

ROGI News

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

**Salvation Army Church
Cnr McDonald Rd & Macarthur St
ALEXANDRA HILLS**

Admission

Members: Gold coin

Visitors: \$5

Please bring a plate of food - savoury/sweet or nibbles preferably home-made.

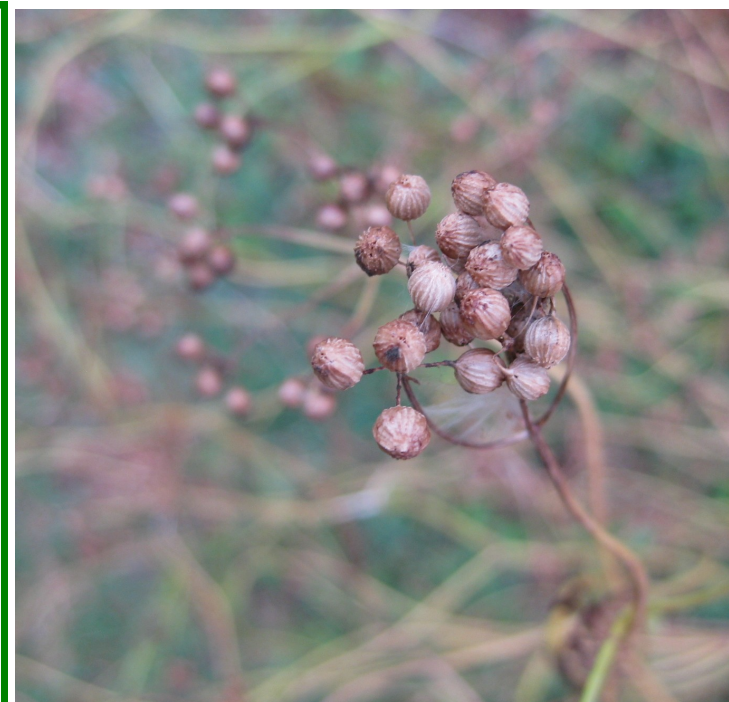
Tea/coffee provided

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

See you Wednesday ...

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Ripe coriander seeds. If you've left your coriander to flower (a good idea, as beneficial insects love them), they should be setting seed now.

Let nature take its course and the seeds will drop and many will germinate and grow. Or collect and save seed to sow when and where you wish.

Coriander bolts rapidly in hot weather so it's a good idea to sow seeds every few weeks to maintain a ready supply of coriander leaves.

The seeds may be used in cooking to add spice and fragrance.

Jill's Jottings

Hello fellow gardeners

This edition of ROGI News is chock-full of information to help you with your food-growing over our increasingly-challenging and seemingly-longer summer season.

Read about the mildew on your cucurbits, growing sweet corn, pollinating your zucchini and pumpkins, being patient when you discover aphids on your dill, what to do with the cocoons of yellow eggs on your kale, growing snow peas and sugar snap peas and snake beans, and how to identify some of the critters in your garden.

More people are becoming aware of the importance of the creatures that live below our feet in the soil. Last month, I wrote about this in reference to a book I was reading *The Soil will Save Us* by Kristin Ohlson.

Now I'm reading *Composting* by Tim Marshall, an Australian who has also written *Weed, Bug, The New Organic Gardener*, and *Prisoners of Geography*. The subtitle of this book is *The Ultimate Organic Guide to Recycling Your Garden*.

He gets straight to the point about the need to increase organic matter in our soil. Increasing organic matter means increasing the carbon content of the soil which results in a greater volume of humus. 'Humus in the soil can store 20 to 30 times its

weight in water, protecting it from evaporation or deeper infiltration beyond the reach of plants, but the water held in humus is available to plant roots,' he writes. Also, humus-rich soil absorbs and holds water quickly permitting maximum use of summer storms. He laments the fact that most Australian soils have lost organic matter since white settlement—from 5% down to 1.75%.

'Raising the organic matter of all Australian soil by 1% by applying compost, green manures and mulch, would improve crop yield, water use efficiency, lift the nutritional value of food and improve general health, and sop up six to eight years of carbon emissions from Australia,' he says.

Everyone can do something to help bring this about—from potted plants to parks and gardens to the largest broadacre farms.

Well-made compost is the ideal soil additive for organic growing because it works as a fertiliser, a soil conditioner and a biological inoculant.

I know that some people struggle to source enough materials, apart from their kitchen trimmings and some garden waste, to make compost. This is where you can do a great community service.

Talk to the manager of the local fruit shop to find out what happens to their 'waste'. Often it goes into the skip out the back. Same story with most coffee shops and juice bars: the coffee grounds and the pulp left over after juicing goes in the bin and thus to the

tip.

The problem with this is that the decomposition process at the tip releases methane into the atmosphere and it's about 30 times more potent than carbon dioxide. Just one fruit/veg shop can dump many cartons of organic matter every day.

A few of us who live near each other collect such 'waste' from four different places in Cleveland and have no trouble at all filling the several compost bins and heaps (to say nothing of the worm farms and chooks' bellies) we have between us.

It just requires quite a few buckets and a bit of a roster between yourselves to make it work. The upside is that you're helping the environment, you're saving the shop keepers money in skip fees and you're getting compost for nothing ... and you may even get a warm glow knowing you're doing the right thing!

On the advice of his doctor, Danny Bonney has resigned as a committee member. We thank Danny for his input at executive meetings. Sharr Ellson has agreed to fill the vacancy. Sharr has been a ROGI member for a couple of years, is very actively working in the Seed Bank and will be a great asset to the ROGI committee. Thank you to Danny and Sharr for your contribution to ROGI.

See you Wednesday.

*Happy Growing,
Jill*

Coming Events

Nov	Wed 11	6.15pm	ROGI meeting
	Sat/Sun 14/15		Talks on Macleay & Russell p11
	Sun 15	2.30pm	Garden Visit—Tony & Linda Garbett p8 *
	Sat/Sun 21/22		Tropical Foliage Festival p15
	Sat/Sun 21/22		Open Garden at Birkdale p16
Dec	Wed 9	6.15pm	ROGI Christmas party
	Tues 15	9.15am	Garden Visit—Linda & Bill Barrett *

* Book with Bernadine on events@rogi.com.au or SMS 0403 742 845 or see her at ROGI meeting

Membership Fees

Fees for 2016 may be paid any time between now and the February meeting. Annual fees are listed in the 'Jan-Mar' column below.

- **Cash** payment at ROGI meeting
- **Cheques** made payable to "Redland Organic Growers Inc." Pay at meeting or by post (PO Box 1257, Cleveland 4163)
- **Direct Deposit** BSB 633-000 Acc 136 137 296
Bendigo Bank, Capalaba **Central**

VERY IMPORTANT! Reference - Your initials and surname are essential to identify who has paid. This is our only way of knowing it's YOU. Please bring your membership application form to the next meeting. Email group@rogi.com.au for application form.

Please provide evidence of pensioner status to claim discount.

Fees	New member/s joining in...			
Member Category	Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct 15—Dec 16
Single	\$30	\$22.50	\$15	\$37.50
Family	\$50	\$37.50	\$25	\$62.50
Pensioner Single	\$20	\$15	\$10	\$25
Pensioner Couple	\$30	\$22.50	\$15	\$37.50

November Meeting

Trees for Staples and Green Vegetables

ROGI member and sub-tropical fruit tree specialist, George Allen, will talk about the use of trees as part of the basic diet providing staples and essential nutrients. Much of this knowledge was known to traditional cultures in the native range of these trees. This information is partially lost, but a great effort is being made by some to document it.

Our climate can grow many of these plants, but the knowledge of preparation and usage is limited to a few, mainly migrants from SE Asia. These same trees have traditional health applications as well. Find out about these trees—maybe you'll be inspired to plant some.



Jakfruit is used as a starch staple by people in Asia at every stage of its growth - even the leaves and flowers are edible. Enormously productive, they grow fast and well here, given the right conditions. One of the many George will talk about next week.

October Speaker—Linda Brennan—Powdery Mildew

As summer deepens and humidity increases, your vegies may be overtaken by powdery mildew which is a host-specific fungus. It's common on zucchini, pumpkin, cucumber and snow peas.

The powdery effect begins under the leaf and spreads to the upper surface. It will cause the eventual demise of the plant, but not before it has severely curtailed the harvest from the crop.

Steps to trouble free crops:

1. Choose and save healthy disease-free seed and plants
2. Care with garden hygiene (clean secateurs, disposal of dead plant parts) and crop rotation
3. Prepare the soil well. Compost, vermicast (worm castings) and humates are essentials in my garden. Humates are available from Linda at www.ecobotanica.com.au
4. Aim for soil pH 6.5 for ideal plant health
5. Keep plants growing strongly - irrigate in the early morning if you have a choice. Avoid watering foliage.
6. Apply foliar seaweed solution once or twice weekly and foliar feed your leaves with a liquid such as Fish and Kelp or Liggy Max (from Linda) once or twice weekly
7. At the first sign of powdery mildew (which is often when we see the black

and yellow fungus-eating ladybird on the leaves) begin treatment sprays:

- i) Apply Eco carb or Eco fungicide to both sides of the leaf. [Potassium bicarbonate is the active ingredient]
- ii) Copper oxychloride for entrenched mildews in plants eg grapes. Beware the regular use of this can lead to copper* toxicity in the soil

[* Toxic copper levels can reduce seed germination, plant vigour, and iron intake.]



Above: the fungus-eating ladybird is a sign that you have powdery mildew

Top right: leaves affected by powdery mildew

Bottom right: healthy leaf of a Romanesco zucchini—these markings are a natural feature, not a sign of trouble



Plant of the Month Sweet Corn *Zea mays*

As the weather warms up you can hear the call from Mother Nature 'it's time to plant corn'. Corn enjoys soil temperatures above 15° and pH of 5.5 to 7 with lots of nutrients (blood & bone, poultry manure, liquid fish fertiliser, rock dust and seaweed) and plenty of sunshine.

Corn seeds are notorious for deteriorating quickly so only buy what you'll plant this year.

When planting seeds directly into your garden sow 5-7cm deep. Place 2 to 3 seeds in each hole and thin as required - allow 25cm between plants and 60cm between rows. Seeds can take about 10 -14 days to germinate. Plant seeds in blocks (squares) of 3 or more rows, not a long single or double row. This improves pollination and gives well-filled cobs. The more plants you grow the better the overall pollination—try thirty next time. The chooks will devour any surplus!

As corn grows, it develops prop roots - this is



where hilling compost around the base of your corn helps stabilise these tall plants as well as give a little extra nutrient (they're very heavy feeders). Remember to mulch and keep water up to them especially when cobs are filling out.

Next is the magic. When the corn plant is Mature, the male flowers (tassels) appear at the top of the plant and shed pollen which is dispersed by the wind (or you can help by shaking the stalk and letting the pollen shed downward to the willing and waiting sticky female silks). Each silk desires to be successfully pollinated so that every kernel within the cob will grow to maturity.

Now we need to protect our babies. Corn cobs are attacked by a few different caterpillars—most common is the earworm, *heliothis*.

There are three easy organic steps to controlling these pests:

- 1) Observation: look for eggs and sawdust-like droppings around the silk. Remove by hand and squash young caterpillars or feed them to the chooks.
- 2) Those you missed are moths 2 to 3 weeks later) The caterpillar pupates around the corn in the soil; this is where good cultivation of your soil at the beginning of the season will help you out.
- 3) Exclude them: you can place a paper bag over each cob following pollination—first make sure there are no caterpillars inside the paper bags.



Left: a block of 12 plants—more would be better
Top: showing male tassel and female silk below
Bottom: close-up of male tassel—not quite ready for pollinating yet

Plant of the Month Sweet Corn cont'd

There are some great companion plants you can have with your corn. Clover can be used as a living mulch that can be dug in at the end of the season for further enriched soil. You can also intercrop—plant corn with cucurbits (cucumbers, pumpkins or rockmelons) and legumes such as climbing beans. Cucurbits act as a ground cover while the beans regulate nitrogen and use the corn stalk as a living trellis.

The corn is ready for picking about two to three weeks after flowering. With heirloom corn you can pierce one kernel to reveal a milky exudate, but if using F1 hybrids this liquid might be clear. Also when the tassels are shrivelled and brown you have about a week to pick your corn by twisting downward from the stalk.

Sharr Ellison



This corn cob was quite inedible so was put in the compost without being chopped up. After a short time it sprouted and started to grow!

Seed Bank News

CORN: The corn variety in the seed bank is Max which produces large cobs of golden corn on a hardy and rust-resistant plant. It is a supersweet F1 hybrid that is twice as sweet as older varieties and is slower to convert sugar to starch.

BEANS: Soil temperatures are warm, so borlotti, Madagascar and lablab beans, jicama and pigeon peas and snake beans (see p16) can be planted until February.

SPINACH: It's a good idea to look at summer alternatives to standard spinach about now. See pages 6 to 9 in Dec 2014 ROGI News <http://www.rogi.com.au/uploads/roginewsletterdec2014-jan15.pdf> (there's a paper copy in ROGI library) Here you'll find info on 'spinaches' such as Suriname, Brazilian, Warrigal, Malabar, Aibika, Egyptian, betel leaf, mushroom plant, and kang kong. They're designed for this weather and you're sure to find one you'll like.

PEAS: It's far too hot to grow shelling peas. However, Linda from Ecobotanica has success growing snow peas and snap peas all year except February. See page 15 for specific information on how she does this.

NEXT MEETING: We'll be selling corn and a variety of other seedlings and plants for 50c and \$1. The varieties will be posted on ROGI facebook page a day or two before the meeting.

Seed Sowing Guide

November

Amaranth
Asparagus
Basil
Beans, Climbing & French
Beans Snake
Beetroot
Borage
Capsicum
Carrots
Chilli
Choko
Coriander
Cucumber
Eggplant
Dill
Honeydew Melon
Jicama
Lettuce
Okra
Pigeon Peas
Pumpkin
Purslane
Radish
Rockmelon
Rosella
Silverbeet
Soybean
Squash
Sunflower
Sweet Corn
Sweet Potato
Tomatoes
Watermelon
Zucchini

December

Amaranth
Asparagus
Basil
Beans Climbing
Beans Snake
Beetroot
Borage
Capsicum
Carrots
Chilli
Choko
Coriander
Cucumber
Eggplant
Dill
Honeydew Melon
Jicama
Lettuce
Okra
Pigeon Peas
Pumpkin
Purslane
Radish
Rockmelon
Rosella
Silverbeet
Soybean
Squash
Sunflower
Sweet Corn
Sweet Potato
Tomatoes
Watermelon
Zucchini

Keep in mind that this is a guide. Be aware that micro-climates and weather conditions may mean certain seeds may be sown other than recommended times.

Seed bank is at ROGI meetings and Garden Visits. \$1 packet for members. \$2 for non-members.

Are your zucchini or pumpkin fruit failing to develop?

If your zucchini fruit forms, but fails to develop into a full-grown zucchini, you probably have a pollination problem.

This is an unpollinated pumpkin.



The first step is to identify the male and the female flowers.

Here you see the **female on the left** in both photos. A baby zucchini is developing behind the female flower, which has a multi-stemmed stigma at the centre.

The male flower, on a long thin stem, has a stamen that is covered in pollen. A plant usually produces male flowers first and has many more male than female flowers.

The pollen must be transferred from the male stamen to the female stigma—either by bees or, if they aren't around, by you.

1. Tear away the male petals to expose the stamen and carry it to the female. Dab it into the centre of the stigma.
2. Using a soft brush, take pollen from the stamen to the centre of the stigma

The flowers bloom for just one day, so do this in the morning when they're at their peak. This works for all cucurbits: pumpkin, cucumbers, squash, and the melons.



Female

Male



... and their flowers are edible

Pumpkin, zucchini (squash) flowers are not just edible, they're quite delicious and the bright golden colour indicates high carotene (which becomes vitamin A) content, so they're good for you.

You can pick the female zucchini fruit when young and still small with the flower intact. There are usually plenty of spare male flowers.

Here are some ways of using them rather than relegating them to the compost:

1. Stuff the flower with soft cheeses such as ricotta, mozzarella or feta and Italian herbs and bake.
2. Dip flowers (stuffed or not) in tempura batter and shallow fry.
3. Tear and flutter the golden pieces over pasta, risotto or salad.
4. Make soup with the flowers as the 'hero' of the dish (see below and recipe over)



Recipe Squash Blossom Soup

1 tbsp butter
1 small onion diced
500 ml chicken stock
1 potato peeled and chopped
12 or so fresh zucchini/pumpkin flowers
1 green capsicum
1 chilli seeded and chopped - optional
½ cup milk
1 small zucchini cut into slices
Kernels from small corn cob
¼ cup thick cream
Parsley

Melt butter in saucepan. Add onion and cook, stirring often, until light brown, about 5 min. Save half onion for later. Add potato and stock, cover and simmer for 20 min.

Prepare the blossoms. Peel off sepals from the base of flowers. Break off stems. Remove the stamen in centre of each flower and discard. Cut flowers crosswise into strips. Add half the blossoms to soup, simmer 3 min. Purée mixture with stick blender. Roast capsicum over a gas flame or below a very hot grill until black and blistered all over. Cover with a cloth or paper towel and sit for a few mins. Remove charred skin, cut out seed pod, then rinse and rub to remove messy bits of skin. Cut into dice.

Add capsicum (and chilli), milk and saved onion, zucchini and corn, simmer 15 min. Add remaining squash blossoms and simmer a few more minutes.

Serve with a good swirl of thick cream and garnished with chopped parsley.

Other vegetables can be used instead of corn—peas, beans, diced carrots etc.

Future Garden Visit—Tony & Linda Garbett

Sunday 15th Nov 2.30pm

Our home is on a two acre block that we purchased in 1980. Initially we concentrated on revegetation with eucalypt, rainforest species and native plants so we have a good selection of mature trees on our block now.

We have also been interested in having a productive garden as well. Generally we have had something edible in our garden for the last 35 years. On a few occasions we have had to relocate our vege area due to shade or tree root completion and have come to realise that a garden is always a work in progress.

Currently we have four vege production areas that are planted with staples for this time of year such as lettuce, tomatoes, beans, zucchini, carrots, corn, eggplant, beetroot, silverbeet etc. We don't grow huge volumes though and aim to always have something available from the garden for lunch or dinner.

Add to these a selection of herbs and flowers and two egg-laying chickens.

We also enjoy growing our own citrus and have about 14 trees that produce quite well. In addition to the citrus we have fruit and nut trees including mango, lychee,

longan, wax jambu, pecan, macadamia, jaboticaba, passionfruit and an occasionally-productive Bunya pine in our rainforest garden.

It would be nice if all of these trees produced well but that doesn't happen so we would appreciate any advice from our ROGI friends that come to visit our garden.

Our garden has its challenges and we seem to be always trying different things and learning as we go. I guess this is the way it has always been for gardeners.

We look forward to sharing an afternoon with you in our garden.

Tony and Linda Garbett

A special bonus for those coming to visit this garden is the opportunity to have your tools sharpened by Steve from Bayside Mobile Sharpening. Steve has provided this service to ROGI before and it has been well-used.

ROGI will subsidise a pair of secateurs, so that you pay only \$2. You're welcome to have anything you like sharpened while you are at it—very convenient.

www.baysidemobilesharpening.com.au

More information will be given to you once you've registered for the Garden Visit on events@rogi.com.au or SMS to 0403 742 845

Aphid Attack: Good Guys to the Rescue



One day Janet's dill was covered in aphids. Although tempted to spray, she knew that this could deter the beneficial insects that feed on aphids, even with organic sprays. She left nature to take its course. After a couple of days, the cavalry showed up in the form of ladybird larvae who were getting stuck into the aphids.

Right: the young and adult of the yellow and black fungus-eating ladybird (in inset)



Top & Above: Young and adult of the red and black spotted ladybird.

Those Cocoons on Brassicas

If you come across a cluster of small, yellow cocoons on leaves of Brassica vegetables – *don't spray them or feed them to the chooks.*

They do not belong to garden pests. (These cocoons are, in fact, the pupation stage of a very small, black wasp. This wasp belongs to the Braconidae family. Braconids are parasitic wasps and very beneficial insects to have in your garden.

The female adult wasps, which are barely 5 mm long, lay their eggs in caterpillars of the Cabbage White Butterfly, which feeds on the leaves of stressed broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, horseradish, kale, radish, rocket, swedes and turnips.

The wasp larvae then feed on the caterpillars from the inside until they are ready to pupate. (Sounds gruesome, doesn't it.)

They each then spin a small cocoon on the remains of the caterpillar, and hatch out two or three weeks later to repeat the cycle.

Adult wasps feed on nectar from flowers. It is worthwhile growing some nectar-producing plants to encourage these useful pest predators.

Taken from <http://aussieorganicgardening.com/2009/08/cocoons-on-brassicas>





SMBI Food Growers Group
 Growing Food on the
 Southern Moreton Bay Islands of Macleay,
 Russell, Lamb & Karragarra Islands.

Food Growing & Sustainable Gardens



Where: Russell Island
When: Saturday 14 November
Venue: St Peter's Parish Hall

Where: Macleay Island
When: Sunday 15 November
Venue: Progress Hall

Program: 9am Rebecca Ford - Food security & a local food system
 10:30am Juergen Rehwinkel - Backyard horticultural sustainability
 12noon Frank Huysing - Building Better Soils with soil health, worms & biochar

RSVP: Bookings required.
 Cost \$10 total for as many sessions as you wish to attend.
 Payment at the door.
 Morning tea provided.

SMS: Dave 0414 383 047
Email: smbifoodgrowers@gmail.com

Sponsor:



Several ROGI members who live on the islands have enthusiastically been pursuing the assistance of experts to help them achieve the goal of growing food on the islands.

In August they hosted Graeme Sait, a speaker of international repute, who attracted many people from far afield.

These speakers in November will be well worth the effort for you to go over.

The ferry leaves Redland Bay at 8.30—they won't start until the ferry has arrived.

Car pooling is recommended because of parking issues.

Get in touch with a committee member—see back page.

Remember to RSVP.

Exchange plants, cuttings, seedlings and home-grown produce

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

ROGI Rewards

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

Members' Sales

Items you have produced that are surplus to your requirements and that **you wish to sell** to other members eg eggs, honey, jam, seedlings, lemons – things that have cost you money (and time and effort) to produce. Please ensure items are labelled, named and priced. You may be asked to staff the stall if you are needed.

FREE swap/share/give-away

(This is for members only)

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

Bring a bag/basket/box to take everything home

Garden Visit - Wendy Boglary

Wendy bought her house 18 months ago and straightaway saw possibilities for a productive garden in the open backyard. On a double block, it has the classic red soil that our city is named and famed for. A shoe-box house was being built next door, so Wendy asked for their soil to be brought over rather than being taken away to who-knows-where.

Meanwhile, Wendy, who is the local councillor, was telling the regulars at her 'Table of Wisdom' sessions at the local coffee shop about the project. Pretty soon, willing helpers were keen to make her vision a reality.

Some of them who were at her garden on this day had helped construct the garden beds (which had been filled with the neighbour's virgin red soil) and had sown seeds and planted out seedlings for her – sometimes without her even knowing about it. How good is that – coming home to find that elves had planted cavolo nero (Tuscan kale, below) in your garden!



While walking and talking around the garden we learnt a lot of helpful and interesting things about growing vegetables, herbs and fruit.

Rhubarb Wendy had some healthy rhubarb growing which in our climate was very surprising as it doesn't like the heat or humidity. She had harvested and used some.



Corn is a **grass** and is **wind pollinated** – therefore best not to grow in single rows but in blocks eg squares or circles so the plants are close and the wind can blow the pollen more efficiently. If the wind comes predominantly from one direction the front plants may not be pollinated but with back yards there is more of a tendency for wind to swirl.

- Best to sow seeds in situ as they don't transplant well
- Grow in as rich a soil as possible
- Hill the soil around the stem when it has grown a bit like you do with tomatoes as it will develop more roots and become stronger.
- When the silks turn brown, harvest them.
- Corn is sweetest when it is just picked as the sugars convert to carbohydrate over time.
- Squash and beans are good companion plants as the squash provides ground cover and the beans give the corn extra nitrogen.

When the corn has been harvested the beans can make full use of the corn stalks for

- climbing. The corn, squash and the bean seeds can be planted near each other at the same time.

Sweet Potato

Wendy had a couple of varieties— purple flesh and the other orange.

- Leaves of any sweet potato are very nutritious - use as for spinach but like many green leaves they do contain some oxalic acid, which could be a problem if you have gout or eat an excessive amount of them.
- To increase the number of tubers, stress the plant and don't give it too much nitrogen which will favour leaf growth rather than roots.
- Plants can be grown from the top part of the potato which will shoot or from runners.
- When planting a runner take a piece about 20 -30cm cut from the top third end as it will die anyway and strip the bottom third of leaves and plant in the ground.
- Harvest tubers about twice a year. Good idea to mark on your calendar 6 months ahead.
- Need 2m² for a plant to spread



Banana Passionfruit

Against the fence, Wendy had a banana passionfruit taking advantage of the full sun and screening the fence.

Garden Visit - Wendy Boglary Continued

Carrots Roly Poly and ordinary carrots

- Need to prepare bed well with rich compost a few weeks before planting as the root will fork out if it suddenly hits a supply of nitrogen fertiliser or a hard object like rocks.
- Use gypsum to break up the clay (heavy red soil) – gypsum doesn't affect pH like lime does.

Garlic Elephant garlic doesn't have as strong a flavour but is more suited to our climate

- Bend stems to put more energy into the tubers.
- When the stem dies, harvest – usually by Christmas – as they don't like too much water.
- Garlic won't store as well here as it does in colder climates



Lettuce Green Oakleaf Perpetual *cut & come again*

- Need watering every day so good to plant in a self watering pot to minimize hand-watering.
- Shade is helpful in summer so they don't bolt.



Tomatoes Wendy had a variety of tomatoes all of which had been producing abundantly.

- Discussion about what to do with a surplus eg dry them or make relish, chutney or sauce.
- Gennaro puts salt on them to make them sweat and then dehydrates them and makes them into a powder which he then adds to his cooking. Tomatoes produce a natural MSG.
- Cherry tomatoes are the easiest to grow in our climate and less susceptible to fruit fly.

Pumpkin Plant August/September to harvest March/April

- Pumpkins can last for 4-5 months after harvesting if left on the stem until the stem dries and then cutting the stem about 3 cm on either side of the stalk (see photo)
- Yellow ladybird helps by keeping powdery mildew in control so wait for a while before taking action against the mildew - you want to encourage them to stay around. Old leaves with mildew can be cut off and composted. Only take action against powdery mildew when young leaves are affected.
- Split vine stem is sign of intermittent watering.

Malabar spinach An annual, so save seeds

- Leaves go mushy, so cook only for a short time
- Use the red seeds as a dye to colour food
- Doesn't leave stain on hand after washing



Tips and Ideas

- Grow basil, catnip, nasturtium, parsley, caraway to encourage bees when in flower
- Better to have a growing mulch like nasturtiums rather than weeds



- Bed frames were used as a trellis to grow beans and cucumbers
- Organic wood ash can be added for beans to give them more nutrients but, if not available, use ag-lime which will raise pH which they like.
- American grapes have a lemon flavour and are good for making dolmades.

Report by Mary Irmer

Photos by Rai Irmer and Jill Nixon



Some of the ROGI members who visited Wendy's garden last month.

L-R: Rhonda (partly obscured), Margaret, Jan H, Jan A, Christine, Bronwen, Heather, Garry (at back) and Julia.

The afternoon tea brought along to these ROGI Garden Visits is often so good that dinner is not required when we get home!

Note the house under construction on the southern side next door. This is where Wendy obtained the soil that she used in her garden beds.

If you'd like to show your garden to ROGI members, please see a committee member (see back page) or you can wait until the end of November when Toni is back and book in with her.

Edible garden wins award for local preschool

An edible fruit and vegetable garden, a rain forest walk, fish pond, mud pit and cycle track all helped the centre, in Main Street, win the prestigious national title.

Ten awards were presented to centres across the country but Redland Bay won top prize in the Physical Environment category.

The innovative outdoor approach to pre-school was the dream of centre director Jodie Zysvelt.

Parents and kids all helped bring the plan to fruition two years ago when the school decided to remove some out-dated pool fencing.

"That's when we decided to use that area for a rainforest walk and garden and once that was built the idea took off with everyone contributing their ideas," Ms Zysvelt said.

"The kids have taken to the ideas and love wandering around eating the fruit and picking the flowers. 'They've developed a greater awareness and respect for the environment and feel a sense of achievement when they get to pick the fruit and vegetables to take home.'"

The centre also focuses on recycling and uses donations of artwork, landscaping materials and furniture in the garden.

Taken from Redland City Bulletin 28th October 2015



It's wonderful that food gardens and other similar initiatives are being introduced into schools—getting children interested while they're still very young and impressionable.



Tropical Foliage Festival

Saturday 21st Nov 8am – 3pm

Sunday 22nd Nov 9am – 2pm

Cleveland Assembly Hall, Smith St.

This year's Tropical Foliage Festival will provide an opportunity for gardeners and collectors to purchase many varieties of tropical foliage plants including new release, rare plants and old favourites offering the best quality cordylines, bromeliads, gingers, costas, heliconias, orchids, palms and much more.

Experienced growers and garden experts will be on hand to answer all your questions.

Special guest speakers will be on stage throughout the weekend.

We'll be holding our famous rare plant auction.

There will be plants displays and a monster raffle. The event will be fully catered.

Admission – Adults \$3, Children free, free parking and EFTPOS available.

For more info visit www.cordylines.org or 3822 4485

Looking for something to do?

Heirloom seed saving and plant swap

Sat 21 Nov. 10 - 12 Mitchelton Library. Free. This workshop provides tips for preserving pure seed lines, demonstrates dry and wet seed cleaning and discusses seed storage.

Presented by **Annette McFarlane**

Bookings required 3403 7410

Backyard chickens for beginners

Sat 21 Nov. 10.30 - 12 Ashgrove Library. Free. Learn all about regulations, housing choices, feeding options, breeds and top troubleshooting topics.

Presented by **Claire Bickle**

Bookings required 3407 1940

Superfoods in your garden

Sun 22 Nov. 1–3pm Chermiside Library. Free. Find out how to grow, harvest and use aloe vera, turmeric, chia, yacon and some very common superfoods that may surprise you.

Presented by **Morag Gamble**

Bookings required 3403 7200

Green roofs and vertical gardens

Sat 28 Nov. 12.30 – 2.30 Corinda library. Free. Be inspired by stunning examples of local and international roof gardens and green walls. Learn what plants work locally and discuss potting mix options. See examples of small scale vertical gardens and be inspired to create your own version at home.

Presented by **Annette McFarlane**

Bookings required 3407 7701

My personal garden journey

Sat 5 Dec. 10 – 11.30 Fairfield library. Free.

Ross McKinnon, retired curator of Brisbane Botanic Gardens, discusses the process of creating and restoring his own home garden. Ross will inspire you to create your own authentic heritage garden or restore your property's original garden.

Bookings required 3403 8615

Growing Snow & Snap Peas in Summer

1. Prepare soil well with plenty of manure and add humic acid (humates) for plant health and water- and fertiliser-holding capacity. It also helps to house beneficial microbes including fungi that compete with the powdery mildew.
2. Provide a climbing frame to get the plants off the soil. Don't let them trail in summertime.
3. Snow peas and sugar snap peas will grow much better in the heat if they are positioned under some dappled shade or given a shade cloth cover. Sugar snaps have a greater success rate over humid summer weather than snow peas.
4. Spray whole plants with seaweed solution weekly to increase leaf resistance to fungal disease
5. Once or twice weekly foliar feeds promote continued growth

Linda Brennan



Update on Mena's Makeover Garden November 2015

Well it has been nearly 3 months since I was lucky enough to have my enclosed garden built by ROGI. I'm sure I still would have



been looking at all the components lying around the yard, if it hadn't been for that fortuitous visit by Linda!! I had a few initial teething problems, which seem to have been sorted now. I thought I'd share them with you:

1 Did I have enough

fabric? I had only enough fabric to tuck into the ground about 10cm and thought for my set-up the ribs along the



length of the tunnel could be on the inside. I moved the top one inside and that also helped make it smoother to stretch the material over the structure. I would put the ribs on the inside of my next one, but that may just be a personal preference.

2 How will I secure the flap? I still had to work out how to close the front overlapping flap to secure my garden. Linda had mentioned Velcro and after trying other things (a couple of magnets) I ended up with her idea. I hand sewed a strip down the entrance and in hind-sight we should have done that in the beginning.

3 Gate? I wanted to be able to leave the front flaps open but stop the chooks getting into it so we made a fence inside the flap, and that seems to work well.



4 Plant Support. Once the plants started growing I needed some support so I have run strings around the inside of the ribs and trained the plants to grow up that. Small beans seem to attach themselves to the fabric anyway.

5 Total exclusion? Rats, it appears, can still eat through this fabric and after only a week after planting one made a nice doorway for himself and ate some kale. We have sewn that up and keep vigilant with rat traps around the area and also making sure wildlife has alternative fodder!

6 Planting layout. I have to think a bit more about placement of plantings next time. I'm using one of those



the area required but I have made the mistake of planting some of the taller growing plants (corn and cherry tomato) near the centre, and they should have been out of the way near the sides. On these hot days I am having to top up the watering in the outer edges that are missed.

7 I'm happy to say that **the native bees** are finding their way through the 30% shade cloth on the side. I am guessing the larger bees and 'critters' are finding their way in and out when I leave the flaps open. So far I'm not sure why the eggplant has flowers but they're not turning into fruit.

Everything else seems OK.

Once I thought I had everything 'watertight' I went to Bunnings and bought up. I filled the whole



space up. I then filled any spare spaces with seeds (you know, like the rocks and pebbles story). I thankfully did make a pathway in the middle, so I can just about reach everything!

I'm very happy with how it is shaping up and Steve is learning to love cucumber and zucchini and off course kale and spinach. We'll try our first ever fresh beetroot tonight!

Happy Gardening, Mena and Steve



OPEN GARDEN

Ian and Judy Wintle invite you to their 'Giving Garden'
Saturday 21st & Sunday 22nd Nov 2015
(9:00am to 4:30pm)

Ian and Judy Wintle's visitor friendly garden is a one acre property which has become one of South East Queensland's best known and loved sub-tropical gardens. Why not relax and spend a few hours in this wonderful and interesting garden. Welcome to the world of rare, bizarre and beautiful botanicals, this is the garden of avid plant collectors and there are thousands of unusual and interesting plants to be viewed while walking the long meandering garden pathways to shade houses full of plants. Must sees include collections of amorphophallus, beehive gingers, costus, orchids and a fabulous collection of bromeliads. Sustainable and smart garden practices abound in this garden and inspires and motivates all who visit. Ian and Judy will be again supporting the 'Lions Club' to raise money for disabled children. If you have been before, there's always something new to see as Ian has created new gardens this year.

Refreshments

Lions Club will be providing refreshments all day. Sit back under our back patio and enjoy a refreshing 'cuppa', home-made delicacies or a sausage sizzle, and enjoy the views.

Plant Sale

As usual, Judy has prepared a large variety of rare and beautiful plants that will be available for sale at very reasonable prices. Get in quick to get a bargain as the plant sale is very popular.

On the Web

Garden Blog: www.ianjudy.blogspot.com

Product Reviews Blog: gardenproductreviews.com

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com.au/birkdalegarden>

Entry
\$7 per person
(Children FREE)

Address: 5 Carlton Court, Birkdale - Ph: (07) 3207 4683

Long Snake Beans

Now is the time to grow snake beans (*Vigna unguiculata*). Unlike regular beans (*Phaseolus* species), they're resistant to bean fly and rust, and relish the heat and humidity of our summers.

Snake beans are quick to germinate and grow fast, climbing to great heights if given the chance, and can reach lengths of 70cm, but they're more tender when harvested shorter.

There are a few different varieties and they all have a slightly sweet flavour and crunchy texture.



Garden Critters with Dave Praeger

At the October meeting millipedes and shield bugs were discussed.

"Whenever I hear of a capture of a rare beetle I feel like an old war horse at the sound of a trumpet"

Charles Darwin.

Insects come in such an amazing and varied form it's hard not to enjoy them.

Millipedes – native millipedes (below left) are very beneficial, converting detritus to plant food

Phylum : Arthropoda (jointed legs)

Class : Diplopoda (double foot, Greek origin)

Common Name: Millipede (thousand feet, Latin origin)

The millipedes are one of the oldest known

land animals with fossil evidence dating to 443 MYA. The longest millipede was 2.6 m with 750 legs. There are 9 orders in Australia and most are harmless detritus eaters.

Interesting Facts

- Australian common brown millipede has 50 segments with a bumpy appearance
- They can only extract **5 – 10 %** nutritional material from detritus, **hence excrete a rich digested compost for the garden**
- They dehydrate easily, hence not seen during the day, and have senses for moisture and light

- Excrete non-toxic smells for defence, however predators annoy them until the scent is exhausted

Problems

- On occasions they suck plant fluids from young seedlings and this damage is a site for disease.
- The introduced **Portuguese millipede** *Ommatoiulus moreleti* (below right) smooth black in colour, causes serious problems, especially in southern states where they are in plague numbers from spring to summer. Control can be achieved by introducing predator nematodes.



Garden Critters with Dave Praeger— continued

Shield Bugs

Family Pentatomidae

A serious pest of citrus fruits

The main distinguishing features are – the body is rounded when viewed from above, the thorax surface extends out the sides, **five segmented antennae** (most bug families have four segments).

There are 390 species in Australia with 40 species found on bark, some are plant pests and a few are predatory. Many are known as stink bugs because of their foul smelling defensive liquids.

Green Vegetable Bug *Nezara viridula*

Facts

- Found in all states
- Damage plants by inserting their sharp tubular mouthparts into soft plant tissues and suck the sap
- Nymphs go through five moults - varying in colour, initially orange then mottled and finally green, three generations per year
- Target - beans, capsicums, silverbeet, potato, corn, tomato, and ornamentals.



Control Measures

- Natural Predators: assassin bugs, predator shield bugs, wasp egg parasitism, tachinid fly parasitism

- Note if the yellow eggs turn black leave them as they may have been parasitised, else squash or drown them (up to 120 eggs in a single raft)
- Home garden – hand pick bugs but wear gloves, remove crop residue after harvest.

Spined Citrus Bug *Biprorulus bibax*

Facts

- Native insect, found in the Eastern States
- Major pest of citrus, especially lemons
- They pierce the rind of young citrus causing drying, brown staining of segments and fruit drop, major infestation October to April
- Lay eggs in batches of 30, females live for a year and lay 200 eggs, with four overlapping generations per year
- Five moulting stages with orange, black and white markings and finally green and black.



Control Measures

- **Use exclusion bags**
- Look for egg masses, observe for 1 week if they turn black or brown leave as they are parasitised
- Squash or drown the nymphs and adults, use a portable vacuum cleaner to capturing the bugs
- Citrus bugs survive winter and cluster together, a good time to reduce numbers
- Natural enemies: wasps, lacewings, spiders, assassin bugs, mantids and birds.

Predator Shield Bugs

Some shield bugs are predators of other bugs, beetles and caterpillars. The following images show predation of a caterpillar by a shield bug while mating!



In My Garden Dave Praeger

The solitary native bees are pollinating the native plants and vegetables.

Blue Banded Bee (Family: *Apidae*) is easily recognised by its blue bands on the abdomen and is the size of a honey bee. These bees are considered to be the second most important pollinators of all the wild bees.



Great Carpenter Bee (Family: *Apidae*, formerly *Anthophoridae*) is a very large bee with a black abdomen and yellow thoracic segment. Although considered solitary, they live in small groups and drill into wood to expand holes for nests.



The predatory flies are hunting aphids, thrips and mites.

Hover Fly (Family: *Syrphidae*) Recognised by their behaviour and the ability to change direction while hovering.

They are nectar eaters whilst their nymphs are predators.



This year **the Stilt-legged Fly** (Family: *Micropezidae*) are abundant and recognised by their black colour with forelegs shorter and white tipped. They are excellent predators of Aphids and thrips.



The Robber Fly (Family: *Asilidae*) is about the size of a dragon fly but more robust. They hunt on the wing and can eat grasshoppers. Their larvae are also predators.



There have always been **legless lizards** (Family: *Pygopodidae*) in my garden. This

year they have invaded my compost bin and hence care is needed to avoid hurting them. They can give you a scare as they appear in shape similar to a young red belly black snake; however they are very timid and burrow into the ground with amazing speed. The photo below shows the remnant foreleg, eyelids, lack of broad scales and long tail. They eat beetle and bug larvae.

Imagine turning over your compost when a **Blind Snake** (Family: *Typhlopidae*) appears. Again they are very timid and burrow into the ground exceedingly fast. They eat mainly white ants.



I hope you have enjoyed this small vignette into the wonderful world of garden critters. With all those predators we don't need to do much to maintain a balance.

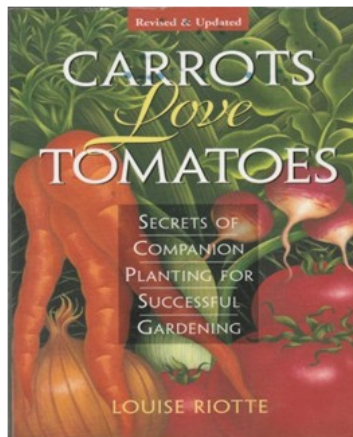
Dave Praeger

A big thank you to Erica Siegel of Birkdale for her wonderful photos of insects.

ROGI Library News

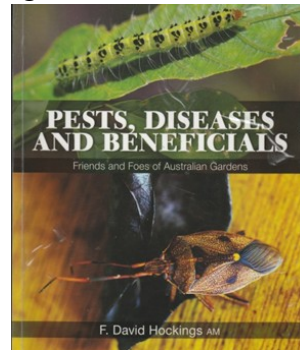
Hello again to all our members
At our last meeting we were given a very timely and informative talk by Linda Brennan, our local gardening guru from Ecobotanica, who talked about identifying and treating powdery mildew and downy mildew.

We have some very helpful books in our library that we are sure you will find of interest in dealing with these common and easily recognized plant diseases. As the humid season will soon be here, now is the time to prepare so that, should your snow peas, zucchinis and precious annuals end up getting this powdery fungus, you know exactly what to do in order to prevent their demise:



Carrots love Tomatoes: Secrets of companion planting for successful gardening

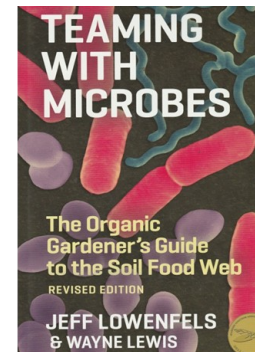
Louise Riotte. An informative, illustrated and practical guide to companion planting first published in 1975, this is a completely revised and updated edition. While Louise lived and wrote in North America, this book still contains much useful information for the Redlands organic gardener. While primarily devoted to companion planting, this book also includes information on mildews and ways to treat and manage outbreaks of this fungus.



Pests, Diseases and Beneficials: Friends and Foes of Australian Gardens

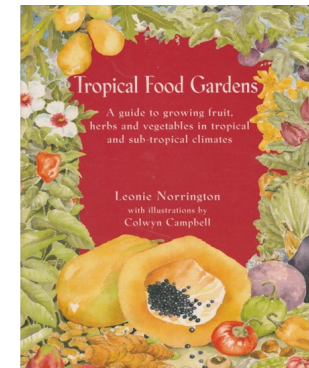
F. David Hockings. Published by the CSIRO this book is an excellent illustrated resource to help Australian gardeners identify and deal with those common insects and small animals (bugs, beetles, mites

caterpillars, and thrips) found in every garden. Clear descriptions and colour images aid in the identification of insects and other organisms, as well as providing useful advice on how to recognise and treat problems. Also colour photographs identifying powdery mildew though, disappointingly, the section on fungi and how to treat diseases such as powdery mildew advocates the use of fungicides.



Teaming with Microbes

Jeff Lowenfels and Wayne Lewis. The authors make the benefits of cultivating the soil food web available to all who simply want to grow healthy, vigorous plants without resorting to chemicals in a way that avoids using jargon and overly technical language. In the chapter dealing with compost tea making they discuss how the use of fungally-dominated teas can be used to prevent and suppress the growth of both powdery and downy mildew.



Tropical Food Gardens: A guide to growing fruit, herbs and vegetables in tropical and sub- tropical climates.

Leonie Norrington. This is a great book, full of practical gardening information ideally suited to our climatic conditions. A section of sound gardening advice, season by season, is followed by sections listing Vegetables, Herbs and Fruit Trees suitable for cultivation in the tropics. Following this is a section, under Managing Pests, dealing with fungi, including both powdery and downy mildew: again, while stressing the importance of good soil as the best insurance against fungal disease, this also recommends the use of 'garden teas', compost and manure sprays.

We think it's great to know these books are able to be borrowed and we look forward to seeing you soon in your library.

Angela and Stephen

We'd love to hear from you

Please send in articles to do with:

- your garden
- your plants
- a photo
- a problem you solved
- A problem you haven't solved
- an unusual plant
- a request
- garden/nutrition info
- a recipe
- a current affair of relevance to ROGI members.....

Send to the newsletter editor at
info@rogi.com.au
by 26th Nov for the
December edition

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



This is how it works:

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

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

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

Plant Clinic

Puzzled by a pest or is it a beneficial insect? Not sure if your plant is a weed or a 'goodie'? Does it have a deficiency or is it a disease? That's what **Plant Clinic** is about.

Bring along as many parts of your plant, fruit, leaf, root as you can (in a sealed plastic bag if it's a diseased plant) and fill in the form.

Place the plant parts together with the form on **Plant Clinic** table well before the start of the meeting. Someone will have a look and may be able to answer your questions.



From this ...

... to this



Recycle Your Strawberry Punnets

We need a constant supply of **250gm cube-shaped strawberry/cherry tomato punnets** (not other shapes and sizes, please) for use at our public events.

One of ROGI's main activities at these events is to give people the opportunity to make a seed-sowing pot out of newspaper. After they make this pot they sow a seed into it and then carry it home in a strawberry punnet for safe-keeping.

At the Redlands Good Gardening Expo, Indigi Day Out and Oaklands St Community Garden Open Day each year, we need thousands of them, so please bring them along to every meeting and we'll store them until they're needed.

ROGI Shop Products

For any pricing or technical advice, or if you have a suggestion, please see Frank at the ROGI shop.

Products Dry	3kg	2kg	1kg	500g	100g	Each
Soil Conditioners						
Blood & Bone	7.50		4.00	3.00		
Blood & Bone 25kg						29.50
Blood & Bone 16kg						24.00
DE Fine Food Grade		15.00	8.00	4.50		
DE Fine Food Grade 20kg						110.00
DE Pet & Garden	16.00		7.00	4.00		
DE Pet & Garden 20kg						80.00
Dolomite	5.50		3.00	2.00		
Eco88	8.50		4.00	2.50		
Gypsum	5.50		3.00	2.00		
Humic Acid					3.50	
Organic Booster	6.50		3.50	2.50		
Organic Xtra	6.50		3.50	2.50		
Organic Xtra 25kg bag						18.50
Organic Xtra 16kg bag						14.00
Organic Xtra 5kg bag				2.50		7.00
Rock Dust #3 25kg bag						29.50
Rock Dust #3 Mix	6.50		4.00	2.00		
Sea Mungus						
Turf Master	5.50					

*DE is Diatomaceous Earth—can kill insects by desiccation.

Tools & Equipment

Soil pH Test Kit	15.00
Banana Bags	3.50
Fruit Fly Exclusion Bags set of 4	5.00
Paper Pot Maker	28.00

Products Wet	5 litre	1 litre	500ml	150ml	100ml
Soil conditioners					
Eco-Amingro		18.00	10.00		
EcoFish	32.00				
Eco Naturalure				15.00	
Eco-Neem					16.00
Eco-Oil		22.00	16.00		
Fish & Kelp solution		13.00			
Potassium Silicate					3.00

Pest & Weed Control

Burn Off		9.00			
Eco-Pest Oil			10.00		
Naturassoap			17.00		
Pyrethrum Spray					20.00
Wild May (for fruit fly)					2.00

Aloe Vera

Aloe Vera Raw Material	33.50	9.50
Aloe Vera Raw Bio Fertiliser	37.00	10.00

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Top: German chamomile in flower
Above: Ethereal flowers of the blueberry