

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 guest speaker.

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 15).

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

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Echinacea purpurea, (also known as purple coneflower) has just about finished for the season. It is a perennial and can grow to 100cm. It does well in our climate if it has some shade over the heat of summer, and moist, well-drained soil. Deadheading will prolong flowering. It attracts beneficial insects such as parasitic wasps and pollinators such as bees and butterflies. Echinacea teas and tinctures (made from roots, leaves and flowers) have a long history of use for its medicinal properties.

Backyard Burblings

Hello ROGI member

By the time you get to read this the Easter holidays will have been and gone. Hopefully for most of you it was a time spent catching up with family and friends even if you didn't get to hunt for eggs in the garden.

It always seems somewhat odd to me that we in the southern hemisphere, who are moving into autumn and shorter days, celebrate what was in earlier times a rejoicing for the return of the growing season in the northern hemisphere.

Even the yearly change of Easter's date relates to the northern hemisphere: "The first Sunday after the first full moon after the spring equinox". Hence for us this year it was barely a day after the second full moon in March. I realise that Easter is firmly established as a Christian festival, but somehow its early origins as part of the cycle of the seasons remain obvious in the changing dates.

So for us in our gardens it is not a time of rejoicing at the return of a warmer sun and the growing season, but a time of preparing our gardens for less sun and cooler days.

Luckily, this year we've also had

plenty of rain, and everything looks green and lush as if it was spring. In other words, an excellent time to clean up all those summer weeds, prune and mulch the fruit trees and make compost to feed the gardens.

Two weeks ago, on March 24th at IndigiScapes ROGI did just that. Various members brought their weeds, grass clippings, prunings, paper, cardboard and vegetable scraps etc. to demonstrate what to do with all the garden and kitchen waste we regularly generate.

It was incredible to see the piles of materials that got turned into hot compost, made into no-dig gardens and got used for the worm farms and Bokashi bucket.

As the theme of ROGI's display was *Closing the Circle on Waste*, we were able to demonstrate many ways of reusing various materials. Old paling fences were made into garden beds and compost bins, wire cages were used for no-dig gardens and a worm farm was made from two polystyrene broccoli boxes.

Many of the visitors on the day were amazed to find how much garden and kitchen waste can actually be recycled in various ways to produce excellent humus in a short space of time.

While the actual number of visitors to IndigiScapes on the day was only around 750, the ROGI site was a hive of activity with kids potting seedlings, rolling workshops, plant and seed sales, chicken

breeds' display, unusual produce, raffles, and of course loads of ROGI information.

IndigiScapes' management were very happy with our result:

"Thank you for the huge effort ROGI put in, the site looked amazing and you seemed to have a captive audience"

This result would not have been possible without the hard work of our 20-plus volunteers. We all owe them a huge vote of thanks for making it a memorable day by sharing their time and energy.

Happy Autumn Gardening

Julia Geljon

ROGI president



Ruth and Rhonda with children (and Dad) making pots from newspaper prior to potting up seedlings in them.

Coming Events

April	Thur 5	BOGI meeting	
	Wed 11	ROGI meeting	
	Sun 15	Garden visit	See p 13
May	Tues 1	Herb Society meeting	
	Thurs 3	BOGI meeting	
	Wed 9	ROGI meeting	
	Sun 20	Garden Visit	See p 13
	Sun 27	Herb Awareness Day	See p 7

Membership Information

2018 renewals are now well-and-truly overdue!

- **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

April Meeting

About Biodynamics

You may have wondered just what biodynamics is all about. This will be your chance to find out, and to ask questions.

The two key goals of biodynamic gardening are defining organic food growing practices (1) to create sustainable soil improvement thus (2) leading to greater plant vitality.

Peter Kearney has a wealth of organic and biodynamic gardening experience and is a speaker on working with biodynamics in urban food growing at national and international conferences, as well as his regular workshops.

He will give you an overview of how biodynamics works and explain how it can be incorporated into organic food growing of any scale.

You will learn why biodynamics creates a wholistic balance of life in the garden and opens new pathways for appreciating the mysteries of life in your soil and plants.

"I have many years of hands on practice with a deep study of the key philosophies that make biodynamics unique. I combine this earthy, yet philosophical style with humour, having taken some time to design a presentation of the sometimes-mind-stretching concepts of biodynamics into something that is digestible no matter the person's starting point."



Peter mentoring a student of biodynamic gardening

Ashley from Mt Cotton Organic Farm will be selling his selected produce for sale outside the hall entrance.
Remember - bring your reusable bags, boxes, baskets etc.

March speaker

Amanda Scibilia

Brisbane Certified
Organic (meat)
Ormiston

Amanda is passionate about doing the right thing by both the humans and the animals involved in her business ... and her passion absolutely sparked as she told us her story. Here is the substance of what she talked about (we were so enthralled, we forgot to take notes!):

Why did I decide to become organic? First let me give you some history ...

With a farming background, and having studied grazing animal production at UQ Gatton Agricultural College in the late 80s, I've seen both sides of farming (good and evil) and I will ALWAYS choose good.

I was raised in the Gold Coast Hinterland with grandparents owning cattle properties in Northern NSW. I worked on a few cattle and sheep stations as a jillaroo and wool classer and, after the 1989 Tiananmen Square tragedy, I was forced back to the city and was involved in the wine industry.

I don't believe sheep should be grazing in hot regions of Australia. Many years ago after I finished at Gatton, I went on to study for my wool classing certificate. One of the big sheds I was working in at Longreach had a profound effect on me as the sheep were so heat stressed. I knew then that this going about it all wrong.

When I had the wake-up call, coinciding with the impending birth of my daughter, I knew I had to rethink everything. So now I'm back full circle and involved in the organic world for food production.

For 12 years I have owned Brisbane Certified Organic, an ethical certified organic meat supplier. Ethical treatment of animals is paramount to me personally, so therefore reflects my business in every way. I visit my farmers often, and never leave without learning a little more about how their farming methods affect so positively the humane aspect of grazing and Earth health. It makes me

very happy that I am promoting such a special niche market, supporting organic farmers, who do it tougher than most, and helping people understand where their food comes from.

My customers, my farmers and I have much in common in that we know that not only does organic food taste so much better than conventionally grown food, (let's face it, we wouldn't buy it if it didn't) but we all sleep a little better knowing that we can contribute to a sustainable farming system that holds humane animal practices at the forefront of grazing animal processes, and also farms the Earth in a manner which preserves the natural balance of its makeup.

I will only source my produce from organic grazing properties which believe in the ethical treatment of animals and who are strictly certified organic. The humane treatment of grazing usually goes hand in hand with certified organic farming. However, there are plenty of organic graziers who finish on grain! Personally, I don't believe that cattle and sheep should eat grain. So my graziers do not finish their animals on grain, which gives you a more succulent flavour to the meat and I believe, a better life for the animal.

My lamb producer is near Stanthorpe where, for most of the year, it is cool, if not snowing! Along with the humane hands of Andrew and Helen, my farmers, the lamb is just simply amazing.

My pork farmer has no sheds at all on her property. She is truly free range and, of course, certified organic. As her piggies farrow (make a nest for birthing) outside, there is always room to move. Her pigs are so happy and are doing what pigs usually do, wallow in mud and hang around together in bushes and under trees. Wonderful!



About my beautiful chicken farmers; from Kilkivan near Gympie, their chickens are outside every day of their lives. Most people believe that free range is good. Free range is not always free range. When chickens are certified organic, you can be sure that these girls are roaming around in paddocks during the day. They have access to shade at all times, but their barns are wide open and the girls are only closed in at night to roost. This is a normal pattern of chickens—they roost in tree branches at night. This property has an abattoir, so there is no travelling and they also kill by hand. This chicken is like no other chicken on the market and I will never substitute.

I remember one time when there was a period of extreme heat, the conventionally-raised chickens confined to those hot long sheds were dropping and dying slowly, like flies: it was so cruel. At the same time, our chooks sailed through it with no losses at all.

Once the animals are delivered to my shop in Trade Street in Ormiston, they are butchered and packaged. I make the ham, bacon, corned silver-side, beef jerky and bone broth myself. Nothing nasty goes into these. My cured products are not red or pink, they are brown. They don't have nitrate or nitrite compounds ... and they taste amazing. They won't keep a million years, but they don't need to—you'll eat them before then!

Why not pop in and visit me sometime and you can see for yourself what I'm all about.

Love, Amanda

These are the rules:

- No herbicides or pesticides can be used on the farm
- No chemical fertilizers can be used on the farm
- No growth-promotants can be given to the animals
- No hormones can be given to the animals
- Genetic modification is banned
- Animals must be given green pastures to roam for the majority of their lives
- Animals must be only fed grass and organically-certified feed
- All animal by-products are banned

March speaker
Marion Davis

Wray Organic Market
Cleveland

Marion spoke about organic certification and the reasons for growing and eating organic. Her talk was reduced due to time limitations: here is the planned presentation.

Certified organic retailer in the business of farming

My husband Scott and I opened our Wray Organic store in Cleveland in September 2012 - almost six years ago. It is a one-stop certified organic (CO) store - we offer meat, dairy, bread, milk, grocery, homewares, clothing and Australia's largest range of CO Australian fruit and veg. Families shop for everyday items. Unlike so many 'health' food or 'organic' stores, our focus is not on pills and supplements. We like to leave this in the hands of health professionals to administer. We are organic grocers.

We also offer a CO café. All cafe ingredients are CO, milk, coffee, bread, eggs, fruit - everything.

What is a certified organic retailer?

A member of Australian Organic ACO

We are a member of Australian Organic, the parent company of Australian Certified Organic or ACO. ACO is an Australian Government approved certification mark.

Products wearing the ACO Bud logo must follow requirements set out by the Australian Certified Organic Standard which is a 100 or so page document. There are six certifiers in Australia, ACO being one of them and about 400 throughout the world.

Certification Standards

Organic certification is the world's most widely-used, secure and impermeable traceability system.

Certified organic farmers, producers and



manufacturers must prove that every aspect of their process is compliant to organic standards in their country.

Australia is arguably the strictest, requiring 95% certified ingredients and the other 5% to be of natural origin.

Every single certified product can be traced back to its origin. For example, a bottle of certified wine can be traced back to the exact vineyard its grapes came from; a single coffee bean can be traced back to the plantation in which it grew. Using certification, we can pinpoint the exact field where an apple was picked.

The certification process ensures every stage in the 'chain of custody' between the producer and the consumer is secure and meets organic requirements. This process is what empowers consumers to trust organic brands.

The process includes checking a producer's Organic Management Plan and conducting an annual audit. They visit farms, packing facilities, warehouses, stores and manufacturing operations to check their practices meet organic standards and requirements. Only when organic requirements are met does a producer receive certification.

Audited

How does organic certification work for a retailer?

Each year an independent auditor visits our store to audit our shop and café to check that we are indeed offering CO products. These same auditors visit growers, processors and distributors to check that when the product says it is CO it is.

Most of the chemicals that are tested for are in the form of fertilisers, pesticides, herbicides, fungicides and weedicides. We then receive a report showing these results. Luckily these results always come back as zeros and thus we continue to be a CO retailer.

The auditors take away samples of our fresh produce to be tested for about 350 different chemicals, all of which are commonly used in Australia on commercial produce.

Even the windows, floors etc are cleaned with CO cleaning products.

Guarantee

Once the word 'natural' was used to sell a product. Now the buzz word is 'organic'. But the trouble is that anyone can say that a product is organic.

There is many a farmers' market or product label, where the stand holder or label will be promoting the product as 'organic', but the only true guarantee to us as consumers is if it is 'certified organic'. The world seems to be flooded with 'green washing' in recent years - beware of fakes.

That's why we decided to become a CO retailer and cafe. It's our guarantee to our customers that when we say it's 'organic', it is!

Being a certified organic retailer Business

What a wonderful business to be involved in. We are in the food business. The CO food business. The food we offer hasn't been treated with methyl bromide, it hasn't been treated to increase shelf life and it hasn't been grown with synthetic pesticides, herbicides, growth hormones and antibiotics or packaged with any number of preservatives.

Our food contains no genetically modified ingredients, because GM is prohibited in a CO product. Since Australian legislation doesn't require foods made with GM ingredients to be labelled, if consumers want to avoid GM, they choose CO.

So we're in the business of offering clean, nutritious food to Australian families.

Produce

Fresh produce is our favourite part of the business. We offer a huge selection of CO Australian produce. Kiwi fruit is the only exemption to this as it is from NZ and BioGro compliant.

We deal with our farmers direct whenever possible. The first thing they do on their farm is show you their soil. They'll bend down and pick up a handful or they'll lift the mulch around the apple



March speaker Marion Davis *Continued*

trees to show a soil teeming with life ... worms and bugs, and the soil is moist and aerated.

The farmer will tell you '*it's all about getting the soil right,*' they communicate what seems so complex with these simple words:

'Healthy soil = healthy plants = healthy animals = healthy us'.

Challenges

As suppliers of produce to the community, we are dealing with farming and all its challenges. For example, some years ago for a few months, we had no lemons. Early February our CO lemon supplier had lost his crop due to extreme heat in the Mildura region. Twenty tonne of lemons dropped from the trees onto the ground.

Someone may have lemons growing in their backyard: "*I've got a tree full of lemons, we don't spray them, why don't you buy those?*" The first thing we'll ask, "*Are they certified organic?*" "*No, they're not certified organic but we don't spray them*". Well, we can't accept them. No offence to the lovely backyard lemons but we need a system where someone is checking. We don't know where this lemon tree is located, or the state of the soil it's growing in. We cannot possibly 'police' all of our farmers and suppliers on a daily basis.

So we had no lemons on our shelves, which for a retailer is challenging; not only do you appear unprofessional - a fruit and veg shop with no lemons?! - you also miss out on a sale!

Out-of-stocks – substituting...

In the CO world it's about substitution. Let's talk about those lemons again. When someone wants lemons for tonight's salad dressing, we suggest they substitute with grapefruit or limes or apple cider vinegar. Olive oil and grapefruit juice is delicious; olive oil and apple cider vinegar, drizzled over green salad, works well with fish.

Out-of-stocks challenge us to think outside the box; often we discover an amazing alternative.

Once we had no lettuce due to excessive rain. We substituted with Asian greens - pak choi and bok choi. We have customers who now always use raw Asian greens in salads and have never gone back to lettuce!

In season

What we offer is what was picked recently. It's what's in season. For example Aussie grapes are available from January to about May. We enjoy grapes for about five months. Once the season ends there are no grapes until next January.

Apples are picked from late January and are available until about November. So by November or December we have no apples on our shelves. Customers actually get used to this and indeed embrace it, once they understand. We are constantly educating our customers about what's 'in season' so they learn to eat 'in season'.

A 'market'

We call ourselves Wray Organic Market because we are a true market. Customers get used to visiting the store and looking at what's available that day and then deciding what they will cook. Just like you would if you visited a market in an Italian village. What's available that day is what's in season and just been picked. Very simple isn't it?

Communicating our message of food quality

Appearance

One of the first things that communicates food quality is appearance:

size – In the CO world it's not about the size. For example, the peaches and apples can be quite small.

shape – CO produce is not always 'perfect'. For example this odd-shaped carrot would be

generally rejected in the non-organic world.

smell – You can pick up a CO fruit or veg and it smells amazing. So often fruit and veg has no smell.

Taste

Communicating food quality is usually about the taste. Taste is very subjective; we often hear people say that tomatoes don't taste like tomatoes used to. Just like your own home-grown tomatoes, CO tomatoes have that 'old-fashioned' true tomato taste.

Consumer demand for quality

Once you have tasted the difference in a variety of CO foods, you will appreciate the quality. This is what people want.

The organic market in Australia is one of the fastest growing business sectors in Australia at over 15% each year. Approx 70% of Australian shoppers claim to have bought at least one CO product in the past 12 months.

Nutrition

One of the first things people notice when they start eating CO food is they eat less and have increased energy levels. There has been a number of studies that highlight the superior nutrition that exists in CO food.

One four year study, funded by the EU and conducted by Professor Carlo Leifert, found that organic fruit and veg contained up to 40% more antioxidants. The study also revealed that organic fruit and veg had higher levels of minerals such as iron, magnesium and zinc. Anti-oxidant levels in milk from organic herds were up to 90% higher than from non-organic herds. Is it possible that CO food gives you more bang for your buck?

Summary

CO food provides you with real food quality, most importantly nutrition, and with us being a CO retailer, this is something you can trust.



photo by editor

Dear ROGI member,

Our 21 year old son, Jarod, has autism. We are trying to develop his skills in as many areas as we can and at the same time, give him the sense of wellbeing, that comes from being involved in meaningful work and community life. With assistance and guidance of his support workers, he has been involved in running his micro business Veggie Van since 2015, delivering vegetables, fruit and eggs to a small group of customers (currently four families we already know).

We grow, with varying degrees of success, some vegetables and fruit and Jarod visits the markets each week to purchase any bargains.

However he is actively involved in a lot of different procedures such as doing up the invoice, washing, packing, weighing, counting the produce, growing sprouts, etc.

One of the main reasons I joined ROGI initially, was to learn more about organic gardening, to pass on to him and to see how on a community level he could become involved in a friendly group.

The following idea is a way I think both could happen... Instead of buying from the markets, it would be great if he had a few suppliers, local gardeners, possibly like yourself, who believe in growing healthy produce as organically as possible.

VEGGIE VAN



Farm fresh to your door

jarods.ipad@outlook.com

LOCAL

ORGANIC

VEG

EXCHANGE

TO DELIVER

Maybe you have some extra space in your garden that you want to utilise. Maybe there are times when your garden is producing a surplus and you don't know what to do with the excess. If you are interested in selling your extra produce with Jarod, He would pick it up from your place and pay you an agreed percentage of what he sells it for. This may offset some of your gardening costs.

You may find you would like to become a customer as well, in that way exchanging your produce for other local produce.

I think it could work, and I really want to give this project a good try. Let me know if you are interested in becoming a supplier or finding out more about this and what we currently do.

You are welcome to email or phone me. We are hoping to add new suppliers from May and in that way eventually phase out going to the markets. No quantity is too small as we intend to keep the customer base small and manageable and it's more about the experience for Jarod, rather than the profits.

Gabrielle Bell
bell.g.m@outlook.com Ph: 0418 787 865

His favourite part is delivering the orders to his customers, as he finds travelling around relaxing for his sensory system.



Ladies, Lords & Goodpeople ~
the Queensland Herb Society
in 2018 proudly present a

Medieval herb Awareness

Join us for a fascinating day of herbal discovery as we explore the importance of herbs in this historic time.

- Discover a wide range of medicinal and culinary herbs and plants for sale.
- Browse a vast range of stalls: preserves, teas, coffee, spices, skin care, gardening and more.
- Feast at Café Sage with herb inspired, home baked food with a medieval twist.
- FREE herbal talks and demonstrations with medieval relevance and interest.
- Delight in roving medieval entertainers.
- Dress In medieval fashion if you wish!

Sunday 27th May
9am to 3pm
Albion Peace Hall
102 McDonald Rd, Windsor
Entry is FREE.

Please note: No ATM on site.

Email: qhs@live.com.au

Telephone: 07 3279 6037

Visit our website closer to the date for speaker timetable
www.qldherbsociety.org.au

This event is supported by the Lord Mayor's Suburban Initiative Fund
and Hamilton Ward Councillor, David McLachlan.



Plant of the month

Leek

At the shops the humble leek (organically grown) costs around three dollars each, making them a vegetable that many people don't cook due to the cost.

But ... as organic gardeners, we can grow 20 plus leeks for less than three dollars making this a wonderful cheap vegetable to grow, then we don't have to miss out on the joy of cooking and eating leeks.

Whole leeks ... sliced down the middle, washed out, sautéed with lemon, garlic, butter and toasted walnuts. Oh, take me to heaven now!!

The leek (*Allium ampeloprasum*) is an easy onion to grow in our subtropical climate,

They require finely textured, well-composted soil with well-rotted manure or mushroom compost dug into it a few weeks before planting. Always provide a free-draining bed for leeks as they have a strong body to hold up and soil with a pH close to neutral (7) will be spot on for leeks.

Plant seedlings in holes 15cm apart in rows 30–45cm apart. Make planting holes with your finger (or a dibber) and drop in the seedlings. The trick for growing sturdy plants with long stalks is to make sure that two-thirds of the seedling is below soil level.

Water immediately after planting. Enough soil will wash into the hole around the seedling to cover its roots, so don't backfill. The seedlings may initially flop over but will recover in a few days.

Then over the next few months feed and

water them regularly and you will have tall beautiful sweet leeks

Leeks take around 100–140 days to fully mature. A really great thing about leeks is that you can leave them in the ground and pick them the day you plan to cook with them. This can be from the 100 days old till around 18 months after planting. Their quality will start to deteriorate at flowering stage.

Leeks produce viable seed which, when mature, will turn black. (See photo of leek flower-head below with black seeds just visible inside some flowers) If you want to harvest seeds, grow only one cultivar so it remains true to type.

Leeks truly are so easy to grow I thought I would teach you how to clean a leek. Leeks need to be cleaned before cooking. It's such a disheartening experience when you have forgotten this in your meal prep and you tuck into your meal only to find mud in it.

First, remove the dark green leaf tips and the root ends. Compost these, plant the root ends back in the garden for another yield of leeks or reserve for stew or stocks.

Then, slice each leek in half from top to bottom or slice into thin rings (whatever look you are wanting from the leek's shape).

Rinse in a large bowl of water giving them a gentle stir or shake to remove any soil or grit between the layers.

Scoop them out into a colander to drain.

You may decide to dry them between layers of teatowel if you want them really dry.

There you have it! Clean, sliced leeks that can be used in a variety of recipes.

In the seed bank we have the giant Carentan leek \$1 for members and \$2 for non-members.





Closing the Circle on Waste

Saturday 24th March
9am to 2pm



1. Gabrielle and Rhonda showed children (and parents) how to make pots out of newspaper. Then they planted tiny seedling 'plugs' into them
2. The seedling area catered for much browsing and buying of plants raised by Janet
3. Through the seed and seedling tent—ROGI members are getting ready for the crowds
4. Linda and Julia demonstrating the building up of another compost heap—a very hands-on workshop
5. The entrance to the ROGI area showing some of the 'gardens in baskets' which were raffled during the day, with the information table to the right
6. Jill (and Ann) demonstrated how to make a no-dig garden using stuff that could have been thrown out
7. Chris and Russell showed how to make various types of worm farms and what to feed the worms
8. George's tent - a cornucopia of amazing, unusual, interesting and unusual plants and produce
(Inset) The jackfruit (to scale) was cut up for tasting



Plant Clinic

Q: My guavas have spots on them. Is this from fruit fly? What can I do about it?



A: It looks like fruit-spotting bug is responsible. If it was fruit fly it would be more likely to have soft spots, and of course little 'grubs' crawling around inside. The best preventative is exclusion - deny access to the fruit by either pest. You can bag each fruit or net the entire tree.

Either way, the fruit is till edible. Some recommend that you eat guava with your eyes closed or in the dark; that way you can't see the wriggly little grubs, and you can't taste them either! Protein for free!



Guava cut open. The fruit is fine to eat.

Q: What is this 'bug' crawling on my fig leaves?



A: It is figleaf beetle. Its black slug-like larvae feeds off fig leaves. You can control these by spraying with molasses, soap or spinosad (a bacteria-derived product). Or you can net the entire tree to prevent the beetles arriving in the first place. At this time of year the figs will be losing their leaves prior to their dormant period, so don't worry about it at this time. The small photos (courtesy of <http://www.thefigsofaustralia.com/fig-beetle-poneridia-semipullata>) are of the eggs and the larvae—watch out for them next season.

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.

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.

A plenitude of papayas



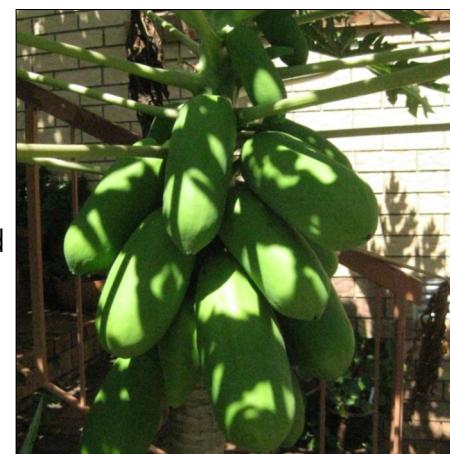
We have a problem. A good problem. Our red papayas are producing more than plenty—and we will be having trouble keeping up with them once the ripening gets into full gear.

These three trunks belong to one of our trees. The other tree (below) has more fruit on it, and they're bigger as well.

Let me know if you have a use for green papayas (pickles, salad, etc) and you can have some now.

Later on, there'll be surplus ripe papayas—maybe you'd like to do an exchange.

Jill
0418717735



Garden transformation

John Harris is a dialysis patient and he decided to build me a new garden. I used to have one big garden, in which I planted everything together.

Instead, he built me three compost bays and divided the rest into small beds. Then he paved all around them, and put a net over it all. Also, he put in sprinkler system with taps on each garden.

He dug each garden, then put in lucerne, then soil on top with rock minerals, blood and bone, chook and horse manure, and organic soil.

I have just planted beans, snow peas, red and sugarloaf cabbage, broccoli, cauliflower, radish, kohlrabi, tomato, silver beet.

Thank you, John, for my garden. I love it.

Rose Harris

You are most welcome to send us stories about what has been happening in your garden. Ed.

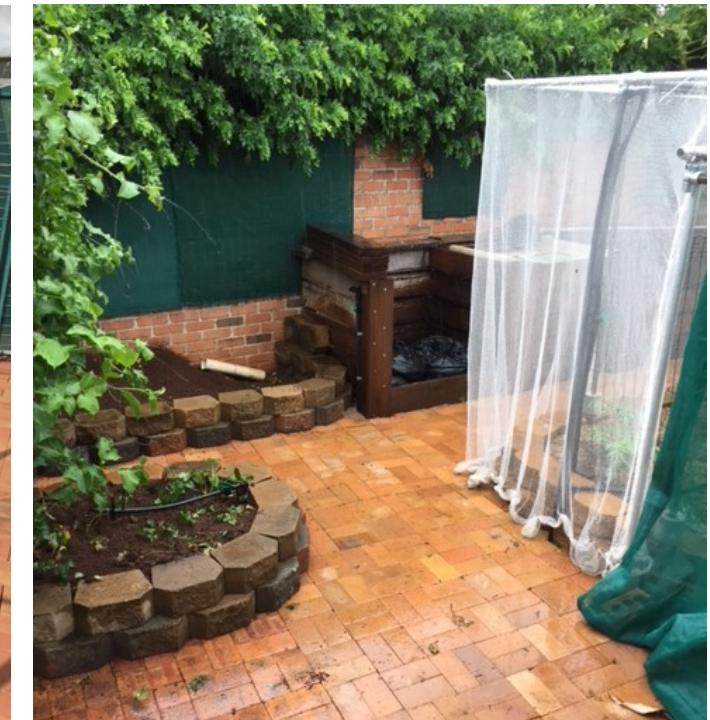
Clockwise from right:
John hard at work
(note the rich
'Redlands' soil);

the completed
beds ready for
planting, surround-
ed by brick paving;

one of the beds
has net curtains to
exclude pests;

the gardens are
looking lush—note
the taut netting
high above;

the three bay
compost area.



Book Reviews

These books have been in the library for some time, so I thought we could revisit them. Maybe there's one for you.

A Year of Slow Food:

Four Seasons of Growing and Making Your Own Food in the Australian Countryside

Many people yearn to get into the country on a bit of fertile land and be as self-sufficient as possible ... for as long as they can stick it out. The ROGI library has five such books that I'm aware of, and this is one of them.

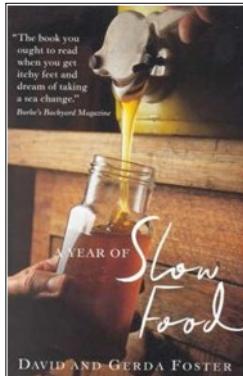
Twenty five years ago David and Gerda Foster, with eight children between them, moved to the southern highlands of NSW for their attempt. They point out that this book is not about the 'Slow Food Movement'. This is food that takes time—time to grow and time to prepare and cook. Each week has a recipe using seasonal food; for some he notes how long it took—for example, four months to grow the broccoli for dinner.

They did the lot; chopped wood, made cheese and bread, kept bees and a cow, and just about kept ahead of entropy in their run-down house.

Their climate differs greatly from ours, but nevertheless it's interesting to read of their challenges and successes. Also interesting that David (an award-winning author) did the house and garden while Gerda worked at the local prison; she used fresh food as part of her therapy sessions.

Reviewed by Jill Nixon

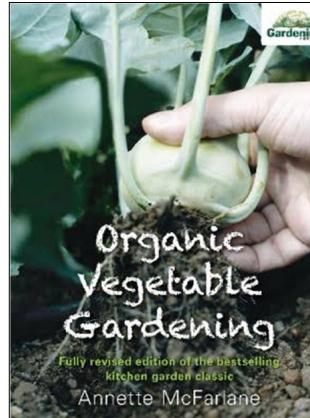
If you read a book that would be valuable for our library please tell a committee member know about it—see back page.
We welcome reviews from readers of ROGI library books you've read. Please!



Books by Annette McFarlane.

Annette lives in south east Queensland, so her books are particularly suitable for us who, like her, garden here.

If you are a beginner gardener you will gain much by working your way through each of these. Experienced gardeners usually have their own copies and refer to them often.

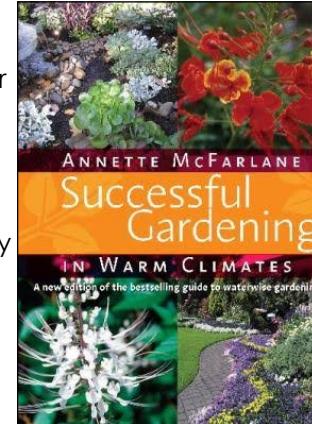


We aim to put a review of new books in ROGI News before they are added to the library. If you'd like the privilege of being the first to read a new book, and then write about it, please let me know on info@rogi.com.au

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

We also have pH test kits and needles for sewing shade cloth for you to borrow.

Quite a while ago our refractometer went missing from the library. We want it back. If you know where it is, please arrange for it to appear at a ROGI meeting or garden visit. No questions asked.



Refractometer aka Brix meter

ROGI has owned a refractometer for several years. However we have been unable to locate it and thus have been unable to use it.

Rhonda Binns has very kindly offered ROGI members the use of hers.

It will be available, for the first time, at the ROGI Garden Visit on Sunday 15th April, at which time you can learn how to use it. From then on, Rhonda will have it at each ROGI meeting, so ask her about it at the membership table.

What is it used for?

To quote the company from whom we bought it, '*This simple, robust instrument can utilise just a couple of drops of sap or juice to provide valuable data for crop management. It measures brix levels (total dissolved solids) which give an indication of plant sugars, minerals and vitamin content. The link between high brix levels and inherent pest and disease resistance has been conclusively established. Good brix levels also ensure good taste, longer shelf-life and better yields.*'

So come along to the garden visit to see it being used.



Top 10 butterfly plants for south-east Queensland by Helen Schwencke

Plants	Butterflies
Climbing senna (<i>Senna gaudichaudii</i>)	Yellow migrant, small grass-yellow, large grass-yellow
Corky milk-vine (<i>Secamone elliptica</i>)	Common crow, blue tiger
Emu foot (<i>Cullen tenax</i>)	Chequered swallowtail, common grass-blue, tailed pea-blue
Karamat (<i>Hygrophila angustifolia</i>)	Chocolate argus, meadow argus, varied eggfly, dainty grass-blue
Love flower (<i>Pseuderanthemum variabile</i>)	Australian leafwing, blue argus, bluebanded eggfly, danaid eggfly, varied eggfly
Mangrove wax-flower vine (<i>Cynanchum carnosum</i>)	Swamp tiger, lesser wanderer, common crow
Native mulberry (<i>Pipturus argenteus</i>)	Jezebel nymph, speckled line-blue, yellow admiral
Thornless caper (<i>Capparis lucida</i>)	Caper white, chalky pearl-white, caper gull
Zig zag vine (<i>Melodorum leichhardtii</i>)	Four-barred swordtail, pale triangle, eastern dusk-flat
Finger lime (<i>Citrus australasica</i>), also citrus: mandarin, lime, orange trees	Orchard swallowtail, fuscous swallowtail, dainty swallowtail



Clockwise from left:
Caper white; Swamp tiger;
Meadow argus; Swallowtail;
Common crow; Blue tiger;
Australian leafwing; Corky
milk vine; Love flower;
Common crow caterpillar,
Climbing senna.
Many native local host
plants are available at
IndigiScapes for \$2.50 each.

Garden Visits

Sunday 15 April 2pm Robyn Dwyer (rescheduled from March)

Sunday 20 May Ruth Bolomey's garden at Capalaba

Field Trips

Nothing is confirmed, but we are investigating visiting various places: **Spurtopia at Fernvale (possibly in early June), Currumbin Valley, Byron Bay area, Sunshine Coast Hinterland.**

As always, space is limited, so book early. Please book with Toni on 0402 323 704 or events@rogi.com.au or at the ROGI meeting.

Our Garden Visit calendar is full for 2018 (except for December). If you'd like to put your garden on a waiting list in case of cancellation - as happened in 2017 - please get in touch with Toni.

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



Seed bank happenings

ROGI Seedsavers

The inaugural Seedsavers meeting was a resounding success. An enthusiastic band of members rolled out to learn about the authentic artfulness of saving seeds. The aims of the group are to develop knowledge for growing and saving seeds, to build our resources and diversity and as Janet says, to help people to grow flowers and food.

We'll meet again on Tuesday 15 May, 7-8.30pm, to learn about how to successfully save seeds from 'wet' veggies such as eggplant, tomatoes and more.

Connect with Janet Crighton at the next ROGI meeting if you'd like to join the ROGI Seedsavers group.

Linda Brennan
ROGI Seedsavers tutor

Plant your own seeds at the next meeting

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

At home, you need to:

- keep the mixture moist and keep pots in a protected well-lit, shaded spot
- harden off seedlings: gradually increase 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 ...
Good Bug Mix.**

Sharr Ellison

New seeds in stock

Novella peas: A unique self-supporting podding pea with tendrils rather than leaves. The sweet, plump peas are produced in abundance on the top of the bush for easy harvesting. 70 days to harvest



Beetroot 'Bulls Blood' This beautiful beetroot has deep reddish-purple metallic leaves! The young leaves are delicious and very popular in salad mixes. Beets are good too, especially harvested as baby beets. The beetroots are dark red with pretty pink rings inside.



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 to

be reused, especially the 4-cell ones. Other clean use pots, small sizes only up to 12cm diameter. Square pots are good.

Our seed-raising mix (a blend of vermiculite, coir peat, perlite and biochar) works quite well. Now you can get some for your own use. We put it in used yogurt or ice cream containers.

Fifty cents a litre. We can offer good prices as we source well and we are not-for-profit.

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.

Seed Sowing Guide

April

Artichoke; Jerusalem artichoke

Asparagus

Bean: Lablab, Madagascar

Bean—French

Beetroot

Broccoli

Brussels sprouts

Cabbage

Capsicum/Chilli

Cauliflower

Carrot

Celery

Chicory

Endive

Florence fennel

Kohlrabi

Leeks

Lettuce

Onions/garlic

Parsnip

Peas

Potatoes

Radish

Silver beet

Spinach: Brazilian/Egyptian/

Warrigal/ Kangkong

Sweet potato

Tomato

Yacon

May

Artichoke; Jerusalem artichoke

Asparagus

Bean: Broad, French

Beetroot

Broccoli

Brussels sprouts

Cabbage

Capsicum/Chilli

Cauliflower

Carrot

Celery

Chicory

Endive

Florence fennel

Kohlrabi

Leeks

Lettuce

Onions/garlic

Parsnip

Peas

Potatoes

Radish

Silver beet

Spinach & Other spinach: Brazilian/Egyptian/Warrigal,

Kangkong

Swede

Sweet potato

Tomato

Turnip

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 pack for members. \$2 non-members.

For a list of the seed bank stock, <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 plant with its name and variety 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.

Did you know?

You can go online and read every edition of ROGI News since September 2014. Go to www.rogi.com.au/resources.php and browse.

Germinating peas (and beans)

If you like to get your peas/beans off to an early start (perhaps it is too wet to sow into the garden as the seeds may rot), here's a way to do it.



Put some kitchen paper on a large plate, place some seeds (well-spaced) on the paper, and then cover with another sheet of paper. Keep the paper just damp (use a spray bottle or similar). The seeds will germinate in about a week.

Then you can plant them, carefully (they are just babies), out into pots or the garden, if the rain has stopped.



If you have spare produce from your garden or are looking for something in particular, this just may help.

Have a look at the website:
<https://search.spareharvest.com>
Thanks Linda Barrett for the tip.

Good idea.
Use a 'bottle-top waterer' to provide a gentle spray for delicate seedlings and indoor plants. The tops fit on any standard soft drink bottle.



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

May Newsletter Deadline Please send your contributions to the newsletter editor by **18 April**

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



This is how it works:

- Pick up 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.

Carry a few ROGI 'business cards' with your name on them in your purse or wallet.

Then when you are chatting with someone at a plant centre, you can give them one and invite them to the next ROGI meeting.

Find them on the supper tables.



INSPIRING THE GROWING COMMUNITY

MEETINGS: Guest speakers, supper, helpful advice and support, swap and share table, meet like-minded gardeners, discuss experiences

6.15 for 7.00pm start
1st Tuesday every month except Jan
Indigiscapes, Runnymede Rd, Capalaba

LIBRARY – large range of books, magazines and DVDs

SEED BANK – organic seeds for sale
ROGI SHOP – organic pest control & nutritions

FIELD TRIPS – Low cost or free

NEWSLETTER – Monthly, informative and educational

GARDEN VISITS – to a member's garden monthly
GUESTS WELCOME

info@rogi.com.au www.rogi.com.au

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

Other gardening groups using organic methods:

Brisbane Organic Growers Inc (BOGI)—1st Thursday every month (ex 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

Sanseveria plants use the crassulacean acid metabolism process, which absorbs carbon dioxide and releases oxygen at night. This purportedly makes them suitable bedroom plants.

Since the leaves are potentially poisonous if ingested, they are not recommended for children's bedrooms.

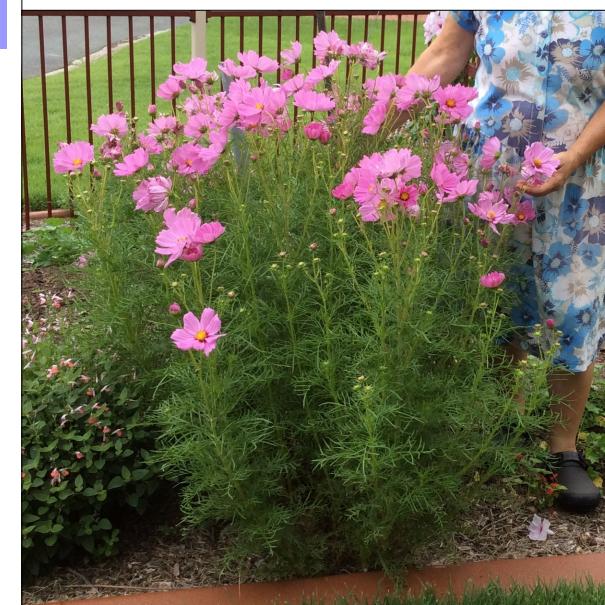
Sansevieria species are believed to act as good air purifiers by removing toxins (such as formaldehyde, xylene and toluene) from the air, thereby gaining a reputation as a good cure or prevention for sick building syndrome.

They prefer good light and are drought-resistant. They thrive on neglect.

Easiest propagation is by division of overcrowded clumps of leaves.



Above: Sansevieria cylindrica in flower



Cosmos—pink single
This beautiful stand of cosmos is growing in Garry and Sophie's garden.

One of the 23 000 members of the daisy family, most cosmos are annuals, but self-seed readily, so will come up every year. Flowering is from spring to autumn. The very tall varieties will need some support.

They are hardy and fairly disease-free. In fact, they like doing their own thing, so no need to fuss over them. They are very attractive to beneficial insects.

Something to think about when spring comes around.