

HFS Orchard Workshops for December and January

Summer is a great time to join us at an HFS Workshop!

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HFS Volunteer Workshops at Pettys Orchard Heritage Block

Sunday 4 December - 9am to noon

Wednesday 7 December - 9am to noon

Wednesday 21 December - 9am to noon

Wednesday 4 January - 9am to noon

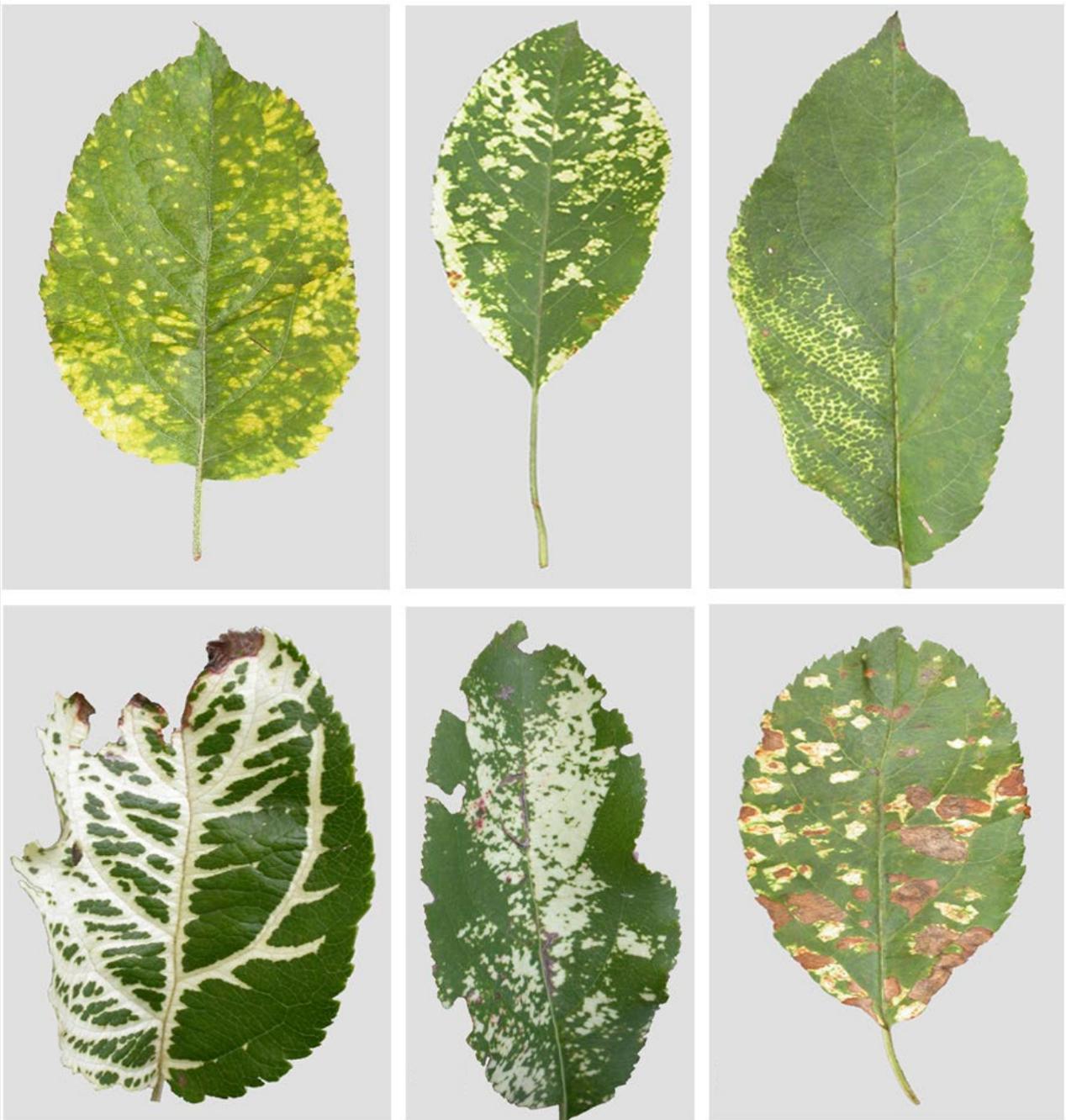
Sunday 8 January - 9am to noon

... a week later than in our usual "first Sunday of the month" pattern!

Wednesday 18 January - 9am to noon

1 Homestead Road, Templestowe - Melway 22 A11

Meet at the big white marquee



Examples of apple leaves affected by Apple Mosaic Virus (ApMV) - details in article below

The dates for the next HFS Volunteer Workshops at the Petty's Orchard Heritage Fruit block are:

- the month's first Sunday, **4 December**
- the month's first Wednesday, **7 December**
- the month's third Wednesday, **21 December**
- next month's first Wednesday, **4 January**
- next month's **second** Sunday, **8 January ... a week later than in our usual "first Sunday of the month" pattern, to avoid running a workshop on New Year's Day!**
- next month's third Wednesday, **18 January**

You're cordially invited to help us with:

- Putting up bird netting to protect our apple harvest from birds ... especially important this summer, as it looks like we could have a bumper crop for the first time in a

number of years!

- In the HFS Nursery:
 - Checking on status of trees and the irrigation system
 - Maintaining and expanding the "tree bath" system
- Mowing, weeding, whipper-snipping, hole-filling and removing blackberry plants
- Summer tree pruning
- Painting labels on trees (*weather permitting*)

As ever, we'll make time to revel over cuppas and home-baked specialties. Please **bring your own keep-cup** to avoid generating unnecessary rubbish.

We wish all HFS members and HFS Workshop volunteers a safe and enjoyable time during year-end merrymaking. Stay safe and well, and we look forward to enjoying 2023 with you.

SUMMER TREE-WATERERS NEEDED!

We need committed helpers to water our newly planted trees this summer.

Over the last two years, we have planted many new trees in the Heritage Block. Like all of us, they need some nurturing early in life: young fruit trees can be severely retarded or even killed if they're not adequately irrigated during hot weather. Unfortunately, our drip-irrigation watering system doesn't serve these trees well, as it's designed to deliver occasional multi-day deep soakings. That works well for our mature trees, but our young trees need a lesser amount of water more frequently.

In past years, we've struggled to water all of our young trees during summer consistently, and we have lost quite a few of them as a result. With so many new young trees, watering this summer will be crucial ... and we need you to help! This will involve rolling out the hoses, connecting them to the dripper system, and hand-watering of some of the more isolated trees. For most of the summer, we expect that two hands-on waterings per week should be sufficient (some of which will be done as part of our Workshops). We'll also want to be informed about what watering has been done, as well as any issues which might require immediate attention. There's nothing onerous in all this, and detailed but easy-to-follow instructions will be provided.

If you can commit to one or two hours of watering at the Heritage Block at least twice over the summer period, please [email](#) us, or speak to John or Fred at one of our Workshops.

ABOUT APPLE MOSAIC VIRUS

Many of the apple trees in the Petty's Orchard heritage block have long shown evidence of being infected by Apple Mosaic Virus (ApMV). ApMV has recently become a hot topic of conversation in our group, so it's a good time to summarise what's known about the disease (drawn from a range of reliable sources on the web), and what actions we all should be taking to minimise its impact.

ApMV has been recorded in many countries around the world. Many plants are susceptible to ApMV, including apple trees, most stone fruit trees, nut trees such as almonds, hazelnuts and chestnuts, berries such as strawberries, raspberries and currants, and quince and hops. To complicate matters further, there are a number of known strains of ApMV which have varying impacts on different plant types. The effects of this disease on affected plants include reduced fruit yield, as well as a range of leaf discolourations and deformities. The success rate in propagation using affected plants or material is also

reduced significantly.

In apple trees, ApMV is most easily identifiable by characteristic leaf discolourations, examples of which are shown in the photos above. These can appear as yellow mosaic patterns, ring spots, or mottling and banding around major leaf veins. The mosaic patterns are often paler on leaves with a darker green or greyish foliage. Ring spots usually appear as a yellow ring which contrasts the green colour of the leaf. These traits are initially visible on new leaves of single shoots, and gradually progress to other shoots on the affected plant.

ApMV prefers climates where there is a clear distinction between spring and summer temperatures. In Australia, leaf symptoms of ApMV typically appear in October and November, particularly during seasons with mild spring temperatures. Dry heat impairs multiplication and survival of ApMV, which helps explain why symptoms are most often observed at this time of year.

The number of affected leaves and the severity of symptoms vary depending on temperature, the pathogenicity of the strain and the susceptibility of a given plant variety. Interestingly, some plant varieties are markedly less susceptible than others. In apples, the Jonathan, Golden Delicious and Granny Smith varieties are known to be particularly susceptible and likely to exhibit disease symptoms. Plants infected with ApMV are can often be asymptomatic: they may be infected with the virus, but not show any symptoms. However, specially-designed (and rather expensive and tricky to handle and use) PCR-type test kits are available to test for the presence of ApMV in plant material.

ApMV is almost always transmitted from an infected host to uninfected host through mechanical means - for example, secateurs and saws. It is thought that transmission by insects do not spread the virus, although leaf sap has been identified as a vector for transmission in hop plants.

For valuable plant material or budwood, thermotherapy (heat therapy) can be used in laboratory or controlled growing environments to kill ApMV. However, the usefulness of this treatment is limited: it is practical to apply to living trees, and prolonged exposure to heat has a negative impact on the growth of plant material treated in this way.

As there is no cure for ApMV, prevention is the best and only way to limit its spread. Rigorous nursery hygiene should be practised during all pruning and propagation activities, by sterilising tools, equipment, recycled pots and surfaces before and between any contact with susceptible plant material.

COVID-19 NOTICE

COVID-19 restrictions have now been lifted, but nonetheless:

- If you are feeling unwell - even with only mild symptoms - please protect yourself and others by **doing the right thing** and staying at home and getting tested
- All volunteers should endeavour to **maintain social distancing** at all times
- Please feel free to wear a **mask** at any time

Memberships

We are a membership-based group. It is only through the support of our members that we can continue doing the work we do. Please consider becoming a member.

Click below to go to our web site. Payments are via PayPal.

[Memberships](#)

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