

# ROGI News

ROGI meetings are held on the 2nd Thursday night of the month, with doors opening at 6.15pm. Members can visit the plant table, Seed Bank, library and stalls or have a chat before the meeting. Please be seated by 7pm ready for the proceedings.

*Bayside Community Church  
Cnr McDonald Rd and Macarthur St  
ALEXANDRA HILLS*

**Don't forget:**

- Only fully paid members may attend this meeting
- Your plate of sweet/savoury food
- Your cutlery and crockery
- Donation for Salvo's Food Drive
- Your E-Waste
- Your tool for sharpening
- Return library books
- Return washed seedling pots
- Free swap/share/giveaway
- NO Plant Clinic or ROGI Rewards

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ROGI webpage: [www.rogi.com.au](http://www.rogi.com.au)  
ROGI Email: [info@rogi.com.au](mailto:info@rogi.com.au)



Photo by Linda Brennan

Mexican coriander is a tasty and hardy option to regular coriander, which does not like our hot, humid summers in SEQ. On pages 6-8, discover edibles that grow well through a hot and dry summer, as well as those that thrive during a hot and wet summer.

## December Meeting

### Christmas Gathering

To celebrate the end of 2023, we're having Christmas dinner together!

Please bring:

- **Food to share - a salad/savoury/dessert/bread (cut up into pieces if possible). Please include a label listing ingredients to assist members with allergies.**
- **Your own plate, bowl, cup/glass and cutlery in a bag (you will take them home to wash).**
- **E-Waste for SubStation 33 to repurpose** (see p. 3).
- **Your tool for sharpening (one tool per member)** (see p. 3).
- **A donation for the Salvation Army Christmas Appeal** (see p. 3).

From 6.15pm, members may visit the Seed Bank, library, plants and stalls (local honey, jams, wax wraps, soaps etc) or just have a chat.

**There will be no Plant Clinic or ROGI rewards.** Giveaways accepted.

We plan to start dinner at 7pm.

We need to know if you're coming - please register on TEAM APP or email [tonibowler@hotmail.com](mailto:tonibowler@hotmail.com) by the **8th December**, and let us know what food you are bringing - salad (type)/savoury/dessert/bread (chicken, ham and drinks will be provided).

**\*\* We need volunteers to assist with setting up, serving food and packing up on the night. Please let us know if you can help with this.**

**ROGI MEMBERS ONLY.**

To join, go to the MEMBERSHIP tab at [www.rogi.com.au](http://www.rogi.com.au)

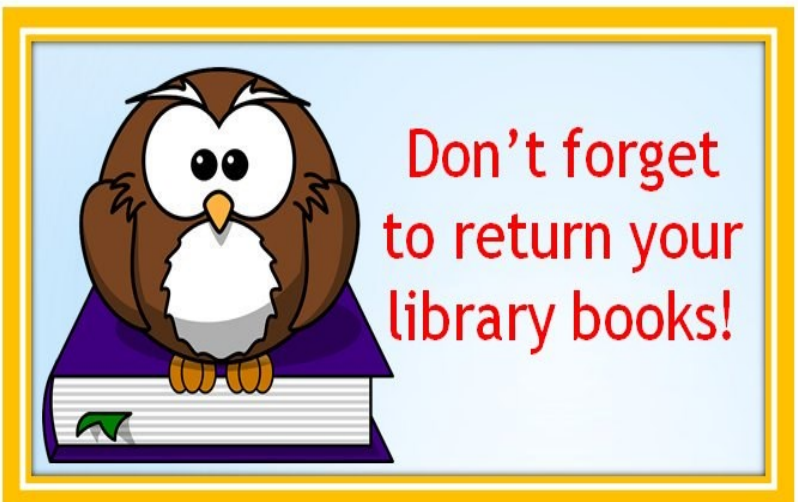
## ROGI Events

**ROGI CHRISTMAS GATHERING**  
Thursday 14 December

**ROGI MEETING**  
Thursday 8 February, 2024  
Our first meeting for the new year.

**SEED SAVERS MEETING**  
Wednesday 14 February, 7-8.30pm  
Save the date. More details in the February 2024 newsletter.

The February newsletter deadline is **25 JANUARY 2024**. Please email [newsletter@rogi.com.au](mailto:newsletter@rogi.com.au)

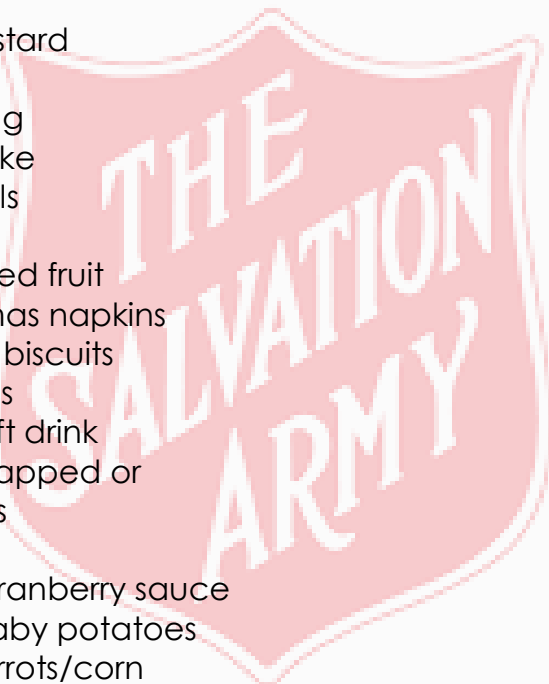


## Salvo's Christmas Food Drive

Christmas time is hard to celebrate when you are doing it tough. ROGI members are asked to donate a food item/s from the list below for the Salvation Army Christmas Appeal **at our meeting on December 14**. Please help struggling families in the Redlands.

### What to Donate:

- 1 litre long life custard
- Long life cream
- Christmas pudding
- Christmas fruit cake
- Mini pavlova shells
- Bonbons
- 400g or 825g tinned fruit
- Packet of Christmas napkins
- Family Favourites biscuits
- 175g potato chips
- 1.25 litre/2 litre soft drink
- 500g-1kg bag wrapped or unwrapped lollies
- Packet of jelly
- Gravox sachet/cranberry sauce
- 400g tin whole baby potatoes
- 400g tin peas/carrots/corn



**NOTE: Please ensure foods item/s have expiry dates well into next year.**

**People will be receiving these packages as a gift. Help battling Aussies feel a little extra special at Christmas by purchasing a brand name (not 'no name' brands please).**

## E-WASTE COLLECTION

Your E-waste can be placed beside the steps in the car park at our December meeting. E-Waste is any electric/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

### PLEASE NOTE:

**THERE WILL BE NO BIN TO PUT YOUR E-WASTE IN. PLACE IT BESIDE THE STEPS, IT WILL BE PICKED UP THE NEXT DAY BY SUBSTATION 33.**

## TOOL SHARPENING

Peacock Saws will provide garden tool sharpening at the December meeting ... this is FREE for members.

- One tool per ROGI member. Please write your name clearly on the tool with indelible ink or name tag it.
- Clean hand tools, not spades.





## Field Trip - Rocks Community Garden

Report and Photos by Kathy Petrik

ROGI's October field trip was to the Rocks Community Garden (RCG), an eclectic little gem of creativity, productivity – and fun! It's part of the shady 26 hectare Rocks Park (a former cement quarry) on the southern bank of the Brisbane River in Seventeen Mile Rocks, Brisbane.

We were treated to a personal tour by members of the RCG committee - as well as a shared morning tea and conversation about how the Garden came to be.

It started in 2007, and from very humble beginnings it has grown to a beloved and productive centre for positive community cohesion. It's for all ages and cultures and, except for the very occasional Brisbane City grant, its operations are funded mostly through annual membership rental of the 60 individual garden plots.

During our visit we met gardeners tending their separate 'patches', and enjoyed seeing firsthand their fruit, vegetable and floral successes. Every allotment was different. The secret to the RCG's success is the commitment of its members. They all share the necessary tasks to maintain the common areas of the garden – in addition to working their own allotment.

Every community garden develops its own 'personality' quite organically, reflecting a shared purpose, philosophy and general spirit of its members. This garden was no exception. Not only was it a highly productive food space, but such a lot of good-humoured fun with original colourful artwork and sculpture displayed in every nook and cranny.





## Field Trip - Rocks Community Garden (continued)



The Garden operates under organic gardening principles. It acknowledges the educational and economic value to members and the broader community of growing food and other produce locally, as well as reducing 'food miles' and increasing self-sufficiency for households.

It's a great way to gather and share experience and knowledge about growing food. Members work together to provide a safe, welcoming place for people to learn about and grow produce, as well as strengthening community spirit through sharing. People with little or no experience are welcome to join and learn.

Yearly garden plot rentals range from \$100 for 6 x 3 metres; \$50 for 3 x 3 metres; and \$25 for associate membership, which allows access to common garden areas. It's free to become a Friend of RCG to receive regular emails, and, yes, there's quite a waiting list for locals who want to rent their own allotment.

There's a very handy timed irrigation system for allotments. Many members have added value to their 'patches' by putting in frames, netting and exclusion fencing to keep any 'nasties' that might like a feast.

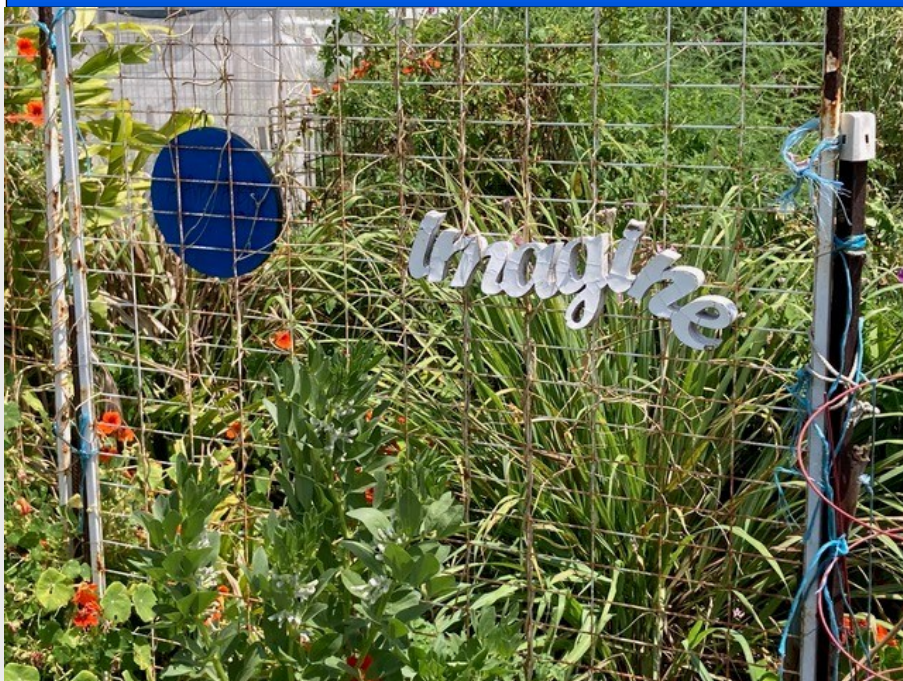
Other membership bonuses include well stocked garden sheds for members' use, gardening tools, and a seed bank. All organic waste material is composted through worm farms and compost bays, and reused throughout the garden. Recycling, repurposing and reuse of other goods is just part of the ethos.

A big thank you to the Rocks Community Garden committee for hosting ROGI members so generously. And to Toni Bowler who organised another informative field visit.

There are lots more great ROGI gardening visits to come in 2024 – so stay tuned.



## Field Trip - Rocks Community Garden (continued)



## Edibles for Hot Dry and Hot Wet Summers

By Linda Brennan, Ecobotanica

When I first thought about the topic for this article on 'hot dry summer edibles', we were in the thick of a dry period that seemed to go on forever. The whole garden, and in fact everything around us was parched. This article was to be on dry tolerant edibles.

But now, as we've had a minor deluge and all is green and heaving a sigh of relief, I've added the 'hot and wet' edibles to the mix. And, I've just heard from the Bureau of Meteorology, that yes, we are still in an El Nino pattern. It's typified more by dry weather patterns from autumn to late spring, with a 'regular summer' (whatever that is).

No matter what the weather, I always aim to prepare my soil prior to planting to increase biology in flora, fauna and fungi to support plant growth. I find that home-made compost, humates (*I buy and distribute this from Nutri Tech Solutions Yandina*) and a little fertiliser are a good start. Our soil is highly mineral deficient, so an annual dose of specific minerals goes in according to lab testing, and some of ROGI member Rohanne Young's *Biodynamic Soil Activator*. It's amazing how quickly our yellow reactive clay improved when I started my own soil therapy program.

Next, let's consider those particular plants that enjoy the heat, that produce well in subtropical summers and that will provide something for your next meal.

You'll notice that many of these are duplicated in both sections. Aren't plants amazing in their adaptability! It's by no means an exhaustive list, but it's a start for keen summer gardeners.



**Surinam spinach does well in a subtropical climate**



## Edibles for Hot Dry and Hot Wet Summers *(continued)*

### Hot and dry loving vegies, herbs and more:

Amaranth	A whole range of amaranths are grown. Some for their delicious leaves, others for their seed.
Basil	Basils typically grow lots of leaves where the soil is moist and fertile. A wet summer when it's very hot may press the gardener to grow basil in part shade to reduce heat and water stress.
Beans (e.g. Snake beans, Mung beans, Cow peas)	Snake beans are the summer alternative to French beans in the garden, producing prolifically for months if picked often. Mung beans and cow peas, while edible, are more often used as green manure crops.
Chilli	They love hot summers, but like dry and hot best of all. Once rains start, your chillis can go mushy on the plant
Choko	A choko vine is a rampant grower, often grown over a chook shed to shelter the hens from the worst of the summer heat. It's grown from a choko with a shoot.
Cosmos	They come up from seed readily and will grow from dropped seed in the most inhospitable places. Many types of cosmos from dwarf to tall with a range of flower colours will delight most gardeners.
Eggplant	Eggplants love our hot dry summers. Try the Little Fingers or the pretty pink striped varieties for a change.
Luffa	Fancy a bathroom sponge? Luffas are a vigorous climber with long zucchini shaped fruits that can be eaten when under 20 cm or when allowed to mature, can be dried and cleaned for a bathroom sponge.

Mexican Coriander	It's a tasty and hardy alternative to regular coriander which does not like heat at all. Mexican coriander will self-seed easily.
Okra	Grown as annuals, Okra plants will produce delicious little buds regularly for you. Cut them when young. Grow multiple plants.
Pawpaw	While they love a good soak, pawpaws appreciate well drained soil and detest boggy conditions around their roots. Grow a paw paw, or maybe a couple, from dried seeds.
Queen Anne's Lace	A magnet for insects in the garden, this flowering plant grows up to 1.5 metres tall.
Rosella	Rosellas don't love drought, but they will grow and produce in a dry summer with some regular irrigation.
Snapdragons	These tough little edible flowers do not perform well in the rainy weather, but are exceptional in dry heat.
Spring onions	We can't grow bulbous onions over summer, so try spring onions instead. They also do well in pots and troughs when it's really wet.
Sunflowers	Given some irrigation and fertile soil, your sunflowers will really shine in a hot dry summer. Dry soil produces stunted plants.
Sweet potato	While it does grow in hot and dry summers, it will put on more root/tuber growth if well watered and well drained in fertile soil.
Yakon	This relative of the sunflower will produce edible tubers that are harvested when the plant finishes flowering.

## Edibles for Hot Dry and Hot Wet Summers *(continued)*

### Hot and wet loving vegies, herbs and more:

Amaranth	A whole range of amaranths are grown. Some for their delicious leaves (e.g. <i>Red Callaloo</i> ), and others for their seed.
Banana	Bananas need plenty of water and nutrition over their main summer growing and fruiting period. If your soil is potassium deficient, it pays to apply a dose of liquid potassium once the banana bell starts forming.
Basil	While they tolerate a wet summer, too much rain may cause a fungal disease of the leaves where they turn black and slimy. Frequent picking helps to reduce this.
Beans (e.g. <i>Wing beans, Snake beans, mung beans, cow peas</i> )	Winged beans are a great alternative to snow peas for summer harvests. The seed germinates once the night-time temperatures are balmy and warm. Nick and soak the seed the night before for best results, and plant against a trellis. They'll tolerate a wet, humid summer.
Choko	A choko vine is a rampant grower, even in the wet. Chokos make great pickles and relishes.
Cosmos	See the previous table. If it's really wet, white cosmos will bruise in the rain. However, the bedraggled coloured flowers will pop back to life when the sun comes out again.
Eggplant	They do grow in our hot, wet and humid weather, but you may find the fruit split from heavy rain.
Elderflower	A wonderful edible flower but a potential weed! It loves a dampish spot for its roots over summer.
Gingers & Turmeric	All sorts of gingers and turmeric grow so well over a hot wet summer. Give a few applications of cow or chicken manure or enriched compost as they grow, to get the maximum tuber production.

Leeks	It may seem strange to add leeks to this list, but...they start to grow well in winter, and will stay in the ground fattening up over summer too.
Luffa	Fancy a bathroom sponge? Luffas are a vigorous climber with long zucchini shaped fruits that can be eaten when under 20 cm, or when allowed to mature, can be dried and cleaned for a bathroom sponge.
Melons	All melons love plenty of water. If it's really wet weather as the fruit is developing, sit each melon up on an upturned flower pot to prevent it from rotting.
Mizuna	It's a great lettuce alternative that thrives in our wetter summers and into autumn and winter.
Pawpaw	While they love a good soak, pawpaws appreciate well drained soil and detest boggy conditions around their roots.
Rosella	They are hardy in wet weather and humidity. Just give them good drainage.
Spinaches ( <i>Egyptian, Surinam, NZ</i> )	These are examples of the best varieties to grow for our hot and humid summers. Others include <i>Brazilian</i> and <i>Sambung</i> .
Spring onions	We can't grow bulbous onions over summer, so try spring onions instead. They also do well in pots and troughs when it's really wet.
Sweet potato	While it does grow in hot and dry summers, it will put on more root/tuber growth if well watered or rained upon and grown in a friable, well drained fertile soil.
Water chestnuts	Once they are about 10 cm high, water chestnuts must be transplanted and grown in water about 20-30 cm deep. They will love a wet summer.
Yakon	See previous table for harvest time. This rooting vegetable loves humid weather.



## Bronze Orange Bug

By Linda Brennan, Ecobotanica

Photos by Francke Latter

Do you have smelly insects on your spring and summer citrus? It's probably the bronze orange bug (*Musgraveia sulciventris*), also known as the stink bug.

These bugs are an Australian native insect that have developed a taste for the sap of citrus trees and other plants related to the citrus family. It has piercing and sucking mouthparts, so will be found sucking the sweet sap from the new leaf stems, fruit stems, and from young fruit. Due to its destruction of new stems, the actions of the bronze orange bug may severely reduce potential fruit harvest.

When disturbed, the bronze orange bug emits a caustic, foul smelling squirt of liquid to deter predators. Take care and cover up in the vicinity of the tree though, as that liquid can burn skin and eyes. And by the way, their squirty secretions will also cause brown spots on the leaves of your trees.

As the bugs hatch out from a cluster of bright green eggs under the leaves in spring and early summer, they rapidly grow from bright green nymphs into mature adults that are brown/bronze in colour.

### Should we kill them?

If you don't kill or limit bronze orange bugs you'll be finding them decimating the chances of fruit next season as they destroy new growth tips and fruit.

### How to kill them?

There are several organic ways to kill them. Pyrethrum based sprays are not included in the organic methods as pyrethrum kills beneficial insects.



Mature adult bronze orange bugs on citrus tree. They are 25mm long, shield-shaped, and bronze to nearly black in colour.



## Bronze Orange Bug (*continued*)

1. If you've been spraying your citrus regularly with *Eco Oil*, this will help to control the population by smothering the eggs and young nymphs. However, *Eco Oil* is not effective on adult bronze orange bugs. It may be more effective to spray the adult bronze orange bugs with *Neem Oil*.

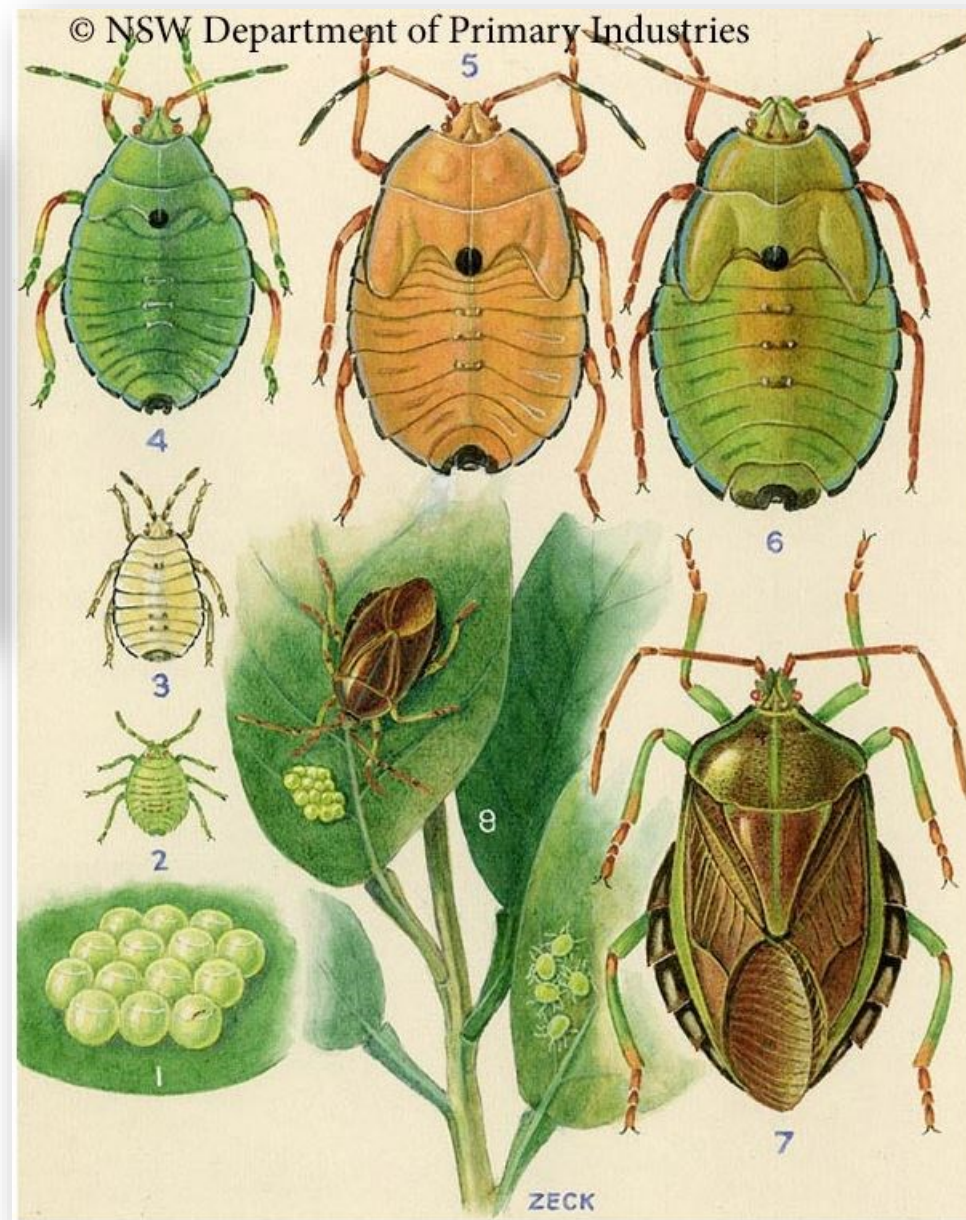
2. Another option is to cover up your eyes, skin and clothing with goggles and thick protective suiting and knock them out of the tree with a stick or tennis racket. Either squash them as they fall, or drop them into a bucket of hot soapy water. Picking them off by hand will require wearing several layers of rubber gloves to prevent penetration of the gloves by the caustic liquid that they produce.

3. Allow small spiders to spin their webs in your citrus trees. While this may sound pretty radical (because who wants spiders in their citrus), it's a natural way of catching and disposing of these insects.

4. On hot days, you'll find clusters of adult bronze orange bugs en masse down in the cooler trunk area of the tree. These can be more easily knocked to the ground and squashed when they cluster in the trunk area. However, it's a very stinky job that noone likes to do.

5. Some people use an old vacuum cleaner to suck off the insects. I don't advise this as the stench of the bugs will stay in the cleaner forever more.

And finally, can you feed bronze orange bugs to your chooks? I'm afraid not. They will refuse to eat these smelly creatures. You'll have to deal with them yourself.



Source: <https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/about-us/services/collections/scientific-illustrations/zeck/true-bugs-order-hemiptera/bronze-orange-bug>



## ROGI MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

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

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[www.facebook.com/groups/redland.organic.growers](http://www.facebook.com/groups/redland.organic.growers)

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  
and Friday 9-noon, Sunday 2-5pm. Oaklands Street,  
Alexandra Hills. 0408 259 445

## ROGI Membership Renewal for 2024 - due 31/12/23

### How to renew your membership . . . fast and easy

1. Go online to <https://www.rogi.com.au/renew-membership.php>
2. Fill out the application, press SUBMIT.
3. Go to your online bank to make a transfer to ROGI -  
**BSB 633000, Account Number 136 137 296**  
**(Use your name as a reference please)**
4. Find your 2024 Membership card name tag on the hanger near the sign-in table at the February 2024 meeting.

**PLEASE NOTE—We now have a 'square reader' so that you can make your payment with your credit card (at ROGI meetings).**  
However, please keep in mind ROGI is charged for this option.

Member Category	Members Renewing for 2024	New member/s joining in...			
		Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct 23-Dec 24
Single	\$35	\$35	\$27.50	\$20.00	\$42.50
Family*	\$55	\$55	\$42.50	\$30.00	\$67.50
Pensioner Single**	\$25	\$25	\$20.00	\$15.00	\$30.00
Pensioner Couple**	\$35	\$35	\$27.50	\$20.00	\$42.50

\* **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.



**Merry Christmas and happy gardening from Rhonda and the ROGI Management Committee.**