

Next meeting: Wednesday 12 June 2019

ROGI News

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

Salvation Army Church
Cnr McDonald Rd & Macarthur St
ALEXANDRA HILLS

Admission

Members: Free
Visitors: \$5

Please bring a plate of food (sweet/savoury or nibbles, preferably home-made) for supper after the meeting. Tea and coffee provided.

You are very welcome to provide a **quality plant** to help share interesting plants with other members (**see p 19**).

Remember to bring a bag, basket or box to take home your items.

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A very healthy crop of asparagus growing in the ground. If you want to learn about growing them in a bathtub, check out the story on p.14.

Backyard Burblings

Dear Fellow Gardeners,

Lately, our news sources and social media seem to have woken up to the fact that the world's apex predator, the USA, is responsible for the impending mass extinctions of many species of flora and fauna. While many may question the reasons, the fact remains that somehow we are losing species all over the world at an alarming rate. Scientists predict that we may lose as much as 30-50% of our animal species by 2050, with many plant species also struggling. This is up to 1000 times higher than the documented background extinction rate of up to five species a year. We are now literally losing many species every day. It is estimated that worldwide we have lost around 60% of our animal populations since 1970. A scary statistic!

Australia has the dubious honour of being first in the world for animal extinctions since colonisation, and being third for the number of endangered species behind the USA and Mexico. Not something to be proud of as a nation that promotes itself on its clean green image when exporting food products to many parts of the world.

A Senate Inquiry interim report issued on April 4th this year, acknowledges that drastic legislative changes need to be made if we are to save our remaining native species. See www.aph.gov.au. The final report was due on May 31st but is probably delayed due to the recent election.

As individuals, we can't do much to protect some of our native species and shorebirds, apart from raising our voices against habitat destruction of our trees and foreshores. But there are many things we can do to create a safe and healthy environment

where endangered wildlife, birds, lizards, bees and beneficial insects can thrive in our own backyards. Here are a few easy ones:

- Plant trees, shrubs and flowers to attract small mammals, birds, lizards, and beneficial insects
- Install native bee hives and insect hotels to encourage good bugs
- Use exclusion methods such as netting or bags to protect fruit and vegetable crops, not sprays
- Consider using various traps to lure and kill fruit flies, or yellow traps for aphids and whiteflies. Blue traps attract thrips and leaf miners
- Encourage mosquito eating native micro-bats by installing special nesting boxes
- Improve the microbial life of the soil by using compost, worm castings, mulches and teas
- Wrap tree trunks in grease bands or sticky traps to stop ants from farming scale and aphids

As members of an organic gardening group like ROGI, we are uniquely placed to ensure that our own gardens benefit all creatures. We might even be helping to save an endangered insect or bird, and if not, at least we have an ecologically and environmentally friendly backyard which is safer for our own health.

Safe Gardening
Julia Geljon



Coming Events

June	Wed 12	ROGI Meeting
	Wed 19	Seed Savers Meeting (see p. 17)
	Sun 23	Field Trip to Spurtopia, Fernvale (see p. 13)
	Sun 30	Garden Visit (see p. 19)
July	Tues 2	Herb Society Meeting
	Thurs 4	BOGI Meeting
	Sun 7	Garden Visit (see p. 19)
	Wed 10	ROGI Meeting

Membership Information

- **Cash** payment at ROGI meeting
- **Cheques** made payable to *Redland Organic Growers Inc* - pay at meeting or to PO Box 1257, Cleveland 4163
- **Direct Deposit** BSB 633 000. A/C 136137296 (Bendigo Bank, Middle St, Cleveland) **IMPORTANT!** Reference - Your initials and surname are essential to identify who has paid.

When paying your fees online, please complete a membership renewal form online at <http://www.rogi.com.au/renew-membership.php>

Member Category	Members Renewing For 2019	New member/s joining in...			
		Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct18-Dec19
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

June Meeting

Which herbs should I grow and why should I grow them?

Sarah Heath's mother introduced her to the amazing world of herbs at the age of fourteen.

She now runs *Basilea Living Herbs* and loves seeing herbs grow—their shapes, colours and tastes as well as their diverse uses and benefits.

Sarah will share a little of her herb-growing journey and how it affects how she grows her herbs and edible flowers.

She will show us her must-have herbs for a productive garden.



Sarah will have herbs for sale. These come in a small pot—please bring a box to contain them in. Janet from the plant table would greatly appreciate you giving her the pots after you have planted out the plants.

The usual attractions will be there—the well-stocked library, the seed bank and seedlings (at bargain prices) - plus local honey, organic produce, organic gardening inputs and more.

April Meeting — Round Robin Reports

Getting Your Vegetable Garden Started

When thinking about growing plants and especially food, it is important to remember that there are four limiting factors—water, temperature, sunlight and soil. Extremes of these factors will absolutely limit what you can and cannot grow.

Location

There are a number of things to consider when choosing where to prepare your vegetable gardens—whether you are growing seasonal, annual or perennial plants.

- You need five hours of sun exposure to your garden bed each day; remember your plants need sunlight to photosynthesise and make their carbohydrates. If there is poor sunlight, plants will fail to thrive.
- If possible, you do not want the plants to be exposed to a lot of wind, as this can cause damage and reduce pollination—such as flattening your corn and blowing all the pollen into the neighbour's grassy lawn.
- If your patch is close to large trees or shrubs, these can compete with your vegies for water and nutrients.
- If your yard slopes, consider growing across the slope and not down the slope. This helps best utilise the water that travels after rainfall. Also, do not have your patch in a low area, as most vegies like to be in free draining soil – not boggy. In low areas you can grow some water loving plants such as kang kong or water spinach.
- Consider having your vegie patch close to your house as it does make it easier to look after. Also, you can run out and grab some parsley in your PJs!

Preparing the Soil

All human life depends on the soil for our existence, as it provides our food, shelter and more.

Healthy Soil = Healthy Plants and Healthy Humans

Healthy soil retains water, drains well, is high in nutrients and organic matter, is porous and has good structure and can support plants.

Good soil is called loam and is a mixture of sand, silt and clay. Sandy soil has very large particles with low levels of organic matter and will not hold water. Clay has fine particles. These layers together are often difficult to work with as they can become sodden and “heavy”. After rain, clay holds water and when dry will contract and crack.

Soil is also made up of:

- Minerals – The main minerals that we all hear about– nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium. There is also trace amounts of minerals such as magnesium, copper, zinc and more.
- Organic matter both living and dead. Living matter includes bacteria, worms, insects, fungus. Dead organic matter includes decomposed plant matter, dead animals and insects, and humates. Organic matter in the soil helps to hold and retain water.
- Water
- Air

When preparing soil, it is a good idea to test the soil pH. This is a measure of the acid – alkaline profile, and is measured in a number range of 1 – 14.

7 is neutral, below 7 is acidic and above 7 is alkaline.

Most vegies like to grow in a soil that is about **6.5 to 7.5 pH**. At this range, plants can uptake the soil nutrients. pH testing is easy and the ROGI library has test kits that you can borrow.



Getting Your Vegetable Garden Started (cont'd)

Building your Vegetable Beds

You can start a garden without outlaying a lot of money—you do not have to buy raised garden beds and lots of products. I always suggest starting smaller and then build on your successes. There are many ways to construct a vegie bed. The No Dig or Lasagne method works well, and I have used this many times with success. I usually use horse manure as a layer, as this is readily available in my area and the cost is minimal. This method is shown here: https://www.rogi.com.au/uploads/rogi_no_dig_gardens.pdf

You can build this type of garden directly on bare ground or in a raised bed. Do not plant in this for about two weeks, as young seedlings can be damaged. For a short time period there is heat made as products decompose to create your beautiful soil.

Another method is the Double Digging Method. If you are using this method it really only needs to be done once. I would also recommend adding some rock minerals, and a good layer of compost or manure in the bottom of your trench. Then water and cover with mulch. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AiFCfQ9AEeQ>

Buying soil to create gardens can cause some challenges as you may get poor quality product that is more river sand and silt than loam, and it may contain weed seeds or stones. If you are buying soil go and look at it, ask lots of questions and go to a recommended seller.

Remember, take time to get your soil right, it really is worth it in the long run as healthy soil grows healthy plants that defend themselves against insect, mildew and fungal attack. You are aiming for a dark loamy soil that will hold water like a damp sponge. (Plants need to take up the minerals and nutrients from the soil via water so your soil needs to be damp).

Over time you need to keep adding to your soil – it is not just set and forget. You need to replenish nutrients and organic matter that has been used by the plants you grow. But once you have

made your vegie bed it is only a matter of additions over time – compost, manures and at times a little organic fertiliser and rock minerals.

The Seasons in SE Queensland

We are really lucky living where we do, as we can grow a huge variety of fruit and vegies across most of the year. We need to grow in the correct season for the crop and consider the length of day time, temperature, humidity and rainfall patterns throughout our SEQ year. All these affect what we can grow and when we can grow it. For example, some seeds will not germinate in Summer, when the temperature is very hot, and some plants need cool nights and low humidity to thrive. Therefore, we need to ensure that we do our homework and plant according to OUR seasons.



What to Plant

For the beginner I do suggest growing leafy green seedlings such as bok choy, silverbeet and lettuce. Generally these get going quickly, and you can get a sense of achievement placing something on your table that you have grown yourself. Seeds are great value for money and the crops with larger seeds such as corn and beans do love to be planted directly into the ground where they will stay and grow to maturity. Some plants can be a bit more challenging e.g. carrots, so I suggest trying them after you have had some successes. Seeds, like anything in nature, want to survive and grow, so with some care and water that's what they do!

Getting Your Vegetable Garden Started (cont'd)

Our weather patterns in SEQ can loosely be described as:

1. *November to March.* Subtropical weather - Hot and humid. This can be a challenging time for growing seasonal crops and insect pests can be a problem. Eggplant, capsicum, sweet potato and other crops will grow happily through summer.
2. *April to August.* More temperate weather, with decreasing humidity and cooler nights. This is our main growing season for many seasonal crops, especially potatoes and the brassicas (cabbage family).
3. *September to November.* Mediterranean type weather- starting to heat up with increasing humidity. During this time we can grow many things such as cucumber, zucchinis, beans and pumpkin to name a few.

This means that we do have seasons that we need to pay attention to. The length of daylight, the humidity and the temperatures during the day and night affect what will grow and when it will grow. Use the ROGI resources to see what to grow – these are in every monthly newsletter, and also on the ROGI website: <https://www.rogi.com.au/resources.php>

There are other ways to grow vegetables. Many herbaceous plants should be considered as a vegetable – such as perennial basil and mushroom plant. These just keep growing and can be harvested continually, used in salads, soups and stews. There are several perennial spinach plants that are well suited to our climate such as malabar spinach, and this makes good sense as it is always available. So investigate these perennial plants to make your food growing easier.

Another way is growing new plants from old. The ends of spring onions that have the roots can be replanted and these regrow. Sweet potato and ginger grow from a cutting of the tuber itself.

Basil and rosemary will grow from cuttings and pineapples will grow from the prickly head that so many people throw away.

One last suggestion is to make your garden a place that you want to visit regularly. Have a seat nearby, plant flowers and herbs. A walk around helps you keep track of your plants—you will harvest regularly, notice any insects or caterpillars and attend to them quickly. By making it look attractive with lots of herbs and flowers, you will attract beneficial insects that pollinate flowers and increase your crop, and also those that will help defend your produce. Also, by planting herbs and flowers you are adding extra defences to your garden, through additions to the soil by the odours they emit and by the birds, animals and lizards they will attract. Nature is just truly remarkable! Happy gardening.

Linda Barrett



April Meeting — Round Robin Reports

Composting Workshop

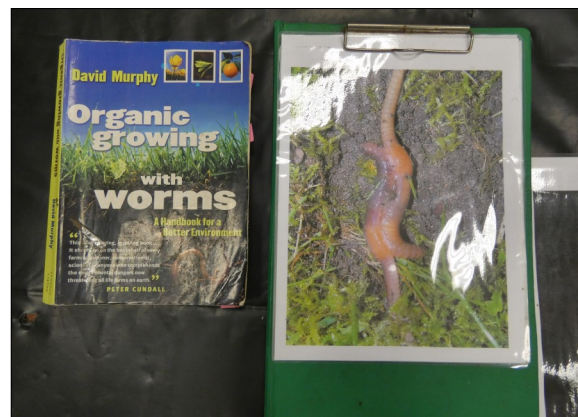
Frank and Marion presented a really interesting talk on composting. Instead of the usual focus on what can and cannot be composted, Frank focussed on the worms and microorganisms that do the work, breaking down waste into beautiful garden soil.

The different types of worms and their roles in composting were discussed, as well as the importance of various microbes. The bacteria, fungi and other microorganisms live in the soil, but they also live in the gut of the worms. These microbes help the worms to break down the waste into food for the worms, and into worm castings. Worm castings as we know are great for our gardens.

When the worms excrete the worm castings, they also excrete lots of the microorganisms, so by adding the final castings to your garden you are also increasing the beneficial microbes in your soil.



Marion is holding up a picture of a worm sack from which new worms hatch.



Other organisms including sawfly maggots and cockroaches can also assist in the composting process, so don't think you are doing something wrong when you see these critters in your compost.

Frank had an example of one of the compost bins that he had made—very sturdy and made from recycled wood, so that we could get away from using plastic bins, which Frank is not a fan of.

Marion covered the importance of not over-wetting your compost, as this could drown your worms and bring in anaerobic bacteria, which is what makes compost bins smell bad. The importance of having enough moisture in your compost bins was also covered. If the bin material is too dry, then composting will not take place, or will take a lot longer if it does break down.

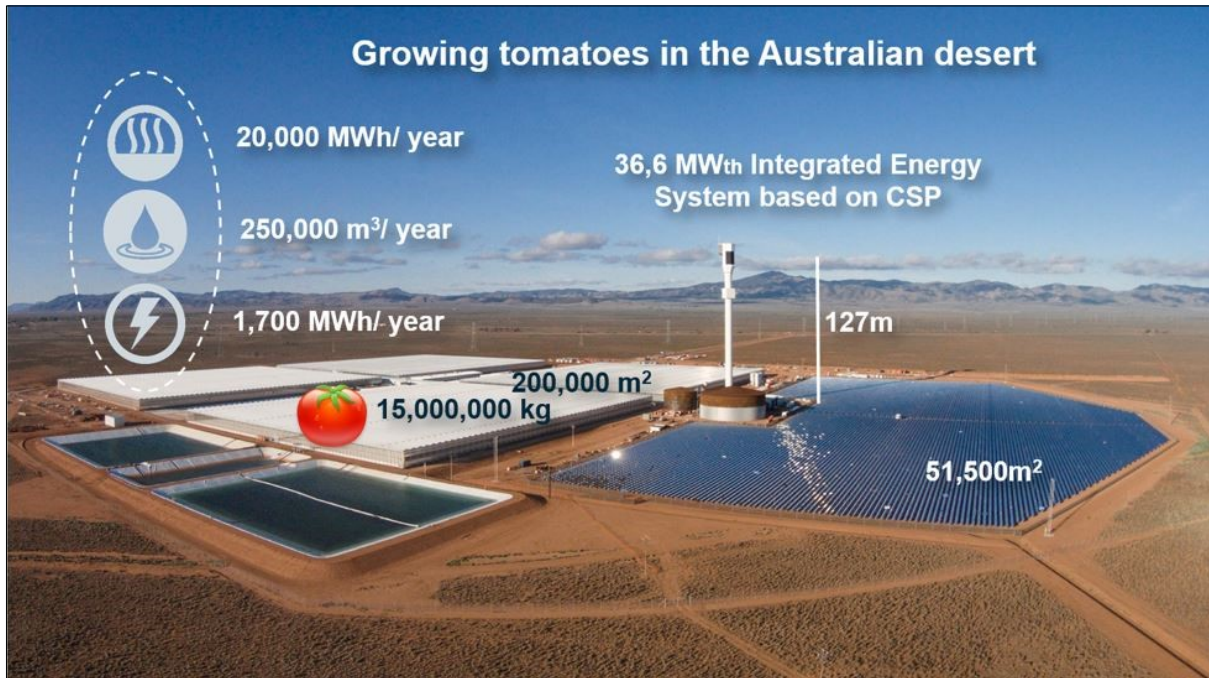
Worm castings are the best way of fertilising your garden and can be used straight on the vegetable garden and even on top of your pots.

I really enjoyed this workshop, and even though I have been composting for over a decade I learnt some new information and got some useful ideas.

Rohanne Young

May Meeting — Terry Sullivan

Terry Sullivan presented a very interesting talk on work that he did at Sundrop Farms at Port Augusta in South Australia recently. The farm is owned by Danish Company Aalborg—a leader in sustainable agriculture for the arid world, growing high-quality and natural crops using only seawater and sunlight.



So how does a greenhouse that covers 20 hectares in the desert, produce more than 17,000 tonnes of fresh tomatoes annually (15% of Australia's tomato market!)? They have developed technologies that integrate solar power, electricity generation, fresh water production and hydroponics.

A state-of-the-art solar tower produces energy to power the plant growing systems and to heat and cool the greenhouses as required. It is 115m high and has 23,000 mirrors pointed at it. Their water comes from the Spencer Gulf, and is desalinated using a thermal desalination plant.



Air and Water Distribution

- Irrigation Pipes feed water to plants
- Plants grow in coco peat bags
- Grow pipes under coco peat distribute warm air throughout greenhouses
- Plants reach 15m in height!
- Pollination using scissor lifts
- Greenhouses are warmed twice daily



May Meeting — Terry Sullavan

Terry's great tips for growing Tomatoes at home:

- Like most fruiting plants, they require lots of sun
- Tomatoes like warm soil—don't mulch in winter
- Start with a tough variety like cherry or roma tomatoes first
- Note crop rotation—don't succession plant Solanaceae family crops
- Prepare bed well with lots of mature compost
- Use fertilisers high in phosphorous and potassium, low in nitrogen where possible. pH 6-7
- Avoid dense block planting
- Use companion planting to confuse pests (eg. basil, marigolds)
- Deep plant to encourage extra root growth up stem



What's wrong in this photo? The tomatoes look healthy enough, but will probably not do well as they are growing in the shade.



How to tie a Tomato

Twist the twine to restrain the plant sufficiently without choking the stem as it grows. If it's done as in the picture on the right, the tying is very simple and you only need to feed the stem through the two lengths of twine.

Pruning a Tomato

Terry finds that when pruning, it is useful to be methodical.

- First, remove the diseased leaves and lower leaves. Remove the largest laterals.
- If it wasn't done when they were planted, think about how you're going to tie them up and put in the posts and twine.
- Next, remove any stems which clearly cannot be trained to fit your frame.
- Tie up the stems, allow them some horizontal growing space—there's no race to the top.
- Finally, adjust or prune any last dense spots or laterals that you've missed. There should be plenty of airflow through the vines.

**** See page 20 for an update on the Oaklands Street Bed Prep Workshop on April 14.**

Garden Visit—Sally Duffield

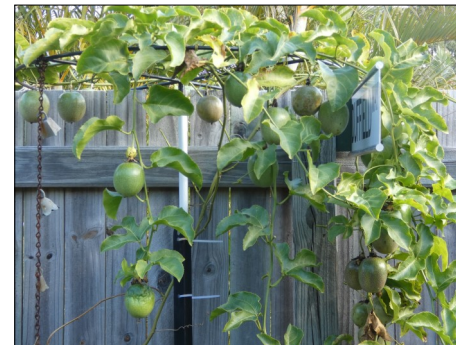
Sally Duffield describes her suburban garden in Alexandra Hills as a “mental health space”. Over the 20 years they have lived there, Sally and husband David have transformed their block into the green oasis it is today.

Thirty-seven palm trees were removed, and native trees such as Blueberry Ash, Macadamia, Melaleuca and Holly Fuchsia were planted. The block backs on to council bushland, so they get lots of birds, including unwanted ones like a scrub turkey. He/she was persuaded to move when they cut back the lower branches of the trees under which its nest was made (apparently they don't like too much light on their mound—a helpful hint!).

The Duffields keep chickens and native bees, and try to attract as many birds to their yard as possible. It was lovely to walk around and check out the many rooms they have created; thank you for a very interesting afternoon.



Now that the children have grown up, their play areas have been repurposed . . . what was once a cubby house and sandpit has been converted into a chook pen for 1 Silkie and 2 Pekins.



Brazilian spinach can be grown in full sun to medium shade. It is a great spinach to grow in our hot Summer, when others don't thrive. Chooks also love it.



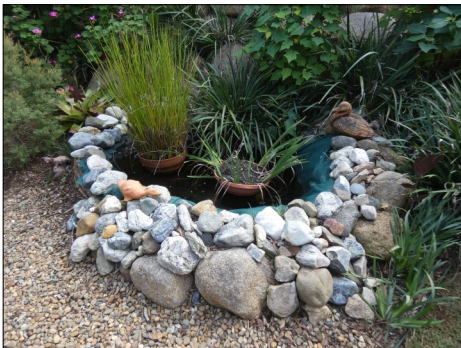
Above, right, below and left—Sally has a productive garden. Passionfruit growing on the fence, herbs growing handy to the kitchen, “cut and come again” perpetual spinach in the vegie garden, and a mandarin provides citrus in winter.



Garden Visit—Sally Duffield



Sally and David have 2 native bee hives. They started with one, and then split it to start another. There are plenty of flowers in their yard to keep the bees happy.



A pond in the back yard, stocked with fish to keep mosquito larvae from hatching.



Beautiful camellias growing in the front yard, in a shady spot.

Abutilon Dwarf flowering for the first time.



A lot of larger birds visit the Duffield garden, and they are hoping to attract smaller birds as well. The tripod on the right has been underplanted with bushy plants so that small birds will have somewhere to hide.



These beautiful caterpillars (right) are destroying Sally's crocus plants. She didn't know what they were, so a brief description and photo were sent to The Coffs Harbour Butterfly House. Thanks go to Don Herbison-Evans for his prompt reply. It has been identified as 'Brithys Crini'—go to website:

<http://lepidoptera.butterflyhouse.com.au/hade/crini.html>

This species is an international pest, and the moth is not especially attractive, so in this instance it is probably not worthwhile letting them destroy her plants!



Plant of the Month—Good Bug Mix

Have a guess what Red Clover, Alyssum, Cosmos, Marigolds, Queen Anne's Lace, Buckwheat, Lucerne, Caraway, Coriander, Dill, Phacelia and Gypsophila all have in common?? They are all the wonderful flowering plants in **The Good Bug Mix**, and now is a wonderful time to get more flowers into your garden.

A garden simply cannot exist without a wildly diverse ecosystem of insects, interacting in a delicate symbiotic relationship that exemplifies the beauty of a garden. All these small creatures, even the gross and destructive ones, serve a purpose—they are the ones who pollinate our vegetables and fruit trees, decompose our compost, protect our plants from predators, provide sustenance to predators, as well as produce silk, honey, food dye, shellac and some medicines. Without bugs, the beauty and synergy of a garden would be replaced with decay and rot.

We need to build an ecosystem in our gardens—a community of organisms functioning hand in hand with their environment and each other to exchange energy and create a nutritional cycle. Insects are connected to each and every activity occurring in the ecosystem of your garden.

So how do we do this? Well, remember that list of flowers I started this article with—sow the seeds from **The Good Bug Mix**. Good Bug Mix contains loads of colourful annuals and perennial flowers that bloom most of the year. These beautiful, colourful, smelly flowering plants provide nectar and pollen, as well as a habitat for beneficial insects such as predatory mites, tiny micro wasps, ladybirds, lacewings, native bees, hoverflies, tachinid flies and predatory beetles.

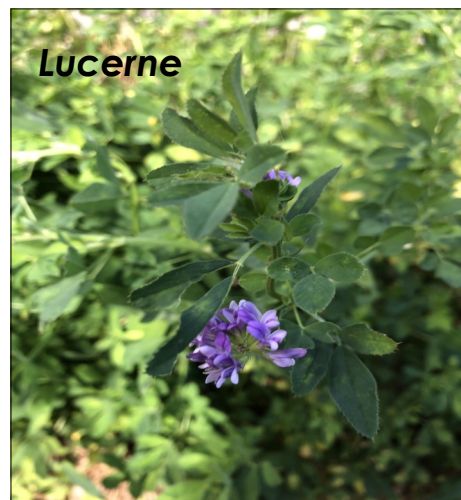
This mix of plants has been thoughtfully chosen—one attribute is the size of the flower heads. Some beneficial insects drink nectar through a straw-like mouth part called a proboscis, while others

use their rostrum, a long sword-like mouth part to stab and suck, and yet others chew with their mouth parts. All of these flowers cater to the diverse needs of these insects to provide them the greatest opportunity to thrive, and in turn bolster the strength and diversity of our gardens.

So, get out in your garden this weekend and sow your Good Bug Mix. Take a moment to watch the community that uses your garden now, because in a few weeks things are only going to get better out there.

Good Bug Mix seeds \$1 members, \$2 non-members

Sharr Ellison



Field Trip to Spurtopia Homestead, Fernvale

When: Sunday, 23 June
Time: 9.30am (at Fernvale)
Cost: \$10-00 (BSB 633 000, A/C 136137296 with your name as the reference please)
Where: Address and details about bus travel will be emailed



Our first Field Trip this year is to Roman Spur's 1 acre sustainable living property 'Spurtopia Homestead' in Fernvale. If you haven't signed up and are interested in attending, please contact Toni Bowler on 0402 323 704 or email events@rogi.com.au

The visit comprises:

- a garden tour explaining and showing how it was built
- a talk on soil health and other sustainability features
- a display table with practical, inexpensive gadgets and ideas
- morning tea (coffee, tea and home baked cake)

You will see:

Kitchen garden, vegetable garden, orchard, establishing food forest, various styles of wicking garden beds, self-watering herb spiral, energizing mandala pyramid including schematics, composting and making DIY garden fertilizers, chickens, honey bees, utilizing grey and black water.

You can taste home produce:

Sauerkraut, kombucha, water and milk kefir, home brew beer and ginger beer, mustard, sourdough bread etc. *Some home produce and cultures will be available for purchase.*

Please find a short video of the property at:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_1qpSnsiW8c

Changes to ROGI's Library Usage

Over the last few months we have made a few changes to the ROGI Library that should make it easier for members to borrow books. We anticipate these changes will lead to higher borrowing rates by members on meeting nights.

Previously all the books, regardless of any specific category, were listed in alphabetical order on the library shelves. While this was useful if one knew the title of a book, it was not particularly helpful when looking for a particular subject.

In order to make the library more user-friendly and assist with finding a book to borrow we have arranged all the books into broad categories. 11 categories on closely related topics, eg. Weeds, Pests, Diseases and Bugs. Plus 1 miscellaneous category for general interest books eg. "Omnivore's Dilemma".

Each category has its own colour code on the shelf below the books and on the spine of each book within that category. For ease of finding books, a copy of the Category Catalogue with colour codes is available at the library table for members to peruse. There is also a full A – Z Inventory of books in title order with a 2 digit letter code for each category e.g. OG for Organic Gardening. Please see our librarian, Sophie Bromham for more information.

We ask that any members in possession of a ROGI book/s without colour codes, please return them promptly to the library for processing to enable us to finalise the catalogues.

Please note—the above catalogues are also accessible on ROGI's updated website under <https://www.rogi.com.au/resources.php>

Julia Geljon & Shanthie Goonetilleke

Revisiting my Asparagus in a Bathtub

Almost two years ago I planted 3 asparagus crowns in a bathtub (see *ROGI Newsletter August 2017*). Well, how are they growing? Very well! In August last year I proudly harvested my first asparagus spears—and for quite a few months afterwards we enjoyed them in various dishes, or steamed ever so lightly and eaten with a ‘fresh from my chickens’ egg for breakfast. YUM!!!

Asparagus can be planted between April and September in Brisbane. If you plant seeds or seedlings, you will have to wait two years until your first crop. Crowns are much quicker, only one year, but they are more expensive to buy. You can purchase them from places like Green Harvest or Capalaba Produce.

I decided to grow my asparagus in a bathtub as they are long lived and can take up a lot of room. Plus I can take them with me, if I ever move! The plants thrive on plenty of moisture, so I water them every day in summer, and every second in winter.

The mix I planted them in is on the ROGI website—go to https://www.rogi.com.au/uploads/rogi_no_dig_gardens.pdf In the bathtub I layered organic sugarcane mulch, brown leaves, aged cow manure, grass clippings, vege scraps and compost, until I had filled it to the top.

The only problems I have encountered were firstly, my mix in the bathtub was too alkaline—the pH should be between 6 and 7. So I applied Liquid Sulphur to correct it (this will lower the pH). Secondly, we had a lot of rain and the tub started filling up with water. Digging out where the drain hole was and removing the shade cloth I had put in to stop soil escaping solved that!

Asparagus are a heavy feeder, so I keep them happy with liquid fertiliser applied every couple of weeks. They also appreciate regularly applied decomposed animal manure and seaweed during the post-harvest, pre-dormancy growing period. If you love eating asparagus, consider growing it yourself—it is well worth the effort!

Ann Roffey



Timeline of Asparagus—Fig. 1: July 2017, planting out asparagus crowns in bathtub, 15-20cm deep. Fig. 2: Wire spirals around them stop the fronds from falling over. Fig 3: Starting to die off (May/June) - prune back when they are completely brown, then add compost, aged manure and lucerne. Fig 4: The ideal height to harvest is 22-25cm or less. Fig 5: My first harvest in August 2018.

Ice Cream Recipe (Lemon Myrtle)

Ingredients (as I make it for a 2 litre ice cream churner)

If adding extras like bush passionfruit pulp:

4 cups heavy cream
1 1/2 cups whole milk
1/2 cup maple syrup
1/2 teaspoon salt
Optional added extras

Making plain ice cream or infusing a flavour such as lemon myrtle or mint:

5 cups heavy cream
2 cups whole milk
3/4 cup maple syrup
3/4 teaspoon salt
Optional lemon myrtle leaves
(approx. 20—use newer leaves
in preference to old leaves)

Method

1. Combine cream, milk, maple syrup and salt into a bowl or saucepan (if infusing a flavour) and mix thoroughly.

To infuse a flavour

- Add the Lemon Myrtle leaves to the mixture (Tip: Don't chop up the leaves as you will need to remove them later).
 - Heat contents of saucepan to a gentle simmer and maintain for around 10 minutes. Stir constantly/frequently to prevent sticking to bottom of saucepan.
 - Remove from heat and allow to cool for around 30 minutes.
 - Remove the leaves from the mixture (Tip: Use a slotted spoon or similar rather than a strainer, as a strainer also catches the cream. I use a wire mesh type scoop that is designed for getting chips etc out of oil).
2. Place the mixture into the fridge (or freezer for a limited time) to cool down. A cold mixture works best in an ice cream churner.
3. When cold, pour into an ice cream churner and process as per your machine. It is possible to make ice cream without a churner but I have not made it this way. There are instructions on the Internet and if you wish to follow this path, I suggest you do some research.

Extra notes

There are plenty of ice cream recipes on the Internet but we were looking for those without uncooked eggs, and less or no sugar.

I find this ice cream freezes harder than commercially produced ice cream, maybe because of additives to prevent hard freezing. If you want to play around, these are tips to reduce hardness in freezing:

Fat reduces hardness in freezing

Sugar reduces hardness in freezing

Alcohol reduces hardness in freezing

Salt reduces hardness in freezing

Alternatively, remove the ice cream up to half an hour before serving.

The original recipe is:

2 cups heavy cream
3/4 cup whole milk
1/2 cup maple syrup
1/4 tsp salt

Greg Lindner



USEFUL GARDENING TIP:

I use a permanent black marker to fill in the measurements on my garden sprayer—makes it so much easier to read! (Francke Latter)

If you have a useful gardening tip you want to share with fellow ROGI members, please email it to info@rogi.com.au

Garden Events in June & July

Cactus & Succulent Society of Qld Annual Show

Saturday 8 June—9.00am to 3.30pm

Sunday 9 June—9.00am to 3.00 pm

At Belmont Shooting Centre,

1485 Old Cleveland Road, Belmont

Admission: \$5.00 (under 14 free if accompanied by an adult)

Come to:

- Purchase unique plants grown by our specialist growers
- Appreciate rare plants on display in our annual competition
- Speak to our members with decades of experience
- Join the Society
- Purchase books

Gardening on the Edge

Saturday 8 June & Sunday 9 June—9.00 am to 4.00 pm

Tickets available at Maleny Showgrounds (Maleny-Stanley River Road, Maleny) and at all gardens

6 Gardens—\$25

3 Gardens—\$13

1 Garden—\$5

Children to 16 Years—Free Garden Entry

Go to <https://malenygardenclub.org/about-goe/>

Lindmar Open Garden & Plant Lovers Fair

Saturday 22 June & Sunday 23 June—9.00am to 4.00 pm

130 Blewers Road, Morayfield

Entry: \$8.00 (under 18 free)

Go to <https://www.lindmargarden.com.au/> for more details.

Leafmore Winter Garden School, Toowoomba

Wednesday 12 & Thursday 13 June

The President's Room, City Golf Club,
South Street, Toowoomba.

Bookings essential

2 day gardening school featuring impressive gardening presenters covering a wide range of topical issues in gardening, with an interesting variety of trade stalls and multi-draw raffles with fabulous prizes. Lunch and morning tea included in ticket price. Presenters include Millie Ross from Gardening Australia, **Linda Brennan from Ecobotanica** and Mike Wells from ABC Southern Qld.

For further information, including program and registration form, email leafmore4350@gmail.com or phone 07 4632 5499.



Friday 12th July –

8am to 5pm

Saturday 13th July –

8am to 5pm

Sunday 14th July –

8am to 4pm

Adult Entry: \$20

Aged Concession: \$18*

Children 15 years and under Free

Groups of 10 or more: \$18

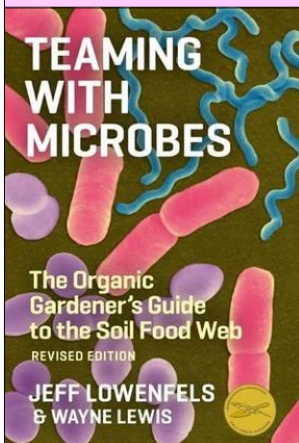
3 Day Pass: \$45

2 Day Weekend Pass: \$30

* Concession will be given to Pensioner Concession Card, Qld Senior Card, Disability Card and Qld Carer Card holders only.

Go to <https://qldgardenexpo.com.au/#> for more information.

Book Reviews



Teaming With Microbes By Jeff Lowenfels & Wayne Lewis

Teaming with Microbes was first published in 2006, with a revised edition republished in 2010. This publication is one of the important books of our time that helped to change the way we look at our soil.

The book's subtitle *The Organic Gardener's Guide to the Soil Food Web* sums up the main

premise of the book, which is that for organic gardeners everything we grow in our gardens is dependent on the microbial life in our soils.

The authors chronicle their own journey from relying on ever-increasing amounts of inorganic fertilisers as well as toxic pesticides and herbicides to “manage” their gardens. Apart from the chemical input, they also regularly rotary hoed the soil in an attempt to “improve” the tilth. The result of all their labours was a lifeless unproductive soil.

Once they came across Dr Elaine Ingham's research on the microbial life of the soil, and understood that there is a teeming mass of life in healthy soil, the “teaming” with soil microbes began and their gardens thrived.

Throughout the book, the mysteries and interactions of the numerous bacteria and fungi in the soil beneath our feet are explained in simple, clear language we can all understand. We learn about the roles earthworms, flies, beetles and spiders etc play in the complex processes of nature to maintain a balanced environment.

In part 2 of the book, advice on restoring our soils and our gardens by making composts, applying mulches and brewing compost teas are discussed, as are the actions of various bacteria that control the composting process. Most of the material covered in this book is supported by diagrams, charts and colour pictures. At the end of the book a useful appendix lists a brief overview of Soil Food Web Gardening Rules.

While many of us may already know quite a lot about caring for our soils, this older book provides excellent in-depth information about the importance of soil microbes for maintaining “Healthy Soil, Healthy Food and Healthy People”. Exactly what ROGI is all about!

Borrow it from the ROGI library or through the Redlands Library.

Reviewed by Julia Geljon

Seed Savers News

Our meeting in April focused on seeds and plants that need special treatment. This was very interesting—you may have noticed that after recent rain, baby plants were popping up in your garden everywhere (I have a lettuce forest in mine!). This is because a lot of seeds wait in a dormant state for ideal conditions before they will germinate and grow.

If you would like to learn more about seeds and how to save them, come along to our next Seed Savers Meeting, which will be held at 7pm on **WEDNESDAY 19 JUNE** at Linda Brennan's house in Capalaba.

The topic for the meeting is “**Preparing for Spring Planting**”.

All Welcome! The Seed Savers Group is open to all ROGI members. See Janet or Sharr at the Plant Table to register your interest.

Seed Bank News

Please **return seedling pots and punnets** to the seed bank 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.



ROGI is a beneficiary of the My IGA Card Program for **Cleveland IGA** store. This is how it works:



- Get a My IGA Card at the Cleveland store
- Register online
- Tick ROGI as the community group you wish to support

Then, every time you shop in the store and use your card, not only do you receive discounts, but you also help to raise funds for ROGI, which we use to benefit our members.

The Seed Sowing guide (*right*) is for sowing seeds, not seedlings. There may be several days or even weeks between the optimal time to sow a seed and to transplant a seedling.

Seed Sowing Guide

June

Artichoke; Jerusalem Artichoke
Asparagus
Bean: Broad, French
Beetroot
Cabbage
Capsicum/Chilli
Cauliflower
Carrot
Celery
Chicory
Endive
Florence Fennel
Kohlrabi
Leeks
Lettuce
Onions/Garlic
Parsnip
Peas
Potatoes
Radish
Silverbeet
Spinach
Other Spinach: Brazilian, Warrigal
Swede
Sweet Potato
Tomato
Turnip

July

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

For a list of the seed bank stock, please go to: <http://www.rogi.com.au/uploads/seed%20bank%20list%20March%202017.pdf>

Keep in mind that these are only guides. Be aware that micro-climates and weather conditions may mean that certain seeds may be sown before or after the recommended times. **ROGI Seed Bank is available at all ROGI meetings and Garden Visits. \$1 per pack for members, \$2 non-members**

Meeting Information

Please consider contributing to any or all of these at various times.

ROGI Rewards: Good quality plants and other garden-related items brought along by members. Everyone who attends is eligible for a ROGI Reward. **Please label plant with its name and some details before placing it on the table.**

Members' Sales: Items you've produced that are surplus to your requirements that **you wish to sell** to other members - eggs, honey, seedlings, lemons, jam, sustainable craft items – things that have cost you time money, and effort to produce. Please make sure items are labelled, named and priced. It is preferable that you staff the stall yourself or time-share with a friend.

FREE swap/share/give-away:

(Members only) For those items you don't want payment for - eg. shredded paper, unwanted volunteer plants (named), surplus produce, cuttings, empty pots, strawberry runners and so on. You may want to work out an arrangement with other members to do some swapping outside of the meetings.

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

Update—Oaklands St Bed Prep

Carrots and potatoes planted at our April 14 Bed Prep Workshop are up and growing well! Thank you to all who participated.

Terry Sullavan



Garden Visits

Sunday, 30 June—Linda Barrett, Thorneside

Sunday, 7 July—Maurie & Margaret Foley, Cleveland

As always, space is limited, so book early. Please see Toni Bowler at the next meeting or phone her on 0402 323 704 or email her at events@rogi.com.au to put your garden on the schedule.

Toni also welcomes suggestions for field trips and workshops related to ROGI's organic growing interests.

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 info
- 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 ROGI News topical, interesting, local and relevant. info@rogi.com.au

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www.facebook.com/groups/redland.organic.growers

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 St,
Alexandra Hills. 0419987870

Give Away:

- Breville 'Stir and Fry' electric fry pan
- Breville 'Juice Fountain' juicer
- Kogan Juicer



Contact Mena to collect at the next ROGI meeting
mena@stokeit.net/ or phone 0422 202 707



Did you know?

You can go online www.rogi.com.au/resources.php and read every edition of ROGI News since September 2014.

JUNE NEWSLETTER DEADLINE— Please send your contributions to the newsletter editor by the **26/06/19**.