



MEDIA RELEASE

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Launching Australia's inaugural National Gardening Week 8-14 October 2017

Dig In & Celebrate!

Today a new and exciting addition to the Australian gardening calendar was launched at the Melbourne International Flower & Garden Show – Australia's inaugural National Gardening Week, 8-14 October 2017. National Gardening Week offers a wonderful opportunity to celebrate the simple joys of gardening and to highlight the associated environmental, social and health benefits. Whether it be maintaining a few pots on a balcony, a suburban backyard or a large country expanse, the enjoyment, the improved mental and physical wellbeing and the satisfaction gardeners gain from 'getting their hands dirty' is universal.

The driving force behind the idea is passionate gardener and The Garden Clubs of Australia President, George Hoad. "I was first made aware of a National Gardening Week on a visit to England in April 2013. The week was celebrated throughout the country with colourful floral displays, show gardens and special events, all focused on the practice of gardening. The Royal Horticultural Society (UK) had launched the inaugural National Gardening Week in 2011 and it has grown into the country's biggest celebration of gardening. I would like to see a similar celebration of gardening and gardeners here in Australia."

The Garden Clubs of Australia Inc., established in 1950, is the nation's premiere organisation for garden clubs and other like-minded groups and today has more than 700 affiliates representing over 45,000 members.

"I see the establishment of a National Gardening Week as an extension of The Garden Clubs of Australia's primary objective, to extend the culture of gardening into the wider community for the benefit of all citizens. With our large network of gardeners to promote and celebrate this event, I feel confident that the Australian community will embrace the idea and be inspired to participate," George Hoad said.

National Gardening Week is open to everybody – people of all ages, organisations, businesses, local communities, local councils, schools, etc. - to participate in and celebrate gardening in any way they choose. Throw a garden party, visit a local park, join a garden club, plant a tree, visit your local nursery or just spend a day relaxing on the lawn – the list of possible activities is endless!

Australia has a long and proud tradition of gardening and garden creation, often against the odds and in adverse conditions. The indigenous aboriginal inhabitants viewed the landscape as one big garden and were well versed in the culinary and healing properties of Australia's native flora. Within days of the First Fleet's arrival in Port Jackson in 1788, the soil was being dug over and a productive garden planted. Over the ensuing two and a quarter centuries, the practice and pleasure of gardening has grown into one of the nation's favourite pastimes.

Many other countries annually celebrate this great national pastime of gardening including the USA, Canada and, last year, New Zealand and South Africa held their inaugural celebrations. It's now Australia's turn to dig deep, cultivate the country and delight in the sheer pleasure of gardening!

National Gardening Week - Dig In & Celebrate!

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