

ROGI News

Doors open at 6.15pm so that members can :

- renew membership in person
- hand in labelled tool/s for sharpening
- deposit Christmas gifts for the Salvo's hampers

Salvation Army Church
Cnr McDonald Rd & Macarthur St
ALEXANDRA HILLS

Admission:

Members: Free

Visitors: \$10 for this night

Please note there will be no stalls or selling and no plant sharing.

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How's this for a bunch of Bananas??? There are approx. 300 bananas on this dwarf banana tree—Dwarf Ducasse. This is the first time Jill & Ian Nixon have had a bunch so low that it is possible to see under the bell's layers and observe the flowers and then bananas developing. It is growing in classic Redlands red soil, fenced off in part of the chook run and given lots of water and Organic Xtra. The Nixons keep only 3 trunks—this one (their first to fruit), a smaller one ready for the next bunch to develop, and a sucker. Everything else gets removed.

Backyard Burlblings

Dear Members,

As this is the last ROGI Newsletter for 2018, it seems timely to recap some of the activities and highlights enjoyed by our members during the year.

In March we collaborated with IndigiScapes at the Living Green Expo to showcase "Closing the Circle on Waste" by showing how repurposing our household waste for Worm Farms, Compost Making and Bokashi can benefit our gardens as well as our environment.

In May our usual meeting venue was turned into a lively workshop/discussion space with members choosing one of five topics ranging across tool care, chook care, making wax wraps, pros and cons of various garden beds, and ways to deal with garden pests.

In late June, 2 busloads of ROGI members visited the Currumbin Eco Village in the Currumbin Valley. All those who were able to go enjoyed a fabulous informative day at this beautiful example of a well-managed Eco Village.

August saw over 30 members carpool to visit the Hare Krishna Farm near Murwillumbah. Again, this was an extremely inter-

esting day where we learned a lot about the Hare Krishna way of farming and caring for the earth, as well as providing food and flowers for the temple and residents. Our day finished with a superb vegetarian lunch.

In late August we also had our annual Mini Garden Makeover competition where the winner gets the benefit of an expert consultant assisting around 20 ROGI members to transform a selected garden site.

In September ROGI took part in the Green Heart Fair at Carindale. This was a huge event, where we were able to sell plants and seeds as well as interact with the public and children by showing them how to sow seeds in paper pots. The ROGI site was constantly busy all day, as was Gennaro's display of unusual fruits and foods.

Apart from the above Field Trips and Events, members have been able to go on 10 Garden Visits to other member's gardens during the year. We have also been fortunate to have inspiring guest speakers at our monthly meetings, as well as an opportunity for free tool sharpening and e-waste collection.

When looking back at all this activity it seems incredible that we have managed to pack so much into the last 10 months. Of course all of this does not happen by itself, and takes quite a lot of planning and organising.

We are all extremely lucky that within the ROGI membership there are willing volunteers like Toni Bowler, who coordinates the Field Trips and Garden Visits and Kathy Petrik, who organises the Guest Speakers. Then there are our excellent Events Organisers like Margaret Sear and Sharr Ellson. Without them we could not attend Public Events or even have our Organic Christmas Feast. Another important cog is Jill Nixon, who has been ROGI's Newsletter Editor for many years. Due to family commitments, she has reluctantly decided to step aside from this position. In true ROGI fashion, another willing member volunteered to step into Jill's big shoes and carry on this mammoth monthly task. We thank Ann Roffey for taking on this role.

We owe them all a big thank you for managing all these tasks so ably, but also recognise that without many willing unsung helpers from within the wider ROGI family they could not function as well as they do. Therefore, a very big thank you is due to all of you who come to meetings, assist with many tasks and make ROGI a lively and inspiring community organisation. It is no wonder our membership has grown to 205 at the last counting.

Finally, I would like to wish you all a safe and happy Christmas with loved ones, and I look forward to seeing you at the Christmas feast.

*Julia Geljon,
ROGI President*

Coming Events

Dec	Thurs 6	Brisbane Organic Growers (BOGI) Meeting
	Wed 12	ROGI Christmas Feast
JAN	NO MEETING	
Feb	Tues 5	Herb Society meeting
	Thurs 7	BOGI meeting
	Wed 13	ROGI—first meeting for 2019
	Sun 24	Garden Visit (see p. 17)

Membership Information

- **Direct Deposit** BSB 633000. A/C 136 137 296 Bendigo Bank 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>

- **Cash** payment at ROGI meeting
- **Cheques** made payable to *Redland Organic Growers Inc* - pay at meeting or to PO Box 1257, Cleveland 4163

Member Category	Members Renewing For 2019	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

December Meeting

Organic Christmas Feast

Following the overwhelming success of our last 2 Christmas feasts, we are doing it all again this year!

The feast will be free for financial ROGI members. Visitors and guests are welcome to attend for a contribution of \$10 each.

PLEASE NOTE THE DECEMBER MEETING IS NOT A REGULAR ROGI MEETING. IT IS FULLY BOOKED. PLEASE ATTEND ONLY IF YOU HAVE ALREADY INDICATED THAT YOU ARE COMING.

Please bring:

- Your own **dinner plate, dessert plate/bowl, cup & cutlery**. (You'll take them home to wash, so a cloth bag would be handy too).
- Clean, named **Secateurs** and other hand tools (not spades) for **sharpening** (free for members). More information on page 17.
- Instead of exchanging gifts, we'd like you to give something to the **Salvation Army Christmas Hamper**, if you wish. See page 17 for suggestions.





Frank & Marion's

SHOP STUFF—0449 031 606

Merry Christmas & A Great next year!!!

If you are short of some of our products over the Christmas season, give us a call.

Bio Char	Coarse	4 litre	\$12.00
	Fine	4 litre	\$15.00
	Activated	4 litre	\$25.00
Blood and Bone		3 kilos	\$ 7.00
Gypsum	<i>(Clay Breaker)</i>	5 kilos	\$ 5.00
Dolomite	<i>(Magnesium & Calcium)</i>	5 kilos	\$ 4.50
Organic Extra	<i>Fine (Lawns)</i>	2.5 kilos	\$ 6.00
	<i>Coarse (Gardens)</i>	2.5 kilos	\$ 5.00
	<i>Paddock</i>	5 kilos	\$ 8.00
Organic Booster	<i>(Need we say more!)</i>	2.5 kilos	\$ 8.00
Rock Dust	<i>(All the minerals you could ask for)</i>	4 kilos	\$10.00
Organibor	<i>(Slow reléase Boron)</i>	1 kilo	\$ 8.00
Zeolite Powder	<i>(Heavy Metals Absorber)</i>	400 grams	\$30.00
Organic Straw Bales		Each	\$ 5.50

PLEASE RING FOR AN APPOINTMENT

Membership renewal time -

Yes, it's that time of year again!

How to renew your membership ... fast and easy

1. Go online to <https://www.rogi.com.au/renew-membership.php>
2. Fill out the application, press SUBMIT.
3. Go to your online bank to make a transfer to ROGI - you will need:
BSB 633000, Account Number 136 137 296
(Use your name as a reference please).
4. Pick up your receipt at the next ROGI meeting.
5. Find your 2019 Membership card name tag on the hanger near the sign-in table.

The slower way to renew

1. Join the queue (between 6.15 and 6.45) at the next meeting.
2. Fill in the paper form.
3. Pay cash or cheque.
4. Collect your receipt and new Membership name tag at the following meeting.

The not-quite-so-slow way

1. Fill in form online as in 'fast and easy' above.
2. Join the queue at the meeting to pay by cash or cheque.
3. Collect receipt and new Membership Card name tag at the following meeting.

Merry Christmas and Happy Gardening from Rhonda and the Management Committee.

November Speaker— Debra Henry

Healthy Waterways, Healthy Us

Debra Henry, one of ROGI's founding members, delivered a clear message to members at November's meeting: when it comes to valuing, conserving and managing our natural environment – it's up to all of us.

As a former Redland City Councillor and local environmental crusader, Debra has devoted most of her life persuading the community not to take our local natural assets for granted and to actively look after them. By doing this, we will continue to enjoy the many benefits of Moreton Bay.

Her talk reminded us that:

- *We all have an impact on the environment (it can be good, or bad).*
- *Cumulative impacts count: one small act may seem irrelevant but multiplied millions of times over, it has significant impact (either good or bad).*
- *Everything is connected; we all live in a catchment (the area of land that collects and transfers rainwater to a waterway).*
- *We all have a part to play in managing what matters.*

For the full presentation, click on the following link:

<file:///F:/roffey/DocSync/Ann/ROGINewsletters/December%202018/DebraHenry.pdf>

Here are some highlights of Debra's talk:

IMPORTANCE OF TAKING CARE OF THE BAY

- Residents and visitor surveys confirm local natural assets are highly valued. We live along one of the world's most beautiful coastlines – 125 km in length from Caloundra to the southern tip of South Stradbroke Island. Waterways consist of 16,000 km of trickling streams, occasionally flowing creeks, 6 permanent rivers and the open waters of Moreton Bay.
- Diversity of species with 27 unique endemic species found.
- The Moreton Bay-Quandamooka Marine Park is home to hundreds of fish species and coral, 4 species of dolphins, 4 species of turtles, 270 bird species, migratory whales and it's the only place in the world where dugongs are found so close to a capital city.

- 60,000 migratory shorebirds rely on feeding grounds of Ramsar listed Moreton Bay wetlands which Australia has promised to protect under international agreements.
- It's also a tourism playground with over 12 million domestic visitors a year motivated by nature based attractions and wildlife.
- The Moreton Bay region is the state's most important commercial fishery - worth \$40 million a year to our economy and is a central component in a lucrative seafood chain with flow on effects to other businesses, and consumers.
- Recreational fishing is worth even more at around \$200 million (not including the travel costs of boating).



Healthy Waterways—Healthy us (continued)

MANAGING THE BAY— CITIZEN SCIENTISTS PROGRAM



- Monitoring is key because, we need to know what we've got and the condition it's in to manage it properly.
- Professional field-based data collection is expensive - so in SEQ and around the world, volunteer citizen scientists are filling the gaps.
- Wildlife Queensland Coastal Citizen Scientists come from all walks of life and are of all ages because learning is a life-long process. Students are particularly important to this program.
- The program partners volunteers with the scientific community, monitors mangroves and seagrass in Moreton Bay, providing decision-makers with data to

guide investment in preventative measures and restorative action.

- Citizen scientists perform credible research and participants relish the chance to upskill and work with like minded people, committed to managing valuable habitats.

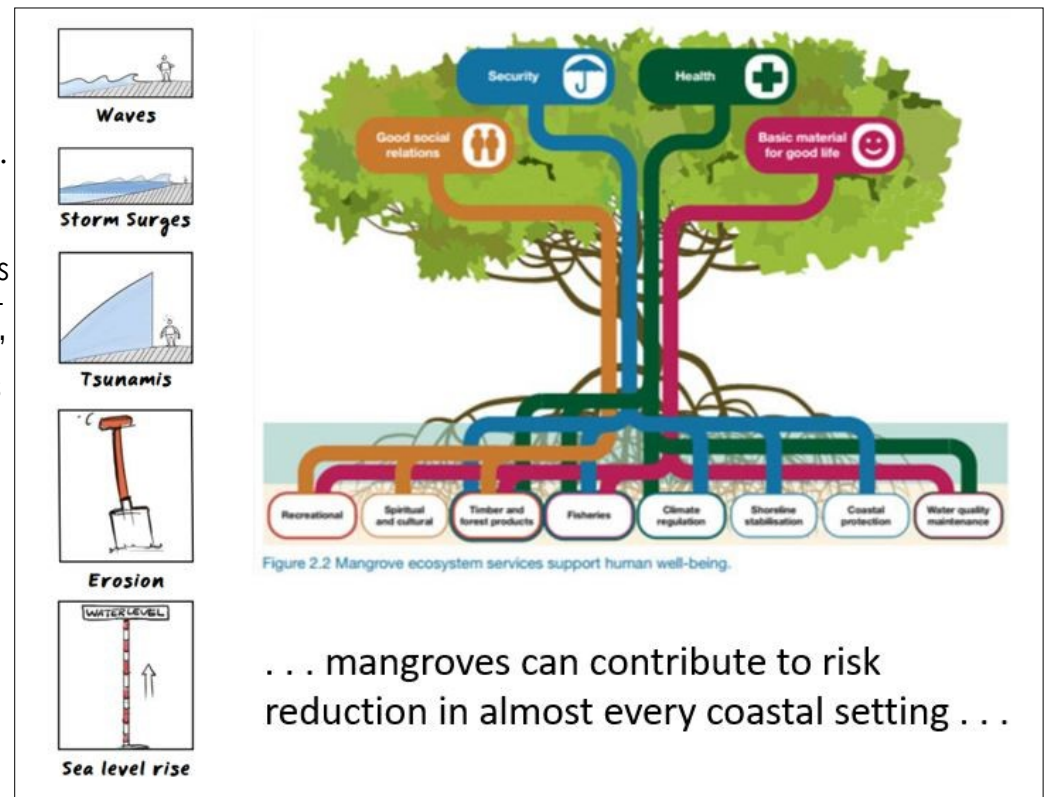
LOOKING AFTER MANGROVES

Healthy mangroves and seagrass:

- Are indicators of aquatic health, giving early warning signs of change and stress. 80% of fish, crabs and prawns rely on mangroves and seagrasses during their lifecycles.
- Are essential to commercial and recreational fishing.
- Have a key role in stabilizing shorelines and riverbanks, act as 'coastal kidneys' trapping sediments before they enter waterways and have scenic and recreational amenity.
- Protect the shoreline by reducing the effects of wind

and swell waves and are a far cheaper alternative to built infrastructure for coastal protection when coupled with other solutions.

- Have an ability to store carbon, and have earned the new name 'blue carbon coastal ecosystems'. They are more efficient than the green carbon systems of trees and forests.
- Mangroves extract carbon dioxide and store the carbon 40 times faster and store it for thousands, rather than hundreds of years.



... mangroves can contribute to risk reduction in almost every coastal setting ...

Healthy Waterways—Healthy us (continued)

HOW GARDENERS CAN HELP LOOK AFTER OUR WETLANDS AND WATERWAYS

- Organic growers already lower their impact by using permaculture principles, wicking beds, companion planting, mulching and composting.
- Weeds are major threats and can originate in our own backyards, ponds and aquariums—including dumped garden waste, seeds moved by wind, water and animals, aquatic plants washed down drains.
- Know what plants can cause a problem and avoid planting them. If you already have these plants, manage them to prevent their spread.
- Dispose of garden waste in a compost or green waste bin.
- Don't allow ponds to overflow as this can spread harmful aquatic plants.
- Coochie Coastcare Group extensively researched the effects of Roundup and succeeded in changing to 'saturated steam' chemical-free weed management for island bushland and foreshores areas.
- Re-use grey water (wastewater from showers, baths, laundry tubs etc) in your garden to limit nutrient and chemical discharge into waterways, reducing risk of algal blooms.
- An average household expels 124,000 litres of greywater a year - more water than most gardens need, and it's available all year round, unlike rainwater. But it's important to understand usage rules – definitely not to be used on food. With increased grey water knowledge, gardeners can play an important role in promoting the sensible re-use of this household 'waste' water.
- Stormwater runoff in urban areas is one of the biggest culprits of water pollution, so managing it by various means is a 'must'.
- Help reduce run-off and prevent negative impacts by replacing impermeable (hard) surfaces with permeable surfaces. This allows water to infiltrate the soil slowly, as it would in the natural water cycle.
- Permeable surfaces trap and filter pollutants resulting in healthier plants with access to water and moist soil, localised cooling as water evaporates from the soils. It improves human thermal comfort and is important for climate change adaptation, less run-off to create flood-

ing and erosion and better quality water reaching our creeks and marine environments.



Report by Kathy Petrik

Due to space and time constraints, there will be more from Debra's report in the February newsletter.

Garden Visit - Leong Lay

Leong and Karina Lay have 7 acres of land at Redland Bay—2 1/2 to 3 of these are cleared and maintained. Leong's passion for growing organically has grown over the years, along with the many areas he has cultivated to accommodate a large range of fruit and vegetables.



We were very impressed with Leong's garlic harvest. They are 'curing' on this old fridge rack for a few weeks in the shade on his verandah so that they store well. He bought certified organic bulbs from Green Harvest ('Italian Pink' variety), and planted them about 6 months ago.

'Gulf Gold Dwarf Plum' tree (right), with loads of fruit. It was suggested that netting be put over the tree to stop fruit fly from stinging the fruit.



Leong's Fig Trees are doing better in pots than in the ground.



A native Mulberry



Leong's bee hive.



The Food Forest area



"Teeny Weeny" Pumpkin



We discovered this lovely Lemon Nasturtium under the Mango tree, and were lucky enough to find some seeds as well.



Garden Visit - Leong Lay (cont'd)

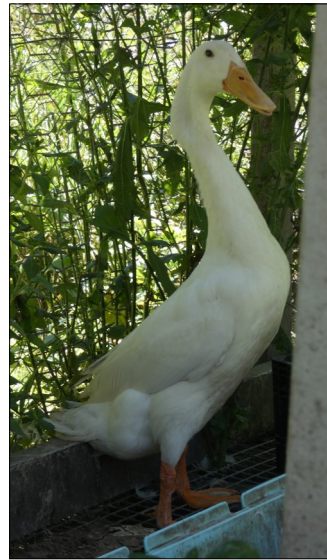


Leong keeps many animals on his acreage property, including chickens—Araucanas, Silkies, and commercial browns. He rotates the chooks so that they can mix, and also lets them free-range.

Leong with one of his 3 day old Araucana chickens.



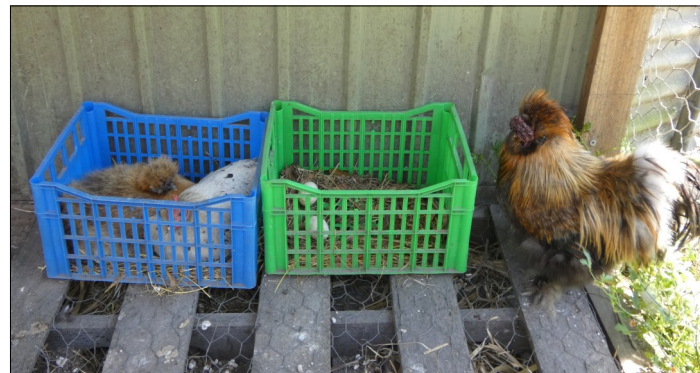
He also had a flock of 9 ducks, but unfortunately lost them all except Ferdinand (right) to a fox attack.



Leon runs the wire out 30-40cm to minimise predators getting into the pens.



More bees—this one is a native bee hive.



The Silkie chooks are broody at the moment.

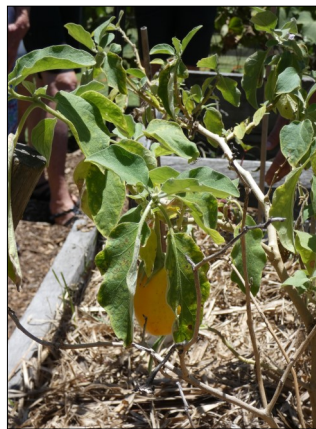


The sheep he keeps are the South African “Dorper” breed—they are self shedding, and very hardy. They help to keep the grass down.

Garden Visit - Leong Lay (cont'd)



Leong made his wicking beds out of timber, with one half of a 'clam' children's sandpit as the water reservoir. He used rock and sand to fill in the gaps, and then placed galvanised grid mesh over it. A hole was made in the centre for the 100mm pipe, and the mesh was then covered with geofabric and soil.



Leong completed a Biodynamic workshop recently with Peter Kearney. He gave us a demo of how he prepares his vegetable garden for a crop. He layers sugarcane mulch, fresh green manure, horse poo and then covers this with another layer of sugarcane mulch. In between each layer he adds lime, ash, and rock dust, watering each layer as he goes. Next, he puts the biodynamic formula into water, and mixes it for 20 minutes. This is then placed deep into the compost pile in a few places. The compost takes 12 weeks to decompose, and when it is ready, it is spread around different beds for planting.

Thank you Leong for a very interesting and informative morning. It was great to share your enthusiasm for growing and all things green.

Report and photos by Ann Roffey



Leong with one of his very impressive onions



Preparing compost the biodynamic way.



What is Biodynamics? **Biodynamics is a science of life-forces**, a recognition of the basic principles at work in nature, and an approach to agriculture which takes these principles into account to bring about balance and healing. Biodynamics is an ongoing path of knowledge rather than an assemblage of methods and techniques.

Leong had a huge amount of chokos on his vine. Margaret Sear has kindly forwarded these recipes for excess chokos—enjoy!

Choko Chutney

1 - 1 ½ kg chokos
 3 -4 large cooking apples
 2 large onions
 340g seeded raisins
 320g seeded dates
 1-2 small fresh red chillies
 2 cups brown sugar
 2 Tblsp ground (or more if fresh grated) ginger
 1 teasp white mustard seeds
 Sprinkle ground cumin/coriander
 Approx 5-6 cups vinegar

Method

- Peel, quarter and core the chokos. Cook in boiling water for about 10 minutes. Cool slightly
- Peel, quarter and core the cooking apples.
- Peel large onions.
- Mince or chop finely the chokos, apples, onions, raisins, dates and chillies. Place minced/chopped ingredients into a large stainless steel pan.
- Add brown sugar, ground/fresh ginger, white mustard seeds, ground cumin/coriander and vinegar.
- Bring ingredients to the boil. Simmer uncovered, and stir occasionally, till thick (approx. 1-1½ hours). Don't let it catch on the bottom of the pan.
- Place hot chutney in clean, heated jars. Seal while hot.



Choko Chutney

1 kg chokos
 3 onions, medium
 1 1/2 Tbs salt
 12 whole cloves
 12 peppercorns
 3 1/2 cups white vinegar
 1 tsp mixed spice
 1 cup golden syrup
 1 Tbs mustard powder
 1 Tbs curry powder
 1 Tbs plain flour
 2 Tbs cold water



Method

- Peel and chop chokos. Place chokos and onion which has been peeled and thinly sliced into a large bowl. Sprinkle with salt, mix well to ensure everything is well coated. Cover and leave at room temperature overnight.
- Drain and discard the liquid.
- Tie the cloves and peppercorns in a square of muslin to secure. Place the vinegar, muslin bag, mixed spice and syrup in a large saucepan and bring to the boil.
- Add the choko and onions, cook for 20 minutes or until tender. Remove from heat, throw away muslin bag.
- Combine the mustard and plain flour in a small bowl, blend with water. Add to the Choko mixture, stirring constantly.
- Bring to the boil, simmer for 10 minutes. Allow to stand for 15 minutes.
- Ladle into cleaned, warm and dry jars (makes about 5). Seal and store in a cool, dark place.

Notes—This is also great to serve with crackers as a dip.

Special Herbs for Pets

Environmentally safe natural flea control and skin irritation remedies can be made at home using fresh herbs grown in the garden. Here are a few that I have used successfully in the past:

Wormwood & Rosemary Flea Wash

Wormwood, *Artemisia absinthium* is a useful herb for flea control on dogs and cats. An infusion of wormwood leaves and rosemary can be used as a preventative and eradication measure.

Pick a handful of wormwood leaves and 2 large sprigs of rosemary (the rosemary adds a pleasant scent, is soothing to the skin and mildly antiseptic); roughly chop.

Place the leaves in an old saucepan or bowl and cover with around 1 litre of boiling water. Leave to steep until cool, then strain and bottle the liquid.

Can be used as is for dogs or diluted to half



strength with warm water for cats. Pour the wormwood infusion directly onto the dog's back and rub well into the coat. For cats it is easier to pour the solution into your hands and then rub it in gently. Be careful around the face area. When dry, comb or brush out the dead fleas. Repeat every week as needed. The infusion can be stored in a cool place for several weeks.



Peppermint, Pennyroyal & Rosemary Flea Wash

This is another safe natural remedy that helps to control fleas on pets.

Gather 2 cups of fresh peppermint and/or pennyroyal leaves plus 1 cup of rosemary leaves. Place in a bowl and pour over 1 litre of boiling water. Steep for 30 minutes, then strain and dilute 4:1 with warm water. Saturate the pet's coat and allow to dry naturally. Can be repeated every 3-4 days.



Catnip Skin Wash

If you own a cat one of the nicest things you could do for your pet is to grow Catnip, *Nepeta cataria*.

Most cats seem to really like catnip. Some of them roll in it, others chew the foliage. As catnip is known to have soporific properties it could be a cat version of a tranquiliser or they may instinctively know it helps to keep them healthy. Cats who regularly chew catnip seem to have less problems with fleas.

An infusion made from catnip leaves is also excellent for soothing an itchy skin on both cats and dogs. Gently rubbed into the irritated skin will reduce their scratching and reduce inflammation. Catnip is not only for cats. Try a cup of catnip tea yourself at bedtime. It is safe to drink and is reputed to have a relaxing effect.

Julia Geljon

Cassava

Botanical Name: *Manihot esculenta*

Below is an article copied from ROGI News Edition 20 (Oct-Nov 2010). Thank you to Terry Sullavan for forwarding this for our information.

DESCRIPTION

Cassava is a shrubby plant growing to about 1-3m, with thin stems and attractive large palm-shaped leaves. A perennial shrub, Cassava produces a high yield of tuberous roots in 6 months to 3 years after planting. The tubers are the main part that is eaten, but the leaves can also be enjoyed as a vegetable dish. For most people, Cassava is commonly associated with tapioca. The plant grows tall, sometimes reaching 15 feet (4.5m), with leaves varying in shape and size. The edible parts are the tuberous roots and leaves. The tuber (root) is somewhat dark brown in colour, and grows up to 2 feet long.

CULTIVATION

Cassava thrives in a tropical and subtropical climate. Grow in rich soil that is high in organic matter, moist and well drained with adequate sunlight. Moreover, Cassava grows in a range of soils, and yields a crop in poor soils better than any other major food plant. As a result, fertilisation is rarely necessary. Since many cultivars are drought resistant, Cassava can survive even during the dry season when the soil moisture is low, but humidity is high.

PROPOGATION

Cassava is propagated by cuttings, by planting pieces of stem. To make cuttings, choose stems 2-4 cm thick, from the strongest plants which have already produced tubers. After the harvest, tie the selected stems in bundles. Wait at least 10 days before planting them. Keep bundles in a cool, dry place until planting time. But remember that the cuttings must not be made from the stems until you are ready to plant. Cut each stem into pieces 20-30 cm long. There should be 4-6 growth buds on each piece. Each stem can be made into 4 or 5 cuttings. To plant Cassava, push into the soil the end of the piece of stem that was nearer to the ground. Plant the cuttings in mounds or ridges. Plant the cuttings either straight or slanting. Push them well into the earth, leaving only 2 or 3 buds above ground.

NOTE:

Cassava is poisonous! In some bitter varieties, all parts of the plant are laced with a highly toxic poison (hydrocyanic or prussic acid). Sweet varieties have lower or marginal concentrations of the toxin. But the more toxic varieties produce bigger tubers! Thorough cooking dispels or denatures the harmful toxins, and makes the remaining portion safe to eat.

FOOD

Around the world, Cassava is a vital staple for about 500 million people. Cassava's starchy roots produce more food energy per unit of land than any other staple crop. Its leaves, commonly eaten as a vegetable in parts of Asia and Africa, provide vitamins and protein. Nutritionally, the Cassava is comparable to potatoes, except that it has twice the fibre content and a higher level of potassium.

In Indonesia, Cassava is used in a variety of food products, the same way potatoes are used in the U.S. They can be used as vegetables in dishes, grated to make pancakes, dried and ground into tapioca flour, or sliced and made into snack chips.



Plant of the month

Eggplant

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 December is the EGGCELLENT EGGPLANT!

Eggplants are a short-lived perennial plant 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 eggcellent 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 (*solanaceae*), and need similar care. So, just like capsicums, eggplants thrive in a fertile soil, that is free draining, to which rich compost has been added. Cover with a layer of sugar cane mulch, just not too close to the stem as it might cause collar rot or other problems.

Eggplants, much like their cousin tomatoes, 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 fruiting 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 and tasteless purple coloured eggplants need this—so pick or buy small eggplants. The cute little Lebanese and Thai eggplants, along with many more of the smaller varieties don't need salting. So here's my eggcellent tip—grow the little ones, pick small, and save yourself the effort!

Sharr Ellison



Plant Clinic

Managed and Reported by Chris McIvor

Welcome to the last plant clinic report for the year.

The first picture below shows a **flowering plant that was brought in for identification:** The Nerium Oleander is actually a member of the Dogbane family. Some of you may have the small purple flowering ground-cover plant.

All parts of the plant are toxic. Oleanders come in a range of colours from white through pinks to deep red and grow as a shrub or small tree.



Next was a question about **Pomegranate not fruiting:**

The best conditions for fruit production are full sun, pH of 5.5 to 7, water at fruit set and good pollination - so you may need more trees or bees. Trees do not generally bear until 4-5 years old with fruit on mature spurs

of wood, so pruning should be light and carried out in Winter to encourage new spur growth.



A very narrow and **deformed leaf from a Pepino** was brought in: They had been treated with long acting fertiliser about 2 months ago and all young leaves looked like this. These symptoms look very much like a virus or deficiency, but are most likely to be broad mite. The mites are too small to be seen with the naked eye, and so are often missed. Spray with Wettable Sulphur or sprinkle with Sulphur Dust (DO NOT APPLY IN HOT WEATHER). Cut off damage. Broad mites attack a very wide range of crops including flowers and solanums.

Some leaves from an 18 month old grafted **Persimmon were showing yellowing** on the edges of young ones and some "burning" on the edges of older leaves. They had been treated with organic liquid fertiliser. After much discussion, including with the "owner", we decided on a verdict of potassium deficiency. Although this had

been applied earlier, the soil is very free draining (being a sandy loam) so it would not hold fertiliser well. The trees are looking better now.



Plant Clinic will not be operating until the next "normal" meeting In February.

If you have an odd-looking pest, think your plant may be a weed or have a deficiency or a disease, then Plant Clinic may be able to help you.

Bring in as many parts of the plant as you can (fruit, leaf, root) in a sealed plastic bag and fill in the form on the 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 it is not related to organic gardening.

Public Tool Lending Library in Brisbane

Libraries are usually places associated with books, reading and speaking in hushed tones, but a new Brisbane library is breaking all the rules. Australia's first public tool library allows members to borrow power tools, lawnmowers and whipper snippers.

Sabrina Chakori came up with the idea, and is now one of 40 passionate volunteers running the **Brisbane Tool Library** out of the State Library of Queensland. Ms Chakori said it worked like a normal library, but members paid an annual membership fee of \$75 to loan tools and other household items. Hand and power tools, camping gear, kitchen appliances and party needs are just some of the items that can be borrowed.

"Not everyone needs to own a lawnmower or a whipper snipper, so sharing resources just makes sense."

The aim is to extend the life of a range of products that would otherwise end up in landfill. There are currently 150 members borrowing from a pool of 500 items, most of which have been donated.

"We're getting a lot of baby boomers donating household items when they downsize, but at the same time we're getting a lot of people aged 25 to 40 borrowing ... they live in the inner city and just want access to equipment, without buying it."

State Library of Queensland spokesman Mick Byrne said he was proud the library had been able to give the enterprising founders of the Brisbane Tool Library the support to grow their idea.

The Library also has an area where you can come and do some of the projects.

"It's a fantastic solution to a problem most people haven't even thought about or realised existed."

Tool libraries are popular in the United States and Canada, with the largest tool library in the world in Toronto. There are a number of tool libraries in Australia, but this is the first to operate out of a public library.

"We see this as the way of the future — people need to get into the mindset that they don't need to buy these things — they just need to borrow it and reduce the environmental footprint, they can save money and space"

- Sabrina Chakori, founder of Brisbane Tool Library.



A celebration of the year we have had together, and to include a look back over the last 10 years of ROGI.

Organic Christmas Feast

On offer is a *locally sourced* organic feast - buffet style serving, with nibbles, drinks and desserts.

Wednesday 12 December
6.15 for 7pm start

Please bring:

* Your own **dinner plate, bowl, glass, cup, and cutlery, in a bag** (take home to wash).

* A **donation** to the Salvo's Christmas appeal of non-perishable goods (*see right for suggestions*).

* **1-2 hand tools** (with your name on it) to be sharpened for free, for members only—a gift from ROGI.

Please note there will be no stalls on this night— no seed bank, plants or selling.

If you can help before, during or after the event, please contact Sharr 0423 503 983.

Salvos Christmas Hamper Suggestions:

- 1 litre long life milk
- 1 litre long life custard
- 375g Weetbix or similar cereal
- 500g family assorted biscuits
- 1 kg rice
- 1 litre fruit juice
- 825g tinned fruit
- 500g pasta
- 500g pasta sauce
- 3/5 pack instant 2 minute noodles
- **100g teabags (approx. 50 teabags)***
- **100g coffee (either instant or flavoured coffee satchets)***
- 1 pkt potato chips, corn chips, Pringles or pretzels
- 400g tin salad item (eg. peas/corn/beetroot)
- Tinned Fish (eg tuna, herrings, salmon)
- Nuts
- 1 fruit cake/Christmas pudding
- **200 Jam or spread (vegemite, peanut butter, honey, Nutella)***
- 1 large bag confectionery
- Christmas bonbons
- Christmas napkins
- Gift for young male

***heavy demand**

Garden Visits and Field Trips

There are no further garden visits, workshops or field trips this year.

Our first Club event for next year will be a Garden Visit:

Sunday afternoon 24/02/19 —Gabrielle Bell's property at Sheldon

Please discuss having a garden visit at your place with Toni—0402 323 704 or email events@rogi.com.au or talk to Toni Bowler at a ROGI meeting.

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

Free Tool Sharpening by Steve from Bayside Mobile Sharpening

You may bring 1-2 tools per family/person for sharpening. Please bring clean hand tools, not spades.

Write your name on each tool in indelible ink or name tag them.

Your second tool will be sharpened if there is enough time.



Seed bank news

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 (pictured right) 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.*



Our next ROGI Seed Savers meeting will be held on **TUESDAY 19 FEBRUARY 2019** at Linda Brennan's house in Capalaba from 7-8.30pm.
See Janet or Sharr at the Plant Table to register your interest.

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.

Seed Sowing Guide

December

Asparagus
Beans—snake, Madagascar, Lablab, soy, pigeon pea
Beetroot
Capsicum/Chilli
Carrot
Choko
Cucumber
Eggplant
Jicama
Lettuce
Melon—Honey, Rock, Water
Okra
Pumpkin
Radish
Rockmelon
Rosella
Silverbeet; other leafy greens
Squash
Sunflower
Sweet Corn
Sweet Potato
Tomato
Zucchini

January

Amaranth
Asparagus
Basil
Beans: Climbing, Snake
Beetroot
Borage
Capsicum/Chilli
Choko
Coriander
Cucumber
Eggplant
Jicama
Lettuce
Marigold
Melon—Honey, Rock, Water
Pigeon Peas
Purslane
Radish
Silverbeet
Soybean
Spring Onion
Squash
Sunflower
Sweet Corn
Sweet Potato
Tomatoes
Zucchini

February

Amaranth
Asparagus
Basil
Beans: Climbing, Snake
Beetroot
Borage
Capsicum/Chilli
Choko
Coriander
Cucumber
Eggplant
Jicama
Lettuce
Marigold
Pigeon Peas
Purslane
Radish
Silverbeet
Soybean
Spring Onion
Squash
Sunflower
Sweet Corn
Sweet Potato
Tomatoes
Zucchini

This 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.

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

Seed savers news

At our final Seed Savers meeting for 2018, we discussed how to select the best seeds and provide safe storage of them over time.

Some of our saved "First Fleet" Lettuce seeds will be given to the BOGI Seed Bank. We would love to hear your feedback about the First Fleet Lettuce seeds— did they germinate and did you have heaps of lettuce for Summer?



The Seed Savers Group is a free service to ROGI members. We meet bi-monthly at Linda Brennan's house in Capalaba.

Our next meeting will be held on **Tuesday 19 February 2019 from 7 to 8.30pm.**

All welcome! See Janet or Sharr at the Seed Bank & Plant Table at the February ROGI meeting for more details.

Experience the botanical delights of Borneo

We are planning (hoping) to visit Borneo next year, again, and see many of the same things we saw five years ago. Yes! It was *that* good! Too good not to share, in fact.

We toured with Ross Garden Tours and our tour leader was Libby Cameron, who is a horticulturist. It was well-organised and geared to gardeners and growers of food.

A highlight was the visit to the private garden (yes, a garden visit in Borneo!) of the family that owns the tour company *Exotic Borneo*. Martin is a botanist, so he was interesting to talk with. We have possum problems, he has monkey problems in his productive gardens!

Have a look at the last tour they did, and see if you'd like to come along too.

<http://www.rosstours.com/sabah>

Get in touch with us to discuss it, and even look at photos.

Ian and Jill Nixon 0418 717735



One of the many unusual fruits in Borneo . . . Lemon Drop Fruit

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

FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

Please send your contributions to the newsletter editor by 30 January 2019

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.

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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.

Oaklands Street Community Garden

Do you:

- Have a love of gardening and the outdoors
- Want to learn how to grow fresh fruit and vegetables organically
- Want to reconnect with the land and our food supply
- Seek companionship in an informal setting
- Want to build community

Then **Oaklands Street Community Garden** at **Alexandra Hills** welcomes you! Our garden includes common shared beds (not individual plots), and the produce grown is then shared and enjoyed by everybody, and is a regular talking point.



We are open on Sunday 2-5pm, Wednesday 9am-12pm, and Friday 9am-12pm.

Our annual membership fees are kept to a bare minimum to cover our costs and allow anyone to participate.

Family \$20-00, Single \$15-00, Concession \$10-00.

For enquiries, please call:

Glenda Brown - 0414 735 417/ Terry Sullavan - 0408 259 445