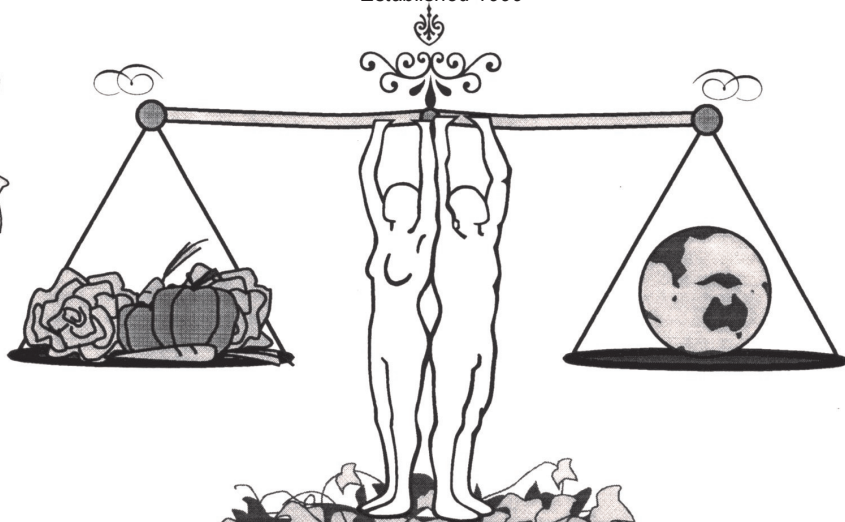


# GOLD COAST ORGANIC GROWERS Inc.

Established 1999



## NEWSLETTER

Volume 16    October 2013    Issue 10  
GARDENING IN SPRING

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**OUR NEXT MEETING: Thursday 15 November**

## 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 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:

\$2.00 each.

### 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 - \$1 each or 3 for \$2.

### Library:

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

### Advertising:

**1/4 page:** \$10 an issue, or \$100 per year (11 issues)

**1/2 page:** \$20 an issue or \$200 per year

**full page:** \$30 an issue or \$300 per year

## 2013 Committee

President	Maria Roberson (07) 5598 6609
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Librarians	Greg Wiltshire (07) 5578 8755 Judy Reiser (07) 5532 7198 Ann-Maree Andrew
Seed Bank	Roger Griffiths (07) 5530 5067
Seed Assistant	Lyn Mansfield 0409 645 888
Supper Co-ordinator	Paul Roberson (07) 5598 6609
The position of Trip Co-ordinator has been abolished.	

### Newsletter:

Contributions and ideas welcome. Send in a photo of what's going on in your patch. Email Angela at [w.a.anderson@bigpond.com](mailto:w.a.anderson@bigpond.com) or text a photo - 0439 488 166.

### Thanks to Contributors:

Diane Kelly, Jill Barber, Maria Roberson, Karen Hart

### Website:

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

## 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.

**Overdue:** Lise Racine (151), Chris & Dorothy Winton (253), Neil McLaughlin (326), Kathy Steenbeek (331), Shelley Pryor (72), Jill Barber (290), Geoffrey Williams (293), Lyn Mansfield (306), Jan Guest (307), Henry Blonner (108), Neil Ross (294), Denise Goodwin (335), Frank Rebesco (342), Beth Orme (343)

**October:** Debbie Jones (254), Glenn & Joan Jones (266), Gai Morrow (309), Darrell & Marion Williams (310)

**November:** Paul & Maria Roberson (4), Marie Rudd (12), Ross & Jenny Davis (199), David Wyatt & Helen Wainwright (284)

## GCOG - Guest Speaker

**October:** Lise Racine on "Therapeutic Tea and Decoction - Preparation & Use"

**November:** Christmas Meeting

## What's On

### Gold Coast Permaculture

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

19 Oct - Growing & Cooking Tropical Veg  
 26 Oct - Growing & Propagating Herbs  
 9 Nov - Saving & Growing Seeds  
 16 Nov - Sprouts & Micro Seeds  
 23 Nov - Get the Garden Ready for Summer

### Gold Coast City Council

<http://www.greengc.com.au/>

Oct 19 - Elanora Library  
 Nov 16 - Varsity Veggies Garden  
 Dec 14 - Helensvale Community Garden  
 10a-12noon

## Sunday 20th October Cut Your Own Bamboo Stakes



Sunday 20th October - 9am.

You can cut up your bamboo then we can put the kettle on or perhaps go for a wander around some of the "gardens".

We are at 746 Currumbin Creek Rd, Currumbin Valley - about a km past the Ecovillage. Drive across the creek and park inside near the kiosk.

BYO cutting implement, **sturdy footwear**, and perhaps a chair, mug and small plate to share.

Wayne and Angie - 0439 488 166

## President's Message

Hello Everyone,

As I mentioned last month, we are celebrating the Gold Coast Organic Growers 16th Birthday. While it does feel like we have been around for quite a while, each year brings many new and exciting opportunities to share with our members. Our focus has, and always will be, to provide reliable and up to date information relating to all fields and styles of growing food organically. Early on we saw the need for like minded people to get together and socialize with each other. It's funny to say that 16 years ago growing your own food and especially organic gardening was rare, if not a little weird. How things have changed, there is a major ground swell of people wanting to know how their food is grown and with that they are taking on the personal responsibility to provide some of it for themselves and their family. This call to action is not just happening here in Australia, but is a world-wide movement. Some may say that "it is just a fad", my answer to that is "what a fabulous fad, now bring it on".

The Gold Coast Organic Growers has grown from just 10 people at our inaugural meeting to over 140 members; we now have around 120 members with a few new people joining each month. There are still many long time members in the group who joined in the first year or two; however Marie Rudd, my husband Paul and I are all that is left from that very first meeting.

In the beginning we held our meetings at GEKO hall but during their extensive renovations we moved to our present location. This allowed us to permanently house our growing library in our very own Library Cupboard; we had been carting all the books to and fro each month in boxes for a couple of years, no wonder Jenny our then Librarian had a bad back. With so few members in the club in the first year, our election for the committee was a speedy affair with most of us taking on 2 or 3 positions each. We have never had difficulty in

finding willing members to join the committee in the last 16 years, I think that is a testament to the type of people we attract, and they are all doers and know what it takes to get a job done.

I came across something I had written all those years ago when I was reading an old newsletter of ours; it is from the third edition and I don't think anything has changed, so I would like to share it with you once again.

I am often asked what the benefits are in joining GCOG, and I guess for all of us there are different reasons why we are members. For some it's the informative meetings with special guest speakers each month, question & answer time, or our fact packed newsletter. It might be the contact with other members who love gardening and share the same ideals of organic growing practices. Another advantage is the opportunity to purchase organically grown fruit and veg, handmade gifts or potted plants, or borrow a book from the library, not to mention having access to S.A.F.E. products at membership prices. Through joining GCOG you can participate in seed saving, go on day trips and join in on gardening workshops.

Maybe though, the best reason of all is that our GCOG meetings are a darn good night out – where you can win a prize in the raffle, have a chat to friendly people, and the \$1 entry fee gets you a piece of cake and a cuppa!

Happy growing, Maria.

### SPECIAL OFFER ON FRUIT TREES

DALEYS fruit tree nursery is offering all club members a 10% discount on fruit trees when you order online.

Visit <http://www.daleysfruit.com.au/> to check out availability fruit trees

To receive the discount enter the following code at the checkout :

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## Q & A

By Karen Hart

Maria opened the meeting with a suggestion for a barter and swap meeting for next month, October, such as swap half a dozen eggs for a bunch of flowers or fruit, etc.

October is also the Club's sixteenth birthday, and a cake will be provided and herbal tea, courtesy of Lise Racine, long time member, and October's guest speaker.

Maria mentioned the library, and apologised for the difficulty for access as it is in the corner; however, we have no choice in the matter. It was suggested that everyone have a good look at what is on offer. As well as great gardening books, there is a diverse range, from beekeeping to chooks, etc.

### Q & A Session

Q. Eileen brought in some **citrus branches** covered in *gall* – what to do?

A. The gall wasp lays eggs in newish wood, which causes a swelling. This is not a huge problem, but the site can cause a weakness. Cut out the affected part and solarise or burn it. Do NOT compost. The *pigeon pea borer* was blamed for infecting citrus, but this is not the case – there are two different varieties.

Q. Are all *wasps* in the garden 'bad'?

A. No, most wasps are beneficial; this wasp only affects citrus. Grapefruit is particularly susceptible.

Q. A plant was presented with a *Cocoon* to be identified.

A. It is a 'case moth' – a chewing insect, but not really a problem.

*Myrtle rust* was a real problem a couple of years ago. It's quite scary as it's a 'powdery' rust.

Q. Jill asked when was the best time to plant *ginger* and *turmeric*?

Now. Get good quality ginger and turmeric from markets not a supermarket as it's not known if they are commercially treated.

Q. Roger brought in a tuber for identification -

daikon, yakon, yam, white or sweet potato?

A. It is a *dahlia tuber*, which is edible, and can be grated. The flowers are also edible.

Q. How to eradicate *cockroaches*?

A. Do NOT squash them as this causes the females to release their eggs. A mixture of borax and sugar as bait in little dishes under stoves, fridges, etc., works. Neem oil, or a mix of twenty drops of cypress oil and twenty drops of peppermint oil were suggestions. Green tree frogs, geckos and huntsmen spiders enjoy cockroaches.

Q. Have the *bamboo stakes* that Bunnings sells been treated? Wishes to stake tomatoes.

A. If they are green, yes. An alternative is branches from the garden. Angie has stands of bamboo she would be happy to have chopped down, and she could organise a working bee before next meeting. Do not leave bamboo outside when not in use. Store it in the shed. It's good for making a tepee for climbing plants, etc. It has lots of good uses. A pruning saw is needed, and the cuts need to be at the 'nodes'.

Q. Is there an 'organic' way to weed a *lawn*?

A. A chipping hoe helps by not damaging the grass, and is an alternative to hand weeding. You can use a knife to cut out weeds at or slightly below ground level. It helps to have the right grass for your situation. Good grass should outcompete weeds. Chop out weeds before any flowers set seed.

Q. Does anyone have old bath tubs or know where to obtain some?

A. There is a demolition place in Rina Court, West Burleigh.

**John Palmer**  
**Wild Herbs & Practices**  
 By Jill Barber

Most people seemed to know or have heard of John Palmer at the last GCOG meeting, and I was told that he was a character, so I was looking forward to an entertaining evening at least...and I was not disappointed. I was not only highly entertained by John's quirky way of talking about the things that he loves, namely edible plants, but my horizons were broadened by this very knowledgeable man. Trained as an agricultural scientist, botanist and ecologist, John works as an Eco Tour guide at Gwinganna, Camp Eden and in the Palm Beach parklands for Gecko educators. He is clearly passionate about **wild greens and super herbs** from around the world that are readily available, easy to harvest and good in smoothies and salads, and he brought along some examples for us to learn about and sample.

Initially, John chose to comment on a couple of the issues members raised in the prior Question and Answer session: one was cockroaches; the other lawn weeds. His solution to the **cockroach problem** removal without using pesticides was to get a green tree frog in your house – with a bucket of water in the toilet, plus some taro and a few leaves, for example, to attract it in – then it crunches up the cockroaches. There are four types of **lawn weeds** he talked about: thick weed, which is African lettuce; true chickweed in winter, which is very tasty and acts as a blood cleanser; milkweed or radium weed, which is not edible, but is medicinal and can burn off unwanted skin blemishes; and slender celery, which is feathery and great to eat.

John reminded us of the **six tastes**: sweet, sour, bitter, umami, pungent and salty, like stinging nettle. Bitter herbs, such as wormwood, can kill parasites, just using half a leaf. Gotu kola is a great tonic; just use three to seven leaves a day. French or wild sorrel has a sour taste, and is good for the immune system, alkalising the body. Hot tastes are found in garlic, ginger, chilli and rocket, and pepper-cress is pungent.

Good **reference books** for information on edible herbs are *How You Can use Herbs in Your Daily Life* and *Sel-Sufficiency and Survival Foods*, by Isabell Shipard.

An essential element in our body is **nitrogen**, which legumes like white clover contain. Although it makes up eighty percent of the atmosphere, we have to eat plants to get it, through peas and beans, for example. Aborigines got it from **wattle seeds**, which is what some airlines used to serve in wattle cookies! A lot of wattles are found in Tarabara, which means islands in the stream, and is the reserve at the Currumbin estuary, near the Pirate Park. There are also five different types of mangroves there as well as medicinal herbs.



**Examples of the many “weeds” John spoke of.**

**Honey weed** is found in summer, and is like a superfood. **Fat hen** is similar to quinoa, from South America, being high in protein. **Wild amaranth**, on the other hand, could have cyanide in it. Brazilians are popularising **maca**, which is a high energy wild plant. Then there is green **Lebanese cress** and **water cress**, and also **pirella lettuce**.

John made the point that we need to chew these greens exceptionally well to release the negative ions, oil globules, and other beneficial elements of them. **Green plants are our perfect food**, giving us fat, as in avocados, for instance, as well as carbohydrates, sugars and protein. He also reminded

us that as organic farmers, we like to share our produce and show it off, with **cycles** of giving and receiving, as these meetings evidenced.

Another fascinating concept he raised was the **Eight Interacting Realms**, which are very useful for growers to be aware of:

- Cosmic – eg. planting by the moon; it usually rains when the moon is almost full.
- Sunlight – eg. some plants, like garlic and turmeric, grow best in semi-shade.
- Water – is a bi-product of volcanic activity
- Atmosphere – bacteria need air to do their work for us; nitrogen, which our plants need, makes up 80% of the air, after all.
- Soil – made up of rock, sand, clay and humus; takes up water that the plants need.
- Bacteria – also invertebrates and fungi, all work to feed the plants we grow.
- Plants
- Animals, like us.

On a final note, our very interesting speaker told us how very useful Farmers' friends/**Cobblers' pegs** can be: you get a wet T-shirt, drag it through the cobblers' pegs, then hang it up on the line for the seeds to sprout...then you eat them! They're the world's best food, claims John, and go great in smoothies, being a bitter green and so very nutritious.

So ended the very edifying and fascinating evening's talk, with the remaining weeds that John had brought (after he'd finished eating some, in demonstrating how edible they were, and I had swept up the fallen dirt from them) being available for us to come and **sample** or take with us. Several people said they'd like to have him come back again, so we most likely will. Thank you, John, for your time and catching passion!

[The author cannot vouch for the veracity of the details in this article as feedback from John was not forthcoming... Conclusion: it's all good]



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GC Visitors Guide 2013

## Getting to Know - Beth's Garden From Diane Kelly

Last month the "Getting To Know" series featured Debbie Jones's raised bed vegetable gardens. This time we are visiting another Palm Beach garden – which has also had the problem of extremely sandy soil – and we will see how Beth Orme has created a peaceful, green oasis.

Beth tells the story of her garden:

"I lived in my previous home on a small-acreage property in Currumbin for 25 years. The soil was shale and clay, and there were steep slopes and large, tall trees. A chainsaw and ride-on mower were my first tools of trade, and importing trailer loads of soil silt from Murwillumbah enabled us to build a 6-tiered vegetable garden. Therefore it was quite a shock to the system to buy a house on a flat, suburban block, and on complete sand!

When I took over my new home four years ago, the front garden was mainly unfenced and open to the road, with nothing but grass and a couple of paperbark trees. The front fence and gate were the first things to be installed. This gave me privacy, and a defined space in which to put fruit trees, and dig out an area in the grass for planting vegetables. The fence has allowed passionfruit, and grapes to clamber over.

The garage was the defining boundary between the front garden and the house behind. There was much more work to do on the back garden. It was overgrown with humungous bougainvillea, lilly-pillys, fig trees and weed trees, with patches of grass butted up to some weed-prone pavers.

After having cleared and trimmed all the rubbish, a large area of pavers were revealed near the kitchen, which now makes a pleasant sitting area which is surrounded by herbs, vegetables, azaleas, camellias and fern trees.

After digging up about two thirds of the block's lawn, there have emerged three separate and thriving gardens, closely packed with herbs,

vegetables and fruit trees. Large amounts of money were spent on compost and all the things one thinks one needs for this almost white, sandy soil – and I suddenly baulked about what was happening to my bank balance!

So a new strategy had to be put in place.



***The back garden of vegetables and herbs, entranced by a beautiful arbour of star jasmine***

Being an unconventional gardener, I just planted whatever herbs and vegies I purchased (mainly from Bunnings) all over these new patches of dug-up grass - with absolutely no order in mind. I just wanted to grow plants, and eat food from my own home garden. (I did cheat a bit by checking on the internet about anything that might hate another nearby plant, but found most things got along just fine.)

The best way I found to build up this dry, barren soil was also rather unconventional - tipping the contents of a friend's chicken run - feathers and all - with the contents of the mower catcher, including dry grass and dry leaves, straight on and around everything. I then hosed the mixture in, and covered it with a light sprinkle of organic cane mulch.

I never dug the mulch in .... I realize this may be an absolute anathema to some gardeners, and may not work for you, but in my case, it's just what the doctor.....plants....ordered.

This, I'm sure, is the secret of my success, as the nutrients from the clumps slowly and continually seep down from the top. I also occa-



sionally boost the nutrient intake with potash, citrus fertilizer, blood and bone, and 5 in 1. I have an enormous variety of produce in a crowded house garden, and the list of vegetables, together with herbs and fruit trees, are testament to their unusual treatment!!

Herbs , herbs, herbs - these are the most important part of any garden , making delicious teas, helping heal wounds, assisting in keeping a strong immune system, helping other plants to keep strong, and, of course, enhancing cooking.

The twenty young fruit trees are an abundant joy, although I had my arguments with my first passionfruit - which I dismissed after two years of none-productivity - and a lemon tree which I threatened to dispatch after its third year of "non-yield" but gave it a reprieve after a friend suggest I sprinkle Boron around the drip line - only to be blessed with blossoms this year. The feijoa tree is amass with blossoms for the first time in three years. I don't know if it's because I bought another one and put it in a pot at the other end of the garden (which incidentally also is covered in blossoms,) or whether three years is apparently the norm for most fruit trees. The rest have been bountiful even after one year, which has really amazed me - these have been mango, fig, mulberry, Brazilian cherry, pawpaw, and the new passionfruit! The rest started fruiting in their second year, including the grapes.



***The feijoa tree in blossom***

I have had a great deal of fun dehydrating fruit, vegetables, and herbs, and in particular the bananas. There have been so many - and what would I do with a whole tree load except give masses away (which I do).

But it's quite amazing how, when dried, you can put a whole tree-load into a largish plastic container, allowing for delicious snacks until the next harvest. Unbelievable!

The secret with dehydrating is to rinse your produce in a Vege Rinse first. This ensures no bacteria emerges down the track during storage.

I was asked by Diane what advice I might have for the members of the GC Organic Growers Club. I thought "who am I to tell such seasoned operators anything of use" and then I thought - there are a few things that might be helpful to new and old gardeners alike.

If you're growing from the ground soil in suburbia - and not elevated boxes - treat every part of your garden as a micro climate. Something that might not grow successfully in one spot might do well in a different direction six feet away.

Let at least one of each plant in your garden go to seed, and allow it to sprout up, pulling what you eventually don't need. As they re-germinate from one source year after year, they get stronger and the pollinating bees love it.

Be very careful how you water. Alter your nozzle according to what you're watering. Most plants like their roots watered, not their leaves, although a hand-sprinkle over a whole plant occasionally is good.

Remember in the wild, plants don't grow in rows!  
Happy times, Beth.

I enjoyed hearing the story of Beth's garden - and I was very impressed with the richness of the soil and the health of the plants. Beth harvested the season's potatoes as we walked around the garden, and we checked the asparagus and the kale. (Beth is experimenting with "sacrificial plants" as a means of controlling any grubs that want to help themselves to the broccoli.)

It is a very peaceful garden, and is a credit to the concept of nourishing whatever soil you have to start a garden with. In Beth's case, it has worked extremely well.

## Jobs For November From Diane Kelly

November in the vegetable patch is as much about battling against weeds and pests as it is about sowing and planting new crops.

Birds, slugs, snails, aphids, butterflies, moths and innumerable other forms of wildlife will regard your newly emerging seedlings and tender young plants as an irresistibly delicious free meal. And if the bugs don't get them, weeds will strangle or smother them to death! So you'll need to take action if your crops are to survive

**Water seeds and seedlings.** Water regularly and generously. November can be a surprisingly dry month, and all growing plants need to be kept moist, especially young ones. They may not survive if you let them dry out. Direct sown seeds will germinate better if the seed bed is covered after watering. Carefully lay wooden boards, damp hessian or woven poly bags over the bed. Check daily and remove the covers as soon as the seeds have germinated. Established vegetables can be mulched with straw to reduce moisture loss.

**Weed regularly.** Weeds will grow as vigorously as anything else in your garden this month. It's important to remove them, however, as they compete with your own plants for water and nutrients in the soil. Using a hoe is the least back-breaking way of weeding, and is best done on dry, warm days when the sun will dry out and kill uprooted weeds.

**Watch for pests.** In the vegetable patch slugs and snails can devour a row of new seedlings overnight, so it's wise to place snail bait around the seedlings, particularly if rain is forecast. Basil seedlings are a favourite of snails but all young tender leaves are food for slugs and snails. Aphid infestations can build up quickly on new growth, particularly new shoots of peace, nectarine, plum and cherry.

**Thin out seedlings.** Seeds you sowed direct last month may now have produced seedlings that need thinning. If you don't

think them out, crops such as carrots, parsnips, beetroot and lettuces may not have enough room to grow to a reasonable size. Don't throw away the thinning – add them to green salads.

**Check soil moisture under fruit trees.** Fruiting trees are thirsty trees during fruit development. If the weather is dry, irrigation will be required, especially when fruit is forming.

*Veggie Patch  
Alan Buckingham*



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## Pests & Diseases From Diane Kelly

### Vegetables:

**Watch for cabbage white butterfly larvae**, especially on the leaves or radishes, rocket, and brassica seedlings such as cabbages, cauliflowers and broccoli. Keep plants well watered so they grow strongly and survive attack.

**Slugs and snails** can be deadly now. Wet weather draws them out, especially at night.

**Pesky birds** will attack brassicas, peas and strawberries. You can try scarecrows, but nets are the only real solution.

**Broad beans**, especially early-sown crops, are prone to Chocolate Spot, a fungal disease that causes large freckles on leaves, stem and beans. Pull affected plants out and discard.

**Pamper tomato plants** to keep the plants vigorous. If the foliage looks pale or curled, plants are likely to be diseased and should be replaced. Tomato virus diseases are spread via a sap-sucking vector such as thrips. There is nothing you can do once plants are infected except replace with healthy seedlings.

### Fruit:

**Net strawberries** to keep off birds, and deter slugs by laying a bed of dry straw around the base of the plants.

**Check apples** for canker, powdery mildew and scab

**Check pears** for canker and scab

**Pear and cherry slugs** consume the leaf surface, skeletonising leaves on quince, pears and cherry during summer. Dusting with fine ash or lime desiccates the slugs.

**Codling moths** mate this month. Hang pheromone traps in apples to catch the males, thus preventing the females, thus preventing the females laying eggs.

**Don't spray** any fruit trees or bushes with treatments for **bugs** when they are in blossom and bees are busy pollinating.

*Vegie Patch  
Alan Buckingham*

## November At A Glance From Diane Kelly

- Prune spring-flowering shrubs that have finished flowering
- Take softwood cuttings of shrubs
- Lightly trim box and other formal hedging
- Prune *Clematis montana* after flowering
- Take cuttings from herbaceous perennials
- Cut back and divide spring-flowering perennials
- Protect young plants from slugs
- Clear out spring annuals, and plant out summer annuals and bedding plants
- Thin out annuals and vegetables sown earlier
- Feed fish regularly, and also give a special aquatic fertilizer to water plants
- Feed and weed lawns to encourage good growth, as well as mowing regularly
- Sow and plant out warm-season vegetables throughout the month
- Continue successional sowing of vegetables
- Feed and water shrubs in pots outside
- Sow more annuals for a late summer and autumn display of flowers
- Inspect plants regularly for signs of pests and diseases, and nip potential problems in the bud

*Gardening Through the Year in Australia  
Ian Spence*

## Gardening Through the Year From Diane Kelly

Many gardeners regard November as one of the best months in the garden, with the freshness of spring and the promise of summer. It's a time when roses can excel, and jacarandas and gardenias are in flower.

To make sure you have a succession of young vegetables throughout the summer, continue with regular sowing of all vegetables at seven or ten day intervals. Hoeing also becomes a very regular chore among vegetables now, as weeds burgeon in the mild conditions.

This month temperatures can get very high, and it's vital to shade young, vulnerable plants. Mulch after watering to keep roots cool and at an even temperature, but keep the mulch away from plant stems. Keep new plants well-watered during dry spells, so they don't suffer stress.

### Vegetables:

*Plant out self-blanching celery:* Make sure the ground is prepared thoroughly, incorporating plenty of well-rotted organic matter to retain moisture – celery needs plenty of water throughout the growing season. Unlike blanching celery, there is no need to exclude light from the celery stalks. It is best to grow it in blocks to aid the blanching process for most of the plants; for those around the outside of the block, a strip of plastic supported by canes around the edge of the block will improve blanching of the outer stems. Seed listed as "Cut Celery" is easier to grow than the bunching types and good for cooking.

Blanching of celery for white stems is done about a month before harvesting.

Wrap plants individually with thick or waxed paper: hold in place top and bottom with string or rubber bands.

*Plant out marrow and zucchini:* Plant into soil that has been enriched with plenty of organic matter, as marrow and zucchini require a lot of water during the growing season. They do take up quite a bit of room, so place them 90cm (3ft) each way. Keep the plants well watered through the summer.

If you don't have room in the vegetable garden, why not grow one or two of them as ornamental borders? The large leaves are bold and attractive and will provide a good contrast to other foliage plants in the garden, and the edible parts are a bonus. Trailing varieties can be grown up strong canes, bean poles or other forms of support to make an attractive feature, which also saves space at ground level.

*Check tomatoes* for grubs and caterpillars – handpick and destroy them before they multiply. Also check for fungal diseases. Water at ground level and space plants well. Tomato blossoms fall prematurely if it is very cool, very hot or the soil is dry. Even, deep watering also helps to prevent blossom end rot, which shows up as sunken leathery patches on fruit.

Feed all tomatoes, peppers and eggplants with a high-potash fertilizer every week from now on throughout the season for a plentiful supply of good-quality crops.

### Fruit:

*Tuck straw under strawberries* to protect the fruits from rotting because they are resting on wet ground. This also prevents the fruits being spoiled by rain-splashed soil and slugs. As the fruits

develop, cover the plants with netting to keep the birds from getting them – but make sure the netting is properly secured to prevent birds getting tangled up in it.

Remove runners from strawberries if they are not required for propagating new plants. If runners are allowed to develop, then a great deal of the plant's energy will go into producing them. The crop of fruit will be poorer, and the strawberry bed will end up as a mass of tangled plants which will be difficult to weed. Putting down straw to protect the fruit will also be next to impossible. If you want to let a few plants develop runners for new plants, pick the flowers off these plants and sacrifice their crop so that you get strong young plantlets.

Mulch all fruit to retain moisture in the soil. Use well-rotted farmyard manure, garden compost, spent mushroom compost, or any other organic matter you can get hold of. If the soil is dry, make sure it is watered well before applying a mulch, as mulches are just as good at keeping moisture out of the soil as keeping it in. There is no point in giving small amounts of water every day. Instead, concentrate on watering small areas really well in turn, otherwise the water is just wasted.

Check all plants regularly for signs of pests and diseases, which will become more prevalent as the weather becomes warmer. Look on the undersides of leaves for whitefly, and the tips of shoots for aphids. Small infestations of pests can be picked off, or may be caught on yellow sticky cards. Don't use these traps if you have plenty of predatory insects around, as they will be caught too.

*Gardening Through the Year in Australia*  
Ian Spence

### Thanks Librarians Greg, Judy and Ann-Maree



What's new with the Library this year:-

- The full listing of books and resources available on our website.
  - A super efficient database of loans.
  - The bookshelves are organised into easy to find sections
- ... Now we just have to remember to bring them back each month.

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**Gardening on the Gold Coast  
& Thereabouts  
From Diane Kelly**

November is not one of our biggest planting months, but despite the best mulching efforts, those voracious summer weeds persist. There are routine sowings to be made, and bed rotation and preparation must be continued.

**Vegetables:**

Pumpkins, melons, cucumbers and squash should be planted this month. A trick with these plants is to select the patch six months before planting and use it as a compost heap, digging lots of it in well before sowing. Make concave mounds and, when the seed has germinated, water around the roots and not by overhead spray. The risk of mildew will be reduced.

In particular, keep the lettuce and tomatoes moving with those fortnightly feeds of liquid fertilizer, remembering that zestful plants are far less susceptible to disease and insect attack.

**Pawpaws:** Are showing their flush of summer growth and it is advisable to have seed sown by the end of November. There are options with the pawpaw – they can be easily propagated from the seed (the fresher the better) of the non-hybrid types or they can be purchased as bi-sexual and hybrid models. However, all demand well-drained soil. Plant out in February or March. Earlier plantings tend to grow too tall for comfort.

If you have propagated male and female pawpaws, remember that one male is required for pollination of seven females. During spring and summer, fertilize and/or top-dress every two months for large, flavoursome fruit.

**FRUIT TREES  
From Diane Kelly**

**Custard Apple:** Increase irrigation. Mulch trees. Commence hand pollination of Pink Mammoth and Hillary White. Apply organic fertiliser with sulphate of potash – 1 kg for mature trees and ½ kg for small trees.

**Figs:** Keep well mulched and watered.

**Low chill stone fruit:** Use fruit fly control programs, for example netting or an attractant method. When fruiting is finished and harvested, prune trees.

**Mango:** Peak water needs:

**Passion-fruit:** Pruning carried out this month. All dead parts to go. Keep up the water.

**Paw-paw:** Increase irrigation. Apply 20 gms per sq m of organic fertiliser.

**Persimmon:** Peak irrigation needs.

**Strawberries:** Most plants are finished by now. Keep well watered to encourage new runners for next year.

**Bananas:** De-suckering should have been carried out by now. If not, do it now. Apply organic fertiliser with sulphate of potash – 1 kg per stool.

**Citrus:** Keep up the water. Spray with pest oil for leaf miner. Paint trunks with a white water-based paint. This will control ants and scale.

*Brisbane Organic Growers Handbook*



## VEGETABLES

### OCTOBER:

Amaranth, Artichoke, Bush beans, Ceylon spinach, Climbing beans, Snake bean, Sweet corn, Capsicum, Carrot, Choko, Cucumber, Eggplant, Gourd, Lettuce, Luffa, Marrow, New Zealand spinach, Okra, Peanut, Pumpkin, Radish, Rhubarb, Rockmelon, Rosella, Spring onion, Silverbeet, Squash, Sunflower, Sweet Potato, Tomato, Watermelon, Zucchini.

### NOVEMBER:

Artichoke, Capsicum, Carrot, Choko, Sweet corn, Cucumber, Eggplant, Gourd, Lettuce, Luffa, Marrow, Okra, Peanut, Pumpkin, Radish, Rhubarb, Rockmelon, Rosella, Spring onion, Silverbeet, Squash, Sunflower, Sweet potato, Tomato, Watermelon, Zucchini.

## HERBS

### OCTOBER:

**Annual:** Basil, Borage, Calendula, Dill, Herb Robert, Italian parsley, Misome, Mizuna, Giant Red Mustard, Mustard Lettuce, Nasturtium, Rocket.

**Perennials & Bi-Annals:** 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, Thyme, Upland Cress, Watercress, Winter Savoury.

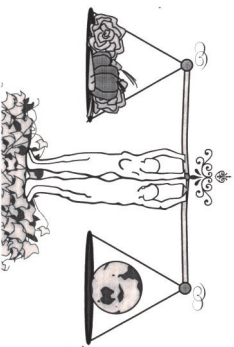
### NOVEMBER:

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

**Perennials & Bi-Annals:** 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, Thyme, Upland Cress, Watercress, Winter Savoury, Winter Tarragon.

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 15 November 2013