

# 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 just have a chat before the meeting. Please be seated by 7pm ready for the proceedings.

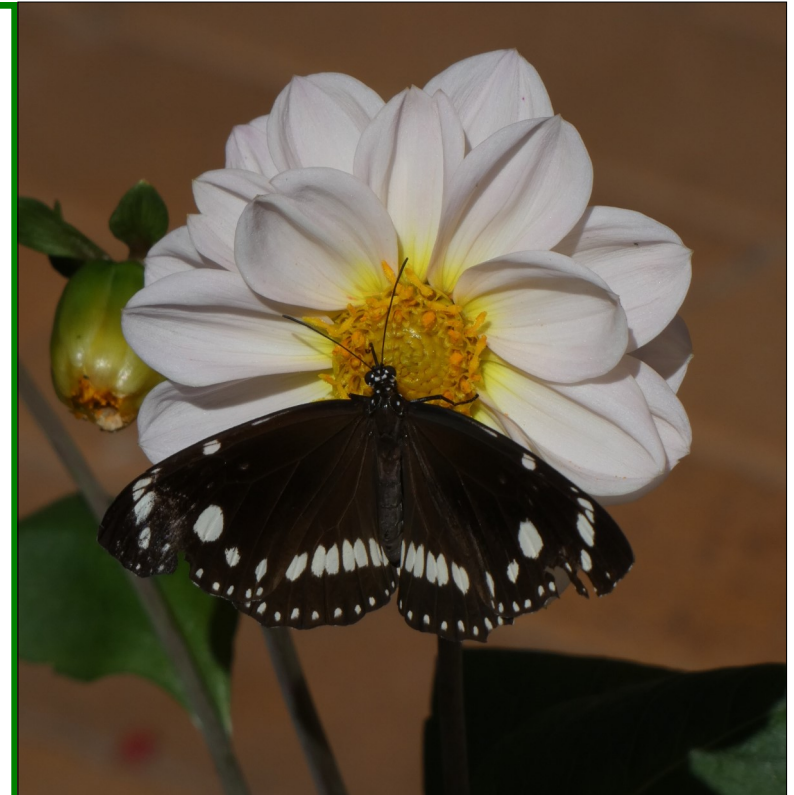
**Bayside Community Church**  
**Cnr McDonald Rd & Macarthur St**  
**ALEXANDRA HILLS**

## Don't forget:

- Pay your membership dues (**only fully paid members may attend**)
- Observe social distancing
- BYO mug if you want tea/coffee
- There will be no supper
- Swap and share has resumed
- ROGI Rewards has resumed
- Bring a basket/box/bag for your purchases
- Return washed seedling pots
- Any questions for Plant Clinic

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*The common Australian crow or oleander butterfly (Euploea corinna) is found in Qld and northern New South Wales. Butterflies, like bees, do a great deal for the environment ... they are plant pollinators and also provide an important link in the food chain. A garden that attracts butterflies will also bring native bees and birds.*



# Jill's Jottings

Hello ROGI members

Well, here we go again. Lockdown. We've cancelled the July meeting. However, at the time of writing this (1<sup>st</sup> July) the Garden Visits to our place will still go ahead. From my perspective, having ROGI visit our garden is a really good incentive to make it look a bit more presentable. But... it is always a work in progress – a productive garden.



We join ROGI to help us achieve our productive gardens, so we can have fresh healthy food for us and our family. Some of us go to great lengths (and expense) to avoid doubtful additives and chemicals in our food. Right?

Last week, two ROGI members helpfully alerted me to this show on the ABC: <https://iview.abc.net.au/show/what-are-we-feeding-our-kids> Please watch it. Having taught Food and Nutrition, I thought I was aware of the issue, but it's actually much more serious than I thought. I won't spoil the ending for you. I urge you to share it with your kids (and their kids) and your friends and the neighbours ... everyone, really. Because, of course, it's not just about what we're feeding our kids, it's everyone.

It highlights the importance of growing food at home where very young children can see it happening. Also that the growing and preparing of food, and eating the results is normalised for them. I love it when children know obscure fruit, vegetables and herbs. I love having little ones visit our garden and we go on a sensory wander – admiring colours and touching and smelling. Attaching a scent to the name of a plant enhances memory – they always remember the strong scents of rosemary or lemon verbena. Oh, the look on a face when someone smells lemon verbena for the first time is such a treat!

Children need to grow up knowing where food comes from. Even when you have a food garden, you can't grow everything, so it's a good idea to take a child with you when food shopping. They can watch (and help) you choose your (healthy) food and you can discuss with them and let them decide which sort of apples you'll buy or what type of cheese you need, and why. Seek out those obscure foods and work out what they could be used for. Look at those foods that are grown on the other side of the world and shipped here at great expense just so we can have cherries in winter. There is so much to learn on a simple expedition to buy fruit and vegetables.

As for the middle of the supermarket ... well, I haven't even started on ingredient labels yet, and I won't. Well, except ... just have a look at this label. How much of this stuff is actual food? Over to you. Rant over. I hope our kids aren't being fed 'rubbish'.

**INGREDIENTS:** ENRICHED FLOUR (WHEAT FLOUR, NIACIN, REDUCED IRON, THIAMIN MONONITRATE [VITAMIN B<sub>1</sub>], RIBOFLAVIN [VITAMIN B<sub>2</sub>], FOLIC ACID), CORN SYRUP, SUGAR, SOYBEAN AND PALM OIL (WITH TBHQ FOR FRESHNESS), CORN SYRUP SOLIDS, DEXTROSE, HIGH FRUCTOSE CORN SYRUP, FRUCTOSE, GLYCERIN, CONTAINS 2% OR LESS OF COCOA (PROCESSED WITH ALKALI), POLYDEXTROSE, MODIFIED CORN STARCH, SALT, DRIED CREAM, CALCIUM CARBONATE, CORNSTARCH, LEAVENING (BAKING SODA, SODIUM ACID PYROPHOSPHATE, MONOCALCIUM PHOSPHATE, CALCIUM SULFATE), DISTILLED MONOGLYCERIDES, HYDROGENATED PALM KERNEL OIL, SODIUM STEAROYL LACTYLATE, GELATIN, COLOR ADDED, SOY LECITHIN, DATEM, NATURAL AND ARTIFICIAL FLAVOR, VANILLA EXTRACT, CARNAUBA WAX, XANTHAN GUM, VITAMIN A PALMITATE, YELLOW #5 LAKE, RED #40 LAKE, CARAMEL COLOR, NIACINAMIDE, BLUE #2 LAKE, REDUCED IRON, YELLOW #6 LAKE, PYRIDOXINE HYDROCHLORIDE (VITAMIN B<sub>6</sub>), RIBOFLAVIN (VITAMIN B<sub>2</sub>), THIAMIN HYDROCHLORIDE (VITAMIN B<sub>1</sub>), CITRIC ACID, FOLIC ACID, RED #40, YELLOW #5, YELLOW #6, BLUE #2, BLUE #1.

Happy and productive gardening,  
Jill Nixon (ROGI President)



## Coming Events

JULY	<b>Thursday 8</b>	<b>ROGI Meeting <span style="color: red;">CANCELLED</span></b>
	<b>Saturday 10</b>	<b>Garden Visit</b> (see p. 17)
	<b>Sunday 11</b>	<b>Garden Visit</b>
	<b>Sunday 18</b>	<b>Field Trip</b> (see p. 17)
	<b>TBA</b>	<b>Seed Saver's Group</b> (see p. 19)
AUGUST	<b>Thursday 12</b>	<b>ROGI Meeting (AGM) &amp; E-Waste</b>

## Membership Information

- Direct Deposit** to BSB 633 000, Account Number 136 137 296  
Bendigo Community Bank Victoria Point  
Bendigo Community Bank Wynnum-Manly  
N.B. Reference: Please include deposit ID: YOUR NAME MEMB
- Cheques** made payable to:  
*Redland Organic Growers Inc.*  
Pay at meeting or by post to:  
*Redland Organic Growers Incorporated*  
PO Box 1257, Cleveland. Qld. 4163.

Member Category	Members Renewing For 2021	New member/s joining in...			
		Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct 21-Dec 22
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

## July Meeting

### Gardening lessons I have learned

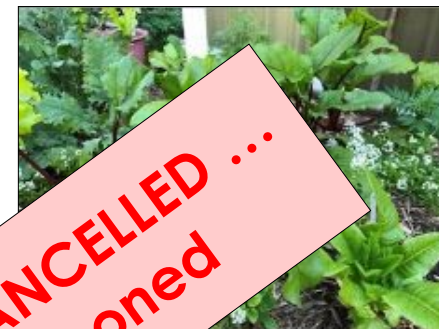
How do we become experienced gardeners? By doing it, of course.  
"Experience is simply the name we give our mistakes." Oscar Wilde.

Tonight some experienced ROGI gardeners will share their failures and successes.

There's sure to be something you can relate to and learn from!

As usual at our meet-

The usual attractions will be there - the well-stocked library, the seed bank and seedlings (at bargain prices) - plus for sale are local honey, organic gardening inputs and more. You may bring something gardening-related for the 'swap/share' table.



**JULY MEETING CANCELLED ...**  
**this topic postponed**

**This meeting is not open for visitors.**

**Entry free for ROGI members. To find out how to join, go to the MEMBERSHIP tab at [www.rogi.com.au](http://www.rogi.com.au)**

**IMPORTANT! To ensure that we comply with COVID-19 regulations and our COVID-safe plan, everyone MUST sign in at the door before entering.**

**There will be drinks, but no supper. Bring your own cup.**



## ROGI Committee Positions

**The ROGI Annual General Meeting will be held on the 12 August, 2021.** All committee positions will be declared vacant at the beginning of the AGM.

### **PRESIDENT**

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

### **VICE PRESIDENT**

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

### **SECRETARY**

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

### **TREASURER**

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

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

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

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

## **ROGI OFFICE BEARERS**

### **Internal Events Secretary**

- Sources and coordinates member workshops, garden visits and field trips

### **Membership Secretary**

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

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

- Handles advertising and press releases
- Arranges maintenance of website and social media

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

- Organises public ROGI events (eg. Green Heart Fair, IndigiScapes)

### **Website Manager**

- Manages and maintains the ROGI website

### **Newsletter Editor**

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

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

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

### **Library Co-ordinator**

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

### **Supper Co-ordinator**

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

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

- Operates desk on meeting nights



## June Meeting - Pick A Topic Reports

### Green Goddess Dressing/Dip/Condiment

**Presented by Sharr Ellson**

*It's light, smooth and creamy, while the fresh herbs give it a fresh healthy feel. Fantastic over salads, added to roasted vegetables, in rice bowls, spooned over hot pasta or as a dip with carrots and crackers.*

#### Ingredients:

1 cup avocado flesh/mayonnaise/  
cashew cheese/yoghurt (or you can mix  
and match ingredients)  
7-8 tbsp water\*  
4-5 tbsp fresh lemon juice/apple cider  
vinegar  
1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil  
1 cup packed mixed fresh herbs\*  
*Also think about some great weeds that  
can be used too*  
1/2 cup packed green onion (green part  
only, not white)  
2-3 garlic cloves  
Salt to taste



#### Method:

1. Add the garlic cloves to a blender or food processor and process until finely chopped.
2. Add avocado/mayonnaise/cashew cheese/yoghurt, mixed fresh herbs/weeds, extra virgin olive oil and green onion. Process until smooth. Add lemon juice/apple cider vinegar and taste test. Add water slowly until the desired consistency is achieved. Finally, add salt to taste.
3. Store in an air tight container or jar in the fridge. Keeps for over a week.

**Notes\*\*** If your dressing is too thick, mix in little more water.

**Herbs to use:** Basil, parsley, dill, tarragon, chives, mother of herb, chervil, lemon balm, nasturtium leaves and flowers, mushroom plant, lovage, coriander, mint.

**Weeds:** Dandelion, stinging nettle, chickweed, fat hen, cobbler's pegs, red clover, sour sob, sida retusa, wandering jew, purslane and mallows.

### Why you need Worms and how to care for them

**Presented by Jen Symmons**

**Worms Downunder**



*Don't forget the great discount offer made to ROGI members ...*  
**10% discount on a 140L worm farm or 5L Worm Cast Extract".**  
*Expires on 09/07/21.  
Details are in the email accompanying this newsletter.*



## Why you need Worms and how to care for them (continued)

# Beneficial Microbes - Let's break it down further

UNDERSTANDING YOUR WORM CAST

## Why are they beneficial?

### FUNGI

- Disease suppression & pest management
- Converts difficult-to-digest organic matter into usable forms for other organisms
- Builds soil structure
- Decomposes toxins
- Produces powerful enzymes

### BACTERIA

- Disease suppression & pest management
- Creates natural antibiotics
- Increases water retention capacity
- Detoxifies soil (e.g. residual chemical)

## What beneficial microbes are in your worm cast?

Bacteria

Fungi

Protozoa

Beneficial Nematodes

## Why are they beneficial?

### PROTOZOA

- Mineralisation & nutrient conversions to plant available forms
- Competes with and feeds on pathogens
- Builds soil structure
- A key food source for worm populations

### BENEFICIAL NEMATODES

- Mineralises and releases nutrients in plant available forms
- Serves as a transport system for bacteria
- Acts as Nature's aggressive pest control
- Inhibits root-knot nematodes (bad guys)

worms  
DOWNUNDER

# WORM FEEDING

- Worms will process anything organic (once living)
- To keep a good C:N ratio in your habitat, a good rule of thumb is to have roughly equal input of both "browns" and "greens"
- Moisten your carbon input
- Chop, Blend, Shred!  
Reducing the size of your inputs will allow the worms to process it more efficiently
- A sprinkle of dolomite should be used every two weeks to balance acidity levels

wormsdownunder.com.au

## "Browns" carbon (C) inputs



Shredded paper  
Cardboard



Tissue paper / paper towel  
Mulch, straw, hay etc.



Aged grass clippings



Brown (dead) leaves

Aged animal manure (horse, cow, sheep)

Peat moss / cocopeat

## "Greens" nitrogen (N) inputs



Fruit and vegetable scraps  
Fresh green grass clippings



Green leaves & plant cuttings  
Fresh animal manure

## Sparingly / Avoid



Raw or cooked meat & fish  
Bread, cake, pasta & rice



Citrus products  
Onions & garlic



Dairy products (milk, cheese etc.)

Foods high in oil or salts



## Beverage Bar

**Presented by Lara Brits**

Lara makes fermented beverages for two reasons:

1. The taste. Complex, unique, satisfying. In a way it is a beer or wine substitute - a 'special' drink. It is NOT similar to a cordial (fruity, sugary) - but in that same way, it can be an alternative to cordial. Less sugar is good!
2. For the nutrition. As a substitute to alcohol or cordial, this is much healthier! Bacteria/yeasts in fermented food/beverages have been shown to improve gut lining (decreased leaky gut), increased nutrition (increased bioavailability of vitamin B and various enzymes) and improve gut flora (diversity and numbers).

How?? Fermentation is getting bacteria and sometimes yeasts to create food for you. Examples are beer, wine, sauerkraut, sourdough, yoghurt, kombucha. It has been done for thousands of years, and often in the most basic and primitive of environments. There are different types of fermentation:

Wild vs controlled. Air vs anaerobic. Salt vs sugar.

Lara keeps things easy with her brews. She likes them bubbly, so she adds soda water. You can create bubbles by double fermenting them, but she finds she wants to dilute them, so this is easier and faster!

Recipes:

**Kvass** - great to use up leftover fruit and pips/cores

- Large jar, 1/3 full of fruit - 2-3 tablesp sugar/honey, pinch of salt
- Top with water and stir, keep out of the sun
- Shake regularly, taste daily. Approximately 2-5 days
- 1/3 Kvass, 2/3 soda

**Shrub** - fruity vinegar from 1700's; refreshing wine-substitute

- Fills smaller jar with 1 cup fruit, 1/4-1/2 cup sugar, 1 cup organic apple cider vinegar (with mother)
- May mash or heat fruit in saucepan first to increase flavour (e.g. pear, strawberry, berry) > then cool.
- Allow to infuse (out of sunlight) for a few weeks.
- Shake every few days. Strain when aromatic.
- Very strong - add a dash to a glass of soda

**Tepache** - Mayan recipe drunk in Mexico +/- cinnamon/cloves

- In a jar, place the rinds and cores of your organic, washed pineapple, and 1/2 cup sugar/honey.
- Top with water, sit on a bench out of direct sunlight.
- Shake several times/day and taste 1-2 days (fast ferment!)
- Ready in 2-7 days, when it is minimally sweet and has a beer-like funkiness.
- 1/3 - 1/2 tepache to rest soda (add tepache on top of soda so it doesn't get too frothy!)

Pictured right to left:  
Pear and cardamom shrub (completed), melon and pineapple shrub (brewing), plus tepache (pineapple beer) and melon kvass





## Know Your Soil - Learn the various soil tests

### Presented by Rohanne Young

There are three main types of soil: clay, sand and loam. Loam is what we as gardeners are aiming to achieve, as it is a good mix of clay, sand and lots of organic material. In the Redlands our soils are primarily clay-based.

### Soil pH

The pH of the soil is a measure of the acidity or alkalinity of the soil. pH actually means potential hydrogen and is a measure of hydrogen ion concentration. Because hydrogen ion concentration varies over a wide range, a logarithmic scale (pH) is used. The scale runs from 0 to 14, with 7 being neutral. Soils lower than 7 are acidic and those higher than 7 are alkaline. As the scale is logarithmic, this means that a pH 6 is 10 times more acidic than pH 7 and pH 5 is 100 times more acidic than pH 7!

### Why is pH Important?

The pH of your soil affects the availability of the nutrients. Some nutrients are more available under acid conditions, while others are more available under alkaline conditions. Nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium and sulphur are readily available between pH 6 to pH 7, but are less available when the pH is less than pH 6 or higher than pH 7.5. So when your plants are showing signs of nutrient deficiency, before giving the plant more fertiliser, check the pH. There may be plenty of nutrients in the soil, but they may not be readily available to the plant because the pH is wrong.

Plants that are well nourished and healthy are less likely to be attacked by pests or diseases. For the vegetable gardener, a pH of 6 to 7 is ideal for most plants. Some fruits including citrus, blueberries and strawberries prefer a more acidic soil. Other herbs and vegetables, especially those from Mediterranean climates such as rosemary, brassica, sage and asparagus like a slightly more alkaline soil.

## How to Test Using a pH Test Kit

- ✓ Take a small sample of your soil, around a teaspoon is ideal. Make sure you dig down to the depth of the main roots (around 10 cm or even deeper for trees), as the pH on the surface won't be what your plant is experiencing
- ✓ Place the soil sample on the plastic tile in the test kit
- ✓ Add a few drops of indicator dye from the kit to the soil sample and stir using the applicator
- ✓ Puff on the barium dust (white powder) from the kit
- ✓ Wait 30 seconds for the colour of the white powder to change
- ✓ Match the soil sample colour with the colour of the chart

### Highly Acidic Soil

Take a lot of samples from different parts of your garden, as the pH can change over distances depending on how you have treated your soil. Fertilisers, especially non-organic, composts, manures and various other practices can impact the pH of your soil. It is a good idea to check your soil annually so that you can adjust the pH for the needs of your plants.



### Changing the pH of your Soil

If your soil is too acidic and you want to raise the pH you can add any of the following:

- ✓ Compost
- ✓ Poultry manure
- ✓ Wood ash
- ✓ Agricultural lime or dolomite

Mature compost usually has a pH 6.5 and can be added to both alkaline and acidic soils. However, it is always best to check the pH of your compost as it may be higher if you have added wood ash or chicken manure to your compost as these are alkaline.



## Know Your Soil (continued)

If your soil is too alkaline and you want to lower the pH you can add any of the following:

- ✓ Compost
- ✓ Animal manures (esp. horse, cow or sheep but *not* poultry)
- ✓ Leaf litter or mulch
- ✓ Sulphur (either powder or liquid)

Always remember to alter the pH slowly, as you don't want to go from one extreme to the other.

Soil pH test kits are available from nurseries and hardware stores, and the instructions are really easy to follow. ROGI Library has a test kit which can be borrowed by members at no charge.

## Soil Composition

Soil is composed of three main elements: sand, clay and silt. As you can see from the diagram, clay is like a millionth of the size of a sand particle. This means that there are a lot more clay particles than sand particles. In clay soil these particles all band together, making the traditional sticky texture of clay soil. It only takes 40 percent clay for a soil to demonstrate clay tendencies.



## Finding out What Type of Soil you Have

There are a couple of simple tests that you can perform on your soils at home:



**Water test** - Fill a clean jar (that has a tight-fitting lid) with water until it is 2/3 full. Add a sample of your soil to the water leaving a gap of about 2cm at top. Screw on the lid and shake jar vigorously for a minute, until soil particles are broken down into suspension in water. Allow the soil to settle for one

minute before placing a mark on the side of the jar at the top of the layer that has settled out. This is the sand layer. Set the jar aside, taking care not to disturb the settled layers and leave it for an hour. Place another mark on the side of the jar at the top of the next layer to settle out. This is the silt layer. Leave to sit for 24 hours, making sure it isn't moved. By now the water will be more-or-less clear. Place a mark on the side of the jar at the top of the final layer. This is the clay layer. The percentage of each layer shows what kind of soil you have.

**Ribbon test** - Collect a handful of soil from a few locations in your garden. Wet each soil sample gradually and work it in your hand until it forms a ball. The moisture content should be just drier than the point at which the soil sticks to your fingers. Slowly squeeze the soil out between your thumb and forefinger to form a ribbon. The length of ribbon that you can form determines the soil type. If it is a firm shape and has a long ribbon, it is a clay soil. These soils are usually rich in nutrients and hold water well. If you can see and feel sand particles and the soil crumbles without forming a ribbon, it is sandy soil. Sandy soils have low moisture and nutrient holding capacity. If it holds together but is still slightly crumbly, it is a loam soil. Loam soils are said to be the best for growing plants. Loam covers all soils between sandy and clay soils.



**Percolation test** - Dig a hole about 30cm wide by 30cm deep and fill it with water. After the water drains out, refill it right away and measure the depth with a ruler. After 30 minutes, measure again to see how much water has drained out. Since the ideal drainage rate is 3-5cm per hour, you'll be looking for about 1.5 to 3cm of drainage in a half hour. Test a few different areas of your garden in this way.

**Commercial soil testing** - There are a number of places where you can get your soil tested for the pH, as well as various nutrient levels. These tests vary in price, but can be worthwhile in determining what actions to take to improve your soil.



## Top Tips for Cuttings

Presented by Linda Brennan

Many cuttings can be planted into a fine organic potting mix, but this is the mixture demonstrated on the night. This basic mix will work for most plants.

2-3 parts coconut coir  
1 part vermiculite  
1 part perlite

N.B - NO fertiliser! Cuttings don't need it and it can cause death of cuttings.

**Why cuttings?** We take cuttings to propagate plants with the same genetic makeup as the parent. Cuttings are usually a quick way to grow new plants.

**Plant Material** - The plant we take cuttings from is the parent plant. Ensure it's healthy and well hydrated before taking your cutting. When you do take pieces from the parent plant, cut them with sharp secateurs and sit them in seaweed solution until you are ready to prepare the cuttings. Do it all the same day for best results.

### Three plant parts were demonstrated on the night

Tip, also called terminal cuttings. These are soft and the stem is green. Semi hardwood pieces are firm but have not yet produced any bark. Hardwood cuttings are from older pieces of the plant and have developed bark in most cases. This type of cutting is the one most often treated with a hormone or cutting gel/powder or similar, in order to encourage callous formation on the cut end from where roots emerge. Some people use honey instead of rooting hormone, while others may use a fleshy piece of aloe vera.

Brown turkey fig cutting successfully propagated by Linda. Note the pot, which should be only a little larger than the cutting. Too large and the cutting will die.

**Cutting length** - Trim your cutting on an angle to just below a node where a leaf once emerged. Cut the top out of the cutting to promote lateral branching and remove all but two leaves. Large leaves will need to be cut in half. Ensure the cutting sits 2/3rds in the propagating mix and 1/3 above the mix. You may have multiple cuttings per pot, but they must be of the same plant.

**Care for your cuttings** - Keep your propagating mix moist, and the cutting in a bright but not too hot spot. You can also make a little cloche pot of a plastic bag and bamboo shask sticks to reduce water loss from the cuttings. You'll know when the cuttings are ready for planting out when new growth emerges from the stems, and roots are visible in the base of the pot.

Linda also showed us paper pots that are suitable for cuttings. See her video for how to make these on:

[www.ecobotanica.com.au/videos](http://www.ecobotanica.com.au/videos)

For further classes on organic growing, check out Linda's website and wide range of offerings at [www.ecobotanica.com.au](http://www.ecobotanica.com.au)





## Black Spot on Pawpaw

By Annette McFarlane



Fungal infections of *Asperisporium caricae* cause this disease. Natural plant genetics and nutrition are important factors in disease control. Grow plants from seed of pawpaw local to your region. Increase potassium (sulphate of potash and/or lucerne mulch), phosphorous (rock phosphate or chicken manure) and magnesium levels (Epsom salts) to make plants more disease resistant. Incidence of the disease increases during the cooler months when the nutrient uptake slows. Apply liquid seaweed to increase nutrient availability and improve cold tolerance.

### How to Remedy:

Apply casuarina spray; bicarbonate of soda spray (see *Home-made pest control link below*); commercial liquid silica and potash; wettable sulphur or copper-based sprays prior to the onset of and during the cool weather. Wash ripe fruit in water as hot as your hands can stand and dry thoroughly to control fungal and bacterial spores that cause post-harvest fruit rot.

**Homemade Remedies:** <https://www.annettemcfarlane.com/homemade.htm>

### By Annette McFarlane

ABC Radio - Gardening Talkback Saturday 6-7am ph:1300222612  
Garden Writer

Awarded Golden Wattle - Australian Institute of Horticulture  
Awarded Gold Laurel and inducted into the "Hall of Fame" Horticulture Media Association Australia

Member of Horticultural Media Association Australia

**Did you know? Questions to Annette can be emailed to:**

<https://www.annettemcfarlane.com/Q&A.htm>

## Plant Clinic

By Rohanne Young, *The Delectable Garden*



Mary asked if this plant could be identified - it is *Piper sarmentosum* or betel leaf. Betel leaf is an ever-green, perennial creeper which grows to around a metre in height. It has shiny heart-shaped leaves with small white flower spikes, which can develop into an edible fruit. The

leaves are commonly used in south-east Asian cooking. Young leaves can be used in salads, or as a wrap with savoury fillings such as cooked pork, prawns or vegetables. The plant is easy to grow and makes a good groundcover under trees. However it does send out suckers and can become weedy if conditions are favourable.

Mary asked what plant this was. It was identified as *Ocimum sanctum* or Shyam tulsi basil. It is also known as Holy basil. It is a short-lived biennial/perennial herb which grows to around 60 cm tall. The plants are upright, with slightly hairy aromatic green oval-shaped leaves, a pinkish stem and small white or mauve flowers. The leaves have a slightly

spicy flavour, and it is sometimes called hot basil. It is commonly used as a flavouring in Thai cuisine. Holy basil is being researched for its potential health benefits, and it has been used extensively in traditional Chinese and Ayurvedic medicine. Research is now supporting this use due to the antibacterial, antiviral and anti-inflammatory properties. Like all basil, it is easy to grow both from seed and from cuttings. Holy basil likes a well drained soil and regular fertilising and watering.





## Garden Visit - Oaklands St Community Garden

A cheerful bunch of ROGI folk joined us at Oaklands Street on the 23rd May, firstly to check up on beds planted at the workshop on the 11<sup>th</sup> April, and also for a tour of the gardens site with a twist – through time! This was made possible by an intrepid time traveller, Rhonda Binns. She recently (and ever so casually) handed me a USB stick with a heap of photos taken over the years by her hubby Peter. I was blown away, this was basically a photographic historical account of the gardens since 2007! And so we set our watches, turned back the time to that date and settled in for the ride!

*ROGI time travellers - bracing themselves for the trip.*



Oaklands Street Community Gardens was originally a neglected corner of Alexandra Hills, known for much less noble pursuits than gardening. A chat to the neighbours regularly unearths stories of persons in trench coats loitering about at 6 in the morning. The Gardens were originally a small corner of the south-east of the block. This is often referred to as 'The Top'.

Like many gardens, Oaklands Street has been a labour of love for many folks over the years. It wasn't a 'plan and execute' type project. So, photos in hand, we wandered back and forth across the site, this way and that through time, until we made our way to the most recent additions - the Fairy Garden and the pizza oven, (thanks Tom, may you forever be at rest).



*Feasting at the SE Corner of the gardens, with Redland's first child care centre in the background - January 2007*

*The Top Beds - January 2007. Note there is no rotunda or stage.*



*Who doesn't love a wood fired pizza!?! This pizza oven was made by long-time Oaklands volunteer Tom.*



## Garden Visit - Oaklands St Community Garden (cont'd)

Finally it was on to the beds prepped at the ROGI workshop in April this year. These beds have been a real eye opener. A month prior to the workshop, bed remediation was undertaken - nut grass, tree feeder roots and other weeds were removed. Organic matter in the form of well-made and mature compost, mushroom compost, cow manure, biochar, rock minerals and coir soaked in diluted worm juice were added to the soil. Mung beans were then planted, and dug into the soil at the planting workshop. The result was beautiful, rich, moist, dark and productive soil, ready for planting.

And now, what growth! It needed a second trellis after the first could no longer support the weight of the tomato plants. And I thought they did well when I grew them hydroponically last year! The beds smell like honey when you walk past, thanks to the borders of alyssum, and are simply delightful to explore. Not only is it inhabited by the plants, but also bees, hoverflies and other beneficial insects are present and active, pollinating and searching for aphids and other sap suckers to snack on.

Many thanks go to everyone who joined us and brought plants, afternoon tea, helped organise and pack up. I noticed a box of caffeine-free chai appear in the kitchen, a big shout out to whoever donated that.

Oaklands Street Community Garden is a great place to get hands-on gardening experience, and we'd like to extend a warm welcome to volunteers who enjoy gardening in good company.

Opening hours are Sunday 2-5pm, Wednesday 9am-12pm and Friday 9am-12pm. For more information call me on 0408 259 445.

*By Terry Sullavan*

It's on again! Oaklands Street Community Garden's annual Open Day is back with stalls, food, music, talks and more.  
Keep the date free, all welcome!

**Open Day at Oaklands St Community Garden**  
**12th September 2020 ... See you there!**



*A few days after planting the tomato bed in April.*



*Tomato bed on the 23rd June - a buzzing hive of activity!*



*Coeur de Boeuf tomatoes on their way, in good company with basil, parsley, lettuce and marigolds.*



## Plant of the Month—Peas

In subtropical regions, peas can be planted from April to July. So this is the last month to “get your peas in!” as they prefer cool, frost-free growing conditions.

The pea (*Pisum sativum*) is an annual, with either white or purple short-lived flowers. All parts of the pea plant are edible. Peas are also referred to as legumes, a group of plant foods in the family *Fabaceae*. These plants bear their seed in pods that split down both sides when they are ripe. Legumes have a special relationship with bacteria that enables them to supply their own nitrogen - how cool is that? So don't add too much nitrogen to the soil (animal manures), as this will produce lots of growth at the expense of flowers and pods.

Grow your peas in a sunny spot, in well-drained soil. They grow well with most vegetables, but heartily dislike members of the *Allium* family (garlic, onions, chives, shallots and spring onions) - so keep them well apart! Prepare the bed by first checking the pH; peas prefer a pH of 6-7.5. Several weeks before sowing, add compost and if necessary, garden lime or dolomite.

Left to Right:  
Greenfeast  
podding and  
dwarf peas,  
Shiras/Shiraz  
purple pod-  
ding peas, and  
sugar snap  
Sugar Ann  
peas. I've used  
an old security  
screen (with  
the mesh re-  
moved) as a  
trellis for my  
peas.



There are three main types of edible peas. English/garden (shelling or podded) peas, snow peas and sugar snaps. They also have different growing habits - dwarf/bush peas or semi-dwarf and climbing. However all pea varieties need support, so erect a support structure before planting. Some ideas include growing vertically on a boundary fence or lattice, stakes or a trellis, corn stalks, a tepee or tripod. Or, you can grow down by planting dwarf peas in a hanging basket!

Sow your seeds directly into the ground, as pea plants don't like being transplanted. They can be pre-soaked overnight in warm water to soften the seed coat. Water in immediately after sowing, and then leave them until after germination. They require regular watering, but don't like to be waterlogged.

Peas are packed with protein, as well as many other vitamins, minerals and antioxidants. They're easy to grow, suffering few problems. Fungal diseases such as powdery mildew or leaf spot may occur, especially in humid conditions. Avoid overhead watering, shady conditions, and allow good airflow by planting the correct space apart. Liquid spray on warm, sunny days with seaweed fertiliser to build up disease resistance.

The ROGI Seed Bank currently has *Greenfeast* (podding, dwarf) peas, as well as sugar snap *Sugar Ann* peas (dwarf and climbing) for sale.

Sources:

*Organic Vegetable Growing* by Annette McFarlane  
July/August edition of *Organicgardener.com.au*

<https://themicrogardener.com/easy-guide-to-growing-perfect-pea/>



By Ann Roffey



## Biochar for Sale

Biochar is a stable, carbon-rich form of charcoal that is applied to the soil. It can increase soil fertility, water holding capacity and crop productivity. Please note it can take up to a couple of years before results are seen.

Jill Nixon has again secured a bulk order of biochar from Spinifex Country Products at a reasonable price for ROGI members. It is made using hardwood timber from their farm, cooked at over 900°, and is 93% carbon (which is very high carbon charcoal).



Top tips from Spinifex Country Products for using biochar:

- Add nutrients and water (soaked for a few hours minimum) to your biochar before adding to soil.
- Work biochar through your composting system to enable the microbes to start habituating in the biochar.
- Work biochar into the top 5-10cm of soil for veggies. A new mixture can be added to every new fruit tree hole to ~40-50cm, incorporating with the soil.
- The solanum family of plants seem to be disadvantaged in fresh Biochar soils – add them to mature (~1-2yrs) biochar soils if possible.

### SPINIFEX COUNTRY BIOCHAR 'RECIPE'

Into a large tub put a 50 litre bag of **Biochar**. Add 1 litre of **worm juice** concentrate (from your worm farm), 500mls of **Seasol** and enough **water** to make it sloppy. Stir well and mix in a sort-of-equal amount of very broken-down **compost**.

<b>8 litres</b>	<b>\$12</b>	<b>=</b>	<b>\$1.50 litre</b>
<b>20 litres</b>	<b>\$22</b>	<b>=</b>	<b>\$1.10 litre</b>
<b>50 litres</b>	<b>\$45</b>	<b>=</b>	<b>\$0.90 litre</b>

Please place your orders by contacting Jill. Pickup is from her house in Birkdale at the garden visit on 10 and 11 July.

## E-WASTE COLLECTION

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

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

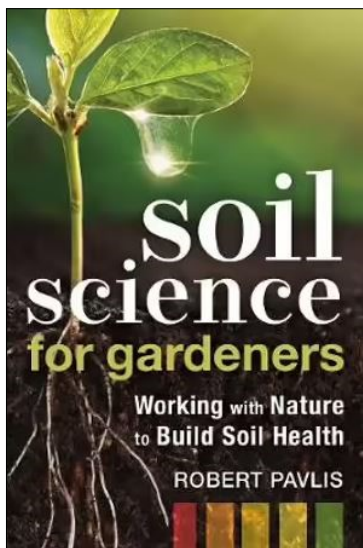
Sources of E-Waste include:

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





## Book Reviews



### **Soil Science for Gardeners** **Working with Nature to Build Soil Health**

By Robert Pavlis

Healthy soil means thriving plants (and thriving plants means healthy people): this is the premise of this book, which aims to give gardeners what they need to know about the science behind gardening without being too boring.

How do you analyse your soil's fertility? How do you improve it? What is going on with all the creatures living in the world

below your feet? What parts do biology and chemistry play in your food garden? What is the soil food web? The rhizosphere? CEC?

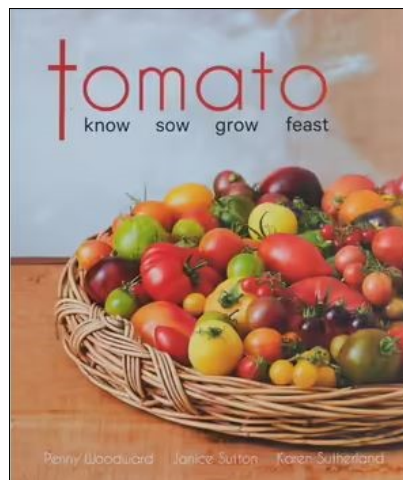
This book is not a 'thriller' but it's a good one to read to broaden your understanding, and so you know where to go when you need more information about a certain issue that may crop up (pardon the pun!).

*Reviewed by Jill Nixon*

### **THANK YOU JOHN!**

*A big thank you to John Borg for help with the library shelving unit, which he repaired and made safe to use.  
Safe for both librarian's back and all our books.*

*Viga Misztal, ROGI Librarian*



### **Tomato** **know sow grow feast**

by Penny Woodward, Janice Sutton,  
Karen Sutherland

This isn't 'just' a book all about tomatoes ... it's a tomato tome! It's written for Australian gardeners by experienced Australian gardeners. But it's not just a gardening book – it includes dozens of tempting tomato recipes from some culinary icons, because after reading this you'll have so many

tomatoes you'll need new ways to cope with them all.

There are very detailed explanations so you can decide which of the over 220 heirloom varieties to choose (a very difficult choice – I have selected 23 that I'd like to try!), and the photos are fabulous.

The section on soil and how to prepare it is comprehensive enough that it can be translated across to most vegetables with some tweaking. Actually, I think 'comprehensive' is a good word to describe the entire book.

Pests, diseases, and nutritional deficiencies and what to do about them. Propagation - did you know you can grow tomatoes from cuttings? And graft them? It's all there, and the photos are fabulous here as well.

Peter Cundall has this to say about it: *'This is the ultimate book on tomatoes, brimming with information based on experience. It covers everything anyone ever needed to know about selecting, growing and using the best and tastiest tomatoes in all districts and climates.'*

'Tomato' is new to the ROGI library. Be the second person to borrow and devour it, and be inspired to grow more tomatoes.

*Reviewed by Jill Nixon*



## ROGI Garden Visits & Field Trips

### GARDEN VISIT

**Jill & Ian Nixon, Birkdale**

**Saturday 10 & Sunday 11 July - 1.30 to 3.30pm**

*Visit our current President's 5-year-old suburban garden for some inspiration ... full of vegetables, fruit trees, flowers and also back yard chickens.*

### YANDINA FIELD TRIP

**Yandina Community Garden and Sustainable Cuisine**  
**Sunday 18 July**

*Yandina Community Gardens Inc. is a membership-based community group dedicated to providing education and practical experiences in Permaculture Principles. Visit a boutique nursery and extensive gardens at Sustainable Cuisine. Please book via Team app or contact Toni at [tonibowler@hotmail.com](mailto:tonibowler@hotmail.com). Cost \$10-00 per person.*

### SEED SAVERS GROUP

*See page 19 for more details.*

## Upcoming Garden Events

### Queensland Garden Expo

**Friday 9, Saturday 10, Sunday 11 July 2021**

**Nambour Showgrounds**

Qld Garden Expo is a 'must-see' garden event for green thumbs and novice gardeners alike. Held in the Sunshine Coast hinterland town of Nambour, this 3-day expo is Qld's premier gardening event attracting 40,000+ visitors from all over Australia and New Zealand. Some of Australia's leading gardening experts take part in three days of lectures, demonstrations, and workshops. For more information and to book tickets, go to:

<https://qldgardenexpo.com.au/>

### Bethania Street Community Garden

**Bethania Street, Lota**

### Adults Water Colour

**Thursday 29th July**

**9:30am to 12:30pm**

Local artist Megan Forward will use the community garden environment as a stimulus for an enjoyable and easy watercolour workshop. Take home your paintings. No experience necessary. COST \$5 - BOOKINGS ESSENTIAL on 0439 048 585

### Introduction to Organic Gardening

**Sunday 1st August**

**9:30am to 11:30am**

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

FREE - BOOKINGS ESSENTIAL on 0439 048 585

### Veggie Gardening for a Year-Round Supply

**Sunday 8th August**

**9:30am to 11:30am**

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

FREE - BOOKINGS ESSENTIAL on 0439 048 585

### Propagation - New Plants from Old

**Thursday 19th August**

**9:30am-11:30am**

Learn various methods of propagation, including starting from seed and using existing plants. This workshop will focus mainly on edibles and you will take away some plants to grow at home.

FREE - BOOKINGS ESSENTIAL on 0439 048 585



## Used Pots Needed

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



Also other clean used pots (small sizes up to 120mm diameter). Square pots are good too.

*Bigger pots, such as those you get through ROGI Rewards can be put on the swap/share/giveaway table in the foyer.*



*In July, cut back dying asparagus fronds to ground level if you haven't already done so. Fertilise the bed well with compost, aged manure, lucerne or sugarcane mulch. Check your pH to make sure it is between 6-7. If too alkaline, add liquid sulphur, if too acidic, apply garden lime to correct. In no time at all, those beautiful succulent spears will be popping through the ground, just waiting to be eaten. Don't have asparagus plants? Crowns are now available for purchase from Green Harvest.*

## Seed Sowing Guide

### July

Artichoke: Jerusalem Artichoke  
Asparagus  
Beans: French  
Beetroot  
Broccoli  
Cabbage  
Capsicum/Chilli  
Carrot  
Celery  
Chicory  
Endive  
Kohlrabi  
Leeks  
Lettuce  
Peas  
Potatoes  
Radish  
Silverbeet  
Swede  
Sweet Potato  
Tomato  
Turnip

### August

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

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

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



## MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

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COMMITTEE MEMBERS	Rhonda Binns, Toni Bowler Leisa Fien, Terry Sullavan	

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

Other gardening groups using organic methods:

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

1st Thursday every month (except Jan),  
Albion Peace Hall, 102 McDonald Rd, Windsor,  
6.30 for 7.30pm. 3357 3171 <http://bogi.org.au>

### **Qld Herb Society—**1st Tuesday every month,

Albion Peace Hall. 7.30pm. 54268299  
<http://www.qldherbsociety.org.au/qhs>

**Oaklands Street Community Garden—**Wednesday  
& Friday 9 - noon, Sunday 2- 5pm. Oaklands Street,  
Alexandra Hills. 0408 259 445

## SEED SAVERS NEWS

Unfortunately, our planned meeting on June 30 was cancelled due to the 3-day lockdown. It will be rescheduled at a later date, please keep an eye out on ROGI Team app for the new date, or ask to be notified by Linda Brennan, 0416 157 470.



## We'd like to hear from you!

For example, send us:

- A story about your garden
- A photo of an interesting plant
- An article about an unusual plant
- A request for items or information
- Specific garden or nutrition information
- A recipe for home-grown produce
- A notice that you have something to give away or sell
- A handy technique or tip
- A gardening problem solved
- Anything to do with organic growing
- A review of a ROGI library book

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

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

**The August newsletter deadline is 29 JULY 2021**