

ROGI News

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

Salvation Army Church
Cnr McDonald Rd & Macarthur St
ALEXANDRA HILLS

Admission

Members: Free
Visitors: \$5

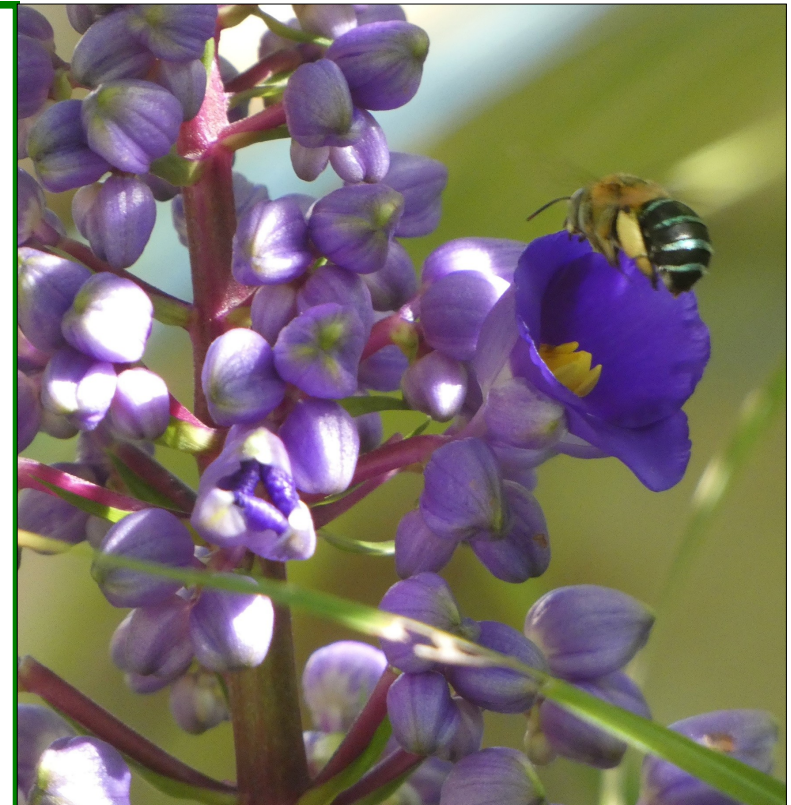
Please bring a plate of food (sweet/savoury or nibbles, preferably home-made) for supper after the meeting. Tea and coffee provided.

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

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

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Blue-banded bees (*Amegilla Pulchra*) love the flowers of *Dichorisandra thyrsiflora* (Blue Ginger plant) which are flowering now. If you would like to learn more about backyard bees, check out the article on page 14, and perhaps borrow a book from our well-stocked ROGI Library.

Backyard Burlblings

Hello ROGI Member,

Sometimes it seems, one needs to take a break from the everyday tasks in the backyard and step away for a while to see it through new appreciative eyes on returning. We often tend to take the good bits about having a productive garden for granted, and instead worry about a few garden pests or a hot dry spell.

This time away from the backyard was over the Easter break when we went camping and walking in Girraween National Park for 6 days. The camping site on private property adjacent to the Park had no water in any of the dams or creeks and we had to rely on our own supply. While challenging, it also showed us how little water we actually need for our survival.

This normally lush and beautiful National Park has been devastated by almost a year of drought and last February's 2 week long bushfires. It was really sad to see all the destruction of ground orchids, grasses and ferns. At first glance it seemed as if all that was left were the amazing rock formations and blackened tree trunks and stumps, as well as a lot of charcoal and ash. However, when actually walking along the tracks, it soon became obvious that Mother Nature was beginning the restoration process despite almost a year-long drought as well as this major bushfire.

Some of the eucalypts were showing beautiful new reddish growth from epicormic buds, while others were starting to shoot from the ground. The grasses were beginning to regenerate and there were numerous little green tree and shrub seedlings in patches around burnt trees. All this without any rain! In one sense it was more worrying to note the number of drought affected dead and dying trees and shrubs in the unburnt parts of the Park. Most of these won't recover, but will be excellent fuel for any future bushfires.

On returning home to our suburban backyard, the lush green garden was such a contrast to the ravaged bush that it literally

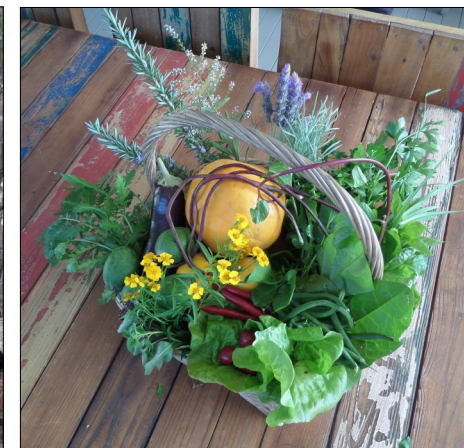
stopped us in our tracks. In less than a week everything seemed to have grown and flourished after some excellent weekend rains (53 mm in our rain gauge over the break). One of the first things we did was to walk around the garden beds and admire the produce. Lettuces twice the size, shiny parsley, rejuvenated climbing beans and bush beans ready to eat, as well as eggplants, chillies and mini capsicums ripe for the picking.

The above abundance was just in the vegetable beds. The many different herbs growing throughout the garden were also thriving—as were the native trees, the fruiting plants and the many varied shrubs and flowers. It made us realise just how fortunate we are not to have to deal with the effects of devastating fires and droughts, unlike many people throughout the country who somehow have to manage without ample city water supplies. We may grumble about the cost, but for now it is available whenever we want to water our gardens.

However, in the near future we may have to practise more of the water saving skills that many ROGI members already exhibit. Things like wicking beds, rainwater tanks, recycling water and creating rain harvesting garden beds may soon be an absolute necessity. How timely to have a garden visit about wicking beds this month.

Happy water saving.

Julia Geljon, ROGI President



Coming Events

May	Thurs 2	BOGI Meeting
	Tues 7	Herb Society Meeting
	Wed 8	ROGI Meeting
	Sun 26	Garden Visit (see p. 20)
June	Tues 4	Herb Society Meeting
	Thurs 6	BOGI Meeting
	Wed 12	ROGI Meeting
	Sun 23	ROGI Field Trip to Spurtopia

Membership Information

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

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

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

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

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

May Meeting

Growing food using sea water and solar power

ROGI member Terry Sullavan will tell us about a project he recently worked on in South Australia which uses concentrated solar power to farm in the desert.

Sundrop Farms has developed a unique concept of growing high value crops in arid climates using seawater and sunlight as the main resources.



The success of their pilot plant encouraged a larger application of the technology, expanding to 20 hectares producing over 17,000 tonnes of fresh tomatoes annually- 15% of Australia's tomato market!

Come along and find out how on earth this is even possible. Is there anything in this that we can adapt and apply to our own backyard gardening?

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

A new segment during the evening will be tips on what to do in your Redlands gardens this month.

April Meeting — Round Robin Topics

Getting the Most from your Garden

We all know what to do with most of what we grow in our garden. Fruits can be eaten as is or an excess may be made into jams and sauces. Vegetables are a staple and when we have more than we need, we can steam and freeze or pickle them. But how can we increase our nutrient intake in unexpected ways? And how do we save excesses of herbs, especially soft ones that don't retain their flavour and nutrition when dried?

Herbs

Excess woody herbs such as rosemary, thyme and oregano may be dried in the sun, in a dehydrator or in a semi-hot oven. This way they may be used for cooking later on. You may also wish to be a little more adventurous, making your own herb salt or lemon pepper. See recipes below from my cooking and nutrition blog:

<http://angelaswildkitchen.com/2018/04/06/make-your-own-herb-salt/>

<http://angelaswildkitchen.com/2018/06/25/make-your-own-lemon-pepper/>

Soft herbs are easily preserved by pureeing them in a Nutri-bullet or food processor and decanting into ice-cube trays. Once they are frozen, pop them out and store in a container in the freezer. In this way, you can have fresh herbs out of season. Just add them to your pot at the end of cooking and they will defrost in the heat of the sauce.

Weed Vitamin Cubes

You may also gain extra nutrition by making "weed vitamin cubes". Do this by picking edible weeds when they are young and lush. Become familiar with such weeds as cobbler's pegs, sow thistle, dandelion, chickweed, amaranth, wood sorrel, purslane and

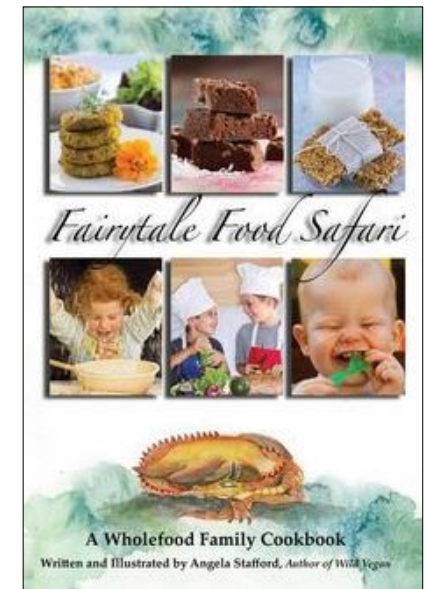
henbit. Puree them together as you would the soft herbs and decant into ice cube trays. On their own, this mix would be too strong in its green flavour, but added to a pot of stew, curry, lasagne, spaghetti sauce or casserole, the taste is not noticeable and it will increase the nutritional value of your meal. Edible weeds are a great source of nutrients.

Vegetable Stock

You may also use the weed mix above in a home-made vegetable stock paste. Mix it with vegetables, salt and flavoursome herbs. My book, ***Fairytale Food Safari, A Wholefood Family Cookbook*** is in the ROGI library and contains the specific recipe for this. If you would like to purchase a copy there is a special price for ROGI members.

Grow a Moringa tree if you can. It's leaves and pods are a great source of vitamins, minerals and anti-oxidants. Do some research online for more detailed information. This diverse plant is very easy to add to meals as a green, to add to your vegetable stock paste or the weed vitamin cubes discussed above.

Angela Stafford



April Meeting — Round Robin Topics

Good and Bad “Bugs”

For Identification use the following:

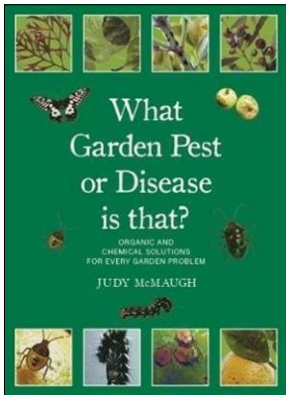
- **Websites:**

<https://bugsforbugs.com.au/whats-your-pest/>

<https://thebeatsheet.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/GoodBadBug-FINALscreen22Feb3.pdf>

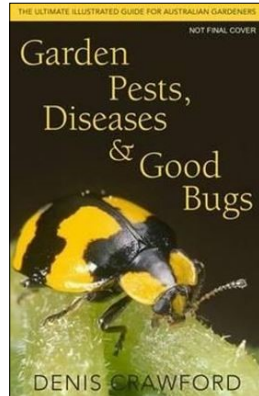
(Pulse pests and beneficial only)

- **Books in our ROGI Library:**



What Garden Pest or Disease is That—
by Judy McMaugh

Garden Pests, Diseases & Good Bugs—
by Denis Crawford



- **A good hand lens / magnifying glass.**

General prevention:

- Healthy soil and plants
- Vigorous sanitation
- Crop rotation
- Exclusion structures, barriers
- Companion planting, sacrifice plants
- Traps, attractants
- Plant purple crops so green caterpillars are easy to see
- Diatomaceous earth, coffee grounds repel some pests
- Remove host weeds / plants to stop overwintering

Control:

- Hand picking, squashing
- Biological and Botanical pesticides available (eg. BT, Pyrethrin, Neem)
- Homemade sprays
- Systemic or contact chemical insecticides

Does it actually eat the Plant Parts or Not?

Chewing Mouthparts

Actually eat plant tissues (leaves, buds, stems, flowers, fruit)

Includes beetles, caterpillars, grasshoppers, cutworms, fruit fly, grubs, codling moth, slugs, snails

Controlled by parasitizing insects, contact insecticides, or stomach poisons

Sap Sucking Mouthparts

Suck sap from young growth (shoots, flowers, buds, leaves, stems)

Aphids, Mites, Scale, Thrips, several bugs.

Controlled by predator insects or systemic insecticides which are absorbed by sap stream. Some contact sprays work.

Chris McIvor



The other two topics on our Round Robin night will be covered in the June newsletter.

Thank you to all April meeting speakers for the time and effort they put in to produce very interesting and informative presentations.

Garden Visit—Frank & Laurel Dobson

Frank & Laurel Dobson's 1/3 acre block in Wellington Point is a mecca for growing food. Since joining ROGI 4 years ago, they have given over their side and back yards to vegetable gardens, fruit trees, water tanks for storing their bore water, chickens and large compost bins.

Their soil is half mangrove mud and red soil. It is hard to deal with, so Frank has come up with many ways to improve it. He has a mulcher, and mulches leaves and bark from the gum trees on the southern side of the house. The veg gardens are all raised, and have a mix of soil, compost, bagged cow manure, 5mm gravel (to break up the clay), sand and fertilisers.

Frank has bought Australian Native stingless bees for pollination. He has lots of problems with the white cabbage moth and his brassicas, so he has purchased predatory mites from Bugs 4 Bugs to (hopefully!) get rid of them.

Frank says that he is not gardening to save money—it is for the enjoyment that he gets out of it, and the for the taste.

Thank you Frank and Laurel for showing us your wonderful productive garden—it was an inspiration to us all!

Photos & Report by Ann Roffey



More raised veg gardens down the northern side of the house. The polystyrene boxes are where Frank grows his seedlings. He reuses his old mix by adding mushroom compost, gravel, coir, washed river sand, vermiculite, compost, and mulch.



Graviola/Soursop (left) - the fruit tastes like custard apples.



The Guava tree (right) has just finished fruiting heavily, and has been pruned back.

Garden Visit—Frank & Laurel Dobson



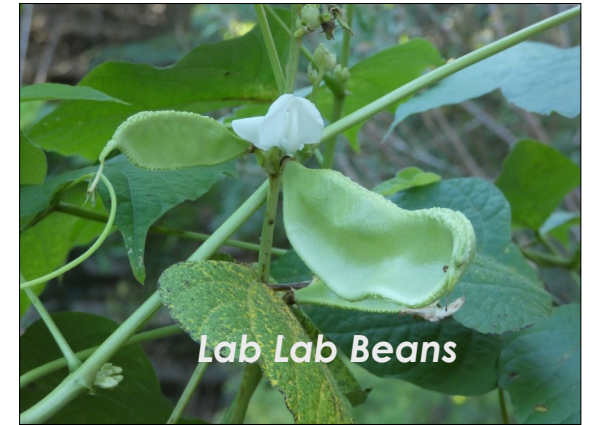
Frank grows Lady Finger Bananas extremely well—he gets about 2000 a year! He fertilises them with his chook poo tea, and waters them a lot. To harvest bananas, he places ladders as below, with a board resting on top. He then chops the trunk so that the bananas land just past the plank. And, he doesn't have a problem with possums!



Pictured below are the greens that Frank grows in his chook pen—chooks can stand on the wire and eat the shoots as they pop through. They won't be able to dig out the roots of this sturdy structure! The Asian Lettuce is also grown as greens for the chooks (outside their pen). Eggs are plentiful, and chook poo is stored in a large container with water, which makes a wonderful 'chook poo tea'.



Nothing is wasted—the banana trunks are dried for about 12 months and then mulched. When they first moved in 5 years ago, there were a large number of palms. These were chopped down and also mulched.



Lab Lab Beans

There are quite a few different varieties of beans growing—Lab Lab, (eaten cooked and uncooked) Sword, and Madagascar (put into stews).



Sword Beans



Madagascar Beans

Garden Visit—Frank & Laurel Dobson

Frank has converted fibreglass bathtubs with a stand into wicking beds. His 5 beds have kept him going with food throughout the long hot Summer. He plants out one bed each month, so that there is a constant supply of vegetables all year round.

Empty baths were set up in the front yard to give us a demonstration on how to build a wicking bed. Firstly, silicone your plug—a waterproof lining (food-grade plastic) is not needed, as the bath is now a reservoir. A filling pipe which has holes cut out with an angle grinder (see arrows in photo1) is then placed at the bottom of the bath. Cover with recycled gravel (cheaper than regular gravel), to just below the overflow pipe. Geofabric is placed over the top of the gravel (with a hole pre-cut to go over the top of the pipe). Soil and compost is put on top of the geofabric. Fill the bottom reservoir with water until it flows out of the overflow pipe, and then plant your plants!



A **wicking bed** is a garden **bed** with a waterproof lining that holds a reservoir of water at the bottom from which water is drawn upwards like a **wick** to the surface of the **bed** via natural soil osmosis or through the roots of plants in the **bed**. Basically it works like large Decor self-watering pot.



Traction Workshop—Fruit Tree Pruning

Thirteen ROGI members attended the Fruit Tree Pruning workshop at “*Traction*” recently, and were welcomed by Jo Sullivan, who told us about the work that *Traction* does for youth.

Traction is situated at the old Horticultural Site at Alexandra Hills TAFE college. This site was developed many years ago, but the horticultural course has not been run for many years, therefore the fruit trees needed care.

ROGI members George Allen, Julia Geljon and Chris McIvor ably lead small groups to teach and demonstrate the correct way to prune peach and citrus trees. Then, with their leadership and advice, all the group pruned several trees—removing dead wood and crossing branches, reducing their size, getting the trees back into shape and allowing air and light into the area. The experts advised how some trees can be almost left alone and only occasional pruning is required, while other trees need pruning to promote flower and fruit development.

This workshop allowed members to see many different types of fruit trees- including Citrus, Peach, Jaboticaba, Acerola Cherry, Guava, Mulberry, Grumichama, Saba Nut and Persimmon.

ROGI members observed the following:

- How older fruit trees may grow if left unattended.
- How citrus need close observation to ensure the graft stock does not grow and take over the tree.
- How stone fruit trees can benefit from pruning to promote flowering.
- How a mulberry tree can grow to the sky, making picking very difficult—with regular pruning it can have several crops a year that can be easily harvested.
- How a Jaboticaba can be pruned to allow access to its fruit on the trunk and branches.

This was a great opportunity to see such a variety of mature fruit trees, discuss their care and see a practical demonstration of pruning and then undertake pruning with experienced guidance.

Although citrus gall wasp (pictured far right) does not kill citrus trees, the damage it causes is unsightly, and repeated attacks can weaken trees and make them unproductive. To control this pest, remove all galls from the trees by the end of August. Place the galls in a plastic bag, then seal the bag and put it in the garbage. After removing the galls, it is a good idea to fertilise your tree to encourage strong new growth in the Spring.



We were shown how to prune side shoots growing below the graft of fruit trees (left). If the suckers are not cut off and removed, they can completely overtake the growth of the graft and it will revert back to its rootstock (right). The tree on the right had to be removed as it will now never bear fruit again.

Fruit trees are **not** normally pruned while they are fruiting. However, these trees were long overdue for care, and it was decided not to wait until after they had finished fruiting.

Linda Barrett

Oaklands Street—Bed Prep Workshop

Bed prep is always something of a talking point among gardeners. Removing weeds, soil aeration, fresh compost and fertilising your bed gives your crop the best start to life it can get. And on Sunday the 14th April, 15 enthusiastic ROGI folk joined us at Oaklands Street Community Garden to learn and share a few tricks or planting carrots and potatoes.



Starting out. A healthy crop of nutgrass makes way for a bed of potatoes.

Bed Aspect

Understanding the position of the bed and the path of the sun throughout the year is one of the most important characteristics of any garden bed. The sun travels directly above us in Summer, and only reaches about 42 degrees above horizontal north in the Winter. This helps you estimate the hours of sunlight your bed will receive in any season, and can also help with designing solar energy systems! For a good sun map, visit the website <https://www.gaisma.com/en/location/brisbane.html>

Crop Rotation

Crop rotation maximises the uptake of nutrients by plants and minimises the build-up of pests and harmful bacteria in the soil. Planning your crop in advance ensures more of your produce makes it to your kitchen.

Beans 'n Peas, Greens, Fruits 'n Roots

Next, consider the family of your crop and the season. Avoid planting crops from the same family in succession. Take the time to learn about your crop's favourite fertiliser—don't give carrots anything.



Spuds away! Three rows of Dutch Creams put to bed in 15cm deep furrows. Fertilise with Dynamic Lifter (aka composted chicken poo). Heap up the stems when they emerge. Then forget them. Harvest when the tops die back (about mid-August).

Experienced gardeners are always on the hunt for that one new trick— hopefully we obliged. Mix carrot seeds with fine sand in a squeeze bottle. Cover with very fine potting mix and vermiculite and water regularly. Tight supervision and moral support is also essential! Carrots were up on the 25th April – 10 days later!



A very warm thanks to all who attended the Oaklands Street bed prep workshop—we hope you enjoyed your time with us and took something useful away with you.

Terry Sullavan

Useful Gardening Tips

Have a useful gardening tip you want to share with other ROGI members? Please email info@rogi.com.au and it can be included in our newsletter. Photos also welcome.

Always leave your compost bin lids upside down to catch the rain, then just tip it in and put the lid back on (*Francke Latter*)



Useful scoop in the pet section of K-Mart. Sits level, and measures out 1/2 cup to 2 cups hand free. Only costs \$2 and can be used for potting mix, pellets, lime etc. Great value and very strong (*Francke Latter*)

Rosella excess? Peel as you normally would, and dehydrate them. Crunch up and sprinkle on yoghurt, etc (*Ruth Bolomey*)

When planting a seed or seedling in the garden, I like to put a barrier around it till it grows bigger. Protects against cut-worm, and any animals that might dig it up, and also makes it harder to step on accidentally! I use PVC pipe 9cm wide x 10cm high—you can often find offcuts on building sites or in skips (*Ann Roffey*)



Date Claimer:

Oaklands Street Community Garden's Open day is on **Sunday the 25th August, 2019**. Lots of the usual plant and produce sales, food stalls, talks, raffles, music and entertainment. We hope you'll join us!

Keeping a Gardening Diary

Do you keep a gardening diary? For a number of years I have diarised (by date) when I prepare beds, plant, spray, fertilise, and also noting any diseases or problems. I have found this very useful, however it does have its limitations. Looking up when I planted sweet potato last year required searching through every entry for quite a few months until I found the correct one!

Another gardening friend also keeps a 'diary', but has a separate page for each subject (eg. one for lettuce, one for tomatoes, etc). Pages are numbered, and a list of contents at the beginning will tell you which page to go to. Or, you could use a book or folder that already has A-Z dividers, and do up a page for each subject.

For those of you who love digital devices, a search online revealed this "free" (for the first 7 days only) Gardening Journal: <https://www.growveg.com.au/journal.aspx> which can be used on a mobile phone or tablet.

Whatever method you choose, keeping a gardening diary makes good sense— you can refer back to what worked and learn from your mistakes.

Ann Roffey

Plant of the Month—Salad Mix

One thing I have great success with in all my gardens over the years is leafy greens. I have grown them in Styrofoam boxes, milk bottles, hanging baskets, raised garden beds, in the cracks of concrete paths and right into the earth. I find this fantastic, because relying on the shops to sell fresh, quality and many different varieties is just not happening. I also see that a lot of leafy greens (lettuce, spinaches) are grown hydroponically, and I just can't make my mind up if this is a good or bad thing. Also, leafy greens begin to lose Vitamin C from the second they are harvested, so are very vulnerable to nutrient loss. Other vegetables like cabbage or eggplant have vitamins that are far more stable, so it makes much more sense to grow your own leafy greens.

As the weather starts to cool down, salads are becoming more uncommon for meals. However, Winter is one of the best times of the year to grow them. You may not feel like a cold salad, so this could be a good time to find other recipes that use lettuce leaves (eg San Choy Bow). See p. 20 for ideas for other recipes.



I like to pick a sunny spot, but somewhere that can also offer some shade during the day. I make sure my soil is high in nitrogen and has great drainage. Dig the soil over thoroughly to incorporate compost, worm castings and well-rotted horse manure (ROGI member Jean

has enough horse poo to supply the whole of ROGI if you are looking for some) and a sprinkle of Earthlife "Garden Mate" gives me a beautiful mix. I like to sow a little of the ROGI Salad mix seed (which includes leaf lettuces, chicory, endive, rocket, beet-root greens, kale, mizuna, mustard, silverbeet and spinach) once a week, so I always have fresh greens for my family and friends. I cover with very little soil, water well, and keep damp until seeds sprout. After germination, thin seedlings to a final spacing of 2-3 cm. The thinned plants are micro greens, and are jam packed with flavour and nutrition (they will make a very special salad that any fine dining restaurant would be jealous of). Never feel bad about thinning seedlings.

As I have said, I have also had great results growing Salad mix in recycled Styrofoam boxes. For the soil mix, I like to add organic potting mix, vermiculite, worm castings and aged horse manure. Fill your box with your selected soil mix, sprinkle the seeds evenly on top, mix, gently pat the seeds down and then cover with 0.5 cm of soil mix. Water often using a gentle spray. Every other day I like to add some diluted seaweed, worm tea, or compost tea with a sprayer. I hear this improves the nutrient levels in the salad mix after the first true leaves appear. And like growing in the earth, thin the plants out so you have space—but remember, these are packed with nutrients and flavour, so eat them up!

Harvest by cutting leaves as they reach 5-10 cm in length; use scissors to snip them off just above the growing crowns if you would like to be able to pick several times. This is called the cut-and-come-again method, because the crop will grow back if you water and fertilise often. Or you can choose to harvest whole plants. The green, leafy vegetables like beetroot, kale, mustard, silverbeet, and spinach that are part of the salad mix can also be grown individually to a mature size.

In the seed bank we have ROGI Salad Mix - Member's \$1, Non-Members \$2 a packet.
Sharr Ellson

Recipes

At the Traction Workshop in April, Jo Sullivan had a lovely hand scrub for us to use. It was intended as a mechanic's hand scrub, but I think gardeners would also appreciate it! Thank you to Diana Vujanic for following up on this recipe.

HOME-MADE HAND CLEANER

1/4 cup grated soap
3/4 cup hot water
1/3 cup salt
1/3 cup sugar
1/3 cup bicarbonate of soda
1 tbsp bentonite clay
10 drops lemon or orange essentials oil
(Jo used peppermint oil)



- * Place the grated soap and hot water in a glass bowl, cover and leave overnight to melt and soften.
- * Combine the dry ingredients and essential oil and stir well with a wooden spoon.
- * Slowly add the soap mixture to the dry ingredients and stir well. You can add as much soap as you like until you get the consistency you want.
- * Place the homemade cleaner in a glass bottle wherever you wash your hands.

If you are unable to get identification of a plant from your local nursery, go to <https://www.qld.gov.au/environment/plants-animals/plants/herbarium/identify-specimens> . Fill out the Botanical specimens cover sheet, and send with your plant cutting (between two sheets of newspaper) to:

Botanical Information & Advisory Service, Queensland Herbarium, DSITI, Brisbane Botanic Gardens, Mt Coot-tha Road, TOOWONG QLD 4066
They will identify your plant for free and send you a reply by your choice of post/email/fax/phone.

SOURDOUGH CRACKERS

(Mary Blades)

1 cup whole wheat flour**
1 teaspoon sea salt
1 cup sourdough starter
1/4 cup unsalted butter, room temperature
2 tablespoons dried /fresh herbs of your choice**, chopped
1 tablespoon LSA mix
1 tablespoon chia/linseed
1 teaspoon ground cumin
Oil for brushing



For original recipe, go to:
<https://www.kingarthurfLOUR.com/recipes/sourdough-crackers-recipe>

- * In a bowl, mix together all the ingredients to make a smooth (not sticky) cohesive dough.
 - * Section dough into pieces and roll out very thin on silicone baking mats/baking paper on a baking tray.
 - * Grind a little salt and pepper over the top, and roll it into the dough (so it doesn't fall off later).
 - * Score the dough into cracker sized pieces with a paring knife.
 - * Prick each square with the tines of a fork.
 - * Bake for 5 minutes at 190°C (170°C fan forced) or until the crackers separate. Then take out and flip the crackers so they dry out evenly.
 - * Put back in the oven for about another 10 minutes.
 - * N.B They burn easily—take the outside ones off first because they cook faster than the centre ones.
 - * Cool on a cake rack.
- ** Mary has used normal plain flour, gluten free flour, and hard white (bread) flour and they have all worked
- ** Mary used 2-3 tablespoons fresh rosemary

Native Bees in my Runcorn Backyard

So I'd noticed blue-banded bees each Summer hovering around my tiny frog pond from around 5pm until sunset, eventually coming to roost in a small group of 2-5 on the ends of sedge stems. This Summer, they chose a new place to roost—the ends of some Spanish Moss draped over a hanging basket, and their numbers were much larger than any year yet. At the peak of Summer, I counted 30 bees by sunset! Usually known as solitary bees, I believe that the younger male blue-banded bees like to meet up in the late afternoons and sleep in a group. Perhaps it's a bit of male bonding—who knows?!



Blue-banded Bees

Late one afternoon I was watering my gardens and spotted this intriguing bee settling (-eventually), on the end of a Whirling Butterfly plant (*White Gaura*). The iridescent blue was so striking against its black body—just stunning!

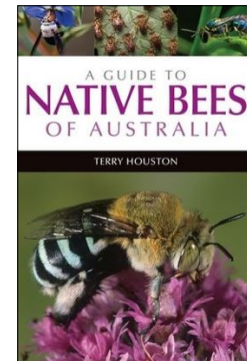
After some research online, I identified it as a Neon Cuckoo bee, and as the name 'cuckoo' reveals, the females cleverly lay their eggs in the nests of the blue-banded bees, who unknowingly work to fill their brood cells with pollen for their offspring. If the baby neon cuckoo bee is fortunate enough to hatch earlier than the blue-banded bee, guess who gets all the pollen?!



Neon Cuckoo Bee

Helen Blessing

If you would like to attract more bees to your garden and would like to learn how, the ROGI Library has a number of excellent books about bees:

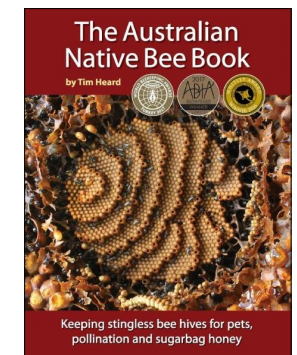
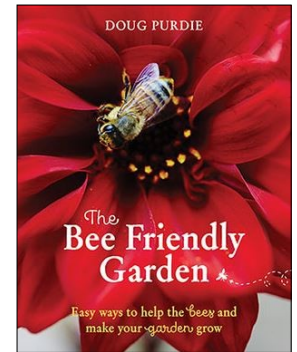


A Guide to Native Bees of Australia
by Terry Houston

The Bee Friendly Garden by Doug Purdie

Australian Stingless Bees—A Guide to Sugarbag Bee-keeping by John Klumpp

The Australian Native Bee Book by Tim Heard—
new to the ROGI Library. See the review on p. 18.



Other information about bees can be found on the following websites:

<https://www.aussiebee.com.au/beesinyourarea.html>

<https://actforbees.org/>

<https://zabel.com.au/australian-stingless-native-bees/ressources/>

Bellis Open Garden

Saturday 11 and
Sunday 12 May—
9.00am to 4.30pm
56 Daisy Street,
Wynnum

Admission: \$10-00
Adults, under 18 Free



IMPORTANT NOTES:

- Wear sensible shoes (stilettos and mulch don't work)
- Prior to entry, you must be prepared to disinfect the soles of your shoes in the disinfectant provided.
- This garden is unsuitable for wheelchairs and strollers
- No Pets
- Supervise children at all times—super-hot chillies, plant spines and Euphorbia sap may cause injury
- There are no toilets onsite
- Refreshments available from "Second Shot Van"
- **Dr Tim Heard, a native bee expert and entomologist will split one of Jerry's native stingless bee hives on Sunday at 1.00pm.**



"Bellis is not an attempt at self-sufficiency, but it is a living example of how we can turn our Aussie backyards into an environmental advantage, without compromising our lifestyle. Everything growing here can be grown by an average gardener on an average income. Discover how to reduce your ecological footprint whilst reducing the cost of living." **Jerry Coleby-Williams**

Herb AWARENESS

QUEENSLAND HERB SOCIETY ANNUAL SHOW 2019

The place to be for anyone who wants to learn more about growing and using herbs!

- Discover a wide range of medicinal and culinary **herbs and plants for sale.**
- Browse a vast selection of **herbal stalls:** preserves, teas, spices, coffee, skin care, bush foods, craft, gardening and more.
- Relax and revive at **Café Sage** for home baked and delicious, herb inspired food.
- **FREE demonstrations and talks** from informative and passionate guest speakers and Queensland Herb Society members.
- Focusing on the *flavour of herbs*
 - **FREE ENTRY** • **ATM on site**

Sunday
26th MAY
9am to 3pm

**Albion Peace Hall,
102 McDonald Rd, Windsor**



Email qhs@live.com.au or call **07 3279 6037** for more details and information. Visit the web www.qldherbsociety.org.au closer to the date for guest speaker and demonstration timetables.

This event is supported by the Lord Mayor's Suburban Initiative Fund and Hamilton Ward Councillor, David McLachlan.

A Hobby Farm in Tasmania

Ann Roffey

To celebrate our 30th Wedding Anniversary, we decided to revisit our honeymoon destination of Tasmania. The Apple Isle has certainly undergone a transformation since 1989!!! In fact, apples seem to no longer be their chosen crop - I think it is berries, berries and more berries!!!!

On the last 2 nights, we stayed at a Farm Stay in Sheffield, a small town 23 km inland from Devonport, on the north-west coast of Tasmania. Sheffield has long been the rural hub for the Mount Roland area.

We were delighted to learn that the owners of Hurlfield Cottage - Chris and Sharon Hearle - originally hailed from our neck of the woods! They moved from their suburban block in Bracken Ridge to their 40 acre "hobby farm" 15 years ago.

On the farm they keep a variety of animals—15 chickens, 3 adult pigs and 13 piglets, a very cute dog named Lucy, 5 horses, 7 cows, 3 sheep and an Alpaca with lots of attitude named Tristan.

A lot of the animals are bred for their meat (cows, pigs, and in the past sheep). The horses were used for pulling carriages for weddings and other special occasion hire. They had 2 Alpacas originally, who used to look after the 30 sheep they kept (better than any guard dog—they never lost a single one!).



Tristan, the cheeky Alpaca

Sharon is a keen gardener, who grows her fruit and vegetables organically. The main pest she has to contend with is birds. To protect her vegetables, Chris built her a wonderful enclosure (pictured right), which has raised garden beds made from timber. It is covered with cherry netting.



The soil is loamy with clay underneath. They add loads of the good stuff to it, including mushroom compost, horse poo, and chicken poo "tea". They don't have a compost bin, as they have found it too cold for the ingredients to 'cook'. Instead, any scraps and/or damaged produce gets fed to the animals (especially the pigs!).

In Brisbane we find it difficult to grow crops in Summer because of the heat, but in Tassie it is the opposite. Winter temperatures can get down to -4°C in Sheffield, so they grow heaps of fruit and vegetables in Spring, Summer and Autumn, and then leave the ground to rest in Winter. They can still get frost until the second week in November.



The fruit vines are growing on these vertical structures next to the enclosed vegetables. Mt Roland is in the distance.

A Hobby Farm in Tasmania

Red eating grapes (not wine grapes). They have green grapes growing as well.



Thornless blackberries—good for jam and pies.



The sheep are the South African domestic breed called Dorpers. They shed their fleece naturally, which means they do not need shearing. They are a very good meat sheep.

Scarlet Runner Beans—these will live for 7 years. They chop them back once they start to die and they come back the next season. They get to 2 m tall, and Chris has them growing on concrete mesh uprights.



The Saddleback Cross pigs were especially interesting. The 2 sows are sisters, and gave birth one day apart. They had 13 piglets between them, and if a piglet can't get on his Mum's teat, he will go to his Aunt and get milk from her instead! Pictured they are devouring the giant zucchinis that Sharon left to grow. Chris laid a concrete pad as their "table", as in Winter it rains a lot. The farmers have a saying in Tasmania—no mud, no money!



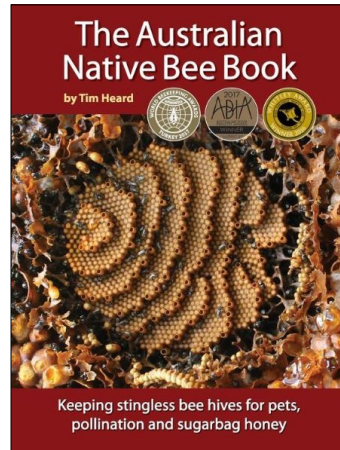
Sharon grows a huge variety of fruit and vegetables—hazelnuts, gooseberries, red and green grapes, strawberries, black currants, red currants, thornless blackberries, blueberries, sweet corn, peas, beetroot, silverbeet, leek, potatoes, beans, lettuce, zucchini and tomatoes. They also have a nectarine tree, but they can't grow citrus (although a friend has a lemon tree). They freeze their excess produce and get a butcher in to slaughter an animal when they need meat.

It was very interesting to hear about life "down on the farm". I particularly admire all the hard work both Sharon and Chris have done around their property. All the fences are electric, and the animals look very happy and healthy. Regrettably, they are selling their hobby farm, as they are both 68, and think it is a good time to downsize while the farm is still looking good and they are still in good health themselves. If you wish to view it, here is the link: <https://www.realestate.com.au/property/537-claude-rd-sheffield-tas-7306>

Book Review

The Australian Native Bee Book By Tim Heard

I purchased this book a number of years ago after attending a very interesting talk by the author on Australian native stingless bees. It has sat unread on my coffee table, and now that ROGI has purchased a copy, I felt it was high time I read it!



Dr Tim Heard lives in Brisbane, and is well-known as an entomologist, ex-CSIRO research scientist, and long term keeper and promoter of Australia's native stingless bees.

The book is divided into 3 parts: Understanding bees; Keeping Hives of Stingless Bees, and Bees for Pollination—so if you don't want to read everything, you can skip to the part that interests you the most.

Fast facts at the beginning of each chapter give you a taste of what's going to be covered. The photography is stunning, and the content is comprehensive.

I found the book fascinating, and recommend it to those of you who have Australian native stingless bees, want to purchase them, or simply want to know more about these amazing creatures.

Ann Roffey

Would you like to do a BOOK REVIEW of one of the books in the ROGI Library? Please see a committee member (listed on page 21) at the next meeting, or email info@rogi.com.au.

Changes to ROGI Website

Gardening Advice and Services @ Your Fingers

The Links on the ROGI website have been renamed as Directory and updated to provide more details of each provider, including services and products on offer.

Also, to make it easier for you to find what you are looking for, the list has been categorised as follows:

ROGI Members - ROGI Members offering gardening related goods and services

Associations - Not for profit organisations involved in activities aligned to ROGI's objectives

Reference and Publications - Websites providing information that may be of interest to members

Commercial - For profit organisations offering gardening related goods and services

At present, the Directory is not as comprehensive as we would like it to be. So, if your favourite supplier is not listed, please send an email to group@rogi.com.au with relevant details. All requests received will be discussed by the management committee and included if thought appropriate.

If you as a member offer gardening related services and/or products please respond too, as we would like to have you listed on the Directory.

Please note that listing on the Directory is free for ROGI members and commercial organisations listed and is designed to be a benefit to our members.

ROGI Management Committee

Seed Bank News

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



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



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

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



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

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

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

Seed Sowing Guide

May

Artichoke; Jerusalem Artichoke
Asparagus
Bean: Broad, French
Beetroot
Broccoli
Brussel Sprouts
Cabbage
Capsicum/Chilli
Cauliflower
Carrot
Celery
Chicory
Endive
Florence Fennel
Kohlrabi
Leeks
Lettuce
Onions/Garlic
Parsnip
Peas
Potatoes
Radish
Silverbeet
Spinach & Other Spinach: Brazilian, Egyptian, Warrigal, Kangkong
Swede
Sweet Potato
Tomato
Turnip

June

Artichoke; Jerusalem Artichoke
Asparagus
Bean: Broad, French
Beetroot
Cabbage
Capsicum/Chilli
Cauliflower
Carrot
Celery
Chicory
Endive
Florence Fennel
Kohlrabi
Leeks
Lettuce
Onions/Garlic
Parsnip
Peas
Potatoes
Radish
Silverbeet
Spinach
Other Spinach: Brazilian, Warrigal
Swede
Sweet Potato
Tomato
Turnip

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

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

Meeting Information

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

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

FREE swap/share/give-away:

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

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

Salvo Pots Repurposed



Thank you to ROGI and the Salvos for the pots that were given away in March. My sister made good use of them at the Child care centre where she works—they have been repurposed for Mother's Day gifts.

Ann Roffey

A Note from Sharr:

If you need inspiration for all the lettuce you are going to grow, I found on the internet a collection of recipes called "**18 dishes that let lettuce shine (and aren't salad)**".

Go to: <https://www.sbs.com.au/food/blog/2017/10/25/18-dishes-let-lettuce-shine-and-arent-salad>

MAY NEWSLETTER DEADLINE— Please send your contributions to the Newsletter Editor by the **29/05/19.**

Garden Visits

The Garden visit for this month is:

Sunday 26th May—Sally Duffield, Alexandra Hills

As always, space is limited, so book early. Please see Toni Bowler at the next meeting or phone her on 0402 323 704 or email her at events@rogi.com.au to put your garden on the schedule.

Toni also welcomes suggestions for field trips and workshops related to ROGI's organic growing interests.

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 info
- 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 ROGI News topical, interesting, local and relevant. info@rogi.com.au

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PO Box 1257, Cleveland 4163

www.facebook.com/groups/redland.organic.growers

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

Other gardening groups using organic methods:

Brisbane Organic Growers Inc (BOGI)—

1st Thursday every month (except January),
Albion Peace Hall, 102 McDonald Rd, Windsor,
6.30 for 7.30pm. 3357 3171 <http://bogi.org.au>

Qld Herb Society—1st Tuesday every month,

Albion Peace Hall. 7.30pm. 54268299
<http://www.qldherbsociety.org.au/qhs>

Oaklands Street Community Garden—Wednesday &

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

Oaklands Street Community Garden

Do you:

- Have a love of gardening and the outdoors
- Want to learn how to grow fresh fruit and vegetables organically
- Want to reconnect with the land and our food supply
- Seek companionship in an informal setting
- Want to build community

Then **Oaklands Street Community Garden** at **Alexandra Hills** welcomes you! Our garden includes common shared beds (not individual plots), and the produce grown is then shared and enjoyed by everybody, and is a regular talking point.



We are open on Sunday 2-5pm, Wednesday 9am-12pm, and Friday 9am-12pm.

Our annual membership fees are kept to a bare minimum to cover our costs and allow anyone to participate.

Family \$20-00, Single \$15-00, Concession \$10-00

For enquiries, please call:
**Glenda Brown - 0414 735 417/
Terry Sullavan - 0408 259 445**