

ROGI News

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

Salvation Army Church
Cnr McDonald Rd & Macarthur St
ALEXANDRA HILLS

Admission

Members: Gold coin

Visitors: \$10 for this night

You are welcome to provide a quality plant to help share plants with other members - see p 20. Bring a bag/box/basket for your purchases.

See you Wednesday ...

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Lablab grows well in our summer and provides pods (as in photo) that can be cooked and eaten, and seeds that can be picked young and used fresh, or left to dry on the vine and used as dried beans. Being a legume, it can improve your soil. At the close of 2016 - *International Year of Pulses* - consider planting it as a cover crop this summer.

Thoughts from the potting shed

Dear ROGI member

For me, 2016 seems like the year where you blinked and missed it. There's been so much happening on virtually every front that it's been hard to keep up.

It's been a very full and busy year at ROGI with a range of different speakers to add to our horticultural knowledge and a full slate of garden visits and field trips. We've also spread the ROGI word at public expos in both the Redlands and Brisbane City.

But before 2016 totally slips away, let's make sure we give it a rousing end of year sendoff. Which brings us to the first **ROGI Organic Christmas Feast**.

We wanted to do something a bit different for our Christmas wrap-up event this year. The notion of an organic and healthy dinner at no cost to members was the most popular idea with members at our monthly meeting. So please make sure you've reserved your place so our catering can accommodate.

Vice president Sharr Ellson and her merry band of helpers have devised a mouth-watering organic menu for us, sourced

from local suppliers and our own backyards. It will take into account all dietary requirements. Other members will be supplying tasty desserts.

We've also linked in with the Salvation Army's Annual Christmas Hamper drive. Everyone who shares in our Organic Christmas Feast is asked to bring some non-perishable goods to help those in the community who are doing it tough over Christmas. A list of wanted items is on p 19 of this newsletter to help you make your selection/s.

Also bring along a pair of secateurs or other gardening implement to be sharpened for free. More on this on p 19.

I do hope you can join us for the Organic Christmas Feast. It will be a relaxed, sociable celebration where we can have a bit more time to catch up with our fellow gardeners and socialise with everyone and share the season's goodwill.

On behalf of your committee, I wish you and yours a joyous and safe holiday season and a very prosperous New Year.

Good gardening

Kathy

Please note that the ROGI Shop will not be at our December meeting.

Food Connect

ROGI member Pal Juvancz has agreed to become a Food Connect 'City Cousin' - a Redland pick-up point where people can collect their supplies of fruit and vegetables.

What is Food Connect?

Food Connect Brisbane is a social enterprise founded in 2005 by ex-dairy farmer Robert Pekin who was forced off his farm in the 1990s and since then has been on a mission to create a fairer food system.

'We ethically and transparently engage local farmers to supply ecological food that in season and super fresh and pay them about four times the amount of the big food chains, so more of your dollars go directly to growers. Their beautiful produce is then delivered all over Brisbane for everyone to enjoy.

'At Food Connect, local actually means local: our fresh fruit and vegetables, dairy products and bakery items travel no more than 400 kilometres before getting to your door, that's why we can guarantee superior quality, freshness and a reduced impact on the environment.'

Go to www.foodconnect.com.au to see how it all works. While you're there, check out the farmer profiles, including Franco our local Barefoot Farmer from Birkdale (right).

Get in touch with Pal if you are interested in sourcing produce from Food Connect. pal@pcpals.com.au



Coming Events

Dec Wed 14 ROGI Organic Christmas Feast
 There will be no ROGI meeting in January.
 Feb Thurs 2 BOGI meeting
 Tues 7 Herb Society meeting
 Wed 8 ROGI meeting—all about chooks

2017 Membership Fees are now due

- **Cash** payment at ROGI meeting
- **Cheques** made payable to *Redland Organic Growers Inc* - pay at meeting or to PO Box 1257, Cleveland 4163
- **Direct Deposit** BSB 633000. A/C 136137296 Bendigo Bank Capalaba Central

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

If you pay your 2017 fee online, please ensure that you complete a membership renewal form.

This can be done by completing the form online at

<http://www.rogi.com.au/renew-membership.php>

Member Category	Current Members Renewing For 2017	New member/s joining in...			
		Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct16-Dec17
Single	\$30	\$30	\$22.50	\$15	\$37.50
Family*	\$50	\$50	\$37.50	\$25	\$62.50
Pensioner Single**	\$20	\$20	\$15	\$10	\$25
Pensioner Couple**	\$30	\$30	\$22.50	\$15	\$37.50

* **Family** - two (2) adults residing at the same address and their children under eighteen (18) years

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

December Meeting

It's been a great year for ROGI and it's time to celebrate.

Join other ROGI members for an

Organic Christmas Feast

Please bring:

- your own **dinner plate, dessert plate/bowl, cup and**
- **cutlery.** (You'll take them home to wash, so a cloth bag would be handy too)
- secateurs and other tools for sharpening (free for members). More information on p 19.
- gifts for the Salvation Army Christmas Hamper, if you wish. More information on p 19.
- your organic gardening hints and tips to share with other gardeners via the newsletter during 2017. We'll supply paper and pencils on the tables.

As usual, we ask for a gold coin donation to help cover hall hire.

There will be a charge of \$10 for non-members for this night only.

Shane Gishford will be selling fruit and vegetables as usual. See p 19.
Kemp Killerby will be selling Australian native food plants. See p 5.

November Guest Speaker Kim Killerby Bushfood4Biodiversity

About Australian native foods

Indigenous peoples have been eating them for over 40 000 years. They survived through three ice ages and adapted. Most indigenous foods were removed as a result of colonisation, but thankfully some people saved seeds and continued the varieties.

Many people think indigenous foods are toxic: a very small number are toxic and need special preparation of some sort.

Native bush foods don't need fertiliser (even though Aus has the world's most depleted soils (being four billion years old)).

We are lucky as South-East Queensland has the most biodiversity in Australia and is recognised around the world.

Most native foods are much higher in vitamin C than other sources. Over 2 000 plants contain known botanical substances that are used for medicinal purposes. The knowledge systems of indigenous Australians and modern day scientist are coming together at last.

Often regarded as survival foods (to be eaten only when desperate) but are actually very good food sources eg Bunya nut festivals where indigenous people celebrate.

Most people have no idea and we all need to get to know about our native foods:

- **Native finger limes** *Microcitrus australasica* —information spread from indigenous tribes and now they're gourmet and highly-valued
- **Gumby gumby** *Pittosporum angustifolium* is acknowledged as natural cancer cure

- **Small-leaved tamarind** *Diploglottis campbellii* is highly endangered—only a few left in wild but seed-saving is happening
- Modern farmers grow using native plants as root stock for more resilience
- Many fruits make highly-desirable jam if raw fruit is not palatable (eg Davidson plum)
- Most bush foods are found in dry rainforest – 900mm annual rainfall – with a multiple canopy system

Tall trees - Davidson, Illawarra, Burdekin plums (birds visit here first and then go lower—assist with pest control)

Shrubs—native rosella (perennial)

Low plants—native grapes, midyim berry *Austromyrtus dulcis*, Warrigal greens (attract native bees and butterflies)

Below ground—native yams etc

This system can be replicated in home gardens—it takes time to establish but then needs little maintenance



Davidson Plum



Midyim Berry

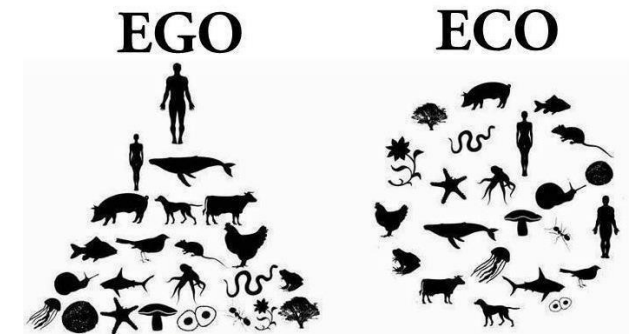
Some thoughts

Our purpose in life is to be carers of the environment which sustains us and everything within it. We've been brought up to think the bush as separate to our gardens, but everything is connected.

There is the **ego** attitude (humans hold dominion over everything else); and there is

eco which acknowledges that we are a part of everything else. Much (ego) pest control is a 'war on everything'. We must embrace eco.

The world is getting hotter, climates are changing and the weather is more erratic. Bees are endangered, possibly through human action (and inaction), and without bees there is little pollination of fruit.



What can we do?

We can control our own backyard but not what the government does.

- Promote using bush foods for us and native fauna to eat
- Grow native fruits and other native foods as much as possible
- Have an attitude that the bush and reserves are an extension of our gardens, not separate (we know the animals consider them as one!)
- Do eco walks with Kemp to learn to identify plants through seeing, touching and, perhaps, tasting
- Have a native beehive in your garden
- Do what the indigenous peoples did/do—eat native foods and then spit seeds out to regenerate

There is so much to be discovered and now at last people taking an interest.

A message from Kemp

Here is some reference information to help you retain some of the concepts and topics discussed in November.

The first and perhaps one of the most important parts of the discussion centers around we as **human beings becoming 'The Carers of Everything'**, i.e. to take responsibility for our actions, connect with the environment around us and work towards caring for everything found in our local environment in whatever capacity we can.

This YouTube clip below is of one of my teachers and mentors, Dr Noel Nannup in Perth who puts forward the concept that we all have a role to play in relation to the environment and that, as a species, we cannot keep taking, without giving something back. It's a relaxed and informative approach to the topic and its message is applicable wherever we find ourselves. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aeGqTpLDYjQ>

The **second most important message of the talk** is understanding and implementing 'multiple canopy systems' within our gardens, properties, parks, community gardens, etc. It is a concept often expounded in the principles of permaculture and can be seen 'naturally' in many National Parks and Forest Reserves, etc. You can read about multiple canopy



systems here: <http://tcpermaculture.com/site/2013/05/27/nine-layers-of-the-edible-forest-garden>

Some of the best-performing local Native Australian Bushfoods that are also well-suited to enhancing environmental biodiversity and the diversity of our own diets are:

Burdekin Plum:	<i>Pleiogynium timoriense</i>
Davidson Plum:	<i>Davidsonia</i>
Illawarra Plum:	<i>Podocarpus elatus</i>
Native Mulberry:	<i>Hedycarya angustifolia</i> <i>Pipturus argenteus</i>
Native Pepper Bush:	<i>Tasmannia insipida</i>
Lime Berry:	<i>Micromelum minutum</i>
Native Yam:	<i>Dioscorea transversa</i>
Riberry:	<i>Syzygium luehmannii</i>
Midyim Berry:	<i>Austromyrtus dulcis</i>
Native Ginger:	<i>Alpinia caerulea</i>
Finger Lime:	<i>Citrus australasica</i>

Other **native Australian herbs and spices** that we can all grow and introduce into our diets are: [List_of_Australian_herbs_and_spices](#)

The above-mentioned bushfoods are a small sample of the dozens of native Australian plants that are well suited to the Bushfood 4 Biodiversity concept! Here is a more complete listing: [Bush_tucker](#)

Further reading about the most common Native Australian Bushfoods can be seen here: <http://www.harpercollins.com.au/9780207169304/>

Thank you once again for inviting me to speak on our 'Bushfood 4 Biodiversity' concept and we hope that the information received helps with your ongoing learning about our Native Australian Bushfoods that can be successfully used to enhance our internal and external biodiversity.

Kemp Killerby (Flora 4 Fauna - Qld)

Kemp plans to bring plants for sale at our December meeting.

Flora 4 Fauna - QLD often host 'Pollinators 4 Biodiversity' - free walk and talk events. If you are interested in learning more about this topic, feel free to join us!

A free walk and talk is a continuation of what we discussed at the Bushfood 4 Biodiversity talk, ie using Native Australian Pollinator-Attracting Host Plants to help generate and preserve native food sources. For more information about events, go to:

<https://www.facebook.com/Flora4FaunaQLD/events>

Plant Clinic

Q: How often does jade flower? This is the only one in the yard to flower.'



A: They will flower when they are old enough. Sources online say that jade plants need to be very mature (eg over 15 years) before they will flower and need perfect conditions—keep it in a dry (not humid) environment, withhold water and expose it to cool temperatures.

Q: What is this tree?



A: *Ardisia elliptica*—a known weed whose seeds are dispersed by fruit-eating birds.

Q: What is this plant?



NB This is not my photo, as the one I took on the night didn't turn out very well. I have taken this photo from <https://frustratedgardener.com/2015/10/04/daily-flower-candy-mirabilis-jalapa>

A: 'Pride of Peru' or Four O'clock Flower *Mirabilis jalapa*. The leaves and root have been used medicinally for centuries. The flowers are used for food colouring. An interesting feature is that flowers with different colours grow simultaneously on the same plant. The strongly-scented flowers open from mid-afternoon through to morning, hence the name.

More Plant Clinic over the page ...

Plant Clinic

If you have an interesting-looking pest, wonder if your plant may be a weed or have a deficiency or a disease, Plant Clinic may help you.

Bring along the insect or plant (as many parts - fruit, leaf, root etc - as you can, and in a sealed plastic bag if it's diseased or very seedy) and fill in the form. Place the plant parts together with the form on Plant Clinic table well before the meeting starts. Someone will have a look and may be able to answer your questions.

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

Plant Clinic continued

Questions were asked about various pests attacking plants. One was psyllid damage.



(Once again, this isn't my photo.)

A: Psyllids are sap-sucking insects - usually host-specific (each one attacks only one type of plant). New growth may have dimpling on leaves. Leaves may be distorted. Leaves may fall off or be discoloured. The psyllids produce a crystal-like honeydew that sooty mould grows on.

Drench soil with neem. ROGI member Shane Gishford from Independent Crop Consultant Services (ICCS) told us that neem only travels

up the plant, so is best applied to the root zone as a drench.

He said that Eco Neem has only one bio active for insects whereas his has more.

This led to many questions about neem ...

Info on Neem Oil

What is it?

The neem tree (*Azadirachta indica*) produces an oil that contains bioactives which, when adsorbed by plant roots, convert to omega 3, 6 and 9 fatty acids.

What can it do?

These enhance plant health to enable it to inhibit diseases such as Downy Mildew and Powdery Mildew and others. Insects such as aphids, mealybugs, scale and white flies are also deterred. It doesn't affect beneficial insects; only those that suck (bugs) and chew. For more on how it works, see <http://www.discoverneem.com/neem-oil-insecticide.html>

It can be used as a skin drench for fleas, nits, acne, scabies and warts. It is also used as a beauty aid for the skin and hair.

How do I use it in the garden?

- It's an oil so will set at temperatures below 16°C, so warm the container in a pot of hot water first if it's set.
- Measure the required amount of liquid neem into some warm water (about 30°) to emulsify it—it will go white. Pour this into your watering can.
- Add required amount of cold water and apply to the soil around the plant.

- Use between 2 ml and 5 ml added to a 9 litre watering can for an area of 10 square metres. A little bit goes a long way!
- Use neem regularly—every 7 to 10 days if insects are in large numbers; less often if conditions are okay.

Shane usually has neem and several other useful concoctions for sale at our meetings.

I have a neem tree. How do I use it?

Pretty every part of the neem tree can be used:

Seeds—this is where the oil comes from

Bark – Neem bark isn't widely used, although its anti-inflammatory and antiseptic properties make it a useful treatment for gum disease in mouthwash form. Traditionally, natives chewed the twigs, which served as effective, im-promptu toothbrushes. The sticky bark resin is commonly used as glue.

Flowers – Neem tree is widely appreciated for its sweet aroma, which honeybees love. The oil is also valued for its calming effect.

Wood – Neem is a fast-growing tree that tolerates poor growing conditions and drought-prone soil. As a result, the wood is a critical source of clean-burning firewood in many frost-free regions of the world.

Cake – “Cake” refers to the pulpy substance that is leftover after oil is extracted from the seeds. It is an effective fertilizer and mulch, often used to discourage diseases like mildew and rust. It is sometimes used as livestock fodder.

Leaves – In paste form, neem leaves are used as a skin treatment, primarily for fungus, warts or chicken pox.

See <http://www.gardeningknowhow.com/ornamental/trees/neem-tree/neem-tree-information.htm> for more info on this

Plagues of Insects

November brought us two plagues of almost biblical proportions.

The first one was rather beautiful: millions of caper white butterflies wafted over southern Queensland for days. Many got stuck in screens and greenhouses and so on but their effect on us as gardeners was negligible.

The other, which is still happening, is a real pain and has had a devastating effect on many farmers and gardeners.

It has variously been reported as being either the Rutherglen bug (*Nysius vinitor*) or the grey cluster bug (*Nysius clevelandensis*). They are very similar.

The Rutherglen Bug

- Native to Australia and is rarely found on native plant species
- Arrive in crops in spring in large numbers, usually in association with storm activity. This year is particularly bad.
- Feed on and kill small seedlings, feed on growing tips, buds, flowers, pods/seeds
- Settle on the flowering heads of many weeds (eg the weed amaranth, sunflowers, parsley and coriander that are in flower in my garden) and take off when disturbed
- Some hosts are the exotic weeds fleabane *Conyza bonariensis*, and thistle *Carduus* sp., (I have noticed that fleabane is very prolific this season) and goosefoot *Dysphania pumilio* which is a native weed. There are more.
- Will land on you and 'stick', even giving you a nip

- Attracted to white/cream surfaces and flyscreens and lights at night-time

Control

- There seems to be little that can be done from an organic perspective, apart from managing weeds and squirting with a hose
- Little is known about impact of predators; thought to be spiders
- Egg parasitoids (wasps/flies) seem to be the only beneficials to attack Rutherglen bug.



Above:
Rutherglen bugs
attacking a leaf

Right:
An adult on
sorghum
(photo <https://www.daf.qld.gov.au/plants/field-crops-and-pastures/broadacre-field-crops/integrated-pest-management/a-z-insect-pest-list/rutherglen-bug-grey-cluster-bug>)



The Weed Fleabane

A weed of cultivation, it is found in disturbed areas, roadsides and pastures.

From a farmer's perspective, it is difficult to control with herbicides and more tolerant to glyphosate than most other annual weeds.

In the home garden the best method is physical removal—use a daisy grubber tool before flowering, then it can be put in the compost bin.

The ground-up seed is aromatic and can be used as an insect repellent, hence its name.

Some people are very sensitive to its hairy stems.



Right:
The weed
fleabane is
prolific at the
moment.

Below:
Remove the
weed before
the daisy-like
flowers set seed
as they can
travel far and
wide



Garden Visit

Whepstead Manor

Our last garden visit for the year was very special; a wonderful finale. Chris Cutmore welcomed us to his grand white heritage-listed home, Whepstead Manor, which they have thoughtfully and lovingly restored. The manor is complemented by an absolutely beautiful heritage garden with an added orchid and vegetable garden.

The spacious finely-crafted house was built in 1889 for Gilbert Burnett, an important local identity. Since then it has had many owners and was transformed into Bayview private hospital from 1943 to 1973 and later a restaurant and function centre.

As we walked up the patterned paved

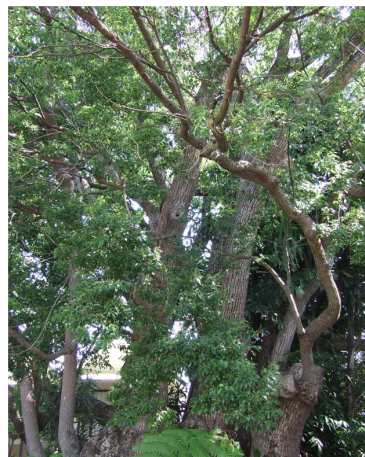


Palm trees line the Burnett Street front entrance to the house which overlooks Moreton Bay. Notice the high dormer window with even better views. Also the white statues on the manicured lawns.

path, the smell of the flowering jasmine vines attracted our attention. Bees hovered over the flowers indicating that this was very much a living thriving garden.

The lawn grass, Empire Green, is perfectly maintained and complements the house. It was like a thick green carpet with not a weed in sight and the edges all perfectly maintained. Pop up sprinklers water it at night, which can be a slight problem in winter as fungus can develop but Glen Buhman, the resident gardener, is on guard for that and treats it immediately. This variety of grass seems to be very resistant to lawn grub which in spite of being so green has not been attacked by it. It is mowed on the highest setting.

Glen works full time maintaining the garden. As there are extensive hedges and garden edges with an 80 metre frontage, there is a lot of maintenance.



This Port Jackson tree is over 100 years old. It has lots of character and interesting bark. It provides shade and privacy.



A beautiful marble statue, Mary, graces the front entrance.



This beautifully-crafted wooden fern house built to a standard, not a price, is a recent addition beneath a heritage-listed camphor laurel.



The naturalistic appearance blends in well with the house and looks like it has always been part of the garden. It was a hot day outside but it was so fresh and cool in the dappled shade with the ferns and orchids that we were tempted to remain there.

Garden Visit—Whepstead Manor

The orchard is a relatively recent addition. Rows were dug one metre deep and filled with mushroom compost and cow manure and then back-filled with the original soil. It is a very productive orchard with a wide variety of trees.



The fenced orchard included trees such as citrus, olives, apple, avocado, figs and mango.



Even in the orchard the garden edges and grass were well-maintained and the fruit trees were all well-mulched and raised for good drainage.



Large bunches on well-established banana palms.



A row of bamboo provides privacy from the neighbouring property and when cut back is a source of stakes and supports for plants



Near the tennis court and tucked away from view, like in a secret garden, was an excellent cubby house to delight children.



*Melissa and the trunk of the enormous heritage poinciana tree.
Glen showed us how the trunk had engulfed the old septic pipes and advised us not to plant a poinciana near a house or water pipes.*

Garden Visit—Whepstead Manor



The enclosed bore which is over 10 m deep supplies water for the garden.



Colourful heliconias and ornamental gingers growing along the pathway in the dappled shade of the poinciana tree add a tropical feel to the garden.



Entrance to the vegetable garden.



Hens free-range beneath bamboo on a long run between vegetable garden and the side fence.



Vegetable garden from outside showing the type of mesh that encloses it.



One of the beds of pink flowering strawberries. Their fruit looked really inviting (and they tasted delicious too).

Garden Visit—Whepstead Manor



Bed of corn with many plants growing close together to help ensure pollination success.



Black Russian tomatoes and a variety of vegetables for the household.



Glen grows mostly heritage varieties of vegetables and is experimenting with trenches for potatoes.



The potting shed. Neatness was everywhere.



Most gardens have a shed but this equipment shed was very different. It has a basement - perfect for a wine cellar. When the house was a hospital, the cellar was used as a store for medical supplies.



Tasting wine in the cellar.



Garden Visit—Whepstead Manor



Near the front door

We greatly appreciate the generous hospitality of Chris who, with Glen, so willingly shared the afternoon with us to show us this amazing treasure. We are in awe of the work they have done to ensure that Whepstead Manor is restored to its full glory and is well maintained as a unique piece of our heritage.

Reported by Mary Irmer.
Photos by Mary and Rai Irmer. Gennaro De Rosa, Jill Nixon



Above: the large gazebo where we had afternoon tea, with the tennis court behind to the right

Below: panoramic view of the main entrance off Burnett Street.

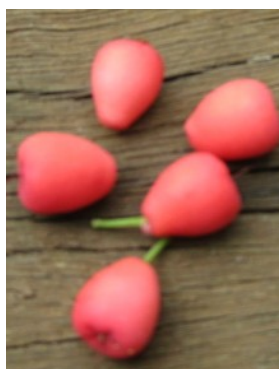


Lillypilly

*Syzygium
luehmannii*
Riberry

Many of you will have access to lillypillies growing in your yard or somewhere in the neighbourhood. Sadly, the fruit often fall to the ground and rot, such a terrible waste of a wonderful fruit.

Last month, Kemp spoke to us about growing more Australian native foods and lillypilly is a classic. The riberry lillypilly is a small tree bearing copious amounts of pink-to-red fruit – about 1 cm long - throughout November.



Using Lillypilly

Eat them raw right off the tree – just check that a bird or bat hasn't dropped its load above them! Some fruit have a small soft seed – just spit it out. They have a flavour best described as 'zingy' – a little bit sweet, little bit tart and a little bit spicy. You'll be pleased to hear that they have a very high antioxidant value.

They can be frozen – just cover them with water and put in the freezer until you're ready to cook them.

Cook them to eat now or later. You can make jam, cordial and a sauce.

Lillypilly Jam (Riberry Jam)

Lillypillies – fresh or frozen
Granny smith apple/s (optional, but they give the jam a bit more body)
Water
Sugar
Lemon juice

Remove stalks, discard mis-shapen or pale un-ripe fruit. Don't worry about the little 'hairs' – they'll get sieved away.

Use one apple for every 1 litre container of lillypillies. Peel, core and chop apple/s.

Put all fruit into a large saucepan; add water to just cover fruit.

Bring to boil and then simmer for about 1 hour until fruit is mushy.

Push it through a sieve into another saucepan. Add sugar – one cup for each cup of fruit – bring to boil and simmer for about 1 hour.

Add lemon juice (about 1 lemon per 2 cups fruit), mix thoroughly.

It should gel when placed on a cold plate. If

not, boil it some more until it does.

Pour into hot sterilised jars.

Note: you can make this without the apples for an even more intense flavour.

Lillypilly Cordial

To make a cordial, prepare as for jam, but omit the apples, use 1½ times the sugar, and strain. Finally, mix in citric acid (1 tablespoon per 1½ litres cordial) and store in sterilised bottles in the fridge. Shake well and dilute to use.

Lillypilly Sauce

Make as for the jam, but use half the sugar.

Add 1 teasp citric acid per 1 litre.

To use, pour over ice cream or pancakes, or stir it through ice cream and refreeze. Or just eat it off the spoon, it's so yummy!



This bowl of lilly pillies made two litres of jam and sauce. That's a dessertspoon .

Plant of the Month

Yarrow *Achillea millefolium*

Yarrow is a wonderful herb to have in the garden. I was aware it had medicinal value but, to be honest, I haven't used it that way before, until I started writing this article!

My husband called me to come and help him in the yard. I came around the corner dodging something in the way, tripped and cut my pinky toe on some aluminium roofing we had sitting next to the item in the way. I looked down to see blood gushing out and then looked to the right and ... what was swaying in the breeze right next to me? Yarrow.

I'd heard yarrow was good at stopping bleeding but never gave it a shot. 'Now is as good a time as any,' I thought. I made a poultice, wrapped it up and ... it stopped it bleeding. Just like they said it would. Easy.

Mostly I've been using yarrow as a perennial and to improve the soil. It is a deep-rooted plant and accumulates potassium, phosphorus and copper from the subsoil.

I love it as a bee- and bug-attractant. It is a

habitat for lacewings, parasitoid wasps, ladybugs, ground beetles, spiders and hoverflies.

I also learned that it is good as:

- a compost activator - helps speed decomposition - add a few leaves in each layer of compost
- a fertilising tea - soak yarrow leaves in a bucket of water for a few weeks - one part 'tea' to 10 parts water on your garden
- its leaves have a pungent odour so good for repelling some pests
- a good drought-tolerant plant - wonderful for use in Brisbane's dry-ish winters
- a cover crop under fruit trees to fertilise and enhance fruit production
- a chop and drop mulch (leave on top of soil after cutting it back) - helping to build soil
- a nourishing green leaf added to layers when making a no-dig garden
- just a plant, to benefit the garden system as a whole.

It can reach a height of up to 60cm and flowers in late spring and will keep flowering well into late autumn. It's a good candidate for any sunny spot even a neglected spot that's plagued with poor soil and dry conditions.

Yarrow will spread quickly via its rhizomes, so unless you have a spot for it that you think can handle it or think you need a good quantity to do all the lovely things yarrow can do, plant it in a pot and care for it that way so you still get to enjoy the wonderful herb yarrow.

Sharr Ellison



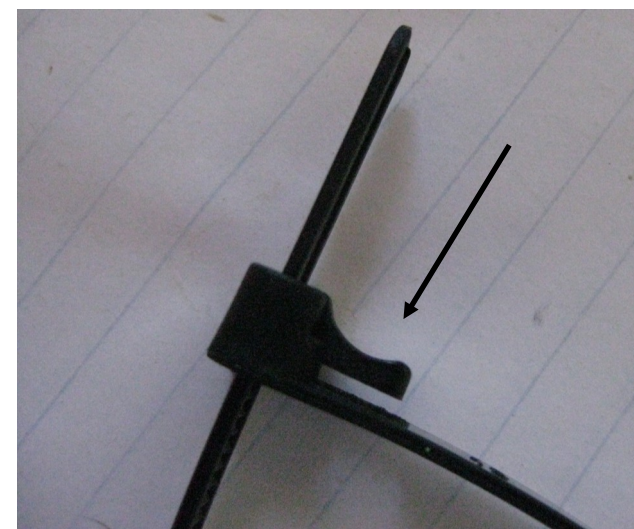
The seed bank will have yarrow plants (and others) for sale at the December meeting.

Remember this is the last meeting for the year so if you need any seeds or plants to get you through to the next meeting in February, please stock up.

Using Cable/Zip Ties

If you're like us, you'll have numerous things around your garden being held together by cable ties. Often they're there to do a temporary or seasonal job. Then you cut them away and they get thrown in the bin. Not a sustainable practice.

Now we use releasable cable ties—just press the little tab (see arrow below) and you can undo them and keep them for other jobs. Sure they cost a bit more to purchase, but it's cheaper in the long run.



Ideas for the garden



Clockwise from right:

Turn an old wheelie bin into a 200 litre water collector. The water trickles gently onto fruit trees.

Buy (or request as a Christmas gift) a compost bucket set (from Kmart). Keeps the flies out, is easily cleaned and isn't unsightly on your kitchen bench. I have three: one for the compost bin, one for the chooks and one for the soldier fly larvae. Give one to your neighbour to collect scraps for you.

Birds were taking the blueberries before we could get them. Now we harvest up to 200 berries a day from our three bushes! To make the 'gazebo' we used 25mm hardwood stakes, some corner brackets, old lace curtains and ties to close it.

Collect horse manure (stable sweepings thus free of nut grass) and/or spoiled lucerne at Jean's horse property. See Jean at the ROGI meeting.



Library News and Review

The following books and DVDs/CDs are missing in action!

Please have a good look to see if they're vacationing on your bookshelves. These resources are very valuable and we want them to be available to others. Please contact anyone listed on the back page if you have an item to return.

Books:

"Cymbidiums, How to Care for Them" Qld Orchid Society 3rd Edition
"Dendrobiums", Their Description & Culture" Qld Orchid Society by P K Seale
"Grow Your Own Bushfoods" by Keith & Irene Smith
"House Plants, How to Choose & Display" Sunset Books- Lane Publishing Co.
"Jackie French's Guide to Companion Planting" (Book 2)
"Organic Gardener Essential Guide, Getting Started" Gardening Australia.
"Organic Gardener Essential Guide, Permaculture Made Easy" Gardening Australia.
"People with Dirty Hands" by Robin Chotzinoff.
"Planet Chicken" by Hattie Ellis
"Silent Spring" copy 1 by Rachel Carson.
"The Cook's Garden" The Australian Woman's Weekly.
"The Fascinating History Of Your Lunch" by Jackie French
The Omnivore's Dilemma, (The Natural History of Four Meals)" Michael Pollan
"The Sacred Balance, Rediscovering Our Place in Nature" David Suzuki
"Tomatoes Love Carrots"
"Backyard Aquaponics" (Blue Folder).

DVDs:

"Composting Kids"
"Gardening Australia – The Complete Gardening Box of 3 DVDs – Permaculture & Organic Gardening, Roses With Open Gardens, Cottage Gardens With Patch From Scratch" ABC - 342minutes
"Harvesting Water The Permaculture Way" by Geoff Lawton, 2008.
"Permaculture Soils", by Geoff Lawton.
"Practical Guide to Home Landscaping" – Readers' Digest.
"Think Global Eat Local", A Diet For A Sustainable Society" Seed International, 2008.

CD:

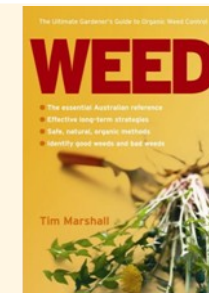
"Unlocking The Ancient Secrets of Aloe Vera, Miracle Benefits That Amaze Modern Science".

Equipment:

Refractometer (an expensive implement for testing the quality of your produce)

Weed: The Ultimate Gardener's Guide to Organic Weed Control

Tim Marshall



Like it or not, weeds are part of every gardener's life. Managing weeds effectively and without chemicals is about developing effective long term and repeated strategies. This book explains how to tackle problems systematically.

It is not about identification of weeds although it does assist in this. It provides advice about weeds and how to manage them.

The author discusses weed legislation in Australia and weeds of significance and reviews past practices with the herbicide use, and then expands on the organic management of weeds. Chapters include: What is a weed?; Weed types; Taking control of weeds; Garden weeds and environmental weeds. There is a large table of common weeds and actions for control.

'Taking Control' is the major part of this 209 page book. Many strategies are discussed: cover crops, smother crops, barrier planting, physical barriers such as trenching, physical control such as hand pulling and cultivation, biological control using natural enemies eg cactoblastis moth for prickly pear, use of animals eg poultry and guinea pigs, organic herbicides ranging from vinegar and salt to complex plant-based herbicides and how to apply them.

He discusses 'good weeds' – those with beneficial functions such as soil protection, indicator of soil conditions, ability to renew and build soil with deep roots plant exudates and organic matter. The final part section names about 80 weeds and their controls in a table.

This is a dense book with a lot of comprehensive information. There are no photos; illustrations are line drawn. A good Australian reference book.

More about the author

Also wrote *Compost: the ultimate organic guide to recycling your garden*, *Bug*, and *The New Organic Gardener*.

Has visited over 1,000 certified organic farms in Australia and more than 1,500 certified organic farms in 25 other countries.

Peter Cundall says: 'Tim Marshall has long been a legend in Australia as an outstanding communicator, writer and broadcaster, specialising in organic techniques'. <http://www.farmingsecrets.com/experts/tim-marshall/>

Please note that the ROGI library has the following items available for borrowing:

- sail needles (for sowing shade cloth)
- pH kits

Seed Bank Request

- Please **return seedling pots** the month after you have bought the seedlings so they can be re-used.
- Please bring along **other clean used pots**—small sizes only, up to 120mm diameter. The almost-square ones are good.

Seed-raising Mix

The ROGI seed bank **seed-raising mix** (a blend of coir peat, vermiculite, perlite and biochar) has proven to be quite successful at getting the little blighters to come up!

We put it in recycled yogurt or ice cream containers.

One litre = \$0.50

Two litres = \$1.00

Four litres = \$2.00

We are able to offer wonderful prices as we source well and we are a not-for-profit group. Our passion is to get you gardening and growing more food.

Sharr Ellson

Special Offer

When you buy five packets of seeds from the seed bank, you will receive one litre of the special seed-raising mix to sow them in – free!

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 that you may have bought from a nursery.

Seed Sowing Guide

December

Asparagus
Basil
Beans - snake, Madagascar,
Lablab, soy, pigeon pea
Beetroot
Borage
Capsicum/Chilli
Carrots
Choko
Coriander
Cucumber
Eggplant
Jicama
Lettuce
Melon - Honey, Rock, Water
Okra
Pigeon Peas
Pumpkin
Radish
Rockmelon
Rosella
Silverbeet
Squash
Sunflower
Sweet Corn
Sweet Potato
Tomatoes
Zucchini

January

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

February

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

Keep in mind that these are only guides.

Be aware that micro-climates and weather conditions may mean that certain seeds may be sown before or after the recommended times.

ROGI Seed Bank is available at ROGI meetings and Garden Visits.

\$1 per packet for members. \$2 for non-members.

Produce available

Pesticide-free (some certified organic) produce available at the December meeting.

Vegetables

Beetroot bunched
broccoli
Capsicum - Red
Carrot – Orange – Organic
Cauliflower
Coriander
Cucumber - Lebanese, Apple
Egg Plant
Ginger
Kale– Green Curly
Lettuce
Mint
Mushrooms
Onions – Brown; Red Salad
Potato Sebago, Dutch Cream — Organic
Rhubarb
Silver beet
Sweet Potato – White/Purple; Gold
Tomato
Wheat Grass & Barley Grass
Zucchini Green & Lebanese

Fruit

Apples - Granny Smith, Red Delicious
Bananas – Cavendish, Lady Fingers
Stone fruit

Other Products

Apple cider Vinegar
Eggs - 700 gms Free Range
Pure Apple and Ginger Juice
Pure Apple Juice – Filtered and Unfiltered

December Meeting

Tool Sharpening

Steve from Bayside Mobile Sharpening will set up his van beside the hall.

Here is how it will work:

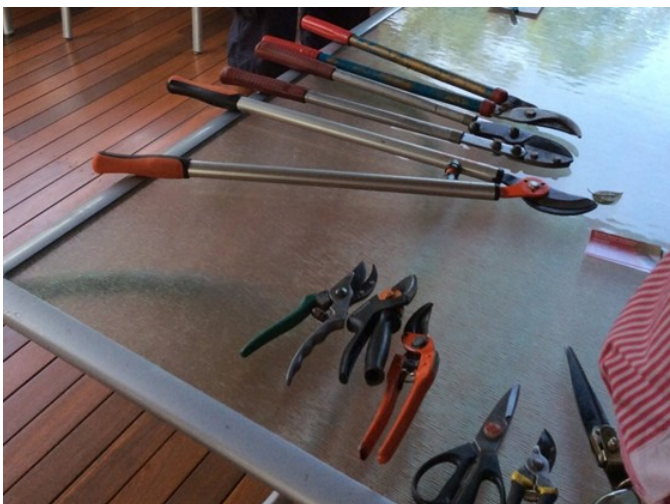
- Register and label your tool/s inside.
- Steve will do secateurs (one per member) first, as he needs to reconfigure his machines for each tool type, and this takes some time.
- After one pair of secateurs per person has been done, he will assess what else is there. 'Second' pairs of secateurs will be done next.
- Steve will alter the machines to do other items.

We hope everyone who brings a tool will be able to get it sharpened.

Only if there's time will he sharpen your second and third tools, so you may bring along two or three and hope for the best.

ROGI will be paying Steve for this service for our ROGI members as a Christmas gift.

Below: Some of the tools that were sharpened by Steve at a ROGI Garden Visit late last year.



Salvos Wish List

Instead of exchanging gifts with other ROGI members in a Secret Santa system (or some other way) we thought it would be better for us to support the Salvos Christmas Hamper Appeal with non-perishable gifts.

Here are some suggested items for you to choose from:

1 litre long life milk
1 litre long life custard
375g Weetbix or similar cereal
500g family assorted biscuits
1kg rice
1 litre fruit juice
825g tinned fruit
500g pasta
500g pasta sauce
3 or 5 pack instant 2 minute noodles
100g tea bags (approx. 50 teabags) *
100g coffee (instant or flavoured coffee sachets) *
1 packet potato chips, corn chips, Pringles, pretzels
500g baked beans or spaghetti (or 3 pack of smaller tins)
400g tin salad item (eg peas/corn/beetroot)
1 fruit cake or Christmas pudding
200g jam or spread (vegemite, peanut butter, honey, Nutella) *
1 large bag confectionery (lollies, candy canes, liquorice, toffee)
Christmas bonbons
Christmas napkins
Gift for young male adults, ie wallet, gift certificate, toiletries.

* heavy demand

Please bring these along to the December ROGI meeting and place them in the designated area.

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 and variety 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, seedlings, jam, lemons – things that have cost you money (and time and effort) to produce. Please ensure items are labelled, named and priced. It is preferable that you staff the stall yourself.

FREE swap/share/give-away

(This is for members only)

For those items you don't want payment for eg shredded paper, unwanted volunteer plants (named, please) 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.

Remember to bring a bag/box/basket to take everything home

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 Cleveland store
- Register online
- Tick ROGI as the community group you wish to support

Then, every time you shop in the store and use your card, not only do you receive discounts, 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.

Did you know?

You can go online and read every edition of ROGI News since September 2014.

Go to www.rogi.com.au and have a browse.

We'd like to hear from you.

For example, send us:

- A story about your garden eg p 21
- A photo of an interesting plant p 2
- An article about an unusual plant
- A request for items or information
- Specific garden or nutrition info
- A recipe for home-grown produce p 14
- A notice that you have something to give away or sell
- A handy technique or tip p 16, 17
- A current affair to do with organic growing p 8
- Anything else to do with organic growing

Please send your items to the editor and help keep ROGI News topical, interesting, local and relevant

info@rogi.com.au

February Newsletter Deadline

Please send your contributions to the newsletter editor by 23 January for the February edition.

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

In My Garden



I enjoy waking up to this late spring-time view from my bedroom. The purples, pinks and mauves in my butterfly garden are quite stunning.

The hot pink of crepe myrtle, various shades of purples and mauves of Buddlejias, petunias and Agapanthus with a splash of white here and there from Vincas and Alyssum.

The beehive gingers are popping up through the New Zealand spinach that provides a good supply of spinach for us and the chooks next door.



Another favourite view is from the lounge looking out to the front garden at the spectacular show of white hydrangea - particularly beautiful this year.

Rhonda Binns