

Next meeting: Wednesday 11 September 2019

# ROGI News

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

Salvation Army Church  
Cnr McDonald Rd & Macarthur St  
ALEXANDRA HILLS

## Admission

Members: Free  
Visitors: \$5

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

You are very welcome to provide a **quality plant** to help share interesting plants with other members (**see p 20**).

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

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Gorgeous calendulas in Jill and Ian Nixon's garden. Grown to attract beneficial insects and repel pests. The Nixons use them as edible flowers in their daily salad. Read more about their garden on page 6.

# Jill's Jottings

Spring is here officially, but in actuality it seems to have been spring for quite some time. This is one of the reasons that Tim Entwisle coined the terms 'sprinter' and 'sprummer' and others to describe the climatic conditions in our part of the world. He even wrote a book about it— *Sprinter and Sprummer, Australia's Changing Seasons*. Go to: <https://www.publish.csiro.au/book/7221/> should you wish to check it out. It will be in our library soon. But I digress ...

We know that 'winter' is the dry season, but this last month seems to have been drier than usual. Heavy dews have gleaned a tiny bit of water for the tanks however. Which brings me to . . . water. The reliability of water continues to be an issue for farmers and gardeners alike. Personally, we don't really want to have to rely on the town water supply, so we've installed five tanks to collect 19,000 litres. It's not enough, but there's no room for more unless we go underground. Of course, they overflow in a good down-pour - such a waste of water.

Speaking of wasting water . . . in our house we do what we can to minimise waste. All urine, a very valuable resource, is collected in a large bucket, diluted and used around the fruit trees. (This process is optional for visitors!) That saves about 30 litres a day of flushing water. More info at: <https://permaculturenews.org/2017/10/13/how-do-you-use-urine/> Then there's the washing machine—we collect the rinse water, which is clean, in nine 12 litre buckets and use it to water the garden. Just think of it as weight-bearing exercise! One hundred litres a time. The rinse water from washing up (in a basin in the sink) is also collected and used for watering vegetables. Over five litres a pop. And any random turning-on of taps (for example waiting for the water to run hot) results in the water being collected in small two litre buckets. It all adds up! A reason to avoid using town water, if you have the space and money to install water

tanks, is its chlorine content. I remember hearing Jerry Coleby-Williams discussing this; he pointed out that chlorine is used in water supplies to kill bacteria. It then follows that it can also kill the microorganisms in the soil—the very life-forms that are needed for the health of the soil and thus the plants.

The successful Seed Savers group, started almost two years ago, continues to draw at least a dozen people along every second month. We're all learning a lot, and not just about saving seeds. There have been requests for similar groups with different topics. Here are some ideas:

## \* **Weed identification and control**

*Edible, medicinal, dangerous and benign weeds*

## \* **Insects in the garden - friend or foe**

*Organic pest control*

*Home-made pesticides for the garden*

*Insect Identification*

*Beneficial insects*

*Integrated Pest Management*

## \* **Preserving your harvest**

*Various food preservation methods in season when there's a glut of a particular produce*

## \* **New to gardening, new to ROGI**

*For new members—discussion of climate, soils, and suitable plant choices etc.*

These are just some of the ideas from various members. Please talk to a committee member (see back page) or phone me on 0418 717 735 if you are interested or have more suggestions. In the meantime, enjoy this beautiful, if somewhat dry, weather and come along next Wednesday evening for our very popular choose-your-own topic meeting.

May your garden flourish and your harvest dreams come to fruition. **Jill Nixon, ROGI President**

## Coming Events

<b>Sept</b>	Sun 8	Green Heart Fair
	<b>Wed 11</b>	<b>ROGI Meeting</b>
	<b>Sun 22</b>	<b>Field Trip</b> (see page 20)
<b>October</b>	Tues 1	Qld Herb Society
	Thurs 3	BOGI Meeting
	<b>Wed 9</b>	<b>ROGI Meeting</b>
	<b>Sun 13</b>	<b>Garden Visit</b> (see page 20)
	<b>Tues 15</b>	<b>Seed Savers Meeting</b>

## Membership Information

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

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

Member Category	Members Renewing For 2019	New member/s joining in...			
		Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct18-Dec19
Single	\$30	\$30	\$22.50	\$15	\$37.50
Family*	\$50	\$50	\$37.50	\$25	\$62.50
Pensioner Single**	\$20	\$20	\$15	\$10	\$25
Pensioner Couple**	\$30	\$30	\$22.50	\$15	\$37.50

**Family** - two (2) adults residing at the same address and their children under eighteen (18) years of age.

\*\* Please provide evidence of **pensioner** status to claim discount

## September Meeting

### Choose-your-own topic

We will have **four** discussions available.  
You choose which *three* you wish to attend.  
Each will be 20 minutes.

#### • Keeping chooks

Davina covers what you need to know to get started with backyard chooks.

#### • Test your soil pH

Mary and Rai explain soil pH and show how to test it. Bring a sample of your soil to test.

#### • Crop rotation

Terry talks about why you should rotate your crops and how to do it.

#### • Fermentation

Marian shows the effect that fermentation can have on your garden.



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

**MISSING TABLECLOTHS—There are a number of large tablecloths missing (dark green, white and green/pink striped). Please return.**



## August Meeting—Higgledy-Piggledy Urban Farm

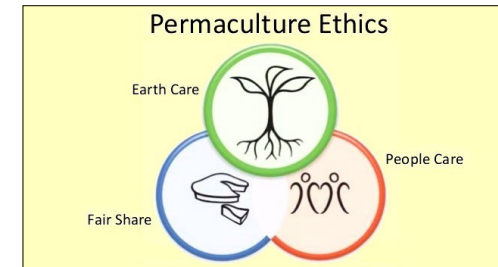
On a 1000m<sup>2</sup> block in suburban Eight Mile Plains, Narelle Oliver-Braddock grows organic food to feed her family, and share the abundance with others. She starts each year with a garden plan, but by the end of the year it looks like chaos—hence the name, Higgledy-Piggledy Farm!



They have a 5 bedroom house and pool, so the growing space is about 600m<sup>2</sup>. On this she has 18 fruit trees, vegetable gardens, and a menagerie of animals. These include a dog (security guard), quails (egg layers), chickens (also egg layers and manure makers), a goat (for weed recycling), cats (mice catchers), a guinea pig (grass mower) and a duck (pest control on plants and also manure).



For the past 8 years, permaculture has been their philosophy and way of life.



### Earth care:

- The plants they grow and the nutrients they put back into the soil with compost.

### People care:

- Wwoofers and help exchangers who come and share their home
- Providing a verge garden for the neighbourhood
- Giving a meal or bed to anyone who drops in and is in need

### Fair share:

- Sharing what they grow with friends and family
- Putting the excess on the sale cart or a give away table on the street
- Donating food boxes to charities

An article from the UN reported that by the year 2050, 70% of the world population will be living in cities, leaving 30% of the rural population areas to provide us with food. What does this mean for food production? It will mean less biodiversity, more mechanised production, more genetically modified food systems, and food travelling thousands of kilometres to get to our table. Already, vegetables and fruit are picked long before they are ripe, and then chemically treated so they ripen just before they are sold. They are also chemically treated so they last for weeks (and in some cases months) so they don't rot. None of this is new to the gardeners at ROGI—it's why we are already organic growers. So at Higgledy-Piggledy they have embarked on a movement to bring food back into cities—urban farming. Which is simply returning to the practices of our parents and grandparents.



## August Meeting — Higgledy-Piggledy Farm (cont'd)

They may only have about 600m<sup>2</sup> to grow in, but at their urban farm Narelle makes use of every cm of that space. They use raised beds, pots, cardboard boxes, milk containers, tins—almost everything that can be recycled gets used. They make use of vertical space on fences, the house, the garden and animal sheds. They also use pots to maximise space, moving them around either to the sun or out of the sun depending on what the plants need.

Higgledy-Piggledy is not certified organic, but they grow organically and make the soil work for them. Plans are afoot to expand their farm—they are going to use some of the land close by on acreage, and have also been given access to a backyard in Salisbury. The elderly woman wants to remain in her home, but can no longer manage her yard. In exchange for her land, they will provide company, regular check-ins to see how she is doing, and fresh produce from the garden. All of this land will provide them with more sellable product at their farm gate. Courses and workshops will also be run, teaching children and families how to be more self reliant for their food. Vivienne, who turns their produce into preserves and other yummy things, has plans to do long table suppers using produce from the farm. They also have a sale cart, which goes out once a week when there is produce to sell.



Community is an important part of Higgledy-Piggledy Farm. They have lots of celebrations—long table feast days, movie nights (about farming, permaculture or environmental issues), and guest speakers. Open days are also held, showing people how to do backyard farming.

Because they are a demonstration farm, they have also become wwoof hosts (world wide opportunities on organic farms/willing workers on organic farms). In the last six years, in exchange for work on the farm, they have given accommodation and food to over 50 people—from South Korea, Scotland, Thailand, France, Germany, Hong Kong, Japan, China, Croatia, Hungary, England, Argentina, Mexico, Belgium, Canada, and Switzerland.

Narelle has extended an invitation to ROGI members to visit her urban farm if you are ever in the area—at 26 Kandanga Street, Eight Mile Plains. Also, if you are good at something, and would like to run a workshop on the farm, contact them. For further information go to: <https://www.facebook.com/higpigfarm>

Ann Roffey



## Garden Visit—Jill & Ian Nixon

Jill and Ian are avid organic gardeners, with heaps of experience and knowledge to share. They live in Birkdale on a 749m<sup>2</sup> block, with beautiful rich Redlands red soil. They moved in three years ago, and set about transforming their block into an oasis of edible plants—wherever we looked there were vegetables, fruit trees, herbs, natives and flowers growing.



Fence panels repurposed as trellises. Last year they tried growing pumpkins on them, but this wasn't successful. This year they are going to try cucumbers.



Asparagus growing in a bathtub and strawberries growing in recycled commercial ice cream tubs.



A healthy patch of fennel that self-seeded from last year's crop.



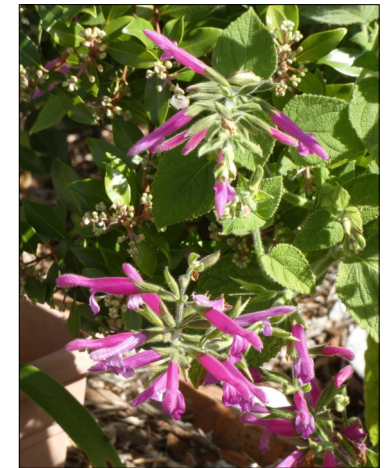
Lettuce (left) has been let go to seed. This attracts beneficial insects and bees to the garden. And, they don't have to plant lettuce any more as it comes up where nature intends it to! (right).



Jill and her repurposed filing cabinet near the footpath. Neighbours donate their unwanted scraps for the chooks and compost.



Healthy cabbages in Jill and Ian Nixon's garden. A pot of spearmint acts as a companion plant—the scent confuses pests like white cabbage butterfly.



Salvia dorisiana (fruit salad sage) is a herb and a perennial. Smells delightful and is edible.



## Garden Visit—Jill & Ian Nixon (continued)



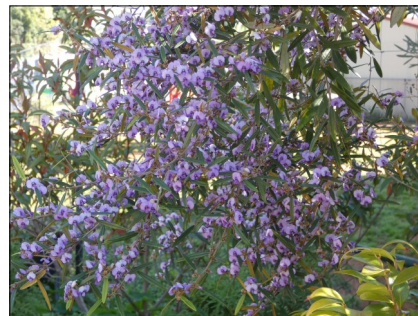
A week and a half after this photo was taken, Ian cut down the bananas—over 400 fruit were produced!



Banana Dwarf Ducasse with loads of fruit! The stem height is only 2-3m, making it a great banana for a small yard.



The purple peas above and right are Purple Shiras. Easier to see than the green ones!



Tomatoes growing on the western side of the yard. As they grew here last year, they are in pots—this will minimize the risk of disease and nematodes.

Beautiful flowering native Hovea.



Ian demonstrates his Chicken Guard automatic chook door closer.



These fence panels are protecting poultry forage (from Eden Seeds) - the chooks can eat it as it grows.



Raw meat scraps are placed in this to attract flies and produce maggots for the chooks (a great source of protein).



Lemonade tree growing in the chook run—nursery trays protect the roots.



## Garden Visit—Jill & Ian Nixon (continued)



Tropic tomatoes (left). Jill pinches out the laterals (right) so that the plant can put energy into producing tomatoes. To propagate a true copy of the original plant, place lateral in a jar of water on a windowsill. After about a week, it will develop roots, at which stage it is ready to pot up.

Below—Jill makes bags from old curtains (with draw-strings) to protect fruit from pests.



Nasturtiums grow throughout the garden to attract bees and repel pests. The leaves and flowers are edible.

Willamette raspberries growing beside the chook run—they have recently been cut back and will soon grow canes that need to be tied up. This variety fruits twice a year (summer and autumn). Fruit is best ripened on the plant—bag or net to protect from fruit fly and birds.



African blue basil growing beside tomatoes. Grows from cuttings only.



Blueberry Burst growing in a pot with loads of flowers. Plant in azalea and camellia potting mix, and add elemental sulphur as required to keep the pH down (very acidic 4-5).



Strawberries are growing very well in this vertical garden. Organic Xtra is applied every now and then, especially when fruiting.



Fruit of the Guisaro (Brazilian Guava). Doesn't suffer from fruit fly infestation. Fruit will be ripe when it turns yellow.



## Garden Visit—Jill & Ian Nixon (continued)



Jill hangs her cutting boards in the sun to get the stains (from chilli, turmeric, beetroot etc) off them.

**A GOOD IDEA!**



Wire rubbish bins from the cheap shop are used to protect plants from animals and being stood on!



Right—A baby bouncer frame is repurposed as a trellis for peas.

Left—this pretty dark blue flower caught our eye. It's a native to South Africa, *Pycnostachys urticifolia*.



Pineapples galore. They take around two years from planting out the tops to producing fruit.



Stinging nettle (below) flourishing in an old wheelbarrow. Jill uses it to make a tasty and satisfying soup, adding a bit of butter, onion/leek, carrot, potato/sweet potato, and a good stock. Stinging nettle is rich in many vitamins and minerals.



Bisexual pawpaw in the front yard. A prolific bearer, needing lots of water and fertilised with Organic Xtra 4 times a year. Flying foxes can get the ripening fruit if it's on the side of the trunk away from the sensor light, so they have to be cut off at first sign of colour.

Jill and Ian have planted out more than 30 fruit bushes/shrubs/trees on their block—four different mandarins (*Fremont*, *Ellendale*, *Imperial* and an unknown), two cumquats (both *Meiwa*), Kaffir lime, dwarf Ducasse banana, jaboticaba (yellow and black), black sapote, cherry of the rio grande, persimmon, blood orange, blueberries, raspberries, strawberries, native black apple, grumichama, soursop, three finger limes (red, green, crystal), two fig trees (*brown turkey*, *black genoa*), dwarf mulberry, acerola, tangelo *Minneola*, mundu, Davidson's plum, red papaya, elderflower, lemon *Eureka*, lemonade tree and many pineapples! They have a huge variety of vegetables, as seen in the photos above, as well as many medicinal herbs and flowers. Jill describes her gardens as random plantings—polyculture. They practice crop rotation, and use Organic Xtra and compost as fertilisers. It is always inspiring to visit the Nixon's garden, and this time was no exception! Thank you Jill and Ian.

Ann Roffey



## Green Heart Fair, Carindale—Help Needed

**Sunday 8 September—8am to 2pm**  
**Carindale Recreation Reserve,**  
**27 Cadogan Street, Carindale**  
**Admission—Free**

HELP NEEDED! This is the Fair's 10th Anniversary, and ROGI has held a stand there for at least the past three-four of those years. Brisbane City Council is promoting sustainable and eco-friendly living.

ROGI has a big presence at this event, and we will need a large number of members volunteering to help with **set up on Saturday 7th**, and also **on our stall on Sunday 8th September**—potting seeds and seedlings with visitors, selling our seedlings, plants and seeds, and just generally chatting about gardening and growing your own food and flowers etc. No expert knowledge is required, just lots of smiles and enthusiasm.

PLEASE consider volunteering for an hour or two—we need lots of volunteers so that those working the whole day have a chance to take a break and relax a bit. We need about 15-20 people on the day. **Contact [events@rogi.com.au](mailto:events@rogi.com.au) or 0418 100 173 ASAP.**

Many thanks, Margaret Sear



## Welcome Back Shorebirds

**Saturday 21 September—9am to 11.30am**  
**GJ Walter Park, 29 North Street, Cleveland**  
**(behind the Grand View Hotel)**  
**Free Family Event**

Get a close-up look at the migratory birds that fly thousands of kilometres from Siberia and Alaska to our own Moreton Bay shores every year, at the third annual **Welcome Back Shorebirds** community event.



As well as viewing the birds through high-powered bird-watching scopes as they feed, there's much more to enjoy such as:

- *Quandamooka Yoolooburrabee dancers from North Stradbroke Island*
- *Amellia Formby—zoologist, flying storyteller and bird nerd turned pilot from Newcastle, who aims to fly a microlight in 2021 around Australia to raise awareness of the plight of migratory shorebirds.*
- *Paint your own shorebird cutout and add to the community 'flock' of eastern curlews and bar tailed godwits.*
- *Hear from experts about the threats to shorebirds survival including coastal development. This includes the proposed \$1.4 billion Toondah Harbour project, which aims to build 3,600 high rise units on 100 acres of reclaimed land in Moreton Bay.*
- *Meet many community groups with a focus on environment. ROGI will also have an information stand for the first time.*
- *Check out the Toondah koala colony—still one of the best locations to see these iconic creatures in the wild.*
- *Sausage sizzle and refreshments.*

The event is organised by local community group Redlands2030 Inc. and Birdlife Australia.



## Seed Bank News

### The Beautiful Blue Butterfly Pea

*Clitoria ternatea*

This pretty blue flowered plant is a delicate perennial vine, growing 1-2 metres in height. It's not a native of Australia, but is found across the tropics and subtropics and may be found as a cover crop in coconut plantations or thriving in saline soils. It grows in full sun to a little shade over a light trellis or frame.

#### Eating the Blue Butterfly Pea

All above ground parts of the plant are edible and contribute anthocyanins to our diet. Anthocyanins are the antioxidants responsible for blood vessel health, and are also linked to antidiabetic, anti-inflammatory and anticancer treatments in many studies\*. The flower contributes a wonderful blue water soluble food colouring that I use in fermented Switzel drinks, for colouring cocktails, rice, cakes and custard. But the flowers are also delicious just mixed in with salads. In Thailand the leaves are used fresh in salads or fried.



You may have seen 'Ink Gin' in bottle shops? It has been coloured to a dark blue with these flowers. They are in demand from edible flower enthusiasts, and can be used on cakes too. But, if you have dyed your hair brown to black, you can also use the blue liquid from the flowers to help retain the hair colour between washes.

#### Growing this edible vine

The plant flowers in summer and may be planted from seed from spring onwards. I tend to grow them in pots, and then transplant them into the ground. Soak seeds in hot water overnight, then plant seeds early spring to summer in loamy soil or potting mix. Germination can take up to 3 weeks. Plant into the garden when the plants have 4-6 leaves. Flowering begins as the weather warms in summer, and continues for months. The flowers dry well and retain their colour when dried.



While it has been used as a green manure to increase nitrogen in the soil around mine site regeneration areas in QLD, I understand there is potential for weediness in the dry tropics, but it doesn't seem to be an issue around the southeast corner.

Seeds are available in the ROGI seedbank.

#### Find out more

You'll find further growing notes and a recipe for Blue Butterfly Pea in the book *A Delicious Bunch*, growing and cooking with edible flowers. Its available in the ROGI library.

\*The study mentioned is: He K, Li X, Chen X, et al. Evaluation of antidiabetic potential of selected traditional Chinese medicines in STZ-induced diabetic mice. *J Ethnopharmacol.* 2011;137(3):1135–1142.

by Linda Brennan, Ecobotanical

## Plant of the Month—Yacon

*Polymnia sonchifolia* syn. *Smallanthus sonchifolius*

**Also known as:** Apple of the Earth, Peruvian Ground Apple

**Description:** Yacon is, surprisingly, a member of the sunflower family and a herbaceous perennial. Native to Colombia, Ecuador and Peru, the plant is mainly grown and harvested for its large and plentiful underground tubers, although the large, polyphenol (antioxidant) rich leaves can also be eaten. The plant has a proliferation of small, daisy-like flowers that are pretty in the garden. The tuber is refreshingly crunchy with hints of watermelon, apple, pear and celery flavours! With such a flavour profile, it lends itself to both sweet and savoury dishes. A good source of fibre and flavour, yacon is low GI and easy to grow.

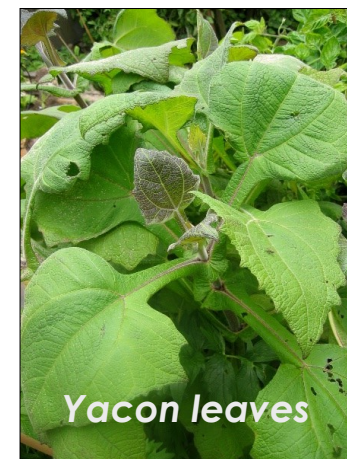
**Uses:** Many enjoy yacon tubers raw in a salad (sweet or savoury). To prepare, simply peel the outer skin away, chop into bite size pieces and pop them into a salad as you would any of the flavour profiles that yacon is reminiscent of (apple, pear, watermelon, and celery). You could also try juicing raw yacon or adding it to a smoothie, fruit crumble or pie, for sweetness and fibre. For more savoury leanings, try baking thin slices of yacon into 'chips', adding it to a vegetable tray bake or julienned in a stir fry. In South America, yacon is boiled down into a thick, brown syrup which is further reduced into 'chancaca', or blocks of sugar for everyday cooking, drink flavouring and baking. The leaves are high in antioxidants and are enjoyed as a healthy tea in Japan. Yacon's uses are limited only by your imagination—so get planting today!

**Nutrition:** Yacon hits above its weight in terms of nutrition, and is considered a 'functional food' for its many health benefits. A source of soluble and prebiotic fibre (inulin), low calorie and very low on the glycaemic index (GI=1 out of 100 compared to table sugar at 65/100 and maple syrup at 45/100), it is a useful part of a healthy diet, but also a good consideration for those watching

sugar/carbohydrate intake or managing Type II diabetes, as it has a minimal effect on blood sugar levels.

An exciting and recent discovery in nutritional science is the effect prebiotics have on the growth of 'good beneficial' bacteria in our guts. Good gut flora has been implicated in regulating everything from mood to metabolism, nutrient and mineral absorption, serum cholesterol, infection and allergy responses (immunity). Looks like good bugs are not just for the garden! While an ancient cultivar, there is growing evidence that there are good health reasons to add yacon, with its prebiotic fibre content to our modern diet. A note of caution however: If you suffer from Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS) or follow a low FODMAP style diet, you may want to limit your intake of yacon, as it is high in *fructooligosaccharides*, a type of carbohydrate (fructose) that can bring on digestive discomfort in some sensitive individuals.

**Planting and Growing Information:** For a good crop yacon prefers humus-rich, well-drained soil in full sun. The plant and tubers are relatively drought resistant and pest free. To plant, simply take a large yacon rhizome (reddish, smaller tuber nearer the stalk of the plant) with several sprouts and cover over to a depth of about 3cm, and then mulch well. Space at 0.5-1m. Height is to 2 metres (plant may need support). Water often if you want an abundant crop.





## Plant of the Month—Yacon (*continued*)

**Harvesting:** Yacon requires a long-ish growing season of six-seven months, but you will be rewarded with a large crop of big tubers (around 300g each) that store well. After the above ground leaves and flowers wither away, it is time to dig—although not too deep or vigorously, as the tubers tend to clump at the base of the plant, and you want to avoid damaging the tubers. Tubers can be stored in a cool, dark place with good ventilation for long periods, but note that the sugar content of the tubers will increase with time and exposure to sun.

**Where to buy:** ROGI plant sales, Green Harvest and Diggers.

### Article sources:

<https://greenharvest.com.au/Plants/Information/Yacon.html>  
<http://www.sugar-and-sweetener-guide.com/glycemic-index-for-sweeteners.html>  
<https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/319299.php>

Delgado GT et al. Yacon (*Smallanthus sonchifolius*): a functional food. *Plant Foods Hum Nutr* [Internet]. 2013 Sep [cited 2019 Aug 27];68(3):222-8. doi: 10.1007/s11130-013-0362-0.

Michelle Boutin

## Seed Savers News

Our last seed savers meeting focussed on the basics:

- Why save seeds?
- What do we want to save and what should we avoid saving?
- When do we save them?
- How many should we save?
- What is open pollination?
- What's an heirloom/heritage seed?
- How to catalogue and record seeds
- Storage solutions



We also learnt about the harvest, eating and regrowing of root vegetables Qld arrowroot, yacon, and turmeric. Pictured is Linda's freshly harvested *Madras turmeric*, which we could purchase and use/grow for ourselves. Linda's turmeric is grown in the ground, in full sun (although they can take light shade). She rotates her crops each year to prevent disease. It needs good friable soil, so she adds compost and humates to the area, as well as organic manure, before planting in August-September. Water to keep the soil moist, so you get fat tubers. Harvest when the leaves die in early to late winter. Linda harvests and sells about 70 kilos of organic turmeric per year! To make the powder, she scrubs it clean, chops and puts in the food processor. It is then dehydrated, and put through the blender until it is a fine powder. To make turmeric latte, here is Linda's recipe: <https://ecobotanica.com.au/turmeric-latte-mix-1/>

The next Seed Savers meeting will be held at **7pm** on **TUESDAY 15 OCTOBER** at Linda Brennan's house in Capalaba. All ROGI members are welcome to attend—see Janet at the plant table to register your interest. The topic for this meeting will be **wet/moist seed saving**.



## Plant Clinic

### Mealybugs

I have received a few enquiries about mealybugs. Most of the enquiries start with a question about how to treat black sooty mould on plants like citrus and gardenia. The black sooty mould is a secondary problem, with the mould living on the honeydew, a sugary substance secreted by the mealybugs as it feasts on your plant.

Mealybugs are easy to spot when you know what you are looking for. A bad infestation will look like someone has gone a bit berserk with some "white snow" spray (see *photo below*). It looks just like cotton wool but, unlike cotton wool, it is anything but harmless!!



You will also find lots of ants on your plant as the ants "farm" the mealybugs. Mealybugs can't move by themselves, so they need the ants to move them around on the plant and on to neighbouring plants.

Mealybugs have voracious appetites and, when they have found a great host plant, will multiply like crazy—often doubling their population in around 48 hours!

So, how to deal with mealybugs? It used to be that mealybugs would be sent into hibernation over winter. However, with the new "sprinter" that seems to have replaced our traditional winter,

the temperatures don't get low enough to cause this hibernation.

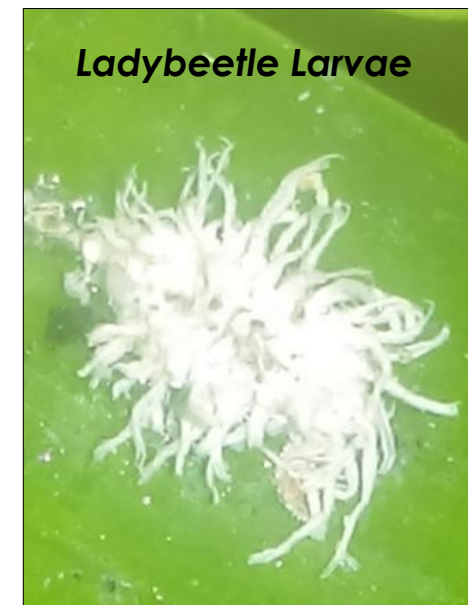
The best treatment is, of course, nature itself—encourage lots of good bugs into your garden! The larvae of ladybeetles love eating mealybugs. They even disguise themselves so that they look like mealybugs, and eat hundreds each day as they hide among them (*pictured right*).

The only way to tell the ladybeetle larvae from the mealybugs is that the ladybeetle larvae can move by themselves. So, if your mealybugs start walking it's a good bug, not a bad bug! Ladybeetle larvae can be purchased from some nurseries, the big green shed, and over the internet from places like Bugs for Bugs.

Other options for dealing with mealybugs include spraying the plant with lime sulphur during winter. When doing this, make sure that you also spray around the plant, as the mealybugs can hide in the soil there. Lime Sulphur should only be sprayed in winter.

If you have a severe infestation and feel you must spray the plant to save its life, you could use home-made soap spray. Use castile soap or other organic soaps. Castile soap is available from Wray Organics, Flannery's and Granny's pantry. Don't use commercial detergents as these are not actually soaps! Mix a few tablespoons of soap with a few drops of oil in a bucket of water. Mix well. Transfer to a spray bottle and spray your infected plant.

Rohanne Young





## Winter Harvest



Wow! Rhonda Binns with her gigantic sweet potatoes, harvested in early August. Grown in an old black fish pond (pictured below right) in potting mix and compost topped with sugarcane mulch.



## Lots of Lemons

In 2013 I purchased my first *Lots A Lemons* tree, which has borne successfully every year. In 2014 for my 70th birthday, my daughter gave me my second tree. Although treated identically to the first one, it refused to flower much, and when it did the flowers dropped. The tips of the leaves were always yellow and the plant always looked as if it was deficient in something.

Advice from all those present at ROGI Plant Clinic proved to no avail. In frustration I removed all the soil from what proved to be a very small root system, and soaked the roots in seaweed solution. I then re-potted it in Coco-pro potting mix to which was added instant humus, rock dust, Earthlife Garden Mate and ½ teaspoon iron chelates, before saturating the soil with seaweed solution. The result was lots of flowers, but one or two lemons only. It still appeared deficient in something.

Last year as a last resort, I changed the fertiliser to Dynamic Lifter. Almost immediately the colour of the foliage improved and it started to bloom. The previous potting mix had subsided considerably, so I re-potted it in the same pot so as not to disturb it too much. Also, I was not going to waste all that extra potting mix unless the tree showed signs of recovery! This time I made a mix comprising Coco-pro, Anne Gibson's homemade potting mix, red soil, enriched compost from CSG, eco compost as well as cow, sheep and chicken manure. To this I added Earthlife Garden Mate, rock dust, instant humus, trace elements and some Power Feed Citrus Fertiliser.

The results have been wonderful! The tree is full of blooms, honey and native bees, and the leaves as well as the small fruit that are forming are green and not yellow. I am hoping for a good crop this year.

Garry Bromham





## Oaklands Street Community Garden Open Day 2019

Sunday the 25<sup>th</sup> of August saw the 14<sup>th</sup> annual Open Day at Oaklands Street Community Gardens. Although most of us would never complain about rain, a notable difference from last year was the beautiful spring day that welcomed our harvest season.

It was wonderful to see the regulars. George Allen and Frank Huysing shared with us their expertise and experience. Dukes of Uke were a great attraction, and added a local flavour to their already entertaining line-up. We also welcomed some new folks to the garden this year. Baysamba rocked the house with some lively djembe grooves. We also opened the adventure playground area to the public for the first time. Smart Tots are our newest regulars and enjoyed the face painting.

ROGI attended with the seedbank, paper pot plants and plant sales, and did a fine job of promoting organic gardening.

Everyone I've spoken to had a very enjoyable day and from the Oaklands St crew, a very warm thanks to everyone who helped make the day a great success!

Terry Sullivan



The nursery is always a popular attraction.



ROGI crew working the crowd. Nice work Yolanda!



Inset—Carrots (from the ROGI seed bank) sown at the workshop in April. Great strike rate!



Dukes of Uke entertaining the crowd.



Adventure playground featuring the Chapman Express is declared open.



Peter and Fern Morgan with their Rotasifter display.

**NEW COMMUNITY GARDEN**—Bayside Community Garden (run by Paul Morley) is trying to get another community garden up and running at Thornlands. They have identified a piece of land, which is currently going through community consultation, and need as much support for the application as possible. More information about the group, and their community garden proposal can be found at: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/BaysideCommunityGarden/about/> (External link) and <https://www.facebook.com/RedlandsCoastSaladBowl/>  
Please make a submission to support them here: <https://yoursay.redland.qld.gov.au/tuna-court>



## Garden Events September

### **Redfest Strawberry Festival—Homegrown & Homemade** **Friday 6 to Sunday 8 September, Redlands Showgrounds** **Entry fee—\$2-00 per entry**

Fees, entry forms and exhibit/s must be delivered to the Homegrown and Handmade stewards on Friday 6th September between 9am to 4pm in the (AMP) Albert Morris Pavilion. The AMP will be closed 4:30pm for judging of exhibits. LATE ENTRIES WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.

Go to: [https://redfest.com.au/images/general/RedFest\\_2019\\_HGHM\\_WEB.pdf](https://redfest.com.au/images/general/RedFest_2019_HGHM_WEB.pdf)

### **Biodynamic Workshop** **Presented by Biodynamic Agriculture Australia** **Friday 13 & Saturday 14 September—9am to 4pm** **Cost \$110-00 non members, \$55-00 members of BAA**

A two-day workshop with practical and theory components, sponsored by the Australian Government's National Landcare Program. Venues—theory at the Ramada Inn, 1 Routley Drive, Kooralbyn and practical at 278 Oaky Creek Road, Oaky Creek.

Limited places—please register by either:  
Email: [events@biodynamics.net.au](mailto:events@biodynamics.net.au) or phone: 02 6655 0566  
More information at [www.biodynamics.net.au](http://www.biodynamics.net.au)

### **Viola's Patch (Open Garden)** **Saturday 21 & Sunday 22 September—10am to 4pm** **280 Beaudesert-Beenleigh Road, Bahrs Scrub** **Admission—\$8.00 Adults, Under 18 Free**

Neil and Viola are avid gardeners who have opened their garden to the public for charity since the year 2000. Guided walks (wheelchair friendly), propagating demonstrations, refreshments.

### **Toowoomba Carnival of Flowers** **Friday 20 —Sunday 29 September**

This 10-day community festival is dubbed the longest running floral event of its kind in Australia—a celebration of flowers, food, wine, culture and entertainment. <https://www.tcof.com.au/parks-gardens/>

### **Sustainability for Kids Workshop** **Bethania Street Community Garden, Lota Street, Bethania** **Thursday 26 September—9.30am to 11.30am** **Cost: \$5-00**

Encouraging children's sense of optimism, confidence, enthusiasm and connection to make a positive difference to the world. A hands-on practical workshop for children aged 6-12, looking at the 3 R's - Reduce, Reuse and Recycle, and making items to take home. **Please bring one empty, clean 2/3 L plastic milk bottle per child - BOOKING ESSENTIAL**

### **Springtime on the Mountain** **Open Gardens Trail—Mt Tamborine** **(Presented by the Tamborine Mountain Garden Club)** **Friday 27 & Saturday 28 September—9am to 4pm**

Trail passes \$20-00, dependent children free, single garden \$5-00

This year there are five diverse and delightful home gardens open for public display. There will be a sausage sizzle and plant sales at the Botanic Gardens. Devonshire tea and light lunches available at the Tamborine Mountain Showgrounds, as well as local produce and botanical art and craft for sale. Payment for passes to gardens by **cash only** can be made at the Tamborine Mountain Botanic Gardens or at the entrance of any of the open gardens (look for the orange springtime flags). For more information go to: <http://visittamborinemountain.com.au/event/springtime-on-the-mountain-2019/>

# Sustainably ROGI

## SMALL STEPS CREATE CHANGE

Sustainability has been included as one of ROGI's objectives. This will include:

- Sustainability of ROGI as an organisation. We encourage members to get maximum benefit and value for money from their membership.
  - \* Please actively support our meetings, events and activities.
  - \* Promote ROGI and the growing of healthy, chemical-free, nutrient-dense produce whether at home, in a community garden or a verge collaboration.
- Refuse to use chemical fertilisers and pesticides. Be aware of the harm they do to our soil, environment, insect and animal populations and ultimately our own health. Organic, natural and home-made and home-grown is best.
- Sustainability in your personal life. Simple things you can do that will help to have a big impact in many ways. Use the R's: there are many more than three!

1. **Rethink.** Do I need it (now or in the future)? Can I do without it? A quote given to me recently (thanks Linda Barrett) is "Shop at home first!" Look to see if there is something else there already that will fulfil that need or purpose. Can you borrow or share something instead of buying?

2. **Repurpose.** The logical progress on from rethink.

3. **Refuse.** You can choose to not buy or accept single-use plastic or single-use items as well as sub-standard/cheap/unethically-produced tools, equipment and clothing.

4. **Replace.** Always purchase the best quality product if you need to buy or replace something. Choose equipment, tools, clothing that is well-made, preferably from materials ethically sourced, can be repaired if needed and made mostly from natural fibres and components that can be reused or composted.

Even if more expensive at the time of purchase, they will last longer and have a much better impact on our ecological baseline, use of Earth's resources and the environmental impact on our planet. More sustainable.

There are many more R's, and we will include more hints next month. Happy sustainable gardening!

*Margaret Sear & Sharr Ellson*

## PLEASE BRING TO ROGI FOR RECYCLING:

*(hand to Margaret Sear or Sharr Ellson)*

- ⇒ **Bread tags** from plastic-wrapped bread—they can be recycled into wheelchair components.
- ⇒ **Soft plastic lids** - from milk, cream, water bottles, soft drink and tetra Pak lids. *Please bring lids only—not the seals or rings. They must be stamped with the recycle symbol 2 or 4.* Wash thoroughly and dry before bringing to ROGI. We'll distribute them to Lids4Kids and Envision Hands, where they will be melted into plastic thread and used to 3D-print parts for prosthetic hands for children.



## FREE COFFEE GROUNDS

ROGI member Jill Nixon took this photo outside the Redlands hospital in Weippin Street in Cleveland. The mobile coffee van is giving away free coffee grounds in 2 litre buckets.



## Seed Bank News

Please **return seedling pots and punnets** to the seed bank so that they can be reused—especially the 4-cell ones like these.



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

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



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



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

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

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

## Seed Sowing Guide

### September

Artichoke: Jerusalem Artichoke  
Asparagus  
Beetroot  
Beans: French  
Capsicum/Chilli  
Carrot  
Chicory  
Choko  
Cucumber  
Eggplant  
Kohlrabi  
Lettuce  
Okra  
Melons: Water, Rock  
Potatoes  
Pumpkin  
Radish  
Silver beet  
Squash  
Sweet Corn  
Sweet Potato  
Tomato  
Zucchini

### October

Asparagus  
Beans: French, Snake  
Beetroot  
Capsicum/Chilli  
Carrot  
Cucumber  
Eggplant  
Ginger  
Lettuce  
Okra  
Pumpkin  
Radish  
Rocket  
Rockmelon  
Rosella  
Silverbeet  
Squash  
Sweet corn  
Sweet potato  
Tomato  
Watermelon  
Zucchini

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

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



## Meeting Information

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

**ROGI Rewards:** Good quality plants and other garden-related items brought along by members. Everyone who attends 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 : bring a bag/box/basket to take everything home.**

**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

**Please send your items to the editor and help keep ROGI News topical, interesting, local and relevant.**

## Garden Visits & Field Trips

As always, space is limited, so book early. Please see Toni Bowler at the next meeting or phone her on 0402 323 704 or email her at [events@rogi.com.au](mailto:events@rogi.com.au) to put your garden on the schedule. Toni also welcomes suggestions for field trips and workshops that are related to ROGI's organic growing interests.

### FIELD TRIP:

**Sunday, 22 September—Roma Street Parklands**

A few places are still available—please contact Toni Bowler if you wish to attend. More details will be sent by email about the day. We will be catching the train into the Parklands, having a guided tour of the gardens, and then BYO lunch.

### GARDEN VISIT:

**Sunday, 13 October—Ann & Mark Roffey, Calamvale**

Originally a garden to attract birds and wildlife (with many native shrubs and trees), and now extended to include organic fruit trees and vegetable. Also including chooks and native bees. Close to Karawatha Forest if you want to check out the discovery centre, have a picnic or go for a walk.

**OCTOBER NEWSLETTER DEADLINE— Please send your contributions to the newsletter editor by the 25/09/19.**

- 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
- **Email your contribution to [info@rogi.com.au](mailto:info@rogi.com.au)**



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[www.facebook.com/groups/redland.organic.growers](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—**Wednesday &

Friday 9 - noon, Sunday 2- 5pm. Oaklands St,  
Alexandra Hills. 0419987870

## 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*

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