdoor exercise.

The TNG will help to reduce carbon footprints and assist in protecting food security by growing vegetables, herbs and flowers locally.