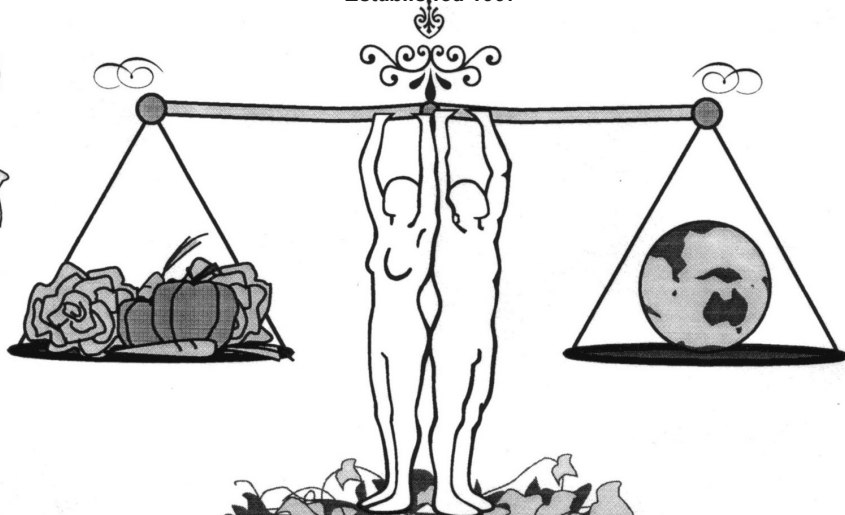


# GOLD COAST ORGANIC GROWERS Inc.

Established 1997



## NEWSLETTER

Volume 24 - FEBRUARY 2020 Issue 2  
GARDENING IN SUMMER

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OUR NEXT MEETING: Thursday 19th MARCH 2020

## 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 PO Box 210, Mudgeeraba Qld 4213, 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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Librarians	Evelyn Douglas
Seed Bank Seed Assistants	Lyn Mansfield Maggie Golightly Bill Smart
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 or write an article about something interesting you've learnt recently. **Deadline for contributions is two weeks before the meeting.** Send articles and photos to Leah at [leahbryan9@gmail.com](mailto:leahbryan9@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 (the number in brackets after your name) in the comment field.**

**Overdue (as of February 12):** John Palmer (357), Denise Goodwin (335), Anne-Maree Andrew (337), Micheline Lazaroo (401), Ira Appel (417), Jane McLennan (446)

**February:** Barry O'Rourke (185), Penny Jame-son (201), Danny Li (384), Bill Smart (386)

**March:** Angela Anderson (323), Lana Beloff (363), Maggie Golightly (365), Rachael Lebeter (367), Tricia Oh (368), Beverly Geraghty (404), Elizabeth Grippo (405), Stacey Panozzo (420), Rebecca Bowen (422), Christine Yeomans (433), Peter & Patricia Edwards (447), Ashley Corpaci (448), Michele Miller (449)

## Upcoming Guest Speakers

March 19 - Kevin Redd 'Fruits to Grow in the Subtropics' (with fruits to taste and plants to buy!)

April 16 - Colin Johnson from Earthlife (with soil conditioner products to buy)

May 21 - Cathie Hodge bushfire talk

June 18 - TBC

July 16 - Professor Rob Capon 'Cane Toads'

To suggest a speaker please contact Leah Johnston via [leahbryan9@gmail.com](mailto:leahbryan9@gmail.com)

## Workshops

**Gardening Lunch** – all welcome  
We meet monthly for lunch and have a chat. 11 am to 2 pm – 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

### Celebrate “Women’s Week 2020”

Women are invited to return to the Cultural Diversity Women’s Garden to celebrate “Women’s Week 2020”, on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> March, 8:30am at the Ediblescapes Gardens site. more info at: [www.facebook.com/pg/n.ediblescapes/events](https://www.facebook.com/pg/n.ediblescapes/events)

If you have a free event you would like us to share in our newsletter please let us know about it by sending the details to: [leahbryan9@gmail.com](mailto:leahbryan9@gmail.com)

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

[www.goldcoastorganicgrowers.org.au/](http://www.goldcoastorganicgrowers.org.au/)

**Thanks to this month’s contributors:**

Jill Barber, Jorge Cantellano, Leah Johnston, Diane Kelly.



GCOG MEMBERS  
**NEWSLETTER**  
CONTRIBUTIONS

**DEADLINE FOR CONTRIBUTIONS IS  
DUE THE FIRST THURSDAY OF THE MONTH**

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Send your content to  
Leah at:  
[leahbryang@gmail.com](mailto:leahbryang@gmail.com)

## January Meeting Recap

By Leah Johnston

Our January meeting had a great turn out with many of us keen to get our GCOG “fix” to catch up with friends, buy some seeds, have a chat and ask some questions about gardening.

Maria encouraged members to utilise the club’s library more. She knows there’s lots of information on Google, but warns that some of it is fake news, whereas the books in our library have been hand selected because they have great information inside them.

Maria said that the price of seeds has increased to ten times the price it was 5, 6, 7, 8 years ago.

“I blame the micro greens. People are using big quantities of seed to grow their microgreens and everything is brought in from overseas. Our seed sources grow little bits but they can’t grow everything that they need to sell. You can help us by donating seeds that you are growing at home and it will help keep our costs down, as well as give us all better seeds that grow well in our area,” she said.

Members who donate a large packet of seeds (enough for Maria to split into ten packets) will be able to choose a free packet from the seed table. Dry the seeds out completely and store them in a paper envelope with the name of the seeds on it, the date you stored it and your name.

Maria spoke about giving the club an inspiring focus for this year, to combat all the bad news we keep hearing about.

“We’ve had such a terrible summer...

People losing everything, wildlife being lost. That news 24 hours a day is bad news after bad news and gives a feeling of helplessness. What can we do to help?

“This year I want to get guest speakers who can help us to be more resilient and feel inspired that we can make a difference. I’m feeling like what’s the point? No one else cares. But I’m looking at all of you and I’m pretty sure you all care. Let’s make our gardens more water wise, more resilient—and grow more of our own food. What you do at home helps the community and the world,” she said.

Members offered their suggestions for ways we can help others affected by the recent bushfires. Kerry is offering her guest room as a respite for people affected by the fires who want a break. You might just want to donate \$10 to a fire charity or give some towels to the Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary hospital. Bill suggested giving some seeds to an organic gardening club down south that may need it (after the meeting I found a Facebook group for people to donate seed through, see our GCOG Members Facebook group for the link).

Megan suggested planting for wildlife and looking at traditional Aboriginal methods of managing fires.

Margaret said the traditional methods were to burn slow and low to the ground, and it gave the creatures and lizards time to escape the fire.

The website Dumbo Feather was recommended for its inspiring articles ([www.dumbofeather.com](http://www.dumbofeather.com))

Rachel said a lot of donations have gone to WIRES for the animal rescue groups,

but to be aware that it doesn't operate in all areas. A lot of the areas affected by fires aren't supported by WIRES. If you want to help animals in our areas then look for a local Group: we have the largest animal extinction levels in the world. Find your local group and support them. We had Sarah from Green Heroes speak for us at GCOG a few years ago so you could ask them what help they need at the moment: some are collecting old towels and blankets, others have volunteers sewing joey pouches, some need funding to buy supplies, such as special milk powders. There are little things we can do that make a huge difference.

Megan said that there are some plants that are growing well in this dry weather and we can discuss between each other what things grow well that we could be focusing on growing for our local climate and conditions. Her dragon fruit is going well. Maria said the bougainvillea and crepe myrtle are flowering so well at the moment - the heat stress is making them flower or go to seed, but they look fabulous. They are trying to procreate before it's too late. One of Maria's olive trees is going well at the moment, even though it didn't get rain in winter, which they usually need to set fruit. Megan said her roses are loving the heat and the loofahs are growing well.

Kiwi fruit vine is growing well at the moment. Maria asked if they need to be pruned to fruit. Rachel doesn't prune hers, and it fruits. Margaret said the commercial growers prune them every winter to make them fruit.

Margaret suggested wicking beds for dealing with not enough water, and Maria explained what they are: beds lined with rubber or plastic, a rock bed-ding, and material of some kind to make

a barrier between the rocks and dirt. The water reservoir sits in the rocks and wicks through the soil up to the plants. If there's too much water it has an overflow outlet. There are different ideas about different materials you can use, but the principle is the same. Mark said washed river sand works well. Margaret likes to use washed charcoal in that layer for purity.

Maria said there are different reasons for a wicking bed: if you have tree roots nearby that will steal your plants' water, then you want a wicking bed on top of the ground; you can also grow in wicking beds on top of asphalt or clay; or just when you want to save time watering and save water.

Kerry said to look up the Gardening Australia segments on wicking beds online for more information.

Margaret has different depth wicking beds for different plants. A small system can even be built using a broccoli box. She likes the Vegie Pod versions too. She has one on the deck for herbs even though she has 10 acres of land to play with, because it's effective and convenient to pick herbs close to the kitchen.

In LA they plant ice plant along the highways as a fire preventative as it holds a lot of water and doesn't catch fire when people throw a cigarette butt out the window.

I explained my automatic olla watering system which I've recently installed in my garden bed - see the last newsletter for the article.

Rebecca used to use plastic milk bottles with some holes drilled in them and some kitchen sponges filled to a third of the way up to help hold the water. She

buried them next to the plants and filled with water. The water would slowly leach out and keep her plants moist for between three weeks and a month.

We then showed the short film Jorge's son made about the Ediblescapes project (which won the Gold Coast Short Film Festival!) You can watch it here if you haven't seen it yet <https://www.facebook.com/n.ediblescapes/videos/430003151268439/>

Stacey encouraged everyone to visit Country Paradise Parklands at Nerang with a picnic lunch and spend some time at the Sensory Gardens and the Ediblescapes site.

Penny asked how long the "pecking order" lasts for in chickens when introducing new chickens. Most people thought it lasted around a week. Introducing the new chickens at night can help as they wake up together, or add some different food to distract them.

A member asked how to bring worms back after the dry weather. Maria said the soil would be full of worm eggs and if you can bring the moisture back they will hatch and come back. Maggie said they would be hiding down lower in the soil as the surface is too hot.

It was asked if eggplants and tomatoes can be affected by soil fungus. Maria said don't plant tomatoes in the same place year after year as the nematodes build up in the soil and affect the plant. There's such extreme weather stress on the plants at the moment that everything is going to be affected by something, and the humidity might stop things that were going well.

Stacey asked about zucchini leaves: should you cut back the mouldy looking

leaves? Some members do and others don't.

Bill brought in an unhappy cosmos plant that has never flowered. It may be a viral problem, he was told, so bin it, don't compost it, to prevent spreading anything throughout your garden.

### **How Can We Help? RedCycle**

By Leah Johnston

Continuing our theme for the year (to help improve the environment and the world), each issue I will bring you an easy change you can make in your life that can make a difference.

Don't be discouraged by the enormity of the task at hand. The world doesn't need a small handful of people doing absolutely everything right and living zero waste lifestyles; it needs billions of people making small changes. It's also good for our mental health to feel we are "doing something" rather than feeling helpless and hopeless.

It's disturbing to think that plastic never fully decomposes; it just breaks down into smaller and smaller particles, over hundreds of years, until it becomes microplastics.

An easy change to make that doesn't take a lot of effort, is to recycle your soft plastics. Avoiding packaging wherever possible is preferable, but for the soft plastics you can't avoid (potting mix bags, dry pet food bags, the net bags that citrus come in, chip packets, chocolate wrappers, cheese packaging, frozen pea bags, post bags, etc) you can collect them all up, and when you go to Coles or Woolworths, pop them in the RedCycle collection bin. The collection bins are located against the walls near the regular

checkouts (not the self service ones). If you can't spot them just ask a staff member.

The soft plastics are processed within Australia and turned into durable outdoor items, including signs and seating.

Every time I take my bags in to the supermarket to drop them off, I run into someone I know who asks me what on *earth* I am doing, and I tell them about soft plastics recycling, then they start to do it, too.

If you are already doing this in your life, then tell two friends about it to make a difference this month.

See the picture to the right for information on what can be dropped in that bin. Basically, if it's plastic, and you can scrunch it up, it can go in the RedCycle bin.

Here's the extensive list of items that can be recycled via the RedCycle bins: biscuit packets (outer wrapper only), bread bags, bubble wrap, cat and dog food pouches (as clean as possible), cellophane, cereal box liner, chip and cracker packets (silver lined), chocolate and snack bar wrappers, cling film (GLAD, Coles Home and Woolworths Essentials Home brands only), confectionery bags, document sleeves (remove the white reinforcement strip along the holes), dry pet food bags, fresh produce bags, frozen food bags, 'green' reusable shopping bags, ice cream wrappers, sheets of plastic that new furniture comes wrapped in, netting produce bags, newspaper and magazine wrap, pasta bags, pet food bags (chaff, horse, chicken) both the plastic and woven polypropylene types (not woven nylon), plastic Australia Post satchels, plastic carrier bags from shoes, plastic film wrap

from grocery items such as toilet paper, plastic sachets, potting mix and compost bags (both the plastic and polypropylene types), rice bags (both the plastic and woven type), zip lock bags, wine and water bladders (clear plastic ones only). Make sure your plastic is dry and as empty as possible.

Larger pieces of plastic (such as potting mix bags) should be cut down to smaller A3 size pieces.



## Soft plastic recycling

The REDcycle Program makes it easy for consumers to keep plastic bags and packaging out of landfill.

### Do the scrunch test



### YES PLEASE

Some of the most commonly recycled items include:



Please make sure your plastic is dry and as empty as possible. For a comprehensive list of what can be REDcycled and more information, check the website.

### NO THANKS

We cannot accept the following:

- X Plastic bottles
- X Plastic containers
- X Any rigid plastic such as meat trays, biscuit trays or strawberry punnets
- X Glass
- X Rubber
- X Paper and cardboard
- X Tin cans
- X Food waste

\*Contact your local council to check if it can go into your kerbside collection.

[www.redcycle.net.au](http://www.redcycle.net.au)

**“The world doesn't want to be saved. It wants to be loved. (That's how you save it.)”**  
**Source: Unknown**

**Club Member Expertise -  
Learning to Adapt**  
By Diane Kelly

Over the past few months we have looked at the areas of expertise of various Club members – Maria with “how to start a gardening Club”; Ian with owning bee hives; Danny with being involved in a Community Garden; and Margaret taught us about propagating plants. This month we take a slightly different approach, but one which I think is relevant to all of us as the weather conditions in our area change.

Recently the Mudgeeraba Rural Fire Service held a presentation on “Community Bushfire Preparedness” and several of our Club members attended, including Gary and Sue Webb who hail from New Zealand. This made me think about how challenging it must be for people who come from different climates to adjust to life on the Coast, and in particular how to garden here.

Evelyn Douglas is another Club member who comes from New Zealand – she moved to the Gold Coast some 20 years ago. So I decided to have a chat to her about what gardening was like in New Zealand – in Evelyn’s case, Auckland – and what has been her gardening experience here. I soon learned that the “gardening experience here” should be broken into several parts – how it was 15-20 years ago; how gardening is now; and how it looks likely to be in the future.

Auckland’s latitude is very similar to Melbourne’s but is regarded as having a sub-tropical climate. The summers are hot and humid, and the winters are dry – and, no, it doesn’t snow there! Much of Auckland has been built on volcanic

soil and Evelyn describes it as being “alluvial, volcanic, very light, dark and rich”. In the suburb where Evelyn grew up, her father’s vegetable garden had to be worked with because the soil was totally clay. But when Evelyn moved to her own home and three-quarters of an acre of land in 1993, the soil required very little assistance to grow broad beans, lettuce, herbs, plum trees, guavas, feijoa trees, wisteria, poplars – in fact a whole range of plants, because “everything grew so easily”. The only adjustment Evelyn had to make was to have raised beds because her property was located in a valley and so the soil tended to be damp. Compost (lawn clippings added to leaf litter and veggie scraps) was the only thing Evelyn added to her gardens.



**Evelyn’s NZ veggie and herb gardens  
(with broad beans on the way)**

That was Evelyn’s first foray into gardening. Then, during several years of house-sitting for friends, she developed their garden. There Evelyn grew all types of salad veggies, silver beet, broccoli (with heads literally the size of dinner plates),



spinach, kumara (purple sweet potato) and more. To nourish the soil, any veggie scraps were just chopped up and put back into the soil – the owners of the property had improved their soil with trench composting. Other than that, Evelyn said that the “idea of adding to the soil was foreign”.

Evelyn’s memory of those times is that everything grew easily and well. There were, of course, things that were not worth growing – you could plant bananas and coconuts, but the results were very small. Also there were – of course – pests. Mostly snails and slugs because of the damp, cabbage moths, and sometimes the birds would steal the plums Evelyn had grown. But special things like figs and persimmons grew easily.

Then, in 2000, Evelyn moved to the Gold Coast to be closer to her family and she purchased a home in Miami. The soil was basically sand, but at least there was very little existing garden so Evelyn had a fresh start to develop a garden as she wished. The house is 700m from the beach so there is always a cooling breeze; there are no intruding trees or “building shadows” from neighbouring properties and the sun comes into the backyard in the morning and crosses out along the side garden where the fruit trees are in the afternoons.

Wanting to garden so that she could eat home-grown produce, Evelyn started a veggie patch. As she says now, “I didn’t know any different”. So she put down layers of newspaper over a 4m square patch in the back corner of the yard and gradually covered it with a layer of about a third of a metre thick of lawn clippings. As she was able to purchase seedlings, she then made holes in the clippings, put an amount of aged horse manure in each cavity, and then planted her veg-

gies. At the same time she started two compost bins so that there was material to add to the garden.



### **The beginning of Evelyn’s Gold Coast veggie patch**

The result was healthy silverbeet, zucchini, tomatoes, lettuce and English spinach, and this cycle was repeated for a number of years. Herbs grew well here (as they did in New Zealand) and there was always coriander, rocket, mint and oregano to add to meals as flavouring. Evelyn’s memory of that time was that rainfall was regular, often happening during the night. The winters were drier and the summers were consistently warm and wet, and the lawns were always green (and filled with buffalo grass, which has since disappeared). There was always a breeze to cool the summers, and as Evelyn had a large pergola built and planted grape vines, she created her own micro-climate for the veggie patch. Evelyn remembers that there used to be a problem with snails and slugs, but that is not an issue in recent times due to the drier weather. Green grasshoppers have always been a problem and Evelyn has noticed that the

butcher birds don't discriminate between eating good or bad insects in the garden.

So that brings us to the last year or two, and this is when Evelyn has found her gardening to be quite challenging.

Firstly, here is an outline of Evelyn's gardens. She has a very large raised garden bed down one side of the house, and in that is growing a pomegranate tree, two paw-paw trees, an avocado; warrigal greens; and several pumpkin vines. Beside that are fruit trees in pots – apples, limes etc – and there are banana trees, dragon fruit plants, and the green, tropical and black grapes on the pergola in the back of the yard. The pergola area is also used for growing herbs and veggies, and all are in slightly raised beds. The pergola gets the morning sun, and then the heat moves across the backyard to where the raised garden bed is. Evelyn has noticed that her pomegranate tree has kept the sun from one of the paw-paws, and wonders if that is why one tree is under two metres high and isn't fruiting, and the other one reaches well above the house guttering and has a dozen or so healthy looking fruit developing.



**The pomegranate tree blocking sunlight from the paw-paw tree**

Here is a summary of what is happening in Evelyn's garden at the moment:

- The pomegranate is fruiting quite well.
- One paw-paw tree is fruiting, while the other one has nothing on it.
- The pumpkins are flowering and some are developing to about acorn size – and then dropping off the vine.
- Evelyn has two native bee hives.
- The apples are also developing to a small size – not even matching a golf ball – and then dropping off.
- The bananas do well.
- The grapes are developing nicely. (Evelyn thinks she will take some cuttings of the tropical grapes she is growing and replace the black vines, as the tropical grapes are wonderfully sweet.)
- Over the past months Evelyn has planted out broccoli, beans (doing moderately well, but are growing out of season), silverbeet, lettuce, sweet corn and celery. None of these have developed – basically growing vegetables has been a waste of time.
- Ants are becoming a considerable problem – they feed off the white aphids (as well as intruding into the house).
- Evelyn doesn't disturb the garden beds. Instead she mixes in a combination of nutrients – rock minerals; blood and bone; egg shells; home-made compost and purchased compost - to make up about a 20% contribution to a mix, and then adds in about 80% cow manure. She then applies a layer of this mixture (about 6 inches deep) to the garden beds to plant into.
- The herbs Evelyn has planted are growing well – the rosemary is a metre or so tall; the oregano is spreading, along with the mint.

So Evelyn's question is: "What am I doing wrong – why are the veggies and

fruit not producing?" With the warmer and often drier weather (with occasional strong rain events creating their own problems), Evelyn has begun to wonder what should she be growing to be able to gather food from her own backyard. Her three questions are: "**what** should I grow; **how** do I grow it; and **how** do I use what I grow." I imagine that these same questions are being asked by a number of our Club members, as days become hotter; weeks become drier; and storms become more damaging – it is certainly going to be a challenge for all of us as we seek to adjust to a changing weather pattern, and as our food crops may be less successful. Evelyn described her-three gardening experiences as "bliss" in New Zealand; "easy" in the early Gold Coast days, and currently "desperate".

You may have read recently about The Earth Market, an organic market in Maitland (some 40 kms north west of Newcastle) that is facing a drop in produce as crops wilt, go to seed, or die completely. "Anything in the 40s [or above] causes the vegetables to move straight into reproduction mode," says one of the local growers. "So they'll either go straight to seed or they'll start to die because they just can't handle that extreme heat." Temperatures in the area have reached over 50 degrees recently, and the veggies are turning bitter – and are being fed to the chooks. One of the other growers has been "tarping" more than 25 different crops until conditions improve and they can start over again.

The problem with this lost production is that "the enormous range of products that you would never see in the supermarket" will be lost. "When we lose that we just end up with the large-scale monocultures, lack of choice, lack of biodiversity in those large crops and all of us will really lose out." The comment was

also made that "without water security you can't have food security," I imagine this same experience is being shared across our country.

As we work together as a Club and share experiences, ideas and successes, let's hope we can achieve a sustainable gardening future together, and that we can all become "experts in adaption".

### More than a Garnish - Parsley

By Diane Kelly

The humble parsley – that little piece of greenery that gets left on the plate after a restaurant meal – is a herb that has been used in cooking in cultures all around the world since early Roman times. Ranging from being part of *fines herbes* (the herbal combination that is the mainstay of French cuisine) to being used in pickling, breads and cakes in Europe, and on to being added to Japanese salads and egg dishes, parsley is both versatile and flavorful.

There are two main types of parsley – the ornamental, triple-curved variety (which is most commonly used as a garnish) and the flat-leaf type (which tends to be used in cooking as it is easier to chop and has a superior flavor in



Curly-leaf and flat-leaf parsley

cooked dishes). Flat-leaf parsley is also a more vigorous plant and doesn't retain dirt or grit as the leaves of the curly variety do.

Parsley grows as an annual or short-lived perennial. Prepare your soil so that it is well-drained (parsley plants tend to rot at ground level if they are kept too damp) and compost-enriched, aiming for a pH of 6.5. Parsley likes a sunny or semi-shaded spot and growing it in pots also works well. Depending on temperature and moisture, seeds take 3-6 weeks to grow, with the plants reach up to about 30cm. Growing parsley from seed can be made more successful by putting the seeds in a cup and then filling it with boiling water. Leave the seeds in the water overnight and then plant out. Cutting back flower heads when they first form will encourage more leaf growth, but as the plant matures, the flowers can be left as beneficial-insect magnets and the seeds used for self-sowing new plants. Having a number of plants growing at once helps the parent plant not become over-harvested. When picking parsley leaves, pull them away from the base rather than cutting them, as in warm, wet weather leaving a stub can also cause the clump to rot.

### ***Parsley by Any Other Name***

It was interesting to learn which other herbs are part of the parsley family:

**Chervil** – the common name for French parsley – is sweetly-scented and has mildly aniseed leaves. It is used in dishes of more delicate flavour, such as eggs, mild-flavoured fish and chicken.

**Coriander** – this is the other name for Asian parsley, which is also known as cilantro. Coriander has a strong flavour and is commonly used in Asian, African and South American cooking. The dried

seeds of coriander have a slightly-orangey flavour and are used in European cooking as an addition to breads, cakes and biscuits, and also as a flavouring for fish and poultry.

**Mitsuba** – this is Japanese parsley that grows with a long tap-root, and the leaves, leaf stalks and roots are all used in a range of Japanese dishes.

Hamburg - a more unusual parsley is Hamburg or turnip-rooted parsley. As the name suggests this plant grows turnip-like roots which have a nutty, celery-like flavour. The smaller roots can be grated and tossed through salads, or made into fritters, and the larger roots are cooked as you would parsnips or turnips. So roast, steam, boil or dice them to add to soups and stews – they are delicious - or chop the leaves and use them as you would curly parsley. Unfortunately this parsley only grows really well and produces good roots in cool climates.

You can dry your fresh parsley by tying a bunch together and hanging it upside down in a cool, dry place. When the parsley is completely dry, remove the stems and store the dried leaves in an airtight container. You can also dry out your parsley in a slightly warm (100 degrees F) oven or in a dehydrator.

So make the most of parsley in all its types. It can be used to make salsa, tabbouleh, marinades, parsley aioli, hummus, parsley and mint sauce, or remoulade (a fancy tartar sauce). Parsley can also be added to meat loaf to contribute a slightly peppery flavour; to scrambled eggs or omelettes; to stuffing for added flavour; or it can be combined with chopped chives to add a tasty depth to your every-day lunch salad. And don't forget to use the stems in your cooking, as they contain lots of flavour.

## The End of a Cycle

By Jorge Cantellano

With the end of a seasonal growing cycle comes the start of the preparation for a new seasonal planting. For us at Ediblescapes we like to think in a spiral open circle, for which each season we build more soil to grow more plants.

We open our photo journal to share learnings; it is a visual document where we can reflect over time which results were satisfactory and what went wrong. Through observation we get understanding. They are also documents that our friends and visitors can comment on and give feedback and advice on.



The above pictures show the diversity of the veggie crops, which grow together with fruit tree saplings, aromatic and medicinal herbs, and weeds as green manure and flowers.

Before planting the next season's plants, we need to remove the crop of the previous season, clean up the perennials, herbs and green manure enough to allow ventilation for this hot and humid weather, but leave some cover to protect the soil from the hot, sunny days.

We will make each garden bed a bit wider, broadening them as much as we can, but leaving the minimum space needed to walk in. We realise that the recommended 1.20 metres width is not enough to create a sufficient ecosystem for the living soil. We will increase the width of the garden beds to about 2

metres. This will mean we need to work with our knees on the ground to reach the centre of the garden, if we are to be kind to the microbes, etc, and not step into the garden.



The set of pictures above show that we have taken the time to mow all the after-season crop plants, overgrown herbs and green manure, and pruned the tree branches and banana leaves.

Why do we mow the after-harvest waste instead of putting it in the bin or composting it?



Well, it will be composted, but in an anaerobic fermented system. To the clipped greens coffee grounds were added as carbohydrate energy, as well as equal parts of brown dry stuff in the form of bokashi feedstock and a wheelbarrow of fermented green manure that we made three months ago. Everything was mixed well together. This is a similar process of "Reproduction of Mountain Microorganism (MM)" we have described before (see at <https://www.ediblescapes.org/composting/microorganisms>).

Small organic farmers in Costa Rica were innovating in using the MM process

to ferment fresh, green grass to replace cow manure in the making of bio liquid fertiliser, in order to get the organic certification. We use this method to ferment the after-season crops and avoid having to bring in animal manure to make the fermented bio fertilisers.

Remember our initial statement about the “spiral open circle, for which each season we build more soil to grow more plants”? Already we have double the organic matter that was taken from the garden, ready to start a new process of building new soil.



We are not alone in this task; we have an indispensable alliance with millions of microorganisms. Firstly, there is Lactic Acid Bacteria (LAB) which is extracted from the wash water of rice, with the addition of raw milk, extracted as whey, and mixed with equal parts of molasses. Secondly, but no less important are the diverse microorganisms in Bio Liquid (BIOL) + Bio Solid (BIOSOL) Fertiliser diluted in water to produce BIOL-SOL Tea, that we are making onsite (see <https://www.ediblescapes.org/composting/biol>).

Third is the mixing of one part of LAB to twenty (20) parts of BIOL-SOL Tea to moisten the organic mix a bit. To know the right wetness, press a portion of the wet mix in your fist, and you should just feel the moisture in your hand without dripping any liquid. It is important to get the right humidity, not too dry and not too wet, to achieve the transformation into fermented soil fertiliser.



To achieve anaerobic fermentation, we need to extract the air out of the organic mix, which is done by compression. The drum is closed airtight, sealing it with an air lock, which allows gas to go out, but not return in.

After 6 weeks, the process results in a solid bio fertiliser soil product, ready to use in a mix of one to ten in water or solid substrates. The product in the garden soil will contribute to transforming the soil into humus, which is the granulate structure of the soil that facilitates the absorption of microelement nutrients into the plants.



We are growing seedlings in summer, in preparation for transplanting them as soon as the weather allows it, confident that this cultivated soil will make these plants grow happily, to produce healthy, nutritious and flavourful food.

From now on, all the women are invited to return to the Cultural Diversity Women's Garden to celebrate “Women's Week 2020”, on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> March, 8:30am at the Ediblescapes Gardens site (74 Billabirra Crescent, Nerang).

You will find garden beds and seedlings ready to plant in the spirit of urban agroecology, which allows sharing knowledge and trying some different organic planting practices.

**“If you want to be happy  
for an hour,  
have a glass of wine.**

**If you want to be happy  
for a day,  
read a book.**

**If you want to be happy  
for a week,  
take a wife (or a husband).**

**If you want to be happy  
for ever,  
make a garden.”**

**Quote: A Proverb, *The Rose Garden*,  
Written by Marita Conlan-McKenna**

## **Butterfly Profiles: Varied Eggfly**

By Leah Johnston

Continuing with our theme for the year - to do what we can in our own backyards to help the world around us - I want to profile a different species of native butterfly in the newsletter each month, and tell you how you can welcome them to your garden. Besides being beautiful in their own right, butterflies are important pollinators in our gardens that can help our fruit and veggies to grow.

It's already tough out there for a butterfly. The odds are against them: for every 100 eggs they lay, it's estimated that only two will make it to become butterflies. There's so much against them: ants, ladybugs, spiders and birds can eat the eggs and caterpillars. Parasitic wasps will lay eggs inside the young caterpillars and instead of a butterfly hatching from the chrysalis, wasp larvae do. Nature can be so incredible, and cruel. So I like to stack the odds a little for the butterflies in my garden.

Butterflies need nectar from flowers to survive, so we can plant lots of nectar-rich flowers to attract them to our gardens: think sunflowers, nasturtiums, buddleja (also known as 'butterfly bush'), zinnias, and let your herbs and veggies go to seed.

You can also offer a mud source (in a bird bath or saucer) for the butterflies, as they absorb minerals and nutrients through their feet by walking around in the mud, known as 'mud puddling'.

To reproduce, butterflies need host plants to lay their eggs on, which the baby caterpillars will then eat. If there's one message I really want all gardeners

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to understand, it's this: caterpillars won't eat every plant in your garden. Cabbage moths have given all butterflies and caterpillars a bad reputation with us gardeners. The caterpillars of cabbage moths will enjoy eating cabbage, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, tobacco, sunflower and tomato plants.

Other butterfly species are much more particular though, and their caterpillars can only eat certain plants. Besides, in many cases, what they want to eat isn't what we want to eat, so we aren't in competition with them at all.

By planting the host plants for different butterflies you can enjoy watching the process from eggs to caterpillars to chrysalis to butterflies. It really is exciting to be out in the garden and see some butterflies flying overhead, and feel that you had something to do with that.

This month our butterfly in focus is the Varied Eggfly. The males are black, with beautiful, blue and white markings. The females are black, with orange and white markings. (Check out the newsletter online to see coloured photos of them). The caterpillars are black with orange spikes. The really cool thing about this butterfly is that they lay tiny BLUE eggs (most butterflies lay yellowish eggs). Its hostplant is lesser joyweed, which is a lovely groundcover that you can grow underneath other plants or fruit trees. It's not picky about where it grows: I have seen it in full sun, part shade, sandy soil, heavy clay, in the lawn and in my veggie patch. It pops up after some rain and disappears if it's dry for too long.

You probably have it growing in your garden already, but in case you don't, I'll bring some potted up plants to the February and March meetings so that

more of us can help this beautiful butterfly to thrive.

**Left: blue eggs  
Below: caterpillar and chrysalis**



**The female Varied Eggfly Butterfly:  
black with mostly white markings  
and two orange markings**



**The male Varied Eggfly Butterfly:  
black with blue and white spots**



## Recipes

By Jill Barber

### Diane Kelly's Quick and Easy Teabread (dates or apricots)

This is one of those fail-proof recipes that are convenient to make because you don't need any butter or milk – and it is made of just four things that you always have in your pantry or fridge. Served as is, or with a dab of butter, these cakes can be stored for up to five days – if you can resist them that long!

#### Ingredients:

- 1 cup of dried fruit – traditionally mixed fruit, but I use dates or dried apricots sliced into thirds.
- 1/3 cup raw sugar – I use half that for dates as they are so sweet.
- 1 egg.
- 1 ½ cups of wholemeal self-raising flour – if using plain flour, add 3 teaspoons of baking powder (with half a teaspoon extra to ensure a slightly lighter loaf).

#### Method:

1. Put fruit in a bowl and add 2/3 cup of boiling water. Leave to stand for 30 minutes.
2. Pre-heat the oven to 180C or 350F (or gas 4). Grease and line the base and sides of a 450g loaf tin.
3. Beat the sugar and egg into the fruit. Sift the flour into the bowl and stir until combined. Turn into the prepared tin and level the surface.
4. Bake the teabread for about 50 minutes until risen and firm to touch (I reverse mine at about 20 minutes to brown evenly). Check that the bread is cooked by testing with a skewer (or toothpick) to ensure that no sticky

mixture emerges.

5. Leave the loaf in the tin for 10 minutes before turning out on a wire rack to cool.

6. Enjoy with a cuppa.



“Gardening is about enjoying the smell of things growing in the soil, getting dirty without feeling guilty, and generally taking the time to soak up a little peace and serenity.”

- Lindley Karstens

## 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. Lemon trees are taller and less compact so keep them to a size easier to handle. Old trees can be cut severely but will take a year or two to recover and bear.

### *Queensland Planting Guide, BOGI*

## 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.

## 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.

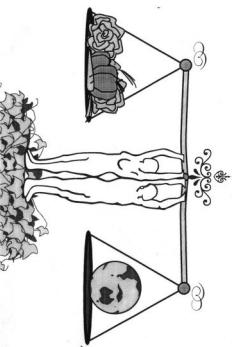
#### **Perennials & Bi-Annuals:**

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.

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  
Doors open at 7pm, meetings  
start at 7.30pm and run  
until approximately 9.30pm

**Meeting place:**

Cnr Guineas Creek Road  
& Coolgardie Street  
Elanora, Gold Coast

**Next meeting:**

**Thursday 19th MARCH 2020**