

Gardening Articles for week ending November 21st 2015

Written by Wally Richards.

## CHRISTMAS GARDENING PRESENTS

Giving Christmas presents to family and friends; finding a suitable and affordable gift that will be actually appreciate is always a tricky problem.

Children that want to give a gift to their parents, grandparents or a close friend can always opt for a potted plant for either indoors or outside.

The gift can be made more personal by decorating the container with the painting of a picture or two, a design or even words such as Merry Xmas Grandma.

To do this you need either a plain plastic pot or a clay pot and a suitable plant along with suitable paint.

Alternative to painting the pot you could glue white paper over the outside of the pot and then coloring pencils, pens or crayons could be used.

After the new container has been decorated you re-pot the plant into it.

If the plant purchased came with a suitable pot then simply remove the plant till the decoration is completed. Keep in a good light situation till you wrap for giving.

When buying a gift for a person who is a gardener is easy as gardeners love anything to do with gardening and you cant have too much of most things.

The gifts that are the most appreciated are the ones that you have thought about, found out what the gardener has or has not then purchase within your budget.

Maybe the gardener does not have a garden shed, there are a range available from the likes of Mitre 10 that are affordable and can be fun helping to construct the kit set.

Compost bins or even better a compost tumbler can never go a miss.

A worm farm is also a valuable gardening accessory, gets rid of the kitchen scraps, supplies worm casts and worm pee for the gardens.

If you are running out of time there are always gardening gift vouchers from the NGINZ which are redeemable in over 150 stores through out NZ.

Some Garden Chains such as Oderings have their own vouchers for use in their own stores only.

A few bags of a good brand compost such as Daltons or Oderings never go amiss to use for potting up or for mulching gardens.

Heat pads for propagating seeds and cuttings are another handy inexpensive gift that can give years of pleasure. They are also useful for keeping your Virgin Coconut oil liquid or for fermenting home brews.

Practical gardening books are also a great inexpensive gift for the experienced or novice gardener.

For instance there are my own gardening books which will be different and more personal as I will autograph each book and will include a personal message of your choice such as 'Happy Gardening Bob and Claire' and autographed.

The gardening books available are; Wallys Down to Earth Gardening Guide revised edition, Wallys Green Tips for Gardeners, Wallys Glasshouse Gardening for New Zealand and Wallys Gardening & Health.

The last one is designed for people that are not really into gardening but would like to know how to grow some vegetables naturally for their health.

I remember one time a mother ordered then had me send to her newly wed daughter and husband one of my autographed books with a personal greeting.

A few weeks later the book was returned with a letter attached saying that they had not ordered the book. I rang the young couple and told them that their mum had purchased the book as a gift. I then resent the book back to an embarrassed couple.

Practical and useful gardening gifts are the most popular items that you can give and the following is a few items that I would highly recommend.

Look for PivoTrim Pro in Mitre 10 stores. It is an attachment that you put onto most brands of weed eaters that takes the hassle out of using the arcade line trimmer.

Not only is it easy to load the swivel heads of the attachment does less damage to the trunks of trees and shrubs if you get too close. It has 8 cutting lengths doing a great job in cutting out those weeds.

You could also buy them a weed eater as well, either electric or 2 stoke.

For gardeners that love to grow their own vegetables from seed or seedlings a few metres of Crop Cover would be of great use keeping cats, birds as well as most insect pests such as butterflies off their vegetables.

At only about \$5.00 a metre length and being 4 metres wide a few metres will go a long way.

You could also add to that a roll of ridged alkathene pipe to make the hoops for the cloth to go over.

Saves the hassle of spraying for insects and at the same time creates a micro climate where the plants grow much quicker. Ideal for also wrapping around branches of fruit trees to prevent the fruit being damaged by birds and insects.