

ROGI News

ROGI meetings are held on the 2nd Thursday night of the month (except Jan). Doors open at 6.15pm. You can visit the plant table, library, seed table and stalls or just have a chat over tea before the meeting. Please be seated by 7pm ready for the proceedings.

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

REMEMBER:

- Return washed pots
- Swap and share
- ROGI Rewards
- Bring a basket/box/bag for your purchases
- Queries for Plant Clinic
- Pay your membership dues
- Bring a plate of food for supper (home-made is best!)

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**Supper will be available
after the meeting only.
Tea and coffee before and after.**



Here is one of the themed Mini Gardens we've been growing in preparation for the Environment and Community Fair at IndigiScapes on Saturday. This is a Mini Salad Garden. We've grown six of these. Also there are three Asian Theme Mini Gardens and three Edible Flowers Mini Gardens. The 2025 theme is **Beat Plastic Pollution**—so we have re-purposed plastic containers previously used for distilled water. After cutting them in half vertically, we drilled drainage holes in the bottom and filled them with potting mix and plants.

Michael's Musings

Hello ROGI fellow members,

Regular newsletter readers know by now that I care very much about the changes to our way of gardening that climate change forces upon us.

The recent floods in NSW have been a stark reminder of what's in store for everyone. In 2022 it was the Northern Rivers; this year it's a bit further south. The same pattern: a strong low pressure system, fuelled by a warmer than normal ocean, remaining stationary for a long time and dumping record amounts of rain on already saturated soils.

It can happen in the Redlands, too.

How can we prepare?

Good drainage is a definite must. There are quite simple drainage systems available that can deal even with laser levelled blocks (which, by design, have poor drainage from the backyard). Ask me for details email secretary@rogi.com.au

On a positive note, the ROGI committee has started to implement some changes to the way we run things. No fear: nothing major, but we need to reduce the workload of our active volunteer members. The first change is, as soon as the current

Seed Bank stock runs out, we will no longer purchase and re-sell seeds. The behind-the-scenes work effort of purchasing, cataloguing, and testing the viability of seeds has become too time-consuming for our volunteers. And, there are many commercial online and physical stores available that sell the same seeds for rather little money. More on this later ...

While we are talking about active members: volunteers for the huge number of jobs within ROGI are always welcome. The more we can spread the workload, the less arduous it becomes. Don't be shy – raise your hand and join a team, be it Seed-savers, run by Linda Brennan, growing seedlings for sale at our meetings, helping with the library or in the kitchen, writing a piece for the newsletter etc.



Consider joining the committee in an official role such as president, vice president, secretary, treasurer or membership officer, or as a member without formal title but in charge of one area of what makes ROGI special – you are very welcome. And, believe me, it is (mostly) fun!

The moon calendar sees us from 29 May until 9 June in a prolonged period of prolific growth for anything but root crops. Don't hold back. With good moisture in the soil and your good soil preparation, you will be on a winner.

Lastly, after some of our committee almost panicked, we've found some fantastic guest speakers for coming months. You will be excited!

In July: Michael Wardle local permaculture person;

In November: Jerry Coleby-Williams, best known through Gardening Australia, our local celebrity.

Enjoy the beautiful, balmy autumn weather, and don't forget to get your seeds and seedlings in the ground before 9 June...

Michael

Left: These are more of the 'mini gardens' growing at our place in preparation for our raffle at the Environment & Community Fair at IndigiScapes on Saturday 7 June. Don't they look tempting to win.

Join us to celebrate World Environment Day at IndigiScapes.
The United Nations theme for 2025 is **Beat Plastic Pollution**.



ROGI has a presence at this Fair every year and we meet many future gardeners as a result of their participation in the activity of making little pots out of newspaper and then sowing a seed or two to take home. We'll also have seeds for sale.

There will be several recycled containers with the charming Mini Gardens planted in them, which will be raffled during the day.



We want you to save these **cube-shaped 250g punnets from strawberries and cherry tomatoes**.

They're perfect for taking home the newspaper pots with seeds sown in them from our stall at the Fair. Please bring them with you if you're attending the Fair. It's before our next meeting. We need them every year, so please bring them along to meetings.

June Meeting

Choose your own topic

We will have **three discussions** available.
Each will be twenty minutes.

- **Keeping Chooks:**

Egg supplies are unreliable these days. Jess will cover what you need to know about getting started with backyard chooks so you can grow your own eggs.



- **Tools:** Terry will talk about choosing the best tool for the job, and how to look after your tools.
- **Preserving the harvest:** Sharr will show what you can do with a bumper crop to maximise its use.

Compost: Unfortunately we've had to cancel this session for medical reasons.

There will be some of the 'Mini Gardens' available in ROGI Rewards.
We prepared more than we'll need for the Fair on Saturday.

Visitors most welcome—\$5 entry. Members—\$2 entry.
Please bring finger food (preferably home-made) to share for supper after the meeting.
Free tea and coffee.

Two Syntropic Birkdale gardens

Garden one—Tracey and Phil

Overview:

We moved to our seven acre property on Byng Road, Birkdale in spring 2022.

The garden was planted in October of 2024 using Syntropic agroforestry ('food forest') principles under the guidance of Thiago and the team at [Syntropic Solutions](#).

The food forest covers half an acre and consists of a number of north to south aligned rows totalling about 200 linear metres.

The key producing trees planted include feijoa, avocado, banana, papaya, fig, macadamia, Yuzu lemon, nectarine, tangelo, mulberry, lychee, oranges, lime, pomegranate, pomelo, finger lime, blueberry, custard apple, dragonfruit, passionfruit, kiwi, grapes, asparagus and moringa.

While we wait for these trees to mature, a number of other support plants were put in place to provide a yield such as our summer harvests of zucchini, eggplant and corn.

Tomatoes were also included but succumbed to fruit fly. Happily, masses of sunflowers and zinnias were harvested through the summer season, and basil, lemon grass and rosemary continue to thrive.

Further support plants still in the system include the eggplant, cassava, pigeon pea, cranberry hibiscus, ginger, turmeric, taro, mulberry, elderberry, many eucalyptus, silky oak, mangium, sword bean and more.

In the first year of the garden Thiago will visit quarterly to help me (Tracey) learn how to manage the system independently.



The area before planting—in June 2024



North/south aligned rows—late afternoon in mid April 2025.
Photo taken from slightly different position.

Tracey's Garden

Our garden visits started at my house where about 20 ROGlans met in April.

How wonderful to see everyone heading in, with plates of food to share, produce, plant cuttings and warm smiles.

Kindred spirits united in gardening!

Thiago welcomed us and explained the concepts of Syntropic agroforestry aka the food forest.

He described it as an ecosystem with plants supporting each other as occurs in any naturally forming forest.

Food forests offer an abundant and manageable way to produce food while restoring soil health, conserving water, capturing carbon and enhancing biodiversity. They embrace the principles of synergy, natural succession and intelligent plant consortiums. We take our lessons from naturally occurring forests and by observing how they thrive without intensive intervention.

Mass planting over a few days in October was completed where everything that will be in the forest was planted all at once.

Spacing and grouping of plants was considered to ensure that each plant will occupy the space it requires for the time it needs to be in the system.

For example, zucchinis grew, were harvested and the plants pruned down to make space for emerging turmeric and ginger plants which were timed to emerge into the space zucchinis initially occupied.

This succession will occur over and over in the life of the food forest. Thiago took us on a food forest tour to illustrate the concepts.



Top: Thiago explaining the concept of Syntropic farming.
Above: Touring Tracey's food forest.

Nicole's Garden

Then we walked to Nicole's nearby edible garden which was planted in January 2025. The entire front yard of her residential block has been cleverly transformed into an edible landscape paradise growing berries, fruit and vegetables she will be able to harvest just a few steps from her front door. This is stage one of Nicole's vision to have productive spaces around her home. The garden has been designed to provide yields now while the fruit

trees, that take a little longer to mature, continue to grow. Harvests included raspberry, blueberry, and then zucchini and lots more of what's in season at the time. In the coming weeks, Thiago's team will be back to manage the garden and plant another section of Nicole's garden introducing more seasonal veggies and salads to be harvested in the coming months.

*Report by Tracey Lees.
Photos: Tracey Lees and Jill Nixon*



Don't be afraid to grow productive gardens in your front yard if that's where the sun is.



Success with Microgreens

Brisbane local Jeremy Trevatt from <https://naturalyield.com.au> was the speaker at our May meeting.

Here's a summary of his presentation, followed by some photos of the harvesting of microgreens on the night.

What are Microgreens?

- Young seedlings of edible plants, harvested when only a couple of weeks old. More than just sprouts!
- Microgreens have developed leaves and are grown in soil or other growing media.
- A diverse range of flavours, textures, colours.
- Nutrient-dense and packed with vitamins, minerals and antioxidants. Studies show they can contain higher nutrient levels than mature greens.

Microgreens



Sprouts

Varieties of Microgreens

Wide range of options: broccoli, radish, kale, peas, sunflowers, and many more! Each variety offers unique flavours and nutritional profiles, such as (L—R) sunflower, radish and coriander.



Growing Microgreens Organically

Soil: Use certified organic seed starting mix or coconut coir. Avoid synthetic fertilizers and pesticides.

Seeds: Choose certified organic seeds whenever possible. This ensures they haven't been treated with chemicals.

Water: Use clean, filtered water

Nutrients: Organic fertilisers like compost tea or worm castings can be used sparingly. Healthy soil is key.

Pest & Disease Control: Focus on prevention. Good airflow and proper watering are essential. For issues, use natural solutions eg neem oil.

Light: Ensure adequate light. While natural light can work, grow lights offer more control and consistency, especially during winter months. LED grow lights are a good option.

Benefits of Microgreens

Nutrient-dense and flavourful. Easy to grow at home. Versatile in culinary applications. Not dependent on weather or climate. Sustainable and environmentally-friendly.

Jeremy has everything you would need to be able to successfully grow microgreens. He has offered a special ROGI Discount. Go to <https://naturalyield.com.au> Enter "ROGI" coupon code at checkout. Free Delivery (to ROGI meeting). 10% Discount. Offer Expires end of June.



Above: Rachel preparing the coir bed

Below: placing an empty tray on top and pressing it down to make surface level



Success with Microgreens



Above: sprinkling seeds—zoom in to see density
Below: optional cover to maintain humidity



Above & Right: harvesting pea greens using super sharp knife.
Below: Biodegradable plant-based box to store in fridge.



Below: Pea roots at base of tray.

Below: Remnants of plants after harvest can go in compost.





Bethania Street
COMMUNITY GARDEN INC.

A beginner's guide to organic gardening.

Sunday 20th July 9.30 - 12.00

Learn how to get the most from your garden and enjoy an abundance of organic vegetables. This workshop, designed for the beginner, will cover the basics of organic gardening, including location, soil and plant choice. You will then be ready to develop your own productive organic vegetable garden.

Free - bookings essential Text 0439 048 585 including your name.

Growing Healthy Citrus Trees

Sunday 27th July 10.00 - 12.00

This workshop is an in-depth look at growing citrus trees, including lemons, oranges, mandarins and limes (and others). You will learn how to select, plant and care for these popular fruiting trees. The garden's variety of citrus trees allows the presenter to demonstrate fertilising, pruning, and the identification, management and prevention of pests and diseases. Citrus grow well in our climate and, once established, can provide delicious fruit for decades.

Free - bookings essential Text 0439 048 585 including your name

July newsletter deadline: Thursday 26th June



**11 + 12 + 13
JULY 2025**



Sunday 27 July

Field trip to Mudbrick Herb Cottage

1. Herb biscuits & Savoury Herb Muffins
2. Herb tea and coffee
3. A workshop where every participant will make and bring home a herb tincture.
4. A walk around the farm to see the various herbs growing in their ideal conditions.

Of course, herb plants, and many other types of plants, and dried herbs will be available for sale.

The morning tea will be at 10.00 followed by the workshop. Departure time (probably 8.30) and car-pooling details will be discussed closer to date.

The cost is **\$30** each for between 20 and 25 participants. ROGI has visited The Herb Cottage twice and each time Sandra has impressed with her knowledge and cooking.

Book on Team App or phone Jill on 0418 717 735.

Lots of information at <https://www.herbcottage.com.au/>

Finding Space for Fruit Trees Linda Brennan

Would you like fruit trees but just can't find the space on your balcony or in your garden?

There may be a way you can have fruit trees and find space for them...

The problem for many of us in urban areas with small blocks, is that we're often challenged by finding a free space for another fruit tree.

Typically we have high fences or walls, narrow spots and plenty of house but not much open space for an orchard let alone a single fruit tree with its spreading canopy.

Why not try your hand at the ancient art of espalier where you can have your fruit trees in a fraction of the space?

Espalier originated in Persia, where gardeners trained trees along walls or boundaries.

Through the Middle Ages, the French became masters of espalier, and the craze for these fancy trees spread across Europe.

While espalier most often involves stone and pome fruits like cherries, apples and pears, you can espalier a

range of evergreens and even tropical fruit trees too.

Tropical pears, apples, plums, nectarines and plumcots will fruit here in the Redlands. Citrus, mulberries and even olives can be trained to grow flat against wires, trellis or wall.

I grew my first espalier in my 20s and

have enjoyed espaliering apples, apricots, olives, and lots more fruiting varieties in both the cool temperate and subtropical gardens I've owned.

Our garden has nectarines and apples on espaliers along the border of the vegetable patch near the pool, around the fire pit area and as a defining line near the compost area.

See next page for how to do it ...



Mulberry laterals

Finding Space for Fruit Trees

Starting your artful training

In June each year, as the leaves fall from our stone and pome fruits, my mind turns to training and pruning them.

When the sap flow is slow and the deciduous trees are leafless, winter is the season for their training prune.

Here are some of my tips for espalier:

Even before you train the first branch, it's essential to get the basics right.

- Choose a spot with at least 5-6 hours sunlight.
- Prepare the soil with compost and organic fertilisers, such as Searles Kickalong Organic for Fruit trees, to create a fertile, moisture retentive growing medium.
- You'll need a supporting framework too. To keep them to a harvestable size, I install five wires on sturdy star pickets, with fencing strainers each end.

Pruning

There are many traditional shapes for an espalier, so choose the shape the year you plant the tree and stick to that pruning and training plan.

You will need to be vigilant during the spring and summer with training growing branches onto wires.

And in winter, pruning to shape, without removing fruiting buds (spurs).

Harvesting your fruit

As with any fruiting tree, espaliered trees may take a number of years to fruit. Expect citrus after just a couple of years; tropical apricots, apples and peaches may take two to three years.

You'll find it very easy to harvest from your espaliered fruit tree as it will be trained no higher than you can reach.

Not only that, your fruit will never need spraying for pests, or suffer losses to animals and birds, because you'll net them with vegetable netting once tiny fruit have formed.

Fertilising

Like all fruit trees, they need regular water and a fertilising regime.

In our garden, ours get

- annual gypsum for calcium and usually boron.
- three-monthly humates, animal manures, worm castings and compost.
- companion annual plants alongside to increase bees and pollination.

Before long, like us, you'll be enjoying the fruits of your artful tree training. Linda

Learn how to do it yourself

If you'd like to join an
Espalier Fruit Trees class,

I'm running one especially for
ROGI members on

Sunday 22 June 1-3pm.

Cost \$50.

This is a discounted price for members only and will not be held again this winter, as this date is the pruning day in our garden at Capalaba.

To join the class which has a maximum of just six attendees, please call me on

0416 157 470. Linda Brennan



Part of our tropical nectarine harvest

Please **return seedling pots** (that have been washed—soak them in a bucket of water) to the plant table so that they can be reused, especially the small tubes, singles, 4-cell and 10-cell packs like these:



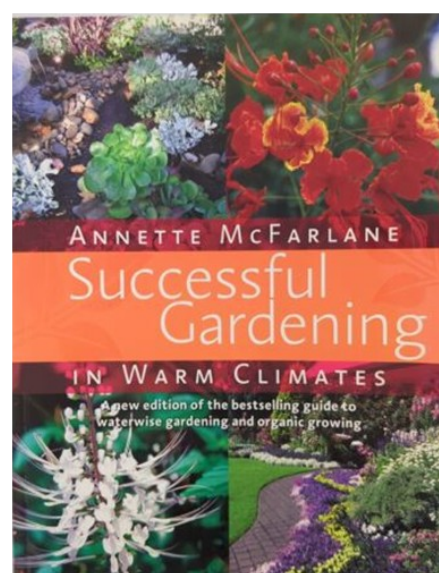
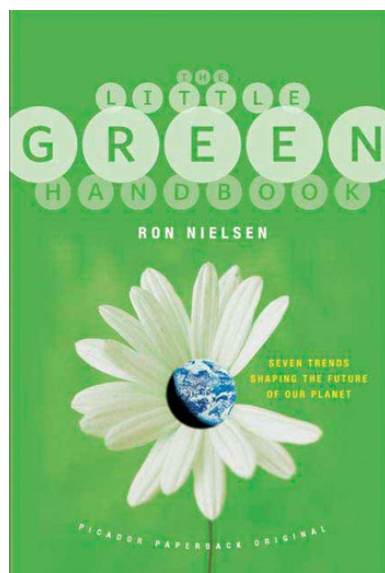
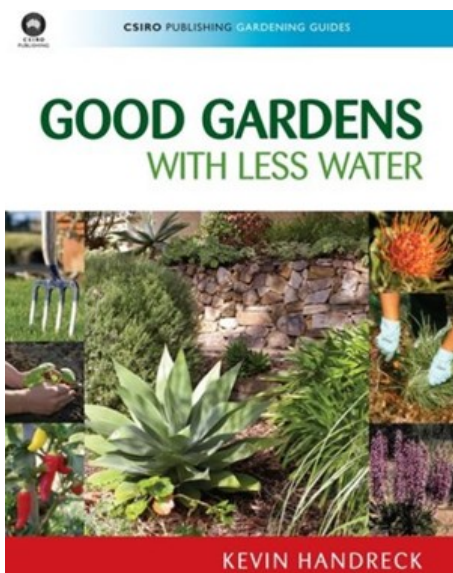
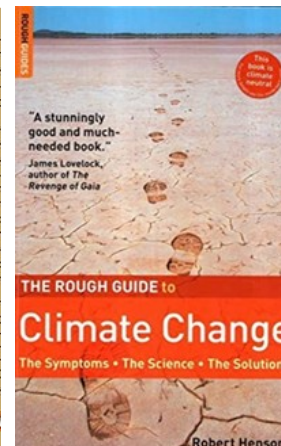
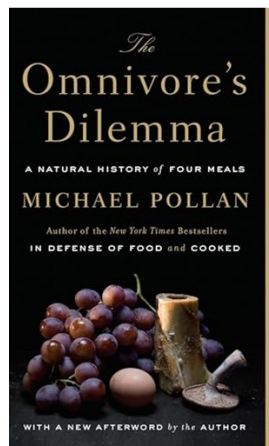
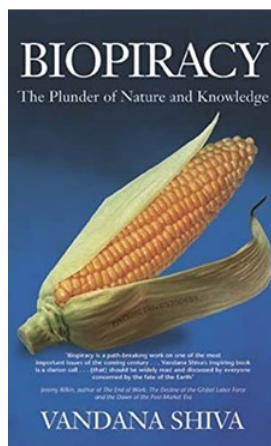
These are often blue.

Library News

Rose Faleafa

If you garden organically, you're already doing your bit for the environment. However, given that we are about to mark World Environment Day by participating in the Environment and Community Fair at IndigiScapes, I think it is timely to remind you of the numerous books the ROGI Library has on the topic. Not only are there many books specifically dedicated to organic growing and permaculture, we also stock books on climate-related research and ideas.

Here are some available titles:



Chumie's Pork Balls

These were a big hit at our May meeting!

300 gm minced pork
1½ cups cooked rice
2 tbsp Ayam red curry paste
1 egg
3 tbsp plain flour

Mix all together.

Cook one tablespoon (in microwave or fry in pan) and taste to decide if you want salt in it. Or skip this step and just add a pinch of salt or sprinkle of fish sauce.

Then add:

One finely grated carrot and some chopped spring onion and coriander.

If mixture is too wet add more flour.

Shape mixture into little balls and fry in oil. Eat. Yum.

Alternative serving method: wrap raw mixture balls in betel leaves and then fry. Serve with sweet chilli sauce and rice noodles.



This is my effort at making them. Chumie's looked better. Jill.

Giveaway garden equipment. Ph Francke 0408 080 113



Field Trip

Rescheduled

Sunday 29 July

Bethania Street Community Garden in Lota

The garden is near the primary school.
Walking distance from Lota Railway Station.

Our visit to this inspirational garden will include its history, and a walk and talk around the seasonal beds, food forest and the composting areas.

Please wear closed shoes and note that there are some uneven surfaces in the food forest area.

Bring along a plate of finger food to share. Tea, coffee and milk will be provided.

A gold coin donation would be appreciated.

Book on Team App or text 0418 717 735



Have you seen these on your citrus trees? They are **instars** * of the caterpillar of the Orchard Swallowtail butterfly, *Papilio aegeus*, which can be found in every mainland state and especially in Qld.

It's the largest butterfly commonly found in Brisbane - where we have many citrus trees on which the larvae feed. They won't eat enough to harm the tree.

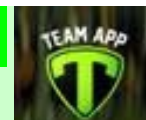
A: Instars 1 to 4 resemble bird droppings - a good plan to stay alive!

B: Instar 5 produces a red osmeterium and a citrus smell when disturbed!

Photos: Jill Nixon



TEAM APP



With TEAM APP, you can:

- keep up to date with club events in real time
- not wait till the meeting to book your place for Garden Visits, Workshops, Field Trips.
- make bookings as soon as they are posted on TEAM APP.
- Cancel your booking if needed to free up a spot for someone on the waiting list

If you haven't already registered for TEAM APP, here's how to get TEAM APP on your phone or computer.

On your smart phone or tablet.

- Go to the App store (apple smart phones) or Playstore (android smart phones)
- Look for the TEAM APP logo. (above)
- If you need assistance to set up your TEAM APP account on a phone or tablet, Diana can help you at the next meeting.

On your computer.

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

**For help with TEAM APP
please see Diana at a ROGI meeting.**

* **instar** is a stage of growth of an insect caterpillar (larva). In the insect world, only larvae grow; the adults don't. This one has five instars. Each instar eats, grows and moults until the final instar (which can grow to 60mm long!) after which it pupates. Then it emerges as a beautiful butterfly.

More graphic info here: <https://butterflyadventures.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Orchard-Swallowtail-Info-Poster-1-2.pdf>

ROGI MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

PRESIDENT	Jill Nixon	president@rogi.com.au
V. PRESIDENT	
SECRETARY	Michael Qualmann	secretary@rogi.com.au
TREASURER	Rose Faleafa	treasurer@rogi.com.au
COMMITTEE MEMBERS	Rhonda Binns, Aniko Major.	Two vacancies (you?)

OFFICE BEARERS

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<https://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—Monday,
 Wednesday & Friday 9 - noon. Oaklands Street,
 Alexandra Hills. 0410 974 458

General Information

Please consider contributing to any of these at various times:

ROGI REWARDS:

Good quality plants and other garden-related items brought along by members. Everyone who attends and signs in is eligible for a Reward. **Please label plant with its name and some growing 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 – seedlings, eggs, honey, 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- on table outside

For items you don't want payment for— empty pots, cuttings, unwanted volunteer plants (named), surplus produce, shredded paper, strawberry runners and so on. You may want to work out an arrangement with other members to do some swapping outside of the meetings. Take home anything still left at end of meeting.

PLANT CLINIC:

Bring along your plant problems—insect/plant/weed (as many parts as you can - fruit, leaf, root) in a sealed plastic bag. Fill in form on the Plant Clinic table (just inside the door to the main hall) before the meeting starts. Someone will look and may be able to answer your questions. Any solutions will be given on the night and published in the newsletter. *Please be aware that, although we do our best, there may not be anyone present who can solve your problem or identify your plant, especially if it is not related to organic gardening.*

ROGI WEBSITE: Under the RESOURCES tab, you will find:

- ROGI's month-by-month Seed Sowing Guide
- Seed viability Chart
- No-dig gardening ideas
- How to make compost
- Qld fruit fly research ... and lots more. Have a browse.