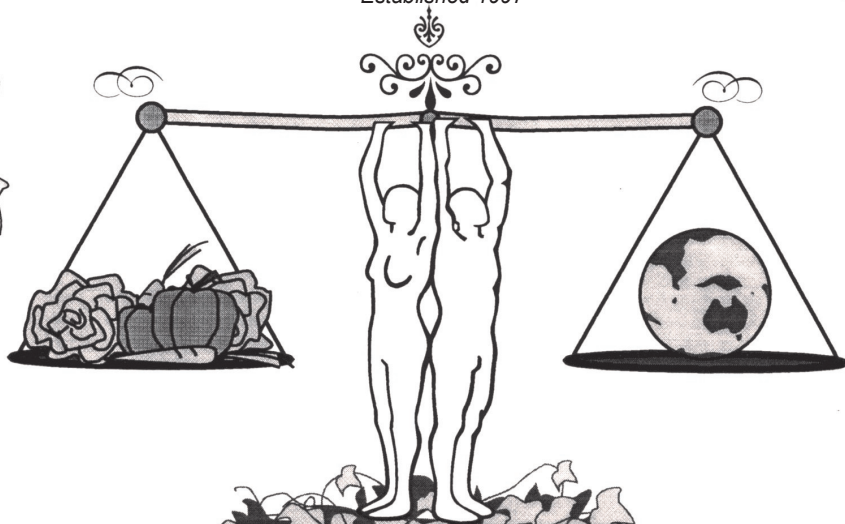


GOLD COAST ORGANIC GROWERS Inc.

Established 1997



NEWSLETTER

Volume 17 October 2014 Issue 9
GARDENING IN SPRING

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OUR NEXT MEETING: Thursday 20 November

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 \$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:

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: \$10 an issue, or \$100 per year

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

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

2014 Committee

President	Maria Roberson (07) 5598 6609
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Seed Bank	Lyn Mansfield 0409 645 888
Seed Assistant	Heather Ryan 5534 4047
Supper Co-ordinator	Paul Roberson (07) 5598 6609

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 or text a photo - 0439 488 166.

Thanks to Contributors:

Diane Kelly, Jill Barber, Maria Roberson, Cathie Hodge, Dorothy Coe, Roger Griffiths

Website:

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.

Membership renewals

Overdue: Winsome Gunning (314), Terri Groth (125), Greg Wiltshire (320), Louise Newell (321), Lise Racine (151), Trevor & Barbara Hewins (348), Val Sier (349), Peter & Jan Fleming (287), Pat McGrath (305), Scott McCormack (334), Anna Yeomans (353), Shelley Pryor (72), Warren & Bev Carlson (87), Gene Rosser (224), Peter & Leanne Dickfos (260), Geoffrey Williams (293), Jan Guest (307), Henry Blonner (108), Denise Goodwin (335), Frank Rebesco (342), Ashleigh Hart (355)

October: Glenn & Joan Jones (266), Darrell & Marion Williams (310), Amy Lukens (356), John Palmer (357)

November: Paul & Maria Roberson (4), Karen Hart (198), Celia Forrest (351), Megan Keeler (358)

What's On

Gold Coast Amateur Beekeepers Society Field Day

Oct 26 9a-3p \$2 entry

Currumbin Community Special School

5 Hammersford Drive, Currumbin Waters

There will be a number of sessions including an introduction to bee keeping from 10a. The hives will be opened after lunch.

www.gcabs.net.au

Tweed Foodie Fest

Nov 19-23

Farm Tours among other things.

www.tweedfoodiefest.com.au



HERB FARM

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President's Message

Hello Everyone,
I hope you are able to join us on Saturday the 25th of October when we visit the SPUR FAMILY garden of utopia or "SPURTOPIA" as they call it. We are very lucky that Ramon and Jana have allowed us this time, as they are booked up with so many presentations and workshops! I wonder where they get the time to garden at all. We will begin the tour at 1.30 pm and envisage being there for around 2 hours. Even though Roman and Jana will be providing us with some delicious treats prepared from their garden, I suggest that you bring your own food, water and whatever else you may require to see you through the afternoon. We ask that you make a small cash donation on the day towards helping SPURTOPIA remain an inspiration to as many people as possible. Carpooling is being organised at this October meeting, the week before the trip, so let us know if you won't be there, but want to carpool.

The GOLD COAST ORGANIC GROWERS will celebrate our 17th birthday this month, which makes us the oldest organic gardening group on the Gold Coast. Come to think about it, we may be the second oldest in Queensland after the Brisbane Organic Growers, who, of course have been around for a very long time. I would have to say that, to me, the past 17 years have gone very quickly and run very smoothly, thanks to the dedication of the many committee members who have come and gone over all those years. I think it is probably pretty rare that so many different people can rub along so nicely together, and I want to thank each and every one of you for your commitment in making the GOLD COAST ORGANIC GROWERS the best little garden club ever.

November will be the last meeting for the year as we do not hold a meeting in December. The November meeting doubles as our CHRISTMAS PARTY, and we ask all members to bring a plate to share, nothing too fancy; however, something home grown or produced is always a hit.

At the November meeting we like to have an extra special RAFFLE TABLE, overflowing with heaps of great garden-related prizes. Naturally this makes the night even more fun when just about everyone wins a prize. As usual we are asking for your contributions, and here are some ideas for your consideration - homemade jams, relishes, cakes or biscuits, a dozen eggs, potted plants, punnet of seedlings, honey, produce from your garden, relevant gardening books and mags, the list goes on. Contributions for the raffle table will be very gratefully received on the night.

You might want to plan ahead in regards to your seed requirements for the upcoming summer planting schedule. I suggest "making a list and checking it twice"; after all, you'll be pretty ticked off if you have to buy seeds from anywhere else over the Christmas break.

Happy growing,
Maria.

The Diggers Club

Australia's largest garden club is helping gardeners grow healthier vegetables, tastier fruit and the most beautiful flowers.

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- Gardening advice, free seeds and discounts for members



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**If you only do One Thing this Month:
Grow Seeds instead of Seedlings**
From Diane Kelly

Spring is a wonderful time for planting out new crops, and our gardens can be very rewarding. A way in which to improve the quality, volume and cost of production is to **“Grow Seeds instead of Seedlings”**.

Here are eleven reasons to do so:

You can buy good quality, organic seeds to give your plants a good start in life. The range of seeds available is far greater – there are many more varieties offered in seed catalogues or on-line than as young plants at garden centres.

You can control the quality of the potting mix that your plants start their life in.

Planting of seeds can be done according to a schedule – plant a few seeds one week, put the packet away in a dry place, and then plant some more next week. In this way you can avoid having harvest gluts.

Seeds keep much longer – I’m sure most of us have thrown out a punnet of seedlings that we have bought because we didn’t get time to plant them before they died!

Seeds are much cheaper than seedlings. For example, you can get a packet of 70 seeds of Bush Beans from an organic supplier for \$3.70 – or you can pay \$2.75 for a punnet of 6 (non-organic) plants from a nursery! Remember too, seed saving reduces those costs even more.

Costs are even more reduced when you let self-sown plants grow. When seeds from your garden crops pop up in various places, let them grow – they often turn into robust plants.

Seeds are fun – it is wonderful to watch a plant shoot break through the soil, and to puzzle how a lettuce, sweet corn or cosmos plant can come out of a little brown seed.

Self-sown plants are also fun – in our back lawn at the moment we have about ten varieties of plants that have come from our vegetable garden area. Little plants of coriander, sugar snap peas, cosmos, white daisies, cucumbers & tomatoes are growing in our lawn – it just means we can’t mow!

You learn more about plants by observing the whole process of seeds to crop.

Just one word of warning – you will need to think about planting times, and be aware that growing crops from seed takes a bit longer.

**Grand Opening of
GC Permaculture at Cararra**

Lyn Mansfield (who wears many hats - GCOG Seed Bank) orchestrated a fantastic day to present the new site for GC Permaculture - What a great day Lyn - excellent job.

A very big Thanks to everyone who turned up to help out at the GC Organic Growers stand at the opening. Diane and Maria did an outstanding job. You can’t see them in the photo but Maria was passing on plenty of advice in the background and Diane (taking the photo) put together a fantastic collage of photos involving our members gardens.



Cathie, Angie & Dorothy helped out on the GCOG stall at the grand opening of GC Permaculture at Carrara - 11.10.14

Dave Gaven & Dan Smith
Creating Your Own Potting Mixes,
Soils & Propagation Mediums
 By Jill Barber

I and others were looking forward to this presentation, if only to find a good seed raising mix, but we really got more than we were expecting with this fearless duo! Turned out that not only did we receive some excellent tips and practical help with how to have the right soil for our seeds and seedlings and lots about herbs, but we were also vastly entertained. I don't think I've heard so much laughter in one night in the several years that I've been a GCOG member!

It all started for Dave with cat litter. He wanted some affordable, readily available litter for his four cats, and decided to buy **vermiculite** from a wholesaler. He soon realised that he could make a business out of retailing it in smaller bags, delivering free to anywhere on the Gold Coast, making runs up and down the Coast just on weekends (During the week he does IT work at the Gold Coast Hospital). This is all to support his lovely family of wife and three kids, not to mention cats.

Looking to expand his growing business, four months ago Dave teamed up with Dan, who uses vermiculite as well as perlite for his soil mixes. Both are natural, organic and inert, like rock minerals, being mined in a quarry then put into an extremely hot furnace of 800 to 900 degrees, which exfoliates or expands commercial grades eight to twelve times. It also becomes much lighter, and can absorb a lot of water. It can be used in wicking beds, as the moisture is drawn through the vermiculite and potting mix up to the plants, as well as in cement blocks, in ceilings, in packaging and for absorbing road spills. So it has many uses. **Perlite** is also mined, and is very similar to vermiculite; it's just white, and is used in gardening the same way: to increase the air space in soils and hold water. Microbes in the soil absorb the minerals, and through them it becomes available to plants.

Dave sells them in 30-litre bags for just \$15

and 100-litre bags for \$35 (as opposed to \$9 for just 5 litres from Bunnings). He had some there on the night, to very kindly donate to the raffle table and to sell. If you missed out, you can give him a call (0428 296 646) or email him (davesperlitevermiculite@gmail.com) for your free delivery. By the way, Dave also sells compressed **pine pellets**, from sawdust, which is used for cat litter, for \$22 a 15kg bag. Once moisture is applied these turn back to sawdust.

Now Dan the Herb Man, has a growing herb business, selling his herbs in the weekend at the Carrara Markets. He's also qualified in permaculture, and for the past two and a half years he's operated the nursery at the Gold Coast Permaculture's Carrara urban farm site. Their aim, by the way, is to encourage backyard food production, and they supply a vast array of plants, as well as assisting with any technical knowledge and support you might need.

Dan talked ten to the dozen, and shared a wealth of information about the plants he'd brought along to show us and sell. First, though, he shared with us his soil mixing recipes, as follows:

Seed raising mix – 1/3 sieved compost + 1/3 worm casting + 1/3 vermiculite. The latter comes in various grades, and for this he uses grade 3, fine, and, as well as good moisture retention, this gives the soil good aeration and good drainage. He covers the seeds with straight perlite to keep them moist.

Propagation mix – The same + 1 extra part of vermiculite, ie. $\frac{1}{4} + \frac{1}{4} + \frac{1}{2}$.

Potting mix – 2/3 compost + 1/3 mushroom compost + small amount of worm castings + perlite to suit. He puts the latter on the top to look good as well as hold in the moisture, etc., and uses this for all his herbs and seedlings.

Dan says that the most important element of all is the **compost**, which should be good quality. Better still, make your own, he recommends: 30 parts carbon or dry leafy, grassy material + 1 part nitrogen or green leafy material. They water it in, put a tarp on top, and

turn it every 7 to 10 days. After 5 to 6 weeks, some can be used, and in 10 weeks it's done. They sell it for \$6 a 40-litre bag. The **worm castings** they buy from Greg Plevey, at Wormtec (www.wormtec.com.au), and they use worm extract as a foliar spray once a month as it greens up the plants nicely.

In their garden beds, they build up good soil using the "**lasagne method**", ie. layers, starting with wood chips, then green cuttings, eg. lucerne, then blood and bone, horse manure and finally mushroom compost, which they plant straight into, spraying it with worm extract. They do "chop and drop" in the established beds, leaving the cuttings to break down for a week or so before planting, then they add mushroom compost and worm castings, and plant straight into that.

Dan then took us through over twenty of his **herbs**, most of which he'd brought and we could later buy (at just \$3 a pot!), giving us their botanical names, as well as their main benefits, a lot of which I'll pass on here.

Lemon balm – use the tea for depression, anxiety and insomnia, and in cooking in place of lemons. It attracts bees to the garden.

Borage – a good companion to strawberries, tomatoes and citrus, and it helps most plants. It means "To be merry", grows to 90cm, with lovely, tiny, blue flowers. It's an annual, but self-planting babies grow up all around the mother for continuing growth. It can be used in salads

Comfrey – can grow from a piece of root; its roots go deep and bring up nutrients to its leaves. It's good for sprains, gout and broken bones! A poultice can be made of the leaves to put on bruises, and it's cancer fighting.

Stevia – is used in place of sugar in cooking, being 300 times sweeter, and also used to cure diabetes.

Dog Bain – stops dogs and cats peeing in the garden, smells like marijuana, has big, blue flowers, is easy to propagate, and grows into a big plant which needs to be cut back periodically.

Marshmallow – grows to 1 metre high, is an ornamental bush, with large, variegated, pink and white flowers.

Gotu cola – is used for arthritis healing, fertility and wound healing, and is good as a ground cover.

Mexican tarragon – is part of the marigold family, and the flowers can be eaten or infused into a tea.

Mugwort – for insomnia, use in a tea, etc.

Herb Robert – an anti-cancer herb

Lemon Grass – a hangover cure, with hibiscus flowers

Japanese Spinach – lots of vitamins and minerals

Ceylon Spinach – can be used in stir fries, juices, smoothies, soups and salads

Water leaf, ginseng – leaves are eaten raw or cooked, blended into smoothies or in a stir-fry.

Qld greens or hibiscus spinach – leaves are eaten raw or cooked, blended into smoothies or in a stir-fry.

Yarrow – make into tea, for stress

Rosemary – grows to 2 metres tall; water morning rather than evening to avoid mildew

Sweet Annie – grows quite big; is a "sacrificial" plant: insects are attracted to it, and leave others alone.

Curry plant

Russian tarragon – is different from French tarragon

Pineapple mint – can use in drinks and fruit salads

Lavenders – like part sun part shade; cut right back after flowering

Ornamental **salvias**

At the end of these presentations, both were rushed by those wanting to purchase some of their goodies while they were so conveniently available and affordable. Dave generously donated some vermiculite to the raffle table, and I think Dan's supply of lovely potted herbs was reduced considerably. I, for one, had lined up five I wanted to rush to buy the minute they'd finished; it was first in first served, and I was glad I was sitting in the front row! This was a very enjoyable evening that we greatly appreciated – informative, light and fun. We wish them all success in their business ventures.

Getting To Know – Ron Campbell By Diane Kelly

They say you only get one chance to make a good first impression, and this is certainly what happened when I arrived at Ron and Sue Campbell's home last Saturday.

The Campbells live in a quiet cul-de-sac in Tallebudgera, just south of the township. Well established trees, a sloping acreage block and well-maintained gardens give an impression of tranquillity and order, so I was looking forward to hearing Ron's story.

Ron grew up in suburban Melbourne, and he remembers that his father used to have a vegetable patch and chooks in the backyard. Tennis and Aussie Rules football were Ron's interests then, and his involvement in tennis continues to this day. As a member of clubs in Miami and Burleigh Heads, Ron still plays tennis four or five times a week at competition level, and also helps with photography at Burleigh Head's coaching camps and writes their club newsletter. The Burleigh Heads club has 200-230 members, and Ron is currently its president, so he is kept busy.

Ron and Sue lived in Melbourne for nineteen years after they were married, and Sue very much enjoyed the flowers and seasons of Victoria. Then they moved to Sydney when Ron was offered a transfer in his job – at this stage, he then became a Swans supporter! The Campbells stayed in Sydney for another nineteen years, and although their garden area was small, they always tried to have something growing in the vegie patch. During that time they renovated their house, and Ron retired from his job. The decision was then taken to move to where the largest number of their family was, and so Ron & Sue moved to the Gold Coast. They initially lived in Bonogin while they looked around the Coast to find where they would like to live permanently – they did know that they wanted "acreage, a flat block, and somewhere to grow vegetables".

So, just over seven years ago, Ron and Sue moved into their current home. The block is one and a half acres, and has a front garden with a wide range of shrubs and flowering plants, and then a backyard that faces to the north. Here are more well-grown trees, the orchard, the vegetable patch, the shed and the chook house, and lots of lawn for Freckles the dog to run around on. As the whole property is fenced, the chooks – Peggy, Dolly, Googy and Julia – are able to free-range all day, returning to their house only to feed, lay eggs and sleep.

Since they moved into their home, Ron has renovated the shed (everything is now orderly and has plenty of storage space), built the chook house and enclosed yard, and created the vegetable gardens. Most of the floral garden was already established, and there were a mango tree and three stone-fruit trees growing. Ron noted that the bats were getting most of the stone fruit, and so those trees were removed, and replaced by a number of citrus trees, lime and fig trees. The mango tree continues to grow well, and fruits prolifically.

I asked Ron about the soil of the block, and he said that, although the area used to be a dairy farm, there is only about 300mm of good soil, then 200mm of shale – and then clay. So that is why he has established four large raised garden beds in the vegetable patch. Initially Ron bought in soil for the gardens, but he now comments that gardeners need to be very careful doing so. There were even bits of plasterboard, plastic and pebbles in the load that arrived for his garden! But since that time a lot of compost and manure have been added to that soil, and the quality has improved. Ron uses horse manure, and mentioned that the main reason for getting the chooks was for their fertilizer – the bedding straw and droppings get added to the compost. The main timber composter is divided into three bays for the varying stages of production, and Ron puts grass clippings and the chook shed clearings into a tumbler bin. There is also a bio-cycle unit in operation for watering the fruit trees, and a productive worm farm.

**BEFORE****THEN** (*Note the wonderful compost bays at the back of the garden beds!*)**AND NOW !**

Growing in the raised beds at the moment are tomatoes, cucumbers, zucchinis and beans. The fourth bed has just been bandicooted for its potato crop. In the shed, the garlic that Ron grew this year was being stored – it was not a good harvest, and this was a disappointment as the Campbells use a lot of garlic in their cooking. They also have a lot of salad and barbecued meals, many of which are shared with their children and nine grandchildren.

One of the things that I was impressed with – right from when Ron first started his vegetable garden, he has kept a detailed diary of when crops were planted and how they grew. Other interests that Ron has are taking Freckles for walks on the beaches of Tallebudgera and Currumbin, and photography – he has a good Nikon camera that he uses for family photos and for taking pictures for the tennis club.

I asked Ron about the raised garden beds – three are about a metre wide, and three metres long, and the other one is about three metres square. The fourth (and latest) bed was built for planting out spreading plants – potatoes, zucchinis, pumpkins etc, and although it is harder to weed, the system works well. Of course, as all gardeners with free-ranging chooks need, Ron has the vegie gardens fenced off.

As is obvious by the effort Ron puts into his composting, worm farm and vegetable gardens (and there are three more garden beds in another section of the backyard that are currently not in use) he gardens by the philosophy of “if you can’t eat it, don’t grow it”. The rest of the gardens are well maintained, but you can see where the real interest is. And his advice for gardeners? For people just starting out, Ron recommends starting small. And for all of us – and obviously the voice of experience – stagger your plantings.

So if you want to learn how to build a secure chook pen, or shelving for your shed, or how to rotate compost, or improve your garden soil, have a chat to Ron. Meanwhile, here are some photos I snapped that made me smile.



Obviously gardeners in training !!

Gardens Overseas By Cathie Hodge

Visiting the UK & Sweden in July this year, naturally the theme of gardens caught my attention!

The following gardens were a few of my favourites...

Hackney City Farm in East London:

I had the pleasure of volunteering one afternoon at this interesting city farm. It was established in 1984 by members of the local community, with the aim of giving city children & the local community the opportunity to experience farming. The farm has since become a very successful community hub & resource. <http://hackneycityfarm.co.uk/>

The City Farm has animals on rotation from a farm in Kent. The animals include calves, donkeys, pigs, goats & sheep. They also keep smaller animals – rabbits, ducks, chooks, ducks, geese & guinea pigs. Vegetable gardening, bee-keeping & the Haggerston Orchard Project (using Permaculture principles) are just a few of the community ventures on offer. All of this in busy London.



Batvik, Sweden – a home garden

At the parents of my Swedish daughter-in-law. The mother is a very keen gardener of both flowers & veggies. I was both intrigued & impressed with her garden, especially as their growing season is extremely short. My hostess grows seedlings inside her house in early spring, in preparation for planting outside in the summer. (She was likewise fascinated to hear about our subtropical growing conditions).

Batvik is located on the coast in the north of Sweden. Summertime brings very long days & all-night twilights. I found it extremely difficult to imagine the same beautiful & bountiful garden scene in winter, covered with deep snow and the sea frozen over.



Upwey Wishing Well Gardens, Dorset, UK:

At the source of the River Wey are perhaps the most stunning gardens that I have ever seen. The River Wey bubbles up from a wishing well within the peaceful gardens! From there it flows gently to nearby Weymouth Harbour. See the link for more details & more photos. <http://www.love-weymouth.co.uk/a-walk-around-upwey/#/>


**The King Parrot Made Me Do It!
By Roger Griffiths**

Something had been attacking our large, green Russian tomatoes and I suspected cockatoos. But while in the garden some days later, I spotted the culprit quietly sitting on the tomato post, leaning over and destroying green tomatoes. It was a King Parrot! As the earlier red tomatoes were not the best for taste, all the green ones were then picked to make green tomato chutney.

p.s. I can vouch that the results were spicy but very tasty! Di Kelly



Roger's green tomato chutney, plus some of his jams and home-dried & ground ginger & turmeric

What happened in October?
Costa came to town

Costa at Lohas Precinct 4.10.14

and ...


Roger extracted a hive of honey

and ...



Beth shared her egg-plant harvest – this was just part of it!

Edible Weeds By Dorothy Coe

Notes taken from John Palmers talk a few weeks ago at the Botanical Gardens (plus I did some extra research on the internet).

Stinging Nettle

People use the root and above ground parts as medicine for treating joint ailments, as a diuretic, and as an astringent. Stinging nettle above ground parts are applied to the skin for muscle aches and pains, oily scalp, oily hair, allergies, hayfever, and osteoarthritis. In foods, young stinging nettle leaves are eaten as a cooked vegetable. Also ideal for making tea. Side affects are known so re-search before you use. Prefers moist fertile soil, shaded area.



Thickhead

Sometimes regarded as a newcomer amongst Australian weeds. Has a carrot-like flavour which is great in salad. Herbal uses : indigestion , a decoction for headaches. Leaves used on fresh wounds to help healing.



Dandelion

Common edible weed is tasty both raw and cooked, from the roots to the blossoms. The root of the dandelion can be dried and roasted and used as a coffee substitute. I have been doing this myself but with the non weed variety (I think it's called *radikia*) but I think you can do it with the weed variety too. I think you have to let the plant grow for about a year before pulling up to use the root. Health benefits include: Bone Health, Liver Disorders, Diabetes, Urinary Disorders, Skin Care, Weight Loss, Cancer Jaundice, Gall Bladder Disorders, Anemia, High Blood Pressure.



Clover

One of the more surprising sides of clover is that it's in the pea family, and its blossom is actually a bunch of little pea-like blossoms. The roots, leaves and blossoms can be eaten but apparently the blossoms are the only part that tastes nice. Blossoms can be eaten raw or in a tea. Clover is high in protein, has beta carotene, vitamin C, most of the B vitamins, biotin, choline, inositol, and bioflavonoids. Some people can be allergic to Clover so eat in low doses to start with.



Cobblers pegs - aka Farmer's Friend

One of the world's greatest natural digestive tract healers and lymphatic and anti-allergy remedies.

Cobblers Pegs tea or tincture has been used to treat ulcers, and traditionally to treat other conditions including wounds, flu, colds, fever, neuralgia, small-pox, snake bite, pain, anemia, rectal prolapse, hepatitis, jaundice, and colic. **John Palmer** suggested getting a damp bed sheet and dragging over the plants and the seeds will stick to it and you just leave them on there to sprout.



I have one spot in my garden which is well drained sandy soil and if I turn my back for a day, the next day the Cobblers pegs have taken over. I have noticed that the bees love the flowers too.

Chickweed

Chickweed grows in a unique, intertwined manner. A thin hairy stem with pointed oval leaves. It produces small, white, star-shaped flowers throughout much of the year. Used as a folk remedy for centuries for many conditions including asthma, blood disorders, conjunctivitis, constipation, inflammation, dyspepsia, and skin ailments. Excellent for helping to dissolve fats in the body. Helps to liquefy and remove mucous from the Respiratory tract. The young shoots are edible – raw or cooked.



Wood sorrel / Oxalis

Not to be confused with clovers, as it looks similar. There are various species, some have yellow flowers and some have purple. They contain more oxalic acid than clovers so don't eat too much at any one time. Wood sorrel is an incredible thirst quencher and is refreshing to eat. The leaves, flowers, and immature green seed pods are all edible having a mild sour flavour that some say resemble lemons.



Wood sorrel tea when cooled can make a refreshing beverage especially when sweetened with honey. In moderate dosages, wood sorrel is cooling, diuretic, soothing to the stomach, relieves indigestion, astringent, and catalytic.



DID YOU KNOW ?

You can eat Hibiscus Flowers!

Gardening on the Gold Coast & Thereabouts

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 zesty 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, flavour-some fruit.

FRUIT TREES

Custard Apple: Increase irrigation. Mulch trees. Apply 2g boron/sqm.

Figs: Pruning should be done. Figs only produce on new wood or new season's growth. Mulch well.

Lychee: Peak water needs. Mulch. Apply gypsum 20gms/sqm.

Low chill stone fruit: Spring prune new growth. Continue with high irrigation. Prune out water shoots and dense foliage for better size fruit. Use fruit fly control programs, for example netting or an attractant method.

Mango: Peak water needs. Apply organic fertiliser with sulphate of potash, 1kg for larger trees and 1/2kg for smaller trees. Spray with copper based spray or leaf microbes for anthracnose per fortnight.

Passion-fruit: Plant out new vines. 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.

Strawberries: Apply small amount of organic fertiliser with sulphate of potash, about 10g / plant. Keep up with fish emulsion or kelp spray weekly.

Bananas: Have one plant with fruit on, one half grown and one sucker. Discard all others. De-sucker plants by cutting down to centre with a sharp knife taking the centre out and add 1teaspoon of kerosene in the well.

Citrus: Keep up the water. Add lime or gypsum. Mature trees 1/2kg, 1/4kg for small trees.

VEGETABLES

OCTOBER:

Asian Veg, *Amaranth*, *Artichoke*, Asparagus, Beans - Bush, Climbing & Snake, Ceylon *spinach*, Sweet corn, Capsicum, Carrot, Choko, Cucumber, Eggplant, *Gourd*, Lettuce, Luffa, Marrow, Melons, Mustard Greens, *New Zealand spinach*, *Okra*, *Peanut*, Pumpkin, Radish, Rockmelon, Rosella, Spring Onion, Squash, *Sunflower*, Sweet Potato, Tomato, Watermelon, Zucchini.

NOVEMBER:

Asian Veg, *Artichoke*, Beans (French), Capsicum, Choko, Cucumber, Eggplant, *Gourd*, Lettuce, Luffa, Melons, Marrows, Mustard Greens, *Okra*, *Peanut*, Pumpkin, Radish, Rhubarb, Rockmelon, Rosella, Spring onion, Snake Beans, Squash, *Sunflower*, Sweet corn, Sweet potato, Tomato, Turnips, Watermelon, Zucchini.

Guest Speaker - Dan



Dan Smith talking about Soil Mixes - the wheelbarrow is filled with his recipe for Potting Mix

HERBS

OCTOBER

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

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, Thyme, Upland Cress, Watercress, Winter Savoury.

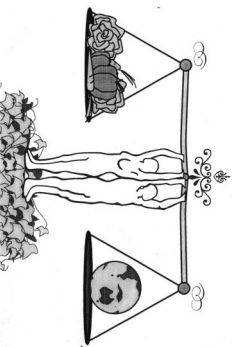
NOVEMBER:

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

Perennials & Bi-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, 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 20 November 2014