



Winners of Best Green Blog at the SA Blog Awards, Niall and Grant McNulty, describe themselves as 'enthusiastic amateurs from Durban'

PHOTO: SUPPLIED

BLOG: BROTHERS WIN AWARD FOR GARDENING SITE

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WHEN Niall McNulty (32) moved into his new home he was excited to get stuck into his garden; the only problem — his garden was a barren patch of sand.

Determined to bring the dreary piece of land to life, he trawled Durban's nurseries and soon became part of a small community of avid gardeners.

Niall and his brother Grant (30) realised a blog would be a good way to share thoughts and gardening inspiration and so they started www.sprig.co.za — a gardening blog that went on to be named Best Green Blog at the South African Garden Awards at the end of last month.

"The joy and surprise a new gardener experiences

when his plant flowers for the first time or when a seedling grows into something unexpected is something you want to share," said Niall.

"We'd always been photographers so had been photographing our gardens and e-mailing the pics to each other for discussion and identification. We decided that perhaps a blog was a better and easier way to do this," he added.

The brothers are the perfect pair for this venture: Niall, with a background in new media, is able to manage the online aspect of the blog while Grant, a PhD student in social anthropology, gets stuck into the research.

The blog has developed into a pool of resources and ideas, with readers submitting content and pictures.

"We now get submissions

from across the country — and even a few from expat South Africans — and from organisations such as the Garden Food Network and Durban Botanic Gardens as well as individual gardeners," Niall said.

The pair are always looking for new material, and have set up flickr, twitter and facebook accounts to encourage interaction.

They sometimes receive some unorthodox gardening advice.

"We recently had a submission from a reader asking how to discourage moles from destroying her garden. Two responses which I thought were amusing were to pee down the mole holes or save your hair from when it gets cut and stuff it down the holes!" said Niall.