



Tea in my  
**GARDEN**

### Tea in my Garden

Join us for a delightful morning in nature!

Explore three unique Waitaha gardens, meet the gardeners, and enjoy a guided tour through their beautiful grounds.

*December, February & March 10.30am – 12pm.*

Meet at the garden, or carpool with friends  
\$20 (\$30 Non-Members) Includes garden entry, light morning tea. [Book Online Now](#)



### Christmas Kokedama

### Christmas Kokedama

Celebrate the festive season with nature's very own baubles!

Join moss-masters, Allan Paterson and Stargirl, and learn how to create a Christmas-themed Kokedama ball.

*Sunday 8 December 10am-12pm & 1-3pm*

*The Kiosk, Christchurch Botanic Gardens*

\$60 (\$75 Non-Members) [Book Online Now](#)

### Grow your own Cut Flowers

Sow a variety of seeds to brighten your garden

A relaxed session led by self-taught flower enthusiast Isabelle Weston. You'll learn how to nurture a thriving garden and take home seeds for future planting.

*Thursday 30 January 2025 7- 9pm*  
*The Kiosk, Christchurch Botanic Gardens*  
\$40 (\$45 Non-Members) [Book Online Now](#)



### Grow your own Cut Flowers



GREEN MAN TILE  
Workshop

### Green Man Tile

Botanical Ceramics with Jane McCulla

Create an age old symbol of seasonal renewal and ecological awareness with ceramicist Jane McCulla. Includes all materials, glazing and kiln firing!

*Sunday 2 March 2025 10am - 12.30pm*

*The Kiosk, Botanic Gardens*

\$65 (\$80 Non-Members) [Book Online Now](#)

### Cool Season Seeds

Discover the benefits of planting hardy annuals

If you're a seasoned gardener or new to gardening, this workshop will help you prepare your garden for a beautiful early Spring bloom.

*Thursday 27 March 2025 7 - 9pm*  
*The Kiosk, Christchurch Botanic Gardens.*  
\$55 (\$70 Non-Members) [Book Online Now](#)



### Cool Season Seeds

Planting your Cut Flower Garden in Autumn

### GARDEN LIFE DECEMBER

### Valmai Becker

*Phytofarm, Little River*

*Tuesday 3rd 6pm & Wednesday 4th 1pm*



Phytofarm is a unique herb farm and educational centre located in Little River on the Banks Peninsula, New Zealand. It was founded by Valmai Becker, a qualified naturopath and herbal medicine expert. The 10-acre property includes diverse gardens and native forest, where medicinal and culinary herbs are cultivated, alongside native plants.

### Mini Speaker: Dr John Clemens AHRIH

John Clemens is a horticulturist and landscape ecologist who has worked with plants, gardens, and nurseries in the UK, Australia and – for almost 40 years – in NZ. He was awarded an Associate of Honour by the Royal NZ Institute of Horticulture in 2023 for teaching, research, and advice to the horticultural industry. In this talk he will introduce you to today's "special project": how we can work together to minimise the impact of pest plants in our gardens and neighbourhoods. Get to know the problem pests and what we can do to conquer and replace them!

### Furoshiki Demonstration: Ayumi Hirata

Ayumi will introduce us to the Japanese tradition of Furoshiki - sustainable gift wrapping that bridges the cultures of Aotearoa and Japan. Ayumi also has a passion for reducing textile waste as she transforms fabric scraps to re-purpose them into beautiful accessories.

*The Kiosk, Christchurch Botanic Gardens*  
\$5 (\$10 Non-Members) Pay on the door

*Tea, coffee and biscuits afternoon*  
*Wine & nibbles evening*

## What a Year!

As we look back on the year, it's hard to believe how quickly time has flown. It truly is a privilege and a pleasure to work for CHS and to be surrounded by the beauty of the Botanic Gardens. Late spring and early summer are such a glorious time, and I'm sure all of you—whether you are passionate gardeners or garden admirers—are enjoying the vibrant colours and new growth that this season brings.

This year has brought its share of changes, with new staff joining and roles evolving. But what has remained constant is the joy of working alongside like-minded plant enthusiasts and the ongoing exchange of knowledge and experience. We are so fortunate to be part of a community that fosters learning, and this year has been no exception. Our knowledgeable members, workshop tutors, and inspiring guest speakers continue to make each gathering a valuable opportunity to deepen our understanding of gardening and horticulture.

In other news, the long-awaited parking charges are now being enforced from 8am to 5pm, 7 days a week. A payment meter has

been installed near the footbridge. To use it, simply enter your car registration number, choose your duration, and tap your chip-enabled card on the screen to pay. Unfortunately, meters only accept chipped cards for payment. To help offset the additional expense of parking, December's afternoon Garden Life will be free for members. One silver lining is that there's now plenty of space, making parking much easier!

For those of you who join us for Garden Life, we have another exciting line up of speakers. It will be wonderful to catch up and share a cuppa—or even a glass of bubbles!—and celebrate the year that was while looking forward to the exciting possibilities 2025 and beyond hold for us.

To the CHS staff, volunteers, and Board members, thank you for your dedication and inspiration. It has been a true joy to work alongside you. Wishing you all a joyful and festive season filled with warmth, laughter, and time spent with loved ones. Here's to a wonderful holiday season and a bright new year!

*Please note the office will be closed from 20 December – 13 January.*

**Jenny Cookson**, CHS Manager



### Craft and Create with Nature

Join renowned flower preservationist and artist Debz Eagle for two inspiring workshops in flower pressing and botanical art.

**Pressed Flowers: Sunday 23 March**  
**Pressed Flower Art: Sunday 4 May**

The Kiosk, Christchurch Botanic Gardens  
\$60 (\$80 Non-Members) [Book Online Now](#)

Use the coupon code **SAVE\$10** to save \$10 when booking both Workshops.

## Floral Design

**Wednesday 18 December 1pm**

The Kiosk, Christchurch Botanic Gardens

The group is studying the upright styles of Ikebana under the tutoring of Ray King. This month's theme is a Celebratory arrangement. Contact: **Ray King** tel: 021 037 0675

[See the latest arrangements online](#)



## Watercolour Painting

**Wednesday 11 December 10am**

The Kiosk, Christchurch Botanic Gardens

## Chrysanthemum Group

**Sunday 8 December 1.30pm**

**Christmas Gathering hosted by Nelson & Therese Boustead.** Contact Robyn to join and she will advise what to bring and the address. **Robyn Purcell** tel: 942 9871 or 021 179 8186  
Email: [dandrpurcell@gmail.com](mailto:dandrpurcell@gmail.com)

## Monthly Tips & Tasks

*with Michael Coulter*

### Summer Gardening Update

Summer has arrived, bringing the annual battle with blackbirds over ripening berries. Strawberries and raspberries are their favourites, often pecked before they're fully ripe. Not this year! With netting in place, the berries are safe, ready to enjoy with ice cream.

This is a busy month in the garden with tasks like planting, weeding, watering, and pruning spring-flowering shrubs. Here are some key tips to keep your garden thriving:

**Spring Bulbs:** Cut back the tops of spent spring bulbs. Cover the gap with soil to protect against insect pests.

**Begonias:** Well-sprouted bulbs can be potted or planted, and cuttings taken now.

**Summer Bulbs:** Plant summer-flowering bulbs and tubers promptly to allow sufficient growing time.

**Fruit Trees:** Thin pip and stone fruits to ensure they grow to a good size. Control pests and diseases early to protect the crop.

**Vegetable Garden:** Successive planting and seed sowing will ensure a continuous harvest. Watch for psyllids on tomatoes and potatoes—use insecticide to prevent infestations.

**Watering Tips:** Keep your garden hydrated with targeted watering. Mulches help conserve moisture. Install systems like weeper hoses for efficiency. Mine has been great for my narrow border, keeping plants healthy without wasting water.

**Pest Control:** Keep an eye on greenhouse plants for pests like whiteflies. Early action now can prevent issues during hotter months.

**Lawns:** Deal with emerging weeds while

they're small. Apply a slow-release fertiliser, and maintain regular watering and mowing for lush growth.

**Gardener's Health:** Wear a hat and sunscreen, drink plenty of water, and schedule weeding in the cooler mornings. Use water timers for efficiency, and always run hot water out of hoses before watering plants. *Finally, take time to relax in the evening and enjoy the rewards of your hard work.*

**Happy Christmas and New Year!** *Michael*

## Bot Tots December

**Mondays 10 - 11.30am (term time only)**  
Gardening and nature themed activities for preschoolers. (\$2 koha per tamariki).

**2 December** Cardboard Crafts: Ornaments  
**9 December** Recycled Jar Lanterns  
**16 December** Wrap a Seedling Sustainably  
[Bot Tots Facebook page](#)

## When to Harvest Fruit?

### When is the right time to harvest your fruit?

Harvesting at the right time ensures fruit is neither underdeveloped nor overly ripe.

Orchards in Schools Coordinator Melissa Thompson, shares her tips for telling when to pick!



### Signs of Ripeness

#### Colour:

- **Apples, pears, nectarines** – full colour for the variety.
- **Peaches, plums, apricots** – deep, vibrant shades.
- **Feijoas** – no longer bright green.

#### Firmness:

- **Apples, peaches, plums** – firm but slightly yielding under pressure.
- **Pears** – soft near the stem indicates readiness.
- **Feijoas** – slightly soft, with a clear jellied centre when cut open.

### Ease of Harvest:

- **Apples, peaches, pears** – twist gently; ripe fruit detaches easily.
- **Feijoas** – fall naturally or detach with light effort.

### Taste/Smell:

- **Apples, plums** – taste for sweetness.
- **Peaches, apricots, feijoas** – fragrant, sweet aroma.

### Quick Tips

- **Apples:** Lower fruit ripens first; pick selectively.
- **Pears:** Harvest firm; ripen indoors.
- **Peaches/Nectarines:** Ripen quickly off the tree; pick slightly early if unsure.
- **Plums:** Ready when smooth, wrinkle-free.
- **Feijoas:** Harvest just before softening for best results.

### Harvest Wisely

- **Test Often:** Check daily as ripening happens quickly.
- **Avoid Over-Picking:** Prevent tree stress and ensure a better future harvest.
- **Handle Gently:** Protect fruit from bruising.

## Envirohub

### Green Drinks

**Thursday 19 December 6-8pm**

### Seeds of Change - The Edible Streets Story with Zane Crofts

Cascade Bar & Courtyard, 89 Lichfield St  
Zane shares his vision for Edible Streets, building on the success of local food pantries. *Free, all welcome*

**Stay connected with Envirohub** with the following links:

[Eco Events Calendar](#), [Map and Directory](#) and [Facebook page](#) are valuable resources to keep you connected with environmental happiness in Ōtautahi.

## Christchurch Envirokids

**Envirokids** meet at the Kiosk every Saturday from 10am - 1pm for FREE activities.

Check out programme: [@CHCHEnvirokids](#)

## Friends of the Gardens

### Botanic Gardens Guided Walks

The Friend's FREE daily guided walks have fabulous line-up of new and favourite walks through the Christchurch Botanic Gardens. Walks take approximately one hour, starting at the Kiosk at 1.30pm. [See the full schedule online](#)

*Please note there is no walk on Christmas Day.*

### Sunday 8 December 4pm

The Friend's annual Christmas Gathering with Garden's Director, Wolfgang Bopp as guest speaker.

### Summer Talk Series

#### Sunday 16 February 4pm

Laura Jones will speak about the history & importance of the Magnetic Observatory. \$5 (Non-Members \$10)

### Mona Vale Guided Walks

**Saturday 14 & 28 December 1.30pm**  
(90 mins), free.

### Fundraiser! Potted plants for your Outside Table or Patio in vintage terracotta

**Wednesday 4 December 9.30am- 12 pm**

- Succulents - a mix of 3 species in a large pot (\$12)
- Succulents - single species in small pots (\$6)
- Box Topiary (\$8)
- Rhodohypoxis, flowering now, White and Pink (\$8)

## Old Magazines

We have an exciting project coming up in 2025 and need old NZ Gardener (or similar) magazines. If you have any you are willing to offload please drop them into the Kiosk.

## Scorpio Books

### Book of the Month

#### The Natural Gardener

By Richard Unsworth

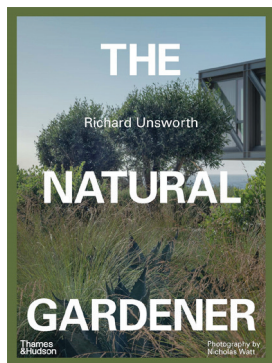
\$65 [Hardback](#)

From the earliest crop plantings to the most elaborate formal gardens, humans have cultivated gardens for millennia. Recently there has been a shift away from clean lines and perfectly trimmed hedges to more naturalistic plantings: the new natural garden is considered and curated, taking its cues from the surrounding landscape. Plants are laid out asymmetrically, but still are balanced, random in appearance, as though seeds have blown in and germinated where they fell.

Garden designer Richard Unsworth offers advice on how to select landscape materials that sit effortlessly in the landscape, planting combinations that thrive in different settings, and discusses principles of regeneration and restoration. Whether large or small, urban or rural, every garden and every gardener can benefit from wilding their surroundings to reconnect with nature.

**CHS Members enjoy a 10% discount at Scorpio Books & Telling Tales**

[www.scorpiobooks.co.nz](http://www.scorpiobooks.co.nz)



## Green Thumbs Podcast

Tune in **fortnightly Mondays at 9am** on Plains FM 96.9, where Amy & Ray chat with local gardeners and review inspiring gardening books.

**9 December: Sue Heazlewood of Tangleby Gardens** shares her passion for gardening, cooking, and her stunning Ohoka garden that inspired her books. **23 December:** Book reviews include *Tangleby Everyday Recipes* and *Tails of Tangleby* by Sue Heazlewood.

**6 January:** An interview featuring a local gardening trust followed by latest book pics on **20 January**. Listen live on Plains FM 96.9 or via the [CHS Website](#)

## Tangleby Book Offer!

**20% off with coupon code: TOTG20%**

Award winning author Sue Heazlewood is offering the CHS community a generous Christmas discount of 20% on her fabulous range of illustrated cookbooks. Take advantage of this offer by visiting [www.tangleby.co.nz](http://www.tangleby.co.nz) and prepare to be delighted with her unique cookbooks for both adults and children.

*"I now grow 15,000 vegetable and annual flower seedlings every year in my glasshouse. Along with the garden, I also built a rather elaborate playhouse, which has since become the setting for my first children's story and cookbook, Tails of Tangleby."* Sue Heazlewood

## Garden Life 2025

### February

**Tuesday 4th 6pm & Wednesday 5th 1pm**

Garden Life will be back in February with a great line up of speakers and demonstrations.

**The Kiosk**, Christchurch Botanic Gardens  
 Armagh Street car park footbridge  
 \$5 (\$10 Non-Members)  
 Tea, coffee and biscuits *afternoon*  
 Wine & nibbles *evening*

See our [website](#) and [Facebook](#) for updates. **We want your Problems!**

### Kiosk Volunteers Needed

We are looking for volunteers to staff the Kiosk on **Monday 6, Wednesday 8 and Thursday 9 January** from 10am - 1pm or 1pm - 4pm. Light duties include opening and closing the building, taking eftpos transactions and chatting to the public.

As a show of appreciation, and to cover parking costs (\$4.60), we will provide a \$20 grocery or petrol voucher. Please email Jenny if you can help. [office@chsgardens.co.nz](mailto:office@chsgardens.co.nz)



### Canterbury Rose Society

**Thursday 5 December 7.30pm**

#### Christmas Function

The Kiosk, Christchurch Botanic Gardens

The Rose Society will have a table show and some fun competitions for members to participate in for the festive season. A shared Christmas supper will finish events for the year.

*Members and all interested parties welcome!*



### Avon Bonsai Society

**Monday 9 December 7pm**

#### Xmas Breakup

The Kiosk, Christchurch Botanic Gardens

Tree of the Year Competition for Open and Novice Classes - Bring Your Very Best Tree that are in bonsai pots and a tree decorated for Xmas. Critique/Raffle. *Guests are welcome to come and find out more about Bonsai and the club.* The first meeting of 2025 will be **Monday 10 February 7pm** at the Kiosk.

**Feature** - Concrete Mountains demonstration, Critique/Raffle. Tree of the month: natives. *Guests welcome*

### Join our Transformation Team at Avebury

**Sunday 8 December 9am - 11pm**  
 9 Evelyn Couzins Avenue, Richmond

Join the team preparing the site for the CHS Avebury Climate Resilient Garden. Bring your hand tools and gloves; we'll provide wheelbarrows, spades and forks. Meet fellow experienced gardeners and exchange tips over morning tea.

This working bee precedes the **Avebury Xmas Market** running 11am-3pm. Food, music, and over 40 diverse stallholders meaning you can enjoy getting all your Christmas shopping done in one afternoon!

### Plant of the Month - Hydrangea

Hydrangeas are beautiful, low-maintenance plants that thrive when given the right conditions. They grow best in rich, well-draining soil that is slightly acidic. You can enhance soil quality by adding compost or other organic matter.

Hydrangeas prefer a partly shaded spot, though some varieties can tolerate full sun if watered regularly. Ideally, they should be planted in a location that receives morning sun and afternoon shade to protect their leaves from scorching. These plants need plenty of water, especially during dry weather, as their shallow roots dry out quickly. Keep the soil consistently moist but not waterlogged, and apply mulch around the base of the plant to retain moisture and keep the roots cool.

Hydrangeas are also excellent for container gardening. Common problems include wilting leaves, which may indicate insufficient water or poor drainage. Pests such as aphids and spider mites can also

affect hydrangeas. Additionally, the colour of their blooms can vary depending on soil pH: acidic soil produces blue flowers, while alkaline soil results in pink blooms.

Pruning after flowering helps maintain the plant's health and encourages abundant blooms the following season.

Hydrangeas come in a stunning array of colours and varieties. For example, Strawberries & Cream features rich strawberry-red blooms with pink-tinged white buds at their centres, while Blueberries and Cream boasts blue blooms surrounding white centres. Other popular varieties include Altona, Fireworks, Renate Steinger, Snowball, and Limelight.

A notable addition to the hydrangea family is the Tuxedo range, known for its striking dark foliage. The bold, bright pink or red flowers create a magnificent contrast against the deep purple-black leaves.



**Thanks to Portstone Garden Centre for this update. CHS Members enjoy a 15% discount at Portstone [www.portstone.co.nz](http://www.portstone.co.nz)**

CREATE YOUR OWN ARTWORK TO TAKE HOME

## BOTANICAL WATERCOLOUR



Create stunning Botanical Watercolours with Kay Duncan

Whether you are a novice or a seasoned painter, this workshop offers a fantastic opportunity to hone your skills and create stunning botanical artwork. *For anyone who missed Kay's popular October workshop, this is a chance to attend a repeat session.*

**Sunday 6 April 2025 10am - 1pm, The Kiosk, Botanic Gardens. \$125 (\$155 Non-Members) [Book Online Now](#)**