

# ROGI News

## PLEASE NOTE:

Due to the Covid-19 virus, all ROGI meetings and events have been cancelled until further notice. The ROGI Management Committee would like to take this opportunity to wish all members good health.

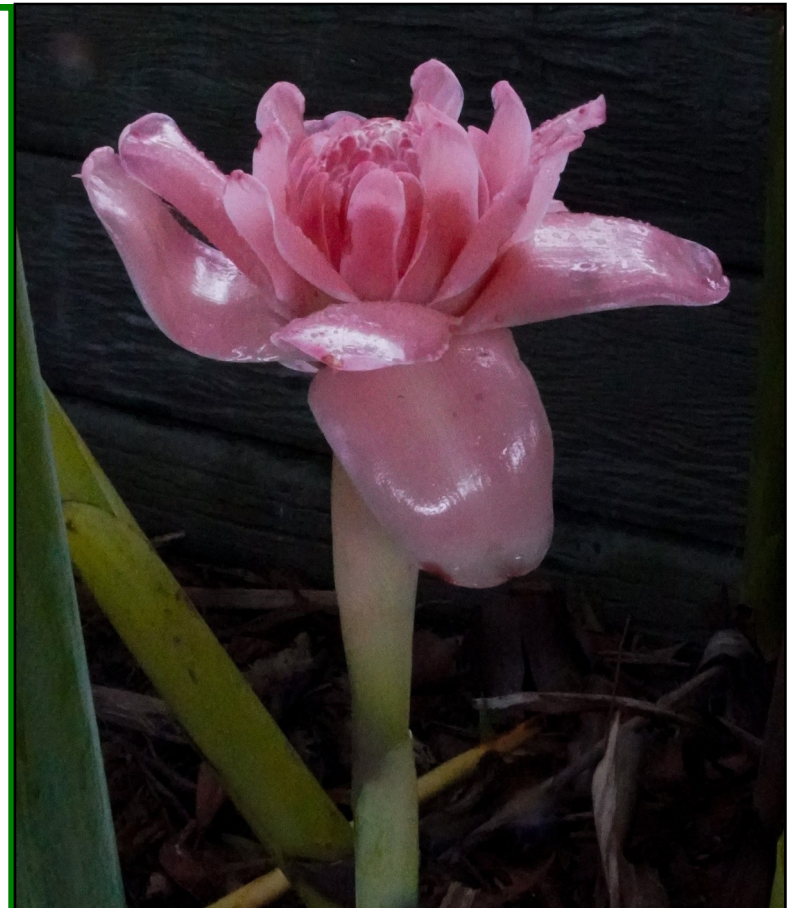
If you are in need of assistance, please do not hesitate to get into contact with one of us (all email addresses are on the back page of this newsletter).

The newsletter will still be emailed each month, please contribute if you can. The deadline for the next newsletter is the **24 February 2022** - email [info@rogi.com.au](mailto:info@rogi.com.au)

Stay safe and happy gardening!

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Linda Brennan's Torch Ginger has flowered profusely after prolific rain this summer. They've been added to salads and also picked for bouquets. Read more about what's been happening in her garden p.10.

# Carolyn's Corner

The ROGI Committee has reluctantly made the decision to cancel the February meeting because of the current COVID spread, thanks to borders being opened. The peak is expected soon, and we would like to keep our members and ourselves healthy and gardening.

This is the time to have a walk through your garden, decide what you will have for dinner and what you may need to plant for the upcoming months. Then harvest what you need.



This year I have been planting a lot of seeds, with the idea of bringing seedlings along to the meeting to both give away and sell for ROGI. I am also planning on growing a range of culinary herbs, so have planted herb seeds as well.

So sort out your herb and vegetable patch and plant the fruit trees you need to provide your family, or just you, with the main foods you eat. If you have minimal space to grow much food, then grow those plants that you

like and will eat - strawberries, vegetables and salad items, which really should be grown organically.

To reduce food waste, learn how to store your fresh food, and how to preserve a surplus. Currently some of our stores are having problems getting supplies. You won't have a worry when you take advantage of the store in your own backyard.

Also, learn how to make use of leftovers instead of throwing them

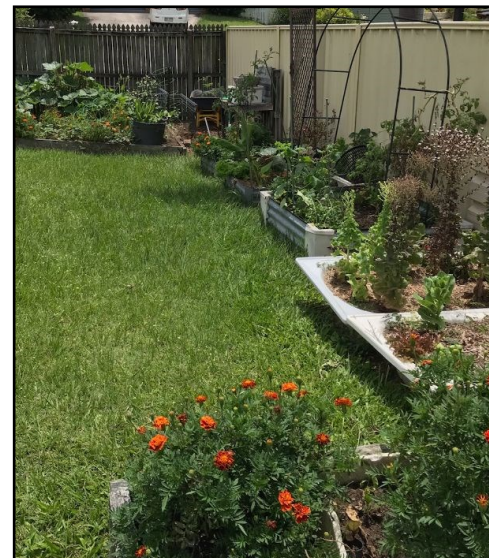
away. If you have an overabundance, pass it on to your neighbour. At the very least, give the leftovers to the compost bin, worm farm, or chooks.

Once you have grown food yourself, you do not want to be throwing it away. It's not just the waste of the food, it's the water, nutrients, and time and effort that went into growing it. Make it a policy to not allow anything food-like to leave the property! You could even take this one step further and ask your non-gardening neighbours to contribute their food waste to your compost, worms and chooks. I do.

This year has been a bit of a challenge with the heat and constant showers. So I have been getting up around 5.30am and spending an hour or two in the garden. Also, late afternoons. Just a little effort and we see the rewards.

Have a wonderful month. Happy New Year and happy gardening.

*Carolyn Lassen, ROGI President*



*My garden needs a bit of work.*



*This will become my herb garden.*



## Coming Events

FEBRUARY	Thursday 10	ROGI Meeting <b>CANCELLED</b>
	Tuesday 15	Seed Savers Group <b>POSTPONED</b>
MARCH	Thursday 10	ROGI Meeting (?)

## Your Membership Renewal is Due NOW!

### 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 2022 Membership card name tag on the hanger near the sign-in table at the next ROGI meeting.

**PLEASE NOTE—We now have a 'square reader' so that you can make your payment with your credit card (at the ROGI meeting).**

Member Category	Members Renewing For 2022	New member/s joining in...			
		Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct 22-Dec 23
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.**

The SEED SOWING GUIDE is now located on the ROGI website under **RESOURCES**. Go to:

<https://www.rogi.com.au/resources.php>

The March Newsletter deadline is

**24 FEBRUARY 2022**



## TEAM APP

**Not sure what Team App is? Team App is a FREE platform managing the communication and membership of ROGI.**

With TEAM APP, you can:

- Keep up to date with club events in real time
- Not have to wait till the meeting to book your place for Garden Visits, Workshops and Field Trips.
- Make bookings as soon as they are posted on TEAM APP.

Here's how to get TEAM APP on your **smart phone or tablet**:

- Go to the App Store (Apple smart phones) or Playstore (android smart phones)
- Look for the TEAM APP logo (*pictured above*)
- **If you need assistance to set up your TEAM APP account, please see Lisa at the next meeting for help.**

On your **computer**:

- Go to <https://www.teamapp.com>
- SIGN UP using your email address and a password
- Click on MY TEAMS and select your team as ROGI

*You will now receive notifications of events, and you can make bookings to attend... it's so easy!*



## December Meeting - Christmas Party!



Lots of fun had by all at the ROGI 2021 Christmas Party. Dr Kevin Redd of Sustainable Cuisine hosted the event, with fun and games and gardening trivia questions.

Left: Calendar gift for members; Salvos Christmas food drive donations.



Below left: Stall vendors Peter Shadwick, Anthony Aw and Margaret Sear.

Right: ROGI's hard-working committee members Diana, Lisa and Lara with the delectable desserts (recipes on page 5 and in the March newsletter).





## December Meeting - Christmas Party *(continued)*

### **Kuih Seri Muka** - Diana Yeo

*It is a sweet yet savoury kuih (cake), a popular dessert among Peranakan. The meaning of "seri muka" is "pretty face".*

#### **Ingredients:**

##### **Bottom Layer**

400g white glutinous rice  
250ml coconut milk  
40-50 blue butterfly pea flowers  
100ml of water  
1 tsp salt

##### **Top Custard Layer**

3 x 70g large eggs  
400ml coconut milk  
90g plain flour  
45g tapioca flour  
25 pandan leaf (or store-bought pandan extract)  
100ml water  
150g sugar  
1/4 tsp salt

#### **Method:**

##### **Bottom Layer**

- Wash glutinous rice to remove excess starch, soak for at least 2 hours.
- Soak blue butterfly pea flowers in hot water till water turns dark blue. Remove flowers.
- Add 1 tsp of salt to the coconut milk and mix well.
- Prepare a steamer.
- Drain out the water from the soaked glutinous rice.
- Lightly spray a 24cm round pan with oil.
- Transfer drained glutinous rice into pan.
- Pour prepared coconut milk over the glutinous rice, mix well.
- Place the pan of rice in the steamer and steam for 20 minutes.



- Fluff up the rice with a pair of chopsticks and scatter the water from the blue butterfly pea flowers over the rice in patches.
- Steam the rice for another 10 minutes.
- Remove the pan from the steamer and press the rice flat with a spatula until it is well compressed.
- Set it aside.

##### **Top Custard Layer**

- Cut the pandan leaves into small pieces and blend in water.
- Sieve out 100ml of pandan juice and set it aside.
- If using pandan extract, mix a few drops of extract in 100ml of water.
- Add 1/4 tsp salt to 400ml of coconut milk.
- Add 150g sugar to 3 large eggs and mix well.
- Add the coconut milk into the egg mixture and mix it well. This forms the custard mixture.
- Add the pandan juice to the custard mixture and stir well.
- Sieve 90g plain flour and 45g tapioca flour into custard mixture and stir well.
- Sieve out the custard mixture to ensure a smooth consistency.
- Pour the sieved custard mixture into a saucepan and heat it over low heat. Stir constantly until it thickens slightly.
- Turn off the heat once the mixture sticks to the back of the spoon.

##### **Assembly:**

- Heat up the compressed glutinous rice in the steamer.
- Slowly pour the custard mixture over it.
- Wrap the steamer lid with a tea towel and leave the steamer slightly ajar when steaming. This is to achieve a smooth surface for the kuih.
- Steam over medium heat for about 40 minutes.
- The kuih is ready once the top layer firms up and a skewer inserted into the centre of the top layer comes out clean.
- Remove the pan from the steamer and let it cool for at least 4 hours before cutting.
- Use a plastic scraper or plastic knife to get a smooth cut.

# Powdery Mildew

By Rohanne Young, *The Delectable Garden*

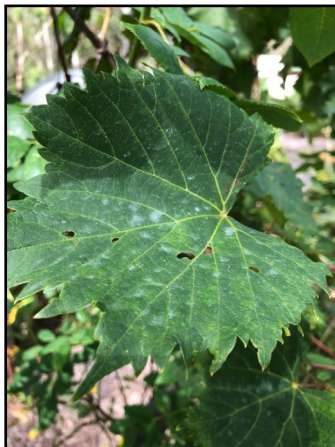
Photos by Linda Brennan, Rohanne Young

I had a query recently asking what a white powdery substance was on a grape leaf. "It looks like powdery mildew, but it's not on zucchini!" It looked like powdery mildew because it **was** powdery mildew. It got me wondering "how many other gardeners consider powdery mildew a disease restricted to plants of the cucurbit family?"

Most gardeners will have had powdery mildew on their cucurbits (i.e. cucumbers, cantaloupes, pumpkins etc). It shows up as a white or grey powder on the leaves. While it generally doesn't kill your plant, it can significantly impact your crop as the plant can't produce lots of fruit while its energy is being drained off and the plant is trying to fight the disease.

Powdery mildew affects a wide range of plants, not just zucchini, pumpkins, and squash. It can affect both edible and ornamental plants. Edibles that can be affected by powdery mildew include apples, beans, capsicum, carrots, eggplants, grapes, peas and tomatoes, to name a few. Ornamentals can include chrysanthemums, dahlias, gerberas and roses. In fact it's probably quicker to write a list of plants that aren't affected by powdery mildew!

So what is powdery mildew? Powdery mildew is a fungal infection. The fungal spores attach to the leaves of the plant where they drive filaments or threads into the leaf structure to draw the nutrients away from the plant. The fungi then develop fruiting spores which can be transmitted by wind or water splashes. Powdery mildew thrives in warm, dry conditions AND warm, humid conditions. I have not found it to be a major problem so far this



summer because we have had a lot of rain. Powdery mildew is caused by a range of different fungi, some of which are specific to a species of plant while others can affect a whole host of plant species.

## Prevention

There are several things the organic gardener can do to prevent powdery mildew in their garden:

- Grow plants in the conditions they need to thrive. With veggies this means plenty of sunlight. Struggling and weak plants are more susceptible to attack.
- Don't crowd plants. Allow plenty of room for air circulation.
- Encourage beneficial insects. The orange/yellow lady beetle actually eats the fungus!
- Good hygiene is essential, as it is with all gardening tasks.
- Clean tools with a weak bleach or hydrogen peroxide solution between tasks.
- Remove infected plant material and put it in the bin.
- Do not compost as the spores will hibernate and can then infect other plants.
- Crop rotation assists by removing susceptible plants from the soil for several seasons.
- Don't over-fertilise, as lush new growth is more susceptible to the fungi.
- Watering in the morning is best. Some say to not wet the leaves, although scientific evidence shows that water can interrupt the sporing cycle.

If you find that you continually battle with powdery mildew then you may need to investigate a range of crops that have been developed to be resistant to powdery mildew.

*Lady beetle feasting on powdery mildew*



### Treatment

If you find you have an attack of powdery mildew, there are several organic treatments. These include:

- Spraying with milk. This is the number one organic solution, and surprisingly, it works better than many commercial treatments. The standard spray is 1 part full-cream milk to 10 parts water, but I find a 25 percent solution works better. For severe infections you may need a 50 percent solution. Milk can also help to prevent infections if you spray your plants weekly.
- Spray with a sodium or potassium bicarbonate solution. You may need to add some soap to help the bicarb adhere to the leaves.
- Spray with Neem Oil. Again, a small amount of soap or white oil will help it to stick to the leaves.
- Dust with wettable sulphur or spray with lime sulphur.
- Use a commercial bio fungicide.



1. Cucumber treated with a combination of seaweed solution and Potassium Bicarbonate (Ecofungicide from OCP). It's been effective at killing the powdery mildew, but the disease has left leaf scarring.

2. Snow peas are a favourite to grow almost all year, but later in summer you'll find powdery mildew will take over the plants if you don't act decisively.

3. This zucchini is fungus free thanks to fortnightly sprays with seaweed solution. The leaves of zucchini have natural silvery markings which are not to be confused with the fungal disease.

## Weed Tea for Controlling Weeds

By Rohanne Young, *The Delectable Garden*

Weeds are often described as plants that are growing in the wrong place. We therefore remove the weeds so we can grow the plants that we do want! However, when we remove the weeds it's important not to lose all those nutrients that have gone into growing this plant. Therefore, we compost the leaves and roots.

Weeds can be prolific as they are often plants that have rapid reproductive cycles, producing hundreds of seeds in each cycle. As such, many gardeners fear spreading the weeds, so put the waste in their green bin. Even if you compost the weeds, common wisdom is to remove any weed seeds and diseased parts and put those in the bin.

There is a way we can still access these nutrients and not throw them away. This is through creating weed teas. In this way weeds are used as a free fertiliser, returning nutrients to the soil in the form of a liquid compost.

By shifting our thinking about weeds we can start to benefit from the weed. We do this in biodynamic gardening. Biodynamics acknowledges that weeds are telling us what is wrong with our soil and what nutrients are missing or in excess. For example, clover generally grows best in soil that is deficient in nitrogen.

By "listening" to the weed we can amend our soil to replace the missing nutrient and accelerate the remediation that the weed is trying to make to our soils. This will make the soil less hospitable to the weed, which over time will save us the time and frustration that comes with weeds!

To use weed teas in this way, each tea is made using a separate weed. You don't mix them at all. So, you make a weed tea from wandering jew or oxalis or nutgrass or cobbler's pegs, keeping each weed separate.



## Weed Tea for Controlling Weeds - *(continued)*

### How to make your Weed Tea

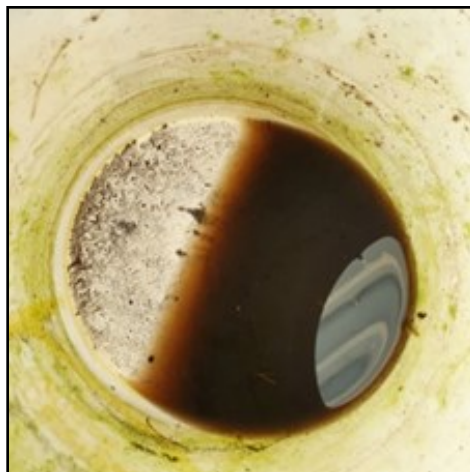
The process is simple: place the weed in a bucket and cover it with rainwater. You can use tap water, but allow it to off-gas for 24 hours before use. You may want to place the weed in a hessian sack first, so that you can easily remove the fibrous matter at the end of the process. However, I don't normally find this step necessary.

The six biodynamic composting preparations (yarrow, chamomile, stinging nettle, dandelion, oak bark and valerian) are added to the weed solution. These preparations potentise the tea to increase the remedial action the weed was undertaking. Biodynamic composting preparations are available from Biodynamics Australia (<https://biodynamics.net.au/>).

When the weed tea has fermented properly (i.e., no longer any odour), it is diluted and watered on the soil where the weed has become a nuisance. This needs to be repeated weekly until you see a reduction in the growth of the weed. Weed teas used in this way are slower than using weed peppers but can be just as effective over time.



Wandering Jew weed ready to be submerged in rainwater



The final "tea"

### And from Linda Brennan:

Rohanne's Biodynamic weed tea input is wonderful. It shows how we can use those weeds from our garden as weed suppressants for problem areas, while still utilising the nutritional value of the plants.

You can also use weed teas purely as a kind of fertiliser and soil improver, reducing the loss of green material from your garden and closing the nutrient loop.

There are 4 steps to a regular weed tea:

**Step 1.** Collect your mix of weeds and place them in a 20 litre bucket with a lid. I use diseased leaves as well, and problem plants that can include nut grass, but for these you **MUST** use boiling water in the next step.

**Step 2.** To kill pathogens and problem weeds, pour over boiling water, enough to cover the weeds and allow the weeds to macerate a couple of hours. For a big bucket, you may need to boil the kettle several times!

**Step 3.** Cover the bucket with the lid, and stir the whole tea mixture every day with a stick to aerate it and assist the breakdown of the weeds. No further water will need to be added. Depending upon your weeds and their woodiness, the whole lot may become black and sludgy in as little as 5 days, but usually the process takes several weeks.

**Step 4.** When the weed liquid is black and sludgy, strain it into another bucket through a piece of cloth or flywire. Dilute it in your watering can with fresh water. I usually use about 1 litre of weed tea per 7 litres of water. You are ready to apply this to your soil, grass and garden beds.

You may also like to add some Instant Humus to the watering can (available from Ecobotanica), to increase the humus in your soil. Humates increase carbon, promote soil fertility, water holding capacity and microbial numbers.



# Smudge Stick

## It's a great time to clean the house

There is no better way to start the year then with a good clean! A fresh start to the year is not just about de-cluttering your space, it involves a spiritual cleanse as well.

Some cultures such as Native Americans (eg Lakota, Chumash and Cahuilla) and indigenous Australians achieve their cleansing by smudging or smoking their environments.

Smudging is the practice of energetically cleansing a space to invite positive energy. When smudging a space, you burn certain herbs, read a verse with intention and the smoke purifies the environment with good intentions.

## My favourite herbs to make a smudge stick

Mugwort - getting rid of negativity, lucid dreaming

Sage - meditation, cleansing, purification

Rosemary - cleansing, invigorating

Lavender - used for cleansing, protection, happiness, healing, purification, tranquillity, sleep

Rose - meditation, peace, love, and romance

Lemongrass - purifying and cleansing, energising, refreshing, encourages clarity and focus

## How to make a smudge stick

1. Gather your herbs (cutting from the base of the herb).
2. Tie the bundle at the base with a secure knot.
3. Starting in the centre, wrap the string toward the top of the bundle before returning to the base.
4. Hang the bundle upside down in a cool, dry place for at least three weeks.
5. Wait... wait...wait. Check on them. Tighten knots as it dries.
6. Find a verse you would like to read while smudging.
7. Now it's time to smudge!

## How to smudge your space

1. Light your smudge stick at the very tips of the leaves and once ignited, carefully blow out the flames to allow the leaves to smoulder.
2. Using smooth movements, waft the smoke around your home with your hand.
3. Read out your intentions/verse while still waving your smudge stick around the room.
4. Once you feel done, rest the stick on a plate and make sure it stops smoking.
5. Store on a flameproof dish away from the wind.

This is my favourite verse to read. You can use it if you believe it, or make up your own.

*"I cleanse myself, this space and the people within it of all negative thoughts and stagnant energy. May only energies of love, light and peace surround me and this space."*

*By Sharr Ellison*



# In our Summer Garden January 2022

By Linda Brennan

The cicadas are humming from the first glimpse of dawn and the kookaburras are singing after the sun has set. It must be summer!! As many gardeners will agree, summer is a time of phenomenal growth in the subtropics. I try to maximise our productivity through this time rather than leaving beds covered in mulch. Let me take you through a quick ramble on the garden to show you what's in flower and fruit, and some of the particular things I'm up to in the garden in the cool parts of each day. May I also say that there are just not enough hours in my day for all that I want to do out there. I seriously need to employ an assistant! Anyone offering?



## In the orchard

**Bananas** are threatening to smother us in fruit again, with ripening beginning in a month or so. Our Goldfinger bananas are prolific and the bunches hang not too far from the ground. We use old ladders to support the growing bunches and to prevent the whole stalk falling over. As soon as the mother shows any sign of producing, I give the plant a dose of 30ml of liquid potassium in a bucket of water to boost potassium content in the fruit. Each mother plant also gets a dose of diluted liquid lime combined with humates. These products provide calcium the plant needs to transport minerals to the developing fruits, plus it strengthens the stems and reduces insect attack. The humates support a healthy soil.

**Mangoes** are filling out now and with that, I apply my anthracnose foliar treatment that includes seaweed, humates to the soil, foliar lime and either aspirin tablets or potassium bicarbonate. The result is beautiful mangoes in late January through February. Each

fruit has a fruit fly prevention bag that also helps keep bats at bay, but I may also need to throw a big fruit fly net over the whole tree as well to prevent bat attack. Somehow they will suck the fruit juices through the little bags without damaging the bag if they are really hungry.

**Wampi**, *Clausena lansium*, is fruiting at the top of the tree now. It's going to get a big chop after fruiting, as the fruit is so high that I need a very large branch trimmer to harvest it. The fruit are citrus relatives, tasting like an orange, with thin leathery skin. We eat it fresh. It's a good narrow tree that tolerates sun or shade.

The *Garcinia intermedia* or **Lemon Drop Mangosteen** has revelled in all the rain, producing a bumper crop. The soil has been saturated and it loves the conditions! There are so many on the tree I just can't keep up, so if you have any recipes for this delicious thin-skinned and thin-fleshed fruit that doesn't involve peeling, I'd be an appreciative recipient via email at [linda@ecobotanica.com.au](mailto:linda@ecobotanica.com.au).

The **Pitomba**, *Eugenia luschnathiana* has come into fruit again around the labyrinth and I'm delighted. The apricot flavoured fruit on this shrub ripen rapidly after flowering. I pick them straight from the tree and eat them in the garden. No special needs for this wonderful fruit tree.



Bagged Mangoes



Mangosteen tree



Pitomba



## Flowering in the garden

I love having flowers throughout the year. Summer is a time of many edible flowers for us too, and the petals and blooms grace our platters, salads and desserts. I've thrown in more sunflower seeds along the front fence as the passing walkers love the display. And cosmos are shooting up in their little pots. I've saved the seeds from my favourite cosmos and those little seedlings are almost ready to go into the garden. They make such a spectacular show.



**Torenia**

The **Torch Ginger** is responding to plenty of rain and regular fertilising with chicken manure teas, humates and cow manure this year. I've taken bunches into the hospital for the staff when Damien was sick, and we've eaten torch ginger salad many times. If you have a copy of my book, *'A Delicious Bunch, growing and cooking with edible flowers'*, you'll find the recipe in there.

And if you are looking for a spectacularly colourful border colour, you can go no further than the **Torenia**s. I love them, and happily they are edible too. Save seed and grow your own through the year.

## The vegie garden

It's a jungle in there! So many weeds and a profusion of growth. The best performers are our tropical vegies. Warrigal greens, sweet potato, yams, climbing *Purple King* and *Rattlesnake* beans (we are not fans of snake beans), water spinach, cucumbers producing so many that I've had to pickle and preserve many kilos, watermelons, pumpkins, corn and more.

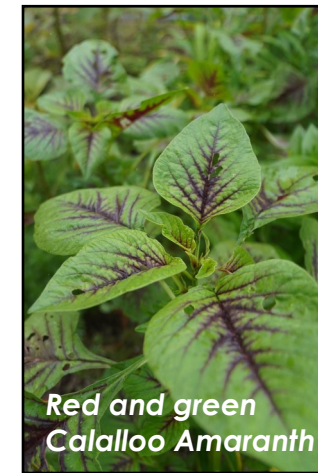
Sadly, the corn has suffered from a sudden explosion in rat numbers. Our traps have been successful every night in collecting rats. The edamame soy beans that I planted for the rotational soil



**Climbing Rattle-snake beans**



**Edamame**



**Red and green Calaloo Amaranth**

improvement has also had rat traps laid in that patch. Rats love fresh soy beans, and peanuts too, so I'll be wire caging up the peanut plants as they mature.

And we should be pretty healthy this summer as there are lots of different amaranths that we can eat cooked as leafy greens. Unfortunately, the heavy rain in early summer drowned lower parts of the garden, so those spots have not been so productive. I'd like to plant rice in those areas but so far have not had success in finding rice seed for planting.

## The seed sowing area

I like to continually grow and sow seeds. At the moment cosmos, climbing beans, lettuce, rocket, chilis, perpetual silverbeet, leeks, snapdragons, cucumbers, beans, red bunching onions, rooted lemon grass, pepper vine and more, are finding space on the bench.

The garden is always a busy place, and currently weeds seem to outnumber the plants 2 to 1. But I'm always happy with my hands in the dirt. I hope you've enjoyed a ramble in our garden and hope yours is also bringing you much joy.

Cheers, Linda

**You'll also find me on Facebook and Instagram as Ecobotanica and the website is [www.ecobotanica.com.au](http://www.ecobotanica.com.au)**

## Seed Savers News



### Dahlia Update

At the Seed Savers meeting in September we looked at growing dahlias and how to divide the tubers. Linda provided lots of tubers of the large red dahlias that grow so well in her garden. Many participants have reported great results, with beautiful rich red dahlias growing strongly from the tubers.

Now, what do you do with those dahlias to keep them healthy?

- Water regularly to keep soil moist.
- Spray for powdery mildew if it starts. A fortnightly preventive foliar seaweed solution spray will help to keep it at bay by strengthening cell walls on the leaves.
- Keep caterpillars at bay. Crinum caterpillars have been recently seen devouring petals! They will also eat new shoots.
- Stake plants for spectacular flowering up to 1.5 metres high.
- Pick dead flowers with a long stem and compost these. This practice stimulates repeat flowering over a longer period.



Potted on seedlings at front, seedlings waiting to be "pricked out" at back.



Bottle top sprinklers are available from Fame Orchids

### Seed Growing Recipe (error corrected)

In our excitement to share Janet's seed growing recipe, we neglected to specify what size container to use for measuring. Here's the recipe again, with more growing information:

**Fine Coir Peat—8 parts** (use a 1kg yoghurt container)

**Medium Perlite—2 parts**

**3/4 cup Organic Xtra Lawn Fertiliser OR Organic Xtra pellets**

(add water to pellets the day before to break down)

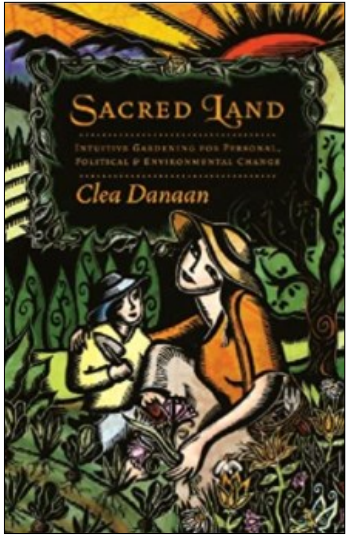
**A handful of Garden Mate** (or fine rock dust)

**Vermiculite—on top**

- Soak the coir peat in water as per instructions on packet.
- Perlite dust is dangerous for lungs—wear a respiratory mask when handling.
- Mix the above ingredients together in a large tub (except vermiculite).
- Using a large seed tray/4-cell punnet, plant your seeds. As a rule, plant about the depth of the size of the seed. Sprinkle some vermiculite on the top.
- Plant more than one seed in case they don't all come up.
- Very tiny seeds may only need to be lightly raked into the soil or just covered with a light layer of vermiculite.
- Water by lightly spraying with fulvic acid or seaweed solution (this will accelerate germination), and then keep the mixture moist with rainwater. Use either a bottle top sprinkler, pictured left (attach to a soft drink bottle/similar) or a spray bottle.
- Once a week water seedlings with some liquid fertiliser.
- Seedlings can be transplanted by 'pricking out' when they are big enough to handle. Always hold the seedling by the leaves when transplanting.
- Pot on to a single small pot using the above mix (but without vermiculite on top). Increase the size of the pot until ready for planting into the ground or a large pot.
- In summer, gradually increase light levels until they can cope with full sun all day long.



## Book Review



### **Sacred Land: Intuitive Gardening for Personal, Political and Environmental Change** By Clea Danaan

As the title suggests, *Sacred Land* explores our spiritual and historical connection with Earth, with practicalities of organic gardening complementing the ethos of ROGI. The contents, index and references are comprehensive for specific topics, or if further research is required. Each chapter is introduced by a short preface with information about a goddess from various lands, further reinforcing the connection to Earth. First Nations Peoples' connection with Earth is also explored. Befittingly, the first chapter on soil immediately grounds us to Earth. There is useful information about planting times, including moon rhythms, good and unfavourable predators, and in particular reference to Australia, Earth's connections to fire and water.

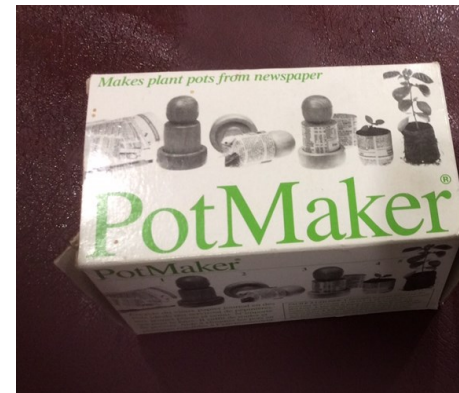
Danaan's research has found many inspirational people. Dr Wangari Maathai (1940-2011) was the first female Kenyan to earn a doctorate and win the Nobel Peace Prize. Maathai founded the Green Belt Movement, an organisation run by poor, rural women who planted over 30 million trees in an effort to reverse deforestation and desertification. Even though *Sacred Land* was published in 2007, Maathai's quote that follows is so relevant today. *"It took me lots of days and nights to convince people that women could improve their environment without much technology or without much financial resources"*

Although this book's style may not be everyone's cup of organic tea, the information in *Sacred Land* certainly encourages the reader to think positively of our environment and describing

how we are actually part of it, rather than the more common practice of trying to dominate it.

*Sacred Land* provides many practical ideas to continue our planting tasks - whether it is food nurturing us, or us simply nurturing our environment.

Reviewed by Tracey Mann



#### **FOR SALE:**

Paper pot maker.  
Used only a couple of times, as new.  
\$15  
Phone 0417824095.  
Collect Alexandra Hills or at next ROGI Meeting.



*Amanda Johnston got quite the surprise recently when she dug up this beauty! It's a rainbow carrot...grown organically, of course!*

*If you've got any photos or stories about the unusual fruit and vegies you've grown, please send them in to:*

[info@rogi.com.au](mailto:info@rogi.com.au)



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Other gardening groups using organic methods:

**Brisbane Organic Growers Inc (BOGI)**—  
1st Thursday every month (except Jan),  
Albion Peace Hall, 102 McDonald Rd, Windsor,  
6.00 for 7.00pm. 3357 3171 <http://bogi.org.au>

**Qld Herb Society**—1st Tuesday every month,  
Albion Peace Hall. 7.30pm. 0433 235 866  
<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

*“Keep your face to the sunshine and you cannot see the shadows. It's what the sunflowers do.” - Helen Keller*



Linda Brennan's beautiful Russian Giant sunflowers