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COASTLINE

Oct
 2018

Summer Thyme Viewing Gardens

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The conundrum for gardeners wanting to attend the monthly 7pm Riverton Organic Gardening Group meetings, is the temptation to be outside gardening, rather than indoors talking about it! Therefore with summer approaching and daylight-hours increasing, the Group will be meeting in the gardens of gardeners happy to share so that everyone can learn from each other and enjoy what there is to tantalise the senses.

The plan is to start in the Guyton's Riverton Forest Garden to get first hand experience of what it's all about and to see how a wilder approach to gardening can be a desirable thing.

The following month, the group will travel to Roundhill to visit Hannah's well-nurtured organic garden that wraps around their lovely family home. A recent visitor described it as looking wonderful; raised beds replete with healthy vegetables and herbs and berry fruits galore!

Beyond that, possibly Nathan's extensive gardens at Taramoa and Natalie's South Invercargill garden, established on an old compacted gravel work site. It's out-of-the-ordinary! Somehow, Natalie extracts the most amazing plants from conditions that would make your toes curl!

You are most welcome to join the group for the outdoor meetings. Call the Environment Centre for more info. If you wish, the group may like to visit your garden. Much more enticing than meeting indoors on a summer evening!



OCT	Dates to Diary
Tues 16	Volunteers Get -Together 5.30 to 7.30 pm, Pot-Luck Shared Tea
Mon 22	Forest Garden 4 Hour Workshop See Facebook for details
Tues 30	Riverton Organic Gardening Group 7pm, meet at the Environment Centre

Our People, Our People, Our People

You may be familiar with the Maori Proverb,
He aha te mea nui o te ao

What is the most important thing in the world?

He tangata, he tangata, he tangata

It is the people, it is the people, it is the people

The message certainly applies to the focus of the SCES. Everything the Society does is to work towards ensuring our environment and community is better for us, the people of our village, our region, our province, our nation and our world.

To do so effectively we need more people involved in contributing to the ever growing work of the Society. There are so many ways to assist from mowing the grass out the back of the building to becoming a seed saver, see the front page article.

If you can volunteer an hour or so each week, each fortnight or each month, please email the Centre or call in for a chat.

Other ways to be involved and gain new skills is by joining in the workshops. Even Robert, an expert in various fields, gained from attending one recently, his comments pg 7.

Tanya, our Chairperson shares her new hands-on learning, also pg 7. I hope you too learn something new and enjoy reading through our October issue of the Coastline.

Wendy Joy

Coastline Production Co-ordinator

The South Coast Environment Society Incorporated

is a NZ registered Charitable Trust (registration number CC41561). The Society vision is of a sustainable, resilient community of good leaders, resources, systems and examples available to assist and support people to adopt sustainable lifestyles and care for and about our environment. The Riverton Environment Centre is one project operated by the Society. Volunteers open the Centre for the public 40 hours a week. The displays, information and resources are inspiring and enabling, incorporating a blend of traditional ways and new concepts showcased to give people more earth-friendly options in their daily lives.

Preparation Is The Key

El Nino maybe on it's way

Words of Advice from Robert Guyton

Rain, rain, go away....no, no don't!

We need the rain that's presently falling on the heads of all of us, if outside without a raincoat, and on the leaves of everything that grows green.

We become complacent about rain and the need for it, when we have plenty. Last spring and early summer showed us that rain isn't a given in Southland, though we've always believed it was. Provision for dry times; drought they call it elsewhere, is necessary, now that climate change has begun to show its effects here in the south.

The Australian weather and climate authorities have today issued a warning about El Nino to every Australian and when they do that, we too should listen and take note. It could go all dry on us again, and if we haven't taken precautions, we could be caught out.

Mulch, that's what I say, in the home garden and the orchard, and store water wherever you can. The best place to do that, of course, is in the soil by providing as much humus as is humanly possible. Make some and get it into your soil so that it can begin storing precious water molecules.

Tanks too, to store water. If you don't have any, get at least one, is my advice. Get it full (today's rain would have done it) and treat that water as precious, as indeed it is!!
Robert



South Coast

Environment Society Inc. AGM

Come and hear about our achievements over the last 12 months and our exciting plans for the future. New members are welcome to join our proactive team.

Tuesday 20th November 7pm
Riverton Environment Centre
Supper provided

October Gardening with Robert



There's a cold spell coming, gardeners! At least, that's what's predicted by the weather wizards and expected by every gardener who's ever had their early potatoes frosted by an "unexpected" cold snap. It's only early October but we all have our hopes up and sowing fingers cocked.

The soil is warmish and suitable for planting beans of the broad sort and peas of any sort. They won't be disastrously affected by cold weather; merely slowed down and they'll recover. Other young veg plants aren't so robust and cold-hardy and will lose the battle for life, so keep them in their packets or, if you've already sown and grown them to transplant-size, keep them indoors a while yet until our coastal weather, is clear and warm.

Tomato plants are beginning to colonise kitchen window-sills everywhere, with sweet pepper seedlings pushing in as well, but they'll have to stay inside enjoying the same heating system keeping us warm through October, and make the move to the tunnel house or outdoor warm spots, later on.

I've sown spinach of various sorts; "ordinary", the taller "tree" spinach and the everlasting "perennial" that should see us eating spinach forever and a day. Amongst the other seeds I've sown are bronze fennel that have sprouted already and will soon be ready for pricking out into small pots. I sowed them in a flat "tray" and they've come up like hairs on a dog's back. I plan to plant them throughout my "wild" garden, as their unusual colour makes a nice change from the almost unrelenting green of my other plants, although I do have some grey-leafed plants; cardoons especially, which coincidentally, you can sow the seeds of right now.

Southland Seed Savers Update

Calling all Southern Gardeners - We Need Your Help to Survey Overseas Heirloom Varieties

We have been gifted a great range of interesting beans from all over the world, corn that grows in Peru, plus some other interesting seeds. They have come to us via Mark Christianson in Whanganui. All the seeds are imported and new to New Zealand. The goal is to get to know how the different seeds grow in various parts of NZ with our focus being on the types most likely to do well in our southern area.

The list is up on our website and we have a display in the Environment Centre for you to select from, or send us a stamped addressed envelope and we will return it with your chosen selection; up to 6 varieties per grower. All we ask you to do is to provide us with a brief summary of your findings, e.g. soil type grown in, growing stage observations - sun, moisture, how long until harvest, taste, comparative comments with types typically grown locally.

Once we receive growers feedback, we will select the best ones, out of the over 40 varieties to be trialled, to be included in our Southern collection. The chosen varieties will then be progressively made widely available in future as stocks permit.

Likewise we have some older seeds that may or may not be viable, that we would like gardeners to grow. If successful we ask you to send us back some fresh seeds for the network. These are also on the website free of charge. Again just send us a stamped addressed envelope for 2-3 packets or a \$3.50 addressed self-sealing post bag for orders of 4-12 packets. Or call in to see us at the Riverton Environment Centre to make your selection.

We look forward to you helping out with Seed Saving in Southland and THANK YOU for helping out

Monthly Events for Food Co-op Volunteers

We really value our volunteers and want to attract many more!

Anna, our new volunteer co-ordinator, is organising something special once a month just for Centre volunteers; fun, informative and interesting evenings and other special offers.

So if you have been thinking about volunteering, now is a great time to start! If you are job seeking we offer to be referees for our volunteers and volunteering is classed as work on your C.V.

Plant of the Month

Perennials

Perennials are doing their annual thing of popping their heads up now, providing security and continuity of supply bless them! I've been welcoming over the past few weeks: rhubarb, cardoon, comfrey, alkanet, fennel, French sorrel...the list is a long and delightful one.

The beauty of the perennial herb, aside from appearing without gardener effort, is their willingness to be divided and spread around the garden and friends. It's delightfully easy to do so. A sharp spade, or a pair of pointy forks, is all you need to make 10 from 1, be they horseradish, elecampane, goldenrod or hemp agrimony, all part willingly, or at least, eventually, slicing them with a blade or prising them apart with 2 forks, back-to-back. By doing this year after year, one small nursery or appreciated gifted plant can become a drift, a spreading clump or a scattered garden feature, and feed you at the same time.

Rhubarb is the classic dividable food plant. Serious gardeners lift them in the winter-time, leave them to "mature" on top of the soil, then replant early spring with a boost of animal manures or fish frames, both loved by rhubarb. Frost, apparently, "conditions" rhubarb and provokes it into vigorous growth. I don't know about that, but it certainly does the root no harm.

Other perennials, such as the giant Chilean rhubarb, *Gunnera tinctoria* can be propagated by chopping off, or carefully separating, the pups that appear every spring, somewhere on the parent plant. These babies quickly establish as new plants and soon match their parents in size and form.

Creature of the Month: The Kereru

Three or four native wood pigeons have taken up residence in my garden. Around Riverton, there are many more. A couple of dozen spend a lot of time in the broom fields at the top of Castle Street, feeding on leguminous plants tips, but I've no idea where they roost; probably various locations around the village, including More's Reserve perhaps. Kereru love the succulent tips of anything in the legume family. They won't come onto the ground to feed, wisely, as cats are everywhere, but love to graze on kowhai, kaka beak, tagasaste, laburnum and a range of other "pea-flower-bearing" trees around the town.

Broom and gorse, so despised by most people, are adored by kereru. As fields are cleared of the tasty treats, the wood pigeons must mourn their loss. I've planted a dozen laburnum, with their cascades of yellow pea-flowers, to draw kereru to my garden. Laburnum seeds are poisonous, but the flowers and leaf tips are certainly not, to birds at least. Kereru nest high in the branches of tall trees, in nests that look like rubbish! Well, they aren't elegant in any way or form. You'd probably not even think of them as nests and wonder how they might contain their egg. Clearly they do, as there are still kereru around the place, but it does seem a miracle.

Robert

Herb of the Month

Chamomile

Roman: (*Chamaemelum nobile*)

also called "Lawn" Chamomile

German: (*Matricaria recutita*) **also called "True" or "Wild" Chamomile**



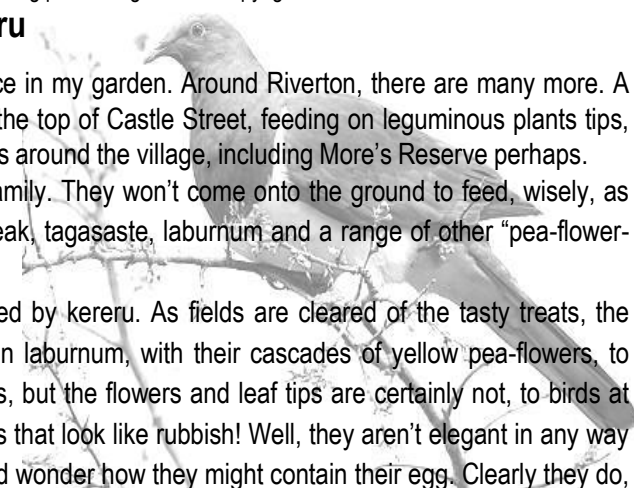
Roman Chamomile is an evergreen perennial. The upright flowers can be picked before mowing. Grow from seed in early spring or transplant as rooted cuttings into light soil. German Chamomile is a hardy annual, which easily reseeds if left. Sow early spring, in light, dryish soil. Pick both varieties daily in season, just as or before petals are flat, to be at their best. Dry thoroughly to prevent mould and store in dark-coloured, air-tight jars.

Chamomile is a safe infusion in warm water to relieve babies colic; as a tea it helps nausea, indigestion, cystitis, sleeplessness, and painful periods; it is a great wash or ointment for bites, stings or other skin complaints and the best herbal decongestant to inhale as a steam bowl; "true" or "wild" Chamomile has higher anti-inflammatory properties while both plants share its other healing powers.

CAUTION: Will cause diarrhoea if taken excessively internally, and before using on skin, rub a flower on the back of hand first, as although this is a very safe herb, in a few people, it can cause contact dermatitis.

NB: The EC has Dried Chamomile in the medicinal herbs section and the seeds to grow the plants yourself, are in the Kings Seeds range instore.

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Seasonal Recipe: Kale Salad

You may have Kale that's been growing all winter or perhaps you have new spring plantings beginning to bear baby leaves, ideal for salads. Either way, you can enjoy this wholesome salad.

Make The Crispy Crumbs:

Cut-up some wholegrain bread with crusts on into 1cm cubes and spread out in a thin layer in an oven dish. Bake until dry, but not brown, at your ovens' lowest temperature for approximately 1 hour. Cool then make into course crumbs with a rolling pin or food processor.

Kale Preparation:

Cut enough raw kale into 2 cups of thin ribbons and place into a bowl.



Dressing:

Mix together well, 1 clove crushed garlic, ¼ cup finely grated Romano cheese, juice of 1 lemon, 1 tbsp olive oil, 1/8 tsp chilli flakes, pinch salt and black pepper.

Put it all together:

Pour dressing onto the Kale and mix well into the leaves using clean hands. Leave to sit for about 5 minutes so the kale softens slightly.

Top with the bread crumbs, shower with more cheese, and drizzle with more oil, if desired.

ENJOY!!

Extracted from: 'Six Seasons' Cookbook 2007, by Josh McFadden

How To: Sow Carrots

Carrot seeds like to be shallow sown and kept damp for the first few days - not too dry or too wet. Immediately after sowing gently water them, then place a plank of wood on top and leave it there for 4-5 days. By that time the seeds will have developed sufficiently to handle the natural changes in soil moisture.

You can sow parsnip seeds in the same manner.

As carrot seeds are so fine it is difficult to space them individually so you can pre mix them with a cup of sand. Shake well in a container then sprinkle the sand mix evenly and the carrots will be nicely spaced along the line.

You can include sowing radishes, which are much faster growing, every now and then to mark the row as the fine, slower growing carrot seeds can be hard to see amongst the flush of spring weeds we get this time of the year. Once the radishes are ready to be harvested in 30 days the mature carrot leaves will be well up above the ground and readily distinguishable.



From SDC Library: Women of the Catlins: Life in the Deep South.

Reviewer Trish. Edited by (my idol) Diana Noonan. Photographed by Cris Antona. Foreword by Kim Hill, "It's about indomitable spirit, true grit, all that stuff. Plus, it's a beautiful thing! Enjoy. Envy. Be inspired."

The book contains 26 short biographical stories providing insight into how Catlins women and their families survive, exist and pay the bills while living in this remote corner of New Zealand. The stories demonstrate the ability for a diverse community to remain resilient through having flexibility and being able to learn new skills, diversify incomes or accept the necessary distances to travel to work and the distances they now may be from their homelands.

The biographies range from a school-age perspective (with dreams of the future) to women in the grip of the now (trying to keep afloat and provide well-rounded experiences for their children) to women with ripe old wisdom (reflecting on changes they have seen and the paths their lives have taken).

As well as reminding me how strong and resilient we women can be, as a pakeha woman, these stories also offer me insights into the Maori world of the Catlins. The significance of Marinuku, the Maori ground on the hill and the loss of Maori identity while co-existing in the Catlins' European world.

Each story is different, but together they tell one story of love and connection to the Catlins, that is so strong that (for most) it outweighs the intense day to day efforts, feelings of isolation, cultural loss and extreme weather conditions.

Ultimately, we can learn from these women that our differences make this world more interesting and meaningful. We do not need to be the same; together we can inspire each other to greater resilience and tell the stories of our land.

Our People **Big Welcome to New Staff Member, Sam Grayson**

I am a new addition to the Environment Centre Office Admin Team. I will be working on Projects, Workshops, Food Forest Tours, databases and running the office on week days when Karla and Robyn are away. I will also be involved in the Harvest Festival, Fruit Tree Sales and much more I'm sure! It's busy, I'm enjoying it and I'm looking forward to becoming more involved.

I am from the UK originally but I have been living here in New Zealand for the last ten years and am proud to have become a NZ citizen and have my own NZ passport. I really enjoy living here. I have lived in several different places in this beautiful country - Taranaki, Canterbury as well as Southland. Previously I spent 3 and a half years here in Riverton, which is when I first heard about the Environment Centre and met Robyn & Robert Guyton and the work that they do. I love Riverton; it's a unique and vibrant, energetic place, with lots of history and it is in a beautiful setting. For me it has been interesting watching Riverton grow over the last several years, and see all the changes that have happened since I first came here in 2010.

When I'm not working I enjoy doing photography, yoga and travelling. I love living close to the sea, and going for long walks on the lovely beaches, especially first thing in a morning, and watching the sun rise.

Sam

Our Community

Getting to Know Our Newest Neighbours – The Newly Established Riverton Menzshed

Riverton is known for being a resourceful, supportive community and that's being reinforced with the establishment of a Menzshed in the township; a group of locals developing a new supportive facility where predominantly retired men can get together to share and learn new skills, to make new contacts and/or gain the satisfaction of working on individual or community focused projects.

The building is a true shed that has undergone transformation from a basic storage facility, for Flecks Hall Scouts and Guides, to a lined, purpose redesigned shed with easy indoor-outdoor flow to enable enjoyment of the nearby estuary location and to meet the needs of the new occupants. The environment is structured with a supervisor on-site whenever open to visitors and a requirement to comply with e.g. all safety requirements, but relaxed and informal to encourage participation and sharing.



It all started just a few months ago, initiated by the Riverton Lions Club. From a public meeting an Executive Committee was formed of 3 Lions and 3 members of the public. Chairman, Russell Bickley, said a lot of research and work has gone on to reach the stage where there are already 16 financial 'Sheddies'. Work is going on to finalise the constitution and rules so that application can be made for membership of Menzshed NZ, a charitable organisation there to support autonomous Sheds nationwide. Once confirmed the formal links as a project of the Riverton Lions will cease and the Riverton Menzshed will be self-governing with the support of the NZ national body.

Throughout NZ, Menzsheds are "growing like topsy" says Russell, reflecting our growing aging population. He has visited several South Island Sheds and was amazed at the resources, facilities, community support and services some Sheds have. As well as woodworking and light engineering areas, e.g. some invite in guest speakers for informational talks on health and well-being topics.

Funding for establishment for the Riverton Shed has been thanks to the Riverton Lions Club. In future it will be by way of fund raising projects such as selling Cow Manure Compost, membership fees (to be kept as low as possible), donations, and once registered with Menzshed NZ, then by applying for grants. The Executive Committee is also very grateful for the tremendous support received from the Flecks Hall Trust Committee which has enabled the establishment of the local Shed to be relatively straight forward.

Currently the Shed is 'open for business' on Wednesdays 1 to 3 p.m. and Saturdays 9 to 12.30 p.m. New attendees are very welcome to just drop-in to join in working on projects or for a chat. Russell Bickley is very happy to be contacted by anyone who would like further information; just call him on 03 234 9337.

From Tanya, Our Chairperson

“Not so pretty or designer, but oh so functional”

Recently moving from the city to the country I have been given the privilege of working in a real country garden at Roundhill/Pahia, and creating a large vegetable patch and orchard along with learning to look after 200 “real” free range chooks and helping, where I am capable, on the sheep farm. Being an avid craft person, wool is my favourite fibre to work with “wooltastic not foolplastic” so I’m really in my element.

One of the first things needed in this change of environment was to find the best place to start raising seeds with what there was at hand. Window sills were out of the question so that meant turning to the outside. There were three choices; the large tunnel house, an 8 inch high wooden frame covered with plastic and a two foot high plastic covered cloche I made.

What I found was that in the tunnel house the seeds planted in trays of seed mix stayed cool, the top would get algae and be slow to germinate if at all. In the low wooden frame I planted the seeds in the ground and they seemed to get leggy and reached the top before they were ready to harden off. But in the cloche where I planted in trays of seed mix I soon had corn, courgettes, tomatoes and many others up and growing within a week. With no algae growth, the cloche warmed the ground soil which maintained the heat and having adequate height allowed for good air circulation without detriment to the warmth.



Conclusion – my homemade seed cloches are the answer! I’ll select a permanent spot for ongoing use and when not raising seeds I’ll fill them with plants for an extended growing season.

Tanya

Even the Experienced Can Learn From Our Workshops

Robert says, “Seed Saving Workshop well worth attending”

I attended the recent seed saving workshop where tutor Josie from Lumsden, a super-keen seed saver, explained the importance of seed saving, how easy it is to save some seeds (beans and peas) and tricky to save others (carrots), all the while passing on her passion for the art. Josie brought to the workshop some runner beans her father had kept going throughout his gardening career and she seemed determined to keep that tradition going.

Josie described methods for planting the crops you plan to save, selecting the seeds worth saving, how to collect seeds at the most appropriate times and how to store them safely, away from light, bugs, mice and other threats. It was a most enjoyable couple of hours and everyone learned a great deal about becoming and being a seed saver.

The workshop finished with a lucky dip, where everyone could choose a few packets of curious and saveable seeds from the “expired” section of the seed bank we have at the Centre. My guess is that most of those seeds will do well and be the start of a long line of saved seeds that will add to the value of the programme the Environment Centre is running.

Thanks, Josie, for a most enjoyable and informative workshop. You were an inspiration!

Robert



Readers' Patch

Is there something you would like to Buy, Sell, Swap or you have a Service to offer? Any burning questions? Maybe a Hint, Tip or Idea to share or Feedback on a previous article?

If relevant to our local community / environment / sustainability and space is available, we will be happy to include your item. If Selling goods or a service and you make a sale, a donation to the SCES would be greatly appreciated.

Riverton Menzshed Fundraiser
Bagged Cow Compost available in time for your Spring Gardening. For more details, give Russell a call on 03 234 9337

Wanted by the Environment Centre
Large Agee Jars for making up sprouting kits. We can pay \$2 each or would greatly appreciate donations to support our projects. Big Thank You to those people who have donated jars already!

'The Bee Man' has an Apiary Training Site in Riverton. If you would like to learn how to keep and manage a hive here's your chance.

Lessons will be held throughout the year, at \$25 each. Contact Geoff 028 402 4852 or email: dronep1650@gmail.com

Environment Centre Stock

Goodbye Range of Products

This is a good quality new range of certified organic products including insect repellent, soothing manuka balms and now their own special sun balm (sunscreen). There are different sizes, the smaller being perfect to keep in your handbag, plus beach and holiday use. Excellent for quality, practical gifts!



Hass Avocados

Big and Glossy
Delicious and So Healthy!

In Store Now - \$2.80 each



Please send in your Readers' Patch contributions by the third Friday of each month to: coastline@sces.org.nz

Support the South Coast Environment Society

Community support enables the South Coast Environment Society to continue to operate the Riverton Environment Centre and manage several successful projects throughout Southland.

If you like what we do, and want to help us to do more, please consider; donating money, volunteering time, becoming a member, and / or sponsoring a project. <http://www.sces.org.nz/about/donate>

Ph 03 234 8717

Visit the Environment Centre

The South Coast Environment Centre is situated on the main street of Riverton on the Southern Scenic route.
Phone: 03 2348 717 Email: office@sces.org.nz
Opening hours are:

- Monday - Friday: 10:00am - 4:30pm
- Saturday: 10:30am - 4:30pm
- Sunday: 1:30pm - 4:30pm



www.sces.org.nz



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