

Next meeting: Wednesday 9 September 2020

ROGI News

PLEASE NOTE:

ROGI meetings will resume in July, with some changes. In line with COVID-19 regulations we will :

- observe social distancing
- no supper, tea or coffee
- no swap and share
- no ROGI rewards
- maximum 70 people

However, we will still have plant and seed sales, and members' stalls such as sustainability products, soap and honey.

Our next meeting will be held on **WEDNESDAY 9 SEPTEMBER.**

This meeting will only be open to ROGI members (no visitors allowed). **YOU MUST BOOK TO ATTEND.** Please book your spot at info@rogi.com.au

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What's not to love about this beautiful dianthus? It lasted in Jill Nixon's garden through our hot dry, and then wet summer. It's also edible, scented and very attractive to beneficial insects.

Jill's Jottings

It's spring at last, although my garden has been showing spring tendencies for a while now. How appropriate that the new ROGI committee starts in spring, traditionally a time of new beginnings. Several people have retired from the committee. Thank you for all your hard work and valuable contribution to ROGI. Kathy has had the positions of president, vice-president, secretary, P.R. and public events person over the past seven years; Margaret has been our secretary on-and-off (mostly on) since she joined ROGI; and Toni has been on the committee and coordinating Garden Visits and Field Trips for many years. Greg was a ROGI member for several years before being treasurer for the past year. A warm welcome to our new committee members:

Vice-president **Jan Haughton** is a landscape architect with a career in environment, art and design, and community projects. Jan will organise guest speakers and anything else that needs doing to assist the president's role.

Lisa Harsley is our new secretary. Lisa is an accountant, so this is a change of focus for her. You will have met Lisa helping Viga in the library if you've borrowed a book this year. Lisa loves her garden and enjoys constantly learning, and seeking out hints and tips to improve her knowledge.

Vet and mother of two young boys and respite foster mum of two young girls, **Lara Brits** is taking on the treasurer's role. Lara has completed a Permaculture Design Certificate, an element of which she spoke about at the last ROGI meeting (see p. 5) and is now finalising her Permaculture Teaching Certificate. Lara is also a professional photographer!

Our final new committee member is **Tracey Mann**, who is a science teacher with a special interest in biology and agricultural science. She has always had a food garden and this has ramped up since retirement. Tracey's first project for ROGI is to compile a list of the library books that have had a review in the newsletter over the past six years. This will help you decide which books you may want to borrow.

Continuing as committee members are food-growers and passionate gardeners ROGI News editor Ann Roffey, and Rhonda Binns who handles Membership, and Terry Sullavan who you'll find at the AV desk at meetings.

National Organic Week Australia 7-13 September is designed to increase awareness of the benefits of organic products and farming production systems, and accelerate the uptake of these in the wider Australian community and environment. Of course, this is what we in ROGI do every day. During this week we have engaged an organic farmer to address our meeting and then a series of visits to his farm, starting Sunday 13th (subject to COVID-19 rules at the time).

So, what are the organic standards that we aim to uphold? No synthetic pesticides, no toxic chemicals, antibiotics, synthetic herbicides or fertilisers, no food additives, growth enhancers, GMOs or irradiation are permitted in certified organic production systems. I think it is self-evident why we would want to avoid such things, but if you want a refresher, have a look at these books in our library:

The Myths of Safe Pesticides by Andre Leu

Silent Spring by Rachel Carson

(and *Since Silent Spring* by Frank Graham Jnr)

Or any of the fourteen books with 'organic' in the title.

The library catalogue is available at <https://www.rogi.com.au/uploads/ROGILibraryBooksInventory-TitleOrderFeb2020.pdf>

We are planning new ways of doing things in light of the COVID-19-led changes. If you have ideas to improve/increase what ROGI can safely and legally offer, please get in touch with any committee member. See back page for email addresses. Or phone me on 0418 717 735.

May your organic garden flourish and your harvest dreams come to fruition.

Jill Nixon, ROGI President

Jan's Jottings

Our gardens provide much more than food and habitat, and it's this mental and physical wellbeing which has helped many of us negotiate our lives through this pandemic. COVID-19 restrictions on how ROGI operates have been testing our procedures on garden visits, events and meetings. We are bound legally, morally and socially to adhere to these ever-changing restrictions. There are hefty fines for the organisation and also individuals if we do not adhere to them.

With over 200 members, our outreach to you has been mainly through our newsletter, but your committee has been looking at ways to offer more immediate contact. One of these initiatives will be through informal garden visits. See more about 'Come and See My Garden' as an attachment to this newsletter. We are always keen to hear from you and how you can get the best from your ROGI membership. So email us, talk to us and be a part of making it happen.

Jan Haughton
ROGI Vice-President

International Year of Plant Health

The United Nations General Assembly has declared 2020 as the International Year of Plant Health (IYPH). The year is a once in a lifetime opportunity to raise global awareness on how protecting plant health can help end hunger, reduce poverty, protect the environment, and boost economic development.



INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF
PLANT HEALTH
2020

September Meeting

The Biodynamic Barefoot Farmer from Birkdale

Franco Cencig and his family use biodynamic farming methods on their organic farm in suburban Birkdale.

At our meeting, Franco will talk about the philosophy, principles and processes involved in biodynamic growing - such as working with the cycles of Nature, having nutrient-rich and well-structured soil, and not using any artificial chemicals.



You will see that biodynamics goes far beyond organic, and that it can be used in your back yard.

We'll also be featuring a ROGI member who will tell us "What's happening this month in my garden".

As usual, you're welcome to bring your gardening problems to the Plant Clinic and we'll see if someone can help.

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

Coming Events

SEPTEMBER	Wednesday 9	ROGI Meeting
	Sunday 13	Field Trip (see page 20)
	Sunday 20	Field Trip
OCTOBER	Wednesday 14	ROGI Meeting

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

Congratulations & Thank You Jill!

Our president Jill Nixon was awarded Lifetime Membership of ROGI at our last meeting. Jill has been a member of ROGI since June 2010, and in the last ten years she has made an immense contribution to our organic gardening club.

Jill has held positions on the Management Committee including President (2014, 2015, 2016, 2019 and 2020), and she has also been Newsletter Editor for four years. During her presidency she introduced garden visits and started the ROGI Facebook page. The COVID-19 lockdown saw many of us gardening, whilst Jill was ultra busy posting seeds and selling seedlings from her home.

Congratulations Jill, and many thanks for your years of hard work for ROGI! This month also marks a milestone birthday for Jill—from all the members at ROGI, we wish you a happy birthday.



August Meeting—Lara Brits

The Verge:

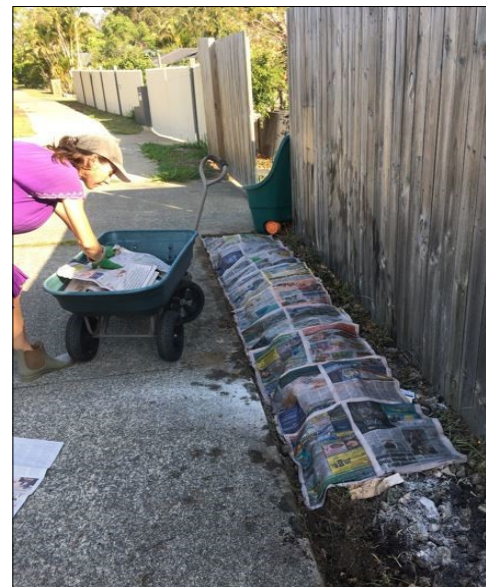
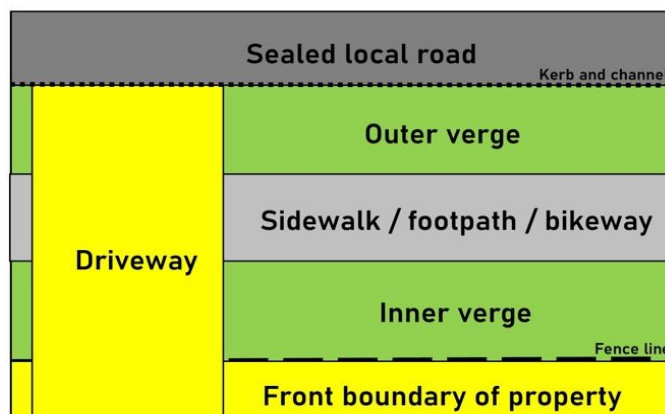
Connecting to our Community via our Footpaths!

Our newly appointed ROGI treasurer Lara Brits is a homemaker, mother, veterinarian, photographer, permaculturist and trainee permaculture teacher. She has personally found gardening to be one of the healthiest things you can do. According to Qld Health 2017, the benefits of gardening are:

- It improves mental health, encouraging relaxation and patience.
- It increases physical activity, motor skills, endurance and strength.
- Vege gardening encourages eating varied, novel, seasonal, homemade and fresh foods, and improves our intake of vitamins and minerals.

These benefits are well known to gardeners, but Lara wanted to spread the word in her community. A lot of her neighbours feel disempowered by gardening, using the excuse “I’ll just kill them” to not plant anything. Her suburban road became much busier during the COVID-19 lockdown, with more people venturing outdoors and going for walks. She has found her fledgling footpath garden has given her opportunities to practise the permaculture ethics of earth care, people care, and fair share.

In Redlands, the 90cm “inner verge” does not need approval to plant out. Council approvals are needed for further than 90cm from your fence.



Earth Care: One afternoon several months prior was spent laying down manure, then cardboard, then mulch—to kill the grass and kickstart soil fertility. This worked brilliantly. At planting time, the soil was lovely and fertile ... transformed! Already, the principle of earth care was coming into play.

People Care: Lara gradually planted what became available to her through her own garden's abundance. Cosmos, pigeon pea and sunflowers are prolific seeders—their seeds spread quickly, germinated in the warm weather and then flowered happily. Several mums have told her how much joy their children have got from getting up close and personal with these blooms on their walk. The sunflowers she grew were exactly the height of a little child—a great way of starting community conversation ... people care in action.

Lara also loves growing unusual edibles on her verge, letting kids in on the secrets of their edibility. Brazilian spinach, cranberry hibiscus and four seasons herb are favourites—her boys grab handfuls and stuff them into their mouths as they walk past on the way to school. Her foster girls are also fond of rubbing the four seasons herbs on their arms as perfume!

August Meeting—Lara Brits (continued)

Fair Share: The other side of Lara's footpath is being left unmown, to create an insect haven. It is full of red natal grass and mimosa groundcovers—both weeds, and nothing special! However, she went out one day to find a 5-year-old boy on his hands and knees, looking excitedly to see how the leaves close quickly on the mimosa (aka sensitive plant) when you touch it—he loved it! She was able to share with him a plant to take home and pot up. Some kindies use this plant as a calm down time for kids.

Lara also likes to share abundance and education from her verge. She often puts a little info sheet (pictured below) and packages up 5-10 bunches of seeds or plants for people to take. She has almost 100% uptake of these. The feedback she has got tells her that kids, particularly, love getting unexpected freebies on their walk. The info is read, the seeds planted. Do they come up? Who knows? Maybe not, but their imagination has been sparked.



Redruth Road Garden Giveaway!

Name:	Pigeon Pea
What am I?	Long lived shrub producing beans for stews, dahls and curries. The King Parrots love feasting on the beans too!
My best features..	I have pretty flowers and I can fix nitrogen from the air and make my own fertiliser! I pop up quickly from a planted seed which the kids love!
I grow best when:	I'm in sun or part shade. I like water to get established, but am very hardy once I get going.

Please help yourself to a seed pod below!

Yellow flowering pigeon pea plant



Red Natal Grass



Mimosa pudica



Lara also likes to think of the native bees and honey bees—the more cosmos, basil and salvia seedlings she gets on her verge, the happier they'll be!

August Meeting— Lara Brits (continued)

What style of verge do you want? Considerations include water, sunlight, traffic, neighbourhood characteristics, visibility issues and maintenance. Obvious street eats include capsicum, eggplant, lettuce, celery, corn, chives, beans, beetroot, pawpaw, passion-fruit, cherry tomato, zucchini, rainbow chard. Less obvious street eats include chilli, kale, kohlrabi, amaranth, arrowroot, bok choy, cardamom, coffee, fennel, ginger, turmeric, mizuna, mustard, cranberry hibiscus, lemongrass, rosella, sweet potato, alternate greens such as sambung, okinawa and Ceylon spinaches and warrigal greens.

Herbs such as thyme, oregano, parsley, coriander, basil, four seasons herb, purslane, sage and rosemary are good choices. Edible flowers include begonia, pansy, basil, calendula, feverfew, echinacea and nasturtium.

In Buderim, Urban Food Street began in 2009 when two neighbours were taken aback by the excessive cost of limes in the shops. They began by planting limes along their street verge, and this later expanded into other citrus. Their project has grown to take in a network of eleven streets, with a focus on the use of nature strips for growing a wide variety of vegetables, fruit and herbs.



Urban Food Street in Buderim—a neighbourhood has banded together to reinvent their verges as edible gardens.



Incredible Edible gardens in Todmorden UK is an urban gardening project started in 2008. They grow vegetables, herbs and fruit that are for everyone to share. They do not have any paid staff, buildings or funding—instead, income is largely from voluntary donations and fees for talks and tours.

So, what does the Redland City Council say about it all? Do you own this? No!!! Do you need approvals? Yes—for garden beds or landscaping more than 90cm from the front boundary of your property, and also for artificial turf on a road reserve. Approval includes an application form, diagram and plant list, and there is no charge for the application or approval.

Rules and regulations of the Redland City Council specify that verge plantings must:

- Allow pedestrians and cyclists to use the footpath (60cm clearance)
- Allow drivers to see properly when using driveways
- Be satisfactorily maintained
- Allow access for public utility workers to do their work

Verge plantings must NOT:

- Contain spiky/thorny/potential injurious plants
- Contain sprinklers, permanent structural footings, raised beds, letterboxes, retaining walls etc further than 90cm from the front boundary
- Contain loose stones or pebbles as groundcover

Lara has found establishing a garden on her verge has been very satisfying. It has given her opportunities to practise earth care, people care, and fair share. Why not give verge gardening a go?

By Ann Roffey

Garden Visit—Wendy Lee

Wendy and her husband have lived on their 2.5 acre block in Belmont for 21 years. A food forest was started two years ago when a tree was removed from the front yard by a bobcat. They put mulch down, and started planting. The soil is sandy loam, and plants are starting to take off. ROGI members gave advice about the positioning of some plants (too much shade), which was gratefully received.

In the back yard are some raised vegetable gardens and a huge chook yard. Wendy agists native bees, and there are 38 hives scattered around the property in shady spots, providing great pollination for her plants.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, we had two garden visits on the day with a smaller number of people at each. Thank you Wendy for accommodating this and sharing your garden with ROGI members.



Passionfruit vine growing over a trellis—enabling plenty of sunlight and for ease of harvesting



Jana banana trees



Wendy's new food forest



Nasturtiums



Left: Gennaro identified the yellow substance on Wendy's mulch as 'dog vomit fungus' (*Fuligo septica*). It is often found on bark mulch after heavy rain or excessive watering. Also known as scrambled egg slime, it is actually not a fungus but a slime mould. It is not harmful, so it is best to just leave it.



Right: Gennaro gifted a lemon guava tree to Wendy. Prior to planting, it was soaked in a seaweed extract and worm juice solution for a few hours. The soil has a very healthy layer of decomposed wood mulch, which should provide some nutrition to this very "easy to please" baby guava tree.



Garden Visit—Wendy Lee (continued)



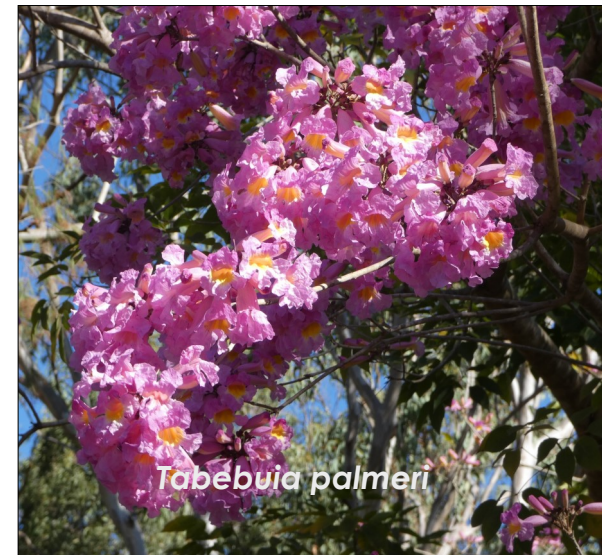
Wendy agists 38 native beehives for Russell Zabel (see back page of the newsletter for details if you wish to agist too).



Callistemon



Above and left: Gennaro demonstrates where to cut a paw paw tree when it is getting too tall. Cut on a slight angle towards the top section of the trunk, where the leaf joints are closer together—that's where the winter growth (solid trunk) is. Some gardeners still top the cut with a tin or other container to keep the rain out, however Gennaro feels that the tin would trap moisture and when in full sun “cook” the tissue it touches. He has never done so, and has never had a paw paw tree rot yet.



Tabebuia palmeri



By Rhonda Binns, Gennaro de Rosa and Ann Roffey

Crop Rotation in your Garden

The soil in our garden was pretty abysmal when we first purchased the house. It had been sprayed with herbicides, had artificial fertilisers applied and was high in salts, low in organic matter and it was a hard yellow clay.

But with a plan for soil enrichment using compost, humates and addressing nutrient deficiencies, we were on our way. In addition to this, our vegie garden has an ongoing rotation of crops and flowers planted using crop rotation.

What is crop rotation?

It's an age-old way of planting that sees a range of annual plants planted in cycles through a patch of ground. It can be practiced on farms or in the tiniest garden bed.

There are several ways of practising crop rotation. The method I use is the simplest form of it, where I follow a 4-crop method, and I find it's very successful. A little more on that later...

Why crop rotation?

- This method of planting helps to build the soil web of life that in turn supports healthy plant growth.
- By adding a green manure crop to your rotation, organic matter is enhanced. This increases the moisture holding capacity of the soil, feeds earthworms and retains nutrients so that less fertiliser is required.
- Crop rotation cuts the risk of fungal infection, especially from crops such as cucurbits, tomatoes, peas and beans which can suffer from fungal infections.
- Pests are controlled when plants like tomatoes are not planted in the same area for a number of seasons. Preventing tomato root knot nematode is a prime example of why we rotate the position of tomatoes.

What is a Green Manure Crop?

Green manure crops provide living food for the soil and encourage complex interactions both in the soil and above ground. They may be legumes that fix atmospheric nitrogen in the soil, converting it to microbe and plant food, or they may be non-legumes. Green manure plants of this type are selected for their contribution to soil fertility and organic matter.

Green manures are usually dug into the soil before flowering as this is when their contribution to the soil is at its greatest. I allow my edible green manures such as peas and beans to crop first before I dig them in.

A selection of green manure crops to plant in spring include legumes such as lab lab, soy beans and peanuts that fix nitrogen. Non-legumes may be buckwheat which accumulates phosphorous, and French millet that increases organic matter effectively because of its leaf and root bulk. Many of these seeds can be purchased in bulk from produce stores.



A winter crop, broad beans are legumes that will ripen in spring and provide a decent harvest. After harvest, cut down the plants and dig them into the soil as the soil improver element of your crop rotation.



For summer, try peanuts as your soil improver crop.

Crop Rotation in your Garden *(continued)*

How to practise 4-crop rotation

Let's say you have a garden area that needs planting now. Begin the rotation in that bed by planting a **green manure** crop suitable for spring and summer. This crop may take from 8-16 weeks to be ready to dig in.

After the green manure has been incorporated into the soil, it will be mid-summer. Plant a selection of **leafy green crops** that will thrive in the warm weather and that will benefit from the nitrogen rich roots and leaves from the green manure crop. Choose lettuce if you have a shady spot, or sun tolerant plants such as gai lan, surinam spinach, sambung or mizuna.

Once these are harvested it will be autumn in your garden. Chop down and dig in plant residues ready for the next crop. We choose **flowering and fruiting plants** in this next step of crop rotation. Some suggestions for your bed could include broad beans and bush beans, broccoli, cauliflower, snow peas and regular peas, and tomatoes.

I like to plant some marigolds around the tomato plants to act as a catch crop for nematodes. When the tomatoes come out, dig up the marigolds, cut off the roots of the tomatoes and marigolds and pour boiling water over them in a bucket before adding them to the compost. This way nematodes in the roots are killed, not perpetuated in the garden.

The fourth step in your crop rotation will possibly be a late winter planting. This is when you plant the **root and stem crops**. Beet-roots, radishes, sugar beet, carrots etc. After these are harvested it will be time to plant the green manure crop again.



Hungarian yellow wax capsicums -

These heirloom capsicums follow leafy greens as a flower and fruit crop.

Cabbage - *After the soil improver, leafy greens make the most of the rich nutrition and organic matter you've added to the soil. Cabbages are part of a cool season leafy greens crop rotation.*



Carrots - *The final crop in a 4-crop rotation is a root and stem crop. Sow carrot in the autumn to spring months for good results. After harvest, begin your cycle once again with a soil Improver crop.*

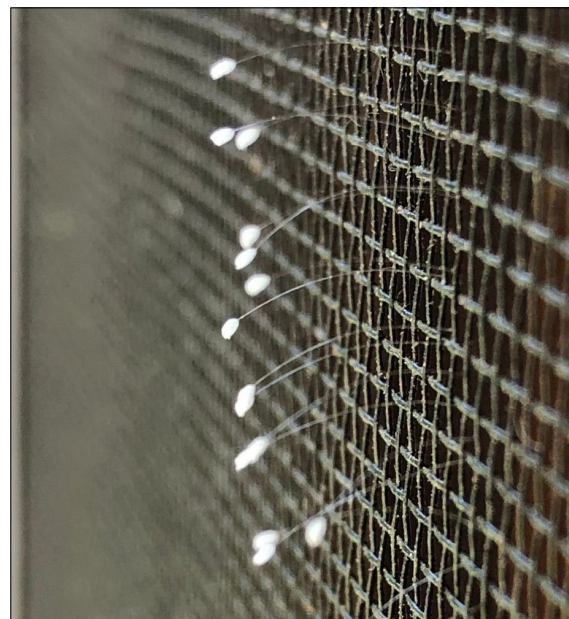
Crop Rotation *(continued)*

It's a good idea to have at least four garden beds in your crop rotation. This means each bed will have a different crop cycle, so you get a range of veges through the year. Not all of our garden beds are ready to plant at once, so start on one bed now and as other beds become empty, start the crop rotation cycle off in those.

We've had great success with crop rotation this way. I always know if I have leafy greens ready to harvest, I will plan for flowers and fruit in that bed as my next planting. Likewise, if I have root crops ready to remove, my next planting will be a green manure crop, no matter what the season.

I hope it works well for you too and helps you to grow a great patch.

Linda Brennan, Ecobotanica



Lacewings on a screen - find an article on lacewings and their role in your garden: <https://ecobotanica.com.au/>

And while you are on Linda's website, you might like to take a look at the range of local organic gardening classes coming up here in Capalaba.

A handy guide to the 4-crop rotation for vegetables:

Green Manure/Soil Improvers	Leafy Green Crops	Flowering & Fruiting Plants	Root & Stem Crops
Barley Beans (<i>broad, lab lab, mung, soy</i>) BQ mulch Buckwheat Cowpea Fenugreek Linseed Lupins Millet (<i>French/Japanese</i>) Oats Peanuts Subterranean clover	Cabbage Celery Kale Lettuce Silverbeet Spinaches (<i>Brazilian, sambung, surinam</i>)	Beans (<i>bush, climbing</i>) Broad beans Broccoli Capsicum Cauliflower Corn Cucumber Eggplant Melons Peas Pumpkin Tomato Zucchini	Beetroot Carrot Celeriac Celery Garlic Kohlrabi Leeks Onions Potatoes Radish Sugar Beet Turmeric

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

Plant clinic is a service provided to ROGI where members can ask for help identifying problems, pests and diseases in their plants. The service is carried out by ROGI members Linda Brennan, Gennaro De Rosa and Rohanne Young.

This month a ROGI member asked for a plant to be identified. She wondered whether the plant was a pepper tree and if so, whether it was a native pepper tree and were the berries edible.

Rohanne identified the plant as the Brazilian pepper tree or broad-leaved pepper tree (*Schinus terebinthifolius*).

The broad-leaved pepper tree is native to Brazil/South America and is considered an invasive, noxious weed. It is easily spread by birds eating the red berries.



The berries can cause nausea and vomiting if eaten and the sap can cause skin reactions including welts, dermatitis and eye irritation.

A similar tree, the Peruvian pink peppercorn tree has edible berries that are sold as pink peppercorns, although they are unrelated to the true peppercorn (*Piper nigrum*). It is also considered a noxious weed and can be distinguished from the Brazilian peppercorn tree because it has much narrower leaves.

Rohanne Young

DID YOU KNOW?

A weed is any plant considered to be unwanted in a particular situation. They often prevail over native plants, impacting on environmental diversity, agriculture and our community. Over 70% of our weeds have been introduced for agricultural purposes or as garden plants!

Find out more about what is considered a weed in your local area. Go to:

https://www.redland.qld.gov.au/info/20258/pest_animals_and_weeds/652/weeds

The Environmental Weeds of Redlands Coast brochure can be downloaded from this website.

Or, for more information on local weeds, go to:

https://www.redland.qld.gov.au/info/20258/pest_animals_and_weeds/653/weeds_of_the_redlands

PLANT CLINIC

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

Plant of the Month—Turmeric

Plant of the month is turmeric - it is easy to grow but you have to be patient, as it takes close to a year to harvest a crop. You need to start off with some turmeric rhizomes, they can be purchased from a farmer's organic market or friends/family, and at times from ROGI (I noticed last year somebody had bought in rhizomes already shot to a ROGI meeting for free to members).

I know of two varieties of turmeric, one is a darker orange than the other. I have found that the darker one has a stronger curcumin, which is the compound that makes it a powerful medicinal herb. Turmeric has many benefits, ranging from reducing inflammation in the body to lowering blood sugars, and in my case it improves memory!!!! According to Cancer Research UK it can kill cancer cells and even prevent more from growing.

So, where and when to plant? Turmeric can be planted in part shade, but it has to have good composted soil for its base to achieve good results. It can be planted in pots, but it needs to

Turmeric rhizomes waiting to shoot in a dark cupboard before planting in late September/October.



Notice the colour difference between these two varieties of turmeric—the darker one on the right has a stronger curcumin.

be in a large pot with good drainage as it does not like wet feet. It grows well in our Brisbane climate, as we have hot and sometimes wet weather. So a good time to plant the rhizomes is in late September into October. To get a head start, a good idea is to store the rhizomes in a dark cupboard prior to planting, so they hopefully start striking. When they are planted into the soil they are up in no time.

Tumeric plants grows well over the hot summer, but be sure to water them if it doesn't rain. They can be planted about 30cm apart and 5-7cm deep. As they grow they have green foliage, and at times they produce a lovely white flower (this happens late in the season, just before winter). Over winter the plant is dormant, so the growth is happening under the soil where the rhizomes are growing. By roughly the end of winter the green stems start to wither off, they can be left to dry off completely which do no harm. They can then be harvested when it suits yourself. Carefully dig the whole plant up. I find a good stream of water cleans the rhizomes up.

Plant of the Month—Turmeric (*continued*)

The turmeric can then be broken up. For storing I wash them well, place in a jar and cover with sherry. I have found that this is a better way than freezing them. The crop can also be turned into powder with some extra effort. The rhizomes need to have their skin taken off – peel and place them in a dehydrator. After they are fully dried, 'whiz' them in a food processor, and presto, you have beautiful smelling turmeric. Oh, and I forgot to state—wear gloves while processing the turmeric as it stains well!

In ending, I would recommend you give turmeric a go - it is very satisfying to grow your own veggies, and as it is quite expensive (around \$30 a kg), it's well worth the effort!

Happy Gardening,
John Borg



Turmeric in three stages (L to R):

Rhizomes broken up and placed in sherry.

Dehydrated turmeric ready to be 'whizzed' in a food processor.

The final product—turmeric powder.

Garden Events September & October

Bethania Street Community Garden - Bethania Street, Lota

VEGGIE GARDENING FOR A YEAR-ROUND SUPPLY (WORKSHOP)

Sunday 13th September, 9.30am-11.30pm

We have the opportunity to grow food all year round. Topics will include our South East Queensland seasons, plant choices and how to plan for a harvest throughout the year.

Free—Bookings essential on [0439 048 585](tel:0439048585)

IndigiScapes -17 Runnymede Road, Capalaba

NATIVE NURSERY OPEN DAY

Saturday 3rd October, 9am—12pm

All welcome.

KEEPING BACKYARD CHICKENS WORKSHOP WITH CLAIRE BICKLE

Saturday 3rd October, 9am—10.30am

IndigiScapes Theatre & Gardens

Want to keep a few chooks in the backyard? Learn about feed, housing, bedding, chook breeds, council regulations and trouble shooting some of the possible issues that may arise.

Free—Limited places, bookings essential on [3824 8611](tel:38248611) or email indigiscapes@redland.qld.gov.au

CHEMICAL FREE GARDENING WORKSHOP WITH LINDA BRENNAN FROM ECOBOTANICA

Saturday 10th October, 10am—11.30am

IndigiScapes Theatre & Gardens

Learn about crop rotation, insects, pest, diseases, companion plants to attract pollinators and building soil health with compost teas and worm wee.

Free—Limited places, bookings essential on [3824 8611](tel:38248611) or email indigiscapes@redland.qld.gov.au

Oaklands Street Workshop

Bed Prep for Carrots, Peas and Beans

On August 9th, workshop attendees learnt the value of good bed preparation - you give your crop the best possible start and you get to really know what's in the soil. There's some nutgrass which we won't have to pull out later!

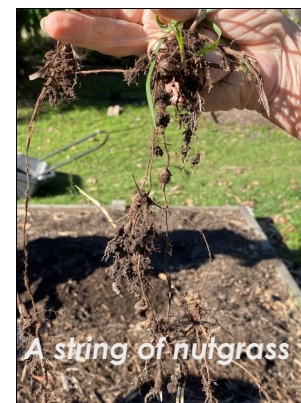
Carrot seeds are mixed with dry sand in a sauce bottle and 'squirted' into shallow furrows in rows. The tiny seeds must not be deep sown, and will need to be kept moist until they are able to draw up water for themselves when they are larger. Some people back-fill with vermiculite, but we didn't on the day.

Peas are sown into deeper furrows which are back-filled. They'll be watered once when sown, be thinned once they've sprouted, and will get trellises in a few weeks. The soil in these beds received a cup of lime each a couple of weeks ago.

A question about bean fly came up on the day. It is a problem on this site, but the scientific name of bean fly (*Ophiomyia phaseoli*) suggests it is a pest specific to beans, not peas. Fingers crossed!

Carrots and peas have similar fertiliser requirements – add a simple compost, but no fertiliser.

Good news—all peas and carrots sown on the day have sprouted! Always rewarding when things work out. Thanks for your help folks. Hope you enjoyed the workshop, please let me know if you really liked something or have suggestions. I will keep you updated on their progress!



To find out about future workshops or share organic gardening skills call Terry on 0408 259 445 or attend the Oaklands Street Community Garden (behind Aldi) on Sundays 2-5pm or Wednesdays and Fridays 9am-12pm. Residents from other suburbs are welcome to join.

Oaklands Street Workshop—(continued)



Maritza shows how to peel tubers, then grinds them.



Above: the finished products—cassava chips, cake, and bread from tapioca

Cassava—Propagation, Growing and Cooking

Cassava, also known as Yuca or Manioc, is a tuberous root plant belonging to the *Euphorbiaceae* family (spurges). It is native to South America. This perennial plant is high in carbohydrates and is a staple part of the diet in Latin America, Indonesia and Africa. It's popular because it grows easily and is resistant to pests and diseases – a sure-fire carbohydrate crop which produces well under good conditions and still quite well in poor conditions.

To propagate, the stalks are usually saved at harvest and planted in spring. Tubers can be harvested in July the following year, or left in the ground until you're ready to use them. I usually plant the stalks horizontally. I think it produces more nodes and stalks and more leaves for photosynthesis, so more tuber mass is possible.

Although the root crop is widely cultivated overseas, little is known about it here. My wife Maritza (who is from South America) shared how to prepare her favourite cassava recipes, while I shared growing and harvesting tips. Cassava can be bought in Asian stores but people are reluctant to try it, I suppose because they don't know how to use it.

After harvesting, the tubers are peeled. From there, they can be boiled and frozen and can be kept for a long time. Usually we then thaw, cut into chips and then fry or bake them as a snack or side, much like a potato chip.

Alternatively before boiling, the cassava can be ground to make cassava cake, or the starches extracted to make tapioca or ground into gluten free flour for healthy bread, cakes and pasta.

Cassava is also a great field crop because it grows anywhere and is unpalatable to insects. Nothing eats it except us, because it needs to be cooked before consumption to destroy the toxicity.

People often ask about sweet/bitter varieties. I've never seen the bitter variety in Australia, the sweet variety is less toxic and has red coloured stems near the leaves. The bitter variety is far more toxic and has green coloured stems near the leaves. It has its uses, I believe it produces larger tubers, is even more pest resistant and the hefty dose of cyanide is used for poison darts!

By Terry Sullavan

Cassava Recipes

Cassava Cake

Ingredients

Grated cassava 1kg
250mL coconut milk
½ 12 oz. can evaporated milk
3 eggs
¼ cup butter melted
6 tablespoons cheddar cheese grated (*optional – I don't use*)
½ cup condensed milk
1 tablespoon granulated white sugar

Topping ingredients

2 tablespoons flour
2 tablespoons sugar
½ cup condensed milk
2 tablespoons cheddar cheese grated (*optional – I don't use*)
250 mL coconut milk



Instructions

1. Make the batter by combining the grated cassava, butter, condensed milk, evaporated milk, cheddar cheese (*optional*), sugar, and 2 eggs in a mixing bowl and mix thoroughly.
2. Add the coconut milk to the mixing bowl. Mix again.
3. Grease the baking tray then pour in the batter.
4. Pre-heat oven to 180° C for 10 minutes then put in the baking tray with batter and bake for 1 hour. Remove from the oven and set aside.
5. Meanwhile, prepare the topping by combining sugar and flour in a heated saucepan. Boil gently and mix constantly.
6. Pour in condensed milk and mix thoroughly.
7. Add cheddar cheese (*optional*) while stirring constantly.
8. Pour in the coconut milk and stir constantly for 10 minutes.
9. Pour the topping over the cassava cake and spread evenly.
10. Separate the yolk from the egg white of the remaining egg (*we'll be needing the egg white only*).
11. Glaze the topping with the egg white using a basting brush.
12. Set your oven to grill mode. Grill the cassava cake until the colour turns light brown.

Garnish with extra grated cheese on top. Share and enjoy!

Author: Vanjo Merano, adapted by Maritza Sullavan

<https://panlasangpinoy.com/filipino-food-dessert-holiday-cassava-cake-recipe/>

Prep Time - 15 mins
Cook Time - 1 hr
Total Time - 1 hr 15 mins
Cuisine: Filipino Recipe
Servings: 6

Cassava Recipes—(continued)

Yuca Fries

Ingredients

3 lb fresh yuca (cassava)

Salt to taste (see notes)

2 - 3 cups light tasting oil (vegetable, canola or avocado)

Guacamole to serve (optional)

Cilantro Mojo to serve (optional)



Instructions

Cut & Peel: Cut off both ends of the yuca root. Then cut into 3-4 inch rounds, depending on the length of the yuca. Make a shallow cut lengthwise into the skin of the yuca. Work your thumbs under one side of the cut. Once you're underneath the peel, you can work your thumbs down the length of the root, peeling the skin off.

Cook: On a stovetop, bring to boil a pot with plenty of water and salt. Add the rounds to the boiling water. Cook for about 20-30 minutes, or until fork tender. Drain and let cool.

If using a pressure cooker, place the yuca in the Instant Pot. Add enough water to cover the yuca and salt. Secure lid on the pot. Close the pressure-release valve. Select "Manual". Cook on high pressure for 10 minutes. When the time is complete use quick release to depressurize. Drain and let it cool.

Fry: Cut yuca pieces in half and remove the inner root. Then cut into fingers. Heat the oil in a large skillet or cast iron pan with oil up to ½ inch over medium-high heat until hot but not smoking. Fry the yuca fries in batches, turning once, until golden brown. Remove with a slotted spoon. Drain over paper towels.

Notes

Yuca (also known as cassava): If you prefer, you can use frozen yuca. You can find frozen yuca (peeled and cut) in the international frozen section of most Asian grocery stores.

Salt: I add 2 tablespoons of salt per 6 cups of water. However, you can add less salt, cook the yuca, and when ready (soft), taste the yuca and add more salt to the cooking water, if needed. If you decided to add more salt after the cooking process, let the yuca boil for 2-3 more minutes to let it absorb the additional salt.

Can I make Yuca Fries in the Oven? Yes! Cut, peel and cook as instructed in the recipe. Then, preheat oven to 425° F. Bake for 20-25 minutes or until slightly brown, turning twice.

Prep Time 15 minutes

Cook Time 40 minutes

Total Time 55 minutes

Serves 6

Calories 362kcal

Author: Oriana Romero

Cassava Recipes—(continued)



*Cuisine: Colombian
Serves: 13 bread rolls*

Pandeyucas

Ingredients

2¼ cups (270g) cassava flour
(also called tapioca flour, mandioca, yuca flour or yuca starch)
1 tsp baking powder
1 tsp salt (optional)
1½ tsp white granulated sugar
1 cup mozzarella
250g feta cheese (grated)
1 tbsp butter, softened or at room temperature
1 large egg
milk, as needed

Instructions

1. In a large bowl mix flour, baking powder, salt and sugar.
2. Add cheese, butter and egg. Mix with your hands and add small amounts of milk while kneading until you get a soft dough.
3. Shape the dough into a large ball, wrap with plastic wrap and store in the refrigerator for about 3 hours.
4. Pre-heat oven to 400°F (200°C).
5. Take the dough out of the refrigerator and make small balls that measure about 2 inches in diameter (you can make them bigger if you want to). Then, roll each ball into a small cylinder or rope to shape it into a crescent moon, making sure the ends are thinner than the centre of the dough.
6. Place the pandeyucas about 1-2 inches (2.5-5 cm) apart on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper and bake them on the top rack of the oven for about 20 minutes or until they're golden brown. Serve immediately.

Garden Visits & Field Trips

Upcoming garden visits and field trips will be limited to only 10 people at a time. The visit to Lunar Farm is now FULLY BOOKED. An email will be sent with more information closer to the date.



Sunday 13 & 20 September— Field Trip to Lunar Farm, Birkdale

Lunar Farm is a family-run six acre farm in Birkdale. Seasonal vegetables and fruit are grown organically, by the moon and using biodynamic principles.

Farm produce will be for sale on the day. There will be no afternoon tea.

We'd like to hear from you!

For example, send us:

- A story about your garden
- A photo of an interesting plant
- An article about an unusual plant
- A request for items or information
- Specific garden or nutrition information
- A recipe for home-grown produce
- A notice that you have something to give away or sell
- A handy technique or tip
- A gardening problem solved
- Anything to do with organic growing
- A review of a ROGI library book

Please send your items to the editor and help keep the ROGI Newsletter topical, interesting, local and relevant. Email info@rogi.com.au

The September Newsletter deadline is 30 SEPTEMBER 2020

Used Pots Needed

Please **return seedling pots (that have been washed)** 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.

At this stage, we ask that you NOT bring larger pots, as we are not having the swap/share/giveaway table.



Veges on the verge at Timbara Nursery, Thornlands

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.

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
Silverbeet
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 the ROGI website www.rogi.com.au and click on the RESOURCES tab.

Keep in mind 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.**

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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

These groups may have temporarily stopped their face-to-face operations to comply with Covid-19 regulations. Please check with them for further details.

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

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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