

ROGI News

ROGI meetings are held on the 2nd Thursday night of the month, with doors opening at 6.15pm. Members can visit the plant table, seed bank, library and stalls or just have a chat before the meeting. Please be seated by 7pm ready for the proceedings.

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

Don't forget:

- Pay your membership dues (**only fully paid members may attend**)
- Observe social distancing
- BYO mug if you want tea/coffee
- There will be no supper
- Swap and share has resumed
- ROGI Rewards has resumed
- Bring a basket/box/bag for your purchases
- Return washed seedling pots
- Any questions for Plant Clinic

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A member of the hibiscus family, this warm season vegetable is valued for its edible green seed pods. It is high in vitamins, minerals, antioxidants and fibre. To find out what it is, go to page 16 for our Plant of the Month ...

Jill's Jottings

Hello ROGI Members,

This winter/spring weather has been glorious, albeit still a bit chilly overnight. Perfect for getting stuck into the garden – just as well, since we cannot go out and party! These COVID restrictions ... it means the AGM won't happen as usual in August, so we'll have it as soon as we can.

In spite of the disruptions and uncertainty, in the past year ROGI has given you 37 opportunities to meet with other keen food gardeners, whether aspiring or experienced. This provides value for your membership. Even if you can't do Thursday evenings, you can attend our Garden Visits (which are like personalised ROGI meetings on weekends), field trips and/or workshops. Here's what we got up to in the last 12 months:

Guest speakers –

August	Lara Brits	Vegetables on the Verge
September	Frank Cencig	Organic/Biodynamic farming
October	Linda Brennan	From Seed to Supper
November	Erik vanZuilekom	Growing in a Different Climate
December	Committee	Favourite tools & Garden Items
February	Andrew Stovall	Mulch Matters
March	Russell Zabel	Bees
May	Gary Entwistle	Epicurious Gardens
June	Round Robin	Various topics

Garden visits –

August	Wendy Lee at Belmont
September	Jan Haughton at Wellington Point
October	Margaret Sear at Capalaba
November	Vicky Leggatt at Capalaba
March	Rhonda Binns at Cleveland
May	Oaklands St Community Garden at Alexandra Hills
July	Jill & Ian Nixon at Birkdale

Field trips/Workshops –

August	Oaklands Street Community Garden: Bed Prep; growing and using cassava
September	Franco's Lunar Farm in Birkdale –two sessions
September	Permaculture Potager workshop 1 st
October	Permaculture Potager workshop 2 nd
November	Higgledy Piggledy Farm at Eight Mile Plains
March	Oaklands Street: Bed Prep workshop
April	Oaklands Street: Bed Prep & Planting workshop
April	Tullamore Farm – two trips
May	Samford Edible Garden Trail
June	Epicurious Garden, South Bank Parklands
July	Yandina Community Garden & Sustainable Cuisine

Events –

late 2020	No events
June	Environment and Community Fair at IndigiScapes

Extras

E-waste collection	December
Seed Savers group	October, December, February, April
Biodynamics group	February, March, April, May, June, July
Free tool sharpening	February
Newsletter	February to December (monthly)

I'd like to thank all of you who help make ROGI the strong and wonderful group that it is. In particular, I want to acknowledge the gardeners who have invited ROGI to visit their place. Having ROGI visit your garden benefits you as well as the visitors: the impending visit motivates you to do all those jobs you've been putting off (although we do not want you to go to any particular trouble – we don't want to see a show garden, we want to see a working garden). On the day, you receive hints and tips from your guests, which is helpful and worth the whole exercise. People bring along food, and also plants to swap, so they can go home with a new plant and a full tummy. So, if you've been toying with the idea of showing us your garden, just do it!

Jill's Jottings (continued)

If you'd like to get more ROGI in your life and help more people enjoy ROGI, please offer to be a part of our committee. We have fun at our committee meetings, and it's great being in a position to make ROGI the best gardening group it can be. I am sure any committee member will tell you they've enjoyed the experience, and have met many new people and often learned new skills.

Some of the Office Bearer roles have been adjusted, e.g. the PR person has oversight of all media, but doesn't have to do it all; there is the new role of COVID Coordinator; and we need one more person to work the AV desk at meetings. Note that all Committee Members will have a defined role.

I urge you have a good look at the various roles on pages 4-5 and consider if you have the skills, enthusiasm and time to contribute to ROGI. It is very evident that you learn so much more about organic growing, and are greatly inspired to grow more (and better) when you become really involved.

We need a new president and vice-president to take the reins, and as yet we have no takers for these two important positions. I will continue as president until the AGM can be held. Please have a chat with me on 0418 717 735, or talk to other current and former committee members and office bearers to hear what they say.

Happy gardening.
Jill Nixon, ROGI President

August Meeting

Edibles that thrive in our summer

Passionate local gardener Gennaro deRosa will show-case some of the best hardy edibles that will not just survive, but thrive in our hot and humid summer. He'll also tell us how to look after them and how to use them.

This will be preceded by the RO-

AUGUST MEETING CANCELLED
... this topic postponed

GI Annual General Meeting and Plant Clinic - so bring along your plant and gardening problems).



Collect any unwanted e-waste (anything with a battery or plug or battery) of yours, your friends and neighbours, and bring it along for pickup by Substation 33, who will repurpose it. See page 5 for more details.

This meeting is not open for visitors. Entry free for ROGI members. To join, go to the **MEMBERSHIP** tab at www.rogi.com.au

IMPORTANT! To ensure that we comply with COVID-19 regulations and our COVID-safe plan, everyone MUST sign in at the door before entering.

There will be drinks, but no supper. Bring your own cup.

Coming Events

AUGUST	Thurs 12	CANCELLED (AGM Postponed until our next meeting)
	Sun 22	Biodynamics Workshop (see p. 17) Garden Visit To be advised
SEPTEMBER	Thurs 9	ROGI Meeting
	Fri 17	Morning tea at IndigiScapes

Membership Information

- Direct Deposit** to BSB 633 000, Account Number 136 137 296
Bendigo Community Bank Victoria Point
Bendigo Community Bank Wynnum-Manly
N.B. Reference: Please include deposit ID: YOUR NAME MEMB
- Cheques** made payable to:
Redland Organic Growers Inc.
Pay at meeting or by post to:
Redland Organic Growers Incorporated
PO Box 1257, Cleveland. Qld. 4163.

Member Category	Members Renewing For 2021	New member/s joining in...			
		Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct 21-Dec 22
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

ROGI Committee Positions

The ROGI Annual General Meeting will be held at our next ROGI meeting. All committee positions will be declared vacant at the beginning of the AGM.

PRESIDENT

Leads and inspires ROGI.

Delivers monthly meetings to members.

Seeks guest speakers, field trips and other opportunities.

Promotes ROGI and organic gardening to the community.

VICE PRESIDENT

Assists the President to:

- Lead and inspire ROGI.

- Deliver monthly meetings to members.

- Seek guest speakers, field trips and other opportunities.

- Promote ROGI and organic gardening to the community.

Stands in if president is absent.

SECRETARY

Keeps records of the business of ROGI, including the rules.

Records officeholders and trustees of the association.

Sets agendas and records minutes of committee meetings.

Completes and sends documents to the Office of Fair Trading after the AGM.

Manages correspondence.

TREASURER

Handles all monies paid or received and issues receipts.

Deposits monies into ROGI bank account.

Makes payments from ROGI funds with appropriate authority.

Complies with Associations Incorporation Act.

Submits report, balance sheet or financial statement to the committee on a monthly basis.

Has custody of all accounting records of ROGI.

Reviews transactions online prior to all meetings.

Prepares and forwards financial statements and supporting documents to auditor before the Annual General Meeting.

ROGI Committee Positions *(continued)*

ROGI OFFICE BEARERS

EVENTS CO-ORDINATOR – INTERNAL (COMMITTEE POSITION *)

Sources and coordinates member workshops, garden visits and field trips.

EVENTS CO-ORDINATOR – PUBLIC (COMMITTEE POSITION *)

Organises public ROGI events (eg. IndigiScapes, Green Heart Fair).

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY (COMMITTEE POSITION *)

Updates membership list monthly; sends to committee.

Compiles list of visitors each month.

Sends an individual welcome letter to each new member.

PR & COMMUNICATIONS CO-ORDINATOR (COMMITTEE POSITION *)

Handles advertising and press releases.

Arranges maintenance of website, including Directory and Public Events.

Arranges maintenance of social media (Facebook, Instagram, Team App).

COMMITTEE MEMBERS (4) *

The committee members will have office bearer positions and be an integral part of the decision-making process. The eight committee members (listed above) are expected to attend ROGI management committee meetings. Currently these are usually held two weeks after the ROGI monthly members meeting.

POSITIONS VACANT:

You may nominate for any committee position (vacant or not) if you wish to be part of the decision-making process. All nominations must be lodged in writing on the appropriate form before the AGM and, with a proposer and a seconder and signed by the nominee.

COVID CO-ORDINATOR

Ensures COVID restrictions are adhered to and oversees the COVID cleaning requirements as listed by the Salvation Army and completes the signoff after the members meetings. Coordinates helpers.

AV DESK OPERATOR/S (Two or more people are needed)

Operates AV desk on meeting nights.

LIBRARY CO-ORDINATOR

Maintains records of books in stock and all loans.

Acquires new books as directed by the committee.

NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Liaises with President, Committee, and Office Bearers to publish their articles, upcoming events and other relevant articles/news.

Develops ideas and arranges for members or self to write articles.

Arranges for write-ups from events and speakers.

Edits for accuracy of spelling, grammar, sources and facts.

Sends finished document to President for review and distribution.

SEED BANK, SEED AND PLANT SALES CO-ORDINATOR

Purchases, saves or procures fresh quality seed for seed bank.

Maintains records of seed stock and rotates to maintain viability.

Sells seeds at ROGI meetings, garden visits and events.

Arranges for envelopes, labels and seed-packing days.

Ensures Seed Bank has seasonal stock.

SUPPER CO-ORDINATOR (When allowed)

Supplies consumables and keeps receipts for reimbursement by the Treasurer.

Lays out supper provided by members.

Ensures kitchen is clean after meetings with help of volunteers.

Launders tea towels.

June Field Trip - Epicurious Garden, South Bank

We had a wonderful morning on Sunday 27th June with our very knowledgeable guide Gary Entwistle, the horticultural curator of both South Bank and the Roma Street Parklands. He gave us a tour of South Bank Parklands including the Epicurious Garden.

This beautiful public space certainly takes a lot of maintenance for the 11 million visitors (pre Covid) that visit annually, under conditions that are unique to public spaces. South Bank is the second busiest park in the world per square metre. It is a credit to Gary and his team.



We walked past the original Epicurious gardens site near the river. Unfortunately, the garden was washed away in the January 2011 floods. The only tree that remains from the original Epicurious Garden, is an extremely healthy Helena olive tree (see left). It is from the original *Helena Olive* on Saint Helena Island. The first tree of its type was brought from Europe to the small convict island of Saint Helena (off Brisbane) in the 1800's. It has continued to thrive in the testing Moreton Bay environment.

The grassed areas are available for everyone to use, unlike Roma Street gardens. To maintain grassed areas at South Bank, green vegetable dyes are sprayed every two weeks - to not only make the grass look inviting to play and sit on, but also to assist with increasing growth. Every two to three weeks, the grassed areas are cored and filled with water and organic fertilisers. The grass is only allowed to grow 30-40mm. The extreme growing conditions from foot traffic and reduced sunlight from high rise buildings in the city

eventually takes its toll, resulting in the grass being replaced every year.



The Nepalese Peach Pagoda (above left) is one of the two last reminders of Brisbane Expo in 1988. Gary explained that one of his first jobs when he started at South Bank was to put a termite barrier in the Pagoda, as termites had been found. The beautiful tall bamboo (above right) surrounding the Pagoda was purchased from Bamboo Galore (at the back of Mudgeeraba) and is 13-14 years old.

The rainforest area with its gentle flowing creek running through will be soon getting new mulch. It's all hands-on deck when this mulching is done, as 100 cubic metres of mulch can only be moved by hand. This area had numerous exotic plants with coloured foliage, which were also lost in the 2011 floods. The plants are slowly being replaced with native rainforest plants.

Field Trip - Epicurious Garden, South Bank *(continued)*

Rainwater is collected from South Bank and surrounding areas, including Musgrave Park and Brisbane State High. When rain comes after a dry spell, the first 3-4mm passes through filter boxes to catch debris (e.g. cigarette butts) before going into the river. The remaining rainwater is then channelled into the Parkland's water tanks, which can collect 55 mega litres per year.

Water at South Bank is also recycled. 20 megalitres of water from the pools backwash are also collected and recycled. South Bank has been using an injection system in the last five years, which injects calcium to break down the salt. Soil tests are taken throughout the park every month.

The Epicurious Garden was designed to educate and inspire the home gardener, with fresh seasonal produce harvested regularly and free samples available for tasting. As the produce grows it is maintained by a team of dedicated staff and volunteers. The gardens are maintained using organic fertilisers (Pest Oil and Neem Oil) for pest control.



Betel leaf growing successfully under a large tree



Dragon fruit at South Bank's Epicurious garden - it is growing up a palm tree trunk.



Fragrant curry plant has been used as garden edging to deter possums

There were a great number of edibles growing, including citrus trees, bananas, stone fruit, herbs, tomatoes, and broccoli. The Epicurious Garden looks fabulous, and inspired me to go home to continue planning the changes for my garden. It was a great day, and Gary gave an excellent tour of this very special place in the heart of Brisbane.

Report and photos by Lisa Harsley

July Field Trip - Yandina Community Gardens

Yandina Community Gardens was established by the Maroochy Community Permaculture Group on disused basketball and tennis courts in 2002. This membership-based community group is dedicated to education and practical experiences in Permaculture - it's all about care for the earth, care for us, care for all beings.

So, what is PERMACULTURE?

The term 'permaculture' was coined in the seventies by Australian ecologist Bill Mollison and David Holmgren. Since then, it has become a global movement. Permaculture uses organic gardening practices, but it goes beyond this. It integrates the garden and home to create a lifestyle that impacts less on the environment. The aim is to create edible ecosystems.

Growing in the gardens are only sub-tropical plants that are either edible, medicinal or support species for soil and wildlife. They have less problems, better harvests, and they can be eaten

all year round because they are meant to grow in the area. They don't dig the soil, as this is better for the microbes and plants.

Instead of having individual plots, members share the planning, work and harvest. There are 130 members (not all active), some local and others who live outside the local area. The gardens are open Monday and Tuesday 8.30am-2pm and Saturday 8.30am-12pm. About 20 volunteers of differing ages and abilities come on each of these days to work in the gardens.

Courses, workshops and social events are held, and they have a nursery where seedlings are available for sale. The site features many areas such as raised vegetable garden beds, root vegetable bed, a food forest, composting area, and pond.

It's easy to see why Yandina Community Gardens is a leader in permaculture and sustainability on the Sunshine Coast. Thanks go to Robyn, who gave us a tour of the Community Gardens. If you weren't able to make it, check out their website for guided garden tours and other interesting information:

<https://yandinacommunitygardens.com.au/garden-tours/>

The 'Blue House' was gifted and relocated to the Yandina Community Gardens by a local. Its aim is to show how a traditional Queensland building can be renovated to be more sustainable.



Zone 1 (around the Blue House) features trees and shrubs at the front for wildlife, and at the back a herb spiral, massive Madagascar bean growing on a trellis, fruit trees, and enough edibles to feed ... a community!



July Field Trip - Yandina Community Gardens (cont'd)



Left: Root vegetable bed. A selection of root crops are grown that do well in a sub-tropical climate . Unusual vegetables like Tahitian spinach, yam, arrowroot and sweet potato will grow and produce year after year with very little effort. Other crops like cassava, ginger, turmeric and water chestnut will provide a plentiful harvest if dug up and replanted each year.

Below: Volunteers propagate a lot of sub-tropical plants and seedlings for the gardens, and also for purchase by the community.



Below: Raised beds suitable for chook tractor. They are growing a wide range of greens, brassicas and beans at the moment.



Right: ROGI member Jenny is holding one of the Food Waste Loop buckets. YCG recently received funding to start this program. They collect food waste from local businesses, saving it from going to landfill. This is then turned into valuable compost for their gardens. They have three different compost systems - aerobic hot compost, worm farm composting, and black soldier fly larvae composting. Did you know ... since it started, Food Waste Loop has rescued 21.8 tonnes of food waste and turned it into compost!



Above : At the back of the YCG site is a beautiful pond, providing habitat for pest predators such as frogs, dragonflies and mosquito eating fish. Water storage such as this can modify the microclimate of a site, as well as provide habitat for animal or vegetable aquaculture. And it looks so peaceful and inviting. A lovely place to hang out on a hot day after gardening!

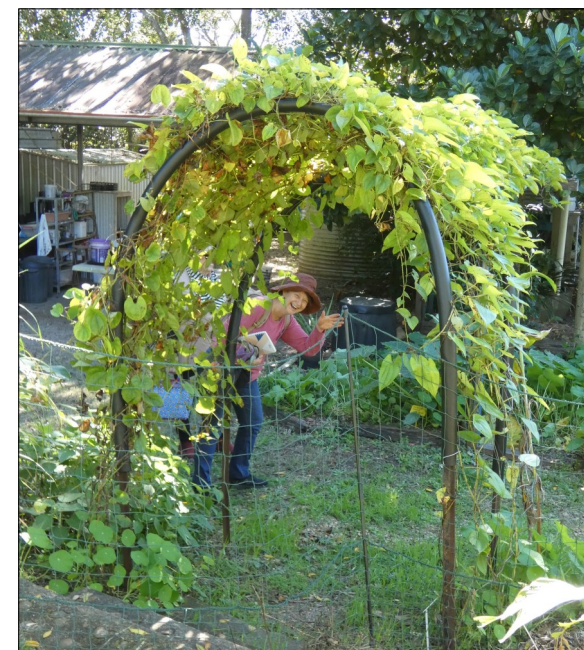
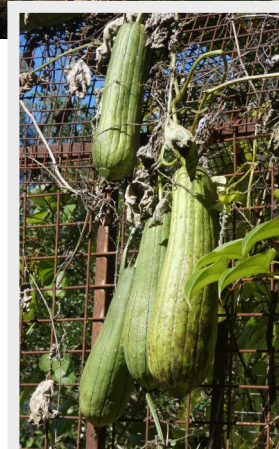
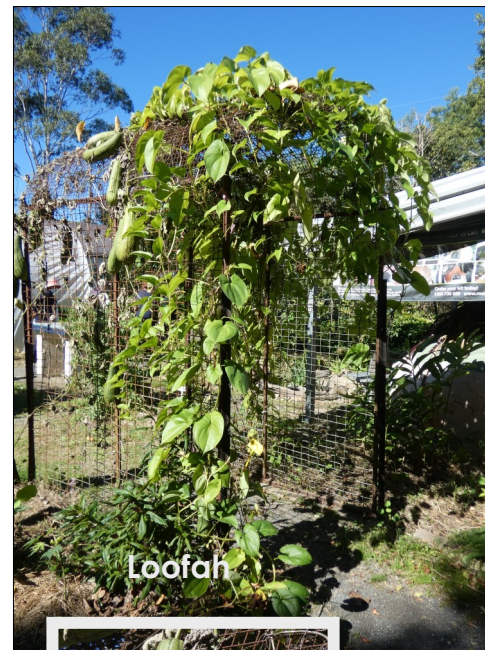


July Field Trip - Yandina Community Gardens (cont'd)

A **FOOD FOREST** is an orchard designed to mimic forests in nature - a sustainable food forest with a wide diversity of plants and animals, each supporting and complementing the needs of other species. The food forest is made up of seven layers and, while all seven layers don't have to be present for the plants to benefit from each other, each plant is still chosen to provide at least three uses in a garden - such as fruit tree providing fruit, food for the bees, plus wind and/or sun shelter for other plants.

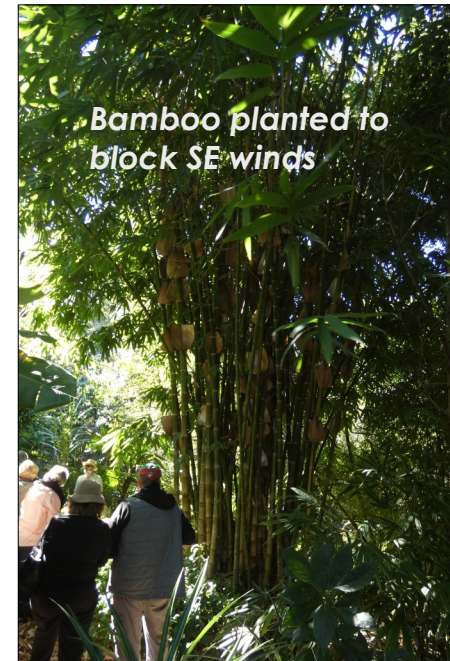
The seven layers of the food forest with suggestions suitable for the sub-tropics are:

- Pioneer species for canopy - large fruit trees like horseradish tree and avocado
- Understorey - smaller nut and fruit trees such as tamarillo, cherry guava and bananas
- Shrub/small tree layer - fig, pineapple, lemon myrtle
- Perennial herb layer - basil, comfrey, ginger, marigold
- Ground covers - clover, nasturtium, legumes (e.g. Pinto peanut)
- Edible root layer - sweet potato, yam bean
- Climbers/vines - climbing beans, passionfruit, grapes, choko



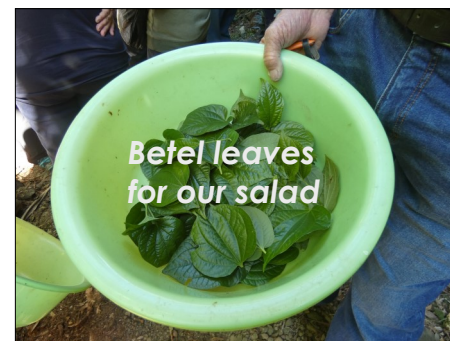
Above: Vertical space is utilised in a number of places by erecting arches out of materials that would normally end up in landfill (e.g. star pickets, irrigation pipe and reinforcing mesh).

July Field Trip - Sustainable Cuisine



The second destination of our visit to the Sunshine Coast was Sustainable Cuisine at Kiel's Mountain. On arrival, Kevin our host gave us two large plastic dishes and secateurs, and took us foraging on his quite steep acreage block. When he bought it lantana was growing, so it was removed and replaced with bamboo to block the considerable winds from the coast. This has created a lovely microclimate for lots of edibles ... growing as a ground cover were betel leaf, Okinawa and sambung spinaches (to name a few), loads of bananas (we counted five bunches!), and even pineapples, which didn't seem to mind the shade.

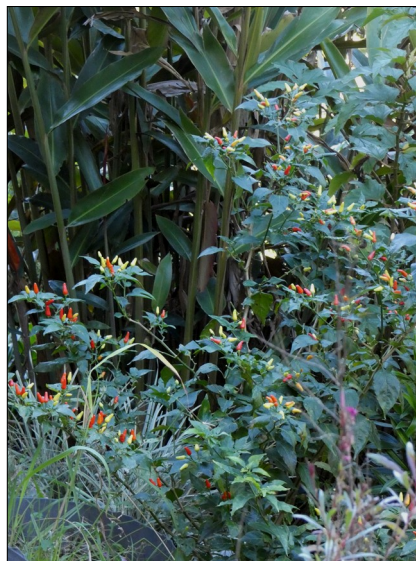
We meandered our way up to the top of his property, all the while picking greens for our salad, and learning about the many and varied edibles growing in amongst his ornamentals. It truly was an interesting and inspiring visit, and one most of us will remember not just for the plants, but for the amazing wood-fired pizza Kevin cooked us for lunch!



July Field Trip - Sustainable Cuisine (continued)



Above: Kevin cuts open the fruit from his Lipstick Tree (*Bixa Orellana*), which is native to South America. It is very popular in Philippine cooking. While the fruit itself is not edible, the orange-red pulp that covers the seed is used as a commercial food colouring and dye.



An abundance of chillies ... we decided not to put them in our salad.



Edible begonia (*Begonia x hybrida*) - A hardy perennial with pink flowers that are edible. They make a great addition to salads, the taste is sour and crunchy. Can also be used as an edible garnish on cakes and platters.



Left: Raised vegetable gardens line the steep block, and make use of their limited growing space in this area.



Look at that view! Where we enjoyed our scrumptious lunch of hand-picked salad leaves and flowers, and wood-fired pizza.

July Field Trip - Sustainable Cuisine (continued)



Left: Rhonda helps Kevin prepare the pizzas.

Right: Sharr and Phil perform quality control and preparation of our salad leaves.



Above and left: Time to relax and talk whilst lunch is prepared.

Right: Kevin removing one of the cooked pizzas. We were in for a treat! The base was made from a Sicilian recipe - flour, yeast, yoghurt and oil. It was then spread with a home-made pesto of wild greens, and finished with a range of toppings such as smoked salmon, anchovies, prawns, fetta, blue cheese, chorizo. And they just kept coming! My husband hasn't stopped raving about them since!

Report and photos by Ann Roffey



Bloom Where You are Planted -

The Joy of Flowers

by Linda Brennan, Ecobotanica

'Bloom where you are planted' – one of my Mum's many sayings to stop her children whining and whinging. I think of those five little words now when I plant flower seeds. But I have more regulars I use too... 'Bloom and be happy', 'Do your best', (I think you'll need it), and if I'm in a particularly encouraging mood with my seeds... 'Go for it girls'. Anyone walking past my potting shed would think I had gone nuts, and perhaps I have, but I blame it on a life in the garden.

It's this time of the year when all those little phrases are coming thick and fast. And that's because the potting benches are full of trays with germinating flower seeds. You see, I love flowers. I don't need to pick them for vases, but I really do love them to use in food, to give a bunch as a gift, or to simply enjoy their utter beauty in the garden. Oh and of course, they are often so wonderful as companions in the vegetable garden and orchard as well.

So, this month I'm encouraging you to grow flowers among your fruit and vegies. You'll love the results I know. It's already August and spring is underway (I know because the apple and nectarine blossoms are making joyous zithers of colour on the espaliers.)

What would I recommend to grow from seed?

As for annuals, go for spring colour. A few of my faves include cornflowers, and they are not just blue. There are pinks, reds, white and purples too. You'll love including the dried flowers in tea and granola, and cornflowers are tall enough that you can grow a border of colour such as dwarf snapdragons or dianthus in front.

Other tall growing annuals for early spring include sunflowers, which can be rather gigantic, tall marigolds in glorious gold and

lemon, and the frothiness of finery in green and blue that is *Nigella* (Love in a Mist).

Perennials mean a little less work as they pop up year after year. I particularly love the fragrant freesias, although it's a bit late to put the corms in now. Better to plan for next year. And don't forget dahlias. I've just put in some seeds of dahlias and hope they'll compete for fabulousness with the tubers that will be popping up very soon. The daylilies are a great addition to any garden and even in a vegie patch, they are sensational. They are my favourite edible flower snack food.



Hibiscus mutabilis aka Confederate Rose. A spectacular display over summer. Grow from cuttings now.

Bloom Where You are Planted - The Joy of Flowers

(continued)

I must also suggest adding some colourful shrubbery, because when you just don't have time for fussing with seeds, the shrubs and permanent plants will bloom with just a lick of water and some fertiliser. Camellias always impress with their hardiness, as do baby bougainvillea, Hibiscus are forgiving of neglect, and please do try a bush of Confederate Rose, Hibiscus *mutabilis* if you have an empty corner. While it's deciduous in winter, the blooms are sensational over summer when the foliage is velvety and green!

Go for it girls and boys!



Hollyhocks will grow again next year from the root mass. They tower over many annuals in your garden.



Torch Ginger love a part shade, moist spot with plenty of fertiliser.

Nigella (Love in a Mist) is an annual. It self sows readily and will grow in full sun.



SOME MORE FAVOURITE FLOWERS TO GROW NOW

Please note, not all are edible!

Annuals	Perennials	Shrubs etc
Cornflower	Dahlia	Bougainvillea
Marigolds	Daylilies	Camellia
Nigella (Love in a Mist)	Torch Gingers	Confederate Rose
Snapdragons	Dianthus	Pentas
Sunflowers	Hollyhock (they'll grow from the root mass for 2 years)	French Lavender
Cosmos		Plant seeds of native Hovea after they've flowered

ROGI SEED SAVERS GROUP

Unfortunately, we are unable to meet up at present. However, when we do, we will meet again during the daytime. Linda will have another interesting topic for our keen ROGI seed savers, so check ROGI Events in the coming months for date and time.

Plant of the Month—Okra

Okra (*Abelmoschus esculentus*), also known as “lady’s fingers” or “gumbo”, is believed to originate from Ethiopia. It is a vigorous annual shrub from the same plant family as hibiscus and cotton, *Malvaceae*.

In subtropical areas, Okra is planted in spring and summer, and will grow 1-1.5m tall. If you’re looking for a drought tolerant plant, this is it! Okra LOVES the sun - put it in a position where it will get as much as possible. Plant your seed direct (after frost, if you’re in a slightly cooler area than Redlands) into well-drained, fertile soil that has lots of organic matter added to it. Okra prefer a slightly acid pH of 6-6.5.

Seed can be soaked in warm water overnight to improve germination. Plant seeds about 30-40cm apart to allow plenty of growing room (they’re related to the rosella, and have a similar growth habit). Germination is within seven days, providing temperatures are above 18°C.

Okra plants are quick-growing, and they are largely free of pest and disease problems. Once fruit emerge you should pick daily while the pods are young and tender (5-7cm long); if the pods are larger they become tough and stringy. If you harvest regularly, this will encourage the plant to produce more. I must confess to having never grown okra, and until recently I hadn’t tasted it either! What is it like, you ask? “Green”, says one ROGI member. A little like a bean, says another. I steamed mine, and found it quite flavoursome.

It would be remiss of me not to mention the ‘slime’ factor. Okra produces mucilage, similar to other plants such as aloe vera, kelp and psyllium. Perhaps because I steamed the okra, it was not very obvious, and certainly my children didn’t think it was slimy either - in fact, they quite liked it!

The ways you can use okra are many and varied, there is even a whole book devoted to it by Chris Smith: *The Whole Okra - A Seed to Stem Celebration*. Jill Nixon will be reviewing this book

in the future, but a quick scan revealed the author’s passion for this often misunderstood vegetable. It can be added to curries, soups and stir fries; pickled; fermented; and even made into okra fries. The flowers and young leaves can also be eaten. The seeds have a number of uses - you can make okra seed flour or oil; if you want to cut back on your caffeine intake, the okra seeds can be roasted and ground to form a caffeine-free substitute for coffee. And finally, to prove that this is a crop that gives so much - the stalks can be made into fibre and paper; they can also be dried and used as drinking straws. Amazing!

Okra is high in dietary fibre and vitamins C and K. It has moderate amounts of folate, magnesium and thiamine, and is a rich source of antioxidants. Why not try growing something a little different this summer...okra!

By Ann Roffey



Janet was growing Okra Country Red in January this year. Featured on the front of this newsletter is the flower of this okra plant.



Okra, lightly steamed for our dinner. Yum!

Biodynamics News

Biodynamics for weed control - Peppering workshop

In biodynamic gardening, weed peppers are used to clear an area of unwanted plants that have become pests and have proven resistant to other organic control measures.

Weed peppers are created by burning the weed, treating it homoeopathically, and restoring the energy from this process to the land. Like all biodynamic preparations, this must be carried out in accordance with the cycles of the moon and zodiac constellations.

If you would like to know more about biodynamic peppering, **a workshop is being held for ROGI members on Sunday 22 August from 12 noon till 2pm. The cost is \$10 per head**, which is being fully subsidised by ROGI. Numbers are strictly limited, both due to Covid restrictions, and also because this is an interactive workshop (so everyone gets to participate).

We will be creating weed peppers that deal with nutgrass and oxalis weeds. Participants get to take home 10ml of each pepper, providing they bring along two small amber bottles.

Following the application of the pepper, it is strongly recommended that an application of horn manure is applied to the land to further boost the actions of the pepper. And if you want to know more about horn manure, you need to attend the next series of biodynamic gardening workshops which are starting soon!

Biodynamic Gardening Workshops

In January of this year, the ROGI Committee approved a series of workshops to introduce and explore the principles of biodynamics. These workshops were to be available for ROGI members.

The first set of Biodynamic workshops were held from February to July this year and have been well received. The next set of workshops will be held from August to December, and will be held in the evening for those members who are not available for daytime workshops.

If you are interested in learning more about this intriguing method of gardening, then put your name down and come along to the workshops. Members are asked to commit to all five sessions of the biodynamics workshops, as your knowledge builds across the sessions. Warning, you will be expected to participate with mixing cow poo and other exciting substances!



Making Cow Pat Pit



Making tree paste

Each workshop session runs for around two hours, and will be held on the 4th Thursday of the month. The first session will be held on 26 August at 6.30pm. Subsequent session dates are 25 Sept, 28 Oct, 25 Nov and either 16 or 23 December (depending on what suits the majority). The workshops are held at my home in Thornlands.

Numbers are strictly limited to nine people, and you must be a fully financial member of ROGI to attend, as ROGI is wholly subsidising these workshops. For further information please phone or text me (*number provided in accompanying email*).

Rohanne Young, The Delectable Garden

DID YOU KNOW? Rohanne Young does a weekly gardening session on BAY FM 100.3. Tune in on Saturday mornings at 6.30am for some expert gardening advice.

Upcoming Garden Events Aug-Sept

Your local Bayside group of ACF (Australian Conservation Foundation), is starting a varied monthly nature outreach/activities programme and welcomes all participants. The first two events are:

Movies that Matter:- Frackman is being screened at the Koala Tavern, Capalaba on Tuesday 17 August at 6.30 - 9.30pm.

The film is followed by speaker Ellie Smith from "Lock the Gate". Tickets \$10 through Eventbrite.

Yoga In the Park - facilitated by ACF community volunteer Vicki Salisbury to raise funds for Save Toondah harbour wetlands.

BRISBANE ORGANIC GROWERS INC. ORGANIC FAIR

Sunday 29 August - 9am to 3pm

Peace Hall, 102 McDonald Road, Albion

- Learn all about growing organically
- Free demonstrations and talks
- Free gardening advice
- Stalls selling herbs, books, seeds, plants, jams, tools & much more
- Relax with friends at the BOGI Café
- Browse the produce from member's suburban gardens
- Stay for the auction of competition entries

REDFEST STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL

Friday 3- Sunday 5 September

Redlands Showgrounds, Long Street, Cleveland

You are invited to participate in the Homegrown and Homemade section of the exhibition by displaying your organically grown vegetables and fruit.

OAKLANDS STREET COMMUNITY GARDEN Open Day

Sunday 12 September

Oaklands Street, Alexandra Hills

It's on again! Oaklands Street Community Garden's annual Open Day is back with stalls, food, music, talks and more.



Salvia Dorisiana (fruity sage) growing in Jill & Ian Nixon's garden in July. Linda Brennan noticed there were tiny holes in the flowers. She waited for 10 minutes to see what was making the hole. It was a bee! Because the flower is so long, it needed to make a hole so it can access the nectar within. Isn't nature amazing!

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 26 AUGUST 2021

Rohanne's Biodynamic Planting guide: the best time to sow, propagate or prune in August

Looking after your soil. Includes composting, adding nutrients, applying cow horn manure	1st-8th and 25th-31st
Sowing seeds (refer to relevant plant group below), grafting, plant propagation and foliar feeds	9th to 22nd
Plant and care for fruiting annuals including tomatoes, eggplant, peas and beans	1st-3rd, 9th-13th, 18th- 20th, 27th-29th
Plant and care for root crops including carrots, beetroot and potatoes	2nd-4th, 11th-14th, 20th-23rd, 29th-31st
Plant and care for flowering annuals	4th-7th, 14th-16th, 22nd -24th
Plant and care for leafy annuals	7th-9th, 16th-18th, 24th-27th



Silverbeet
Fordhook Giant

Unless you provide some decent shade, most leafy greens will struggle in our hot and humid summer. Why not plant them now, and harvest before the heat begins? ROGI Seed Bank has many different varieties of lettuce and silverbeet. You could also check out the Seed Savers' free seeds.



Various lettuces



Salad Mix

Seed Sowing Guide

August

Artichoke
Asparagus
Beans: French
Beetroot
Capsicum/Chilli
Carrot
Celery
Chicory
Eggplant
Kohlrabi
Lettuce
Okra
Potatoes
Pumpkin
Radish
Silverbeet
Squash
Sweet Potato
Tomato
Zucchini

For a list of seed bank stock, please go to the ROGI website www.rogi.com.au and click on the RESOURCES tab.

September

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

This guide is for sowing seeds, not seedlings. There may be several days/weeks between the optimal time to sow a seed and to transplant a seedling. Please keep in mind this is only a guide - 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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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 Street, Alexandra Hills. 0408 259 445

Meeting Information

Please consider contributing to any of these at various times:

ROGI REWARDS:

Good quality plants and other garden-related items brought along by members. Everyone who attends the meeting is 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 – seedlings, eggs, honey, lemons, jam, sustainable craft items – things that have cost you time, money, and effort to produce. Please make sure items are labelled, named and priced. It is preferable that you staff the stall yourself or time-share with a friend.

FREE SWAP/SHARE/GIVE-AWAY:

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

PLANT CLINIC:

Bring along your plant problems—insect/plant/weed (as many parts as you can - fruit, leaf, root) in a sealed plastic bag. Fill in the form on the Plant Clinic table (located 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 in the newsletter. *Please be aware that, although we do our best, there may not be anyone present who can solve your problem or identify your plant, especially if it is not related to organic gardening.*