

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:

- Pay your membership dues
- Observe social distancing
- A small plate of food for supper
- Return washed seedling pots
- Bring a basket/box/bag for your purchases
- Any questions for Plant Clinic
- A plant for ROGI Rewards
- Free swap/share/giveaway

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PLEASE NOTE:
ALL members are now
welcome to attend ROGI meetings.
Visitors may attend, \$5 entry.

ROGI webpage: www.rogi.com.au
ROGI Email: info@rogi.com.au



Heavily-laden Fuerte avocados at Vicky Leggatt's new property on Tamborine Mountain. Read more about our visit on pages 7-8.

Carolyn's Corner

Hello Rogi Member,

We have passed the shortest day of the year, which was on June 21st, so we soon will notice the days slowly getting longer and warmer. This will make getting out in the garden a joy. Earlier this week I went for a walk in my garden and made a 'To Do List' of what I want to achieve before spring arrives. Now to put it into action.

We have observed that those who are or have been on the committee in any role, become more confident, experienced gardeners and it shows in their gardens. We are nearly at the end of the ROGI year, and with our AGM happening in August we will be looking to elect the Management Committee for the coming year.

A few of our committee members wish to stand down and give someone else a chance to share in the fun and learning experiences. The vacating positions are:

President – Leads and inspires, delivers monthly meetings, seeks guest speaker 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.

Secretary – Keeps records of ROGI business, including the rules, sets agenda and records minutes of committee meeting.

Treasurer – Handles all monies paid and received and issues receipts. Deposits money into bank. Makes authorised payments. Submits report, or financial statement monthly.

Membership Secretary – Get to know everyone in ROGI. A great job for a socially minded person with computer skills.

The committee would also like to include training members to help with other positions. The ideal situation would be to have two people to cover, in case one can't attend. These positions are:

Tech Desk/Communications – Training in sound and visuals for ROGI meetings.

Library – Get to know the books we have, source new books.

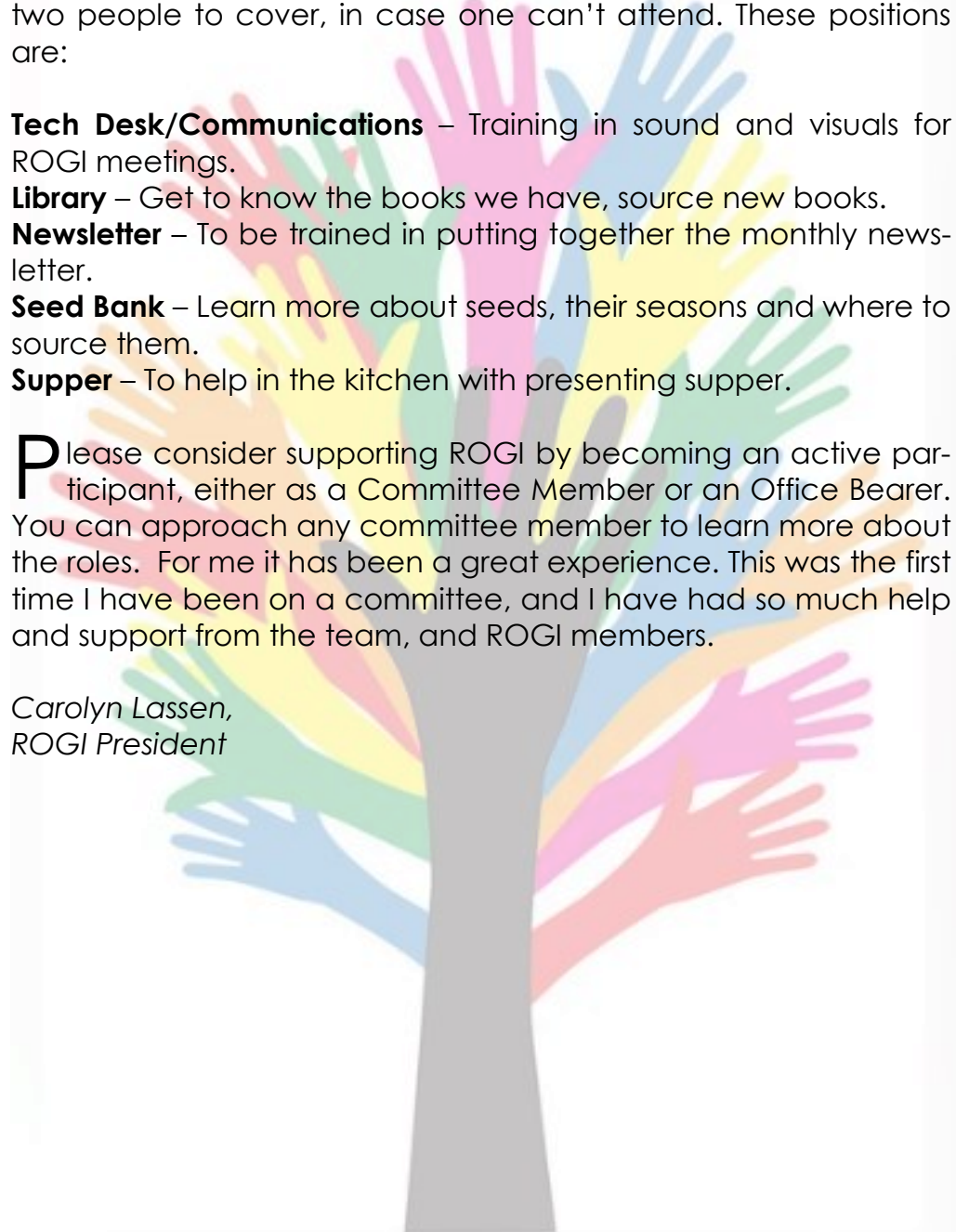
Newsletter – To be trained in putting together the monthly newsletter.

Seed Bank – Learn more about seeds, their seasons and where to source them.

Supper – To help in the kitchen with presenting supper.

Please consider supporting ROGI by becoming an active participant, either as a Committee Member or an Office Bearer. You can approach any committee member to learn more about the roles. For me it has been a great experience. This was the first time I have been on a committee, and I have had so much help and support from the team, and ROGI members.

Carolyn Lassen,
ROGI President



July Meeting

Permaculture



Michael Wardle of Savour Soil Permaculture will cover basic permaculture principles and garden layout, focusing on getting the most out of your back yard, whatever the size.

Permaculture is a practical, low-cost way to develop harmonious and effective growing systems that can be used by anyone, anywhere. Working with nature, the result is a low impact, abundant and sustainable lifestyle.

Michael's talk is particularly timely as winter is a good time of year to take stock in the garden and see what can be done differently to make it more productive and sustainable. He'll talk about what should be planted in the next few months - and share a few challenges and opportunities he recently encountered while setting up his new permaculture garden.

Most of the usual attractions will be there - Plant Clinic, the well-stocked library, some seedlings and plants, and the Seed Bank. Plus local honey, jam, wax wraps etc.

Bring along your unwanted gardening-related items and surplus plants, cuttings etc. for our Swap-and-Share table.

ROGI members and visitors welcome.

Visitors: \$5 entry. Members: free

Please bring finger food (preferably home-made) to share at supper. Free tea and coffee.

ROGI Events

Thursday 14 July
ROGI MEETING

Sunday 31 July - 2pm

GARDEN VISIT *

Chris McIvor & Julia Geljon, Redland Bay

Over the past eighteen months, Chris and Julia's new garden at Redland Bay has been converted from a weedy lawn with *duranta* hedges to multiple fruit and vegetable gardens. On the side of the house, steep banks running down to the Redland Bay Channel were overgrown with many different environmental weeds. These have now been cleared and a revegetation program partnering with the "Your Backyard" council scheme is underway. We will walk down there as part of the visit, but it may be a little steep or slippery for some people. As always please bring a small plate of food to share for afternoon tea, your own cup, and a chair.

Thursday 11 August
ROGI MEETING & AGM

Wednesday 17 August - 9.30 to 11am

SEED SAVERS MEETING *

Linda Brennan's house - 8 Silverash Court, Capalaba

** Please book to attend event on TeamApp or email ROGI Events Coordinator Toni at tonibowler@hotmail.com. The address will be supplied closer to event date, check your text/email messages.*

LOST AND FOUND

An outdoor foldup chair was left at Erik van Zuilekom's garden visit, Thornlands on Saturday 18 June. To claim, please contact Toni Bowler on 0402 323 704 or see her at the July meeting.

ROGI Committee Positions

The ROGI Annual General Meeting will be held on the 14 August, 2022. 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 (e.g. 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 Speaker - John Klumpp

By Douglas Jones

Native Stingless Bees

The guest speaker at the June meeting was John Klumpp, who is an amateur expert on, and keeper of, Australian stingless bees. He has written the useful book *Australian Stingless Bees: A Guide to Sugarbag Beekeeping* (West End Qld, Earthling Enterprises Pty Ltd, 2007) which is held by the ROGI library for anyone interested in reading it.

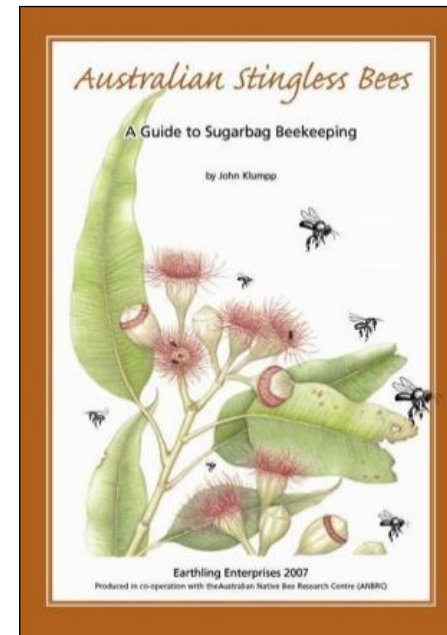
The following are the salient points I gleaned from John's talk:

- Bees collect both nectar and pollen from flowers. Only bees use both, nectar serving as the energy food of the hive (through the production of honey) and pollen as the protein food of the hive.
- There are relatively few native bees that can buzz pollinate. These include the blue banded bees, teddy bear bees, and some carpenter bees. These were the focus of scientific interest for crops requiring buzz pollination (such as tomatoes in green houses). Most bee pollination is done by non-buzz pollinating bees.
- There are 1647 known species of native bees in Australia, with the total expected to exceed more than 2000 species once all have been identified.
- There are bumble bees in Tasmania but they are not native (i.e. they are imported).
- The vast majority of native bees are solitary and can sting, but they are less likely to, and are less aggressive than honey bees.
- Australia is home to approx 12 species of social (communal) stingless bees. Their distinguishing feature is that all are dark, with the various species having distinctive markings.

- The three main species of stingless native bees in south-east Queensland are:
 - ◊ ***Austroplebeia australis*** – These bees seal their hives with a curtain of cerumen (wax) at the entrance, probably to protect the hive from predators.
 - ◊ ***Trigona carbonaria*** – These bees coat the area around the hive entrance with cerumen rich in tree resin.
 - ◊ ***Tetragonula hockingsi*** – This species is of northern origin.
- Stingless bees are native to mainly tropical and sub-tropical Australia.
- The hive comprises one queen, hundreds of worker bees and many drone bees.
- What usable products come from stingless bees? Honey and cerumen (a mixture of wax and tree resin).
- Cerumen was/is used by indigenous Australians to fix spear heads, etc., and to make the mouthpieces of didgeridoos.
- Stingless bees are used for pollination of macadamias, blueberries, etc. They are better than honey bees for pollination of macadamias because the honey bees can actually dislodge flowers in the process of pollinating due to their larger bulk and weight.
- Predators upon and pests of native stingless bees are:
 - ◊ **Assassin Bug**
 - ◊ **Braconid Wasp** – lays egg in the abdomen of the bee and once the larvae hatches from the egg, it feeds on the bee's abdomen.
 - ◊ **Bambix Wasp** – catches stingless bees, stings them (and thus paralyzes them), and then places in tunnels in the ground to feed their larvae. These wasps catch only drone bees.
 - ◊ **Phorid Fly and Syrphid Fly (Wasp Mimic Hoverfly)** – are the worst pests. They lay their eggs in the hive of the stingless bees and destroy the hive.

June Speaker - John Klumpp (cont'd)

- **The Cadaghi Conundrum** - The Cadaghi tree, a native of north Queensland, but introduced into south-east Queensland as a street tree, is one of two trees in the world that uses stingless bees to spread its seeds. The Cadaghi produces resin in its gumnuts, which attracts the stingless bees. The bees take resin from the gumnuts, and, in the process also pick up the trees' seeds - thus spreading the seed as they carry the resin back to the hive. Unfortunately, this resin makes the bees' cerumen granular, and thus unsuitable for some uses such as didgeridoo mouthpieces.
- **Artificial Hive Designs:**
 - Wooden hives of various shapes
 - Plastic
 - Foam (with timber lining)
 - Lightweight cement (*which John makes and sells*)
- **Ah Muzen Cab** is the Mayan god of bees and honey.
- **Food** - Stingless bees feed on all things that produce open pollen and nectar. That is, they are generalist, although they love the flowers of the Australian grass tree.
- **The African Tulip** is toxic to stingless bees.
- Stingless bees attach all of hive structure to hive housing. Hives require maintenance only if the hive structure is failing.
- Stingless bees can't control their hive's temperature as effectively as the introduced honeybee (*Apis mellifera*), which are able to maintain their hive temperature at 37 °C (plus or minus a few degrees). Stingless bees are at risk if the temperature of the hive is greater than 38°C - cerumen then starts to soften and the hive can collapse. Hence, it is necessary to keep a hive where it avoids the extremes of heat and cold.
- During question time, the point was made that **stingless bees may not sting but they do bite.**



John Klumpp's book *Australian Stingless Bees* can be found in the ROGI library.



ROGI members got into the 'bee' theme - with bees atop muffins, Hilary with her bee mug (left), and Casey in her bee shirt (right).

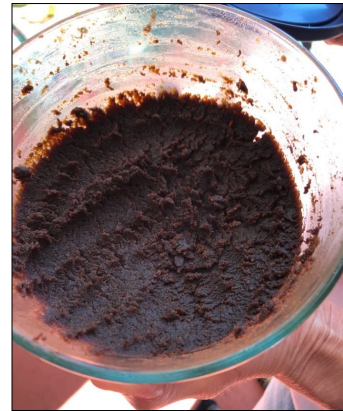


Field Trip - Vicky Leggatt, Tamborine Mtn

By Ann Roffey, Photos by Margaret Sear & Ann Roffey

Most of us dream of having a glut of avocados, but for Vicky Leggatt this is the norm. Late last year she made a lifestyle change, selling her house in Capalaba and moving to a 2 ½ acre property in Tamborine Mountain with her two sisters. It boasts 100 avocado trees, an abundance of citrus trees, tamarillos and a huge vegetable garden. The previous owners who had lived there for 30 years fertilised and composted - so the already rich red volcanic soil is perfect for growing edibles. There are many beautiful shade-loving plants growing including camellias, justicia and tree begonias.

The avocado orchard has mostly Hass trees, and also a few Reed, Fuerte, and Sharwil. Vicky uses excess avocados to make oil (1 cup used 16 avocados!) and a face/body scrub (pictured top left). Hass avocados ripen in December/January, and she has invited ROGI members to make a trip to Tamborine to pick up the excess avocados that would only rot on the ground. Watch this space!



Yacón



Tamarillo



Avocado tree



Ginger

The crisp mountain air is conducive to growing yacón, tamarillos, ginger ... and loads of avocados!

Field Trip - Vicky Leggatt's, Mt Tamborine (cont'd)



The massive vegetable garden located at the rear of the property. Growing are garlic, rhubarb, ginger, turmeric and cherry tomatoes.



This choko vine is growing on the rear fence with a wire support extending out to hold the heavily laden vine. There were so many chokos they were rotting on the ground.



Camellia



Dahlia



Justicia aurea



Justicia carnea

Conserving Moisture is Key Over Winter

By Linda Brennan, Ecobotanica

It has been an extraordinarily wet start to the year, but as organic gardeners in the subtropics we must be vigilant in conserving valuable soil moisture throughout the dry season.

In your July garden, you'll probably be harvesting beans, corn, tomatoes, lettuce and coriander if you live in the Redlands. Your cabbage, kale and cauliflowers will be building up size and will be ready to harvest soon.

Conserving soil moisture

But our flourishing winter veg do need good soil moisture levels too. So what do we do to conserve that moisture and reduce our irrigation requirements?

Mulch

I go for straw, sugar cane trash, or spent lucerne is also a choice. In all areas, a light mulch up to 5cm thick conserves water loss through evaporation from the soil.

Take care when using wood chip or forest mulch to mulch your vegie garden. It can carry and be attractive to termites; it can smother vegies if not carefully applied; it may bring on weed seeds if it's from other gardens, and it can cause nitrogen deficiencies.

To prevent nitrogen deficiencies, apply pelletised fertiliser on soil before spreading bark or chip mulch. Wood chips also create a chunky soil unsuitable for sowing seed and small seedlings, so be selective about what you use in your vegie garden. Mulch potted plants too, as potting mix will dry out rapidly if left exposed.



*Even potted vegies lose moisture and become stressed.
Mulch the top of your pots to reduce water loss.*

Watering

Watering your vegie patch with trickle or dribble irrigation uses less water and delivers the moisture right to the root zone under the mulch. Remember to check dribblers regularly and flush out the system. You'll need to lift and relay your line each time you replant.

We are reminded to water deeply and do it less often than giving the garden 'a blessing' (i.e. just a little sprinkle). Dig a small hole before you start watering and then in a different place after say five minutes watering in a patch. If the water has penetrated to the depth most of your plant roots are living at, then five minutes is long enough. If the water hasn't penetrated deeply enough, you will soon learn how much water is needed and the time to water enough to deeply wet the soil.

Conserving Moisture is Key Over Winter *(continued)*

Water is at a premium during winter in the tropics and subtropics, as this is our longest dry period. A more efficient way than sprinkling is to use a dribbler system that delivers water directly to the roots of plants.



Stressed Plants

Did you know that when plants are water stressed they are more likely to suffer from severe frost damage? If you're in a frosty area remember to keep your soil moist. A foliar spray with liquid seaweed will also help to build resistance to frost damage.

Use up your compost

If you have plenty of compost, add it to your soil now, incorporating it into the top 5cm (under any existing mulch of course), with a 3-pronged cultivator. That way you'll keep its nutritional goodness in the soil for plant use, and prevent the loss of nitrogen in the compost to the atmosphere. Compost not only acts like a sponge, holding water in the soil, it also adds lots of valuable nutrients plus a range of microbial life to support plant growth.

No compost available?

I water on humates, the stable organic compound produced by compost breakdown. It has many benefits including increasing water holding capacity of the soil, encouraging beneficial microbial activity, and building soil life through a number of ways. It

seems such a wonderful way to use natural products that would otherwise go to waste. If you'd like some of this for your garden and for pot plants, call Linda on 0416 157 470 to order a tub. It's easy to apply.

Biodynamic soil preparation

I also apply biodynamic soil preparation to my garden areas twice a year. I've found that this has increased the water holding capacity and helped beds and grass to remain green and lush throughout even the driest periods. In ROGI Rohanne Young is our biodynamic preparation maker, she has soil prep available - phone 0418 983 203. Or, go to Biodynamic Agriculture Australia's website, which has some for sale in their shop.

<https://biodynamics.net.au/>



Compost increases soil moisture through its water holding capacity. Worms will also inhabit a finished compost heap, so when you distribute your compost, you're distributing healthy native worms throughout your garden.

Seed Savers News

Our June Seed Savers meeting was a terrific meetup with warm drinks, supper, a snuggly heater and LOTS of seeds and info to share.

New members and existing brought along seed heads and envelopes of saved seed to share, with the result that our active group were able to separate and package up all of our stores that were waiting to be packed. That means at our next ROGI meeting you'll be able to choose from a lovely selection of locally grown vegetable, herb and flower seeds that you can grow in your garden.

Linda also gave us insight into the saving and sowing of dahlia seeds. You may remember that at the 2021 spring meeting, we learnt how to separate out dahlia tubers? They grew, flowered beautifully and died back, but not before some of the dried seed heads were saved for sowing in August.



Pictures show what we are looking for in separating and saving our dahlia seeds.

1. Dried dahlia seed heads.
2. Chaff etc attached to the seeds.
3. The dried seed after cleaning. *It's this part that you will be sowing just under the surface of the seed raising mix.*



Saving seeds means that you may well get a variation on the parent colour if there has been cross pollination. So, it's with great anticipation that we will each be sowing some seeds into ROGI seed mix this August. You'll find some seeds in the Seed Bank too, so give them a try. It's worth noting though, that seed raised plants will be only small the first season with tiny tubers. It may require a second planting season before you get the beautiful flowers.

Our next Seed Savers meeting is open to all financial ROGI members. It will be a morning meeting on **Wednesday 17 August** from **9.30 to 11.00am**. We will focus on spring planting from seed, and saving our winter seeds. Book your spot on TeamApp.



ROGI MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

PRESIDENT	Carolyn Lassen	president@rogi.com.au
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SECRETARY	Lisa Harsley	secretary@rogi.com.au
TREASURER	Lara Brits	treasurer@rogi.com.au
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TECH DESK	Terry Sullavan, Erin Houselander	
WEBSITE	Pal Juvancz	pal@pcpals.com.au

Blue spice basil (*Ocimum basilicum*) in Erik and Danielle's garden. It is an annual with a spicy lemon and vanilla flavour. Use in teas or pair with tomato, eggplant and zucchini, as well as meat, fish and cheese dishes. More about their amazing garden in the August newsletter.



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.

info@rogi.com.au www.rogi.com.au

PO Box 1257, Cleveland 4163

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

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 info@rogi.com.au and help keep the ROGI Newsletter topical, interesting, local and relevant.

**The August
Newsletter
deadline is**

28 JULY 2022