

Next meeting: Wednesday 11 March 2020

ROGI News

Doors open at 6.15 so members can visit the library, plant table, 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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Cat's Whiskers (Orthosiphon aristatus)- an evergreen perennial growing up to 1.5m high. Flowering from late summer to autumn, it is a bee, bird and butterfly attractant. It requires moist soil, and will grow in sun or part shade. Flowers white, mauve or pink. Hardy.



Jill's Jottings

ROGI has been meeting at our current venue since August 2014. Prior to then we met at IndigiScapes, but by early 2013 it was clear that IndigiScapes was far too small for us.

This prompted a lengthy and frustrating over-a-year-long search for the perfect venue. Serendipitously I happened across The Salvos building while out walking with a friend, and it fitted the bill. They even graciously agreed to forego their band practice on the second Wednesday each month so we could have our meetings that night.

Things have changed, their band has grown, and The Salvos now need every Wednesday night. This has prompted another venue search - and not much has changed. Our requirements make it difficult: enough seating area for growth (minimum of 150), storage space for our library shelves and metal cabinet, supper room, a good AV system, lots of parking and undercover access. This hall has it all. No other does, that we have been able to find.

The Salvos understand our situation and have agreed for us to stay on Wednesdays until the end of the year. So ... from February next year, we propose to change our meeting time to the third Thursday of each month. We would appreciate your feedback and comments.

I read a lot. When I don't have a ROGI library book to read and review, I read other books on a wide range of subjects. My current one is *The 3rd Alternative* by Stephen R. Covey. On page 344, I came across this wonderful example of synergy in Nature, and it resonated with me.

"The world is a living system, not a dead machine, an interdependent reality in which the well-being of each part is tied to the well-being of the whole. Among countless examples is the African honeyguide, a bird that lives on beeswax but can't break into the hive to get it. When it finds a hive, it signals a badger-like animal called a ratel, which scratches into the hive and eats honey while the bird feasts on the wax. The birds can only digest the wax because of bacteria in the gut that can break it down into nutrients. To add to the picture, the Borana people of Kenya follow the honeyguides and participate in the feast. Nomadic cattle herders, the Borana graze their animals through the grasslands, churning and fertilising the grass as they go. In turn the bees gather grass pollen and nectar for making honey."

(Peter A Corning. 'The Synergism Hypothesis' from Journal of Social and Evolutionary Systems 21, no 2 (1998): 314)

Isn't that a wonderful system? The classic 'Win-Win'. Lots of 'Wins'.

The first sentence could be used to describe your organic garden. Each part does not exist in isolation. You want every element in the synergistic cycle to be operating as it should. There are many references to this concept on the Internet, and it is very much a part of Permaculture and true organic growing, so have a search.

By learning more about the different creatures and processes that do their 'thing' out of our sight, we can truly believe that there is no place in our gardens for any chemicals that have the potential to harm the sometimes-delicate balance. Organic is the way to go.

No wonder ROGI is growing! (Pun intended.)

Jill Nixon, ROGI President

Coming Events

March	Thurs 5	BOGI Meeting
	Wed 11	ROGI Meeting
	Sun 22	Field Trip (see p. 19)
April	Thurs 2	BOGI Meeting
	Sun 5	Oaklands Street Workshop (see p. 13)
	Tues 7	Qld Herb Society
	Wed 8	ROGI Meeting
	Sat 18	Garden Visit (see p. 19)
	Sun 26	Oaklands Street Workshop (see p. 13)

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** to BSB 633 000, Account Number 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 be sure to complete a membership renewal form online at <http://www.rogi.com.au/renew-membership.php>

Member Category	Members Renewing For 2020	New member/s joining in...			
		Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec
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

March Meeting

Working with Weeds

Weeds! Even the best gardens have them! Weeds can tell us a lot about our soil conditions and our gardening practices.

Many weeds even have huge benefits to the gardener - soil improvement, attracting beneficial insects and providing free food.

Kate Wall will answer your weed questions and help you learn much about your garden through the weeds you have there.



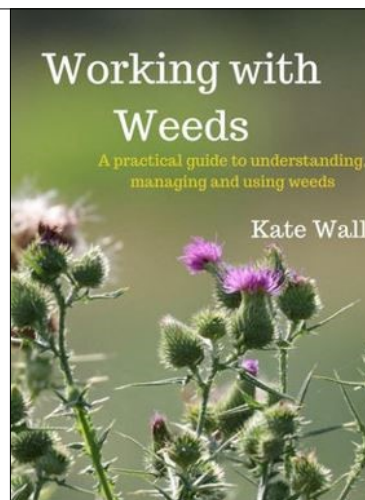
You'll also hear from a local gardener, who'll tell us what is happening **"This month in my garden"**.

As usual, you're welcome to bring your gardening problems to the Plant Clinic (more details on page 12) and we'll see if someone can help. The usual attractions will be there—the seed bank and seedlings (at bargain prices), the well-stocked library - plus local honey and organic produce for sale and more.

BOOK OFFER

Our guest speaker Kate Wall will be bringing along copies of her new book *Working with Weeds* to the March meeting. These normally retail for \$35.00, but a \$5-00 discount will be given if 20 or more books are sold. For ROGI members only, another \$5-00 will be deducted—so you can purchase this book for yourself for only **\$25-00**.

If you wish to read a review of the book, go to our February 2020 newsletter: <https://www.rogi.com.au/uploads/ROGINewsFebruary2020.pdf>



DATE CLAIMER—FIELD TRIP TO GREEN HARVEST

We've organised another field trip to Green Harvest's 'Incredible Edible' Organic Display Garden and Nursery in Maleny, as so many of you missed out last year. Please mark on your calendar **Saturday 30 May, 2020**, and write your name on the sign-on sheet at the next meeting if you wish to attend.



Membership renewal time -

How to renew your membership

... fast and easy

1. Go online to <https://www.rogi.com.au/renew-membership.php>
2. Fill out the application, press SUBMIT.
3. Go to your online bank to make a transfer to ROGI - you will need:
BSB 633000, Account Number 136 137 296
(Use your name as a reference please).
4. Pick up your receipt at the next ROGI meeting.
5. Find your 2020 Membership card name tag on the hanger near the sign-in table.

N.B. It takes 2 steps if you choose to renew online. Fill in your renewal form on the website and then go to your online bank and 'make a payment' with your surname as a reference.

The slower way to renew

1. Join the queue (between 6.15 and 6.45) at the next meeting.
2. Fill in the paper form.
3. Pay cash or cheque.
4. Collect your receipt and new Membership name tag at the following meeting.

The not-quite-so-slow way

1. Fill in form online as in 'fast and easy' above.
2. Join the queue at the meeting to pay by cash or cheque.
3. Collect receipt and new Membership Card name tag at the following meeting.

Scout Fertiliser Drives

The Manly-Lota Scout Group is continuing to assist you make the Bayside beautiful with their autumn fertiliser drive. You can easily order fertiliser, soil or mulch through us.

Benefits of ordering from our Scout Group:

- We deliver to your door—no shopping or heavy lifting required by you
- Supports the youth of our local community
- Top quality Ki-Carma garden products and fertilisers
- Premium organic range
- Buy in bulk and save \$\$\$

FREE delivery will be on Saturday 28 March between 8am and 3pm. Don't worry, you don't have to be home, we'll leave the products where you want us to.

ORDERS DUE BY FRIDAY 13 MARCH 2020

Online www.manlylotascouts.org.au/fertiliser

Enquiries: Mandy Bowden (phone 0421 800 123)

Some of our products (16 in total) include:



N.B. Delivery is to the following suburbs: Alexandra Hills, Belmont, Belmont Heights, Birkdale, Chandler, Capalaba, Capalaba West, Cleveland, Gumdale, Hemmant, Lindum, Lota, Lytton, Manly, Manly West, Murarrie, Ormiston, Ransome, Sheldon, Thorneside, Tingalpa, Wakerley, Wellington Point, Wynnum, Wynnum Central, Wynnum North or Wynnum West.

The Rochedale Scout Group is also holding a fertiliser drive. Do you need fertiliser, soil or mulch for your garden,? Too heavy for you to collect? No trailer? Short of time? Rochedale Scouts are here to help you!

- Top quality fertilisers and garden products
- Buy in bulk and save with our fantastic prices
- Premium organic product range from Ki-Carma

FREE delivery on Sunday 22 March from 9am. You don't have to be home.

ORDERS DUE BY WEDNESDAY 11TH MARCH 2020

Online www.rochedale.scoutsqld.com.au/fertiliser-online-order.html

Enquiries:

email scoutsfertiliser@gmail.com

or

phone Jacqui on 0408 796 952 after 5.30pm

N.B. Delivery is to the following suburbs: Belmont, Carina, Carindale, Daisy Hill, Eight Mile Plains, Kuraby, Macgregor, Mansfield, Mt Gravatt, Mt Gravatt East, Nathan, Priestdale, Robertson, Rochedale, Runcorn, Shailer Park, Springwood, Sunnybank, Sheldon, Tarragindi, Underwood, Wishart, and anywhere in between.

This is a major fundraising project for our Scout Groups, and we really appreciate the continued support from our local community. With your support, purchasing garden products through our fertiliser drive can assist more young Australians to experience Scouting and benefit from the character building, responsibility and self-reliance that Scouting offers. The proceeds raised go towards essential group equipment like tents, backpacks, tarps, ropes, and eskies.

February Speaker—Green Dean

Green Dean is an urban farmer and permaculturist. When he's not busy running his café *Has Beans* in Camp Hill, his focus is on bringing food growing back into towns and cities, where it has traditionally always been in sustainable cultures.

Humans are living longer (because of quality of life, technology, better medicine and diet), and the cost to society economically and socially is growing. The aged care costs for dementia and Alzheimer's are particularly on the rise.



Dean spoke about the *Blue Zones*—5 verified zones in the world where people live the longest. These are:

1. *Okinawa, Japan (island)* - longest living people and women in the world
2. *Sardinia, Italy (island)* - longest living men in the world
3. *Ikaria, Greece (island)* - longest living people in Greece
4. *Nicoya Peninsula, Costa Rica* - longest living people in South America
5. *Jeju (island)* - South Korea's longest living people (and are mostly women)



Misao Okawa - died on 1/4/15 aged 117 years old (Okinawa, Japan)



Margarita Satta - 103 years old (Sardinia, Italy)



The longest living people in Greece live on the island Ikaria



Panchita ((Francisca Castillo) - died on 21/12/16 aged 112 years



South Korea is unique in the world for aging. Their declining birth rate could make it the world's oldest country by 2045. Over 50% of South Koreans are aged over 40 years old. In 15-20 years, around one quarter of South Koreans will be aged over 65! This is very similar in Japan.

February Speaker—Green Dean (continued)

All of the *blue zones* have one thing in common—they **farm** (most often urban farming) and **grow their own food!**



The benefits of urban farming for an aging population include:

- Fresh air and exercise! - *Mobility, flexibility, balance and bone strength*
- Community and social connection - *Urban farming brings people together*
- Connecting generations, the cycle of life! - *Old teaching young teaching old*
- Food and Farmacy = medicine
- Simple living and S.L.O.W. food (*sustainable/seasonal, local organic, whole*)
- Improved mental and emotional health - *giving a sense of purpose, a spiritual connection*
- Preserves tradition and culture - *a return to indigenous foods*
- Promotes earth care and a reconnection to the soil - *environmental awareness; food and nature biodiversity*
- Our personal space, our home, our sanctuary - *a place we love, feel peace and happiness*

For older people, urban farms can be their gym, family, culture, community, supermarket, pharmacy, temple or church, garden and sanctuary.

The message Dean gave us was very clear—we will all get old. We all need a special place to feel healthy, happy and free. Urban farms (home or community) can be wonderful places for aging people to maintain mental, emotional and physical health.

Ann Roffey



Above: Stamatis was diagnosed by nine different American doctors with lung cancer in 1976. He was given six months to live and told to choose strong chemotherapy cancer treatment. Instead, he moved back to Ikaria, Greece and died at 102 years old in 2012 – **cancer free!**

Natural Herbicides *by Linda Brennan, Ecobotanica*

For many organic gardeners, a big part of the time we spend in the garden is in hand weeding, using hand pulling or a range of tools such as long and short hoes, Asian hand cultivators (from Green Harvest), three-pronged cultivators etc. But sometimes it's just not realistic to use these methods in areas such as compacted deco, between pavers, or in stones. We need something else, but NOT glyphosate. What's the option?

Now I don't apply salt to kill weeds as I don't need salt in the soil. Sometimes I use boiling water, but I'm aware of how much energy is used in boiling the urn for our large area, and kitchen vinegar gives me a poor result as it seems to be a very low concentration of acetic acid. Most food vinegars are about 5%, and cleaning vinegars are a little more than that.

In our summer garden, the Red Caustic Weed, *Chamaesyce prostrata*, loves the hot, dry conditions of deco paths in the labyrinth and the bark paths in the vegie patch. Creeping Cinderella Weed, *Calypocarpus vialis*, thrives under the bananas in a little shade, and the Awnless Barnyard Grass *Echinochloa colona*, and Paspalum/Bahia Grass, *Paspalum notatum*, hitched a ride in with bales of sugar cane mulch and has tried to take over the vegie patch and cottage plantings.

I spend up to 15 hours a week weeding the garden and in the warm, wet weather I just can't keep up with the weeds. So, to help out, I've trialled two natural herbicides and I'd like to share the results with you.

Neither act like glyphosate, that is they are not translocated in the plant, and only work as a knock down herbicide to kill the leaves that are sprayed. They are to be applied as a full coverage to the leaves on a hot, dry day, to kill the leaves or whole

plant. Using them on young plants is noted by the manufacturers to be more effective than using on mature weeds.

Two products trialled

The first is new on the market. **HomeSafe Rapid** (ready to use pack) is not as yet organic certified. The active ingredients are 120g/l Acetic acid, 9g/l Sulphamic acid.

The spray results were a total kill on the Red Caustic Weed, and a loss of most leaves on the Creeping Cinderella Grass but the stems remained green. Since the rain, new leaves have grown, so it will need another spray. The Awnless Barnyard grass and Paspalum went a little brown, but the plants are still actively growing.



The second product is **Slasher**. It is organic certified. The active ingredient is 525g/l nonanoic acid (pelargonic acid). When applied at the recommended dilution with full leaf coverage, it turned all leaves of all plants brown. It's had a full kill on the Red Caustic Weed and the Creeping Cinderella Grass is dead.

The central stem of Paspalum remains and looks like it may still grow back from the base. It will need another application.

Natural Herbicides (continued)

SO... which was more effective?

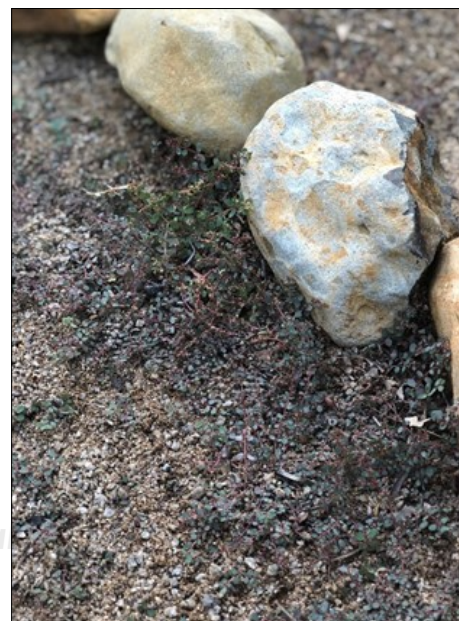
Both products were effective in killing Red Caustic weed. The Slasher is more effective against the Creeping Cinderella weed as the weed was killed completely.

The Paspalum was a more mature weed and neither product could kill it outright. I will do a second application for both herbicides. However, I have observed the Slasher has produced a more effective response so far.

So, what would I buy again? I'd go for *Slasher*.

Availability

Homesafe 1 L ready-to-use \$17.50; Homesafe 5L refill \$66. Stockists will expand over time to include nurseries and produce stores. It's currently available online from <https://www.contactorganics.com.au/shop/> Slasher 750 ml ready to use \$11.95; Slasher 1L concentrate (dilute 70ml/L) \$29.95. Available from nurseries and online at <https://ecoorganicgarden.com.au/products/weedkiller/slasher/>



Red Caustic weed before spraying in the deco path



Red caustic weed with a complete kill using the Homesafe



Homesafe with Creeping Cinderella Weed



Creeping Cinderella weed after spraying with Homesafe



Red caustic weed and paspalum in the bark paths



Red caustic weed and paspalum after spraying with Homesafe

Plant of the Month—Strawberries

If you are like me and LOVE strawberries, why not grow them at home? They will be more flavoursome than store-bought, and have no dangerous chemicals (or needles) in them! I have been growing the same variety for over 20 years now. Each year as an Easter chore, I pull them all out, separate the runners, trim them and repot into new potting mix with some compost and blood and bone added to it. I grow them mostly in containers, as they will quickly overtake a garden and put down roots where you don't want them to.

Growing strawberries

The strawberry is a member of the rose (*Rosaceae*) family, which includes roses, almonds, apples, pears, plums, raspberries, blackberries and many more. The strawberry that we commonly grow today is known as the garden strawberry (*Fragaria x ananassa*), which was first bred in the 1750s in Brittany, France. It was a cross between the flavoursome North American (*Fragaria virginiana*) strawberry and the large Chilean (*Fragaria chiloensis*) strawberry.

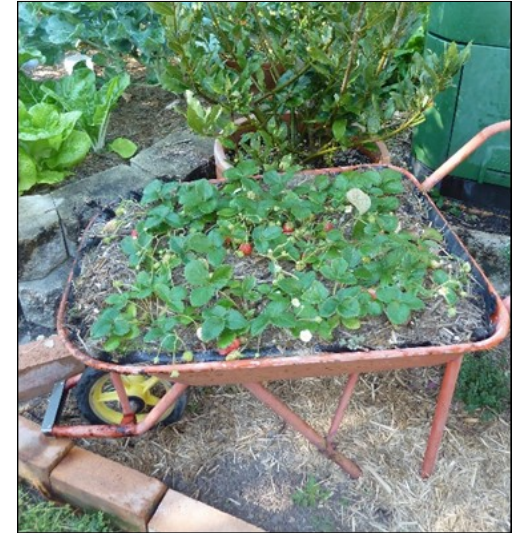
The best time to plant strawberries in our subtropical climate is March to April. When you plant them, make sure the crown (top of the roots) of the plant/runner is at soil level (not below), or they will rot. Space them about 30cm apart and cover the soil with a layer of mulch. This will keep the soil moist (which they love), protect their roots (which are close to the surface) and later keep their fruits off the ground. Commercial growers cover their soil with black plastic – avoid using this as it can overheat the soil and damage roots and microorganisms needed for a healthy ecosystem.

Strawberries love a rich, fertile and well-drained soil and an open, sunny position with good air circulation. The soil should have a pH level of 5-6.5 (slightly acid), and your plants must be kept well watered. They are very hungry feeders, so extra nutrition should be supplied during the growing season, with decomposed animal manure, compost, organic fertiliser or liquid fertiliser. To

promote flowering (and subsequent fruiting), they can also be watered with Sulphate of Potash.

Good companion plants for strawberries are borage, lettuce, bush bean, marigolds, onion, pea and spinach. They dislike being near cabbages, broccoli, cauliflower, thyme, rosemary and mint.

Strawberry plants have a relatively short lifespan of 2-3 years. However, they are most productive in their first year, so it is better to replace plants each year with runners from the parent plant.



Grow strawberries in a container so they won't take over your garden bed—it also provides perfect drainage and improved air circulation. Remove dead or diseased leaves, and bag ripening fruit to protect them from being eaten by snails, slugs, lizards, birds and possums.

Plant of the Month—Strawberries *(continued)*



Lizards love eating strawberries too!



Jill Nixon grows some of her strawberries in this container, which was rescued from a skip. They are in the original potting mix, and she adds compost each year.

Pests and Diseases

The soft, succulent fruit of the strawberry is pest and disease prone. Snails and slugs can be removed by hand, and protection by bagging almost ripe fruits or netting the entire bed or container will deter possums, birds, lizards and even the pet dog! During the drought, some of my strawberries were being sucked through the bag, but I considered this a small price to pay for keeping hungry wildlife alive.

To guard against disease, ensure plants are not overcrowded and that they have good air circulation. Minimise overhead watering, and keep plants growing strong by adding compost when planting and applying liquid seaweed and teas often. Remove diseased or dead leaves, as well as brown or soggy fruit.

Fungal problems such as black spot and grey mould are common in humid weather – I must confess to just removing the affected leaves and binning them, rather than spraying with a fungicide (*there are organic ones based on potassium bicarbonate available*).

Uses

Strawberries can be enjoyed eaten raw or in cooking – you can use them to garnish pavlova and cakes, add them to yoghurt and ice-cream, or dip them in melted chocolate. If you have an abundance make jam, syrup, pies, muffins, wine, smoothies, toppings and so much more! They can also be frozen to use later. Don't pick them until they are a bright red colour, as they will not ripen after they've been picked. They are highly perishable, so store them in the refrigerator and don't wash them until just before serving.

Strawberries are an excellent source of vitamin C and manganese, and also contain folate (vitamin B9) and potassium. They are rich in antioxidants, and plant compounds. Did you know that just one serving (about eight strawberries) provides more vitamin C than an orange? Another interesting fact is that the strawberries are not really a fruit or a berry, but instead are the enlarged receptacle of the flower! Annette McFarlane classes them in her popular books as a vegetable.

For recipes, go to: <https://www.qldstrawberries.com.au/strawberry-lovers/recipes/>

There will be strawberry plants and runners for sale at our next ROGI meeting in March.

Article sources:

Organic Vegetable Growing by Annette McFarlane

<https://greenharvest.com.au/Plants/Information/Strawberries.html>

Ann Roffey

Plant Clinic *(Managed and Reported by Rohanne Young)*

Plant Clinic this month had questions regarding what was causing fig leaves to be deformed and what was wrong with a poinsettia whose leaves were pale and blotchy.

1. Michael Pehrson provided some sample leaves from his fig. The leaves were curling and distorted in shape, but were a healthy green without any mottling to indicate disease. After consulting with ROGI member Gennaro, we determined that the plant was probably infected with mites. All mites love the hot, dry weather that we had through November and December! There



was no webbing, as found with red spider mite infestation, so we determined that it was mostly likely broad mite. Broad mites are so tiny they're impossible to see with the naked eye. They act by injecting a toxic growth hormone into the plant that slows and distorts the plants growth.

After questioning it was determined that the tree had fruited well and none of the fruit had been deformed. Gennaro advised Michael to prune the fig to remove the deformed leaves. It is important to prune figs to maintain their size and shape. By pruning fig trees, you ensure that you maintain a good crop, as fig trees bear fruit on the branches that have grown during the current year. Pruning also helps to ensure that the fruit can be easily reached for harvesting, and can help reduce problems with birds.

Tip of the Month—If you have any tips that you would like to share, please complete the Tip of the month form at the meeting and you too can be taking home one of the fabulous plants from the Plant table.

2. A member asked for advice on her Poinsettia, as most of the leaves were pale and blotchy. The plant was growing in a pot. From the leaves it was obvious that there were some trace element deficiencies. The member advised that she regularly applied seaweed solution, both around the roots and as a foliar spray.



As with any problems relating to trace element deficiencies, it is recommended that the soil be tested for pH before attempting a solution. Poinsettias prefer a slightly acidic soil, around pH 6.5. If the pH is wrong the plant will not be able to access nutrients and trace elements, even if they are present in the soil. Poinsettias require regular doses of complete fertilizer, and may also require additional calcium, magnesium and molybdenum for setting bright bracts or "flowers".

PLANT CLINIC

If you have an odd-looking pest, think your plant may be a weed or have a disease or deficiency, Plant Clinic may help you.

Bring along the insect or plant (as many parts - fruit, leaf, root - as you can, and in a sealed plastic bag if it's diseased or very seedy) and fill in the form. Place the plant parts together with the form on Plant Clinic table (just inside the door to the main hall) before the meeting starts.

Someone will have a look and may be able to answer your questions. Any solutions will be given to you on the night and published on this page. 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.

Oaklands Street Workshops

Bed Prep Workshops

We're very excited to be offering two workshops to help get your season started!

Oaklands Street Community Garden's first beds were established 14 years ago, and still produce great tasting organic produce. We'll show you how you can too.

Sunday, 5th April—2 to 5pm

A root and a fruit - beetroot and tomatoes

Sunday, 26th April—2 to 5pm

Two roots with very different requirements - carrots and potatoes

Topics:

- Why prep a bed?
- Bed location and orientation
- Planning and crop rotation
- Common crop families
- Compost and fertilisers
- Planting
- Questions and Answers



Oaklands Street Community Garden is behind ALDI at Alexandra Hills. Access Oaklands Street from the roundabout behind the Alexandra Hills Shopping Centre - there is a sign on the corner. Turn right at the end and follow the path to the gate. Please drive slowly once you're inside.

Cost: \$5.00 (ROGI will pay this cost for members only). Maximum group size is 20.

Bring: Please bring a plate of something homemade to share. Some tools and gloves are available on site, but If you have a favourite fork or shovel of your own please bring it. Please wear SunSmart clothes and sturdy closed shoes.

Sign-on sheets will be available at the next ROGI meeting. For more information please talk to Terry Sullavan on the Tech Desk or Russell Turner on the Plant Table.

Book Reviews

Sustainable Gardens

By Rob Cross and Roger Spencer

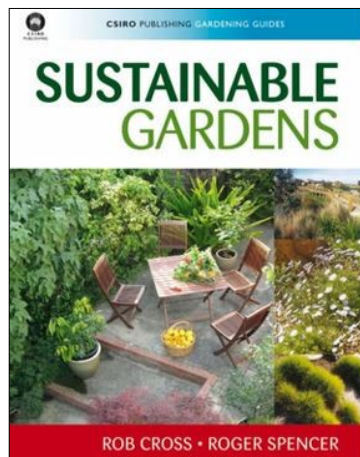
This book is a CSIRO 'Gardening Guides' publication from 2009. The recommendations make even more sense ten years later, and I think not a whole lot has been done to move things forward in that time. Reading more like a textbook than the usual gardening guide with lots of colour pictures, it has many graphs and charts and other data.

At first, the focus seems to be on sustainability generally, and then gardening is gradually introduced once the background information and infrastructure has been established. This means that the gardener can make informed decisions when designing, constructing (or renovating) and maintaining a garden ... or even a farm.

It has taken me two months to get through this book, and it ended up with many sticky notes to indicate things that sparked my interest. Here are some: the Rainstore® load-bearing underground water storage system to go under driveways; water tanks are available so thin and strong that they can be used as fences or walls; the effect of artificial light in urban areas on ecological processes, such as the well-known attraction of moths to lights which kills large numbers of pollinators; that, of the about 3,000 known food plants, 150 have been extensively cultivated, and only 15 species provide 90% of the human diet!

This is the book to go to if you're starting out and have a mildly-scientific bent (or even if you don't – you can skip the nerdy bits). Even if you just browse and look at the heading, the charts and the pictures, you will come away more enthused than when you started.

Book Review by Jill Nixon



The Herb Garden for Cooks

By Jeff Cox and Marie-Pierre Moine

(New to the ROGI Library)

A small book in size, but punching far above in its content. Published by DK, the contents are relevant to our environmental conditions and cover a very wide range of commonly grown and used herbs. Both authors are gardeners and cooks, and as such have written from lived experience.

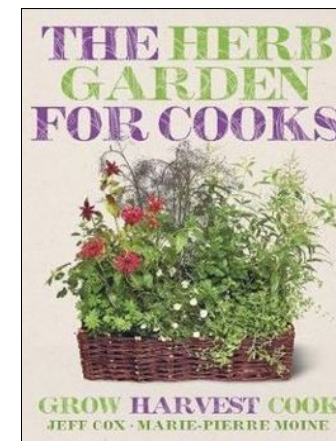
It begins by listing herbs in categories from the suggested essentials through to salad herbs, Mediterranean and Middle Eastern, hardy herbs and herbal teas etc. The herb catalogue outlines herbs in categories/families with a short "grow, harvest, cook" description for each.

The growing of the herbs is covered in detail - with sections on climate, soils, propagation, feeding and watering, diseases, weed and pest control. These are all discussed with organic growing solutions.

Harvest and storage hints and suggestions comes next, and finally the recipes and cooking suggestions - and there are many, such as herb butters, oils and vinegars, salsas, dressings, marinades, herbal teas etc.

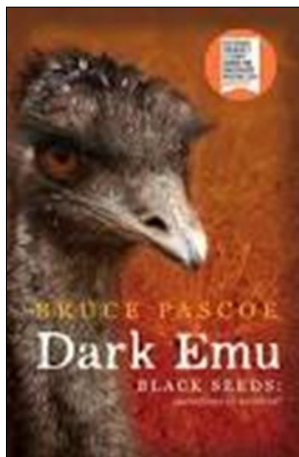
The book concludes with simple charts on pairing your herbs with food partners. I'm sure you'll find this a delicious and helpful read.

Book Review by Margaret Sear



Would you like to do a Book Review?

We welcome reviews from readers of ROGI library books you've read. Please tell the newsletter editor or our librarian that you are doing a review, and email it to info@rogi.com.au.



Dark Emu
By Bruce Pascoe

Dark Emu is an interesting read about the manner in which Aboriginal society produced crops for food and used sophisticated techniques for catching fish and animals. Their society survived a long time without interference, up to 60,000 years.

Bruce Pascoe reports the observations and writings of the first explorers and settlers that the countryside was well managed - the aborigines grew crops, had permanent housing structures and had storage facilities for water and seeds. The explorer Thomas Mitchell admired the "park like" areas and the Aboriginal houses, but he reserved his greatest praise for the land and the wealth it could afford the conqueror.

There is also discussion about the sharing of cultural knowledge and development without population driven conquests. Their use of small-scale burning techniques is remarked upon, and observations made about the land after conquest: *"kangaroos are no longer seen there, the grass is choked by underwood; neither are there natives to burn the grass, nor is fire longer desirable among the fences of the settlers"*. I am sure many discussions will follow about fire and burn techniques as used by the Aborigines and the following settlers.

The author rejects the accepted theory of a "hunter gatherer" society, and argues his case for a re-evaluation of Aboriginal economic and social structures.

There has been much discussion in the press about the author and his theories, and I think that regardless of his origins, he has put forward solid information that supports his argument. I found the book very interesting and thought provoking.

Book Review by Cheryl Rynja

The Fate of Food: What We'll Eat in a Bigger, Hotter, Smarter World
By Amanda Little

(New to the ROGI Library)

Amanda Little is an environmental journalist who set out to explore what is being done to ensure the future population will be able to be fed.

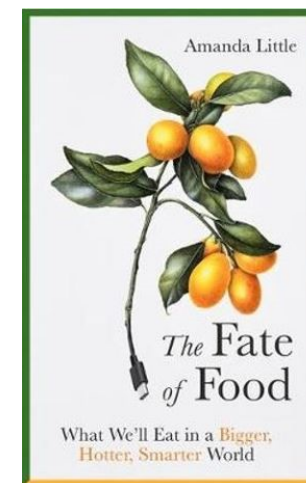
She explores novel ideas and advancements we may have to take up - given the world population is constantly rising and we are also facing global threats such as climate change, which is already having an impact on our food production capabilities. A sustainable way of producing food is required, and there are many with their heads down working on the problem.

Written in an easy-to-read, conversational style, this book is informative, entertaining and thought-provoking, especially for those like us in ROGI endeavouring to make a difference in their own personal corner of the world.

The author covers many wildly and widely varied methods to overcome the many issues raised throughout the book. I had not been aware of some of the problems she raised, nor many of the possible solutions to the looming crisis. It is an eye-opener, and a testament to the ingenuity of humans to look 'outside the box'. I must admit that some of the methods and technologies almost had me rolling my eyes! I'd love to hear what you think! Rather contentious for those trying to avoid undue chemical intervention in the growing and manufacture of food.

Having said that, I think this is a superb, provocative book that needs to be read. The ideas that she grapples with may well need to be seriously considered in the future if people want to continue eating.

Book Review by Jill Nixon



STRAWBERRY/TOMATO PUNNETS

We need your **250gm cube-shaped strawberry/cherry tomato punnets** for use at our public events (*other sizes will be sent home*).

One of ROGI's activities is making a seed-sowing pot out of newspaper. After making this pot, visitors sow a seed into it and take it home in a strawberry/tomato punnet for safe-keeping.

At the Green Heart Fair we use thousands of them, so please bring them along to the next ROGI meeting, and we'll store them until September when they'll be needed.



STEPHANOTIS AND VANILLA BEAN VINES

At my Garden Visit last year, I was asked if I could provide some seeds from my Stephanotis vine when they became available. The seed pods have now matured, so I will have both seeds and seedlings available at the March ROGI meeting if any members are interested.

The Stephanotis is a flowering climbing plant with beautiful, highly perfumed flowers. It is sometimes referred to as the bridal bouquet flower or the wedding flower, due to its use in wedding bouquets. It grows well in part shade in subtropical gardens.



In the February newsletter, I wrote an article about Vanilla Beans and stated that some vanilla bean vines would be available for sale at the meeting. Unfortunately, due to popular demand these have sold out. I hope to have more vines available for sale at future ROGI meetings.

Rohanne Young

BAY LEAVES

The humid weather we have here in south-east Qld is a perfect breeding ground for the evil weevil. One way of discouraging infestation in your pantry items (such as flour, grains and rice) is to keep dried bay leaves in each airtight container. I also keep some in my chook food. I will have a number of organically grown and dried bay leaves available for sale at the next ROGI meeting. See me at the plant table if you wish to purchase a sprig of them.

Ann Roffey



Garden Events March—April

Brisbane Garden & Plant Expo

Friday 13 March—9am to 8pm

Saturday 14 March—9am to 4pm

Rocklea Showgrounds, Corner Goburra Street & Pegg Road

Entry: \$10 per adult, \$8 Senior Concession per day

Children under 15 free

- Interstate and local guest speakers
- Over 100 stalls of dedicated plant sellers and garden products
- Organic and edible gardening
- Native and non-native plants
- Plant creche and variety of food stalls
- Entertainment for both adults and children
- Gold coin parking onsite

<https://plantexpo.com.au/> for more information.

Bethania Street Community Garden

Bethania Street, Lota

Propagation—New Plants from Old

Thursday 26 March, 9.30 to 11.30am

Cost: \$5-00, bookings essential—phone 0439 048 585

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

Art in the Garden for Kids (6-12yrs): Frogs and Ponds

Thursday 16 April, 10am to 12pm

Cost: \$5-00, bookings essential—phone 0439 048 585

<https://www.bethaniastreetcommunitygarden.org/events>

Community Gardens and Permaculture Festival

Northey Street City Farm

Sunday 19 April, 8am to 12.30pm

Free Entry

The Festival will be held on the Sunday before the Convergence, in conjunction with Northey Street City Farm's weekly Organic Farmers Market. The Festival will showcase community gardens from around the region, as well as sustainable living in cities. Come and visit an established permaculture demonstration site and attend a free Farm tour on the day. You can also sample delicious organic breakfasts from the food vendors in the market.

Australasian Permaculture Convergence 2020

Monday 20 to Thursday 23 April

Camp Kindilan, Redland Bay

The 2020 Australasian Permaculture Convergence is a biennial gathering of permaculture people from around the country and the Asia Pacific region. All people with an interest in permaculture and regenerative development are invited to join us for 4 days of workshops, hands-on activities, and discussions on how we can both celebrate and support nature's abundance.

The Convergence is being organised by [Northey Street City Farm](#) on behalf of [Permaculture Australia](#).

For more information, go to:

<https://apc.nscf.org.au/>

<https://apc.nscf.org.au/apc-programme/>

<https://permacultureaustralia.org.au/apc-australian-permaculture-convergence/>

Used Pots Needed

Please **return seedling pots** to the plant table so that they can be reused – especially the 4-cell ones like these:



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

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



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



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

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

Seed Sowing Guide

March

Basil
 Beans: Climbing, Snake, French
 Beetroot
 Borage
 Capsicum/Chilli
 Carrot
 Cauliflower
 Coriander
 Cucumber
 Eggplant
 Leek
 Lettuce
 Pigeon Pea
 Potatoes
 Pumpkin
 Radish
 Silverbeet
 Spring Onion
 Spinach: Brazilian, Egyptian, Warrigal
 Squash
 Sweet Potato
 Sweet Corn
 Tomato

April

Artichoke: Jerusalem
 Asparagus
 Beans: Lablab, Madagascar, French
 Beetroot
 Broccoli
 Brussel Sprouts
 Cabbage
 Capsicum/Chilli
 Cauliflower
 Carrot
 Celery
 Chicory
 Endive
 Florence Fennel
 Kohlrabi
 Leeks
 Lettuce
 Onions/Garlic
 Potatoes
 Radish
 Silverbeet
 Spinach: Brazilian, Egyptian, Warrigal, Kangkong
 Sweet Potato
 Tomato
 Yacon

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

Please Note: This guide 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.

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 the meeting (including visitors) are 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—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.

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



What do these three ROGI members have in common (besides a love of organic gardening)?

They were all born on August 24! Mena is a quinquagenarian, Bill is a nonagenarian, and Jill is a sexagenarian!

Garden Visits & Field Trips

Would you like to host a garden visit in 2020? Please see Toni Bowler at the next meeting or email events@rogi.com.au to add your garden to the schedule. Suggestions for field trips and workshops related to ROGI's organic growing interests are welcome.

Sunday, 22 March—Field trip to Mini Farm at Camp Hill

This field trip is now FULL. You can put your name on a waiting list. Please note: there is no power or toilets at the Mini Farm.

Saturday, 18 April—Garden visit to Terry Sullavan, Alexandra Hills
Terry's garden boasts lots of fruit trees, a vegie patch, and chooks.

Saturday 30 May—Field trip to Green Harvest, Maleny

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

**APRIL NEWSLETTER
DEADLINE— Please
send contributions to
the newsletter editor
by 26 March 2020**

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

PRESIDENT	Jill Nixon	president@rogi.com.au
V. PRESIDENT	Kathy Petrik	president@rogi.com.au
SECRETARY	Leisa Fien	secretary@rogi.com.au
TREASURER	Greg Lindner	treasurer@rogi.com.au
COMMITTEE MEMBERS	Rhonda Binns, Toni Bowler, Ann Roffey, Terry Sullavan	

OFFICE BEARERS

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY	Rhonda Binns	membership@rogi.com.au
NEWSLETTER EDITOR	Ann Roffey	info@rogi.com.au
PR, COMMUNICATIONS	Gail Bruce	info@rogi.com.au
CLUB EVENTS	Toni Bowler	events@rogi.com.au
PUBLIC EVENTS	Ruth Bolomey	events@rogi.com.au
LIBRARY	Viga Misztal	library@rogi.com.au
SEED BANK	Seed Savers Grp	seeds@rogi.com.au
SUPPER	By roster	group@rogi.com.au
WEBSITE	Pal Juvancz	pal@pcpals.com.au

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

PO Box 1257, Cleveland 4163

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. 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
bees@zabel.com.au
www.zabel.com.au



A FRIENDLY REMINDER: Please pay your membership dues for 2020 to receive the newsletter, free admission to meetings, and invitations to garden visits and field trips.
More information on page 4.