

Next meeting: Wednesday 14th October, 2015

ROGI News

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

Salvation Army Church
Cnr McDonald Rd & Macarthur St
ALEXANDRA HILLS

Admission

Members: Gold coin
Visitors: \$5

Please bring a plate of food - savoury/sweet or nibbles preferably home-made.

Tea/coffee provided

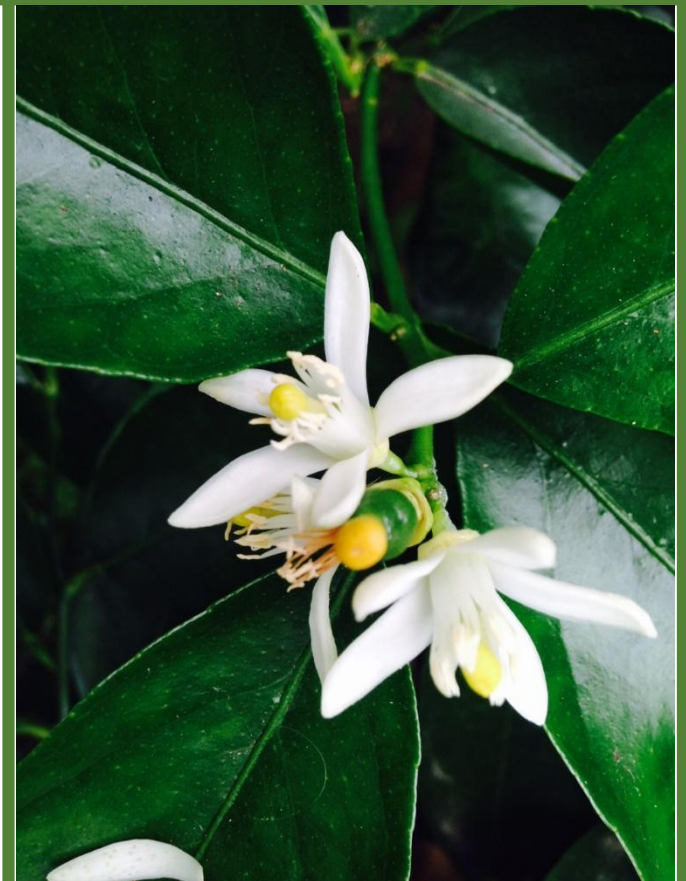
You are welcome to provide a quality plant to help share plants with other members. Bring a bag/box /basket for your purchases.

See you Wednesday ...

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Citrus flower buds begin to form in early winter and develop through late winter and spring. Most flowers don't result in the formation of fruit because more than 99% of them usually fall off.

Jill's Jottings

Hello fellow food gardeners

The book I'm reading at the moment is 'The Soil will Save Us: How Scientists, Farmers and Foodies are Healing the Soil to Save the Planet' by Kristin Ohlson. Some of the takeaways in the first 50 pages are:

- There is a trend towards small farming, but these farmers may call themselves 'soil farmers' or 'microbe farmers' or 'carbon farmers' – they concentrate their efforts on what's in the soil and then everything else thrives.
- Mother Nature has a low-tech method of extracting carbon from the atmosphere: photosynthesis and the buildup of carbon in the soil that naturally follows. So grow plants on every spot of your land to maximise photosynthesis and do your bit to sequester carbon.
- Bare land starves the soil microbes – they need living plants (or dead, in the form of mulch) to get their food.
- How many microorganisms are in a cup of healthy soil? More than all the humans who have ever lived! Wow!

The message is: take care of the little fellas. I'm pretty sure we're all doing our best to do this.

Now that spring is well-and-truly here, your plants most likely are looking at their best. Unfortunately, that usually

means your weeds are doing pretty well also. As we know, all the word 'weed' reflects is a negative attitude towards that particular plant. Purslane, cobbler's pegs, dandelion, chickweed, fat hen and more are common in our area and are all edible by us and our chooks. Why not borrow a weed book from the library and discover how to make the most of these free greens?

While we're talking about edible weeds, remember the edible flowers. Here's a photo of the non-green portion of our salad today – flowers of pineapple sage, chives, fruity sage, chicory, dandelion, viola, nasturtium, brassica, coriander and borage, plus carrot and beetroot.



See you Wednesday.

Happy Growing, Jill

A Note from the Editor

Welcome to the October newsletter. As this is my first edition, I hope you will all welcome a few changes with some new regular articles and minor format changes. I am really excited to be the new ROGI editor. Being a rookie gardener, I'm always in awe of the combined years of knowledge and experience that gathers at the ROGI meetings to share their experiences. Please feel free to share all your tips with me as I will always be hungry for any articles. Here is a little of what you can expect in forthcoming editions of the monthly ROGI newsletters:

My Garden, My Sanctuary

Whether it is your garden on a whole or just a little corner tucked down the back, I would really welcome stories and photos of members' gardens. Please email me on info@rogi.com.au. For this month, I will start off with my own humble garden which I must say will be a little sad due to the fact I have only just moved in.

Buzzing around Your Garden

A feature on any living bird, bug or critter that forms part of the suburban backyard and is relevant to our eco gardens. If you have a great story on something that lives in your garden, forward to me for printing.

If you have any ideas that you would like to see included in the monthly newsletter, please come and see me at the meetings to discuss. Also, as there are always requests for some of the yummy food that members make for supper, it would be really great if you could write your recipes to be placed next to your dish so I can publish them.

Kind Regards Sue Eaton

Coming Events

October 2015

11th – Garden Visit - Wendy Boglary (already booked out)

14th – ROGI Meeting

November 2015

11th – ROGI Meeting

15th – Garden Visit - Tony & Linda Garbett *

December 2015

9th – ROGI Meeting

April 2016 Date Claimer

16th – Redlands Good Gardening Expo

* Book with Toni B on events@rogi.com.au or 0402 323 704

Membership Fees

Payments can be paid by:

- **Cash**
- **Cheques** made payable to "Redland Organic Growers Inc."
- **Direct Deposit** BSB 633-000 Acc 136 137 296

Bendigo Bank, Capalaba **Central**

Please bring your membership application form to the next meeting.

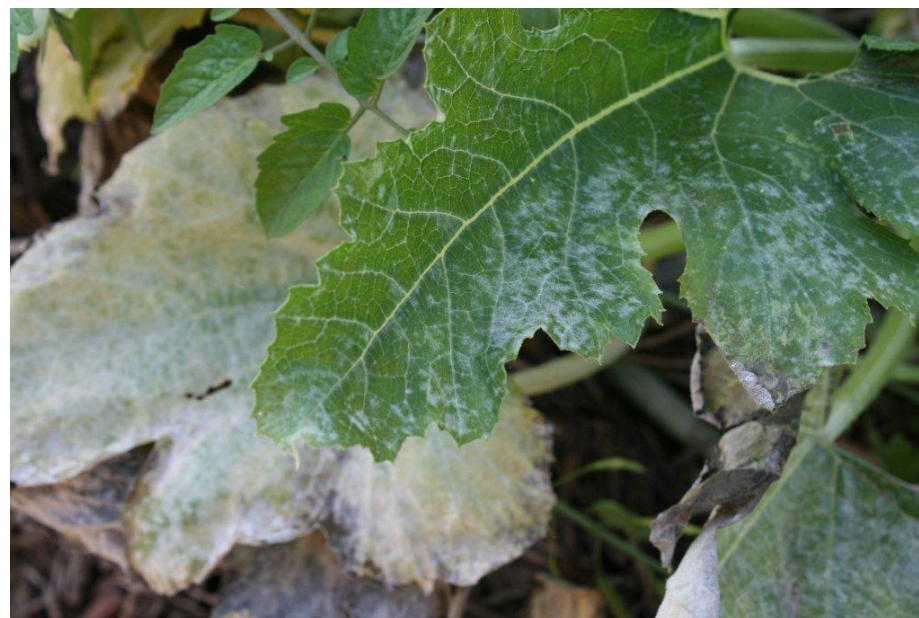
Email group@rogi.com.au for application form

Fees	New member/s joining in...			
Member Category	Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec of following year
Single	\$30	\$22.50	\$15	\$37.50
Family	\$50	\$37.50	\$25	\$62.50
Pensioner Single	\$20	\$15	\$10	\$25
Pensioner Couple	\$30	\$22.50	\$15	\$37.50

October Speaker

Linda Brennan, local gardening guru from Ecobotanica, will be our guest speaker for the October ROGI meeting. Linda will talk about identifying and treating powdery mildew and downy mildew.

Powdery mildew is one of the most common and easily recognized plant diseases. It is perfect timing as the humid season will soon be here, and your snow peas, zucchinis and precious annuals will be at risk of getting the powdery fungus that can lead to the demise of the plant before harvest.



September Meeting Speaker

We were lucky enough to have Linda Barrett as our speaker at the last ROGI meeting. Linda took us on her journey from the inception - she first purchased her property at Thorneside in 2006 - to where her garden is now. What an interesting journey she has been on.



Their block was a long and skinny and sloped to one side. The original dwelling was an old fishing shack which they made habitable and lived in for the next couple of years until they built

their current home in 2008. Previously the property had been rented and they undertook a huge challenge cleaning up the years of trash from previous tenants (including an enormous number of disposable nappies) and clearing the block.

How to lay out the garden was another challenge and the zig-zag approach was adopted. Vegie gardens on one side and fruit trees on the other.



One of the biggest challenges was from the Singapore Daisy that kept creeping over from the neighbours garden, nut grass, wind and pesky possums. Initially they used hundreds of bales of sugar cane mulch to establish the gardens.



Along the way Linda found many challenges. As the block was on a slope, every time it rained the rocks in the path would be washed down the hill and her husband would have to shovel them all back up the hill. Then there was the problem with the dogs eating the Organic Xtra fertiliser. And of course, the naughty crows that loved the mandarins and would eat them off the tree.

With the addition of chickens to help with replacing organic soil back into the gardens, lots of composting and the adjacent blocks now developed assisting to create wind blocks, the challenges have been lessened. Like all new gardens, if we had to do it again we would be better armed with local knowledge.

And what does the future hold for Linda and her husband's little hidden salad bowl at Thorneside?

- Planting understorey plants
- Reducing amount of re-useable waste removed from garden
- Increasing compost production
- Gaining some new skills eg grafting

Margaret Sear

Oaklands St Community Garden Open Day



The impressive brassica garden.



One of the side shoots that grow after the main head of broccoli has been harvested. Note how big each individual little 'flower' head is. A garden member gave Jill several stalks to take home for dinner. They were really very nice – softer than other broccoli.

Below: the herb garden



Above: Posing in front of the delightful 'swale garden' at the entrance, Garry and Sophie are ready for the day.

Below: Part of the original garden consisting of several raised garden beds, some with trellises for climbers.



Oaklands St Community Garden Open Day ... continued



Pretty edibles – kale and calendula.

Below: It was worthwhile going there just for the Asian-inspired hot food! Yum!



Special guest for the garden's 10th anniversary was Jerry Coleby-Williams of Gardening Australia fame. Jerry took guests on a tour and answered their questions and discussed points of interest along the way.

Rain/tank water is better than town water. Why? Jerry explained about the organic matter in the soil and chloramines which researchers think is carcinogenic. Not worth the risk – use rain/tank water.

Pointing to where the gorgeous ranunculus flowers were in full blousy bloom, Jerry remarked how early flowers have been coming to their peak over recent years. Perhaps Toowoomba's Carnival of Flowers will need to bring its dates forward so that people can view the gardens at their blooming best. We home gardeners have already noticed this unpredictability in the seasons.

Noting some white butterflies fluttering around the brassicas, Jerry told about his Nan's experiences of growing *Barbarea vulgaris* (landcress) near her



cabbages kept them caterpillar-free. For more information about this see:

<http://www.abc.net.au/gardening/stories/s4197010.htm>

Someone asked Jerry about the best fruit trees for this area. He suggested avoiding the so-called 'tropical' peaches and apples and stick to fair dinkum sub-tropical fruit. Think pawpaws and avocados. He recommended jackfruit – a very productive tree with huge fruit – if you've got the space and the appetite.

Oaklands St Community Garden is regularly open every Wednesday (2 – 4), Friday (9 – 12) and Sunday (2 – 5). You are welcome to pop in, say hello and have a look around. Perhaps you might even like to join in and grow something.

Story: Jill Nixon

Photos: Margaret Sear

Below: The display of ROGI's Box Gardens. These demonstrate that it's possible to have a garden even with very little space or money. We raffle them at our public events.



My Garden, My Sanctuary!

I officially settled on my house on 6th July however spent a full three weeks renovating. Not a room was left unturned due to the condition the previous owners left it in. Once most of the house was finished, it was time to think about the garden. I have really missed my gardens from my last house. I was lucky there were some well established fruit trees and a bare garden that would be perfect for growing vegies.



Some friends gave me an old bathtub and I framed it up using fence palings and timber from an old pallet I pulled apart. I filled it with soil and planted a mixture of herbs.

The fruit trees were very neglected despite some being laden with fruit. I trimmed off all the infected branches and cleared all the grass away from the trunks, made some frames to go around the trunks with leftover



timber from the herb bath and gave them a good dose of fertiliser. The mulberry tree is loaded with fruit and, despite its size, I pick a large bowl every day.

Finally I have seedlings appearing and looking forward to fresh vegetables once again.

Sue Eaton



What to do with a dog that continuously wants to bury his bone in the vegie garden

I never quite understood the logic of why dogs like to bury their juicy, meaty bones but alas, my dog must hide it for at least 24 hours before it is fit to nibble on. Unfortunately my vegie garden was the place of choice. As frustrating as it is, I have never been able to discourage him from doing it no matter what.

Until a chance purchase from the Redland Bay dump shop whilst picking up some pots. A kiddies sand pit was the perfect solution to this ongoing problem. Now whenever I have a bone for Charlie, I call him over while I bury it and presto, no more gardens being dug up.



It's Mulberry Season again

Mulberries are deciduous trees that provide good shade in summer and in autumn the leaves turn yellow and then drop.

CULTURE

Adaptation: Mulberry trees are very hardy, and will grow well in just about any climatic condition. Plant in full sun and give them enough space to spread out. They are fairly wind tolerant and a great tree for beginner gardeners.

Soils: They are extremely adaptable and will thrive in a wide-variety of soils, although a deep, well-drained loam soil is best. As mulberries grow and fruit vigorously, additional fertiliser is not necessary for these low maintenance trees.

Pruning : Pruning of these vigorous trees after fruiting is recommended to keep them at a size where you can easily harvest the fruit.

Irrigation: Mulberries don't need irrigating - save your water for a fruit tree that needs it!

Propagation: Mulberries can be grown from seed but are more commonly propagated from hardwood cuttings. Grafted mulberries will not grow as tall as

mulberries grown from seed, and are recommended for suburban blocks.

Pests and diseases: Mulberries are hardy and not prone to problems – the most common problem though is birds getting to the fruit before you do! As mulberries crop so heavily there is often plenty to share with the local wildlife anyway. Picking fruit regularly and early (before it is fully ripe) can help beat the birds. Fruit fly can occasionally be a problem.

Harvesting

Mulberries are self-fertile and will pollinate themselves, so you don't have to plant more than one tree to get the soft, luscious fruit every year. Your garden planted tree will fruit the very first year, and in each successive year the crop will be better than the last. It will fruit well for at least 40 years. Keep pinch pruning to reduce tree size and be able to reach the fruit and keep netted when ripening if you wish to avoid the birds leaving strong mulberry stains on everything.

Storage

Mulberries are usually eaten fresh from the tree and are also ideal to use in jams, wines or apple and mulberry pies. Unwashed, the berries will keep several days in a refrigerator in a covered container.



LOOKING FOR SOMETHING TO DO?

An introduction to butterfly gardening

When: Saturday, November 7,

Time: 10:30am – 12pm

Venue: Wynnum Library

Cost: Free

Bookings required. Phone Wynnum Library on 07 3403 2199 to reserve your place.

Note

Presented by Jo Hammond from Butterfly Host Plants.

Keeping stingless bees in the city

When: Saturday, November 7,

Time: 11am – 12pm

Venue: Stones Corner Library

Cost: Free

Bookings required. Phone Stones Corner Library on 07 3403 2170 to reserve your place.

Note

Presented by Ingrid Dimock from City Chicks.

Compost and worm farm workshop

When: Sunday, November 8

Time: 9am – 12pm

Where: Garden Gate Cafe, 153 Rainbow Street, Sandgate

Cost: Free

Bookings required by calling Council on 07 3403 8888, as places are limited.

Morning tea will be provided. Wear a hat and flat enclosed shoes. Bring drinking water and sunscreen.

Grow organic food for a family in your backyard

When: Sunday, November 8

Time: 10:30am – 12:30pm

Venue: Mt Coot-tha Library

Cost: Free

Bookings required. Phone Mt Coot-tha Library on 07 3403 2550 to reserve your place.

Note

Learn how to grow enough organic food in your backyard to provide for 50-75% of your family's fruit and vegetable needs in a small back yard. You will also learn how to make self-watering planter boxes in this session presented by urban gardener Roman Spur.

10 essential plants for your backyard food garden

When: Saturday, November 14

Time: 10am – 12pm

Venue: West End Library

Cost: Free

Bookings required. Phone West End Library on 07 3403 8620 to reserve your place.

Note

Presented by Morag Gamble, SEED International.

Top Australian natives for culinary flavours and fruit

When: Saturday, November 14

Time: 10:30am – 12:30pm

Venue: Fairfield Library

Cost: Free

Bookings required. Phone Fairfield Library on 07 3403 8615 to reserve your place.

Note

Presented by horticulturalist, Claire Bickle.

Highrise harvest

When: Saturday, November 14

Time: 1:30 – 3:30pm

Venue: Hamilton Library

Cost: Free

Bookings required. Please phone (07) 3403 8888 to reserve your place.

Note

Presented by ABC Radio gardening presenter, Annette McFarlane.

Landscaping with herbs

When: Wednesday, November 18

Time: 2 – 3:30pm

Venue: Coopers Plains Library

Cost: Free

Bookings required. Phone Coopers Plains Library on 07 3403 1530 to reserve your place.

Note

Presented by horticulturalist, Noel Burdette.

Heirloom seed saving and plant swap

When: Saturday, November 21

Time: 10am – 12:30pm

Venue: Mitchelton Library

Cost: Free

Bookings required. Phone Mitchelton Library on 07 3403 7410 to reserve your place.

Note

Presented by ABC Radio gardening presenter, Annette McFarlane.

Superfoods in your garden

When: Sunday, November 22

Time: 1 – 3pm

Venue: Chermside Library

Cost: Free

Bookings required. Phone Chermside Library on 07 3403 7200 to reserve your place.

Note

Find out how to grow, harvest and use aloe vera, turmeric, chia, yacon and some very common superfoods that may surprise you. Presented by Morag Gamble, SEED International.

For further information about any of these workshops, please go to this website:

<http://www.brisbane.qld.gov.au/whats-on/type/green-events>

Home Soil Solutions Workshop

Biological Growing

Techniques

for the Home Gardener

**Held in the magical
Phoenix Sculpture Garden
on the summit of Mt
Glorious, this informative
and fun program will
reveal many secrets of the
soil.**

Learn how to:

- Work with nature
- Feed the soil life organic matter
- Minimize tilling and compaction
- Balance the soil minerals.

Enjoy afternoon tea, while indulging in the serene majesty of the gardens that showcase the work of a master sculptor – Graham Radcliffe.

See the theory translate into practice, in a beginning patch.

- Apply a mineral balancing blend
- Green manure
- Natural biological control via insectary plants
- Microbial tea
- Starter
- Fertigation
- Foliar nutrition.

Home Soil Solutions began out of a desire to make growing chemical free, nutrient dense food, at home, reliable and productive for gardeners, regardless of soil type.

Let us show you how.

Saturday 17th October

1.30 pm – 5.00 pm

59 Fahey Road, Mt Glorious

\$30 per person

Bookings essential,

RSVP 07 3289 0171 0410 030 870

grahamradcliffe@bigpond.com

Presenter – Leanne Harper

www.homesoilsolutions.com.au

info@homesoilsolutions.com.au

07 3408 6330

ROGI Library News

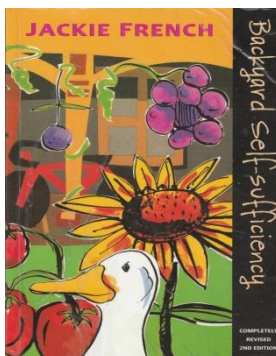
Hello to all our members from Stephen and Angela. A big thank-you to Mandy for helping us to settle into our role and we look forward to helping everyone.

Last meeting we heard from Linda Barrett who gave an interesting talk about "The Evolution of a Backyard". Some resources available from our library that you may find of use in creating your own "productive space that produces an abundance of fruit, vegetables and herbs" are as follows:

Backyard Self-Sufficiency

by Jackie French.

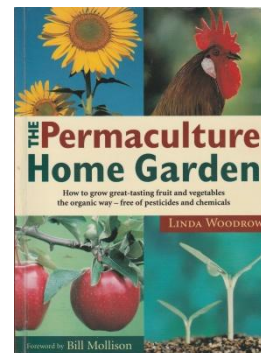
This is a great little book and the first chapter is entitled "Planning the self-sufficient garden" – and, as she says at the beginning: "Gardens need planning to be really productive." At the end of the chapter she provides a list of what she terms "The Great Self-Sufficiency Plants": these include avocados, cassava, maize, potatoes, sweet potatoes, taro, and 'your favourite nuts'. Jackie's book also includes many interesting recipes.



The Permaculture Home Garden

by Linda Woodrow with a forward by Bill Mollison.

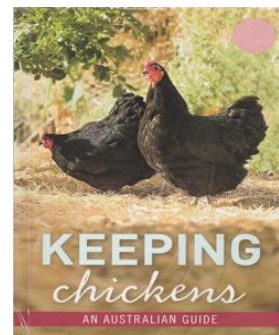
This book includes step-by-step instructions and helpful diagrams that make it easy for you to plan and plant-out a garden to suit both your taste and space and then grow great-tasting fruit and vegetables organically.



Keeping Chickens: An Australian Guide

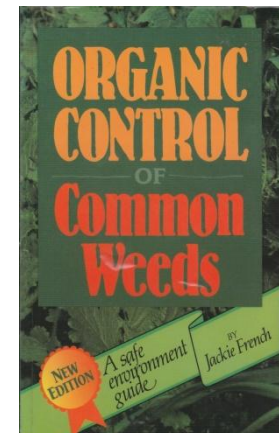
by Nicolas Brasch.

Everything you'll need on caring, choosing and keeping chickens including illustrated and detailed designs for chicken houses.



Organic Control of Common Weeds by Jackie French. This is a completely revised edition in which Jackie shows that it is possible to control weeds using your own home-grown, natural herbicides, along with mulching, solarisation (this involves stretching a sheet of clear plastic over the area to be de-weeded: sealed at the edges,

the trapped heat raises the soil temperature, destroying young weeds and also many weed seeds and soil pathogens) along with a host of other cheap, environmentally safe and

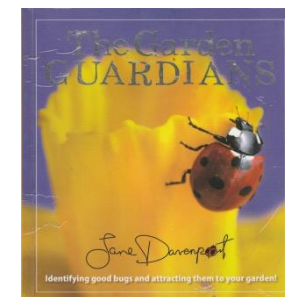


The Garden Guardians

by Jane Davenport.

This book will help you identify good bugs and shows you how to attract them to your garden. Divided into a number of sections, the first helps you identify your Garden Guardians; the following sections give advice on looking after them; safe pest control methods; a Bugliography, or, how to identify your garden's arthropods and, finally, recommended Garden Guardian Friendly Products.

We think it's great to know that all these books are able to be borrowed and we look forward to seeing you soon in your library –



Angela and Stephen

PLANT CLINIC

Puzzled by a pest?

Not sure if your plant is a weed or a
'goodie'?

Does it have a deficiency or is it a
disease?

That's what plant clinic is about.

Bring along your plant, fruit, leaf, root (as
many parts of plant as you can) in a
sealed plastic bag (if it is diseased) and
fill in the form.

Place the plant parts together with the
form on the plant clinic table prior to the
start of the meeting. Someone will have
a look and maybe able to answer all
your questions.



How to tell if your garden needs watering

A great way to tell if your garden needs
watering just by looking out the window
is to plant some indicator plants in the
garden.

You could use impatiens, for example –
the tall red ones work well as you can
see the flowers from a distance.
Impatiens have shallow roots and they
tend to get droopy and they wilt easily if
their roots get dry, but then they perk up
quite quickly once they get a drink.

A quick look will help determine if things
are beginning to get dry; just look for
droopy or perky impatiens without even
having to go outside.



Thanks for sharing this, Gennaro.

Growing Lemongrass

Lemongrass is a tropical herb packed with strong citrus flavor. The lemon taste is prized in Asian cooking, as well as in teas, sauces, and soups. In the garden, lemongrass forms a tall, grassy clump 3 to 5 feet tall. Its appearance rivals that of many ornamental grasses and can easily fulfill a similar role in the landscape.

Soil, Planting, and Care

Avoid planting lemongrass in clay soil. This tropical plant craves moisture, but is quickly killed by heavy soil that makes water puddle. Lemongrass thrives in full sun, even in hot Southern locations. Give this herb rich, well-drained soil. Amend planting holes with composted manure to improve fertility and enhance the soil's ability to hold water. If you're adding several lemongrass plants to planting beds, space plants 24 inches apart.

Provide a steady supply of moisture for best growth—don't let lemongrass roots dry out. Fertilize plants during the growing season every couple of weeks with a liquid plant food or fish emulsion.

Troubleshooting

Few pests bother lemongrass. This herb is actually sometimes used in concoctions to repel insects. Occasionally, though, spider mites will attack plants overwintering indoors.



Harvest and Storage

Start harvesting as soon as plants are 12 inches tall and stem bases are at least ½-inch thick. Cut stalks at ground level, or hand-pull entire stalks. You want to get the entire swollen base, which resembles a scallion or green onion. If a few roots come up with the stalk, don't worry: It won't harm the plant.

The edible portion of lemongrass is near the bottom of the stalk. Carefully cut off the grassy top part of the plant; use caution, as this can be razor-sharp at times. Leaves can be bundled and added to the liquid in a teapot or stock pot, then simmered to infuse lemon flavor into the brew.

Take the lemongrass base and peel the outer fibrous layer to expose the inner white, reedy part. To store, freeze this part either whole or chopped. To make slicing easier, first crush the stem base with the flat blade of a knife. The heart of the stalk (the part you want) has the consistency of soft butter and will then slice easily.

Uses

Lemongrass is best known for its use in Asian cuisine, especially Thai and Vietnamese. In the kitchen, use tender inner stalk bases in stir fries, salads, and sauces. To freeze lemongrass, store thinly sliced pieces in single layers in zipper-seal bags. To use, break off as much as you need for individual dishes. Leaves make a great addition to marinades and can be steeped in hot water for tea. After use, add leaves to your compost pile or puree them and scatter them in the grass along the edges of a patio or deck to help deter insects. To dry leaves, bundle them and hang them upside down in a dark place until dry. Store in tightly-sealed jars. Dried lemongrass retains its flavor up to one year.

THE FRUIT FLY TRAP

By Jerry Coleby-Williams (Gardening Australia)

Commercial traps are quite expensive - they cost between twenty and thirty dollars each and then you have to replenish the bait and that can be almost as expensive.

At home, I use something very cheap indeed. I use a PET (polyethylene terephthalate) bottle and it's got a hole - big enough for a fruit fly to get in - half way up.

The reason it's not at the top is because fruit fly, if they escape drowning inside, will fly up to the top.

The bait I use is a solution of vegemite and water - there's half a teaspoon of vegemite in there and there's a drop of dishwashing detergent in and that means that any fruit fly that get wet will drown.

You have to replace this every week because sometimes it can be so successful, you'll get so many fruit fly in there, it'll put the others off from entering.

Screw on the bottletop, then tie twine around the bottle's neck and hang from your trees.

Space them two metres apart and replace the bait once a week. How easy is that?

Editor's Note: Last year ROGI conducted trials of various inexpensive fruit-fly trap ingredients. See the report on p11 in the November 2014 ROGI News.
<http://www.rogi.com.au/uploads/roginewsno2014.pdf>

ROGI Supper Helpers

It has been a long-held ROGI tradition to have that cup of lemongrass tea and supper at our meetings. For this we have to thank mostly Rhonda and her offsider Colleen (whose beetroot cake I still make) as, to the best of my knowledge, the original team, and more recently Yolanda and daughter Cathy. Yolanda's efforts, until the necessity of an operation recently, were outstanding. As ROGI grew and grew and grew, Yolanda remained smiling, ever so capable and innovative as she tackled the best way to stay ahead of the increasing influx of thirsty members. No small task!

We now welcome Cheryl as our supper coordinator. I hope everybody will both

support her and give her a helping hand if she is short of helpers - the tea-making is now a non-stop effort and an art-form in itself.

I would like to thank Treina and Rhonda for their invaluable help in the interim period before Cheryl takes the reins. Also, I would like to think that even if members may feel what they can offer is limited due to constraints of various sorts, they will know it is welcomed and together with contributions by other members, the tea and supper tradition can be continued. Unfortunately as I suffer from increasingly painful osteoarthritis, the October meeting will be my last meeting where I function as a member of your supper team.

Please let Cheryl know if you are willing to help in any way, whether it be washing-up, managing the table, bringing lemongrass or lemon myrtle, or making and serving the tea/coffee, on a monthly or as-needed basis. Remember - every bit helps and many hands **do** make light work!"

Thank you.
Helen Hart



Seed Bank News

Basil (*Ocimum basilicum*) is often referred to as the King of Herbs. Basil plants are one of the most popular herbs grown in the home garden.

The most common basil is sweet basil which is a compact plant growing to 45cm or so during the hot season. Another variety, Dark Opal, adds a splendid burgundy colour to the garden. It can be used like common basil, though it's a little less sweet. The purple leaves create a beautiful colour when steeped in white vinegar and used to clean the house. Rediscovered by many cooks is lemon basil which adds a lemony basil fragrance to both the garden and the kitchen. Thai basil has a liquorice flavour and tastes great in Asian cooking and bees love it.

All herbs love a friable soil that is high in



nitrogen and basil is no different. If planting in pots use a good quality organic potting mix, if preparing your garden bed mix in compost and good chicken poo prior to planting to raise the nitrogen level (if needed). pH 5.5-7.5.

Occasionally, basil is bothered by aphids and slugs. Aphids come in the height of summer. It is possible to reduce their prevalence by mastering your watering practices so there is no excess or shortage of moisture, but often we can't be in control of the conditions in the Brisbane summer.

The biggest threat is poor drainage, so to avoid root rot, plant in a well-drained location, but don't allow it to get too dry, or growth may be stunted. If your plants get away from you to the point at which they are producing seeds and have stopped growing, shear off the top third of the stems and fertilise with liquid fertilizer. Never cut the woody part of the



stem, or the plant won't reshoot.

Basil is indeed a good companion plant for tomatoes. The two have the same growing requirements, are both vigorous plants, and basil grows to about the same size as determinate tomato plants. Plant seeds at the same time and the two should get along splendidly.

Also try growing basil under other fruiting plants that are prone to bug damage. It seems the strong scent either confuses the bugs or repels them.

ROGI seed bank sells lemon, Lime, Dark Opal, Thai and Italian large leaf seeds.

Also, this month we have basil seedlings at 50c for 7cm pots and \$1 for 10cm pots. To encourage the recycling of pots we will give a 10 cent refund for 7cm pots and a 20 cent refund for 10cm pots.

Sharr Ellson

L-R: Lemon, Italian large leaf, Thai



Garden Critters

In my garden spring abounds - the birds (miner, butcher, magpie, pale headed rosella, lorikeet) have all had young and the carnivores and omnivores are eating the grubs, caterpillars and grasshoppers. The predators are busy with mantids, lacewings, spiders, ladybeetles and especially red parasitic wasps (4-5 mm long) hunting around under every leaf to find the eggs and nymphs of other insects while the lizards are eating snails.

This spring the garden seems to have a good balance of critter life. No poisons (including pyrethrum) have been used for a year. Instead the main defences used have been: detergent water to drown the unwanted, some Eco-oil (sparingly), milk/sodium bicarbonate spray (fungi), improved soil fertility for strong plants, diversity of planting, mulching, water in the bromeliads for lizards and native plants for the birds and bees.

Good Critters to Protect

This picture is the egg case of a **praying mantid** which is produced in winter so the 50 - 100 young hatch in spring. If you had one in your garden you would find



the mantid young under the leaves looking for insect nymphs. The egg cases are often destroyed, being mistaken for wasp



The **lacewing** above appears so delicate and many are nectar eaters, however their nymphs are called the **crocodiles of the insect world** and eat up to 50 aphids per hour. You definitely want these in your garden especially if you grow aphid magnets like kale.

The eggs of the lacewings are white, small and are on thin stalks to protect them from ants. You should find them throughout the garden at present. The lacewing adults are often mistaken for flying termites and unwittingly destroyed.

The critters you do not want

At the moment the **three striped potato beetles** (*Lema trilinea*) are emerging from the soil. If you have a gooseberry bush or a fig tree you will have these pests. The best way to reduce their influence is to drown the adults and

inspect the leaves nearby as they will most likely have the yellow eggs



attached and as seen from the picture above the damage is extensive. This year most of the eggs have been parasitised by a small red wasp.

The **cabbage white butterfly** (*Pieris rapae*) are easily recognised by the off white wing colour with the black dot. They are about looking to lay their eggs on brassicas. The oval green eggs can be seen under the leaves. The scent of the nasturtiums seems to be having an effect in confusing this pest.

If you want to investigate predator insects visit Beneficial Insects 101 (www.planetnatural.com/beneficial-insects-101). At the next ROGI meeting a request has been made to investigate Shield Bugs and the much-maligned millipedes will also be discussed.

A happy garden is a balanced-critter-home.

Enjoy the bugs -

Dave Praeger

Request for Articles

What can you share? It could be to do with:

- my garden, my sanctuary
- a photo
- an unusual plant
- a request
- garden/nutrition info
- a recipe
- a current affair of relevance to ROGI members.....
- A living creature in your garden

Send your articles to keep the newsletter interesting, topical and relevant. All articles to be submitted by 30th October please.
info@rogi.com.au

FOR SALE

Rich Redlands soil is available from Cleveland as a result of some excavations beneath a near 100 year-old Queenslander. Approximately 80 cubic metres. Buy the lot or just some of it. Price negotiable. Please call 0450 959 581 or email summerjazz@iinet.net.au



Exchange plants, cuttings, seedlings, home-grown produce

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

ROGI Rewards

Gift-quality plants and other garden-related items brought along by members. Everyone who attends a meeting is eligible to acquire a ROGI Reward. Please label plant with its name before placing it on the table.

Members' Sales

Items you have produced that are surplus to your requirements and that **you wish to sell** to other members eg eggs, honey, jam, seedlings, lemons – things that have cost you money (and time and effort) to produce. Please ensure items are labelled, named and priced. You may be asked to staff the stall if you are needed.

FREE swap/share/give-away

(This is for members only)

For those items you don't want payment for eg shredded paper, unwanted volunteer plants or cuttings, surplus chillies, empty pots or strawberry runners and so on. This is where you may want to work out an arrangement with other members to do some swapping outside of the meetings.

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

DO YOU HAVE ONE OF THESE?



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

- Pick up a My IGA Card next time you are in the 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, you are also helping to raise funds for ROGI.

ROGI uses its funds to help provide more services to members such as new library books, discounted gardening products, paid expert speakers, and free or low-cost field trips and workshops

TIP



Attract beneficial ladybugs to your garden with nectar-producing flowers of plants such as parsley, coriander, dill, and fennel.

ROGI SHOP NEWS

For any pricing or technical advice, or if you have a suggestion, please see Frank at the ROGI shop

Products Dry	3kg	2kg	1kg	500g	100g	Each
Soil Conditioners						
Blood & Bone	7.50		4.00	3.00		
Blood & Bone 25kg						29.50
Blood & Bone 16kg						24.00
DE Fine Food Grade		15.00	8.00	4.50		
DE Fine Food Grade 20kg						110.00
DE Pet & Garden	16.00		7.00	4.00		
DE Pet & Garden 20kg						80.00
Dolomite	5.50		3.00	2.00		
Eco88	8.50		4.00	2.50		
Gypsum	5.50		3.00	2.00		
Humic Acid					3.50	
Organic Booster	6.50		3.50	2.50		
Organic Xtra	6.50		3.50	2.50		
Organic Xtra 25kg bag						18.50
Organic Xtra 16kg bag						14.00
Organic Xtra 5kg bag				2.50		7.00
Rock Dust #3 25kg bag						29.50
Rock Dust #3 Mix	6.50		4.00	2.00		
Sea Mungus						
Turf Master	5.50					

Tools & Equipment

Soil pH Test Kit	15.00
Banana Bags	3.50
Fruit Fly Exclusion Bags set of 4	5.00
Paper Pot Maker	28.00

Products Wet	5 litre	1 litre	500ml	150ml	100ml
Soil conditioners					
Eco-Amingro		18.00	10.00		
EcoFish	32.00				
Eco Naturalure				15.00	
Eco-Neem					16.00
Eco-Oil		22.00	16.00		
Fish & Kelp solution		13.00			
Potassium Silicate					3.00

Pest & Weed Control

Burn Off		9.00			
Eco-Pest Oil			10.00		
Naturasoap			17.00		
Pyrethrum Spray					20.00
Wild May (for fruit fly)					2.00

Aloe Vera

Aloe Vera Raw Material	33.50	9.50
Aloe Vera Raw Bio Fertiliser	37.00	10.00

SOWING GUIDE

OCTOBER TO NOVEMBER

OCTOBER	NOVEMBER
Asparagus	Asparagus
Capsicum/chilli	Capsicum/chilli
Choko	Choko
Cucumber	Cucumber
Eggplant	Eggplant
French beans	
Lettuce	Lettuce
Okra	Okra
Pumpkin	Pumpkin
Radish	Radish
Rockmelon	Rockmelon
Rosella	Rosella
Squash	Squash
Sweet corn	Sweet corn
Sweet potato	Sweet potato
Tomatoes	Tomatoes
Watermelon	Watermelon
Zucchini	Zucchini

GENNARO'S PLANTING TIPS

Gennaro indicates that with soil temperatures warming up, borlotti, Madagascar and lablab beans, and Jicama can be planted from September until February, as can basil and pigeon peas. Seeds and/or cuttings of kang kong and Malabar (aka Ceylon) spinach and Egyptian spinach are best planted at the beginning of summer so that there have a few months of growth before they go to seed.

Plant seeds or cuttings of Warrigal greens (aka New Zealand spinach) from now onwards as it performs best when soil temperature is above 18 degrees.



Warrigal greens



Egyptian spinach

Lablab beans



Keep in mind that this is a guide. Be aware that micro-climates and weather conditions mean certain seeds may be sown other than recommended times.

**ROGI Seed bank is available at ROGI meetings and Garden Visits.
\$1 packet for members. \$2 for non-members.**

Recipe

Elderflower Cordial

Elderflowers are blooming in abundance; here is a recipe for a delicate, delicious, refreshing cordial that also uses lime.

500g sugar
3 cups boiling water
4 limes, washed
15 elderflower heads (no insects)
1 tbsp citric acid

Place sugar in large saucepan. Pour boiling water over and stir until sugar has dissolved. Let cool. Finely grate rinds of limes, add to sugar water. Add thick slices of limes to pan. Add citric acid and stir. Finally add the flower heads, minus stems. Stir. Cover and steep for 48 hours. Strain through fine muslin cloth into a bowl. Using a funnel, fill sterilised bottles. Seal and store in a cool, dark place for a few weeks or freeze in plastic bottles to keep for longer. Once a bottle is opened, store in fridge.



Can you help ROGI?

We now have over 200 members however only a small number are actively helping ROGI to provide the very many services we offer members.

So we'd like to offer you the opportunity to give something back to ROGI. Here is a list of lots of jobs—small and not-so-small—that need to be done.

Those who get involved with ROGI say they end up with much more productive gardens than they started with.

Sourcing guest speakers

Printing seed bank labels, shop labels
membership cards

Newsletter writing articles, taking notes at meetings, taking notes at meetings, garden visits and club events, taking photos, arranging for printing and mail-out of newsletter for members with no email

Managing website

Storing large ROGI equipment

Meeting night Room set up: placing equipment before meetings, greeting visitors, co-ordinating giveaway, members' sales and prizes, running

the plant clinic at meetings, staffing the sign-in table at meetings, receiving the supper at meetings, stand-in for John at the sound desk, Room bump out: putting away equipment after meetings

Assisting at busy times with:

PR person
Events person
Seeds person
Membership person
Shop person
Treasurer
Secretary
Supper person
Library person

Buddy-ing a new member

Co-ordinating box gardens (three-times-a-year)

It's the inspiration gleaned from the conversations and the visits to other gardens that are key. So join us!

If anything strikes your fancy, get in touch with one of the people listed on the back page.

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