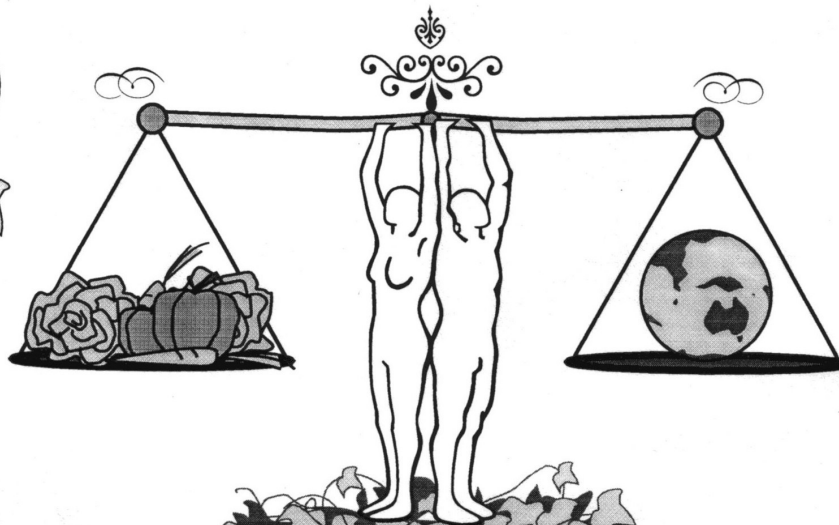


GOLD COAST ORGANIC GROWERS Inc.



NEWSLETTER

Volume 14 February 2011 Issue 2

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OUR NEXT MEETING: Thursday 17 March

THE AIMS OF G.C.O.G. Inc.

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 \$1 members, \$3 visitors.

(No meeting in December)

Annual Membership Fees:

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

To renew or start memberships please send cheques (payable to GCOG) to Diane Kelly - or just pay at the door.

Seed Bank: \$1.50 ea.

Members Market Corner: Please bring plants, books and produce you wish to sell.

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

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

Advertising: \$10 an issue, or \$100 for 11 issues (1 year).

Newsletter: contributions welcome by post or email (preferred). Please send to Dorothy at webprint@onthenet.com.au

Please put [GCOG] in email 'subject' box.

2010 Committee

<i>President</i>	Maria Roberson (07) 5598 6609 405 Piggabeen Rd, Currumbin Q 4223
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<i>Treasurer</i>	Diane Kelly (07) 5522 7444
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<i>Trip Co-ordinator</i>	Maria Roberson (07) 5598 6609
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<i>Library Assistant</i>	Pauline Behrendorff
<i>Seed Bank</i>	Peter Seymour-Smith (07) 55965678
<i>Seed Bank Assistant</i>	Graham Boyle

Thanks to other contributors:

Diane Kelly, Ross Davis, Lise Racine, Roger Griffiths, Justin Sharman-Selvidge, Leah Galvin, Margaret Reichelt, Karen Hart, Elizabeth Dolan, Patti Barton, Dorothy Coe.



Notice Board

Membership Renewals

Overdue: Leah Galvin, Peter Aubort, Maria Roberson, Marion Symons, Peter & Patricia Edwards, Anissa Loades, Rodney Boscoe, Roger Griffiths

February: Terri Groth, Barry O'Rourke, Roger & Pauline Behrendorff, Barbara Morgan, Ken & Pat Jenyns, Judy McCracken, Jerry Rogers, Alison Blatcher, Suzanne Blatcher, Tali Filip, Sylvia Rolih

March: Jannette Janssen, Allan & Penny Jameson, Regina Lacgalvs, Leone Freney, Bronwyn Morrison, Rebecca Bowen

Welcome to our new members: Julie Abraham, Katie Culpin, Winsome Gunning, and John & Jessica Steytler

Guest Speakers

Feb: Lyn Mansfield on Community Gardens on the coast.

March: Peter Davenport on native bees.

April: Leah Gavin talks about her experience with Permacult on the coast and permaculture projects overseas in South East Asia

May: Greg Plevy from Wormtech

Oct: Bonni Yee on micro-organisms

NOTE: If any members within the club would like to share something that would be of benefit to our members please contact Lise Racine to discuss.

We are online at....

Website: www.goldcoastorganicgrowers.org.au

Blog: <http://gcorganicgrowers.blogspot.com>

Facebook: www.facebook.com/gcorganic



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SEASONS ON THE MOUNTAIN
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Introducing: New Format—Three seasons

Autumn: Saturday 8th & Sunday 9th May
Winter: Saturday 7th & Sunday 8th August
Spring: Friday 1st to Sunday 3rd October

www.tmbotanicgardens.org.au

**Workshops at the Gold Coast
Botanical Gardens**

Come and enjoy the expertise and experience of skilled presenters and learn a host of fascinating knowledge and practical skills. The Friends of the Gold Coast Regional Botanic Gardens offer a range of leisure courses – from two-hour presentations, half or full day.

Identifying and controlling environmental weeds

Date: Saturday, 19 February
Time: 10:00am - 12:30pm
Where: Gold Coast Botanic Gardens
Presenter: Diane Wagner
Cost: \$8-\$10

Bookings are essential. Please contact the Friends on 0449 561 674.

Plants and design

Date: Saturday, 26-February
Time: 12:30pm - 4:00pm
Where: Gold Coast Botanic Gardens
Presenter: Kate Heffernan
Cost: \$8-\$10

Bookings are essential.
Please contact the Friends on
0449 561 674. Maximum 10 participants.

Sustainable Gardening Workshops

Composting and Worm Farming

Come along to Council's free sustainable gardening workshops where you can learn all about composting and worm farming to recycle your waste and improve your garden.

The workshops are held on a Saturday between 10am and 12pm at the following locations:

12th March - Helensvale Community Centre
31 Discovery Dr

16th April - Robina Library
Robina Town Centre Dr, Robina

21st May - Joan Park Community Garden,
Joan St, Southport

18th June - Currumbin EcoVillage
639 Currumbin Creek Rd, Currumbin

To find out more information or to register for a FREE workshop near you, call (07) 5581 6855.

Tea and coffee are provided and all you need to bring are closed shoes.



**Gold Coast
Sustainable Living Market
Coming May 2011**

Expressions of interest...

Calling all green/sustainable/organic/
Australian made businesses.

For further details contact
Kym OConnell - 0413 672 940

ATTENTION ALL GOLD COAST COMMUNITY GARDENERS

WE NEED YOUR
HELP TO FUND
RAISE - \$9,000



Spreading Permaculture and
Touching Lives in East Africa

SOCIAL GET-TOGETHER
& PLANT GIVE AWAY

Date: Saturday, 5th March

Time: 10 am to 12 noon

Where: Joan Park Community Garden
(Joan Park is at the end of Joan Street,
which runs off Minnie Street, Southport)

There will be a demonstration on **Crop Rotation, Control Strategies – Biofumigation, & Common Soil Pests** by **Justin Sharman-Selvidge** and **Fruit tree care, Budding & Grafting** by **Jude Lai**

It's a free workshop and we are asking for donations to support a Permaculture charity. With your help, Warren Brush, International Permaculture Designer and Educator, will be offering educational programs and Permaculture design consultation for various orphanages and villages in East Africa over the next six months.

We need to raise \$9,000 in the next three months to meet a challenge grant that will match the funds dollar for dollar. The amazing projects will have a broad concentric ring of impact in the people, mostly orphans, in this developing region of the world.

There will be plants for sale and heaps of plant giveaways.

ALL WELCOME!

RSVP – lynmansfield14@bigpond.com or
Justin 55 393 973

Need help with organic gardening, general gardening, landscaping etc ?

Elizabeth Dolan received this through the EcoVillage network and it maybe of interest to some of our members.

Justin Robinson has 10 years experience in eastern sub tropical Australian organic gardening, farming, and landscaping, currently working in the Currumbin valley Justin seeks work advising on, implementing or enhancing home gardens/ sustainable food production systems, Justin has extensive knowledge, practical experience and is an efficient, resourceful and hard worker.

Contact Justin 0448811349

Some of Justins former employees, biological food production co-conspirators/ precious teachers include:-

Rod and Tania bruin - Summit organic farm (worked full time, assistant farm manager, 2 and a half years)

Dave Forrest - Organic forest farm, tafe organic farm course teacher (studied under Dave 1 year full time)

Grahaeme Lambert - naked earth farm/ sustainable landscape design (worked full time with Grahaeme 2 years, design and construct grey and black water reed bed systems, sustainable landscaping, home orchard/vege garden design and construct.

Geoff Lawton - Permaculture research Institute director (practical work with Geoff here and overseas since 2004)

Rick and Naomi Coleman - Southern Cross Permaculture institute (practical work here and overseas with Rick and Naomi 2000-2001)



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Miami Organic Farmers Market

Where: Miami State High School
2137-2205 Gold Coast Highway, Miami
When: Every Sunday, 6am to 11am
Contact: David Whyte
Telephone: (07) 3358 6309 or 1300 668 603
Email: info@gcorganicmarket.com

**To cultivate one's garden is the
politics of the humble man.**
(Chinese Proverb)



**Life Changing Documentaries,
Workshops and Seminars**

Presents: MONDAY NIGHT @ THE MOVIES

Movies will be shown once a month on a Monday night starting Monday 7th March

Check their website for full details of movie title, session times and costs.

Movies shown at the new location:
Paradise Room - rear of the Gold Coast Arts Centre (facing the Lake + Canals)

GCOG club members receive 20% off the ticket price - simply order your tickets online at their website and type in the customer code: "VIP"

More info and bookings at
www.lifechangingdocos.com



Successive Sowing:

Successive sowing means you plant the same vegetable, successively, at several different locations, at 10-14 day intervals for a continuous harvest.

Succession Planting:

Succession planting means planting a second crop after you've harvested a first, in the same position, so you get two crops from the same space in just one season.

Interplanting:

Interplanting means to plant more than one type of plant in the same place, in among each other. Ideally, mix early and late-maturing types, such as carrots with cucumber

Documentary Farms and our Food Supply

From Patti Barton

This video maybe of interest if you care about food supply in the not too distant future...

A little like Peter Andrews' work for Australian farming, this is a heartwarming film about a woman who grew up on a traditional farm in Devon, England, exploring the question of how her family farm can survive in a future without cheap fossil fuels.

As she points out, even small organic farms are completely dependent on methods that require oil, even if they don't fertilize the crops.

More than 96 per cent of all the food grown in Britain is reliant on synthetic fertilizer. Without it there would be serious trouble.

Can she save the farm using permaculture principles -- or not? Have a look!"
<http://www.nextworldtv.com/page/760.html>

Bird Netting 10x10 metres - \$60

One of our members, Patti Barton purchased some bird netting and thought our other members maybe interested.

The company selling it is called NetPro Protective Canopies and they sell it on Ebay for \$60 for a 10x10 metre size.

They do have a few other related products including hail netting protection, permanent bird protection, evaporation reduction covers, windbreaks and shade structures.

You can either visit their website www.netprocanopies.com or find them on Ebay at <http://stores.ebay.com.au/Netpro-Protective-Canopies>



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Community Gardens

Want to be part of a community gardening project? Community gardens are a great way for residents without their own garden, or those who want to be part of a community gardening project to get out and use their green thumb.

If you would like to grow your own vegetables, fruits, herbs or flowers, and want to get outdoors and interact with like minded green thumbs, the community gardens may be for you.

To find out where your nearest community garden is established simply email: communitygardens@goldcoast.qld.gov.au

February In Your Patch

February is an absolute cracking time to get out in the garden! Sure, it's still a little warm, but instead of planting this month, let's look at the other "P" word – planning.

Look, it sounds boring but as we know, a little bit of preparation in the patch goes a long way, and, come autumn planting time, you'll be patting yourself on the back.

Alright, it's pretty darned hot out there at the moment, there may be a cyclone hanging about, so it ain't the ideal time to be planting too much. That said, you could give leek, chillies, silverbeet, sweet corn, and broccoli and a go towards the end of the month.

Too hot for most herbs, but you could try some lemongrass. Wait until the end of the month to pop in some basil varieties, including our old favourite sweet basil, and the always-stunning purple basil.

Pretty up the patch with these flowering fancies: marigolds, sunflowers and ageratum. Popping these in around your vegies will give some colour and interest to the patch, and act as beneficial insect attractors!

The recent heat in the warm areas may have caused a bit of grief to many plants in the garden, with some foliage looking less than fancy. Don't be too tempted to tidy these guys just yet – cruddy looking leaves will protect the new, young, sensitive shoots underneath from a serious case of sunburn. Wait until the evenings cool down in about a month or so to get your Edward Scissorhands to your scorched shrubs.

Consider a green manure crop to add some life and love to an overworked patch. At this time of year, try millet, lablab, or cow pea. This will improve your soil incredibly, and, for a bit of forward planning, you'll find it well worth the effort!

Water smarter at this time of year. Water first thing in the morning, and instead of quickie

irrigation, a nice, deep drink a couple of times a week is far more beneficial! Alternatively, now is a fantastic time to consider installing a subsurface irrigation system – it's not as tricky as you think, and will do wonders for water savings at your place. Check out http://www.sgaonline.org.au/info_subsurface.html for more info.

Top up mulch on your vegie patches, herb gardens and ornamental beds, especially important if you are heading off this holidays. A hot summer tip is to mulch after watering the patch, to a depth of about 7cm. Keep mulch clear of plant stems....especially young seedlings. Choose sustainable, low environmental impact mulch, one that will enrich your soil as it breaks down.

Time to think about what wonders you will whack into your patch come April. Preparing beds and plots now means that when Autumn planting time rolls around, your garden will be good to go. Removing spent plants, clearing areas of weeds and topping up organic matter is an excellent February job. A nail rake, some good organic compost and a lovely sustainable mulch is the perfect recipe for productive patches of the future.

On non-gardening days, why not head out to the shed, and construct a couple of shade cloth tents. They don't have to elaborate, just a simple, moveable structure that you can pop over the top of some of the sun sensitive vegies (like eggplant, capsicum and others) as the heat becomes more intense. Think of it as slip, slop, slap for plants! Pop these around where required, especially on high UV days, windy days, and during your holidays.

Weeding is an awesome job to do at this time of year. Cut down the competition between your tasty treats and these space invaders, and tidy up your patch. It may sound tedious, but it's incredibly rewarding!

Source: *Sustainable Gardening Australia*, www.sgaonline.org.au

One of Australia's largest private Japanese gardens on our doorstep

Tani Tei En (Valley Garden) is the grand passion of its owners Bob and Evelyn Marshall. The spectacular property features a 2,000 square metre Japanese Garden, with a Tea House cantilevered over a lake and waterfall, making for a haven of serenity. The Japanese garden was completed in 2006, and its construction took more than five years.



The 11-acre Tani Tei En site is part of a subdivided dairy farm in the beautiful Currumbin Valley and the original milking shed is still on the property.

A Fringe Tree *Chionanthus Retusus* is sure to be looking its best at the Open Garden weekend, along with many different coloured Louisiana irises both in the dam near the house and the Japanese Garden.

Tani Tei En incorporates many different garden styles - formal, rainforest, cottage and of course the stunning Japanese Garden. A circular sandstone garden and interesting metal sculptures add to its many pleasures.

Thousands of rainforest trees (many native to the region) have been planted around the garden, and provide a wonderful backdrop to the manicured lawns.

Garden address: TANI TEI EN, 519 Currumbin Creek Road, Currumbin Valley

Open Sat and Sun - 10am to 4.30pm
Admission \$6 (free under 18)

Worm Farms By Diane Kelly

Compost worms naturally exist in the top 30 cm or so of soil, as opposed to earthworker worms, which burrow much deeper. Once compost worms have adapted to a new food source, worms eat up to their own body weight every day.

Worm-farm tips:

- **MASHED PLEASE:** Worms eat more scraps if they are mashed or blended. While this may not be practical, it's worth bearing in mind that they prefer soft foods. Foods for them can include vegetable & fruit scraps and peelings; tea leaves, coffee grounds, soaked and torn newspapers and cartons, and crushed egg shells.
- **ACIDS LATER:** While they will eat them, worms will leave acidic foods such as orange peel or onion skins until other, preferred food is eaten.
- **MATURE MANURE ONLY:** Worms can process manure from horses, cattle and dogs, but it's best to let it mature for 1-2 months, as chemicals from fresh manure could kill a whole worm farm in a day.
- **BREEDING LIKE WORMS:** A worms farm takes 2-5 years to mature, at which point it may support up to 20,000 worms.

HOLIDAY HAVEN: Worm farms can be left for 3-4 weeks without you having to add food, as long as they have a good supply, and are left in a cool spot under cover with the tap open.

Source: *The Garden Book*



Getting to Know *Jill Barber*

Interview by Diane Kelly

Edmonton has the reputation of being one of Canada's sunniest cities. It receives an average of 2,205 hours of sunlight per year (as a guide, Brisbane receives 2,792 hours p.a.), and has an average relative humidity level of a comfortable 60.6%.

However, the average lowest temperature in Edmonton occurs in January at a very chilly minus 19 degrees C, and the average annual snowfall is 48.6 inches. So, when Jill Barber described the experience of finding the compost heap turned into a solid block of ice, and coping with a growing season of only 139 days (officially from May the 7th to September the 23rd to be exact), I knew I was talking with a widely-experienced gardener.

Jill, along with her husband Graeme and their three children, lived in Edmonton for about 20 years. It was while Jill was in Canada that she began gardening, and she speaks of the wonder of digging aside the snow, and pulling out sweet, straight carrots. Lettuces, beet-root, beans, tomatoes and a whole range of vegetables were able to be grown under the contrasting conditions, and so began Jill's gardening life, which now spans some 38 years.

Home these days is in a quiet and shady cul-de-sac in Elanora, and although the north-east facing block upon which Jill's house is situated has its challenges, it also produces healthy vegetables, and a range of trees, flowering shrubs and plants.

Jill and Graeme's property is fan-shaped, with a slightly curving drive-way leading up to the house, behind which there are fruit trees, a pond with gold-fish, flower beds, compost area, seed-growing stand and vegetable patches.

The block wall at the rear of the property is full of a variety of flowering plants, although Jill mentioned that the water run-off does make it difficult to retain the soil, and to keep it well composted. In this area, Jill has lots of pots where she is striking cuttings to plant out, and to share with others – including several pots of very healthy looking Ceylon spinach.

As we proceed along the path to the vegetable patch, Jill mentions that bromiliads are probably her favourite plants, although she would find it hard to choose. (She really likes roses too, preferring those which have a perfume – unfortunately the delicate pink tea-rose in the front garden isn't flowering at the moment, but apparently that's a special one.)

Jill is considering moving some of the bromiliads – some are happy, but others are feeling the effects of being in a sloping part of the garden, and receiving a bit too much sunlight. But the dwarf peach, the lime and lemon trees, the cosmos plants, the frangipani and jacaranda trees and the herb spiral are all doing well, along with the New Zealand spinach and yams.



Lime tree

Jill and Graeme have improved their predominately clay soil by adding the proverbial "compost, compost, compost" – they used to go down to the local green-grocer to get the left-over greens and fruit to add to their bins. Now they use buckets of sea-weed mixture, as well as general compost, and the newly enriched soil looks good.

Jill is just about to put in some green manure to protect and nourish the vegie garden soil during the hot days ahead. There are high timber frames around the two vegie areas, with shade cloth lengths that can be rolled over to protect young plants.



The vegie patch – ready to be sown with green manure seeds & re-covered with the mulch

Shade cloth also protects the potting table that Jill uses for planting seeds – it's a sturdy and easy-to-use piece of equipment, and I was quite envious.



Seed-sowing area

There were several other things of interest – the fruit-fly bait (Jill currently uses a vegemite solution); CD's to keep the crows away from the tomatoes and capsicums; and fences to keep out the bandicoots.

It is the bandicoots that give Jill her worst gardening moments – going out in the morning, and finding newly-planted seedlings dug up and flattened.

So I asked Jill what her best gardening moments have been “when I finally get things to grow!”

I also asked Jill what suggestions she would have for new gardeners. One piece of advice is to not grow vegetables in summer – for most seedlings it is just too hot on the Coast. Also, she recommended joining a gardening club – and she belongs to a couple – for the “advice, moral support and camaraderie” that they provide.

And what did I learn from my visit to Jill and Graeme's home? What was very evident was the value of order ... all gardening tools are cleaned and stored in their allocated spots; there were no weeds in sight; potting mix is prepared in time for seeds and cuttings to be grown; and soil is composted and prepared in time for seasonal growth. A sense of calm was prevalent.

P.S. I think that Jill would agree with me that one of her special “garden” moments occurred recently, out in the front yard, and high up in one of the eucalyptus trees – the first sighting of a koala on their property now not even Edmonton has those !!



First aid for bee stings and wasp stings

Bees

Remove the sting by scraping it sideways. This reduces the chance of more venom being released.

Wipe the affected area clean.

Apply a paste of bicarbonate of soda (baking soda) and water to the sting site. Wrap a bag of ice in a towel and hold it over the sting.

Wasps

Daub the sting area with cider vinegar. Wrap a bag of ice in a towel and hold it over the sting.

Gardening with Ross

More than ever we need to use mulch.

The rain washes away the entire nutrient content and we are left with just washed out soil. The soil needs to be oxygenated to get the microbes growing again. This can be best done by using a really good Garden fork, preferable with a long handle.

It's that much easier to use and saves the back. Make sure you push the tines of the fork in all the way, maybe as much as 12 inches. Then move the handle around to let in the air and crack the soil, just a break will do.

Now it's best to put blood and bone (use the one with extra minerals added) all over the soil before you apply the mulch. Finally water the mulch to start the microbe action.

It's a good time to sow a green crop such as Mung Beans or Lab-lab beans.

Get a place ready for some bare root Roses now.

BEES in your garden?

There are no bees in my garden at the moment. Have you got bees around your garden? I am fertilizing the pumpkins by hand and that's working, the pumpkins are setting.

Happy gardening .Ross

Sweet Garden Soil Conditioner and Composted Mulch

Sweet Garden products are made from 100% Australian Sugar Cane by-products.

Composted Soil Conditioner (30 Litre)

- Improves soil quality
- Returns organic carbon to soil
- Improves soil drainage
- Retains moisture
- Adds nutrients
- Ideal for roses and vegetable gardens
- Assists in resisting fungus, root disease and pests in the garden
- An excellent top dressing for healthy lawn maintenance

Composted Mulch (30 Litre)

- Results in a low maintenance garden
- Provides a soil barrier and reduces evaporation
- Protects plant roots from extreme hot and cold temperatures
- Reduces the need to water
- Help control weeds
- Adds organic nutrients to the soil
- Increases earthworm activity
- Enhances garden appearance
- Stable in windy conditions
- Ideal for use in vegetable gardens and enhances all plant growth

Sweet Garden products are exclusive to Bunnings.

Source: Someone from the club gave me (Dorothy) this information on a flyer a couple of months ago and I cannot remember who it was now - so thank you whoever you are and sorry I cannot remember who you are!

**Prostate Awareness
Twin Towns & Tweed Coast**

Just a click away:
www.prostateawarenessaustralia.com or
contact Ross Davis for more info:
rossco12@bigpond.com

Why Gardening Makes You Happy and Cures Depression Written by Robyn Francis

A popular article sent in by 3 different members: Elizabeth Dolan, Karen Hart and Leah Galvin

While mental health experts warn about depression as a global epidemic, other researchers are discovering ways we trigger our natural production of happy chemicals that keep depression at bay, with surprising results. All you need to do is get your fingers dirty and harvest your own food.

In recent years I've come across two completely independent bits of research that identified key environmental triggers for two important chemicals that boost our immune system and keep us happy - serotonin and dopamine. What fascinated me as a permaculturist and gardener were that the environmental triggers happen in the garden when you handle the soil and harvest your crops.

Getting down and dirty is the best 'upper' – Serotonin

Getting your hands dirty in the garden can increase your serotonin levels – contact with soil and a specific soil bacteria, *Mycobacterium vaccae*, triggers the release of serotonin in our brain according to research. Serotonin is a happy chemical, a natural antidepressant and strengthens the immune system. Lack of serotonin in the brain causes depression.



Ironically, in the face of our hyper-hygienic, germicidal, protective clothing, obsessive health-and-safety society, there's been a lot of interesting research emerging in recent years regarding how good dirt is for us, and dirt-deficiency in childhood is implicated in contributing to quite a spectrum of illnesses including allergies, asthma and mental disorders.

At least now I have a new insight into why I compulsively garden without gloves and have always loved the feeling of getting my bare hands into the dirt and compost heap.

Full story: www.permaculture.com.au and type the article title into the search box and the full article will show.

Robyn Francis is an international permaculture designer, educator, writer and pioneer based at Djanbung Gardens, Nimbin Northern NSW. She is principal of Permaculture College Australia.



Here are some other interesting sites for further info and reading...

Soil Bacteria Work In Similar Way To Antidepressants

UK scientists suggest that a type of friendly bacteria found in soil may affect the brain in a similar way to antidepressants. Their findings are published in the early online edition of the journal *Neuroscience*.

www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/66840.php

Soil bacteria can boost immune system Harmless bug works as well as antidepressant drugs, study suggests

www.msnbc.msn.com/id/18082129/

SOIL FOODWEB Institute
Soil Rehab Specialists Since 1986

Press Release

THE FOUNDER OF SOIL FOODWEB INSTITUTE TAKING ON THE ROLE OF CHIEF SCIENCE OFFICER AT RODALE INSTITUTE IN THE USA

Dr Ingham will still be heavily involved with Soil Foodweb Australia and will add even more research and data to aid Australian primary producers via this appointment!

The founder of SFI Worldwide has joined the Rodale Institute in Pennsylvania, the first organic farm. Dr. Elaine Ingham has joined the Rodale Institute as their new "Chief Scientist" to head their research team. Part of Elaine's frustration over the last 10 years working within the clients of Soil Foodweb Inc. has been the yin and yang of trying to keep prices as low as possible for clients sending samples into the SFI labs, while trying to accumulate money to do replicated research trials on impacts of improving biology in the soil on plant production when working with very different soils, climates and crop plants. This move to Rodale should improve her ability to get this work done.

Part of her reason for taking the Rodale Institute up on the offer of this position, in Elaine's words, was "When we work with growers, and they do the necessary steps to get the beneficial organisms growing in their aerobic compost and liquid extracts and teas, and apply those compost, teas and / or extracts to their soils such that the beneficial organisms start to grow well and perform their functions to benefit plants, then the conversion to sustainable is so easy that usually the grower converts everything on-farm.. Which then means that the replicated scientific research trials are out the door.

On the other extreme, farmers who can't get a source of organisms he can grow and manage himself usually aren't successful with the biological approach, and gives up. The replicated trials are usually given up, when the

correct, beneficial sets of organisms can't take off and do the work they need to do, as a result of being unable to survive in the growers field. A research farm, with years of experience with comparing several versions of organic systems with conventional systems already, the commitment is present to give these comparisons a fair working through."

Elaine won't move to Pennsylvania, however, just work through the spring and summer months at Rodale as much as possible, returning to Oregon to see her husband when time permits. Since the Rodale Institute also maintains an international presence and reputation, Elaine's mission for Rodale, and for SFI fit together re-markedly well. Travel will remain an integral part of what Elaine does, speaking to people around the world about the conversion process, and the benefits of getting the right life working for you in your soil.

Source: *Soil Foodweb Institute, Australia*
www.soilfoodweb.com.au

**WHO ARE THE RODALE INSTITUTE
 AND WHAT DO THEY DO**

Through Organic leadership we improve the health and well being of people and the planet.

Rodale Institute is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organisation dedicated to pioneering organic farming through research and outreach. For over sixty-years, we've been researching the best practices of organic agriculture and sharing our findings with farmers and scientists throughout the world, advocating for policies that support farmers, and educating consumers about how going organic is the healthiest options for people and the planet.

For more information and the history of The Rodale Institute visit www.rodaleinstitute.org

Sent in by: Justine Sharman-Selvidge

Poor Paws

Aphids are the bane of gardeners, but they're also responsible for the spread of viruses that pose a threat to indigenous plants such as the kangaroo paw.

Dr Stephen Wylie, of Murdoch University in Western Australia, has been researching the impact of viruses carried by 150 introduced species of aphid. "There are several ways plant viruses can be spread," he explains, "including by people thoughtlessly dumping garden waste in suburban bushland, nurseries inadvertently spreading viruses when trading native plants, introduced crops and plants that are infected, and climate change".

(Maybe this next idea will solve the above aphid problem!)

Weird Science

Researchers at the University of Haifa in Israel have found that the breath of mammals causes aphids to drop from plants. The insects do this en masse to avoid being accidentally eaten by a herbivore mammal like a goat or sheep, for example.

The researchers used this technique while collecting aphids for experiments. "I simply breathed on them," said one. Some beetles and crab spiders are also known to do this. Why not head into your garden and give it a try!

Source: Gardening Australia magazine, Nov 2010

Comfrey

By Roger Griffiths

For the first time ever our comfrey has a tall flower stalk. It must be the much cooler and much wetter than the normal Gold Coast summer that suits it.



Restoring tool handles

First, assemble the materials that you'll need for the job of restoring your tool handles.

You will need the following:

- steel wool
 - a rag
 - a mixture of linseed oil and turpentine in an old jar
 - a sanding block
 - a fine – and a medium – grade abrasive paper and the handle that needs restoring
1. Sand back the spade handle using the medium-grade abrasive paper and then clean the handle thoroughly
 2. Dip the rag into the linseed oil and turpentine mix. Rub the handle with the soaked rag, then leave it to dry overnight.
 3. Lightly sand the handle again, this time with fine-grade abrasive paper. Repeat the whole process again if necessary

Finish by rubbing the handle with some steel wool.

Source: The Garden Book



Feed lettuces

Lettuces will "bolt" into flower if they are not fed enough or if the weather is too hot.

Giving the plants light side-dressings of nitrogen fertilizer or liquid feeds every 10-14 days helps.

COMPANION PLANTING FOR FEBRUARY
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Plant	Companions	Function	Foes
Asparagus	Tomatoes, Parsley, Basil		
Beans	Potatoes Carrots, Cucumber, cauliflower, summer savoury, most other vegetables and herbs.		Onions Garlic Gladiolus
Beetroot	Onions, Lettuce, Cabbage, Silver beet, Kohlrabi		
Carrots	Lettuce, Peas, Leeks, Chives, Onions, Cucumbers, Beans, tomatoes, wormwood, sage, rosemary		Dill in flower and being stored with apples
Chives	Carrots	grown beneath apple trees will help to prevent apple scab; beneath roses will keep away aphids and blackspot. Deters aphids on lettuce and peas. Spray will deter downy and powdery mildew on gooseberries and cucumbers.	Peas, beans
Cucumbers	Beans, corn, peas, radish, sunflowers		Potatoes, aromatic herbs
Leek	Onion, celery, carrot		
Lettuce	Tall flowers, carrots, radish, onion family	Flowers offer light shade for lettuce	
Onion	Beets, summer savoury, tomatoes, lettuce, strawberries, camomile		
Parsley	Tomato, asparagus, roses	Deters rose beetle, improves tomato and asparagus.	
Pumpkin	Corn		Potato
Pyrethrum		will repel bugs if grown around the vegetable garden.	
Radish	Peas, nasturtium, lettuce, cucumbers, spinach	Radish attracts leaf minor away from spinach	
Squash	Nasturtium Corn		
Sweet Corn	Potatoes, Peas, Beans, cucumbers, pumpkin, squash	Corn acts as a trellis for beans and beans attract predators of corn pests.	
Yarrow	Near aromatic herbs and vegetables	Plant along borders and paths. Enhances essential oil production and flavour	



VEGETABLES

FEBRUARY: Artichoke, Beetroot, Carrot, Celery, Cucumber, Eggplant, Endive, Lettuce (under shade cloth), Marrow, Parsnip, Potato, Pumpkin, Radish, Rhubarb, Shallots, Squash, Sunflower, Tomato, Zucchini.

MARCH: Beans, Beetroot, Broad beans, Broccoli, Brussels Sprouts, Cabbage, Carrot, Cauliflower, Celery, Celeriac, Kale, Kohlrabi, Lettuce, Leek, Onion, Parsnip, Pea, Potato, Radish, Rhubarb, Shallots, Silverbeet, Strawberry, Tomato, Turnip.

HERBS

FEBRUARY

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

Perennials & Bi-Annals: Catnip, Ceylon Spinach, Chicory, Chilli, Chives, Comfrey, Perennial Coriander, Echina-

cea, 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-Annals: 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 the Committee) accepts no responsibility for statements made or opinions expressed in this newsletter.

Planting in February		
Amaranth	Plant in garden.	Harvest from May
Asparagus Pea	Plant in garden.	Harvest from May
Beetroot	Plant in garden.	Harvest from May
Broccoli	Start undercover in seed trays and plant out in 4-6 weeks.	Harvest from May
Burdock	Plant in garden.	Harvest from July
Cape Gooseberry	Plant in garden.	Harvest from June
Capsicum	Plant in garden.	Harvest from May
Carrot	Plant in garden.	Harvest from June
Chilli	Plant in garden.	Harvest from May
Chives	Plant in garden.	Harvest from May
Climbing beans	Plant in garden.	Harvest from May
Cucumber	Plant in garden.	Harvest from May
Dwarf beans (+ French & Bush beans)	Plant in garden.	Harvest from May
Eggplant	Plant in garden.	Harvest from June
Leeks	Start undercover in seed trays and plant out in 4-6 weeks.	Harvest from July
Lettuce	Plant in garden.	Harvest from May
Mustard greens	Plant in garden.	Harvest from April
Okra	Plant in garden.	Harvest from June
Onion	Start undercover in seed trays and plant out in 4-6 weeks.	Harvest from September
Oregano (also Pot Marjoram)	Plant in garden.	Harvest from April
Parsley	Plant in garden.	Harvest from May
Pumpkin	Plant in garden.	Harvest from July
Radish	Plant in garden.	Harvest from April
Rosella	Plant in garden.	Harvest from August
Salsify	Plant in garden.	Harvest from June
Shallots	Plant in garden.	Harvest from June
Silverbeet	Plant in garden.	Harvest from May
Squash	Plant in garden.	Harvest from May
Swedes	Plant in garden.	Harvest from May
Sweet corn	Plant in garden.	Harvest from June
Turnip	Plant in garden.	Harvest from May
Zucchini	Plant in garden.	Harvest from May

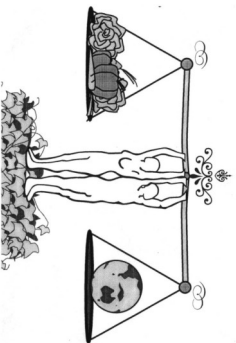
Amaranth	Plant in garden.	Harvest from May
Asparagus Pea	Plant in garden.	Harvest from May
Beetroot	Plant in garden.	Harvest from May
Broccoli	Start undercover in seed trays and plant out in 4-6 weeks.	Harvest from May
Burdock	Plant in garden.	Harvest from July
Cape Gooseberry	Plant in garden.	Harvest from June
Capsicum	Plant in garden.	Harvest from May
Carrot	Plant in garden.	Harvest from June
Chilli	Plant in garden.	Harvest from May
Chives	Plant in garden.	Harvest from May
Climbing beans	Plant in garden.	Harvest from May
Cucumber	Plant in garden.	Harvest from May
Dwarf beans (+ French & Bush beans)	Plant in garden.	Harvest from May
Eggplant	Plant in garden.	Harvest from June
Leeks	Start undercover in seed trays and plant out in 4-6 weeks.	Harvest from July
Lettuce	Plant in garden.	Harvest from May
Mustard greens	Plant in garden.	Harvest from April
Okra	Plant in garden.	Harvest from June
Onion	Start undercover in seed trays and plant out in 4-6 weeks.	Harvest from September
Oregano (also Pot Marjoram)	Plant in garden.	Harvest from April
Parsley	Plant in garden.	Harvest from May
Pumpkin	Plant in garden.	Harvest from July
Radish	Plant in garden.	Harvest from April
Rosella	Plant in garden.	Harvest from August
Salsify	Plant in garden.	Harvest from June
Shallots	Plant in garden.	Harvest from June
Silverbeet	Plant in garden.	Harvest from May
Squash	Plant in garden.	Harvest from May
Swedes	Plant in garden.	Harvest from May
Sweet corn	Plant in garden.	Harvest from June
Turnip	Plant in garden.	Harvest from May
Zucchini	Plant in garden.	Harvest from May

Preparing for March

Amaranth	Plant in garden.	Harvest from May
Asparagus Pea	Plant in garden.	Harvest from May
Beetroot	Plant in garden.	Harvest from May
Broad beans	Plant in garden.	Harvest from June
Burdock	Plant in garden.	Harvest from July
Cabbage	Start undercover in seed trays and plant out in 4-6 wks.	Harvest from May
Cape Gooseberry	Plant in garden.	Harvest from June
Carrot	Plant in garden.	Harvest from June
Cauliflower	Start undercover in seed trays and plant out in 4-6 wks.	Harvest from July
Celeriac	Start undercover in seed trays and plant out in 4-6 wks.	Harvest from June
Celery	Start undercover in seed trays and plant out in 4-6 wks.	Harvest from July
Chilli	Plant in garden.	Harvest from May
Chives	Plant in garden.	Harvest from May
Climbing and Dwarf Beans	Plant in garden.	Harvest from May
Collards	Start undercover in seed trays and plant out in 4-6 wks.	Harvest from May
Cucumber	Plant in garden.	Harvest from May
Dill	Plant in garden.	Harvest from May
Endive	Plant in garden.	Harvest from May
Florence Fennel	Plant in garden.	Harvest from June
Kale	Start undercover in seed trays and plant out in 4-6 wks.	Harvest from May
Leeks	Plant out (transplant) seedlings.	Harvest from July
Lettuce	Plant in garden.	Harvest from May
Mustard greens	Plant in garden.	Harvest from April
Oregano (Pot Marjoram)	Plant in garden.	Harvest from April
Pak Choy	Plant in garden.	Harvest from May
Parsley	Plant in garden.	Harvest from May
Radish	Plant in garden.	Harvest from April
Rocket	Plant in garden.	Harvest from April
Rosella	Plant in garden.	Harvest from August
Salsify	Plant in garden.	Harvest from June
Shallots (also Eschalots)	Plant in garden.	Harvest from June
Silverbeet	Plant in garden.	Harvest from May
Swedes	Plant in garden.	Harvest from May
Sweet corn (also maize)	Plant in garden.	Harvest from June
Turnip	Plant in garden.	Harvest from May

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 17 March 2011