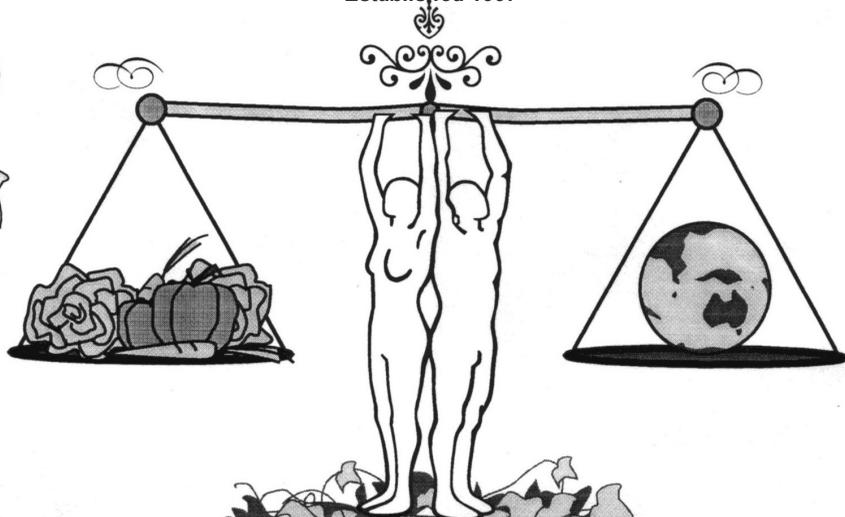


# GOLD COAST ORGANIC GROWERS Inc.

Established 1997



## NEWSLETTER

Volume 23 - FEBRUARY 2019 Issue 2  
GARDENING IN SUMMER

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OUR NEXT MEETING: Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2019

## Notice Board

1. **To promote organic sustainable food raising for home gardens and farms.**
2. **To foster research into improved methods of organic farming and gardening.**
3. **To provide information and support to all those interested in the various aspects of organic growing.**

### Meetings Held:

#### 3rd Thursday of the Month

The Meeting Place, Cnr Guineas Creek Rd and Coolgardie St, Elanora.

Doors open: 7:00 pm. **Begin at 7:30 pm**

Entry is \$2 members, \$5 visitors.

*(No meeting in December)*

### Annual Membership Fees:

Single: \$20. Family: \$30.

To renew or start memberships please transfer funds directly into our bank account, send cheques (payable to GCOG) to Diane Kelly, or just pay at the door.

**Name: Gold Coast Organic Growers**

**Bank: Suncorp**

**BSB: 484-799**

**Account: 0014-21651**

### Seed Bank:

Packets are \$2.00 each.

### Members' Market Corner:

Please bring plants, books and produce you wish to sell or trade.

### Raffle Table:

This relies on the kind generosity of members to donate items on the night. Tickets - \$1 each or 3 for \$2.

### Library:

Books 50c, Videos, DVDs \$2, Soil Test Kit \$2. Available to members for 1 month.

### Advertising: (Note 11 issues/year)

**1/4 page:** \$15 an issue, or \$145 per year,

**1/2 page:** \$25 an issue, or \$250 per year,

**full page:** \$40 an issue, or \$400 per year,

**W: [www.goldcoastorganicgrowers.org](http://www.goldcoastorganicgrowers.org)**

**Facebook: [www.facebook.com/gcorganic](http://www.facebook.com/gcorganic)**

## 2018 –2019 Committee

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Supper Co-ordinator	Paul Roberson, Deb Phillips, Bev Geraghty
Veggie Swap Co-ordinator	Dorothy Coe

**Newsletter Contributions are welcome.** Send in a photo of what's going on in your patch. **Deadline for contributions is the one week before the meeting.** Send your content to Jorge C. at: [jcantellanoc@gmail.com](mailto:jcantellanoc@gmail.com)

## Notice Board

### Membership Renewals

**NEW:** You can now pay your membership fee directly into the GCOG bank account.

Name: Gold Coast Organic Growers  
Bank: Suncorp  
BSB: 484-799  
Account: 0014-21651

**Remember to put your Name and Membership Number in the comment field.**

Note the number in brackets after your name is your membership number - you will need to quote this number in the comment field, if you pay via online banking.

### Membership Renewals

**Overdue:** Eileen Turner (328), Pat McGrath (305), Henry Blonner (108), Gillian Tubbs & Dolphe Cooke (403), Gary Miller (424), Colleen Rohan (415), Marion Symons (155), Denise Goodwin (335), Anne-Maree Andrew (337), Winny Hu Shouhe (414), Danielle Bowe (426)

**February:** Barry O'Rourke (185), Penny Jameson (201), Roger & Pauline Behrendorff (232), Danny Li (384), Bill Smart (386)

**March:** Angela Anderson (323), Lana Beloff (363), Maggie Golightly (365), Rachael Lebeter (367), Tricia Oh (368), Beverley Geraghty (404), Elizabeth Grippo (405), Stacey Panozzo (420), Julie Abraham (421), Rebecca Bowen (422), Christine Yeomans (433), Emma Litchfield (434), Daniel Tucker (435)

Latest newsletter can be downloaded from the site at [goldcoastorganicgrowers.org](http://goldcoastorganicgrowers.org)

### Thanks to Contributors this month:

Diane Kelly, Terry Lewins, Lise Racine, Leah Johnston, Jorge Cantellano

## Upcoming Guest Speakers

Our March speaker is confirmed! Jerry Coleby-Williams of Gardening Australia fame will be speaking about Sustainable Horticulture, which he practices in his garden, Bellis in Brisbane. April and beyond TBC.

We are currently seeking Guest Speakers for throughout 2019. If you have an idea for a potential speaker, or a topic that you think would interest our members, please contact Leah Johnston at [leahbryan9@gmail.com](mailto:leahbryan9@gmail.com)

### View our Newsletters On-Line or Collect at our Meetings:

We are encouraging our members to read our monthly newsletters either on our website - [www.goldcoastorganicgrowers.org.au/](http://www.goldcoastorganicgrowers.org.au/) (and then select "newsletters"); on our Club members' Facebook page; [Gold Coast Organic Growers Members](#) or by collecting their printed copies at our Club meetings.  
enjoy the [coloured editions on-line](#).

## Workshops

### Gardening Lunch – all welcome

We meet monthly for lunch and have a chat. 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. – at a trendy café somewhere (any recommendation welcomed) If you would like to know when the next lunch is on email Lyn Mansfield [Lynmansfield14@bigpond.com](mailto:Lynmansfield14@bigpond.com)  
Mobile – 0409 645 888

Next lunch – 22<sup>nd</sup> February, 2019 at 11 a.m. to 2 pm.  
Café Gold Coast – Shop 12, 300 Marine Pde, Labrado

### EdibleScapes

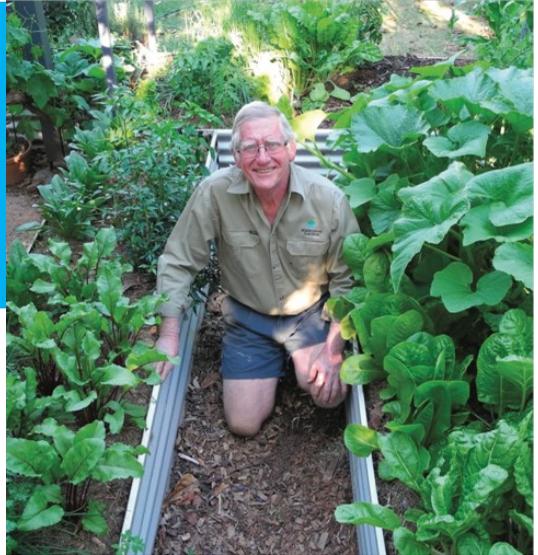
working bee/workshop 2nd Saturday of each month - 8:30am  
[Edible Landscape gardens Project](#).  
[contact@ediblescapes.org](mailto:contact@ediblescapes.org)

## LIKE A GARDEN THAT LOOKS AFTER ITSELF?

Drought can be a gardener's worst nightmare. In 2006 Alan Singleton, a keen organic gardener, had no way of sustaining his crops through the severe water restrictions. Alan set about refining the wick garden system he had come across.

In 2011 he went full time building what are now known as Watersaver Gardens. Besides cutting water use by 80% other advantages include significant reduction in weeding and no regular watering even in hot conditions.

The science behind the Watersaver Gardens is the wicking system - capillary action sees water drawn up through the soil by plants only as required, meaning the plant is never over-watered or not watered enough. Great for those without a green thumb. The reservoir only needs checking every four weeks - great if you're going on holidays. With intermittent rain they can go six months without needing watering. All kinds of herbs and vegetables can be grown in the gardens. Not watering from the top reduces mould and rust that attacks the wet leaves.



### A TOOWOOMBA GARDENER'S CLEVER CREATION SUPPORTS DROUGHT-PRONE PLOTS AND BUSY WOULD-BE GARDENERS.

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Like to know more?

[watersavergardens.com.au](http://watersavergardens.com.au)

Phone Alan for a chat on **0424 996 540**

Established Watersaver Gardens on display at 20 Jennings Street, South Toowoomba



## WATERSAVER GARDENS

Made in Toowoomba

**Bits 'n' Pieces for February 2019:**  
by: Diane Kelly

**Beneficial visitors:**

Cabbages, kale, mustard, turnip, radish and Asian greens are great for stingless bees, honeybees and hoverflies. Adult hoverflies drink nectar, but their larvae are important predators of aphids.

**Get Ready for St Patrick's Day:**

and plan to grow some sweet peas this year. They make a quick, colourful screen to hide utility areas, or an attractive background to the vegetable garden – or a fun wigwam cubby for the children!

Run a trellis for sweet peas north to south, so that the vines receive as much sun as possible.



**Plan now for 17th March!**

**Plant some cabbages for winter:**

According to Annette McFarlane we can start planting cabbages here in April. Remember that they are very heavy feeders, so prepare your plot now and have a good depth of soil ready for them. Don't plant cabbages for three years where other brassicas or potatoes have grown – and it is good to have them follow a legume or green manure crop.

“Seed can be sown direct into well-prepared beds or established in seed trays before being transplanted into gardens. Although seedlings are hardy and losses following transplanting are rare, take care to ensure that the taproot is established in a deep, straight planting hole, and not bent as a result of shallow planting. Space plants at 35 cm intervals for small-headed cabbages and at 60cm or more for large-headed varieties.”

**Hygiene in the Garden:**

Plant diseases are easily transferred when gardening, so it's important to clean and sterilise cutting equipment immediately after pruning diseased material.

Use a strong bleach or 10 per cent methylated spirits-water solution to thoroughly clean all surfaces, then rinse with tap water.

**Some advice that Maria gives** – always wash any fruit or veges before you eat them – it is so easy to enjoy a ripe cherry tomato, or a crisp snow pea pod as you wander through your garden, but make sure you wash them first!



**Let's hope he washed his paws !!**

**worms:** In 1881, Charles Darwin wrote, “Of all animals, few have contributed so much to the development of the world, as we know it, as earthworms.”

**An old farmer once said,** “Used to be that the only test you needed to make to see if the soil was good was to walk on it. If it was soft and springy beneath your feet, it was good, because it had worms in it. That land would be good land and would always grow good crops.”

**If You Only Do One Thing this Month  
– GET READY to plant some Cauli-  
flowers:**

by: Diane Kelly

It's exciting to have a look at the planting guides and see all the wonderful vegetables that we can plant over the next few months. And to make life more exciting this month, let's do something classified as "difficult" – let's grow some cauliflowers!

The reason to think about cauliflowers in February is that you need to plan for growing them:



- \* Cauliflowers need to be grown in a well-protected but open location so choose a space now in your garden.
- \* The soil needs to have good water-holding capacity, but be free-draining as cauliflowers don't like wet feet.
- \* To prepare the soil, add plenty of organic matter – manures, green manures or compost. For new garden beds, add these in two months ahead of planting.
- \* Peter Cundall recommends growing cauliflowers after a pea crop, as they are nitrogen hungry plants.
- \* Work toward providing alkaline soil – a pH of 6.5 to 7.5 is recommended.

Cauliflower seeds can be sown in punnets,

and should germinate in 10-14 days. The seedlings can then be transplanted into small pots to continue growing for another four weeks – and then they will be about 10cm high, and ready to plant out in your beautifully prepared soil! Handle the seedlings carefully, plant them firmly into their final position, and then water them in immediately. Space the seedlings 45-60cm apart (or 30cm if you are trying a miniature variety). If sowing seeds directly into the garden, remember to thin out the seedlings.

It is important that the growth of cauliflowers is not slowed at any stage by water or nutrient stress – it is recommended that they be grown quickly. Weekly fertilising with liquid fish, seaweed or compost tea in the month prior to harvest will result in an improved yield. And be patient – cauliflower plants are slow to mature, and it can take 12-20 weeks before the heads reach a harvestable size.



As the flower heads (or curds as they are known) begin to develop, it is useful to bend a few protective leaves over the head and secure them with string or a clothes peg – in our climate this helps prevent yellowing and premature flower development. (But don't do this if you are growing coloured varieties, as it tends to blanch the colour from the heads.) My seed-saver book says that you can pour iced water on the head at maturity to stop premature ripening.

### ***A bouquet of cauliflowers !!***

**When it is time to harvest:** Cut cauliflowers when the head is tight and well-formed, but before the flowers begin to open. Remove mature heads a good way down the stem, then cut a cross in the top of what remains, and you may be lucky and obtain some supplementary heads. When the harvest is finished, remove the stem and root as otherwise they deplete the soil of nutrients, and also increase the risk of disease. Pulverise the remnants of the plant and compost them.

**Potential problems:** Cauliflower plants have similar pest and disease problems to all brassicas, so watch out for those caterpillars and aphids! Sometimes you may find some small leaves growing in the flowers heads – this is usually stress-induced, so keep up the food and water to the plants.



**And to save the seeds?** Select the plants when the heads are in their prime – the best are those that form the curds quickly but are slow to bolt to flower are the best to save for seed. Remember that for saving seeds, cauliflowers need to have been grown well away from other flowering brassicas such as cabbage, kale or Brussels sprouts. **Note:** flowering annuals such as stocks, wallflowers and alyssum also belong to the Brassica family. Cauliflowers are biennial plants that take two seasons to form seed, although this may be shortened in warmer climates.

Cauliflowers can be eaten raw, pickled, steamed, boiled, stir-fried, made into fritters,

baked with Roma tomatoes & garlic or turned into a tasty, cheesy cauliflower bake – there are so many recipes available!



***Cauliflower bake - an easy & tasty side-dish, or to enjoy with a salad.***

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## Compost Never Sleeps

By Terry Lewins

There are numerous ways to make compost and there are numerous websites, printed articles and books about how to make the 'best' compost. There is plenty of room for interpretation and disagreement. Nevertheless most 'composters' will agree on a few basic principles. When making compost it is important to consider; water, oxygen, microbes and organic material.

Anaerobic composting occurs in the absence of air/oxygen and is due to the action of anaerobic bacteria. This process is generally slower than aerobic composting and can produce bad odours (hydrogen sulphide), methane and pathogenic microbes. The end result is less compost, than if it were composted aerobically.

This is an account of a few different methods of aerobic composting at the Tugun community garden. They are:

- Tumblers – using grass, poo, sawdust, pulp and water
- DD method – Dog's Dinner, using green waste from garden (and beyond) and grass clippings
- NC method – Not Compost, using just sawdust and grass with no mixing and not much water
- GPS method – using grass, poo, sawdust and water

### Tumblers



The tumblers were each about 200 liters. Three were plastic drums with open ends covered with shade cloth. Each had a door on the side to inspect and make additions if necessary. These tumblers were rolled along the ground. A metal drum was also used. A rail (made from a bicycle rim) was attached to the drum. This drum was then placed on a housing with rollers and rotated on the spot.

The 'recipe' consisted of equal parts; *poo* (horse of course), *grass cuttings* (dry), *sawdust* (from a local furniture manufacturer) and *pulp* (fruit and vegetable) from a local juice factory. These ingredients were mixed (giving about 200L) then about 40 L of water was added. Each drum was rolled (or rotated) every day or so to ensure that sufficient oxygen was available. The compost was harvested within six weeks. It was good having a dependable supply and a consistent, fine grained compost for seed raising mix and potting mix. It takes a good sense of humus to recognise good compost but pot trials can be useful. Pot trials, growing lettuces, were used to assess this compost and it compared well with other compost 'brands'.

### The DD method



Compost bay #1 receives green waste from the garden. Waste that is difficult to compost is separated (or not) into a separate pile that goes to the tip. This discarded material includes vines, woody material, paw paw trees, dragon fruit vines (don't they bite), whole coconut (how did that get there ?) palm fronds (strange – the garden has no palm trees), plastic bags and a range of unidentified material. Grass is also added to this bay at irregular intervals. Water, poo, or sawdust are not usually added. After about 6 - 8 weeks this bay is full and is eventually

turned to the next bay.

The last batch from bay #1 consisted of half garden green waste and half grass and was very dry. When turned water was added (about 200 L) but neither carbon (sawdust, hay ect.) or poo were added. After a further three weeks(ish) this batch was turned again (adding water - 50 L) into a third bay. Within 2 – 3 weeks it was ready for use. This final compost still contained traces of bulky un-composted material and was best used after going through a sieve. The final volume (1000L) was less than half the original volume.

### The NC method

On one occasion volunteers, from outside the garden, were used to make compost from a huge pile of grass cuttings (3 cubic meters) and two cubic meters of sawdust. Unfortunately the team weren't supervised and, even after six weeks, the result was three bays of dry, poorly mixed sawdust and grass.

Only a thin bottom layer contained material that resembled compost. Generally it is difficult to botch up a batch of compost but this method shows that it is possible to make a batch that is '*not compost*'.

### The GPS method

Also called the UWVG method (use what we got). The garden receives over two cubic meters of grass cuttings each month (from local commercial operators). Before it compacts



down it is a large, green, sprawling mass larger than two cubic meters.

The garden has a row of six compost bays that are used (or not) on an irregular basis. Over the Christmas period there was an opportunity to try and 'hot compost' the tumbler recipe but with grass only (i.e. no pulp).

### Recipe

2 grass (dry), 1 poo, ½ sawdust (with shavings)

### Method

Batches were made using 50 L black plastic rubbish bins.  $(2 + 1 + \frac{1}{2}) \times 50 = 175\text{L}$  each batch.

Ingredients were mixed using a pitch fork. Then about 30 L water was mixed in (till moist like a damp sponge). The mix was then transferred to compost a bay with a wheelbarrow.

One cubic meter = 1000 liter (L)

2000 L grass + 1000 L poo + 500 L sawdust = 3500 L,

Each (wheelbarrow) batch 175 L = 20 batches  
10 minutes per batch = 200 minutes.

Say, 4 hours to make 3500 L

A volume of at least one cubic meter is required for the compost to reach temperature for *hot composting*. (The compost bays hold over two cubic meters). The GPS method makes compost a bit faster than the tumblers (cold compost). Although less oxygen is available in the compost bays there is more heat, than in the tumblers. So the net effect is faster compost (?).

Within a few days each pile reached a temperature of 60C. After about 10 days the temperature started to drop, indicating that oxygen was in short supply (so I read). After two weeks this compost was turned into the next bay and water added (about 70 L). After yet another week or two this compost was turned again and then it was about ready for use. The volume reduced from 3500 L to about 2000 L. This method makes compost in about 4 – 6 weeks. When one cycle was complete another two cubic meters of fresh grass cuttings had been delivered and it was time to start again.

Sources of good information about composting are listed below.

<https://greenharvest.com.au/>

[GreenGardenNotes/](#)

[OrganicSoilImprovement.html](#)

<http://compost.css.cornell.edu/>

<https://www.planetnatural.com/category/compost/guide-methods/>

**Farewell to “Gobble Gobble”:**  
by Diane Kelly

Peace has finally returned to our backyard.

The bush turkey – “fondly” given the name of “Gobble Gobble” - has finally departed. So we decided that there would be an element of poetic justice if we helped ourselves to all that lovely soil and grass clippings that he scratched from our back lawn and gardens to build his mound.

So I did the “No Dig” bit to my six raised garden beds, and they were full of manure and lucerne hay ready to plant out. We were going to put some of the BT mound soil as the first layer of the gardens to give them some extra height, but we soon realized that it made more sense to use it to plant seedlings in to. So I sieved out several bucketfuls of soil to remove any twigs or leaves, and put a number of small pockets of soil in each bed to plant out in (the photo of the corn shows the quantity that was needed for the “No Dig” system.)

That was all done on the 3rd of February, and a fortnight later we now have sweet corn, cucumbers, celery, tomatoes, capsicums and perpetual spinach all doing quite well.



*The sweet corn is growing well ...*



***and the cucumbers need a trellis already !!***

***And just an update:*** Some time last year, one of our guest speakers gave a presentation about “Compostas”. This mechanism combines a worm farm & a bowl of soil – the vegie scraps get put down the tunnel to the worms, and then they move out into the soil and fertilize it and the plants. The system works really well for herbs, and I’ve been surprised at how well the soil retains moisture, and how the plants are growing.



***Five-in-One herb, chives & parsley – thanks, worms !!***

## Easy herbs to grow for your health this winter

By Lise Racine

notes from the presentation 17.1.19

Autumn great time to plant certain medicinal herbs which can be harvested within the next 6 months.

Start preparing now:

What to grow -

Dandelion, chicory, burdock, lemon balm, comfrey, borage, oates, parsley, coriander, calendula, catnip, garlic, thym, nasturtium, chickweed, ginger, elder.

Where to grow – full sun, shade, semi shade – prepare the area.

Seeds or cutting – see your source

Strengthen your systems –

1. The liver your filter. It is like your compost bin or your car filter or the vacuum filter. What does it do? What affects it? What supports it.

Liver herbs

Dandelion – other similar but not the same

Chicory – tall, purple flower

Burdock – prickly flower that gave birth to the Velcro

Establish in autumn

Eat young leaves of dandelion and chicory

Harvest the root.

Dry root for tea

Fresh root tincture

2. Tincture  
What is it?  
Does it work?  
How does it work?  
How to use it.

Making it

Proportion 1:2 to 1:4.

Vodka macerate 2 weeks

Apple cider macerate 4 weeks

Filter, bottle, identify.

Dispensing bottle

3. Protect and support day to day

### Ginger

Part - rhizome

Action - Antiviral. Thins mucus, slow spread of virus in body, protects mucus membranes from damages.

Use - Fresh in cooking. Fresh juice - juice 500 kg, use 60 to 90 ml in a cup with hot water, honey, cayenne pepper and quarter of a lime.

### Nasturtium

Part - Flowering top

Action - Antibiotic

Use – Cooking. Extract

### Thym

Part – leaves

Action – Respiratory system, antiseptic

Use – Cooking, Tea

### Garlic

Part – Bulb

Action – Alicin is Antibiotic

Use – Cooking. Extract. Syrup

4. Prevent The flu

ginger, Echinacea, garlic

Kung F'd [www.ihealth.com](http://www.ihealth.com)

Painkiller masks the symptoms and blur the vision of how it is progressing.

Fever – Echinacea every 2 hour 5 drops until fever stops then every 4 hours.

Act early – Rest, echinacea, ginger juice, garlic, light food with complete protein.

Mild form- Rest, water, light food with complete protein, ginger juice, propolis, garlic, horseradish, licorice.  
Diligence on doses.

Acute form – Diligence, rest, water, light food with complete protein, ginger juice, Echinacea.



The Herbal Gardener

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## How Does Your Garden Grow? With Stacey Panozzo

By Leah Johnston

It's a brave gardener who will welcome me to take photos of their garden on the Gold Coast in the height of summer! (Several members declined...) But I managed to bribe my way into Stacey Panozzo's garden with the promise of bringing some chocolate cheesecake slice to share as we talked.

The birth of Stacey's first daughter back in 2007 inspired her to start growing her own organic food. Moving to acreage at Tallbudgera six years ago seemed like living the dream but now she's realised that the reality of growing your own food is "bloody hard work." But of course it's worth it and that's why she continues.

"You're getting the highest possible nutrition if you're eating directly from the garden - the day you pick it! I also feel a great sense of pride and satisfaction in growing my own organic food to feed my family. I find my children are more adventurous with trying new foods when they have helped them to grow. It's a great experience for them to see where our food really comes from and we are all far less wasteful when we know how much love went into growing our dinner. Any food scraps go back into our garden - via the chickens, compost systems or worm farm, so we are cutting down on a lot of waste going to landfill too," she tells me.

Stacey, her husband Rob and their three daughters Chelsea, Olivia and Pippa all enjoy getting out in the garden.

"The kids are very enthusiastic when planting new things, and they are always happy to eat from the garden, but I tend to pick up the slack and actually care for everything in between," she tells me.

Stacey's garden features raised veggie beds, subtropical gardens, a fruit orchard and flowers for her European bees, which live in a Flow Hive. She loves relaxing on the couch in her indoor jungalow and watching the bees buzz around the Flow Hive just outside the

window. The kids enjoy learning about the bees and donning their protective suits to help harvest the honey too.

Stacey's garden grows a variety of fruit trees including pomegranate, mulberry, feijoa, starfruit, guavas, miracle fruit, citrus, citrange and one of her favourites - the panama berry, because it's so easy to grow and she can pick a few sweet 'lollies' from this tree to enjoy whenever she is out and about in the garden. She's also excitedly awaiting her naranjilla fruits to ripen so she can try them for the first time. She grows a few native bush tucker plants including Finger Limes, Native Plum and Midden Berry. Of course there's also vegetables like beetroot, lettuces, spinach, bok choy, onion, potatoes, sweet potatoes, egg plant, tomatoes of course, whatever is seasonal; turmeric, galangal, garlic; and plenty of herbs including a variety of basil and mints, rosemary, chives, sage and edible maple geranium.

When she adds fertilisers to the garden she chooses compost from Red Soil Organics and Earth Life Fertilizer. Plus a variety of soil conditioners such as Islands In The Stream Vermiculture and BioChar. Then there's also the homemade worm tea and a solution of seaweed and chicken manure.

For pest control she uses exclusion methods of netting the fruit and removing pests by hand. She wasn't keen on some Orchard Swallowtail caterpillars munching on her small citrange because the tree is still young and trying to grow, so I happily took them to my place and am raising them inside in netted enclosures and feeding them leaves from my mandarine tree, which is older and has plenty of leaves to share.

When the chickens are roaming around the garden they will also help to control the populations of whatever bugs they find.

Stacey's property has a small dam which is a popular drinking hole for the nearby wildlife and home to yabbies. The fruit trees are drip fed recycled biocycle water.

"We also have a few water tanks in different locations around the garden. There's no such

thing as too much spare water come summer!" she said.

Stacey's garden grows with homemade compost which she makes with manure from her chickens, kitchen scraps, dried leaves and coffee grounds, all wrapped in black plastic to keep the heat in and then it is turned every few days.

Many of our members will already know that Stacey is the founder of the Botanical Bazaar garden festival which she has grown from its humble beginnings in 2015 held at the Currumbin RSL to the massive green festival that gardeners from not just the Gold Coast but also Brisbane, Sunny Coast and northern New South Wales pop in their diaries and look forward to all year. Be sure to pop the date of this year's event in your diaries – Sunday August 4, held at Country Paradise Parklands, Nerang.

Besides being a committee member of GCOG she is also on the committee of Gold Coast Green Living Inc, a not for profit group that aims to educate others about living a greener lifestyle and most recently built the Sensory Gardens at Country Paradise Parklands, Nerang.

Stacey's advice for other gardeners is to never stop learning. "Talk to everyone about gardening, there's always something new to learn, that's what makes it such a great hobby."

Thanks for welcoming me to your beautiful garden Stacey (and thanks for the baby caterpillars and cotton seeds). If any GCOG members reading this would be happy for me to write an article on their garden (keeping in mind I'll bring a yummy treat to share while we talk!) please email or text me on leahbryan9@gmail.com or 0428 028 042.



## What are Community Gardens?...:

ref: Community Gardens Start Up Kit - Gold Coast PARKS

### Community Garden Definition

For the purpose of this document, a community garden is defined as an area of shared land in which members of a community participate in the cultivation of food and other plants.

The community garden is a 'not-for-profit' community venture, essentially driven by community. It is acknowledged community gardens will also exist on State Government, private school or land outside of Council control.

Gold Coast City Council community gardens utilise suitable open space in this city. Other open space within the public domain such as verges, easements, roads, rail corridors, vacant and temporary lots may be considered as an option for future community gardens.

### Community Garden Philosophy

Gold Coast community gardens encourage and are founded on organic gardening principles which include permaculture and biodynamic gardening principles.

### A Community Garden is...

An inclusive term for different types of enterprise that involve:

- horticulture, mainly of food species, usually vegetables and culinary herbs, but sometimes fruit and nut trees
- community hub, facilitating social interaction and involvement
- sometimes, local government support and participation
- education in Life Skills, valued, acknowledged and shared through the provision of workshops as well as facilitating activities for children of all ages and diverse community groups and their members.
- best practice sustainable horticulture practices demonstrated to promote an understanding of an energy efficient design for living amongst the community at large.
- improving the environment and soil struc-

ture to enable an abundant and healthy harvest of organic produce.

- arts and cultural activities of all kinds.

### Benefits include:

- allow people to grow their own vegetables, fruit, herbs and flowers
- improves the quality of life for people in the garden
- provides a catalyst for neighborhood and community development
- stimulates social interaction
- encourages self-reliance
- beautifies neighbourhoods
- produces nutritious food
- reduces family food budgets
- conserves resources
- creates opportunity for recreation, exercise, therapy, and education
- potentially can reduce crime
- preserve and improve the precious green spaces in urban environments
- provides opportunities for intergenerational and cross-cultural connections
- contribute to building an ecologically viable and socially just food system
- are a convivial way of getting fresh air and exercise with no gym fees!
- foster community engagement and a culture of generosity, reciprocity, trust and self-help
- are great places to learn about gardening and share local and traditional knowledge
- develop innovative ways of living sustainably in the city
- create art projects, community events, celebrations, workshops, and much more
- may allow excess produce to be distributed to other not-for-profit organisations or used for fund raising.



### Community Garden Model

The most effective Community Gardens are based on a combination of two models:

- allotment gardens
- communal gardens

A blending of the two models ensures effectiveness and the feeling of inclusiveness, as part of a group of gardeners.

Garden membership fees may vary between groups, depending on the application of the two models. It is the responsibility of the steering committee to determine and administer the fee structure for the group. This fee structure must include consultation with Council.

### Allotment/Plot Model

Gardeners are allocated a plot of land in accordance with garden by-laws. The allotment holder may be an individual, family or group of friends, depending on the rules established by individual steering committees.

### Communal Garden Model

This model is a garden cultivated in common with produce being divided amongst gardeners or gifted to charity.

Some gardeners may want to participate only in shared common gardening.

Communal gardens provide an opportunity for all residents to become involved. They also provide the opportunity for seasonal visitors to the area who may wish to participate in community gardening and allow the involvement of schools, youth groups and citizens in gardening activities - all very much encouraged.

Decisions on the plant species selected for cultivation in the shared common garden areas should be made under the guidance of the steering committee, and if necessary, a permaculture or horticultural advisor.

### Designing the Garden

Basing the design on sustainable principles will require careful consideration and use of all resources. A successful design should create a space where people can learn from the garden and each other.

Harvesting the natural elements will affect the

shaping of your design:

- water - attaching a water tank to the storage shed at the highest point of the site will allow water catchment as well as gravity-fed watering across the site
- sun - placing shortest to tallest elements from East to West will create optimum sun harvesting
- wind - constructing wind-breaks to buffer against the harsh westerly winds, while allowing gentle breezes that encourage pollination and reduce bacterial and fungal diseases
- earth - working with the natural soil type, structure and topography to build a healthy garden from the ground up.

Materials used in the construction should also be taken into consideration. Are they environmentally friendly? Can any existing materials on the site be recycled or re-used?

Another significant aim for the design of the garden is caring for people. The design should cater to all ages and abilities, encouraging social interaction at all levels.

The members of a community garden are a major resource. Their skills and experience will help to give each design a unique identity. Their involvement ensures the dual growth of both community spirit and the garden.

### Construction

#### Aim

To create a community garden

#### Process

The construction phase is a great way to establish a sense of belonging to the site and attract new members to the community garden group.

It should be intended that the garden construction is of a manageable scale for current members.

Some of the most successful, established community gardens started small.

Allow room for potential expansion as the need arises.

The community garden group may be expected to drive the construction process in

accordance with Council conditions.

**Outcome**

At the minimum, the construction of key garden elements, including:

- safe environment for all users.
- access to Water.
- areas to grow plants.
- a shady space for people to share food and conversation.

**Setting Goals**

Setting goals for your garden will guide decision making.

Garden goals to consider:

- growing healthy, organic food
- sharing and learning from information and new ideas
- maintaining a harmonious community atmosphere
- increasing the public awareness of the benefits of community gardening
- promoting an Active & Healthy lifestyle

ref: Community Gardens Start Up Kit -Gold Coast PARKS GCCC (year??) Not current policy !!

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**Women gardeners**

by Jorge Cantellano

Over the past two years, since I am working to establish the edible landscape gardens, I have observed that gardening is a female territory.



GCOG club over 3/4 women participants

Here at the Gold Coast Organic Growers club, women are in command. It is noticeable, not only from the President's informative talks, or the over ¾ female regular members, but also to the camaraderie at the regular monthly meetings. Likewise most of the management committee members, newsletter contributors, and speakers are woman.

Similarly, at the Edible Landscape Gardens, participants are predominantly female. As well there are visibly a substantial number of women involved in Gold Coast community and school gardens.



Edible Gardens working bee September

Through digital social media pages, EdibleScapes have received 71% of Women 'likes' and GCOG club have 76% of Women 'likes'. If you follow the South East Queensland Permaculture you will see that from 3,627 FB members, nine out of ten are woman. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/335757083118409/members/>

From the GCOG's library this Month, I am reading 'A Modern HERBAL' a book edited by Violet Stevenson. On page 9 it mentions that in the Middle Ages, the ladies of the castles were the 'gardeners' and the ladies remained the gardeners of the castle and village for centuries, cultivating healing herbs among their vegetables and culinary plants.

Another topic of interest is the transition to urban agroecology. I selected three statements that comment on the role of women in today's global-local agroecology transition; I cite these here:

*"Women play a crucial role as transmitters of traditional knowledge to the new generations. They are particularly aware of the usefulness of plant genetic diversity as they are in many regions the ones with primary responsibility for the production of subsistence crops that are essential to household food security"* (Utviklingsfondet, 2011)

*"Successfully addressing the challenge of natural resources and biodiversity preservation will require putting women at the front seat of agroecological transition processes since they play a major role in managing soil, water, forests and energy, especially in developing countries. Women have traditionally entertained a close relationship with trees and the forests. They have a deep knowledge of the plants, animals and ecolog-*

*ical processes around them. They can be considered the traditional daily managers of the living environment"* (Sobha, 2007).

*"recognizes the vital role of women in the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity and affirming the need for the full participation of women at all levels of policy-making and implementation for biological diversity conservation"* (UNCED, 1992).

I hope this note will encourage some conversation especially with the upcoming International Women's Day, which is to be celebrated in Queensland with a Women's Week.

On 9<sup>th</sup> of March in recognition of the vital role of women in keeping knowledge and practice of edible gardening, EdibleScapes are inviting woman to plant fruit trees, and accompanying vegetables and herbs. We hope to showcase a cultural diversity women's garden at the Edible Landscape Gardens. For details please go to: [www.facebook.com/pg/n.ediblescapes/events](http://www.facebook.com/pg/n.ediblescapes/events)

Thanks to Council of the City of Gold Coast's Division 5 – Cr Peter Young, for funding support. This has allowed, EdibleScapes to proudly source fruit trees and plants in consultation with organic growers and multicultural women's groups to celebrate Women's Weeks with a Permanent edible garden women's garden.



## FRUIT TREES

### FEBRUARY

**Custard Apples:** Peak water needs. Apply organic fertiliser with sulphate of potash, 1 kg for mature trees and ½ kg for young trees.

**Figs:** Net trees to protect figs from birds. Pick fruit every two days. Fertilise with 1 kg organic fertiliser with sulphate of potash.

**Low shill stone fruit:** Moderate water needs.

**Lychee:** Peak water needs. Mulch trees. This is a good time to “skirt” trees (skirt-trim all growth to 500mm above ground). Prune so 20% light can be seen through trees. If Erinose mite is a problem, spray with wettable sulphur every 10 to 14 days from pin head size new growth to fully open, and harden off.

**Mango:** Apply organic fertiliser with sulphate of potash. Keep up water. Prune trees after harvest. **Pruning:** If it is a very large tree that needs to be pruned to a manageable size, the correct way is to cut back 1/3 of branches each year for three years. In the first year remove one of the largest branches, the following year remove another branch, and so on until the tree is of an acceptable shape and size. In this way you will have some fruit each year while at the same time reducing the size of the tree. Spray with copper based spray or leaf microbes for anthracnose every fortnight.

**Passion-fruit:** Keep up the water.

**Pawpaw:** Plant pawpaws in threes (thin out to strongest). Plant out seedlings as the soil is still warm and by Autumn they will be stabilised, and then be ready to get an early start for Spring. De-bud your first year trees (keep one flower to try the fruit – if you must!) Keep one male to eight female trees. Pawpaws are heavy feeders. Spray copper based spray or leaf microbes to prevent black spot.

**Persimmon:** Make sure trees are fully netted. Harvest time for early varieties.

**Strawberries:** Prepares sites for runners to be planted out at the end of the month. Keep well-watered to form new runners.

**Bananas:** Fertilise with organic fertiliser with sulphate of potash – 1 kg per stool. Keep up water; bag fruit; and cut off bells.

**Citrus:** Fruit thinning should be done this month. Leave one fruit every 150mm. Fertilise tree with organic fertiliser containing sulphate of potash, 1 kg for large trees and ½ kg for smaller trees. Keep up sprays of pest oil for leaf miner. Keep up the water.

### MARCH

**Custard Apples:** Fertilize trees – 20 gms of organic fertiliser per sq m to drip line. Harvest every 3 to 7 days. If mealy bug is a problem spray individual fruit with pest oil or wipe on metho and water (30% metho + 70% water).

**Figs:** Close to end of season.

**Lychee:** Less watering is required, but don't let the trees dry out. If Erinose mite appears, spray every 10 to 14 days with wettable sulphur from pinhead size new growth to fully open and hardened off.

**Low Chill Stone Fruit:** Water needs to taper off now as trees begin to defoliate.

**Mango:** If any anthracnose fungus is visible, spray with a copper based spray every 2 weeks, or with 25 mls leaf microbes and 5 grams wettable sulphur per 1 litre of water.

**Passionfruit:** The water can be tapered off. Harvest fallen fruit under vines every 3-4 days.

**Pawpaw:** Plant out new trees. Apply boron now. 1 teaspoon per mature tree. Spray leaf microbes (25 ml leaf microbes per 1 litre of water) if black spot is seen.

**Persimmon:** Main harvest time. Decline water needs. Apply a little super fine lime and gypsum – 50 gms per sq metre of each.

**Strawberries:** Plant out new runners. If you want to leave last year's plants, prune only.

**Bananas:** Give stools a high organic potassium fertilizer – 200 grams per stool (any organic fertilizer that has added sulphate of potash).

**Citrus:** If any fungal problems arise, spray with pest oil and leaf microbes. Add the pest oil + 15 ml per litre of the leaf microbes. This will also control the citrus leaf miner and scale.

**Pruning Citrus:** Citrus trees need little pruning. If over-crowded, thin out after fruiting. Don't thin oranges or grapefruit severely but mandarins can be shortened back to the second or third shoot down the branch.

## VEGETABLES

### FEBRUARY:

Asian Greens, Beans (French, Snake), Beetroot, Broccoli, Cabbage, Capsicum, Carrot, Cauliflower, Chilli, Choko, Kale, Leeks, Lettuce, Marrow, Mustard Greens, Onions, Parsnip, Pumpkin, Radish, Rhubarb, Shallots, Silverbeet, Sunflower, Sweet Potato, Tomato.

### MARCH:

Asian Greens, Beans (French), Beetroot, Broccoli, Cabbage, Capsicum, Carrot, Cauliflower, Celeriac, Celery, Chilli, Endive, Garlic, Kale, Kohlrabi, Leeks, Lettuce, Mustard Greens, Onions, Parsnip, Peas, Potato, Radish, Shallots, Silverbeet, Snow Peas, Sweet Potato, Tomato.

*Queensland Planting Guide, BOGI*

## HERBS

### FEBRUARY

**Annual:** Amaranth, Basil, Dill, Herb Robert, Misome, Mizuna, Nasturtium, Italian parsley Rocket, Giant Red Mustard, Salad Mallow.

**Perennials & Bi-Annuals:** Catnip, Ceylon Spinach, Chicory, Chilli, Chives, Comfrey, Perennial Coriander, Echinacea, Fennel, Hyssop, Lavender, Lemon Balm, Licorice, Lovage, Marjoram, Mint, Mushroom Plant, Oregano, Parsley, Rosemary, Sage, Salad Burnet, Stevia, French Tarragon, Winter Tarragon, Thyme, Upland Cress, Watercress, Winter Savoury.

### MARCH

**Annual:** Borage, Calendula, Chamomile, Chervil, Coriander, Dill, Garlic, Italian parsley, Misome, Mizuna, Nasturtium, Rocket.

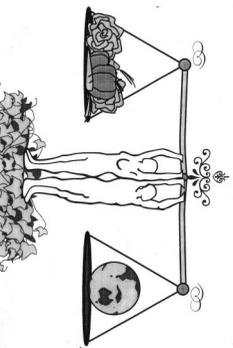
**Perennials & Bi-Annuals:** Catnip, Chives, Perennial Coriander, Fennel, Hyssop, Lavender, Lemon Balm, Marjoram, Mint, Mushroom Plant, Oregano, Parsley, Rosemary, Sage, Salad Burnet, Winter Tarragon, Thyme, Upland Cress, Winter Savoury.

*Queensland Planting Guide, BOGI*

Whilst every effort is made to publish accurate information the association (including Editor, Executive Officers and Committee) accepts no responsibility for statements made or opinions expressed in this newsletter.

If not claimed in 14 days, please return to:  
**GCOG, PO Box 210, Mudgeeraba Q 4213**

*GOLD COAST ORGANIC  
GROWERS Inc.*



**NEWSLETTER**

**Meetings held:**  
3rd Thursday of the Month

**Meeting place:**  
Cnr Guineas Creek Road  
& Coolgardie Street  
Elanora, Gold Coast

**Next meeting:**  
Thursday 21st March 2019