

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:

- **\$2-00 entry all members**
- **\$5-00 entry visitors**
- **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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ROGI webpage: www.rogi.com.au
ROGI Email: info@rogi.com.au



Common Bluetail Damselflies (Ischnura heterosticta) have been seen for months in gardens around South East Queensland, due to increased rainfall from La Nina. Damselflies are great to have in the garden as they prey on small flying insects such as mosquitoes.

President Pete's Post

Hello Members,

Welcome to the June ROGI newsletter, I hope this finds you well. It's an exciting time of the year for getting into the garden, there is nothing like growing and harvesting your own vegies. This time of year allows us to grow some of my favourites such as cabbages, cauliflower and broccoli, to name just a few. It's awesome the mosquitoes and midges are starting to disappear, the days are beautiful, and the nights are now cooler - which is good for getting a sound night's sleep.

I just love finding a nice piece of lawn in my favourite park and lie on it with the sun on my face, hopefully listening to nothing but the birds and natural habitat.

I hope you have had some time in the past few months to prepare your garden beds and do some cutting back. In my garden I have issues with getting enough sunlight at this time of the year in the back yard, so I cut back my border trees and try to create open spaces. I do a mix of planting in pots and raised garden beds - the benefit is they can be moved inside and out - we just planted some Dutch iris, daffodil and freesia bulbs, which remind me of home.

At our May meeting I purchased the ROGI cool season garden starter pack. What a great initiative by volunteers in the background that support our Club! These packs and instruction notes are fantastic - great for busy, experienced gardeners, and those that need some support getting started.

If you are not aware, we are now selling our own seed raising mix at meetings. This, in conjunction with the ROGI Planting Guide and seed packs, will set you up for some rewarding gardening.

Once you have grown and planted out your seedlings, if you have any leftovers please remember to transfer some into a pot, recycled punnet, or even cut the bottom of a milk bottle or any plastic bottle. Put some holes in the bottom with soil and donate them to ROGI. Not only are you giving back, but it is also very rewarding for our Club as a whole to have a range of plants to give to members as part of ROGI rewards or to sell on our table at the front for visitors and members.

As most of you would be aware, we have the Eco Markets at IndigiScapes being held on the 3rd of June. This is also World Environment Day, and an important date for ROGI. We will be hosting a stall, which is good exposure for us to sell plants and educate our future gardeners - if you have time to come and assist, the committee would appreciate it very much. We also need lots of seedlings for this event, if you have any spare.

Lastly, we are having our first BBQ at Bunnings Capalaba on Saturday the 22 July. This will also be great for ROGI to raise funds for future events and guest speakers, as well as give us further exposure and an opportunity to generate new members. However, we need a crew of volunteers to cook and serve customers, so please contact Terry Sullivan who is coordinating this event, or register your interest at the next meeting. I will be there to cook up a storm and serve customers.

Be safe, help those around you, and keep smiling.
Regards
Pete

June Meeting

Insects in your Garden - The Good, the Bad and the Ugly



Are you unsure which bugs are good and which are bad in your garden? Would you like to learn more about the important roles insects play in the environment?

Michelle Gleeson (aka The Bug Lady) is the director, co-founder and SEQ presenter for Bugs Ed, and author of *Miniature Lives*.

Since an early age, she has been captivated by bugs, and this has led to a career in entomology, sharing her passion with young and old. Michelle will talk about pest and beneficial insects in our gardens, and which ones we want to encourage.

We'll also hear from a ROGI member about what is happening in their garden. Bring along your questions for Plant Clinic and we'll see if someone can help.

The usual attractions will be there - Seed Bank, the well-stocked library, some seedlings and plants, plus local honey, home-made jam, wax wraps and more.

All ROGI Members - \$2-00 entry
Visitors welcome - \$5-00 entry
Please bring finger food (preferably home-made)
to share for supper. Free tea and coffee.

ROGI Events

Saturday 3 June - 9am to 2pm

ROGI STALL at INDIGISCAPES ENVIRONMENT & COMMUNITY FAIR

Thursday 8 June

ROGI MEETING

Sunday 25 June - 10am to 12pm

FIELD TRIP - Roma Street Parklands

Officially opened on 6th April, 2001, the Roma Street Parklands celebrated its 20th anniversary in 2021. As you journey along the pathways, you will hear behind-the-scenes stories of the Parkland's fascinating evolution and design from the garden's horticulturist and curator Gary Entwistle. He will highlight attractions, plants and hidden treasures in each precinct, with plenty of photo opportunities along the way!

You may make your own way in by car or public transport. The train leaving Cleveland Station at 8.39 am will get you into Roma Street Station at 9.39am.

Start time: 10.00 am

Meeting place: Garden Room cafe at Roma Street Parklands

Cost: Free

Contact: Romana on 3390 1563

Numbers are limited so book your place by RSVP through Stack TeamApp or events@rogi.com.au. Remember to cancel your RSVP if you can't attend so another person can take your place.

Saturday 22 July

BUNNINGS BBQ, Capalaba

Sign up to help at the ROGI June meeting, or contact Terry at events@rogi.com.au

Garden Visit - Bevan & Jaye, Birkdale

Report & photos by Ann Roffey

Bevan and Jaye describe their garden as a tiny jungle, a hidden oasis of edibles and ornamentals. Their 777m² battleaxe block in Birkdale was bought two and a half years ago, from another couple in ROGI. It already had a number of established fruit trees, and they have been busy developing their gardens to grow food for themselves, as well as create habitat for animals, birds and frogs.

Divided into two areas, the garden features a mixed section of fruit trees and ornamentals, as well as a newer area that is being conditioned for annual vegetables. With a 'more is more' approach to gardening, gaps between existing plantings have

been filled with a variety of plants and landscaping. Most of the garden materials they use are recycled.

Fruit trees include pomegranate, paw paws, bananas, mulberry, jaboticaba (large leaf), lemon, passionfruit, fejoa, cherry guava, grumichama, canistel, moringa, olive and peanut butter tree.

The garden contains two frog ponds, increasing the biodiversity of their little slice of paradise. They've also just finished building a chicken coop and incubating their first clutch of eggs. Forest mulch from a tree lopper is used on the paths. Once this has broken down it is sieved and put on gardens to improve the soil.

It was wonderful to see Bevan and Jaye's new abode and garden. Their enthusiasm is infectious, and we were inspired to get back to our own gardens and get planting!



Garden Visit - Bevan & Jaye, Birkdale (continued)



Left: Bevan and Jaye have finished building a chicken coop (The Roost), located in the back corner under the shade of their neighbour's large Quandong tree (a bit of a problem with root competition). They've also incubated their first clutch of eggs, a number of bantams of mixed breeds.



Above: Two frog ponds have been built to increase biodiversity. They have already had tadpoles spawning.



Left: Visitors were amazed by the huge leaves on the Elephant's Ears plant (Alocasia).



Right: Bevan with his pomegranate tree (already on property when bought).



These handy 3 tier trolleys hold Bevan's seed sowing and propagating trays. They were purchased at Ikea.

Garden Visit - Bevan & Jaye, Birkdale (cont'd)



Above: Brazilian spinach - a low growing perennial leaf vegetable. Will grow in partial shade. Use it steamed or stir-fried.



Their dog Ellie enjoyed all the attention!



Above: Old lockers reused to make great garden beds!



Above: Blue Java banana is doing really well.

Left: Wooden frames built by Bevan for climbing plants.



Below: Madagascar beans growing on an arch made from flexible tent poles - very inventive!

Garden Weed

Problem: Weed in vegetable garden. What is it and is it edible?

Possible Diagnosis: Checking weed ID apps, appears to be *Crassocephalum crepidioides*, in the Asteraceae family. Common names are "Thickhead, Fireweed, Redflower ragleaf".

A short-lived herbaceous plant up to a possible 1.5m tall. Drooping flower heads in loose clusters – orange, red, pink, or purplish heads. Tiny seeds topped with silky hairs. It is a common and widespread weed. Native to Africa and Madagascar.

In tropical regions its fleshy leaves and stems are eaten as a vegetable and parts of the plant are used medicinally, however, it also has plant toxins present - *eating or use is NOT encouraged*.



Lemon

Problem: Leaves appeared mottled in colour and disfigured in appearance.

Possible Diagnosis: Leaves have a mottled colour with yellow edges and yellow blotching around the veins and at the tip - this is a boron deficiency. Yellowing leaf tips will enlarge and eventually curl under.

Treatment is with a small amount of boron, found at plant nurseries. Usually required in small amounts once a year. Curled and disfigured leaves are the result of leaf miner insect damage.

Remove the disfigured leaves and dispose of in the bin (no major concerns to the health of the tree). Buy a leaf miner trap (CLM Trap) and position nearby after winter. No point in treating with Eco Oil at this time of year.

Persimmon

Problem: Leaves eaten, holes and rolled leaves.

Possible Diagnosis: The holes are probably insect damage. The leaf rolling is possibly the result of persimmon psyllid – a tiny leaf feeding aphid-like pest that will cause the leaves to roll and curl up. Or very likely the cause of seasonal change, as persimmons are deciduous through the cooler months. In winter, paint branches and trunk with Biodynamic tree paste (available from Rohanne Young at ROGI). Feed the soil around the plant four times a year with organic fertiliser, cow manure or similar, plus compost. If leaves are affected, spray with Eco Oil.



Snake Bean

Problem: Leaves have blotchy patches with black spotting, and are brown/dry at sides, edges and leaf ends.

Possible Diagnosis: This could be a rust or blight problem, but it is very late in the season for snake bean plants as they thrive in hot weather and are an annual plant. If it's summer time and this occurs, apply OCP Eco-fungicide to the leaves, and fish and seaweed weekly as a foliar spray.



Hibiscus Leaves

Problem: Leaves are blotchy and lumpy and appear paler on top surface.

Possible Diagnosis: If mealy bugs (which are soft, cottony in appearance) are a problem, it's a sign of a stressed plant. Look at the overall health and fertility of the soil, soil moisture levels and growing conditions. These can also be treated with a spray of Eco Oil.



WELL DONE ROGI VOLUNTEERS!

Pictured below (L to R) are:

State MP for Capalaba Don Brown, ROGI Membership Secretary Rhonda Binns, ROGI Vice President Kathy Petrik, and State MP for Redlands Kim Richards. The Volunteers Week event honours local volunteer organisations.

On behalf of ROGI, Kathy and Rhonda received a Certificate of Appreciation, which recognised ROGI's gifting of time through volunteering to provide an invaluable service to our community.



Library News



Those members who visit the ROGI library may have noticed Librarian Viga's young and very able assistant, Astrid. We would like to thank and acknowledge her contribution in helping with the library, and tell members a little about our youngest volunteer.

Astrid has had a natural affinity with books and language since she was a baby. She is a plant lover, and recently helped start a gardening club

at Cleveland State High School. Astrid has a kind spirit and volunteers at the Cleveland Primary School art class, as well as here at ROGI. She enjoys being part of the ROGI club.

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

**The June newsletter
deadline is
29 JUNE 2023**

Soak Seeds before Sowing?

By Linda Brennan, Ecobotanica

Many seeds seem to benefit from soaking in water before sowing. It's a way that we can increase germination rates and speed up the process of germination. The way it works is a three-step process...

Step 1). Imbibition: The seed absorbs water, rehydrating in the process. This soaking phase is different for each type of seed. The temperature of soak water and additives can also change depending on the species.

If seeds have been affected by mould type diseases in the past, or are prone to this occurring, do a pre-soak for one hour with vinegar, 1 Tablespoon per cup of room temperature water for 5 minutes only. Then drain, rinse and soak in fresh plain water for the nominated time. This will reduce the infection on the seed coat and increase success.

Step 2). Activation: Changes occur at the cellular level of the seed including dilution of growth inhibitor enzymes and creation of growth promoting enzymes, creation of nucleic acids and mitochondria that drive cell division, an increase in cell energy, and repair of DNA within the cells.

Step 3). Growth and Elongation: The radicle (root) emerges and lengthens. The seeds should be drained and planted before this step takes place. Soaking for too long will cause soaking injury and may create a secondary dormancy in seeds.

Seeds that don't need soaking

Studies have shown that beans (*Phaseolus* sp.) do not benefit from soaking (e.g. *Journal of Seed Science Research*: Soaking in water creates soaking injury in beans which creates a secondary dormancy due to depressing the protein synthesis in the seed).

Exceptions are seeds used for sprouting including Mung Beans, where a short soak is all that's needed. *Pouteria* (Canistel) fruit should not be soaked as it reduces germination.

A variety of seed companies recommend that small seeds such as carrot, lettuce, radish, celery, turnips, amaranth, and spinach not be soaked. Carrots seeds, for example, are much more difficult to sow evenly when wet.

How long should they be soaked for?

This tends to vary from seed to seed. It seems that overnight is often too long and may cause soaking injury. Most research indicates 4-6 hours soaking time is ideal, or until the seed has plumped up. Some seeds (e.g. parsnips) do not plump, and are not recommended for soaking.

What should I soak them in?

Hydropriming: This is the use of water only to pre-soak seed before sowing. This is effective for most seeds.

Biopriming is soaking seeds in a biologically active solution e.g. bacteria such as *Bacillus thuringiensis* or *Pseudomonas* spp enhanced water, to increase germination, reduce drought stress and yield of the plant.

Osmopriming is the action of soaking seeds in water with Calcium chloride or other chemical. This serves to reduce drought and chill stress in the plant. It may also include soaking in a mineral rich solution to address boron, magnesium or other soil deficiencies, thus giving the seed a head start.

Fertiliser priming: If you have access to Amino acid fertiliser such as OCP Eco Aminogro, add 3 ml per litre to tap or tank water. It helps many seeds in their first weeks to grow with fertility support. Additional foliar sprays with the same fertiliser weekly was shown to produce bigger yields and plants.

Soak Seeds before Sowing? (continued)

These are pre-soak times/details that I've researched via Google Scholar, done under lab testing:

Plant	Soak time	Notes
Peanuts Wheat	1-4 hours room temp water	Use <i>Bacillus thuringiensis</i> (sold as powdered Caterpillar Killer) in the soaking water Reduces drought stress
Lychee	Not sure	Soaking increases germination
Chickpeas	10 hours	Adding lime to the water will enhance tolerance to low chill temperatures
Chia seed	Water at 30°C 1 hour only	
Cereal seeds E.g. oats	Amino acid fertiliser in soak water promotes plant yield	Add minerals to the soak water if you have soil deficiencies e.g. boron, calcium, magnesium
Seeds prone to going mouldy	Soak 5 minutes only in 1 Tablespoon vinegar to 1 cup water	Drain, rinse then soak in plain water 4-8 hours
Maize	40-hour water soak	From Hindawi Journal
Cauliflower	Water 40-50°C 1 hour only	

ARE YOU INTERESTED IN PURCHASING NEUTROG PRODUCTS?

Are you interested in pre-ordering Neutrog products at much lower prices than you'd pay at a garden centre? Last month's guest presenter, Brian Klepzig, told us Neutrog has arrangements with a number of garden clubs to bulk deliver their products.

Before we explore this further, would you advise whether you would be interested in taking part of this service.

Please express your interest by either emailing vp@rogi.com.au or signing the sign up sheet at the ROGI June meeting.

Upcoming Events

LOGAN ECO ACTION FESTIVAL (LEAF)

Sunday 4 June - 9am to 3pm

Free Entry

Griffith University Logan Campus, Meadowbrook

LEAF is our community's opportunity to celebrate everything eco while exploring how we can all reduce, reuse and recycle to create a more sustainable world and future. Learn to make sustainable choices one LEAF at a time. Our main stage and workshops will feature interactive presentations from some of our country's leaders in sustainability, gardening and waste reduction! Plus eco-exhibitors, plant sales, hands-on workshops, eco-markets and fun kids' activities. <https://ourlogan.com.au/whats-on/leaf/>

CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY OF QLD ANNUAL SHOW

Saturday 11 & Sunday 12 June - 9am to 3pm

Belmont Shooting Centre,

1485 Old Cleveland Road, Belmont

Purchase unique plants grown by our specialist growers; appreciate rare plants on display in our annual competition; speak to our members with decades of growing experience.

<https://www.cssq.org.au/annual-show-1/>

QUEENSLAND GARDEN EXPO

Friday 7 July to Sunday 9 July

Nambour Showgrounds

Entry - \$22.50 Adults, pay online or at gate

Queensland Garden Expo is a 'must see' for green thumbs and novice gardeners alike. Held in the Sunshine Coast hinterland town of Nambour, this three-day expo is Queensland's premier gardening event, attracting visitors from all over Australia. Some of Australia's leading gardening experts will take part in three days of lectures, demonstrations, and workshops.

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

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

Email: info@rogi.com.au **Webpage:** www.rogi.com.au
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

HIVE PARKING FOR NATIVE BEES

We are always interested in keeping our native stingless bees in other people's backyards. We need new spots for the coming season.

Here are some requirements:

- * Suburban acreage
- * South, east and south-west side of Brisbane and also south of Brisbane along the coast to say Ballina.
- * The site needs to be safe, secure, tamper-proof, shady and accessible

We would like to keep at least 12 colonies at each site. Please get in touch if you think this is possible for your place, or you know someone who would be able to help.

Some ROGI members are already happy hosts to our bees (talk with Margaret Sear or Ann Roffey).

We do not pay an agistment fee - the benefit to you is that you enjoy the pollination services provided by our bees.

Russell and Janine Zabel
 Keepers of Australian
 Stingless Native Bees
 0404 892139
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www.zabel.com.au



Did you know?

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