

Next meeting: Wednesday 8 August 2018

# ROGI News

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

Salvation Army Church  
Cnr McDonald Rd & Macarthur St  
ALEXANDRA HILLS

## Admission

Members: Free  
Visitors: \$5

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

Tea/coffee provided.

You are very welcome to provide a **quality plant** to help share interesting plants with other members (**see p 19**).

Remember to bring a bag/box/basket to take home your items.

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Mulberry trees are starting to flower this month. Once the fruit have ripened and all have been harvested, you can prune the branches, which will trigger another flush of fruit. Sometimes there's even time for a third flush.



# Backyard Burlblings

Hello ROGI member,

A rather brief note from your president this month as we are holidaying in the Tropical North.

Whilst in the Tablelands I was heartened to see that the past and present owners of the Nerada Tea Plantations have preserved habitat for the endangered tree kangaroos.

However other areas are rather desolate with huge monocultures of sugar cane and cloned bananas. Sad to think that the whole area was once covered with lush rainforest. We have seen and walked in some beautiful examples though.

Anyway, the upcoming ROGI business is the AGM where we have some special treats:

- \* Tharun Sonti will be talking about regions of the world where people live longer than usual.

- \* Steve from Bayside Tool sharpening will be performing his magic on your hand tools again.

We also have several committee positions coming vacant:- Secretary, Vice President, and Public Events Coordinator. We are looking for some of our 186 members to

nominate for these. Now is your chance to come on board and have more input into ROGIs direction. Feel free to take up this exciting opportunity – ask the outgoing member or any other committee person about these vacancies.

I would like to extend my gratitude and thanks to Margaret Sear, Sharr Ellson, and Bronwen Thomas for their hard work and support as Secretary, Vice President, and

Public Events Coordinator.

I look forward to seeing you all at the AGM on August 8 with your nomination forms. (These were attached to the AGM notification email sent recently by secretary Margaret).

*Julia Geljon  
ROGI president*



*Giant curtain fig in the rainforest*



*Nerada tea plants. Mt Bartle Frere is in background*

## Coming Events

Aug	Tues 7	Herb Society meeting	
	Wed 8	ROGI Annual General Meeting	
	Sun 12	Field Trip	See p 16
	Sun 19	Garden Visit	See p 16
	Sat 25	Garden Makeover workshop	See p 16
	Sun 26	BOGI Fair	See p 10
Sept	Sun 26	Community Garden Open Day	See p 10
	Tues 4	Herb Society meeting	
	Thur 6	BOGI meeting	
	Sun 9	Green Heart Fair	See p 13
	Wed 12	ROGI meeting	
	Sun 23	Garden Visit	See p16

## Membership Information

- **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, Middle St, Cleveland)

**IMPORTANT!** Reference - Your initials and surname are essential to identify who has paid.

When paying your fees online, please be sure to complete a membership renewal form online at <http://www.rogi.com.au/renew-membership.php>

Member Category	Members Renewing For 2018	New member/s joining in...			
		Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct18-Dec19
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

## August Meeting

### The Blue Zones

People there live longer. Why?

**T**harun Sonti hopes to inspire ROGI's members and visitors by sharing the science on how plants, garden-



ing and our diet and lifestyle can help us live longer, happier lives, free of many of the most common diseases! We'll be looking at the longest-living populations - the Blue Zones - for inspiration.

**A**lso, **collect and bring along electronic waste** (items that have or had a power cord or battery) that will be taken away and re-purposed.

Substation33 is a Not-For-Profit Social Enterprise in Kingston and so far has collected, dismantled, repurposed and recycled well over 500,000 kg of electronic waste.

At our AGM last year, we collected over one tonne — just from ROGI members, friends and family; part of our contribution to the War on Waste.

**T**ools need to be kept in good order, and that includes being sharp. Steve from Bayside Mobile Sharpening will **sharpen hand tools** (clearly labelled). No tools that are dirty or rusty please. This is a free service for ROGI members only—usually only time for one tool each.

Our August meeting will be one not to miss! Why not help spread the word by inviting a friend or neighbour? **And bring e-waste.**

**Ashley from Mt Cotton Organic Farm will have his selected organic produce for sale inside the building.**  
**Remember - bring your reusable bags, boxes, baskets etc.**



# July speaker Des Warnock

## Why Do Some Gardeners Have Green Thumbs and Some Brown?

Des Warnock's company manufactures and distributes Plant of Health Fertilisers. He conducts seminars on soil nutrition as well as corporate training and presentations at industry events. He has written articles for both national and international publications and exports his products to three continents including the stringent Japanese market.



OUR MISSION is to provide you with easy to use eco-friendly products for beautiful healthy plants while minimising the use of harsh chemicals, pesticides and fungicides. We are committed to providing products that increase soil, plant, human and animal health and vitality.

To help us develop those green thumbs, he told us of five keys of healthy soil:

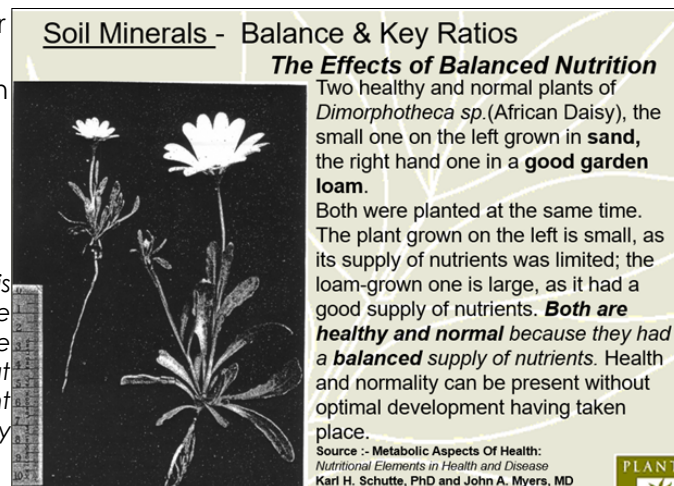
### 1. Soil Texture - What Type of Soil Have You Got?

Conduct a drainage test in your yard by digging a 150mm diameter, 300mm deep hole. Fill this with water and see how quickly (or slowly!) it drains. If the water drains out in 30 minutes or less, it is sandy soil that needs organic matter to hold moisture longer. Holes that take between 6 and 24 hours to drain indicate clay soil which needs to be loosened to drain properly.

### 2. Soil Minerals – Balance & key ratios - How do you Balance Minerals?

Plant of Health does the hard work for you with their range of eco-friendly products. Home soil is often too high in Nitrogen, Potassium and Calcium. Chook poo has a high pH (alkaline).

Des showed us this slide to demonstrate that it is the balance of the nutrients that is more important than the quantity



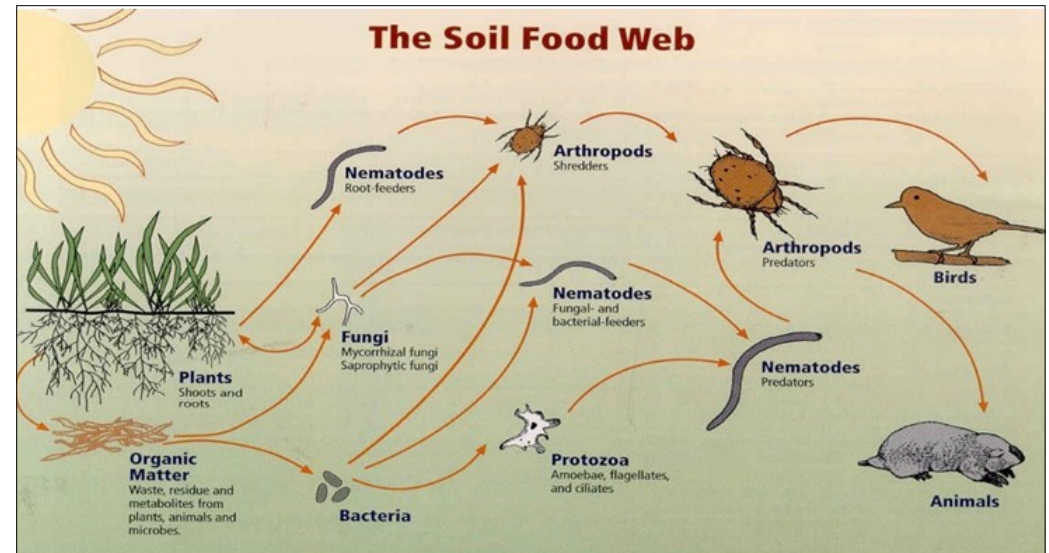
### 3. Organic Matter

Manage Carbon, Compost, Microbe Food. Pasteurisation – Pathogens – Plant Propagules\*.

*Warning: - Ensure raw inputs are properly composted. Safe handling practices apply when handling organic matter.*

### 4. Microbes – Soil Life

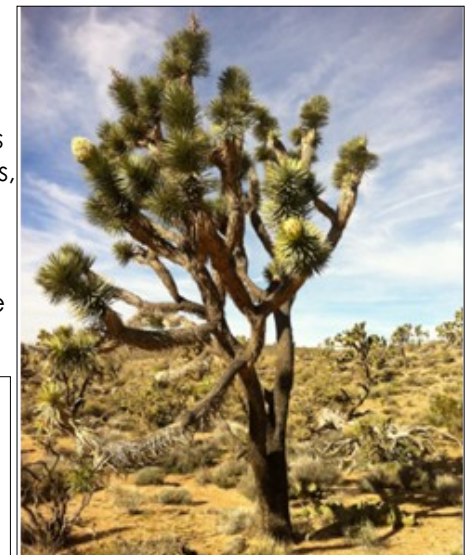
If you have no birds/lizards in your garden, you have a problem with the soil food web.



### 5. Climate Management

An example of the need to grow the right plant at the right time in the right place is *Yucca Brevifolia* (the Joshua Tree). This tree is native to the arid south western United States, specifically California, Arizona, Utah and Nevada, where it is confined mostly to the Mojave Desert between 400 and 1800m elevation. Attempts to grow it elsewhere are fraught with difficulty.

\* a **propagule** is any plant material used for plant propagation. In asexual reproduction, a propagule can be a stem cutting, a leaf section or a portion of root. In sexual reproduction, a propagule is a seed or spore.





## July speaker Des Warnock

Des maintains that pest attack and disease is a symptom of a stressed plant and *not* the cause. Insects and disease were designed by nature to remove unhealthy plants.



If you do decide to use chemicals, always **READ LABELS and SAFETY DIRECTIONS**. All pesticides, fungicides and herbicides are **toxic** to some degree; **never** assume they are safe. **Wear** relevant safety apparel. **Wash** hands and clothes after use.

What sort of fertilisers/inputs should you use?

Des believes that **slow release fertilisers** are essential for healthy soil. If used for release over longer periods:

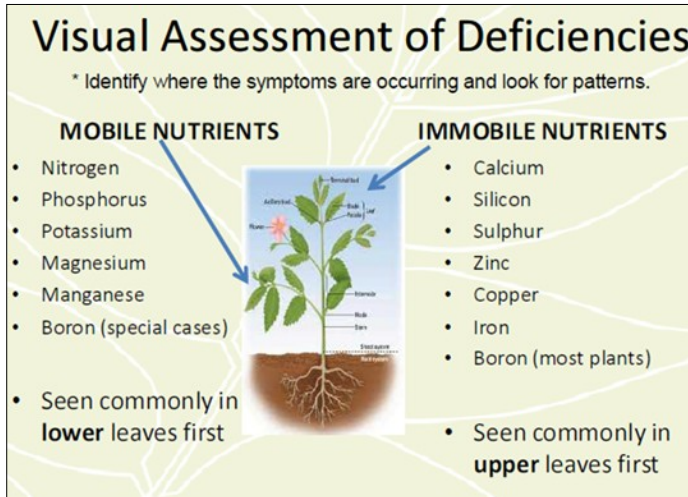
- Stick with organic-based
- Check it is composted properly ... use your nose
- Make sure there is a balance of nutrients
- Always feed each season
- Use more often in sandy soils
- Use more often in high rainfall areas
- Use Summer Winter Autumn Spring
- Use **in conjunction** with Liquid Fertilisers

The healthier the soil, the more inputs should go down (ie use less).

**Liquid Fertilisers** are energy drinks for plants. When "fast food" is required, timing is everything.

- Essential for sand profiles – slowly slowly hydroponics (add small amounts, and wait)
- Times of stress – Transplanting
- Times of deficiencies – Potted plants
- High demand plants – especially vegetables
- Reproductive time to ward off insect attack (flowering and fruiting)
- Following biocide treatments
- Rapid correction of trace element and immobile nutrient problems
- Recovery from insect attack
- As a carrier and food for microbes
- As part of a sodium management plan

Observing your plants frequently is important for you to notice nutritional deficiencies. Des had this slide that can be helpful when your plants are not their best. Remember balance—adding too much of one nutrient can cause a deficiency in another.



Des' recommendations:

## Five fab products

## 3 easy steps for a great garden!

brilliant... naturally!

*3 Easy Steps for great gardens...*

- 1. Apply Organic Link to your soil or pots each season.*
- 2. Foliar spray Triple Boost & Neem combined each fortnight.*
- 3. Foliar Spray Silica & Potash each month*

Organic Link supplements tired soils & feeds plants.

Triple Boost & Neem feeds and boosts plants & pots

Silica & Potash strengthens plants & promotes flowers & root growth.

Ph. 3865 1288 visit [plantofhealth.com.au](http://plantofhealth.com.au)

Amount to mix with water in a.....

9 Litre Watering Can	2 Litre Sprayer	2 Litre Hose-on Pack
Triple Boost 90mL	Triple Boost 20mL	Triple Boost 500mL
Neem 45mL	Neem 10mL	Neem 250mL

Silica & Potash 45mL      Silica & Potash 10mL      Silica & Potash 250mL

Use Bio-Trace when you see leaf discoloration or deformities.

Below is the result of a comprehensive soil analysis. As Des said, you can't be expected to know!

DATE:

21/05/2012

NAME:

New Farm

ADDRESS:

C/- Batphone

PO Box 54

GEEBUNG QLD 4034

LAND USE:

Roses

PADDOCK:

Kiosk

SAMPLE REC:


11/05/2012

CONTACT NO:

0409 729 416

EMAIL:

des@batphone.com.au



ALBRECHT CATEGORY	YOUR LEVEL	IDEAL LEVEL	NUTRIENT STATUS		
			LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
CEC	48.88				
TEC	48.88				
Paramagnetism	4210	200 +			
pH-level (1:5 water)	7.40	6.3			
Organic Matter (IR Gas Anal.)	22.75 %	4 - 10 %			
Conductivity (1:5 water)	0.305 nS/cm	0.2 - 0.6 nS/cm			
Ca / Mg Ratio	4.65 :1	7.00 :1			
Nitrate-N (Morgan)	23.5 ppm	10 - 20 ppm			
Ammonium-N (Morgan)	10.5 ppm	10 - 20 ppm			
Phosphorus (Mehlich III)	422 ppm	50 - 70 ppm			
Calcium (Mehlich III)	7750 ppm	6843 ppm			
Magnesium (Mehlich III)	1001 ppm	587 ppm			
Potassium (Mehlich III)	571 ppm	381 - 953 ppm			
Sodium (Mehlich III)	33 ppm	56 - 169 ppm			
Sulphur (Morgan)	16 ppm	30 - 50 ppm			
Aluminium (Mehlich III)	15.5 ppm	< 22 ppm			
Silicon (CaCl <sub>2</sub> )	85 ppm	> 100 ppm			
Boron (Hot CaCl <sub>2</sub> )	1.85 ppm	1 - 3 ppm			
Iron (DTPA)	219 ppm	40 - 200 ppm			
Manganese (DTPA)	40 ppm	30 - 100 ppm			
Copper (DTPA)	18.2 ppm	2 - 7 ppm			
Zinc (DTPA)	57.4 ppm	5 - 10 ppm			
Molybdenum (Nitric Acid)	N/A	0.5 - 2 ppm			
Cobalt (Nitric Acid)	N/A	2 - 40 ppm			
Selenium (Nitric Acid)	N/A	0.6 - 2 ppm			
Texture	Clay Loam				
Colour	Black				
BASE SATURATION					
(Levels are not really relevant in soils with a TEC below 5)					
Calcium	79.29 %	70.00 %			
Magnesium	17.07 %	10.00 %			
Potassium	3.00 %	2.00 - 5.00 %			
Sodium	0.30 %	0.50 - 1.50 %			
Aluminium	0.35 %	0.50 %			
Hydrogen	0.00 %	10.00 %			
LAMOTTE/REAMS CATEGORY	YOUR LEVEL	IDEAL LEVEL	NUTRIENT STATUS		
			LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
Calcium	11770 ppm	1000 - 2000 ppm			
Magnesium	997.7 ppm	140 - 285 ppm			
Phosphorus	110.2 ppm	20 - 80 ppm			
Potassium	400.5 ppm	80 - 100 ppm			

**Explanatory Notes:** The La Motte Test utilises a mild extraction solution which is a closer approximation to the gentle acids exuded by the plant roots and micro-organisms to solubilise minerals. The La Motte test gives an indication of the amount of plant available nutrients at the time of sampling.

Reported by Ann Roffey, and taken with permission from Des Warnock's PowerPoint presentation.

Please note. The views expressed at ROGI meetings are those of the guest speakers, not necessarily those of Redland Organic Growers Inc. ROGI does not endorse any particular commercial products and encourages members to try various approaches to find what works best for them.

## June speaker Maree Manby Fungi

Maree is the Senior Habitat Protection officer for council's IndigiScapes Centre and has worked within Local Government for over 25 years.

Her passion for fungi was ignited after visiting many properties through council's Environmental Partnership Programs and viewing a number of strange and unusual fungi specimens during property visits.

She then joined the Mycological Society and has gone on to learn more and share more about this fascinating Kingdom of decay.

### Are fungi plants or animals?

Well, they are neither. They have their own kingdom known as the Fungal Kingdom. There are 2 categories of fungi: macrofungi and microfungi (moulds, smuts, mildew and

rusts with microscopic fruiting bodies).

### Where do you find fungi?

Just about everywhere, backyards, parks, sea and freshwater, bushland, carpet, the human body, the supermarket, the air, and so on....

### Characteristics of fungi:

- They are unicellular and multicellular organisms
- Their cell walls are made up of chitin, not cellulose like plants
- They obtain nutrients from other living organisms or decaying matter

### Structure of fungi:

- Hyphae – long filaments in the body of the fungi
- Mycelium – the fungi body which is a collection of interconnecting hyphae
- Fruiting structure - (mushroom)
- Sporangia – the fruiting bodies involved in asexual production of spores

### Why are Fungi Important?

Without fungi we wouldn't have beer, wine or cheese ... !

- Biologically: Fungi are vital to the health and functioning of our world as they help breakdown and recycle dead plant and animal material (saprophytic).
- Culturally: Indigenous people have used fungi as food/medicine sources for years
- Scientifically: They have been used in antibiotics/penicillin, and could be the cure for future disease
- Without fungi, our forests and soils would lose their productivity and animals would have one less food source
- Insects would lose their symbiotic relationship with fungi (they lay their eggs in fungi which then become a food source for the larvae)
- They bind leaves, sticks etc. together while breaking them down
- They help retain moisture and assist in preventing surface erosion



Maree with polypore fungi at IndigiScapes



Leather fungus growing on a wood substrate



Coral fungus—pretty in pink



## Fungi—continued

- They are aesthetically unique and sometimes stunningly beautiful
- They have a close partnership with some plants, assisting in the uptake of minerals and nutrients to ensure plant health

### How do they reproduce?

- Asexual – hyphae fragment breaks off vegetative mycelium, fragment grows to produce new mycelium, vegetative mycelium grows
- Sexual – vegetative mycelium grows, plasmogamy occurs, fruiting structure develops, basidiospores form, mature, and discharge into the environment which then produce hyphae

### How do they spread or disperse?

Broken hyphae or spores are windblown and/or dispersed by water or animals

### What is the role of fungi?

- Decomposition (compost makers)
- They provide for the exchange of nutrients between plants and the soil (minerals and water)

### What happens in the fungal 'World Wide Web'?

- Plants communicate with each other through the 'internet' of fungi
- The mycelium acts as an underground network linking the roots of plants
- They share nutrients and information
- They sometimes spread toxic chemicals through the network to sabotage unwelcome plants to the area
- These networks can also boost their host plant's immune systems using defence chemicals 'priming' making them more resistant to disease

### What are the threats to fungi?

- Habitat loss
- Felling of ancient woodlands/rainforests and veteran trees

- Fauna extinctions (spreaders)
- Pollution
- Soil disturbance, including farming
- Fertilisers
- Weed fungi
- Drought and fire

### There are several fungal groups:

Agarics	Boletes
Polypores	Leathers
Stinkhorns	Puffballs
Earthstars	Jellies
Icicles & Corals	Bird's Nest
Cup Fungi	
Earth Tongues and Club Fungi	

*Notes and photographs by Maree Manby*

*Listening to Maree speak and then reading these notes has really stressed for me the importance of taking care of the soil in our backyards as a personal contribution to the survival of fungi and hence the environment below our feet. Below: My photo of fungi doing the work of breaking down coffee grounds. J.N.*



Agaric fungus



Bird's nest fungi at IndigiScapes





# Garden Visit Heather Clarke

We were met at Heather's by this very friendly fellow who was not the least perturbed that so many visitors had descended on his territory, but he did keep a watchful eye on us all afternoon.



Heather's house was built 29 years ago. She wanted a Queenslander with big verandas and authentic old doors. So she collected doors from far and wide – even from an old house that had been burnt down. Her very patient builder had to fit doors which were all different sizes.

At Inverell she saw an old bath that was being repurposed as a watering trough so she exchanged it for a new bath and had the old one installed in her house.

Below: Walking around her garden, we could see that doors weren't the only thing Heather collected. Her husband carried three of these chairs over on the ferry from Stradbroke Island.



Right: Jonquils have emerged in this vintage wheelbarrow. We enjoyed breathing in the heady perfume



Heather has a long history with Victoria Point as, until 1974, her grandparents farmed the land where St Rita's church and school now stand.

The rich red soil of Victoria Point is very productive, and amazing custard apples used to grow on her grandparent's property.

Heather planted some leopard trees and this karri tree – right - which she thought would be a small rainforest tree.

When she returned five years ago after renting out her house she found that they had become gigantic. The leopard trees had to be cut down.

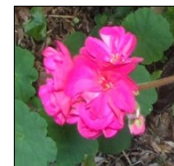


Heather loves magnolias and has planted several, including a port wine magnolia (grown not for the flowers but for its scent) and a fairy (also with scented flowers)—both of which are evergreen.

Right: A magnolia coming into bloom



Heather loves the old traditional garden beauties such as— Clockwise: camellia, Rondeletia, begonia, rose and several geraniums.



Another favourite is the night-scented jasmine or jessamine – *Cestrum nocturnum* – as it has a famously beautiful perfume that can be enjoyed at night, even inside.



## Garden Visit Heather Clarke



The well-kept vegetable garden.

Right: Heather was disappointed with her cauliflowers that had been in for a long time and looked very green but had not produced. It was suggested that they may not be getting enough sun, as the area they were in was very shady.



Another chair in the vege patch



A crab pot repurposed into an insect motel, with herbs growing around it.

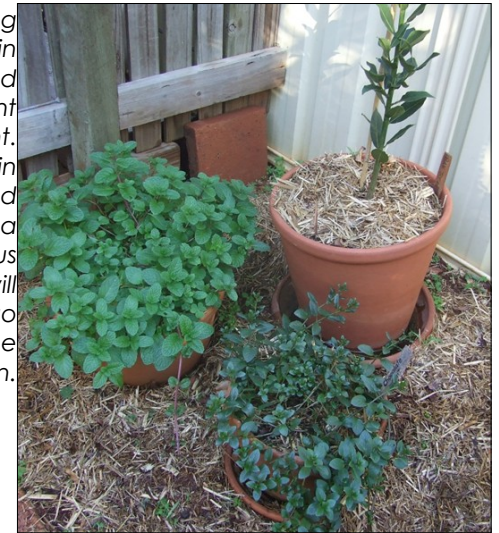


Left: The asparagus patch cut back, fertilised and mulched to reinvigorate it for next season.

Right: Heather uses comfrey for making tea and old leaves for composting. She has interesting and quirky plant markers in her garden.



Right: A young bay leaf tree in the background with pots of mint in front. Growing mint in pots is a good idea as it is a very vigorous grower and will otherwise go wild in the garden.



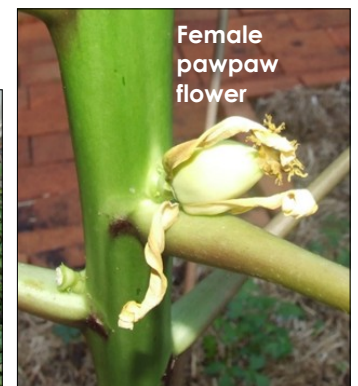
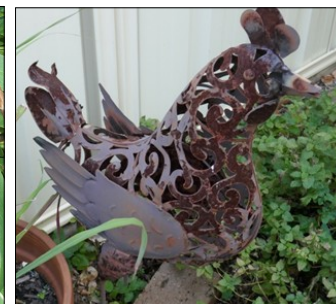
Heather was concerned that flowers had been dropping from her pawpaw trees.

Unless you have bisexual trees, you need both a male pawpaw tree whose flowers form on stems and a female tree where the flower forms close to the trunk.



Male pawpaw flowers

Below: A quirky 'hen' keeping an eye on the herbs.

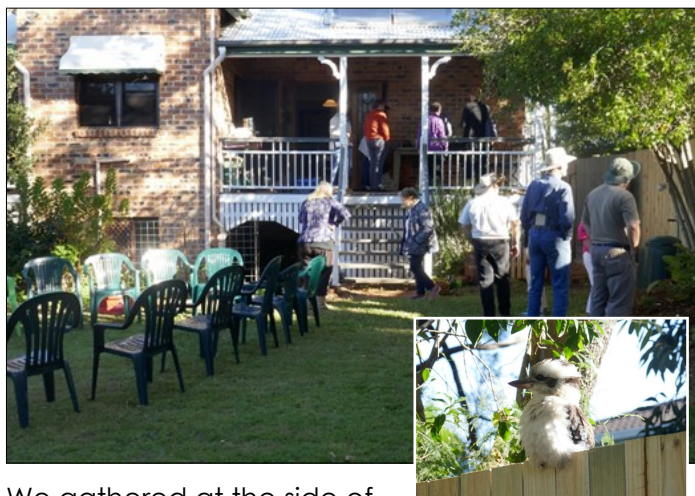


Female pawpaw flower





Under the front veranda, Heather has created a lush and cool garden of shade-loving plants.



We gathered at the side of the house; some were watching the kookaburra who had relocated to the back fence and was taking a keen interest in the visitors. Thank you Heather for sharing your beautiful garden with us and for all the cuttings and plants you gave us to take home to our gardens.

Report by Mary Irmer

Photos by Rae Irmer, Mary Irmer and Greg Lindner

**Sunday 26th August will be a busy day. Which one to go to? Or visit both?**

**Oaklands Street Community Garden**

## **OPEN DAY**

Sunday 26 August 10am – 2pm

Oaklands St, Alexandra Hills (behind Aldi)

Speakers: George Allen—Fruit Trees

Frank Huysing—Worms

Music: Dukes of Uke

**Plant sales**

**Produce sales**

**Jams, pickles, etc**

**Hot food**

**Tea house**

**Face painting**

**Garden tours**

**Raffles**

Come and see the work that has been done in the last year. Volunteers have been working very hard and there may be some surprises!

*This community garden is a delight to the senses. If you've never been, make the effort to pop in - you will be pleasantly surprised.*



Brisbane Organic Growers Inc

## **Organic Fair**

Sunday 26 August 9am - 3pm

102 Mc Donald Road, Windsor  
(near Albion Railway Station)

free pH soil test - bring a soil sample

free gardening advice & talks

free animal nursery

herbs

books

chooks

seedlings

jams

tools

fruit trees

food & drinks

**No pets please**

enquiries

email: [bogifair@bogi.org.au](mailto:bogifair@bogi.org.au)

phone: 0435 916 577

website: [www.bogi.org.au](http://www.bogi.org.au)

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## ROGI Committee Positions

### The ROGI Annual General Meeting will be on 8 August.

All committee positions will be declared vacant at the beginning of the AGM.

#### **PRESIDENT**

- Leads and inspires ROGI
- Delivers monthly meetings to members
- Seeks guest speakers, field trips and other opportunities
- Promotes ROGI and organic gardening to the community

#### **VICE PRESIDENT**

- Assists the president in planning and delivery of meetings, initiatives and events as above**
- Stands in if president is absent**

#### **SECRETARY**

- Keeps records of the business of ROGI, including the rules**
- Records office-holders and trustees of the association**
- Sets agendas and records minutes of committee meetings**
- Completes and sends documents to Office of Fair Trading after AGM**
- Manages correspondence**

#### **TREASURER**

- Handles all monies paid or received and issues receipts
- Deposits monies into ROGI bank account
- Makes payments from ROGI funds with appropriate authority
- Complies with Associations Incorporation Act
- Submits report, balance sheet or financial statement to committee
- Has custody of all accounting records of ROGI
- Reviews transactions online prior to all meetings

#### **Four other committee members**

- These may be Office Bearers of the club, or they may be members who want to be a part of the decision-making process.

The eight committee members are expected to attend ROGI committee meetings. Currently these are usually held the fourth Wednesday of the month.

## ROGI Office Bearers

#### **Internal Events Secretary**

- Sources and coordinates member workshops, garden visits and field trips

#### **Membership Secretary**

- Updates membership list monthly; sends to committee
- Compiles list of visitors each month
- Sends an individual welcome letter to each new member
- Sends reminders to unpaid members in February each year

#### **PR & Communications Co-ordinator**

- Handles advertising and press releases
- Arranges maintenance of website and social media
- Assists with newsletter compilation and editing

#### **Public Events Co-ordinator**

- Organises public ROGI events eg Green Heart Fair. Indigi Day Out**

#### **Website Manager** Manages and maintains website

#### **Newsletter Editor**

- Liaises with president, committee, office bearers to publish their articles, upcoming events, and other relevant articles/news
- Develops ideas and arranges for members or self to write articles
- Arranges for write-ups from events and speakers
- Edits for accuracy of spelling, grammar, sources and facts
- Sends finished document to president for review and distribution

#### **Seed Bank Co-ordinator**

- Purchases, saves or procures fresh quality seed for seed bank
- Maintains records of seed stock and rotates to maintain viability
- Sells seeds at ROGI meetings, garden visits and events
- Arranges for envelopes, labels and seed-packing days
- Ensures seed bank has seasonal stock

#### **Library co-ordinator**

- Maintains records of books etc in stock and all loans; Acquires new books

#### **Supper co-ordinator**

- Supplies milk, teas, coffee, sugar, ROGI herbal tea etc and keeps receipts
- Lays out supper provided by members on table/s
- Ensures kitchen is clean after meetings with help of volunteers
- Launders tea towels, etc

#### **AV Desk Operator/s (two or more people could share the job)**

- Operates desk on meeting nights

**Positions Vacant** Our president and treasurer are happy to continue, but we need a new **vice-president** and **secretary**. You may nominate for any committee position (vacant or not) if you wish to a part of the decision-making process. We also need a **public events co-ordinator**. Please consider volunteering to contribute to your club.

# Plant of the month

## Sweet potato *Ipomoea batatas*

With twice the fibre and one and half times the vitamin C of the humble potato, sweet potato packs a hefty punch in the nutritional stakes.

Did you know one small serving of sweet potato offers ALL the vitamin A you need in a day (higher than any other root vegetable)? Plus they have significantly more potassium, calcium, vitamin K, and have a lower GI than some other potatoes. On top of all that they are an extremely rich source of antioxidant carotenes.

Along with these amazing health benefits they are so easy to grow in the perfect conditions of subtropical gardens.

**Easy to grow** ... but they need a few things to grow really well ...

1. well turned over bed, compost rich soil, pH 5.5 – 6.5 and drainage.
2. planted in raised beds or on mounds 15cm high to avoid tubers rotting in wet weather.
3. best grown from long cuttings, ensure there are 2 or 3 nodes on your cutting and chop off 1/3 of the leaves so the energy can go into making roots. Place in the bed, cover over the stem of the cutting with soil. Water them regularly for a few weeks, feed monthly with seaweed or worm juice and then pull back on the watering.

The only sweet potato pest I know of is a little weevil. Prevention for the little guys is crop rotation; never plant sweet potatoes in ground where they've previously grown. A great follow-on crop would be things like lettuce, spring onions, green manure or capsicums.

Sweet potatoes are an amazing food

with so many benefits - there are 300 times more polyphenols (antioxidants) in purple sweet potatoes than white.

If you want more fibre and anti-oxidants from your sweet potatoes, keep the skin on when cooking. Precooked and cooled sweet potatoes can up their content of resistant starch by 62%. This keeps you feeling full for longer and will boost your friendly gut bacteria.

The leaves are edible too. They are high in vitamin A and have substantial amounts of protein, fibre, magnesium, calcium, copper, manganese, potassium, iron and zinc. Fats added when cooking (a dash of butter or a drizzle of olive oil) can help your body absorb significantly more beta-carotene.

We will have many types of sweet potato plants at the seed bank table next meeting.

*Sharr Ellson*

Another way to grow sweet potato (and Jerusalem artichoke) and rhizomes (ginger and turmeric) is in large pots or grow-bags.

We've been doing this for some years ... because:

1. It avoids the necessity of crop rotation (you'd pretty soon run out of space if you could never grow them in the same place ever again!) as you use new compost/potting mix after every harvest
2. Harvesting is a cinch! Just tip the pot/bag sideways on a tarp and thump it on the bottom until everything comes out. Very easy to sort through, then just tip the remaining soil etc into a compost bin.
3. Many of these plants can be hard to control when grown in the ground. Sweet potatoes and Jerusalem artichokes are famous for growing from a tiny bit that was left in the soil, and you can find them popping up randomly.

*Jill Nixon*



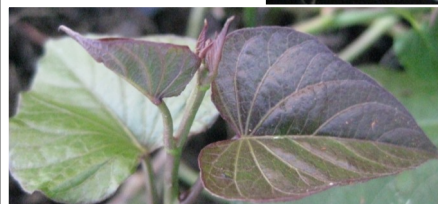
*Right: This has purple skin with very sweet dry white flesh. Its size - 140mm diameter - and shape are not typical!*



*Left: Growing in organic potting mix in a 500mm tub.*



*Right: From the tub above—with white skin and dry, very sweet purple flesh.*



*Left: The leaves are edible—the tender young leaves can be used in salads.*



# Green Heart Fair, Carindale

ROGI had a stall at last year's celebration of all things green, sustainable and environmentally-friendly.

Saying it was successful would be an understatement. We all but sold out of seedlings and plants, sold out of some seed varieties and had a huge number of people express an interest in growing their own food organically in general and in ROGI and what we're all about in particular.

This year we may even need an extra gazebo to fit in everything and everyone!

We're after more volunteers for this —it's a lot of fun, and we'd hate for you to miss out. Can you think of anything better than talking gardening all day (or part of the day)?

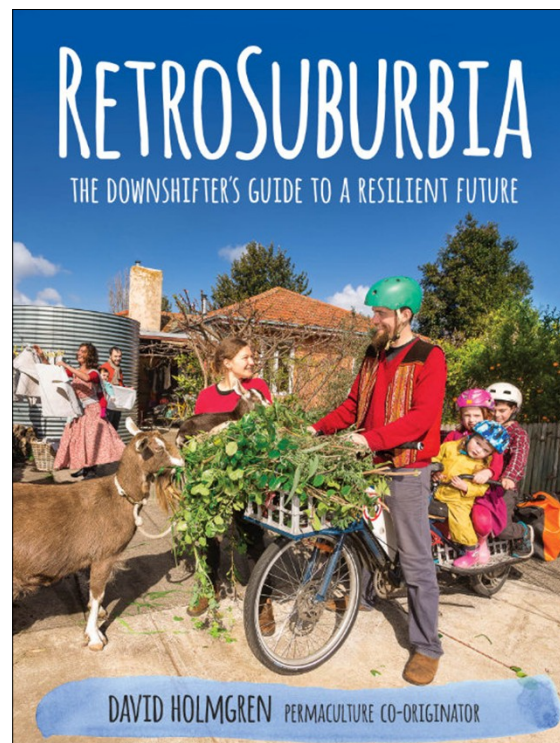
**Sunday 9 September  
8am to 2pm**

Email [events@rogi.com.au](mailto:events@rogi.com.au) or talk to a committee member at the ROGI meeting to find out more about our stall and to offer your assistance.

For more information about the fair, go to <https://www.greenheartfair.com.au>



Setting up in the early morning, waiting for the crowds to arrive.



This book is amazing!

I had my name on the waiting list to read it for three months before I could get stuck into it.

Now I want to buy my own copy, and so do a few other people I know. This makes me think that many of our ROGI members may want their own copy as well.

To quote from Julia Geljon's review of the book in our May newsletter:  
" ... the book basically becomes a manual for looking at how we live and what we could easily change if we

wished. There are numerous examples, diagrams, excellent drawings and photographs as well as an engaging text. While it is a large book, almost 600 A4 size pages, it is definitely not a coffee table book but a working manual.

*I would thoroughly recommend buying this book, if you are interested in changing the way we currently live."*

A great Christmas or birthday gift for, and from, the right person.

The good news is that, although ROGI paid \$85 each for our two copies, it is possible for you to get a copy for \$55.25, with free shipping (and it is *such* a heavy book!) for a bulk buy.

Why pay \$85, when you can get it for \$55.25?

Please get in touch with me by **Friday 10 August** on 0418717735 or [jill.nixon@bigpond.com](mailto:jill.nixon@bigpond.com) to let me know how many you want.



## Plant Clinic

### Pawpaw leaf well-sprinkled with black and brown spots



Everyone passing the table commented that theirs were just the same! The consensus was that it is a cool weather fungal rust.

**Treatments** include spraying with copper and feeding the tree with plenty of seaweed. For prevention try to remove affected leaves from your property to lessen the number of spores around.

### Lemon with distinct brown area



The consultants on the night decided it was a melanose fungal disease.

This can be copper-sprayed, and the tree treated with BioDynamic tree paste (see next page) rubbed all over the wood.

**Prevention** is aided by removing and disposing

of all dead wood to stop re-infection.

### Mandarins with blotches on the skin



These were from an 8yr old tree which also had lots of ants and some aphids.

The two fruit had a mixture of **sooty mould** and **melanose** fungal conditions.

Try Eco Oil on the sooty mould and copper sprays on the melanose. Also the BD tree paste twice a year

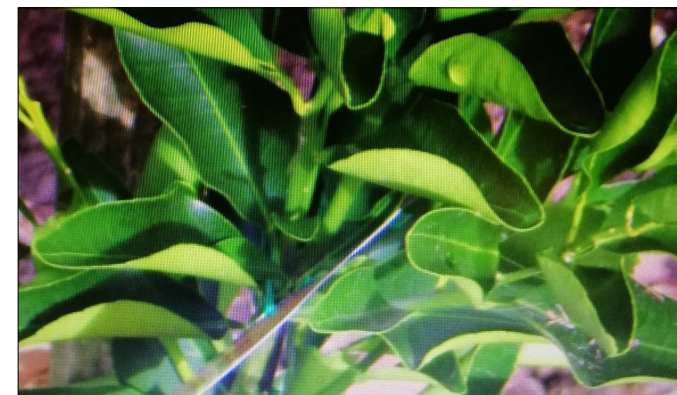
## Plant Clinic

If you have an odd-looking pest, think 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 before the meeting starts. Someone will have a look and may be able to answer your questions. Any solutions will be given to you on the night and published on this page.

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

### Curled mandarin leaves



Apart from the inward curling the tree looked healthy (in the picture).

On searching the internet it appears that it could be the result of a hot, dry spell causing the leaves to try to reduce water loss. Sap-suckers could be a cause but the leaves look very healthy and any sap-suckers would be visible to the owner.

### Lychee leaves with orange velvety patches



**Erinose mite** is a serious disease of lychees, as a heavy infestation can affect flowers and prevent fruiting. The microscopic mites cause bumps or blisters on top of leaves and a distinctive reddish brown velvety underside.

**Treatments:** spray regularly with a miticide, spray with wettable sulphur and also use BD tree paste twice a year. Affected vegetation needs to be cut off and removed from your property.



### Another citrus question

*"If I can't put my citrus peels in the worm farm then surely not in the compost either?"*

Most people do put them in the compost ... where there is usually a greater mixture of materials as well as a wide range of organisms to break them down. Also they can go into a Bokashi compost system (see side panel).

### Cracking and flaking of bark on a lychee tree



Photo taken from above

This symptom has appeared on most of the major branches as well as the trunk. A diagnosis suggested was a **canker**. Please all examine the photo and see what you think

as I could find no information about canker in lychees. **Treatment** suggested was to cut out/ scrape off all dead or affected wood and fill areas with BD tree paste. Also apply it to all trunks and branches.

### Finally ...

This was not brought to Plant Clinic but I came across them on a Bird of Paradise leaf while gardening. Does anyone know what the amazing creatures in this photo are?



*Researched and reported by Chris McIvor*

If you are unable to get identification of a plant from your local nursery, go to <https://www.qld.gov.au/environment/plants-animals/plants/herbarium/identify-specimens>. Fill out the Botanical specimens cover sheet, and send with your plant cutting (between two sheets of newspaper) to: Botanical Information & Advisory Service, Queensland Herbarium, DSITI, Brisbane Botanic Gardens, Mt Coot-tha Road, TOOWONG QLD 4066. They will identify your plant for free and send you a reply by your choice of post/email/fax/phone.

## Biodynamic (BD) tree paste

Tree pastes are used to aid tree vigour and for pest and disease control. Biodynamic gardeners routinely use tree pastes during winter. The original formula proposed by biodynamics founder, Rudolf Steiner, was composed of 4 parts cow manure, 3 parts fine clay or bentonite and 2 parts diatomaceous earth or silica sand. Combine all ingredients and make into a paste with diluted seaweed extract. The clay and manure helps the paste stick and gives it an earthy colour and provides nutrients to the tree. The diatomaceous earth acts as a barrier to pests. Pastes are diluted with water until they reach the consistency of thick paint and work best when applied to thin barked trees and shrubs. Traditionally these pastes are used during winter, but I have found them to be successful at any time of year.

Taken from [www.annettemcfarlane.com/Tree-Paste](http://www.annettemcfarlane.com/Tree-Paste)

## Bokashi

A system using a lidded bucket and a mix of bran and beneficial micro-organisms which aids the composting process. Food waste is placed in the bucket and sprinkled with the mix. The food breaks down and releases liquid which is regularly drained off. When the bucket is full, dig the contents into the soil. You can put these in the bucket:

- cooked/raw meats and fish
- fruit and vegetables
- prepared foods
- dairy
- eggs
- bread
- coffee grinds
- tea bags
- wilted flowers
- tissue





## 'Soil Your Undies' Challenge!!

Across USA, farmers are burying 'tighty-whities' in their fields. Started by the Farmers Guild in California, the challenge is designed to show the power and importance of healthy soil.

### How about ROGI members do it as well?

The challenge for is easy:

- **Bury a pair of 100% cotton undies in your garden. Mark the spot.**
- **Two months later, dig them up, inspect them and document the changes.**
- **Send photos to me to go in the December newsletter.**

Healthy soil contains all sorts of bacteria, earthworms, fungi and other little organisms that like to eat organic matter, such as cotton underwear. In two months, underwear buried in *healthy* soil will be completely eaten through, leaving little but an elastic waistband.

Actually, you can use anything made from natural fibre—towel, teatowel, t-shirt and so on.

Many of you will have noticed this effect in your worm farm. You cover it with a piece of hessian ... and it gradually disappears. I used a holey old linen teatowel once and all that remained was the so-called 'cotton' thread that had been used to sew the hem.

How about some of you bury something in your compost bin as well?

Jill Nixon

## Garden Visits

**Sunday 19 August—Lara Brits, Alexandra Hills**

**Sunday 23 Sept—Ranee Zeller, Sheldon**

## Field Trip

**Sunday 12 August—Hare Krishna** community near Murwillumbah

The gardens are located in several places within the village and are cultivated by members and guests. They produce fruits, vegetables and flowers that are needed for the temple, community and Govindas restaurant.

## Garden Makeover Workshop

**Saturday 25 August.**

The lucky winner is **Ruth Bolomey** of Capalaba. Ruth's garden was featured in June ROGI News. We welcome members to come along to 'learn while doing' - an afternoon of fun, food and play/work.

As always, space is limited, so book early. Please indicate your interest at the August meeting to Toni

Our Garden Visit calendar is full for 2018, but we're planning for 2019. If you'd like to put your garden on a waiting list in case of cancellation, please get in touch with Toni at [tonibowler@hotmail.com](mailto:tonibowler@hotmail.com); or 0402 323 704.

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



### Chook owners.

Now that I have your attention ...

There is still some certified organic coarse layer chook feed left over from last month's order.

I had to order extra to make up the minimum purchase requirement. So please get in touch should you need some.

It's approx \$8 cheaper than retail.

Please phone or text Jill on 0418717735



## Book Reviews

### Your Food

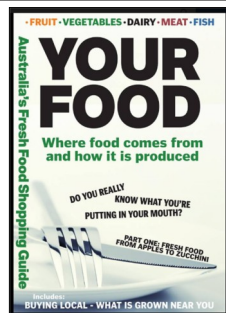
*Where food comes from and how it is produced.*

This is the only new book added to the library this month. It was recommended by a new member and your committee thought that most people would like to know just what goes into the growing, storing and marketing of pretty-much every food item in Australia.

If you are not already growing and/or buying organic as much as possible, this book may give you more reasons to do so. Here are some examples:

- Chemicals approved for use on **tomatoes** number 500+ insecticides, 290+ fungicides and 530+ herbicides.
- as well as several of the above '-icides', the soil used to grow **strawberries** is sprayed with methyl bromide as a pest-control fumigant. This chemical can cause damage to our respiratory and central nervous systems.
- many of the chemicals are **systemic**, meaning they are absorbed into the fruit/vegetable and cannot be washed off.
- over 1400 herbicide products are available to spray on **snow/snap peas**, as well as 300 insecticides and 200+ fungicides.
- **potatoes**: 320+ insecticides, 300+ fungicides and 1270+ herbicides may be used. Over-fertilisation of soil can create an overload of cadmium in potatoes in particular. Peeling can't remove cadmium or the insecticides.

There's more; much more. Read the book! We can grow so much in our climate, and then buy the rest from organic growers.



### Out of the Scientist's Garden

A story of water and food

What an interesting book! Stirzaker grew up gardening—he had a fascination with growing food. It never left him, and along the way (through study, and trials in Africa and Australia) he has become an expert in backyard growing as well as the science of water productivity and agriculture. He has learned through experience and experiments how difficult it is to scale up backyard gardening into broadacre farming

Nevertheless, his ventures into commercial agriculture have yielded much scientific information about the way things grow and how irrigation works. He has invented gadgetry to measure how much water is optimal. You may have heard of Clever Clover™, a CSIRO innovation of his that took the farming world by storm in the 1980s and 90s.

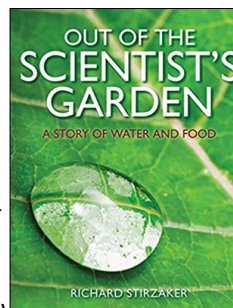
I found the book fascinating and very easy to read—especially since it was written by such a highly-qualified scientist! Each chapter is written as a story,

Here are some points of interest:

1. 'A well-grown crop can produce between one and two kilos of food from a thousand litres of water.' But only if we get absolutely everything right—very difficult, if not impossible. By contrast, an average crop

If you read a book that would be valuable for our library please tell a committee member know about it—see back page.

We welcome reviews from readers of ROGI library books you've read. Please!



yield from 1 000 litres would be 0.2 to 0.5 kg of food. He then explains the ways that this could be improved.

2. 'Even when it's raining and the tanks are full, there are often parts of the garden where the soil below 50% is quite dry. I can store far more water in the plant root zones than in all my tanks combined. I frequently irrigate during the rain to store water in my subsoils and so stop my tanks from overflowing.' Of course, he has a special gadget that can measure the moisture in his soil.
3. Australians use '20% of domestic water in baths and showers, and 12% in the laundry'. He diverts his to a sump and then pumps this water to the garden. When it's very dry, he adds the washing machine water. Of course he uses low-sodium and low-phosphorus detergents, so he's not as concerned about the salts in the detergents as he is with the lint that clogs up his filters.
4. Someone once expressed to him their guilt about having a vegetable garden in the midst of a drought; a luxury, they thought, that their family should do without. 'If you eat food then you consume water.' Grow your own, or let the farmers do it—it all uses water.
5. His chapter titled 'Simplicity' is worth a thorough and thoughtful read. Sometimes we overcomplicate things that are quite fine when left in a simple state.

I highly recommend reading this book.

Reviews by Jill Nixon

**These books are among the many items available for loan from your ROGI library.**

We also have pH test kits (See p10) and needles for sewing shade cloth on loan.



## Seed bank news

### Plant your own seed

... at the next ROGI meeting

We'll supply a container to sow the seed in, ROGI seed-raising mix and the seeds.

At home, you need to:

- keep the mixture moist
- keep pots in a protected well-lit, shaded spot
- harden off new seedlings by gradually increasing their exposure to sun and heat
- water with weak Seasol solution or worm liquid when the second set of leaves appears (the first 'true' leaves)
- transplant into a larger pot or the garden

### The seeds this month will be ...

lettuce seeds saved through the seed savers' group.

### Seed savers' group

Next session is 16 October. The topic will be wet seeds. More info at the seed bank and plants table at the ROGI meeting.

Our **seed-raising mix** works well. You can purchase some for your own use. We put it in used yogurt or ice cream containers.

#### Fifty cents a litre.

We can offer such good prices as we source well and we are not-for-profit.

### Special Offer

For every five seed packs you buy, you'll receive one litre of ROGI seed-raising mix to sow them in.

Please **return seedling pots and punnets** to the seed



bank to be reused – especially the 4-cell ones like these.

**Other clean used pots**—small sizes up to 120 mm diameter.

Square pots like these are good too.



Bigger pots, such as those you get through ROGI Rewards, can be put on the swap/share/ giveaway table in the foyer. See page 19.

This seed sowing guide 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.

## Seed Sowing Guide

### August

Artichoke  
Jerusalem artichoke  
Asparagus  
Beans, French  
Beetroot  
Capsicum/Chilli  
Carrot  
Celery  
Chicory  
Eggplant  
Kohlrabi  
Lettuce  
Okra  
Potatoes  
Pumpkin  
Radish  
Silver beet  
Squash  
Sweet potato  
Tomato

### September

Asparagus  
Beetroot  
Beans, French  
Beetroot  
Capsicum/Chilli  
Carrot  
Chicory  
Choko  
Cucumber  
Eggplant  
Jerusalem artichoke  
Kohlrabi  
Lettuce  
Okra  
Melons—Water and Rock  
Potatoes  
Pumpkin  
Radish  
Rosella  
Silver beet  
Squash  
Sweet corn  
Sweet potato  
Tomato  
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 all ROGI meetings and Garden Visits.**

**\$1 per pack for members. \$2 non-members.**

For a list of the seed bank stock, please go to: <http://www.rogi.com.au/uploads/seed%20bank%20list%20March%202017.pdf>



## Swap plants, cuttings, home-grown produce, seedlings.

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

### ROGI Rewards

**Good quality** plants and other garden-related items brought along by members. Everyone who attends is eligible for a ROGI Reward. *Please label the plant with its name and some details before placing it on the table.*

### Members' Sales

Items you've produced that are surplus to your requirements that **you wish to sell** to other members - eggs, honey, seedlings, lemons, jam, sustainable craft items – things that have cost you money, time and effort to produce. Please ensure items are labelled, named and priced. It is preferable that you staff the stall yourself or time-share with a friend.

### 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), cuttings, surplus produce, empty pots, strawberry runners and so on. You may want to work out an arrangement with other members to do some swapping outside of the meetings.

**Remember to bring bags/boxes/baskets to take everything home, including purchases of organic produce from Ashley.**

## We want your tomato and strawberry punnets

We need **250gm cube-shaped strawberry/cherry tomato punnets.**

One of ROGI's activities is making a seed-sowing pot out of newspaper. After making this pot, visitors sow a seed or seedling plug into it and take it home safely in a punnet. At the Green Heart at Carindale each year we use hundreds of them, and we've noticed that our supplies are low, so please bring them long to the August meeting and we'll store them until they're needed.



## Cute chicks for sale

They are a mix of Bantam, Silkie and Frizzle. \$15 each or \$25 pair. I have an idea of their sex, but no guarantees at this stage. They have been happily free-ranging, as you can see in the photo. Please phone Narelle on 0438881781



## We'd like to hear from you.

For example, send us:

- A story about your garden
- A photo of an interesting plant
- An article about an unusual plant
- A request for items or information
- Specific garden or nutrition info
- A recipe for home-grown produce
- A notice that you have something to give away or sell
- A handy technique or tip
- A gardening problem solved
- Anything to do with organic growing
- A review of a ROGI library book

**Please send your items to the editor and help keep ROGI News topical, interesting, local and relevant.**  
[info@rogi.com.au](mailto:info@rogi.com.au)

### August Newsletter Deadline

**Please send your contributions to the newsletter editor by 29 August**

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



This is how it works:

- Get a My IGA Card at 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, but you also help to raise funds for ROGI, which we use to benefit our members.

### Did you know?

You can go online [www.rogi.com.au/resources.php](http://www.rogi.com.au/resources.php) and read every edition of ROGI News since September 2014.



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[www.facebook.com/groups/redland.organic.growers](https://www.facebook.com/groups/redland.organic.growers)

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

Other gardening groups using organic methods

**Brisbane Organic Growers Inc (BOGI)**—1st Thursday every month (except Jan), Albion Peace Hall, 102 McDonald Rd, Windsor, 6.30 for 7.30pm. 33573171 <http://bogi.org.au>

**Qld Herb Society**—1st Tuesday every month, Albion Peace Hall. 7.30pm. 54268299 <http://www.qldherbsociety.org.au/qhs>

**Oaklands Street Community Garden**—Wed & Friday 9 - noon, Sunday 2- 5pm. Oaklands St, Alexandra Hills. 0419987870



Sharr, Janet and Linda staffing the seed bank and plant sales tables at the July ROGI meeting. As you can see, there is a lot to choose from and many people are taking advantage of the quality, variety and very reasonable prices.