

# ROGI News

## PLEASE NOTE:

ROGI meetings will resume in July, with some changes. In line with COVID-19 regulations we will :

- observe social distancing
- no supper, tea or coffee
- no swap and share
- no ROGI rewards
- maximum 70 people

However, we will still have plant and seed sales, and members' stalls such as soap and honey.

Our next meeting will be held on **WEDNESDAY 12 AUGUST**.

This meeting will only be open to ROGI members (no visitors allowed). **YOU MUST BOOK TO ATTEND.** Please book your spot at [info@rogi.com.au](mailto:info@rogi.com.au)

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*European and native bees were absolutely loving the pak choy flowers from plants that had been let go to seed at Linda Brennan's recent garden visit. Read more about her amazing garden pages 9-13.*

# Jill's Jottings

Hello fellow ROGI members,

Our current ROGI membership is over 200. Organic gardening is the 'flavour of the month', it seems. When there is uncertainty in the world, it appears that people want to get back to the basics of life, and growing some of your own food is part of that. So joining ROGI is a sensible step if you want to fast-track your skills at gardening organically.

Of course, like anything, merely paying your fees and joining up isn't going to make a difference if you don't get stuck in and actually do it!

That's why we have this newsletter, our Facebook page, the ROGI Buddy system, film showings, guest speakers, field trips, workshops and garden visits—to inspire you and to enable you to meet aspiring gardeners as well as those who are more experienced.

Please introduce yourself to other members, pick their brains, share tips and discuss problems. Stay in touch with your ROGI Buddy and other ROGI members. Invite them around to show them your garden and then go to theirs. Share cuttings and so on. Don't worry if your garden is a work-in-progress, or if you think it's messy. That's what gardening is about.

Talk to the people at the Seedbank and plants table and visit the library. Bring along a query for Plant Clinic (see page 16). Join the field trips, garden visits, film showings, and other events (when we can have them again). You could even offer to have a Garden Visit at your place (see page 18).

For those of you who have been in ROGI for some time, and who have got a lot out of your membership, now is the time to consider how you can 'give back' to ROGI. The August meeting is always our AGM where we elect the Management Committee for the next year, and we'd love for you to consider nominating for a position. Or maybe you'd prefer one of the Office Bearer positions (see page 5).

Being a part of the management and decision-making team isn't always purely altruistic: there are advantages. We have fun at our committee meetings (although they are more fun in person than on Zoom!), and it's great being in a position to make ROGI the best gardening group it can be. I am sure any committee member will tell you they've enjoyed the experience and have often learned new skills (and not just gardening skills!).

Make the most of your ROGI membership—and eat the results!

*Jill Nixon, ROGI President*



## **DID YOU KNOW???**

**ROGI member Rohanne Young will be presenting tips for new vege gardeners on Redland's Bay FM 100.3 up to three times a day! Tune in to get some great tips on growing your fruit and veg!!!**

## August Meeting

### Mingling over the Mulching

*How food on your footpath connects you to your community*

ROGI member Lara Brits will cover one aspect of permaculture—the practical and legal, ins and outs of verge planting in the Redlands. She will share how her fledgling verge garden has opened doors in her neighbourhood.

This will be preceded by our Annual General Meeting and Plant Clinic (*so bring along your plant and gardening problems*).

Collect any unwanted e-waste (*anything with a plug or battery*) and bring it along for pickup by Substation33, who will repurpose it.

**Most of the usual attractions will be there—the well-stocked library, the seed bank and seedlings (at bargain prices). Plus for sale are local honey, organic gardening inputs and more.**



### YOUR ROGI LIBRARY BOOKS ARE NOW DUE!!!

Please return your ROGI library books at the next ROGI function you attend—garden visit, meeting or film night.

*Thank you.*

## Staying Covid-19 safe at ROGI Meetings

We're delighted to be getting back together on August 12 – albeit with a scaled back monthly ROGI members' meeting at the Salvos church.

While the set up may be a bit different, we still aim to offer a great evening sharing gardening knowledge and meeting like-minded members – at a socially appropriate distance.

We will need some extra pairs of hands to make sure that we comply with all the Covid-19 protocols before and after the meeting, so if you can help out please contact Kathy on 0468 434 791.

Here are a few things that will be different in order to be Covid-19 compliant:

- **Register online before the meeting** - Only members who have registered before the meeting at [info@rogi.com.au](mailto:info@rogi.com.au) can attend. Numbers are limited because of social distancing protocols - and no guests can be accommodated. Please assess whether you are in the 'vulnerable' category before booking.
- **Venue setup/breakdown** - The auditorium set-up must meet social distancing requirements and will only allow for 70 people to attend. Family members can sit together. Cleaning of all appropriate surfaces and chairs will occur before, during and after the meeting. Members may be asked to help with this.
- **Handwash, sanitiser, paper towels and disposable gloves** will be available for members' use throughout the building.
- **Plants, seeds and other sales tables** will be set up in the foyer to comply with protocols. One member at a time will be served. No change will be given, so bring lots of change if you are planning to buy anything. Queuing will be necessary and we expect it will take a bit more time than usual.
- **Library** - Please bring any books you have borrowed back. There will be a special collection spot. You may borrow more books at the meeting.
- **Kitchen closed** - No refreshments or supper will be served. Please bring your own bottle of water but no food for sharing.
- **ROGI Rewards** - There will be no rewards until further notice.



## Coming Events

AUGUST	<b>Wednesday 12</b>	<b>ROGI Meeting &amp; AGM</b>
	Sunday 23	Garden Visit (see page 18)
SEPTEMBER	<b>Wednesday 9</b>	<b>ROGI Meeting</b>
	Sunday 13	Field Trip (see page 18)

## Membership Information

- **Cash** payment at ROGI meeting
- **Cheques** made payable to *Redland Organic Growers Inc* - pay at meeting or to PO Box 1257, Cleveland 4163
- **Direct Deposit** to BSB 633 000, Account Number 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 2020	New member/s joining in...			
		Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec
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 of age.

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

## E-Waste Collection by Substation33

ROGI will be having an E-Waste collection at our next meeting on the 12 August. **Substation 33 will set up bins/trailer outside in the parking bay opposite disabled parking—please place your e-waste in them as you arrive.**

Electronic waste (E-Waste) is any electric or electronic product that has become non-working, unwanted or obsolete, and has essentially reached the end of its useful life.

Sources of E-Waste include:

- IT and telecommunication equipment
- Large household appliances
- Small household appliances
- Consumer and Lighting Equipment
- Electrical and Electronic Tools
- Toys, Leisure and Sports Equipment
- Medical Devices
- Monitoring and Control Instruments



**E-Waste collection held December 2019**



## ROGI Committee Positions

**The ROGI Annual General Meeting will be held on the 12 August, 2020.** All committee positions will be declared vacant at the beginning of the AGM.

### **PRESIDENT**

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

### **VICE PRESIDENT**

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

### **SECRETARY**

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

### **TREASURER**

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

### **COMMITTEE MEMBERS (4)**

These may be Office Bearers of the club, or they may be members who want to be a part of the decision-making process.  
The eight committee members (listed above) are expected to attend ROGI committee meetings. Currently these are usually held in the last week of the month.

**POSITIONS VACANT: You may nominate for any committee position (vacant or not) if you wish to be part of the decision-making process.** All nominations must be lodged in writing on the appropriate form beforehand, with a proposer and a seconder and signed by the nominee.

## **ROGI OFFICE BEARERS**

### **Internal Events Secretary**

Sources and coordinates member workshops, garden visits and field trips

### **Membership Secretary**

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

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

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

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

Organises public ROGI events (e.g. Green Heart Fair, Indigi Day Out)

### **Website Manager**

Manages and maintains the ROGI website

### **Newsletter Editor**

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

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

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

### **Library Co-ordinator**

Maintains records of books in stock and all loans; acquires new books

### **Supper Co-ordinator**

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

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

Operates desk on meeting nights

## July Meeting—Local Knowledge

*Three ROGI members talked about topics close to their hearts, at our first meeting back after the Covid-19 lockdown.*

### **Soil—Frank Dobson**

Frank spoke to us about the importance of improving our soil. At his property in Wellington Point, he has very heavy clay soil. If you can roll the soil into a sausage and it forms a ring, it's clay. Clay soils are heavy and can be very sticky to dig. If you try digging when clay soil is wet, you can damage the structure of it. He improves his soil by using a variety of ingredients, and most of them are recycled from his yard.

What Frank uses to improve his soil:

- Compost (*decomposed for six months*)
- Sifted soil (*the clay soil from his property*)
- Coir (*from his palm trees which are lopped every 2-3 years*)
- Sand (*to break down the clay*)
- 5mm gravel (*which stops the clay from forming clods*)
- Cow manure
- Soil additives including boron + zinc, trace elements, blood and bone, Vegemate, biochar, diatomaceous earth, rock minerals, gypsum, Active 8 and 5 in 1.

The compost ingredients are put into a bin made from pallets, located in the chook run. He adds lawn clippings, banana trunks, newspaper, eggshells, teabags, garden waste and prunings. Fruit and vege scraps are not included, and instead given to his chooks and the worm farm. All the compost materials are first put into his mulcher (they must be dry) so that they are in smaller pieces and break down quicker. Frank hasn't been to the rubbish dump for five years, he reuses everything! After six months the bin is taken apart and the chooks do the hard work for him, scratching it up and turning it over. Then it is put into his mulcher again to make the parts even finer.

To help speed up the process of his soil making, Frank uses a concrete mixer to mix the ingredients altogether. He can do 20 mixes in one hour! All of his (and his daughter's) hard work have converted his very heavy clay soil to a beautiful, rich productive garden soil.



*Frank sifts his clay soil and adds other ingredients to improve it.*



*Frank uses a variety of ingredients to improve his very heavy clay soil.*

## July Meeting—Local Knowledge (continued)

### pH—Mary & Rai Irmer

Soil pH is very important because it directly affects soil nutrient availability. A pH of 6-7 is ideal for most plants but some fruit and veges (e.g. blueberries, strawberries and citrus) prefer a more acidic soil while others (brassicac, asparagus, sage) like a slightly more alkaline soil. Your soil will be more healthy if the correct pH is maintained, and plants will be less susceptible to disease and also less likely to be attacked by pests. Earthworms are vital for our soil to aerate it - they thrive at a neutral pH, but can tolerate a pH of 5-8.

If your soil is **too acidic**, add any of the following to correct:

- + compost
- + poultry manure / mushroom compost
- + wood ash
- + agricultural lime or dolomite (*but don't fertilise at the same time*)

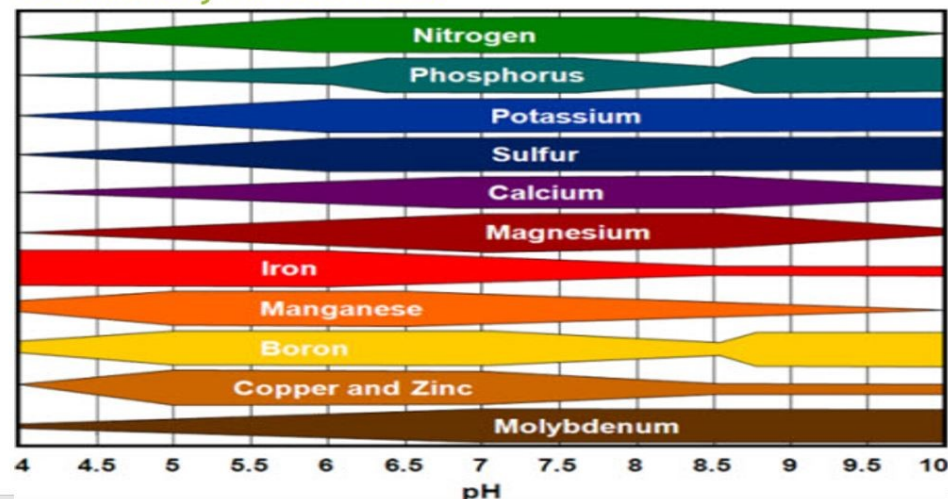
If your soil is **too alkaline**, add any of the following to correct:

- + compost
- + manures—cow, horse, sheep (but not poultry)
- + leaf litter, pine needles, mulch
- + tea or coffee grounds
- + sulphur or iron sulphate or aluminium sulphate
- + some nitrogen fertilisers

How often do you test your pH? pH can vary over time with:

- Agricultural practices
- Weathering
- Continual use of laundry greywater
- Parent material
- Lime leaching out of render in walls and buildings

### Availability of nutrients



Soil pH determines the solubility and therefore the availability of the elements or nutrients in the soil to the plants roots



How to use a Soil pH Test Kit:

- ⇒ Teaspoon sized sample from depth of roots
- ⇒ Place sample on white plastic
- ⇒ Add a few drops of indicator dye
- ⇒ Stir
- ⇒ Dust with white powder
- ⇒ Wait for 30 seconds
- ⇒ Match the colour with the colour chart





### What to grow now and in the coming weeks—Ann Roffey

Ann reminded ROGI members to check out the Seed Sowing Guide in the ROGI newsletter, and to plan ahead for what you are going to grow. A good book to refer to is *Organic Vegetable Gardening* by Brisbane gardening expert Annette McFarlane (available in the ROGI library) - it has heaps of reliable information for each vegetable.

We live in a subtropical climate in the Redlands and Brisbane. It is almost the end of the growing season for cold-loving vegetables such as leeks, peas, cauliflower, broccoli and cabbage.

However, it is still a good time to plant beans, beetroot, celery, lettuce/salad mix, silverbeet, tomatoes, kohlrabi and potatoes.

It's also a great time to think about planting asparagus. Seedlings will take two years to produce spears, or you can plant crowns (which are more expensive) and you will only have to wait for a year to start harvesting. Asparagus can survive for about 20 years; pick a wet spot, as it loves water. One way to grow them is in a bathtub—place on bricks/blocks, and make sure it is sloping slightly toward the drain hole so it drains.

In August, it's time to start planning for summer planting. Seeds can be sown for eggplant, okra, pumpkin, squash, zucchini and others, which are listed in this newsletter on page 19.

One type of zucchini you may not have heard about is the tromboncino. Ann brought along a mature one and it was cut open to reveal the seeds. These will be put into a jar of water to separate the pulp from them, and then dried and saved. Seeds saved earlier this year are available in the Seed Bank. For more information on growing tromboncino zucchini, see the story on pages 14 and 15.



For more information on how to grow asparagus in a bathtub, go to the June 2019 newsletter, page 14 (on the ROGI website under 'Resources').



August =  
plant seeds  
for summer  
such as egg-  
plant, okra,  
pumpkin  
and zucchini



Left: Beans, celery, beetroot, silverbeet and leeks do well this time of year.  
Right: Grow salad mix all year round—available in the ROGI Seed Bank.



## Garden Visit—Linda Brennan

Linda and her husband Damien have lived on their 1½ acre property in Capalaba for seven years. They back onto a wildlife corridor which extends from Lyndon Road up to IndigiScapes. The previous owners were not gardeners at all, employing a mowing man, pool man and a gardener to look after their yard.

The front yard garden had lillypillies, durantas and golden cane palms, so they employed Azz from EzyAzz Earthworks to remove them. The grass has swales to help with drainage as they initially had big issues with flooding in front of the house. Damien loves roses, so a cottage garden was established in the front yard as a tribute to his Mum (who was named Rose).

In the back yard was a putting green, this has been transformed into a labyrinth and an edible garden. The veranda once had an ugly built-in BBQ and latticework. They wanted long views, so it was opened up and Linda did a landscape design to incorporate a herb garden, a huge vegetable garden and lots of fruit trees.

As soon as they moved in they changed completely to organic. Soil tests revealed a fertility score of a ½ star (out of 5) - with boron, calcium, silica and trace mineral deficiencies and magnesium toxicity. Pipes from the pool were also seeping out salt water, so they have had to do a lot of work on the soil.

They have 60-65000 litres of rainwater storage but it still isn't enough, so they had drilling done for another bore. Unfortunately, the water test revealed the water was not usable - being too acidic, salty and magnesium toxic.

New projects this year include the slab hut, and a retaining wall with new garden. The slab hut is made out of reclaimed timber from an original homestead in Canungra.

It was wonderful to finally see Linda and Damien's property, as I had only seen it (barely) at night when attending Seed Saver's meetings. What an inspiration! If you don't already know, Linda is an organic garden advisor and educator, running her very successful business *Ecobotanica*. Many garden-related classes are held at her home, you can check them out on her website: <https://ecobotanica.com.au/>

Thank you Linda and Damien for sharing your wonderful garden with ROGI.

By Ann Roffey





## Garden Visit—Linda Brennan (continued)



Front cottage garden



Blue Flag Iris

Linda holding the root of Kra Chai (Chinese Keys, aka Lesser Galangal).



Kra Chai gives the authentic taste of Thai food. Linda makes a curry paste from the root, and uses it in Thai curries. She also dehydrates it and makes into a powder and puts into brine. It looks like low-growing turmeric.



Rose Monsieur Tillier

The front yard has a cottage garden, which is a tribute to Damien's Mum (named Rose) - with many flowering shrubs, annuals and of course, roses!

Linda also grows many edible flowers throughout the yard which feature in her book *A Delicious Bunch—Growing and cooking with Edible Flowers* (available online and in book stores).



White Dombeya



Rose Aladdin



Linda is also a permaculture teacher, and one of their teachings is that things that are used frequently should be close to the house—hence the herb garden next to the back verandah.



## Garden Visit—Linda Brennan (continued)



**Afourer mandarin**



Linda's Afourer mandarin tree (above) was fruiting abundantly, and the fruit was so juicy and sweet. The mandarin lime tree (pictured right and fruit below) does look very healthy, producing over 200 fruit this year, but it developed a boron deficiency and the fruit is inedible. Linda normally applies boron in small amounts (to avoid toxicity) via foliar and soil applications twice per year, just before the fruiting season and as the fruit is ripening. She will apply boron again to this tree and plant annuals underneath—they are good indicators as their leaves will curl under if there is still a boron deficiency.



**Boron deficiency  
in mandarin lime**

Other fruit trees planted in Linda's yard include achacha, avocado, bananas, carob, cinnamon, chocolate pudding fruit, native fruiting trees such as Davidson's plum, native and Canadian elderberries, fig, imbe, Japanese raisin, lemonade, lime, mango, three varieties of tropical apple and mulberry, Meyer lemon, pawpaw, pomegranate, rose apple, star fruit, Spanish lime, tamarind, tangelo and wampi.



**Mandarin lime tree**



**Espaliered tropical apples**



**Dwarf Ducasse bananas**



**Dwarf weeping mulberry**



## Garden Visit—Linda Brennan (continued)



Above—Linda grows kohlrabi most of the year. All parts of the plant can be eaten (raw, spiralised, or sliced and eaten like a biscuit with a dip) and leaves can be dehydrated into chips.



Purple shiras peas

Linda practises crop rotation in her vegetable garden. This is done in blocks of plants:

1. **Winter green manure crop/soil improver** (e.g. broad beans, beans, peas, buckwheat)
2. **Leafy greens** (e.g. lettuce, kale, silverbeet, brassicas)
3. **Flowers and fruit** (e.g. corn, capsicum, cucumber, egg-plant, tomato)
4. **Root & Stems** (e.g. leeks, onion, garlic, potato, beetroot, turmeric, celery and celeriac)

The flowers in the garden act as companion plants, and she also practises intercropping.



When Linda originally dug over her vegetable garden, she only found three worms! Salt had been leaching from the pool when it was backwashed. Tests revealed the soil had 2500 parts per million of salt—ideally it should be under 100. It is now 900 parts per million. Soil testing by a laboratory is done every year to check what is happening with their soil. More about how Linda improves her soil quality on page 13.



Above—Linda is “blanching” her celery. She ties newspaper around it, and leaves for five days, and the celery tastes much sweeter. The stalks are harvested for five days, then she puts the paper back on again.



Peruvian Parsnip



## Garden Visit—Linda Brennan (continued)



The huge scribbly gums on the property are assessed every two years by Redland Tree Services, and any timber lopped is chipped and kept for mulch. If used fresh, the bark will sap nitrogen from the soil, and if left to break down by itself it would take about three years. To hasten the process, Biodynamic Preparation Balls from Biodynamic Agriculture are used - they stimulate the breakdown of the woodchips into compost. The balls contain yarrow, chamomile, stinging nettle and oak bark. They will do about 12 cubic metres, and are embedded in the bark. This load of bark (about 6 cubic metres) should be ready in 12 months.

Right—Comfrey tea maker. Linda puts comfrey leaves in the top of this PVC pipe (you can find PVC offcuts on building sites/in skips/or buy at a hardware store). Put the bottle weight on top of these (use a soft drink bottle filled with wet sand). The finished concentrate forms in the bottom. Collect in a bucket and dilute until you can just see the bottom of the bucket. Linda uses it on her seedlings (one application is enough) to prevent the fungal disease Pythium wilt.

Right—a two-bay composting area for materials such as lawn clippings and plant material. No food in here to reduce vermin.



Above— Linda adds a lot to her soil to add nutritional value, increase soil life and so her plants will be healthy. Some of her favourite products include:

- Biodynamic Liquid Soil Activator
- Biodynamic Paste—used on the fruit trees. Assists with reduction of pests and diseases.
- Lifeorce Instant Humus—has made a huge difference to the soil quality. Linda now has very few issues with fungal diseases.



Comfrey tea maker

Right below: The chook pen is made from recycled materials. The chooks are sometimes put into a chook tractor to help clean up after crops or turn compost.



Henhouse made from recycled materials



## Growing Tromboncino Zucchini

Last year, thanks to an article by Linda Brennan in the ROGI newsletter (page 13, August 2019), I learnt about a type of zucchini I had never heard of before ... the tromboncino. I decided to give it a go, as the traditional type of zucchini that I grew the summer before was a disaster—the fruit were attacked by fruit fly, and then when I tried bagging them they rotted!

I sowed seeds in small pots in September and was delighted when they all came up. In mid-October, I planted one of them in the back veg garden, after the soil had been improved with compost and rock dust. The plan was for it to grow over a trellis, but this plant had other ideas. It rambled over other vegetables and made its way to the lawn, which it took over for the entire summer. The plant puts down roots where it rambles, so when I wanted the trellis back later in the season (the vine had died off there anyway), I cut it off to see what would happen, and it survived - talk about tenacity. This plant is a winner!



The male flower has a stamen (below), whilst the female flower has a small bulbous area (right) which is the ovary (an unfertilised zucchini). To fertilise, take the stamen from the male flower, and brush pollen onto the female part.



Like its cucurbit relative the pumpkin, I found the tromboncino also needed to be hand pollinated. In the mornings I would dutifully go out and find male flowers (plenty of them!), and then the female—this is the part that the fruit start from. Some gardeners use a small paintbrush to brush the pollen from male to female, but I just cut the male flower off, pulled back the petals and then pushed the stamen into the female flower. To avoid confusion, I would put wire around the female so I knew that it had been fertilised. And also to protect it from whatever decided to take a huge bite out of one of the new fruits!





## Growing Tromboncino Zucchini (*continued*)

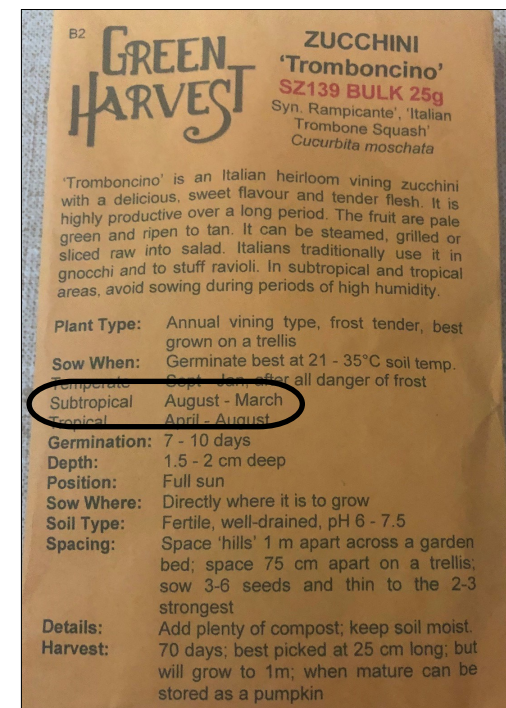
There weren't too many problems with the plant apart from powdery mildew and some fruit getting stung by fruit fly. For the powdery mildew, I simply ignored it or cut off the parts that were looking the worst. The vine keeps growing and the new shoots are where the flowers and fruit form—the powdery mildew usually attacks the older leaves. I also didn't do much to stop the fruit fly, and there weren't that many stings as the fruit is reasonably hard.

I think the taste of tromboncino zucchini far surpasses its supermarket counterpart. It doesn't get all squishy if it's steamed for too long, it's also lovely baked or grated into a quiche. To save seed, let the fruit mature on the vine—it will go a pale orange colour and get quite large. When it's dried and finally cut open, scoop out the seeds and soak them in water until the pulp has separated from the seeds. Then dry, and you have your seeds to plant for next year! This very versatile vegetable can be eaten at the mature orange stage as well, tasting a lot like butternut pumpkin.

Although normally a summer vegetable, Janet has successfully grown tromboncino zucchini in autumn/winter. She planted it in mid-March in a sunny position. It has still been fruiting, even when it's not been hand pollinated. The vine is probably not as prolific as it would be in summer, but growing it in autumn and winter means there hasn't been any problems with fruit fly.

The ROGI Seed Savers group has tromboncino zucchini seed available at the Seed Bank. Enjoy!

Ann Roffey



The tromboncino will grow fairly straight over a trellis, but curls up when grown on the ground. Pick when it's about 25-30cm long for eating.



Mature tromboncino (pale orange) for seed saving and younger one for eating.



To save the seed, scoop them out and soak in water to separate the pulp from them. Then dry on a towel.



Janet's tromboncino—planted in mid-March and growing well over winter.

## Plant Clinic *(Managed and reported by Rohanne Young)*

*Plant clinic is a service provided by ROGI where members can ask for help identifying problems, pests and diseases in their plants. The service is carried out by ROGI members Linda Brennan, Genaro De Rosa and Rohanne Young.*

*This month in Plant Clinic we had questions about discolouration on citrus skin and distortion of tomato and mulberry leaves.*

### **Citrus Melanose**

The first query was from Ann and relates to her dwarf Meyer lemon tree. The skin of the fruit was discoloured and a yellow/brownish colour, but the fruit inside was unaffected and the lemons were still juicy. Ann has an excellent fertiliser program for her lemon tree—she gives it organic fertiliser three times a year along with rock minerals and compost. She supplements this with regular liquid feeds.



From the photos that Ann provided, along with the lemon that she brought along to the meeting, it was clear that Ann's tree had the fungal problem of citrus melanose. Citrus melanose affects the skin, leading to discolouration and in severe cases turning the skin stiff and hard. The fungus also affects the leaves of the

citrus tree, leading to grey spots with yellow halos and in severe cases, leaf distortion. The fungus does not generally affect the

flesh, although in severe cases when the skin hardens the fruit may split as it outgrows the hardened skin.

Citrus melanose must be treated with an acceptable fungicide once it has appeared, as it will not go away on its own. Once the tree is infected, it will always be prone to attack as the fungus spores will stay dormant in the bark and leaves for long periods, becoming active when weather conditions are favourable. Attacks of citrus melanose tend to get worse over time. The fungus is easily transmitted, so treatment of citrus trees needs to be undertaken to prevent neighbouring citrus trees from becoming infected. Good tree hygiene, removing all infected fruit and leaves is also recommended.

Treatment is through spraying with an acceptable fungicide, which includes copper oxychloride, wettable sulphur or lime sulphur. Linda Brennan advised that copper is an acceptable fungicide in organic gardening, but must be limited to one application per season due to the toxic nature of copper in the environment.

The fungicide must be applied early in the fruiting season to prevent the fungus affecting the fruit. However it is recommended that you wait until immediately after the tree has flowered as the application of fungicides during flowering can lead to flower drop, thereby decreasing the crop.

Healthy citrus trees are able to withstand disease and infection better, so a good feeding and watering regime is recommended. Both Linda and Rohanne use biodynamic tree paste on their citrus and other fruiting trees. Biodynamic tree paste provides nutrients, promotes healing and reduces plant susceptibility to insect and disease damage. The tree paste is available from Biodynamics Australia, with a 1.2kg container costing around \$22.00 plus postage. It can be ordered through their website:

<https://biodynamics.net.au/product/biodynamic-paste>



## Plant Clinic (Continued)

### Boron Deficiency

The second query was from Rosanne, who wanted to know why the leaves on her mulberry tree and tomatoes were distorted and curling.

Linda Brennan established that the plants were suffering from boron deficiency. Boron is a trace mineral which is involved in cell growth, and the symptoms of boron deficiency show up as stunted and distorted leaves, especially at the growing tip. Soils in the Red-lands are frequently deficient in boron, although boron deficiency can also be caused by high calcium levels in the soil, or a high soil pH making any boron that is present unavailable to the plant.



The recommended treatment is to test the pH of the soil, and if the pH is too high this must be corrected to allow the plants to access boron. A treatment of boron is then applied (*I use borax, about a quarter of a teaspoon in 10 litres of water, which is then watered into the soil*). Boron is a trace mineral that is toxic in high doses, so you need to be careful when treating the soil.

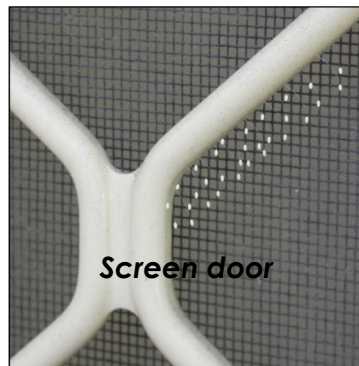
The plants will recover after the boron has been applied, although there may be a considerable lag time. Rosanne's mulberry tree should recover well, although the tomato may not manage to bear fruit if the deficiency is too severe, as the boron deficiency impacts new growth including fruit development.

## 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 - 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 (just inside the door to the main hall) before the meeting starts.*

*Someone will have a look and may be able to answer your questions. Any solutions will be given to you on the night and published on this page. Please be aware that, although we do our best, there may not be anyone present who can solve your problem or identify your plant, especially if it is not related to organic gardening.*



### LACEWING EGGS (don't get rid of them!)

Have you ever seen something like the photos above and wiped them off—whether it be on your clothes line, a screen door, or even a hubcap? They are the eggs of Lacewings—a generalist predator (good bug) for the control of a wide range of pests including aphids, caterpillars, scale insects, mealybugs, mites and whitefly. Don't get rid of them, they are great helpers in the garden!

## Garden Visits & Field Trips

Upcoming garden visits will be limited to 20-30 people only. To book, please email Kathy at [kathypetrik@tpg.com.au](mailto:kathypetrik@tpg.com.au)

### **Sunday, 23 August—Wendy Lee, Belmont**

*This 2½ acre property features a vegetable garden, original bush, Russell Zabel native bee hives and chooks. Wendy is also starting a food forest, and would appreciate advice/help.*

There will be plant sales at the garden visit, but no afternoon tea. If you wish, bring a chair and your own food and drink.

### **Sunday 13 September—Field Trip to Lunar Farm, Birkdale**

*Lunar Farm is a family-run six acre farm in Birkdale. Seasonal vegetables and fruit are grown organically, by the moon and using biodynamic principles.*

### **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 information
- 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 the ROGI Newsletter topical, interesting, local and relevant.**

**Email your item to [info@rogi.com.au](mailto:info@rogi.com.au)**

**The September Newsletter deadline is 27 AUGUST 2020**

## Garden Events August—September



### **Bethania Street Community Garden**

**Bethania Street, Lota**

*The following workshops in August/September will have limited spaces due to social distancing regulations.*

#### **SOLAR COOKING**

**Thursday 20th August, 10.00am-1.00pm**

Learn how solar cooking works, view a variety of solar cookers and make your own simple solar cooker to take home.

**Cost \$10 - Bookings Essential on [0439 048 585](tel:0439048585)**

#### **INTRODUCTION TO ORGANIC GARDENING**

**Sunday 30th August, 9.30am-11.30am**

It's easy to start a vegetable garden. Topics will include location, soil, building your garden bed, seasons in South East Queensland and plant choice.

**Free— Bookings Essential on [0439 048 585](tel:0439048585)**

#### **VEGGIE GARDENING FOR A YEAR-ROUND SUPPLY**

**Sunday 13th September, 9.30am-11.30pm**

We have the opportunity to grow food all year round. Topics will include our South East Queensland seasons, plant choices and how to plan for a harvest throughout the year.

### **Did you know?**

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

## Used Pots Needed

Please **return seedling pots (that have been washed)** to the plant table so that they can be reused – especially the 4-cell ones like these:



Other clean used pots (small sizes up to 120mm diameter) and square pots are good too.

At this stage, we ask you NOT to bring larger pots, as there will be no swap/share/giveaway table.



## Seed Sowing Guide

### August

Artichoke: Jerusalem Artichoke  
Asparagus  
Beans: French  
Beetroot  
Capsicum/Chilli  
Carrot  
Celery  
Chicory  
Eggplant  
Kohlrabi  
Lettuce  
Okra  
Potatoes  
Pumpkin  
Radish  
Silverbeet  
Squash  
Sweet Potato  
Tomato  
Zucchini

For a list of seed bank stock, please go to ROGI website [www.rogi.com.au](http://www.rogi.com.au) and click on the RESOURCES tab.

### September

Artichoke: Jerusalem Artichoke  
Asparagus  
Beetroot  
Beans: French  
Capsicum/Chilli  
Carrot  
Chicory  
Choko  
Cucumber  
Eggplant  
Kohlrabi  
Lettuce  
Okra  
Melons: Water, Rock  
Potatoes  
Pumpkin  
Radish  
Silver beet  
Squash  
Sweet Corn  
Sweet Potato  
Tomato  
Zucchini

Keep in mind that these are only guides. Micro climates and weather conditions may mean that certain seeds may be sown before/after the recommended times. **ROGI Seed Bank is available at all ROGI meetings and Garden Visits. \$1/pack members, \$2 non-members.**

**Please Note:** 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.



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

Other gardening groups using organic methods:

### **Brisbane Organic Growers Inc (BOGI)—**

1st Thursday every month (except Jan), Albion Peace Hall, 102 McDonald Rd, Windsor,  
 6.30 for 7.30pm. 3357 3171 <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—**Wednesday & Friday 9 - noon, Sunday 2- 5pm. Oaklands St, Alexandra Hills. 0408 259 445

## Oaklands Street Community Garden

### Double Workshop 2–5 pm, Sunday 9th August Bed Prep and Cassava Uses & Cooking

*(rescheduled due to wet weather)*

We're very excited to be offering a special double workshop to ROGI folks! Our first beds were established 15 years ago and still produce great tasting organic produce.

Cassava is an easy to grow root vegetable which provides a third of the world's carbohydrates. We'll be serving up some cassava-based snacks for afternoon tea and prepping beds for beans, peas and carrots.

### Topics Covered:

Gardening:

- \* Why prep a bed?
- \* Planning and crop rotation
- \* Prepping for and planting beans, peas and carrots

Cassava:

- \* Propagation and growing
- \* Make fried cassava chips
- \* Discover sweet & savoury snacks; learn to prepare tubers



Oaklands Street Community Garden is behind the ALDI shopping centre at Alexandra Hills. Access Oaklands Street from the roundabout behind Alex Hills Shopping Centre, there is a sign on the corner. Turn right at the end and follow the path to the gate. Please drive slowly once you're inside.

*Due to Covid-19 regulations, please bring your own gloves, fork and/or shovel. Please wear SunSmart clothes and sturdy closed shoes.*

**Maximum group size is 20. Please book your spot by ringing Terry Sullavan on 0408 259 445.**