

Parliament of Tasmania
Legislative Council
HANSARD
Tuesday 1 April 2025

The President, **Mr Farrell**, took the Chair at 11 a.m., acknowledged the Traditional People and read Prayers.

[excerpt]

Recognition of Visitors

Mr PRESIDENT - ...

Continuing with welcomes, because it is that sort of a day, we have some guests joining us for the special interest contribution, and the honourable member for Nelson has, in the President's Reserve, members of the Blackmans Bay Edible Garden Trail. I would like to welcome Louisa d'Arville, Chloe Bibari and Diana Taylor, and from the Edible Garden Trail hosts, Wendy Bowman and Peter Williams. I think I have covered you all there. ...

Now time for our Special Interest Matters and the first one is from the member for Nelson.

SPECIAL INTEREST MATTERS

Edible Garden Trail

[11.10 a.m.]

Ms WEBB (Nelson) - Thank you, Mr President. It is with great delight I rise to speak about the wonderful Edible Garden Trail initiative undertaken by the vibrant Blackmans Bay Community Association.

What is an edible garden trail, I hear you ask, Mr President?

Well, I am told the seed of this edible garden trail was planted during the COVID pandemic - the Blackmans Bay version, this is, with the community association president, Louisa d'Arville, who is here in the Chamber today, as you mentioned, along with other association members. She had the idea to sell pea straw to a variety of local gardeners.

That was the beginning but boy, has it grown from there. The underpinning goal of an edible garden trail is to bring people together and, in this case, in the Blackmans Bay community and to build community and resilience. Louisa researched the concept by being a host for the Home Harvest, which is a larger Hobart-based event. From that, Louisa had a desire to create a local edible garden trail event in Blackmans Bay where the hosts could build relationships with each other, where most of the visitors were locals themselves, where you could travel by bike or by foot to visit lots of the gardens in one day.

Louisa, Justy Phillips and Margaret Woodward mapped out the first trail using seed funding from the Kingborough Council and local donors. This incorporated a community

garden party, which was an opportunity for guests and hosts to get together at the end of the trail to keep chatting about the gardens and to create further connections with each other.

Those community connections have proved as bountiful as the magnificent gardens.

The third iteration of the Blackmans Bay Edible Garden Trail was held this year on Sunday 16 February, which saw over a period of around three hours at least 200 guests visit the nine Blackmans Bay gardens included in this year's Edible Garden Trail.

What a horticultural heaven those nine gardens provided.

Following the trail, either using the digital map or the hard copy print-out versions, visitors could explore, amongst others, climate resilient gardens, water-wise food forests or sustainable vegetable gardens. They could explore the native wallaby grass - sown slowly replacing introduced grasses - or venture into the biodiversity rich native wildlife sanctuaries of a garden.

There were examples of wicker beds alongside rewilding efforts, soil rejuvenation tips, permaculture and the creative example of gardens spilling out onto the verge.

I had the absolute pleasure of taking the garden trail in February and taking with me some family members who are keen gardeners. We were amazed and inspired by what we saw.

Often tucked away out of sight of somebody passing by, we visited gardens that had been expertly and passionately tendered by their owners. Some highlights for me included a small backyard garden with more fruits, veggies, edible plants than I could have possibly imagined could be fitted into such a space, not to mention a very neat little chook run; a garden, beautifully planted, planned around a new house build which now, some years down the track, is a lovely oasis of native plants, wandering paths, special sitting spots and full of birds and wildlife.

Another one was a family - fairly recently arrived in the state - new to gardening, experimenting with what is possible in their suburban backyard and delighting in the novelty of popping out into their garden to get a snack from time to time.

Also, a real highlight was an impressive sloping garden that had been developed over a number of years to have different regions in the garden. It had come together beautifully and had a lovely outlook from a perfect spot for a morning coffee.

And finally, after a few hours of exploring, learning and just absorbing the wonderful nurturing spaces, about 90 of those who are participating in the trail then gathered at the Blackmans Bay Community Garden for a celebratory party.

What was incredibly clear to me as I took the Blackmans Bay Community Association Edible Garden Trail was the pleasure that a diligently tended garden brings, not just to the people responsible for it, but also to others in the community for whom it serves as a point of connection and engagement.

It is also worth noting, as if 200 participants visiting nine gardens on a Sunday in February was not enough, Blackmans Bay Community Association has attained another extraordinary achievement. They have weaned themselves off the monetary funding they initially received from the council and are now solely reliant on the large enthusiastic network

of volunteers and prize sponsorships from local businesses to make this wonderful, local-community-strengthening event happen.

This is truly going from strength to strength in anyone's gardening book.

I take this opportunity to say a huge congratulations and thank you for the inspirational grassroots community work that is done by the members of the Blackmans Bay Community Association who are here with us in the Chamber today: president Louisa d'Arville, Chloe Bibari, and Diana Taylor. I also acknowledge and thank Edible Garden hosts who are here today, Wendy Bowman and Peter Williams. With 20 and counting fruit trees in Wendy's garden, we were provided with a tantalising exploration of the eclectic, the edibles and the exotics. Although they could not be here today, I also wish to acknowledge the work of Hayley and Benoit Chambon, key coordinators of this year's Edible Garden Trail, along with Louisa.

To close, it was a genuine pleasure to explore the Edible Garden Trail this year. It is an honour to stand here and highlight these inspirational and quiet local achievers' contributions towards a healthy, connected and resilient community.

Finally, to all members here, I urge you to keep an eye out for any edible garden trails in your communities and I am be eagerly looking forward to the Blackmans Bay Community Association's 2026 Edible Garden Trail. Thank you.
