

Looks like migrating birds are heading up North to warmer weather and a bit of fun and this year I have decided to join them, for the same reasons, and to bring them back with me in Spring. In saying that migration hurries high predation and mortality, including hunting by humans (jeez!) and by starvation!! So here's hoping for the best and safe travelling for us both.

Autumn is generally a good month for a decent clean up and to feed your asparagus bed with compost, animal manure and seaweed. Gather leaves for your compost heap, fertilise your herbs, gather up pumpkins and marrows and dry well in the sun before storing away. Autumn is, in fact, nature's planting season. That's when soil temperature is at its peak, making it the best to plant roots to snuggle into. Also the autumn rain means plants have a couple of months to establish themselves before they shut down for winter. You can plant out hardy annuals, such as pansies, poppies, primulas, stock, violas and polyanthus directly in the soil now for an early spring/winter display.

In Store

Crops to plant now;

Cavolo Nero – Hard to beat for flavour, versatility and good looks

Kohl Rabi – very versatile, both stems and leaves can be eaten

Rocket – spicy, tangy flavour and very hardy

Pac Choy – very flavoursome fast maturing and easy to grow

Spinach – thrives in the cooler months yum yum

Silverbeet – surely the stalwart of the vege family, sturdy and dependable

Brassicas – cabbages, caulis, broccoli, kale, brussel sprout all ready to be planted out now

And many more available now at a super duper price of **\$4.50 each or 3 for \$12.00**

We have a selection of Herbs, now is a good time to get your hardy herbs planted.

Herbs

Rosemary, Sage and Thyme

Fruits

Now is a great time to pop these beauties in the ground. Feijoas, Blueberries, Boysenberries, Figs, Olives, Currants, Raspberries, and Goosberries. These will all sit over winter and gather strength and the "spring" into action when it warms up.

Lots of new Citrus has just landed including Kaffir and Finger Limes, Mandarins galore, Oranges, Lemons, Limes and more.

Lots of **Succulents** and don't forget your **Spring bulbs**, lovely and long flowering

Lisianthus – late summer/autumn flowering

Salvias – looking stunning

The very colourful **Coleus** on special now \$5 were \$16.99 also on special **Heucheras** looking stunning, “Wild Rose”, “Eye Spy” and “Grape expectations”, outstanding foliage plants for semi shaded to shady areas. Were \$18.99 now **\$13**

Roses 20% off

The little Market

Chocolate Cosmos that really smells like chocolate, Mandevilla Ruby Red, intense red trumpet flowers, Bergenia “Snow Cloud”, Elephant's Ears, beautiful big leaves. Fatsia Japonica for indoor or outdoors. Lemon Verbena chunky plants, potted Irises, Spider plants Strelitzias and the very popular bath salts. And the big question; Will the Dog miss me?

Soil – what type do you have in your Garden?

It is one of the most important questions that I am going to ask you when you come in to select your plants. And if you are like me I have been battling clay soils that are like concrete in the summer and glue in the winter. So here are some helpful tips;

Sandy Soils - large particles and low nutrient content they drain quickly which can lead to drought stress for some plants. In pure sandy soils you have no life in the soil. You need organic matter to bring in life. By adding large feature rocks you are boosting habitats to foster small creatures. Plants that thrive are Succulents, Cacti, Sedums, Lavenders, yarrow, Mexican Orange, Dogwoods, Smoke Tree, Berberis and Amelanchier.

Clay Soils – small particles and it retains water well, but becomes compacted and poorly drained, it's also hard for roots to break through. Amending your soil properly can overcome these problems. Adding compost, leaves, pine bark or simply a bag of Clay Breaker. Plants suited to clay include Buddlejia, Thuja, Viburnams, Weigela, NZ Natives

Loamy Soils – are a balance mix of sand, silt and clay offering good drainage and nutrient retention. Ideal for gardening plants that thrive so take your pick.

Understanding the type of soil in your garden or landscape can save you a great deal of money in the long run even though we often learn from our mistakes. Take it from one who **now** knows. It's far easier to work with Mother Nature, than against her.

Autumn has arrived at Portstone



In The Shop

We have an exciting new range of Essential Oils available from Zurma Bontanical Oil Studio. This is a family owned business based in Christchurch. The Zurma brand is focused on providing the highest quality of pure and natural Essential Oils.

Essential oils can be used for their beautiful aroma or they can be used for a purpose, eg facial cosmetics, body massage, bath and body products, specific problems, pain or wounds.

Each Essential Oil comes in a 10ml bottle, ranging from \$18-\$40. We also have the carrier oil to mix with the essential oils. Research has found that undiluted essential oils should not be applied directly to the skin.

Diffusing essential oils into the air using a diffuser is another lovely way to enjoy them. We have a range of different diffusers costing between \$70-\$100.

We also have Zurma Hydrosols, these are an excellent daily skin care treatment. The Hydrosols have a much higher water content. This means they're gentler than essential oils and can be applied directly to your skin, without having to be diluted.

We have them available in 100ml glass bottles in a variety of scents, from rose, orange, lavender, to witch hazel and tea tree. They cost \$26.99.

Come in and have a look, a smell and a spray of the mix of essential oils we have in store.

New range of books that are great for young ones to connect with gardening & nature

The range of **Herb World Books** was created from the desire to share the magic that nature has to offer with children and inspire the next generation to connect with nature. The beautiful books have been written by The Herb Farm founder and herbalist, Lynn Kirkland and illustrated by her son, Craig Kirkland.

Please remember we have now moved to our earlier closing time

Open 9am-4.30pm

This month's newsletter contributors are;

Bjorg can be located in the undercover area looking after bedding/veges, citrus & The little Market.

Lynnie is our shrub and tree expert;

Leigh can be found within the shop.

Come say hi, we are here to help.

Love your Garden

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