

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 and something to eat before the meeting. Please be seated by 7pm ready for the proceedings.

Bayside Community Church
1-9 MacArthur Street
ALEXANDRA HILLS

Don't forget:

- A small plate of finger food to share for supper (hot/cold)
- Your keep cup for a cuppa
- 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



Photo by Ann Roffey

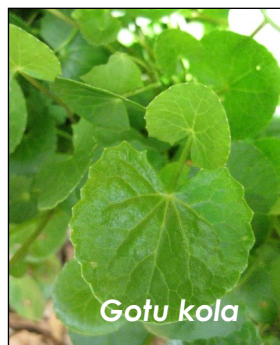
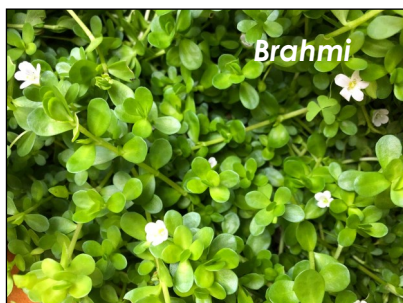
Orange Tamarillo (*Cyphomandra betacea*) aka tree tomato in Keith Heslop's garden. The yellow variety is more palatable than the red. The tree is fast growing and fruits for six months of the year. Growing 1.5-2m high, plant in full sun or part shade. They require well drained soil and need protection from wind.

Jill's Jottings

Hello ROGI Members,

Recently I walked around the garden with visitors who indicated various plants that were new to them. Most are herbs (and some are dismissed as 'weeds' by those not in the know). I grow them here because they have value; many are medicinal. I'll introduce some to you:

Brahmi *Bacopa monnieri* and **Gotu kola** *Centella asiatica*. Both perennial spreading plants that prefer moist conditions. They have a tendency to take over, so I restrict them to large, fairly shallow pots. Both are native to Australia and several other countries. **Brahmi** is a bitter herb famed for improving memory and mental clarity, as is **Gotu Kola**, which can also help with the pain of arthritis.



Purslane *Portulaca oleracea* is an annual self-sowing herb which, sadly, has been vilified as a weed, even though it's done nothing wrong. In fact it is very high in Omega 3 fatty acids – eat it raw or cooked. I encourage it to grow in pots to keep it clean. Read research about it <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC3934766>

Johnny Jump-Up aka **Heartsease viola** *Viola tricolour* is a sweet little flower that persists for months until the heat knocks it out. Edible and medicinal. Read about it: <https://pfaf.org/user/plant.aspx?latinname=Viola+tricolor>



Acerola *Malpighia emarginata* is a South American cherry tree. Its claim to fame is extremely high levels of ascorbic acid and other phytonutrients. Think 'superfruit'. It is often found in vitamin C supplements. Read more here:

<https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC6098779>

Society garlic *Tulbaghia violacea* is a South African native in the lily family. It's perennial and multi-functional. All parts are edible. It helps repel pests, and the pretty flowers are like nodding mauve stars in spring and summer. A delightful garnish for savoury meals. It is said to be 'safe to eat in society' because it doesn't negatively affect your breath. Hmm – see what you think.



Mother of Herbs *Plectranthus amboinicus* has numerous common names. It has the combined pungency of oregano, thyme, basil, and rosemary (depends on your sense of smell). Great in a Bolognese sauce, or chopped for garlic and herb bread. It has medicinal value for coughs and sore throats. Mine is the variegated version.



There are many more. It's a good idea to grow and try many different, new and unusual plants. Then you can keep those you like and want, and remove the others. If you want cuttings or rooted pieces, please get in touch.

Jill Nixon, ROGI president (phone 0418717735)

November Meeting

Eat yourself Healthy with Angela

Redlands Angela Stafford works as a naturopath and kinesiologist with a special interest in gut health, the gut-brain connection, auto immunity and food as medicine.

Not surprisingly, organically grown food plays a great part in improving the health of her patients on a wholistic level.

Angela will talk about the burden that environmental toxins now have on the average person from the water, food, air, and personal care and cleaning products - even furniture and clothes.

Angela will discuss how the body processes toxins and what happens when it is unable to excrete them. She will talk us through the steps of mitigation, concerns about increasing food prices, and specific crops that can be grown more easily to reduce the cost of food and increase our nutrient uptake.

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



ROGI Members \$2-00 entry, Visitors \$5-00 entry
Free tea and coffee

Supper will be held at the beginning of the night (6.30pm). It would be appreciated if all attending could contribute by bringing a small plate of finger food to share (hot or cold). The meeting starts at 7pm.

ROGI Events

GARDEN VISIT - Erik van Zuilekom, Cleveland

Saturday 16 November, 3pm

Botanist Erik and his wife Danielle have made many changes to their suburban block since our last visit. Over 150 tropical and sub-tropical fruit trees and bush tucker trees have been planted. Their swale system has caused the Jaboticaba to fruit multiple times after only 3 years since planting, rather than the typical 7-8 year wait. They've also planted a small food forest and have created two separate syntropic vegetable gardens on their swale berms. Their once nutrient deficient soil is now exploding with life. They are eager to share how they have achieved this, and much more.

To book your spot, email Keith at kmhlmh@hotmail.com or text/call him on 0411 250 524. Please bring a chair, a small plate of food to share, and your keep cup.

SEED SAVERS GROUP

Wednesday 18 December, 6.30pm

8 Silverash Court, Capalaba.

Christmas-themed Supper and Gifts from our Gardens

For our last meetup of the year, we're going to share some Christmas food and free fun. The free fun is what we have each meeting, but this time it's Christmassy. We'll learn techniques to grow from cuttings for free plants. Please bring:

- Cuttings of favourite plants from your garden. Pick pieces 15-30cm long, and bring them in a bucket labelled with what they are.
- A shoe box or small bucket to take your cuttings home in.
- A plate of something to share for supper. Bonus points if it's savoury and if it's red or green!!!
- Cup, plate, knife, fork and spoon.

Please book your spot on TeamApp, or call Linda on 0416 157 470.

Growing a Productive Summer Garden

By Linda Brennan, Ecobotanica

If you find it hard to grow a productive garden in summer due to holidays, heat, rain or just not knowing what to grow, here are some suggestions from our recent Seed Savers meeting that may help you to harvest food from your garden every day.

Plan for summer harvests by:

1. Growing **green manure crops** as part of a crop rotation to prevent the soil from being exposed to the harsh elements. If you are away on holidays and can't tend your garden, sow the seeds of a green manure crop before you head off. While you are gone, it can be growing and preventing the heat from killing off beneficial microbes in the soil, and erosion from heavy summer rain. The best thing about some green manure crops is that they are also edible, so you gain a harvest from them before digging them into the soil. Consider crops like: *Peanuts*, *Buckwheat*, *Mung beans*, *Soy beans* and *Cow peas*.



Left: Freshly dug peanuts

2. Planting **heat tolerant** crops that won't give up the ghost when the thermometer climbs. Remember that any crops will not perform if they are growing in drought conditions, so do try to water regularly and provide a surface mulch, at least before summer rains set in.

Successful summer herbs and vegies in our garden include basil, oregano and thyme, rocket, Warrigal greens, climbing beans, spring onions, eggplants, Gai/Kai lan (sprouting broccoli), wing beans and snake beans, chillis, okra, cucumber, yakon, jicama and Tromboncino zucchini.



Left: Wing beans

Right: Rose apples

3. Growing fruits that **ripen in the summer** so you can complete all the plant nurturing and soil care before the hot weather closes in. In most cases, netting the whole tree will also help in securing a fruit fly free harvest and preventing possums or bats from sharing your fruit. Then you can just relax and enjoy the fruits of your garden. I like to grow *bananas*, *rosella*, *pawpaw*, *figs*, *tropical apples* and *nectarines*, *grumichama*, *jaboticaba*, *melons*, *rose apple*, and *summer producing citrus* such as *limes*.

4. Growing **perennial crops**. This type of crop doesn't tend to need as much care as annuals that need replanting every 3-4 months. Choose *turmeric*, *ginger*, *sword beans*, *galangal*, *taro*, *pineapples*, *cassava*, *Jerusalem artichokes* and *eggplants*.

Keeping Australian Native Bees - Safe, Fun and Easy

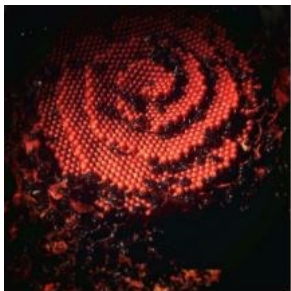
Reported by Ann Roffey



Sarah Hamilton of Bee Yourself was our October guest speaker. She gave us a quick background of how she became a Meliponist (aka Stingless Bee-keeper). Sarah started her working life as a horticulturist, but the pay wasn't great. She landed a corporate job, but was so miserable that she quit. She realised she missed and loved the outdoors. That's when she decided to do something she was passionate about, keeping native stingless bees.

European bees are social (in a colony), whilst most of Australia's native bees are solitary. In South America there are hundreds of native bee species, but here in Australia we have only 11. Three of these are commonly found along the east coast of Australia. They are:

- **Tetragonula carbonaria** (Brisbane and south of), pictured left
- **Tetragonula hockingsi** (Brisbane and north of), pictured mid
- **Austrophlebia australis** (along the coast and inland), right



Various hive rescues performed by Sarah. The bees in the outdoor fridge/freezer were relocated, but she had to come back the following year because another bee colony had set up home. The owner told her to please take the whole fridge this time!

What do you do after a year of looking after a box of 10,000 Australian stingless native bees? You have a choice of:

1. **Doing nothing.** The hive will do a self-split. It will send out a scout party of about 200 bees to find their own hive or a suitable location (e.g. worm farm/water meter/log).
2. **Propagating your bees.** Is the hive ready? It should be 7-11kg heavy. Can you hear buzzing? Are there 60+ bees going out per minute? When it's opened up, is the brood chamber the size of a small football? Is there plenty of food?
3. **Harvesting the honey.** Native bees store honey in a propolis cell. The honey has high medicinal value, the pollen is a super food. It is worth about \$500/kilo.

When splitting your hive, it can be placed side by side or top + bottom. Alternatively, it can be moved 3-5 metres away, or it can be moved away completely. To move away to a new site, use gauze to block the opening. When in their new location, the bees will look drunk for awhile. They are resetting their GPS.

Keeping Australian Native Bees (continued)

Did you know? The drone (male) has only one job: to mate. The female is the worker, she does every other job. The Queen bee's job is to lay eggs.

Bee Therapy. Sarah's bees are now utilised by various organisations as therapy. These include:

- Corporate clients who purchase the hives and educational services to improve sustainability and social responsibility standing
- Crop pollinators who require bees for successful harvest
- Correctional Services
- Juvenile Detention Centres
- Hospitals
- Mental Health Facilities
- Rehabilitation Centres
- Schools and Kindergartens
- Social Housing
- Community Gardens

Currently, Sarah has bees that are housed at the spinal injury unit at the PA Hospital. Studies have shown that native bee therapy lifted the patient's mood and lowered their blood pressure.



What to look for when buying a Native Bee Hive:

- Make sure it is not a transfer (rescue).
- Ask what type of bees are in the hive.
- Ask if there is a warranty (Sarah's is 1 year). If the bees die, you will get a replacement or refund.

For further information go to Sarah's website at:

<https://www.beeyourself.com.au/>

ROGI Website - www.rogi.com.au

ROGI has a wonderful, informative website for members and the general public. Please make yourself familiar with everything on it, as it is a wealth of information.

In particular, the *RESOURCES* page has many articles that may interest you. Also, all the newsletters since September 2014 are available to peruse, if you are keen.

A new addition to the website is an excellent article on **Summer Spinach Alternatives**. Do you find it hard to grow greens in our blistering hot, humid summers? This article gives great advice on what you can grow instead. Go to:

<https://www.rogi.com.au/uploads/SummerSpinachAlternatives.pdf>

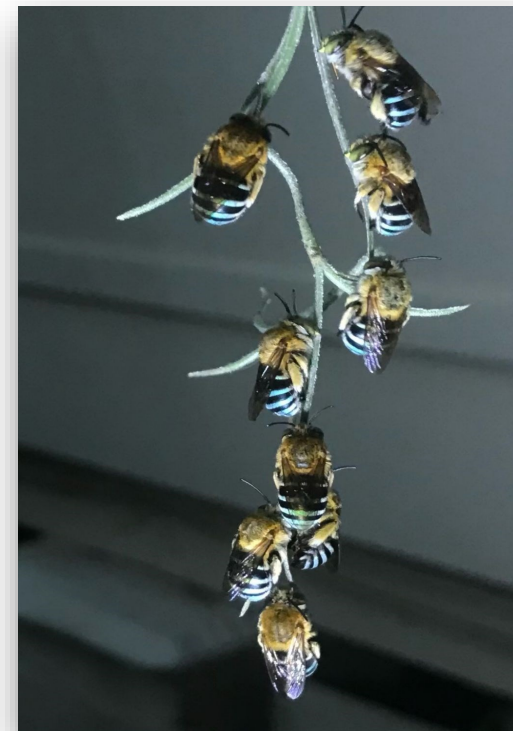
Right: Rosie Harvest sent in this beautiful photo of male blue-banded bees sleeping on a strand of her Spanish moss.

Blue-banded bees are a solitary bee (they don't live in colonies or hives). However, they usually live close to other blue-banded bees.

Females mate and then build solitary nests for themselves, typically in a shallow burrow in clay soil, or sometimes in mudbricks.

Males will roost together in small groups at night, hanging onto twigs or stems by their mandibles.

There are 14 known species of blue-banded bees in Australia.



Garden Visit - Keith Heslop

Report by Ann Roffey. Photos by Linda Brennan, Mike Qualmann, Ann Roffey.

ROGI members were keen to view their new Vice President's garden in suburban Birkdale at the end of September. Over ten years, Keith has transformed what was once open grass and tall hedges to a highly productive space. In preparation for his retirement he hopes to have a passive income from the fruit, vegies, and other systems he has developed. He has had many successes and a few failures too, but he's willing to learn one plant at a time.

We were handed an impressive booklet on arrival, which contained names and photos of all the fruit and vegies Keith has in his gardens. There's a lot! Too many to list here. To improve his soil, Keith grows five varieties of sugarcane. The leaves and stems have a high sugar content and are great for worms. They are mulched and then added to Keith's compost. See page 8 for a full list of the ingredients in his compost.

Keith has immersed himself in the world of aquaponics, aquaculture, worm farming, subtropical fruit trees, wicking beds, vegetables, herbs and raised garden beds. His interest also extends to renewable energy systems and home automation. It was amazing to see how well everything was thriving. All of his success can be attributed to a keen interest to learn, and his dedication to improving his soil. Thank you very much for sharing your garden with ROGI, Keith.



Vertical wire with hooks to hang tools. Easy to access and takes up very little space.



Left: Vertical wall garden and aquaponics house is a work in progress.
Above: Staghorn and elkhorn collection.
Right: Keith explains the workings of his aquaponics house.



Garden Visit - Keith Heslop (cont'd)



Above middle: Seedlings have automated sprinklers and heat beds to start off. The soil they are grown in is from the chook pen - they are rocketing away!



All greens are given to the chooks, and Keith gets 5-6 eggs a day from his 6 chickens. The soil from his chook pen is sieved and used to plant his seedlings in (pictured above middle). Looks like they love it!



Wherever we looked the plants were healthy, a testament to Keith's love and care. Even though he works full-time, he spends time in the garden every day.



Above are the ingredients for Keith's compost. There is no set formula, as it depends on what he has at the time. He uses: cardboard (ripped up, soaked and put through a mulcher), Organic Xtra, fresh chook poo, pea mulch (from produce store), charcoal (watered in), coffee grounds, Garden Mate 100% natural conditioner, gypsum, eggshells, his home-grown sugarcane mulch, and grass clippings. Fruit and vegies go to the chooks rather than his compost.

Garden Visit - Keith Heslop (cont'd)



Left: Fruit of Keith's black pepper vine. It gets morning sun. The pepper can be harvested at any stage. Keith uses a mortar and pestle to break it up, otherwise it will be too strong.

Right: Keith uses a tape gun to tie up his tomato plants. He bought the kit on eBay. The tape comes in a variety of colours, but he chose red as it is highly visible.

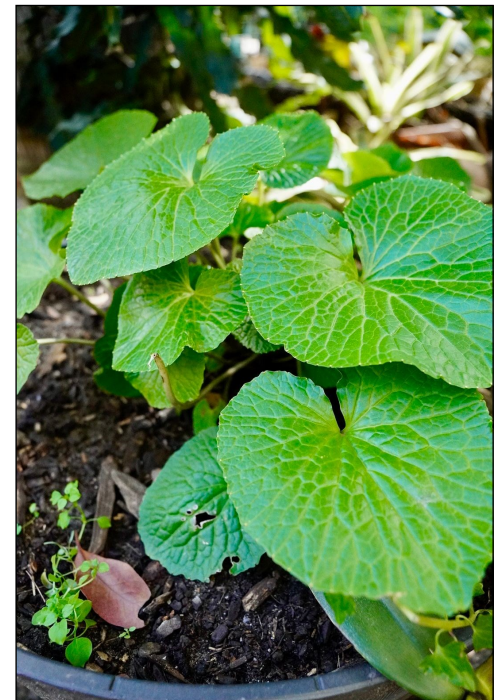


Left: Beautiful ornamental banana *Musa Velutina* (non-edible). Keith has 15 varieties of bananas growing in his garden. He eats bananas all year round!

Above middle: Keith's main vegie garden is covered with a Pink Iona grape vine to cool the north-facing area down in our hot summers. He has loads of vegies and herbs growing including asparagus, carrots, spring onions, parsley, kiwi fruit (male), tomatoes, dill, cucumber, lettuce, eggplants and silver beet.

Top Right: An interesting way to display his succulent collection. Made from a stick from the bush, with Geotech fabric holding the soil and coconut coir on the outside.

Right: Wasabi growing in a pot that doesn't drain. It lives in streams in Japan, and is used in their cooking. This is Keith's third attempt at growing, as it gets too hot in Brisbane for it. All parts of the plant (leaves and roots) are edible. Keith uses the green leaves in salads.



Spring & Summer Citrus Care

By Linda Brennan, Ecobotanica

In my garden, Damien and I are run ragged trying to control the explosion of weeds, the flourish of growth and the potential for pests that will reduce our harvests. This year to date we've harvested over 320kg of vegies and fruit from our garden. We'd like to keep it abundant over the spring and summer so I call in some time-saving organic controls.

In October I'm particularly attentive to the fruit trees. For our citrus I like to use pheromone traps to control pests. Typically they lure the specific insect with a pheromone plug or similar device, attached to a sticky trap. I've found the pheromone traps reduce the Eco oil spraying that I used to do by about 90%. This also means that non-pest insects are left free to do their jobs in the garden. There are three pheromone-based traps that I use:



Citrus gall wasp trap.

This is an extremely effective trap in catching the gall wasp before it has a chance to lay its eggs in the branches of your citrus. I've found that the Lemonade and Meyer lemon trees were always severely affected with this insect pest and the damage it causes that looks like swellings on the branches. I'd end up pruning off large afflicted branches, thus affecting potential for fruit harvest. The pheromone trap is hung in a citrus tree, and the tiny gall wasps become entrapped in the yellow sticky paper. The trap is in

two parts - the outer frame and the inner trap section. It's this inner part that is replaceable, thus reducing the cost of use. I've purchased them from Timbara Nursery. One trap will be enough for 1-3 trees, depending upon their size and distance apart. The traps last about 3 months or so.

CLM trap for citrus leaf miner This trap comes as a flat cardboard trap, lined with sticky horticultural glue. It has a small plug in the pack which contains the pheromone. After sticking the plug to the sticky trap all you need to do is hang the little cardboard triangle in the tree and that's it! The unsightly leaf curling caused by the larva of this insect is prevented. I put one trap per 2-3 trees and replace them once over summer, as they have a life of three months. There is no need to spray with Eco Oil in addition to these traps.



CLM traps are available from nurseries and hardware stores.

Spring & Summer Citrus Care *(continued)*



QLD Fruit fly trap. I find these traps are essential. I place 3 in total in our orchard and vegie patch. Their potent pheromone attracts the male fruit fly, thus preventing the females from being fertilised. I replace the pheromone wick 3-monthly as directed on the pack, and sometimes use an old Chinese food container as my makeshift, cheap catching container.

It's worth knowing though, that this is not a failsafe method of protecting all your fruit fly sensitive crops. I also suggest bagging fruit or netting trees, and applying 'Eco-Naturalure' to areas around the orchard or vegie garden –this attracts and kills the female fruit fly.

With these effective traps in use in your garden, you too can have citrus success.



GRAMMA PUMPKIN RECIPES

If you received free Gramma pumpkin seeds at the October ROGI meeting, you may be interested in some recipes for all those pumpkins you are going to grow! Did you know that this warm climate squash makes wonderful sweet pies. There are several recipes on the internet for them, including:

<https://www.sbs.com.au/food/the-cook-up-with-adam-liaw/recipe/gramma-pie/23t87qam5>

<https://www.littleriverkitchen.com.au/blog/gramma-pie>

<https://www.bestrecipes.com.au/recipes/aussie-gramma-pie-recipe/199osyjo>

Book Review

By Rose Falelafa

Good Gardens with Less Water

By Kevin Handreck

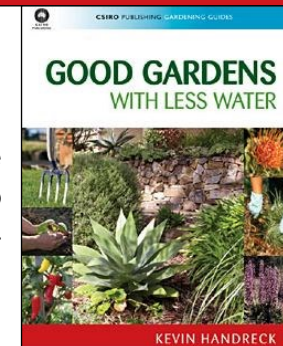
In a changing environment, it's important that we make the best of our resources, none more so than water. So, whether you're starting your garden from scratch or you need to solve individual plant problems, chances are you'll find a solution in this book.

From testing the quality and sources of water from water delivery systems, to testing mulches and soil types, Hendrick covers everything the home gardener could possibly need to know to minimise water use for maximum results.

All recommendations are backed up by easy-to-follow science by the CSIRO, and also includes information on what to do if you have too much water! Included are chapters on the causes of water shortages, lawn health and potted plants.

You could easily read this book from front to back, but there is sufficient detail in each section that you could simply flip to your particular concern.

Also in the ROGI Library by Handreck and Black is *Growing Media for Ornamental Plants and Turf*.



December Christmas Gathering



To celebrate the end of 2024, we're having a Christmas dinner on Thursday December 12 (for ROGI members only).

- **RSVP by 08/12/24:** We need to know if you are coming! **Please register** on TeamApp or email aniko.major88@gmail.com or text (not call) Aniko on 0478 618 078. Numbers capped at 110.
- Please **let us know what food you plan to bring:** salad (type)/savoury/dessert/bread.
- Chicken, ham and drinks will be provided.
- **Members need to bring their own cups/glasses, plates, bowls and cutlery in a bag** (you will take them home to wash).
- The usual plants, seeds, honey and other member's sale items will also be available.
- There will be no ROGI rewards. Giveaways accepted. **We need volunteers** to assist with setting up, serving food and packing up on the night. Please notify us at the above email if you can help with this.

E-WASTE COLLECTION: E-waste can be put in the trailer provided in the Salvos car park at the December meeting. E-Waste is any electric/electronic product that has become non-working, unwanted or obsolete, and has essentially reached the end of its useful life.

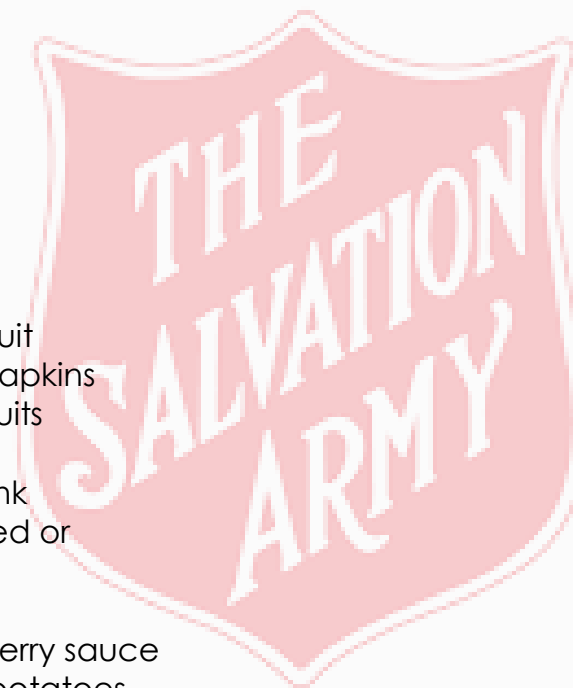
TOOL SHARPENING: Shannon from Pout Sharpening will provide free tool sharpening for members. One tool per member. Clean hand tools, not spades. More information December newsletter.

Salvo's Christmas Food Drive

Christmas time is hard to celebrate when you are doing it tough. ROGI members are asked to donate a food item/s from the list below for the Salvation Army Christmas Appeal **at our meeting on December 12**. Please help struggling families in the Redlands.

What to Donate:

- 1 litre long life custard
- Long life cream
- Christmas pudding
- Christmas fruit cake
- Mini pavlova shells
- Bonbons
- 400g or 825g tinned fruit
- Packet of Christmas napkins
- Family Favourites biscuits
- 175g potato chips
- 1.25 litre/2 litre soft drink
- 500g-1kg bag wrapped or unwrapped lollies
- Packet of jelly
- Gravox sachet/cranberry sauce
- 400g tin whole baby potatoes
- 400g tin peas/carrots/corn



NOTE: Please ensure foods item/s have **expiry dates well into next year**.

People will be receiving these packages as a gift. Help battling Aussies feel a little extra special at Christmas by purchasing a brand name (not 'no name' brands please).

ROGI MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

| | | |
|-------------------|--|--|
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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

Black pepper (*Piper nigrum*) is a self-pollinating vine grown for its fruit. Linda Brennan's vine started fruiting two years after being planted. When picked green, the fruit can be dried and ground to produce black pepper. The vine needs protection from direct sunlight and can be grown in hanging baskets. Linda's vine is growing in full sun, so on blistering hot days it is covered with some shade cloth.



Black pepper vine (*Piper nigrum*)

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

Please send items to the editor at newsletter@rogi.com.au and help keep the ROGI Newsletter topical, interesting, local and relevant. December newsletter deadline is **28 NOVEMBER 2024**.