

ROGI News

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

Bayside Community Church
1-9 MacArthur Street
ALEXANDRA HILLS

Don't forget:

- Only fully paid members may attend this meeting
- Your plate of sweet/savoury food
- Your cutlery and crockery
- Donation for Salvo's Food Drive
- Your E-Waste
- Your tool for sharpening
- Return library books
- Return washed seedling pots
- Free swap/share/giveaway
- NO Plant Clinic or ROGI Rewards

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ROGI webpage: www.rogi.com.au
ROGI Email: info@rogi.com.au



Mexican Tarragon (Tagetes lucida) is a perennial herb that prefers a sunny spot. Growing to 70cm, it has an aniseed scent and flavour similar (but stronger) to French Tarragon. Leaves can be used in salads and fruit salads, and they also make a delicious tea. The long-lasting yellow flowers are a magnet for bees.

Jill's Jottings

Hello fellow gardener,

Only a week until our final meeting of the year - and what a night it will be! There'll be most of the usual attractions - affordable plants and seedlings for sale (please donate if you can), the library (you can borrow for two months), Seed Bank, as well as old and new friends with whom you can feast, drink and talk. Instead of a guest speaker, there'll be a fun gardening trivia session based on newsletter items during the year. There'll also be a quiz about community and the environment.

As usual we acknowledge the Salvos for allowing us to use their wonderful venue. Please bring along items from the list on page 4. I know that some of you don't feel comfortable buying 'junk' food, so please feel free to donate easy-to-store food from the more nutritional end of the food spectrum. I've been told that they *'will assess the food items for our hampers and create a totally healthy and nutritional menu from them and will give out menus with hampers. We do have carrots, corn, peas, potatoes, rice, pasta and tuna etc in our hampers so we think some good salads and rice dishes can be made'*. The Salvos are very grateful for this annual contribution from ROGI. Remember to bring your secateurs for sharpening, your e-waste for collection, and your eating implements.

The committee has affirmed that supper will be available before and after our regular monthly meetings, as this seems to be a popular choice for the majority. There is no roster system for members to provide food for supper, so we appreciate those of you who take it upon yourselves to bring along delicious and healthy options a few times a year. Offers of help are always welcome with supper or any other part of ROGI. Note also that there is a vacancy on the committee if that job interests you.

One of our visits to Erik's garden last month didn't go smoothly because of the weather, and was cancelled - at least the second attempt was a fine day. This doesn't happen often and it's a shame when it does, as people miss out on a wonderful experience. Those who did make it witnessed ROGI's portable PA system in use. This makes it easier to hear what is being said. We plan to use this whenever possible.

As membership of ROGI continues to climb towards pre-COVID levels, we want to ensure that your expectations are satisfied. Why did you join ROGI? Please let us know what else you think ROGI could do to help you grow as much of your food as possible. That's the reason ROGI exists. The more members we have, the more helpers we have and the more we can offer you.

May your garden flourish and your harvest dreams come to fruition ... in spite of the difficult weather.

Jill Nixon, ROGI President (Phone: 0418 717 735)

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

We'd like to hear from you!

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

Email newsletter@rogi.com.au

The February newsletter deadline is 30 JANUARY 2025

December Meeting

Christmas Gathering

To celebrate the end of 2024, we're having Christmas dinner together!

Please bring:

- **Food to share - a salad/savoury/dessert/bread (cut up into pieces if possible). Please include a label listing ingredients to assist members with allergies.**
- **Your own plate, bowl, cup/glass and cutlery in a bag (you will take them home to wash).**
- **E-Waste for SubStation 33 to repurpose** (see p. 4).
- **Your tool for sharpening (one tool per member)** (see p. 4).
- **A donation for the Salvation Army Christmas Appeal** (see p. 4).

From 6.15pm, members may visit the Seed Bank, library, plants and stalls (local honey, jams, wax wraps, soaps etc) or just have a chat.

There will be no Plant Clinic or ROGI rewards. Giveaways accepted.

We plan to start dinner at 7pm.

We need to know if you're coming - please register on TEAM APP or email aniko.major88@gmail.com by the **8th December**, and let us know what food you are bringing - salad (type)/savoury/dessert/bread (chicken, ham and drinks will be provided).

**** We need volunteers to assist with setting up, serving food and packing up on the night. Please let us know if you can help with this.**

ROGI MEMBERS ONLY.

To join, go to the MEMBERSHIP tab at www.rogi.com.au

ROGI Events

SEED SAVERS GROUP

Wednesday 18 December, 6.30pm

8 Silverash Court, Capalaba.

Christmas-themed Supper and Gifts from our Gardens

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



Please bring:

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

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

ROGI MEETING - First for 2025!

Thursday 13 February

Please note there is no ROGI meeting in January.

E-WASTE COLLECTION

Your E-waste can be placed *in the trailer* in the car park at our December meeting. E-Waste is any electric/ electronic product that has become non-working, unwanted or obsolete, and has essentially reached the end of its useful life. Sources of E-Waste include:

- *IT and telecommunication equipment*
- *Large household appliances*
- *Small household appliances*
- *Consumer and lighting equipment*
- *Electrical and electronic tools*
- *Toys, leisure and sports equipment*
- *Medical devices*
- *Monitoring and control instruments*



PLEASE NOTE:

THERE WILL BE NO BIN TO PUT YOUR E-WASTE IN. PLACE IT IN THE TRAILER PROVIDED, AND IT WILL BE DELIVERED THE NEXT DAY TO SUBSTATION 33.

TOOL SHARPENING

Shannon from Pout Sharpening will provide garden tool sharpening at the December meeting. This is FREE for members.

- *One tool per ROGI member. Please write your name clearly on the tool with indelible ink or name tag it.*
- *Clean hand tools, not spades.*
- *If there is time, additional tools can be sharpened but will incur a cost.*

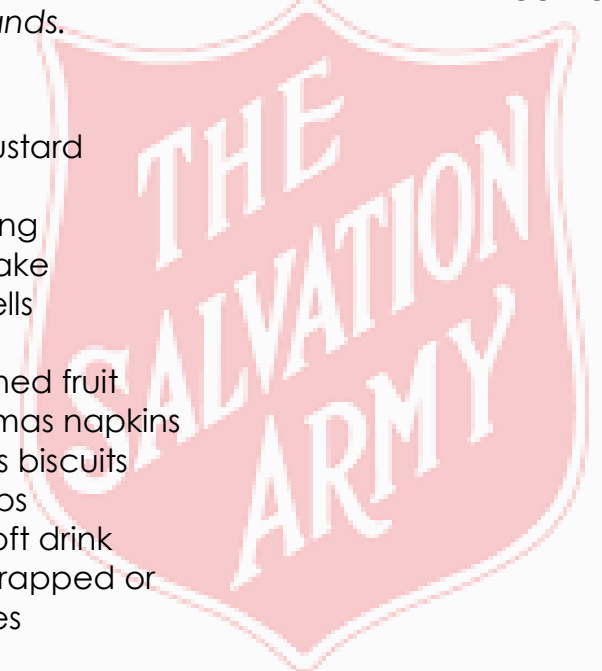


Salvo's Christmas Food Drive

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

What to Donate:

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



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

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

Living the Good Life in a Toxic World

Angela Stafford is the founder of Scribbly Gum Wellness Clinic in the Redlands. She is a naturopath and kinesiologist with a special interest in gut health, the gut-brain connection, auto immunity and food as medicine. Here is an outline of her talk at the November meeting:

Common additives and ingredients in foods that are classed as toxins include NutraSweet, Aspartame, Splenda, high fructose corn syrup, canned foods, pasteurised dairy, unfermented soy, diet anything, non fat/low fat anything, margarine, soft drinks, refined sugar, hydrogenated oils, trans fats, GMOs, artificial colours, preservatives, MSG.



Are we looked after by our regulatory bodies? Pesticides and herbicides that are approved for use in Australia but are banned or restricted elsewhere include Glyphosate, Paraquat, Chlorpyrifos, Endosulfan, Atrazine, Fenthion, Vinclozolin, Bromoxynil.

10 Ingredients to Avoid in Personal Care Products

1. Fragrance or parfum,
2. Phthalates
3. Parabens
4. BHA and BHT
5. Mineral oil
6. Polyethylene glycol (PEG compounds)
7. Sodium laurel sulfate and Sodium laureth sulfate
8. Dioxane and ethylene oxide
9. Triclosan
10. MIT methylisothiazolinone and BIT benzisothiazolinone



Most common toxins to avoid in household products

- Ammonia
- Triclosan
- Sodium Lauryl Sulfate (SLS) & Sodium Laureth Sulfate (SLES)
- Phosphates
- Sodium Hypochlorite or Bleach
- Chlorine Dioxide
- Phthalates
- Parabens
- Nonylphenol Ethoxylate (NPEs)
- Monoethanolamine, Diethanolamine and Triethanolamine

How toxins enter our bodies

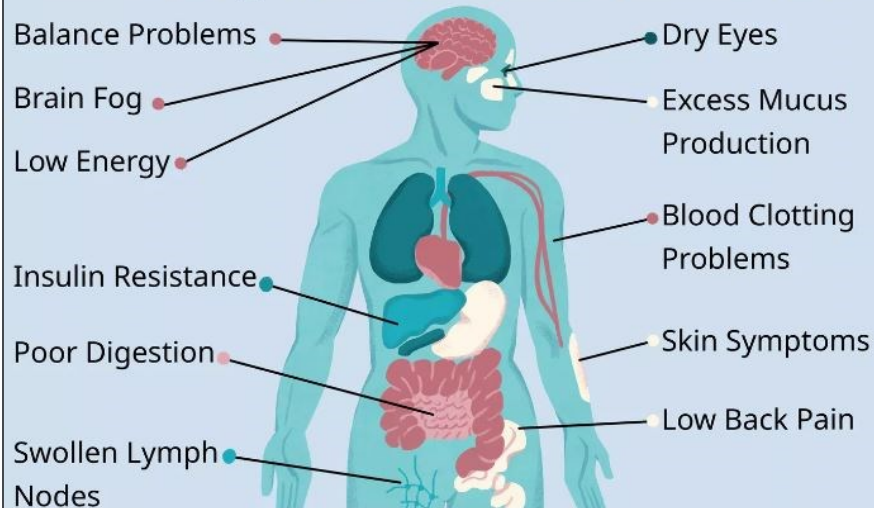
Ingestion – This is the most obvious. When we eat contaminated food or drink polluted water, we ingest harmful substances. Pesticides, herbicides, preservatives, and additives in processed foods are all potential toxins.

Inhalation – We breathe in toxins when we are exposed to polluted air, cigarette smoke, or even chemicals in household cleaning products and fragrances.

Absorption – Our skin, the largest organ in our body, absorbs chemicals from personal care products like soaps, shampoos, lotions, and even makeup. Many chemicals in these products can penetrate the skin and enter our bloodstream.

Injection – While less common, some toxins can be injected into our bodies through vaccines, medications, or even in the case of intravenous drug use.

Possible Signs of Chronic Inflammation



Dirty Dozen Endocrine Disruptors

Chemicals that disrupt hormones can have a variety of negative effects on your body. Watch out for: plastic containers, contaminated food supply, herbicides, sunscreens, contaminated water, contaminated fabric material, candles, arsenic, dental fillings, non-stick cookware, pesticides and cosmetic products.

<https://aklivewell.com/blog/dirty-dozen-endocrine-disruptors>

Eat Clean, Whole Foods

- ◇ Organic or spray free – including home grown.
- ◇ Full control over nutrients in soil by adding organic matter, compost, manures etc.
- ◇ Reconnection with nature – positive ions induce better health.
- ◇ Reducing your environmental footprint and providing habitats for local wildlife.
- ◇ Raise your own chickens for eggs.
- ◇ Start small – pots, herbs on windowsills.

Consume Weeds: Nature's Superfoods

- ◇ Some of the most nutrient-dense foods you can find. Packed with vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants, making them free superfoods.
- ◇ Dandelion greens are rich in vitamins A, C, and K, as well as calcium, iron, and magnesium.
- ◇ Nettle is another powerhouse, offering a high amount of iron and vitamin C, and is known for its ability to support detoxification and fight inflammation.
- ◇ Purslane, a succulent that grows wild in many parts of the world, is an excellent source of omega-3 fatty acids and antioxidants, which help protect cells from damage.

Environmental Working Group's 2024 Shopper's Guide

DIRTY DOZEN

These 12 fruits and vegetables were most contaminated with pesticides:

1. Strawberries
2. Spinach
3. Kale, collard & mustard greens
4. Grapes
5. Peaches
6. Pears
7. Nectarines
8. Apples
9. Bell & hot peppers
10. Cherries
11. Blueberries
12. Green beans

CLEAN FIFTEEN

These 15 items had the lowest amounts of pesticide residues, according to EWG's analysis of the most recent USDA data:

1. Avocados
2. Sweet corn
3. Pineapple
4. Onions
5. Papaya
6. Sweet peas (frozen)
7. Asparagus
8. Honeydew melon
9. Kiwifruit
10. Cabbage
11. Mushrooms
12. Mangoes
13. Sweet potatoes
14. Watermelon
15. Carrots

Choose non-toxic personal care & cleaning products

Safe Cosmetics: www.safecosmetics.org/chemicals/

Ecowatch: www.ecowatch.com/personal-care-product-toxins-guide-2656092627.html

The Environmental Working Group: www.ewg.org/

The Chemical Maze: www.chemicalmaze.com/

National Toxins Network: www.ntn.org.au/

Safe Cosmetics Australia: www.safecosmeticsaustralia.com.au

Supermarket brands: Ecostore, Thank you, Melrose, Freshwater Farm, Earth Choice

Local: The Herbal Estate: www.madeit.com.au/collections/the-herbal-estate

Make your own: herbs, spices, orange peel, vinegar, bicarb

App: Yuka - www.yuka.io/en/

Improving indoor air quality

- Low VOC paints.
- Pest control poisons – choose natural alternatives.
- Formaldehyde on furniture and carpets – good ventilation, air purifiers, house plants.
- Beware of air fresheners (Airwick, Glade, Fresh air, Little Trees for cars) - they contain Volatile organic compounds (VOCs). These can include formaldehyde, benzene, toluene, ethyl benzene, and xylenes. VOCs can irritate the eyes, nose, and throat, and cause headaches and nausea.

Avoid plastics as much as possible

- Never use plastic in the microwave – even if it is deemed safe.
- Store foods in glass or stainless steel containers and bottles.
- Never store an acidic food (tomato, citrus) in plastic as the acid leaches plastic into the food.
- Beware of plastic water bottles, plastic lined cans and plastic coated disposable cups.

Why we need to clean our own drinking water

- Contaminants in rain – heavy metals.
- Contaminants in town water – plastics (forever chemicals), medication residues, herbicides and pesticides from runoff.

Electromagnetic frequencies – the invisible toxin

- Turn Wi-Fi off at night.
- Don't sleep with your phone next to you.
- As much as possible, use speaker phone.
- As much as possible, avoid carrying your phone on your body.
- Avoid air pods and similar devices at all costs!
- If possible, hard wire your devices.

Detox Regularly

Our bodies are constantly working to eliminate toxins, but when we're exposed to more than our bodies can handle, it can be helpful to support our detoxification systems. There are several ways to do this naturally:

- ⇒ Dry brushing your skin can stimulate circulation and help your body release toxins through the skin.
- ⇒ Saunas and steam baths promote sweating, which can help eliminate toxins from your body.
- ⇒ Eating foods that support your liver's natural detoxification processes, such as leafy greens (like kale and spinach), garlic, beets, and cruciferous vegetables (like broccoli and Brussels sprouts), can help your body process and eliminate toxins more efficiently.
- ⇒ Using herbs and nutrients that support detoxification: St Mary's thistle, globe artichoke, dandelion, poke root, red root, calendula, B vitamins, Vitamin C.

Angela has written and illustrated two whole food cookbooks and created a blog (www.angelaswildkitchen.com) in order to share recipes and health and wellness information.

Yakon - the Peruvian wonder crop

By Linda Brennan, Ecobotanica

Diabetics can have a hard time finding sweet fruits and starchy vegetables that do not add to/affect blood sugars. The yakon is a tropical-looking wondrous vegetable that is ideal for diabetics. It is sweet, yet can be used for savoury dishes, and may be eaten cooked or raw.

Yakon has been available in Australia for several years now, and is gaining popularity with vegetable gardeners from Melbourne to Queensland. The reason may be partly because it looks so handsomely tropical, or that it tastes like crunchy pears when freshly dug. It could also be because it grows in a range of conditions from sub-tropical to temperate climate.

Two years ago in spring, I tentatively dug in my first plantlets of Yakon, also known as Peruvian Ground Apple. The botanical name is *Polymnia sonchifolia*. Our heavy clay needed some work so I dug a trench in the vegie garden that mixed my clay with some sandy loam from a friend, fresh compost, worm castings from our hard-working worms, and a handful or two of organic fertiliser.

Our family have a quip... 'is it worth the effort?' Exactly what I was thinking that day, straining through the clay. Anyway, forging on, I planted four tiny plantlets about 40 cm apart. They grew into handsome plants with a decidedly tropical feel in the very large leaves. They certainly looked lush and fitted in with the sub-tropical theme of our garden.

Come autumn, I bandicooted the plants and found a few small tubers. Oh well, not much for the first year, but I thought I could improve next time around.

The plants died down over winter. I put them to bed, preparing them like asparagus with plenty of old manure, compost and a touch of dolomite to treat the clay again.

Season two has been an overwhelming success. What was the difference? Well, a bit more TLC with a regular liquid fertilise twice a month, and moist soil so they didn't ever wilt. Our Yakon grew into 2-metre-high plants with small heads of lovely golden yellow sunflowers in late summer as the days shortened. Our stingless bees and hoverflies buzzed all over those flowers, working hard.

The plants were heavy with leaf, so I staked them with bamboo at each end of the row and some string between, a little like supporting broad beans.

In autumn I began bandicooting the plants once again and this time harvested tubers that looked like big, fat, sweet potatoes.

When cool weather visited us, the plants died down. I lifted the whole lot, finding they looked somewhat like a dahlia under the ground. Our bumper crop weighed in at 15 kg!

So, what is so special about Yakon? Lots! *Polymnia sonchifolia* is a plant native to the Andes, Columbia, Peru and Ecuador. It loves the warm temperate climates with dry winters. It has a long history, even having been found in pre-Incan tombs. It is a member of the plant family 'Asteraceae', like Jerusalem artichokes and sunflowers, which explains the cute yellow flowers.



Yakon - the Peruvian wonder crop *(continued)*



Plant now into soft, fertile soil in full sun.
Cover with 3 cm soil.
Watch them grow to 1.5 metres. Flowers develop late summer. Keep moist. No need to fertilise after planting.
Begin harvesting the tubers in autumn as the plant dies down.
1-5kg tubers per plant.

This tuber has a thin brown skin which when peeled away, reveals a crisp golden flesh. It does indeed taste like a crunchy sweet pear. Although it's sweet, its starch is stored in the form of inulin. Inulin is not absorbed through the human gut and even though the plant is sweet, according to the Australia New Zealand Food Authority, it does not affect blood glucose levels. As it is not absorbed, they term it a soluble fibre rather than a starch.

This means that it is a very low GI food. A bonus with this intriguing plant is its ability to act as a pro-biotic in the gut. Research studies show it supports the growth of beneficial Lactobacillus bacteria and helps to increase calcium absorption.

We feasted on Yakon last winter. It has been in our stir fries, vegetable curries and in place of papaya in green papaya salad. It has even made it into an apple crumble with excellent results. Keep your eyes peeled for the plantlets or tubers for sale after the autumn harvest and enjoy a healthy harvest of your own.

Linda Brennan is a horticulturist and environmental educator. She runs Organic Garden Harvest Workshops in Southeast Queensland and helps local government and corporate clients to nurture sustainable communities.

Plant Clinic

Managed by Rosie Harvest, consulting with Linda Brennan

1. **Peperomia dropping off and plant looks sickly.**

Most probably too much water and the root system is drowned.

2. **Eggplant with spines and some without, from the same packet of seed.**

I think that the spiny plants have reverted to the original form. When you have a packet of seeds you don't get the same genetic material. Several people spoke to me and said that they have had spiny plants that have fruited well.

3. **Fig - very small and curling leaves.**

Very hard to know with this amount of information. We really need more information/evidence...perhaps a photo! However it may be a mineral deficiency?

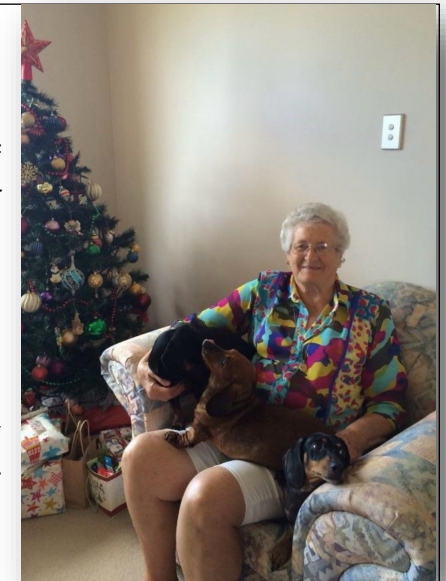
Vale Maisie Cull

It is with sadness that I inform you of the death of former ROGI member Maisie Cull, aged 88. She died on Saturday 30th November. Maisie had diabetes, but lived her life the way she chose.

Maisie will be remembered as a very caring person who was always helping people. She was a terrific baker, who made many contributions to ROGI supper.

Adieu Maisie, you will be missed.

By Bronwen Thomas



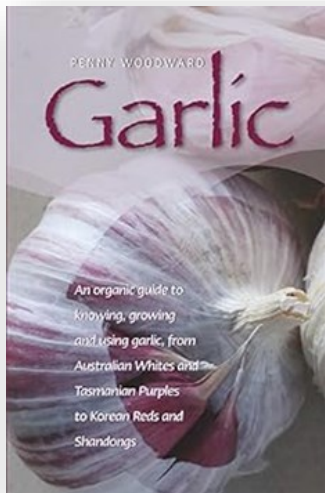
Library News

The ROGI Library has a rich collection of useful books, DVDs, magazines and newsletters. This is a free service for members! Why not take advantage and borrow some reading/watching material over the summer break. Maximum four (4) items per member may be borrowed.

A full list of books in the Library is located on the ROGI website under RESOURCES: <https://www.rogi.com.au/resources.php>

If there is a book you are chasing that is currently loaned out, let Librarian Rose know at the meeting, and she can attach a note to the library book card so that when it is returned she will let you know.

BOOK REVIEWS



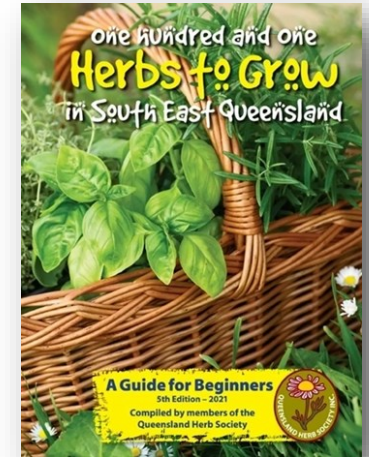
Garlic By Penny Woodward

“An organic guide to knowing, growing and using garlic, from Australian Whites and Tasmanian Purples to Korean Reds and Shandongs.” Need I say more! Woodward, a contributor to the ABC’s Organic Gardener Magazine, also includes information on other plants similar to garlic and how to manage pests and diseases. There are chapters on its medicinal uses and cooking with garlic, but it’s difficult to

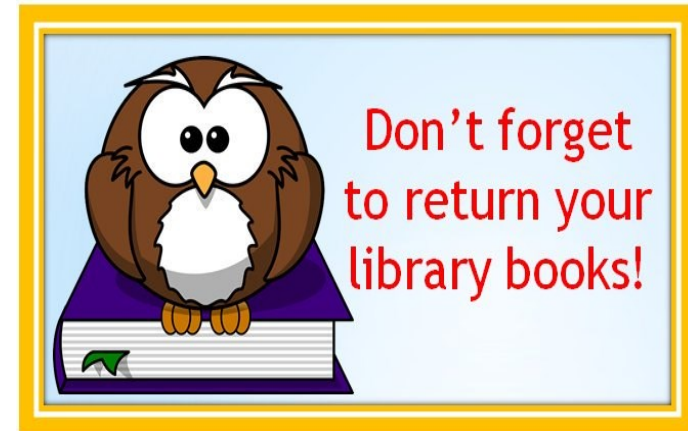
know which recipe to try first – they all sound so good. Colour photos throughout support and enhance the reader’s experience, and the author includes ways to store and preserve your bountiful harvest.

One Hundred and One Herbs to Grow in Southeast Queensland Compiled by the Qld Herb Society

A comprehensive guide to the herbs you know, and some you may not, that grow in our region. Each page is dedicated to one herb that includes basic botanical information, descriptions and growing conditions. Importantly, there is also culinary and medicinal uses, which may help you to decide what you want to grow next. Included are gardening and herbal terms, basic tips, propagation techniques and herb combinations for both sweet and savoury dishes. The herbs are sorted alphabetically for easy reference. Great for beginners or someone wanting to try something a bit different.



Reviews by Rose Faleafa



REQUEST: For donations of books on PRESERVING for the Library.

ROGI MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

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The views expressed in ROGI News and at ROGI meetings are those of the Editor and submitters and guest speakers, not necessarily those of Redland Organic Growers Inc.

Email: info@rogi.com.au Webpage: www.rogi.com.au
www.facebook.com/groups/redland.organic.growers

Other gardening groups using organic methods:

Brisbane Organic Growers Inc (BOGI)—
 1st Thursday every month (except Jan),
 Albion Peace Hall, 102 McDonald Rd, Windsor,
 6.30 for 7.30pm. 3357 3171 <http://bogi.org.au>

Qld Herb Society—1st Tuesday every month,
 Albion Peace Hall. 7.30pm. 54268299
<http://www.qldherbsociety.org.au/qhs>

Oaklands Street Community Garden—Wednesday
 and Friday 9-noon, Sunday 2-5pm. Oaklands Street,
 Alexandra Hills. 0408 259 445

ROGI Membership Renewal for 2025 - due 31/12/24

How to renew your membership . . . fast and easy

- Go online to <https://www.rogi.com.au/renew-membership.php>
- Fill out the application, press SUBMIT.
- Go to your online bank to make a transfer to ROGI -
BSB 633000, Account Number 136 137 296
(Use your name as a reference please)
- Find your 2025 Membership card name tag on the hanger near the sign-in table at the February 2025 meeting.

PLEASE NOTE—We now have a 'square reader' so that you can make your payment with your credit card (at ROGI meetings).
 However, please keep in mind ROGI is charged for this option.

Member Category	Members Renewing for 2025	New member/s joining in...			
		Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct 24-Dec 25
Single	\$35	\$35	\$27.50	\$20.00	\$42.50
Family*	\$55	\$55	\$42.50	\$30.00	\$67.50
Pensioner Single**	\$25	\$25	\$20.00	\$15.00	\$30.00
Pensioner Couple**	\$35	\$35	\$27.50	\$20.00	\$42.50

* **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.



Merry Christmas and happy gardening from Rhonda and the ROGI Management Committee.