

ROGI News

Doors open at 6.15 so members can visit the library, shops or seed bank or just have a chat before our meeting starts. Please be seated by 7pm ready for the speaker to begin.

Salvation Army Church
Cnr McDonald Rd & Macarthur St
ALEXANDRA HILLS

Admission

Members: Gold coin
Visitors: \$5

Please bring plate of food - savoury/sweet or nibbles preferably home-made - for supper after the meeting.

Tea/coffee provided

You are welcome to provide a quality plant to help share plants with other members. Bring a bag/box for your purchases and/or winnings.

See you Wednesday ...

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Sharr, Margaret, Bronwen and Janet ready for visitors to the ROGI stall at Carindale's Green Heart Fair.
Photo taken by Gennaro.

Thoughts from the potting shed

Whenever I open my bush house door early in the morning, I see a little sign reminding me “Gardening is good for the soul”.

If you’re like me, you won’t really need a memory jogger. We can easily experience the pleasures a quiet walk around the garden can bring to a busy mind.

Many of us know the sense of well-being found outside, but it seems there are many other benefits beyond just being somewhere amongst nature. Not only is it good for the soul, but for our mental, physical and social needs.

I came across an article recently by a Melbourne Uni horticultural lecturer who, after studying the results of much research, has confirmed that science agrees gardening has a lot to offer.

Therapeutic horticulture is now almost mainstream. It’s used to help treat depression, stress, aggression and, even post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). You’ll find programs in mental health facilities, schools, hospitals and prisons – across all age and cultural groups.

I also found it interesting that school gardening programs (see photo right) are good for children in many ways - not just improving how they felt about healthy



Kinglake Primary School students with seedlings for their kitchen garden

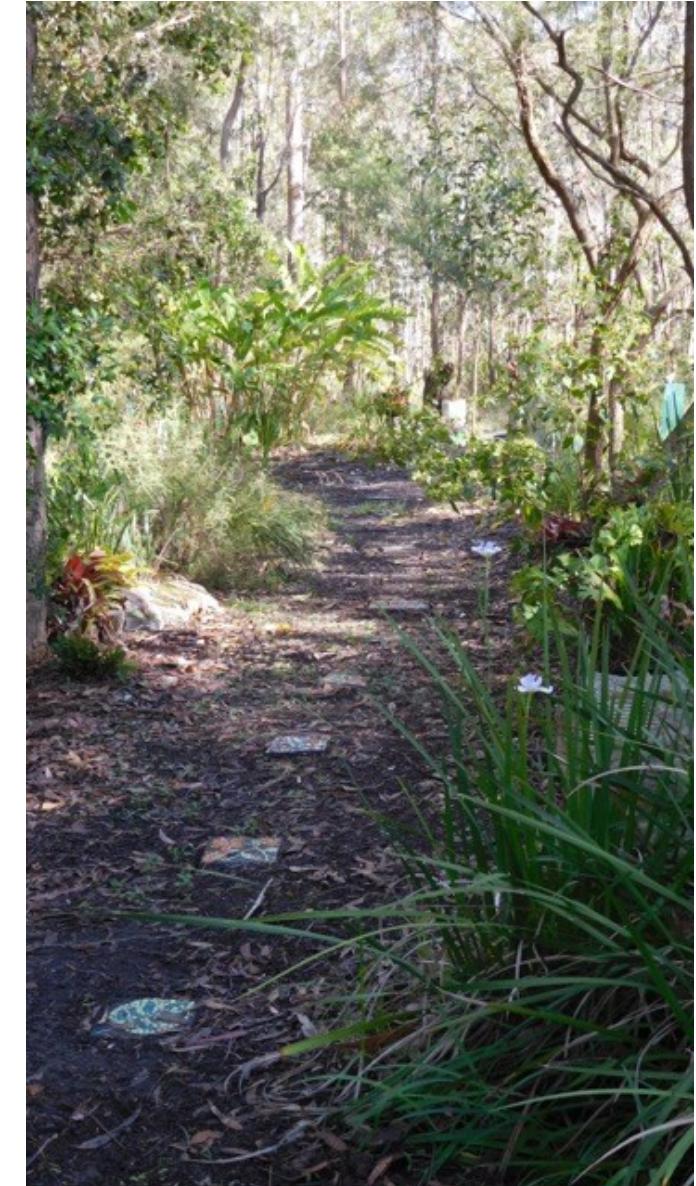
eating. It was also found that students who helped design, create and maintain gardens, also boosted their science scores and interpersonal skills.

Tailored gardening programs have also been shown to increase the quality of life for people with chronic mental illnesses, including anxiety and depression. The hands-on, positive nature of growing plants and seeing them thrive is a great stress-reliever.

And when it comes to older people, gardening programs are also being used in nursing homes and related facilities. Gardening was found to be a powerful health-promoting activity across diverse populations - making us generally feel better and more involved in life.

So now we know the science is in – and that gardening is so good for us, what are you waiting for?

Grab your hat, sunnies, sunscreen and



Good for the soul—a path in Kathy's garden

water... see you in the veggie patch!

Good gardening

Kathy

Coming Events

Oct	Wed 12	ROGI Meeting
	Sun 16	Garden Makeover workshop * See p 13
	Sun 23	Garden Visit * See p 17
Nov	Thurs 3	BOGI meeting
	Sat 6	Whepstead Manor Garden Visit * See p 17
	Mon 7	Herb Society meeting
	Wed 9	ROGI meeting
Dec	Thurs 1	BOGI meeting
	Mon 5	Herb Society meeting
	Wed 14	ROGI Christmas party See p 5

* Book with Margaret Sear 0418100173 secretary@rogi.com.au while Toni is out of the country

Membership Fees

- **Cash** payment at ROGI meeting
- **Cheques** made payable to Redland Organic Growers Inc - pay at meeting or to PO Box 1257, Cleveland 4163
- **Direct Deposit** BSB 633000. A/C 136137296 Bendigo Bank Capalaba Central

IMPORTANT! Reference - Your initials and surname are essential to identify who has paid. Please bring your membership application form to the next meeting. Email membership@rogi.com.au for form.

Please renew online at your convenience, and ensure that you complete a membership renewal form when you are renewing.

Member Category	Current Members Renewing For 2017	New member/s joining in...			
		Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct16-Dec17
Single	\$30	\$30	\$22.50	\$15	\$37.50
Family*	\$50	\$50	\$37.50	\$25	\$62.50
Pensioner Single**	\$20	\$20	\$15	\$10	\$25
Pensioner Couple**	\$30	\$30	\$22.50	\$15	\$37.50

* **Family** - two (2) adults residing at the same address and their children under eighteen (18) years

** Please provide evidence of **pensioner** status to claim discount

October Meeting

Eco-friendly Gardening

Kate Wall from *The Gardeners Wall* has a degree in environmental biology, runs workshops in Brisbane, does consulting work and garden make-overs and owns a wonderful subtropical garden in Yeronga.



Kate is going to get us thinking about sustainable gardening in a way we have not heard before. We hear a lot about water, growing our own food, wildlife, but we don't often hear about the small things that make up a sustainable garden.

Learn how to garden in harmony with nature.
Get useful information on eco-friendly gardening.

Topics covered will include:

- Understanding and working with microclimates in the garden
- Incorporating edible and medicinal plants
- Reducing the need for sprays, chemicals and fertilisers
- Composting / recycling organic matter
- Water-wise gardening
- Attracting good bugs
- Appropriate planting
- Soil care

Shane Gishford will be selling fruit and vegetables as usual. See p 19

September Guest Speaker

Green Dean

Urban Farming

- Grew up in northern NSW
- Bees, chickens and polyculture
- Passionate about urban farming - it's trendy
- Gardening Australia and magazines helped the shift
- Previously people grew own food and had backyard garden and swapped food
- Functional and good for planet and community
- Seven years at Carindale where previous people had added to soil
- Consults—50% free events, 50% teaching
- He does Korean cooking classes, garden consultations—gets lots of ideas from doing these and meeting garden communities
- Does crop swaps - has them at off-site gardens to see different gardens; no cash but sharing produce, recyclables, animals
- KFC - Kindness For Chickens (see over for more on this) - this often ignites gardening interest
- Few commercial agriculture groups in Aus
- Seoul, Korea encourages large urban farming in city. The mayor has indoor garden in office with fruit trees etc and parliament has bee hives
- Australia is actually lagging—we are wasting space and we need to be better stewards of our land. Every backyard with space could be a tiny community garden and build connectedness

- Next wave of food growing will be commercial urban farming; Curtis Stone of Canada (not Coles) produces food for restaurants—see over for more on this
- One in 10 people could grow food for the other nine families
- People who find the time and use smart gardening with permaculture principles are making money
- Forkhay City Farms rents space in backyards to grow food to sell locally in 4km radius - see over for more on this
- Community gardens expanding and more opening. He likes to guess which cultures are growing what in the gardens

How can you get stuck into it?

- Worth challenging council on regulations and use common sense on garden edges and shrub/tree heights etc
- Often councils are not following sustainable principles, are not consistent across the city
- Double standards are a problem
- We could take up the challenge of documenting what is happening across the state re chicken owners etc
- Laws were written years ago during transition from garden environments to people being busy etc
- Chickens - check space and hygiene and not annoying neighbours (See p 18 for more on this)
- Problem is conservatism
- Fight for our food rights
- Request documentation and policies where written
- Dangers could be council turn the issue into revenue stream (by charging fees for



applications and licences etc) - being looked at already

- Actually food sovereignty issue
- Look at challenge and change
- Get together collectively and you have the right to ask why and why not

Notes taken by Margaret Sear

See more at <http://greendean.com.au>
<https://www.facebook.com/greendean.aus>

Kindness for Chickens - KFC

The Project

The KFC Project began by rescuing caged and free-range chickens, but now includes re-homing all chickens that come through us, including roosters (where possible), ducks and other birds - even guinea pigs at times.

Commercial egg farms agree to give or sell us hens at the end of their commercial productivity, instead of being 'culled'. Even the best of these girls are in desperate need of some serious TLC.

We keep them for a few weeks or months, and once they are back on their feet again (literally) (see before and after photos right), we re-home them with people seeking to give these wonderful hens a second chance in life.

In return for your love, care, patience, and natural food and environment, these beautiful girls return the favour with fresh eggs, manure, composting and great company, especially for children.

The Facts

There are over 11 million battery hens living in cages in Australia. Despite the hype and marketing about 'free range' eggs, the truth is that almost 80% of eggs produced in Australia intensive battery (cage) farms.

Around 12 million caged and free-range hens are slaughtered each year in Australia, being deemed 'unproductive', and 'culled' between 12 and 18 months old, whether they are still laying eggs or not. The law prohibits the meat from being used for human consumption so they are used for pet food, flavouring, trapping and compost.

The reality is that these hens, if adopted by kind people, with a little TLC and the right environment, can go on to live normal, healthy and productive lives for over three years – continuing to lay eggs after being rescued.

How can you help?

This is a self-funded project and Dean provides the hens with everything they need from his own resources, but help from the community also goes a

long way, via paying a small fee when adopting hens.

Please contact Dean if you'd like to adopt hens. He doesn't rescue constantly, so hens aren't always available. When he needs to re-home chickens, it is on his and ROGI's Facebook pages.

It is amazing to see what love and freedom can do for an animal



Forkhay City Farms

Our idea is simple. Let's grow food where we need it, and grow it properly. No trucking. No chemicals. Just real food grown in backyards and parks. Right in the heart of Brisbane. Grown, sold and eaten within a (4K) radius. Our team of passionate volunteers is transforming Brisbane's local food-scape one backyard at a time.

Forkhay City Farms is an exciting new not-for-profit, backyard-based urban farming project kicking off in the Bulimba/Balmoral/Hawthorne/Morningside area of Brisbane.

We are aiming to grow fruit and vegetables in a range of backyards and vacant urban spaces without chemicals, embracing the concept of regenerative agriculture.

Our intention is to make the fresh produce available to local residents by delivery or pickup in exchange for a non-compulsory donation.

Please visit <http://forkhaycityfarms.com/> for more information.

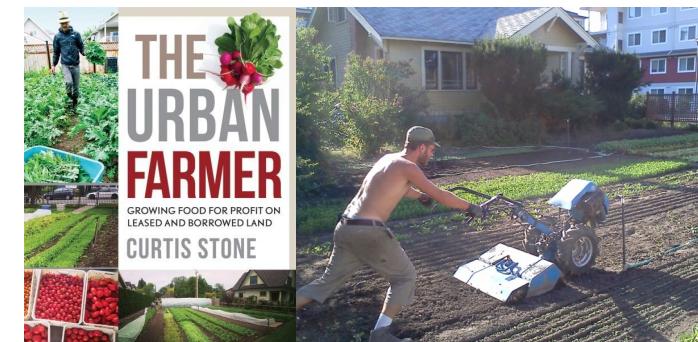
Curtis Stone - Urban Farmer

There are over 40 million acres of lawn in North America. In their current form, these unproductive expanses of grass represent a significant financial and environmental cost.

However, viewed through a different lens, they can also be seen as a tremendous source of opportunity. Access to land is a major barrier for many people who want to enter the agricultural sector, and urban and suburban yards have huge potential for would-be farmers wanting to become part of this growing movement.

Curtis Stone is the owner/operator of Green City Acres, a commercial urban farm. Farming less than a half acre on a collection of urban plots, he grows vegetables for farmers' markets, restaurants and retail outlets.

After five successful seasons, Curtis has demonstrated that one can grow an extraordinary amount of food in a backyard, and make a living doing it.



His book, working a front yard and delivering to market.



Christmas Party

Hard to believe it's nearly Christmas... and time to plan for ROGI's end of year celebration. It's set for Wednesday 14 December in place of our regular monthly meeting and doesn't feature a speaker. The event is a lot of fun and gives members a chance to catch up socially before we all head off for the holidays.

We're wondering whether it's time for a change from our regular gardening-trivia quiz, which has been popular with members for the past three years.

The way the quiz has operated before is that we form teams and compete for prizes – under the eagle eyes of our ROGI gardening gurus. Everyone brings seasonal goodies to share during the evening.

Here are a few alternatives for the evening: we welcome your feedback.

1. Continue with our trivia quiz with members bringing a plate of seasonal goodies
2. Catered event with cold buffet supper – at no cost to members
3. Organic supper prepared by a ROGI catering team, headed by Vice President Sharr Ellson, at no cost to members.

If you have a different idea or would like to be involved in organising the event, we'd love to hear from you.

Please take the time to email or talk to a committee member so we can make this year's celebration truly memorable.

Green Heart Fair



Early on Sunday 11 September, Gennaro found the perfect spot to set up ROGI's stand.

The idea was to let a new group of people know about ROGI and how we can inspire and help them in their food-growing efforts.

We spent an enjoyable day and had long conversations with gardeners of all ages and stages about the seedlings, cuttings of sugar-cane and dragonfruit (which were all very much sought after) and also which seeds to plant at that time of year.

Offerings by others on the day were all related to sustainability and environment awareness, so we were in the right place. Looks like we'll be there again next year.



Being beside the 'Coffee Crate' ensured people knew where we were.

I stepped into Gennaro's shoes occasionally to speak about jicama (which I'm holding in photo), Corsican mint (look/smell/feel), loofah, pepino, sugarcane, tamarillo and Bronwen's star fruit.

Gennaro had set these up and was doing taste tests etc. When he had a wander, I took over. I learnt a lot from listening to him speaking about these with the crowds. We also had mandarins, tamarillos, parsley and limes to give away.

Margaret Sear

Plant Clinic

Q 1. Julia wanted **identification of a cutting from a small tree** that had grown as a 'volunteer'.



No one could identify this plant at our meeting. If anyone knows what it might be after a second look please tell us all at the next meeting. (Especially Julia)

Q 2. Robyn needed ideas about how to erect a **stable tall trellis**. Her last effort blew over in the wind. She did state that it needs to be attached to a 1.8m fence.

Ian McLean's response:

He does not recommend plants growing over a timber fence as this increases moisture in the timber and decreases the life of an expensive fence. He recommended erecting a separate trellis as seen in the diagram below.

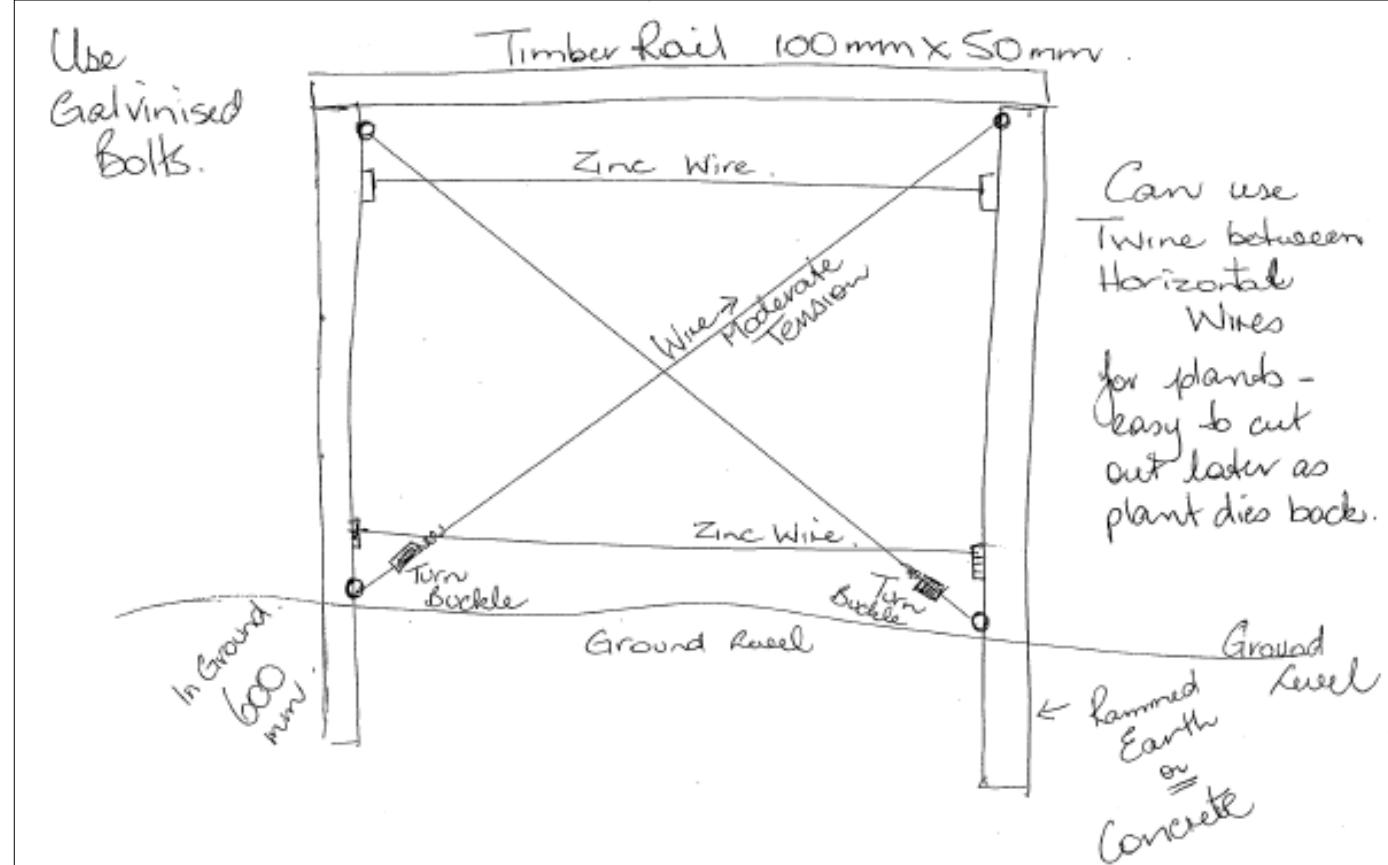
Notes taken by Linda Barrett

Plant Clinic

If you have an interesting-looking pest, wonder if your plant may be a weed or have a deficiency or a disease, Plant Clinic may help you.

Bring along the insect or plant (as many parts - fruit, leaf, root etc - as you can, and in a sealed plastic bag if it's diseased or very seedy) and fill in the form. Place the plant parts together with the form on Plant Clinic table well before the meeting starts. Someone will have a look and may be able to answer your questions.

Please be aware that, although we do our best, there may not be anyone present who can identify your plant, especially if it's not related to organic gardening.



Garden Visit - Tracey Watts, Margaret & Adrian Slootjes

It was hard to believe that Margaret and Adrian's beautiful green peaceful garden is only one block away from the busy traffic on Old Cleveland Road. Margaret's parents brought the property in 1951 when it was part of a small community with no town water. Her parents grew their own vegetables and lots of citrus trees.

When her parents retired, Margaret and Adrian bought the property, but as Adrian moved around with the air force, they rented the house out.

On their return it was very overgrown so they bulldozed the property and put a dam on it. In 2006 they subdivided the 5 acre block into two properties. Margaret and Adrian's property is at the front and Tracey's is at the back.

The soil is sandy with lots of organic material that's been added over time. It is slightly acidic – pH around 6.5. Adrian joked that Singapore daisy and oxalis flourish there.

Margaret and Adrian had not had much experience with designing a garden so hired a landscape gardener to design the front garden. They've been disappointed as many plants died as they had high water requirements and weren't suitable for the sandy soil which dries out quickly. They've replaced many and are going to replace more with grevilleas that used to flourish there.



Beautiful green lawn and front garden. Clivias thrive in the shade provide colour when flowering.



At the back of the old building is a vegetable patch. Adrian uses GOGO juice (a probiotic liquid for plant and soil) and blood and bone to keep the plants healthy



In-ground worm feeders that Adrian uses. He buries pipes with holes and tight fitting lids in the garden. Kitchen scraps are put in and the worms feed on them and are free to move in and out. Adrian warned us that if you go on holiday and neglect them they'd disappear and would have to be coaxed back over time.



Margaret grows many plants in pots which can be moved around depending on the season and the sun.



The vegetable garden is well mulched to maintain moisture. The mulch also minimizes soil temperature variations and provides organic material which sandy soil really needs. There is a variety of plants growing in the patch and, as Margaret has both winter and summer vegetable gardens, the soil has time to recover before the next crop goes in.



Margaret is a chicken whisperer par excellence - even able to put a chicken to sleep by stroking it and singing to it, but unfortunately the five chickens she and Tracey owned were taken by a fox the week before we visited. Both families were out until late and the chickens were not locked in as usual. The opportunistic fox had a feast.

Garden Visit

The original land owner that Tracey bought the property from had filled in the land. In 2010 there was a flood and Tracey's vegetable gardens were washed away. After talking to Margaret, Tracey put back the original water-way but realizes that that area could still be flooded.



The soil is very fertile and the vegetables are growing extremely well.



Madagascar beans grown from Gennaro's seeds are thriving.



Tracey has painted stones to help her remember what she has planted and where they came from. Janet's and Sharr's plants feature in her garden and were all looking very healthy.



At the top end of her garden, Tracey has placed bricks to try to divert any future flood waters away from her vegetable patch.



Watercourse that Tracey has restored to help prevent future flooding.



Tepees that Tracey has made to grow beans. She has mixed up the plants in her garden as well to try to minimise the build up of insects and diseases.

Garden Visit



These vegetable gardens are raised without frames. Nasturtiums are planted to attract bees.



A healthy Kaffir (or Makrut) lime tree. Note the bilobal leaves which are used in Thai cuisine.



Tracey was inspired by Gennaro to build raised garden beds. She has used timber with plastic lining. The beds are set out in a boat shape. Sugar cane and newspaper were placed at the bottom and covered with soil and compost. Edible flowers are mixed with a variety of vegetables.



When her lettuces went to seed, she shook the seeds over a polystyrene box and was amazed at the number of seedlings that grew in the box.

Below: These are what she had left after planting the self-sown brown mignonette lettuce seedlings out throughout her gardens.



Tracey showing us her amazing plants! She has found with the raised gardens that when a crop is finished the soil needs topping up but a problem is that there may be others growing nearby in the same garden that are still growing so the level of the soil can be different. Her kale was gigantic.

Garden Visit



Some of the lettuces that she has planted out around some beans which will fix nitrogen in the soil to help the lettuces grow.



Warrigal greens and kang kong doing extremely well near the watercourse.



What you can do with a fallen tree and some imagination



Tracey has used the seedlings bought from ROGI extensively through her garden beds.



Red sorrel and amazingly healthy kale.



Ducks that visit the garden and didn't give a quack about visitors



Roses grow along the edge of the raised garden beds. As it is very breezy there they seem to be protected from fungal diseases like black spot and were doing extremely well.



Always room for another plant!

Reported by Mary Irmer

Banning Bindii

A few weeks ago we discovered bindii in our 'new' garden. Well aware that we'd need to get onto it straightaway before it set seed, we set out to dig it up using a couple of daisy grubbers (one each).



These work quite well as bindii have a single tap root. However, this system was leaving bare muddy (red soil) patches in the lawn (I use the term 'lawn' lightly—to describe a smorgasbord of weeds that may or may not be desirable).

Then Ian remembered some Burnoff left over from an earlier weed-eradication program (not bindii, though).

The idea that vinegar, no matter how concentrated, can kill bindii sounded a bit far-fetched, but we gave it a go anyway.

All I can say is, 'Wow!' A picture says a thousand words.

So I bought a five litre bottle and we've finished the entire lawn and the verge as well. And still have some left over.



Before



Next day

To use Burnoff is so simple. Just half fill a spray bottle with Burnoff, add a dash of dishwashing liquid and top up with water. Then give each weed a few short sharp bursts. Next day you will find a dead former-weed.

To avoid wasting time and money, it's important that you can tell the difference between bindii and good ol' carrot weed. One way of telling is to wait until the bindii gets its seeds, but we want to avoid that, right?



Above is a close-up of bindii, and below shows bindii on the left and carrot weed on the right. Notice the difference in the leaf shapes.



You can source Burnoff from various websites. I collected mine from Linda at Ecobotanica ... and it cost less than the online shops.
Jill Nixon

Garden Makeover Workshop **POSTPONED** to 16 October

Because of forecast heavy rain, the workshop was cancelled and rescheduled.

Bryce and Wendy Stanway

Linda Brennan from Ecobotanica will be leading the makeover workshop, as she has done for the last three years.

Linda has already helped Bryce to convert his garden to a four-crop and four-bed system in preparation for the day.

We will be learning about, and creating, a four-crop rotation plan for Bryce's organic vegetable garden and one for participants' own gardens as well.

As you may know, crop rotation in a manner suitable for Queensland helps to increase soil fertility and microbial activity, while reducing pests and diseases.

We will also be learning about and planting companion plants in his vegetable garden. These are perfect for increasing pollination and reducing pest numbers, thus reducing sprays.

Linda has planned a fun afternoon of quizzes, prizes, planting and planning. Please do join us. Contact Margaret Sear 0418100173 secretary@rogi.com.au (Margaret is taking bookings while Toni is on holidays)

Donations for Bryce's garden. On the day we will plant companion plants. Do you have cuttings, plants or seeds of the following you would like to donate to his garden? Extras will

be shared amongst participants to take home.
Our wish list:

Alyssum
Queen Anne's Lace
Lavender (plants only)
Parsley
Thyme
Basil
Cassava
Climbing bean seeds
Edible flower plants or seeds

Other herb plants suitable for companions that you use in your garden eg chamomile, chives,



Above: Fruity sage and Alyssum
Below: Lavender and Cat's Whiskers



Left, Top-Bottom:
Cosmos
Lemon Balm
Queen Anne's Lace
Cassava
Borage

Centre: Chives



Right, Top-Bottom:
Heartsease Viola
Chicory
Thai Basil
Blue Salvia

Mango Flower Beetle

These bugs go by many different names including:

Protaetia fusca
Mottled Flower Scarab
Flower Chafer Beetles
Mango Flower Beetles

I was excited to find a strange bug on my lemon myrtle and mulberry the other night so I took some photos and started asking for an ID. At first I thought they were a small frog, growing up to 11mm - they are quite chunky.

I sent photos out to the club and to Queensland Museum. The museum's response was, "They are not pests, as they participate in the very important role of pollinating various native and exotic plants."

So I won't be dropping them into any soapy buckets just yet. I recommend the Queensland Museum Contact: Discovery Centre: Discovery-Centre@qm.qld.gov.au

Linda Brennan identified it straight away as well and pointed me to the same website that the Museum did: http://www.brisbaneinsects.com/brisbane_scarabs/MangoFlowerBeetle.htm ... which also had a link to: https://biodiversity.org.au/afd/taxa/Protaetia_fusca

They are usually found in early summer.

Adults feed on nectar and pollen, larvae in rotten wood and can be found eating on various garden flowers and may even eat some damaged fruit.

They can be found from the NSW North Coast all the way up to the Wet Tropics of Queensland.

The adult is:

- diurnal (active during the day)
- terrestrial (live predominantly or entirely on land)
- volant (flying or capable of flying).



Library News

Last month's speaker, Green Dean, had a chat with us about turning back (and front) yards into mini-farms. Here are two books available for borrowing that may help make your urban farming venture more successful.

The Permaculture Home Garden

Linda Woodrow

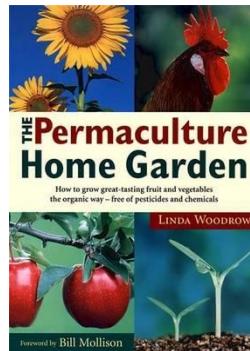
I use this book a lot! It lives on the dining table so I can dip into it while I'm eating.

Using her trademark breezy writing style, Linda stresses the importance of planning the garden to minimise the work required to be done by YOU, by employing the services of volunteers, particularly chickens (who will happily destroy your weeds and dig a new garden bed for you) and earthworms. She calls this Enterprise Bargaining aka working with Nature.

She goes into sourcing stuff to use in your garden (The Noble Art of Scavenging), how to put guilds together, gardening by the moon (Lunatic Gardening) and the importance of keeping a garden diary.

Helpful diagrams and step-by-step instructions make it easy to design and implement a garden to suit your taste and space - a garden that can look wonderful and also yield fruit, herbs and vegetables enough to share.

Book reviewed by Jill Nixon



Sustainable Gardens

Rob Cross, Roger Spencer

This Australian book provides gardeners and horticulturists with background on how to manage cultivated land as a strategy to living more sustainable lives.

Botanists from Royal Botanical Gardens in Melbourne, the authors review how local food production and encouraging biodiversity can impact positively on the environment.

There are very practical components in this book. These chapters consider areas such as design, construction and maintenance.

Each chapter is easy to read and has features that make the information readily available to the reader. Key points are listed at the beginning of each chapter and there are 'info boxes' to highlight important topics.

This book does not need to be read as a whole; readers can pick out subjects such as tools to measure sustainability, water consumption and other resources (eg grey water irrigation set up), tools and machinery, and use of fertilisers and garden waste.

I believe the best use of this book is in the establishment of a property and its garden.

'In short, it's a book for people who want to know why it's important to reassess the way we garden rather than simply doing what we've always done.' Josh Byrne Gardening Australia

Book reviewed by Linda Barrett

Please note that the ROGI library has the following items available for borrowing:

- sail needles (for sowing shade cloth)
- pH kits
- a refractometer (aka Brix meter) for testing the quality of your produce

Grafting and Budding for Australian Gardeners

This terrific little manual is a gem from the late Allen Gilbert.

May I take the chance to say what a great horticulturist Allen was and how his lifetime of experience will be sorely missed in the horticulture industry.

He has written many books about fruit, nuts, espalier, tomatoes and ornamental plants.

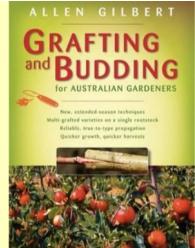
This book is an easy read. You can pick it up and quickly understand how to carry out grafting to improve an orchard, which rootstock or scion to use, tools, tapes and more. There are clear explanations for his instructions, with pictures and sketches.

You'll discover that cacti can be grafted, that some plants graft more successfully in summer rather than winter, and that there are so many methods for grafting that it may take you a good many plants to try all the methods out!

My favourite image is that on page 49. Without giving too much away (take a look yourself), a chainsaw is used to prepare a very old fruit tree for grafting and then eight different fruits have been successfully grafted onto it. The before and after pictures are amazing.

While I did teach grafting at TAFE and worked as a grafted in a wholesale Nursery for a while, this book still has given me many new techniques and terrific ideas. I'm sure even members who are keen grafters will enjoy this book. Anyway, I'm excited and will be trying some of Allen's ideas out here at Ecobotanica.

Book reviewed by Linda Brennan



Plant of the Month

Eggplant

Aubergine; *Solanum melongena*

At the seed bank we commonly get asked, "So what's good to grow now?" or "What can I grow and get a good yield from?".

The answer for October is the EGGCELLENT EGGPLANT.

Eggplants are short-lived perennial plants that love the warmer months; the biggest drama you will have with an eggplant bush is what to do with all the eggplants. They are an excellent fruit with many uses. I feel in Australia we have just not tapped into their beauty. Just spend a few minutes on Google and you will see the rest of the world loving them and sharing some wonderful recipes for them.

Eggplants are in the same family as tomatoes and capsicums and chillis (*solanaceae*), and need similar care. So, just like capsicums, eggplants thrive in a fertile soil, free draining, rich compost, poo and topped with a layer of sugar cane mulch (not too close to the stem as it might cause collar rot or other

problems).

Much like their cousin tomatoes, they need to be staked, and must be well-supported in order to be productive and upstanding. It is important to stake all eggplants especially the larger-fruit varieties.

Eggplants will do even better if the bed is prepared for them a month before planting out, so pick your seeds and start counting the days.

There is one more thing I would like to tell you about eggplants, not about growing but about cooking them. TV chefs always tell us that eggplants need to be soaked in salty water, or just covered in salt and washed off. What a massive pain in the neck that ends up being, as anyone who has done it can testify.

Well, here's the big scoop; it's not 100% true! Only the really big, tasteless, purple-coloured eggplants need this (so pick small, or buy small eggplants).

The cute little Lebanese and Thai eggplants, along with many more of the smaller varieties don't need it, so here's my eggcellent tip: grow the little ones, pick small, and save yourself the effort!

Sharr Ellison



Top to bottom:
Black Beauty

White Easter Egg



Little Finger



Garden Visits

23 October Julia Geljon & Chris McIvor

Having been here less than 18 months we've found marked variations in sun and shade through the year - mostly due to house placement, high fences and neighbours' trees. Consequently, it's been a learning curve as we came from a small farm with ample space.

We also had problems with the soil, possibly due to the site being a grape-growing operation in the past. So we eliminated the weedy lawn, mulched the area, and mostly grow our vegetables, flowers and herbs in raised beds and pots. Fruit trees have been planted as well as ornamentals. A simple low-cost irrigation system has been installed to the various beds and fruit trees.

We recycle household scraps via a Bokashi system and a worm farm, and compost our green waste. In the short time we've been on this place it's well on the way to being transformed from a barren wasteland to a thriving productive garden.

6 November (tentative) Whepstead Manor

The gardens will be open exclusively for a limited number of ROGI members.



As always with garden visits, spaces are limited, so get in early.

Please book with Margaret Sear 0418100173
secretary@rogi.com.au

(Toni is out of the country for a few weeks)

ROGI welcomes suggestions for workshops and field trips related to ROGI's organic growing interests.

Discuss with a committee member when you'd like a ROGI Garden Visit at your place.

ROGI Shop

Proposed Changes

Most regular meeting attendees will have noticed that there have been some changes in relation to the ROGI Shop. Frank and Marion who ran the shop for many years decided some time ago to discontinue being the shop co-ordinators and concentrate on their own enterprises.

Consequently this has led to the shop being in abeyance in its old format. This has given ROGI an opportunity to assess the viability and cost-effectiveness of running a shop at meetings. There is an enormous amount of work involved in the old format of various weights and sizes of products, plus the time taken to set up and demount the stall ... let alone the time involved in stocktaking and ordering new goods. While Frank and Marion ably did this for many years, not one of ROGI's members, including ourselves, were willing to follow in their footsteps.

Therefore we propose that the ROGI Shop be run as an online ordering system with orders being prepaid and either picked up at meetings, or large bags directly from Frank and Marion's house on Old Cleveland Road at Belmont. Final details are still being worked out, but there will be an online list. For the time being a paper list and order form will be available at meetings.

Frank has offered to continue to source fertilisers and soil amendment products for us and store bulk bags at their house, thus eliminating the need for ROGI to store products at the hall.

Small bags and buckets of some products will no longer be offered for sale at meetings. If smaller amounts are required, it is proposed that members get together and divide up a bulk bag between them. As the prices offered by Frank are very reasonable this would be worthwhile doing.

Products still held at the hall will be available at the next few meetings at greatly reduced prices to clear old stock, so bring your cash!

Julia Geljon and Chris McIvor (Shop Co-ordinators)

ROGI Shop Products Available Currently

Products	Size	\$ Price
Organic Booster	5 kg	12
Organic Xtra	16 & 25 kg	14 & 22
Blood & Bone	16 kg	24
Natural Gypsum	25 kg	15
Dolomite	25 kg	12
Turf Master	25 kg	18
Rock Dust (# 3 Blend with 18 minerals)	25 kg	27
Zeolite Coarse (Soil amendment)		
	15 kg	19
Zeolite Fine (Food Grade)	400 gm	32
DE (Food Grade)	20 kg	100 not 108
DE (Fine Pet & Garden)	20 kg	80 not 100
Biochar (Coarse)	4 litres	12
Biochar (Fine)	4 litres	15
* Compost Worms (1000 with bedding)		40
* Compost/Worm Bins		180
* Compost/Worm Towers (with worms)		20

* Ask at the shop how to get these

Diatomaceous Earth (DE) - on Special

DE is made from fossilised remains of tiny, aquatic organisms (diatoms) whose skeletons are made of silica. Over eons, diatoms accumulated in the sediment of rivers, streams, lakes and oceans. Today, these silica deposits (DE) are mined from these areas.

DE products are effective for use against bed bugs, cockroaches, crickets, fleas, ticks, spiders, and many other pests. DE is useful in the chook house and chook run to prevent parasite infestations.

There are many non-pesticide products that contain DE - skin care products, toothpastes, foods, beverages, medicines, rubbers, paints, and water filters.

'Food grade' DE products are purified and can be consumed by humans for several health benefits.

DE is not poisonous; it does not have to be eaten by pests in order to be effective. DE causes insects to dry out and die by absorbing the oils and fats from the cuticle of the insect's exoskeleton. Its sharp edges are abrasive, speeding up the process. It remains effective if kept dry and undisturbed.

For more info on proven benefits of using DE, go to <https://draxe.com/diatomaceous-earth>

Keeping Chickens

Some Redland City Council guidelines

- Properties less than 500m²: no poultry allowed.
- Properties between 500m²: and 2000m²: Up to 6 hens, ducks or drakes.
- Between 200m²: and 4000m²: Up to 12 hens, ducks or drakes - geese and turkeys also allowed.
- Over 4000m²: No restrictions on poultry.

Tips for keeping birds & poultry

- Ensure birds are not kept in a way that causes a nuisance.
- Keep enclosures clean to prevent odours and flies.
- Replace water daily.
- Gather and dispose of manure in a weather-proof, fly-proof container.
- Keep enclosure area dry (muddy and soaked areas will worsen odours).
- Dispense the correct amount of food (excess food can encourage rats and mice).

Taken from https://www.redland.qld.gov.au/info/20078/animals_and_pets/485/birds_and_other_animals

Seed Bank Request

- Please **return seedling pots** the month after you have bought the seedlings so they can be re-used.
- Please bring along **other clean used pots**—small sizes only, up to 120mm diameter. The almost-square ones are good.
- One- and two-litre clean **yogurt and ice-cream containers** and lids

Seed-raising Mix

The ROGI seed bank **seed-raising mix** (a blend of coir peat, vermiculite, perlite and biochar) has proven to be quite successful at getting the little blighters to come up!

It costs **50 cents for one litre** in a recycled yogurt or ice cream container. You can buy larger quantities such as two (for \$1) or four litres (\$2). (BYO containers would be good).

We are able to offer wonderful prices as we source well and we are a not-for-profit group. Our passion is to get you gardening and growing more food ... and nothing else.

Sharr Ellson

Special Offer

When you buy five packets of seeds from the seed bank, you will receive one litre of the special seed-raising mix to sow them in – free!

Seed Sowing Guide

October

Asparagus
Beans - French
Beetroot
Capsicum/Chilli
Carrot
Cucumber
Eggplant
Jicama
Lettuce
Okra
Pumpkin
Radish
Rocket
Rockmelon
Rosella
Silverbeet
Squash
Sweet corn
Sweet potato
Tomato
Watermelon
Zucchini

November

Asparagus
Beans - snake, Lab Lab, Madagascar.
pigeon pea
Capsicum/Chilli
Choko
Cucumber
Eggplant
Lettuce
Okra
Pumpkin
Radish
Rockmelon
Rosella
Squash
Sweet corn
Sweet potato
Tomato
Watermelon
Zucchini

Keep in mind that these are only guides.

Be aware that micro-climates and weather conditions may mean that certain seeds may be sown before or after the recommended times.

ROGI Seed Bank is available at ROGI meetings and Garden Visits.

\$1 per packet for members. \$2 for non-members.

Please note: the guide above is for sowing seeds, not seedlings. There may be several days or even weeks between the optimal time to sow a seed and to transplant a seedling that you may have bought from a nursery.

Produce available

Here is the pesticide-free (some certified organic) produce that will be available at the ROGI meeting.

Vegetables

Beetroot Bunched
Broccoli – Organic
Cabbage – Drumhead, Red, Sugar loaf, all organic
Capsicum
Carrot – Orange – Organic; Purple
Cauliflower – Organic
Celeriac
Celery – Organic
Egg Plant fruit
Garlic - Aussie Purple (New Season)
Ginger
Jap Pumpkin - Organic
Kale– Green Curly
Leeks
Lettuce Cos - Organic
Mushrooms
Onions – Brown
Parsley
Parsnip
Potatoes – Dutch Cream, Sebago – both organic
Shallots
Silver Beet
Sweet Potato – White/Purple, Gold
Tomatoes – Gourmet Round, Roma
Wheat Grass & Barley Grass

Fruit

Apples Granny Smith, Red Delicious
Avocado – Organic
Bananas – Cavendish, Lady Fingers
Lemons
Limes
Oranges
Peach - Low Chill
Pineapples

Other Products

Apple cider Vinegar
Eggs - 700 gm Free Range
Honey
Pecan Nuts
Pure Apple and Ginger Juice
Pure Apple and Pear Juice
Pure Apple Juice – Filtered and Unfiltered



Above: Shane Gishford and his sister Adell preparing their produce tables ready for the onslaught of ROGI members.



Left: Cheryl's happy smiling face at the supper counter, while pouring yet another cup of ROGI's signature tea. You can make it at home if you like.

ROGI's Signature Tea

Lemongrass
Lemon myrtle leaves
Lemon balm—optional
Ginger

Put in a teapot with boiling water and steep until the required strength. Strain into a cup. Add honey if required.

Experiment with proportions until you find your ideal blend. Then keep your blend in the freezer ready for quick use.

Exchange plants, cuttings, seedlings and home-grown produce

Please consider contributing to any or all of these at various times.

ROGI Rewards

Gift-quality plants and other garden-related items brought along by members. Everyone who attends a meeting is eligible to acquire a ROGI Reward. **Please label plant with its name and variety before placing it on the table.**

Members' Sales

Items you have produced that are surplus to your requirements and that **you wish to sell** to other members eg eggs, honey, seedlings, jam, lemons – things that have cost you money (and time and effort) to produce.

Please ensure items are labelled, named and priced. You may be asked to staff the stall if you are needed.

FREE swap/share/give-away

(This is for members only)

For those items you don't want payment for eg shredded paper, unwanted volunteer plants (named, please) or cuttings, surplus chillies, empty pots or strawberry runners and so on. This is where you may want to work out an arrangement with other members to do some swapping outside of the meetings.

Bring a bag/basket/box to take everything home

ROGI is a beneficiary of the My IGA Card Program for the **Cleveland IGA** store.

This is how it works:

- Pick up a My IGA Card next time you are in the Cleveland store
- Register online
- Tick ROGI as the community group you wish to support

Then, every time you shop in the store and use your card, not only do you receive discounts, you are also helping to raise funds for ROGI.

ROGI uses its funds to help provide more services to members such as new library books, discounted gardening products, paid expert speakers, and free or low-cost field trips and workshops.



Request for Articles

**What can you share?
It could be to do with:**

- your garden
- a photo
- an unusual plant
- a request
- garden/nutrition info
- a recipe or technique
- a current affair to do with organic growing

Send your items to the editor and help keep the newsletter topical, interesting, local and relevant

info@rogi.com.au

November Newsletter Deadline

Please send your contributions to the newsletter editor by 26 October for the November edition.

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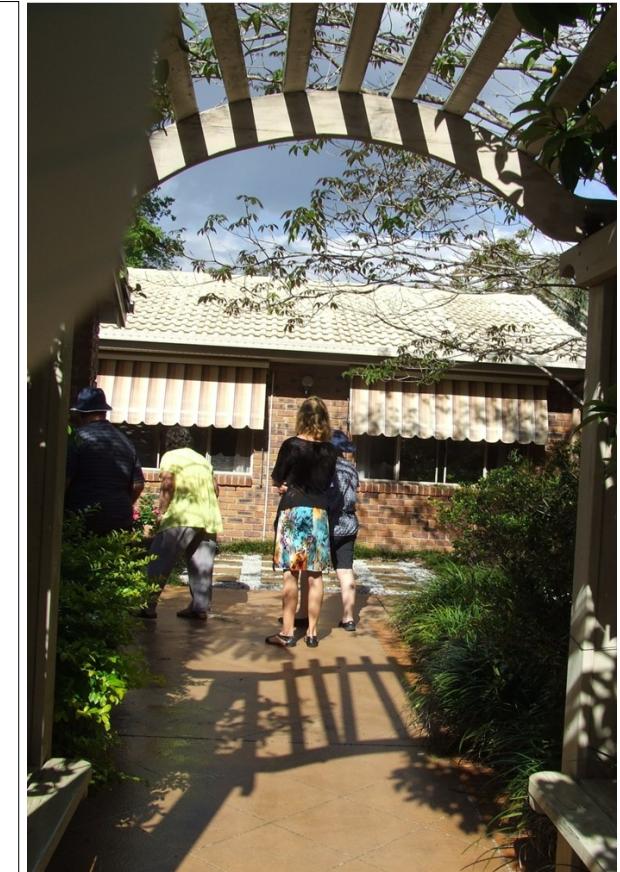
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The views expressed in ROGI News are those of the editors and submitters, not necessarily those of Redland Organic Growers Inc



A beautiful trellis, covered in hoya, frames the entry to the courtyard (below) and provides shade for the seats so you can sit and enjoy Margaret's peaceful garden. See p 8.

