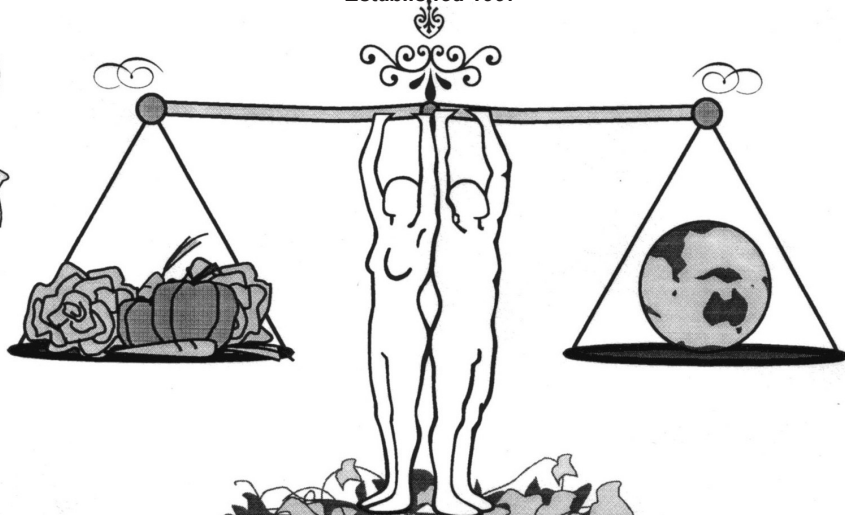


# GOLD COAST ORGANIC GROWERS Inc.

Established 1997



## NEWSLETTER

Volume 25, 2021 Issue 3  
GARDENING IN SPRING

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OUR NEXT MEETING: AUGUST 26, 2021

## 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:

The fourth Thursday of the month at the Elanora Community Centre, 26 Galleon Way, Elanora.

### Annual Membership Fees:

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

To renew or start memberships please transfer funds directly into our bank account, send cheques (payable to GCOG) to PO Box 210, Mudgeeraba Qld 4213, or just pay at the door.

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

### Seed Bank:

Packets are \$2.00 each.

### Members' Market Corner:

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

### Raffle Table:

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

### Library:

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

### Advertising:

**1/4 page:** \$15 an issue

**1/2 page:** \$25 an issue

**Full page:** \$40 an issue

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

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

## 2021-2022 Committee

President	Maria Roberson (07) 5598 6609
Vice President	Diane Kelly 0403 473 892
Treasurer	Diane Kelly 0403 473 892
Secretary	Deb Phillips 0422 680 784 <i>debraps@gmail.com</i>
Assistant Sec	Penny Jameson 0411 639 558
Membership Sec Membership Asst	Diane Kelly Penny Jameson
Newsletter Editor Newsletter Assts.	Leah Johnston <i>leahbryan9@gmail.com</i> Diane Kelly Jill Barber
Website Editor Social Media E.	Jorge Cantellano Maria Roberson
Grants	Stacey Panozzo 0406 007 583 <i>staceypanozzo1@gmail.com</i> Lyn Mansfield
Guest Speaker Liaison	Leah Johnston <i>leahbryan9@gmail.com</i>
Librarians	Doug Beitz Sally Beitz
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## Notice Board

### Membership Renewals

Pay online:

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

**Remember to put your Name and Membership Number (the number in brackets after your name) in the comment field.**

**Overdue:** Jane McLennan (446), Wendy Davies (463), Mark & Anita Fowler (464), Barry O'Rourke (185), Shem Pireh (466), Stacey Hearne (467), Gertroud Webb (468), Kym O'Connell (470).

**August:** Murray & Judith Olver (105), Ian & Margaret Lee (118), Jill Barber (290), Melanie Strang (440)

**September:** Shelley Pryor (72), Jan Wright (191), Cathie Hodge (304), Beth Orme (343), Kerstein Trueman (346), Rachael Lebeter (367), Bill Smart (386), Beverley Geraghty (404), Elizabeth Grippo (405), Deborah

Phillips (408), Stacey Panozzo (420), Rebecca Bowen (422), Peter Meppem (436), Lynn Calligros (451), Janet Shearer (452), Marek Janczewski (455), Katrina Julienne (458)

### Newsletter:

GCOG members are welcome to contribute photos and articles to our newsletter. Please send any contributions to Leah via the email leahbryan9@gmail.com

Contribution deadlines are:  
 Autumn issue: end of January  
 Winter issue: end of April  
 Spring issue: end of July  
 Summer issue: end of October

## Upcoming Guest Speakers

Our meetings are held on the fourth Thursday of the month at the Elanora Community Centre, 26 Galleon Way, Elanora.

Thursday August 26 - Nimai Hedemark 'Plant selection in our changing climate'.

Thursday September 23 - Jerry Coleby-Williams (with plants for sale).

Thursday October 28 - Gavin Bullock.

Thursday November 25 - Kim Martin from Grow (bring your refillable Grow bottles!)

There is no meeting in December.

## Workshops

EdibleScapes Gardens welcomes visitors and volunteers. Gardening activities occur on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday from 9am to mid-morning.

<https://www.facebook.com/n.ediblescapes>

**Gardening Lunch** – all welcome

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

**View our Newsletters On-Line at:**

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

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

**Thanks to this issue's contributors:**

Jorge Cantellano Leah Johnston, Diane Kelly, Lise Racine, Maria Roberson and Helen Rowlands.

**President's Notes**  
By Maria Roberson

Hello Everyone,

Most of our members will have heard me say that "for those of us living on the Gold Coast and surrounding areas, Spring starts in August". So now is the time for planning and planting all the herbs and vegetables that the warmer temperatures and longer daylight hours will allow for. The new season seeds will be available for sale on the Seed Table at the August meeting. If you tend to eat seasonally and or mostly from your veggie patch and orchard you will, probably like me, start to crave the Summer crops such as eggplant, cucumbers and zucchini.

We have been lucky to receive some decent rainfall in July which has built up some good soil moisture just in time for Spring planting. Hopefully we will keep getting some rain between now and Summer and not experience a long dry Spring with no rain until December. I rely solely on rainwater tanks for the house and garden so it can be a very stressful and anxiety ridden time in the garden and learning not plant more than I can comfortably water in very dry times has been a necessary lesson.

I hope those of you who like to have a printed copy of our newsletter are enjoying its reinstatement. We won't be posting any issues out to members who can't make it to the meeting to pick one up as unfortunately the price of postage prohibits this. Most members have opted to read the newsletter online which is great, therefore we will not be doing a full print run.

Speaking of online - have you joined our

Facebook group yet? Members can join both the open page and the closed page which is for financial members only. The Gold Coast Organic Growers Members page is for members only, this is where members can be kept up to date with all the happenings, such as last minute changes or dates and special events. Members often have special requests or a need to communicate gardening advice between meetings so it is a very useful group to be part of. To join you must be a paid up member and answer the questions on the page to be admitted. Of course, anyone else is welcome to join our open Facebook page where we post gardening advice, news and meeting updates.

We have a brilliant line up of Guest Speakers for each month for the rest of the year with topics to interest all our members. The Speakers come highly recommended and have many years of knowledge and experience in their field and I am sure that you will not want to miss hearing any of them.

Happy growing,  
Maria

**Meeting Recaps**  
By Leah Johnston

Naturopath Deidre Parkinson was our speaker at the June meeting: teaching us so much about how wonderful raw garlic is for our health.

Garlic has long been revered by many cultures around the world as the elixir of life: the Greek used it for athletic performance; the Romans gave it to their soldiers for strength; the Egyptian slave workers building the pyramids were given garlic for strength and stamina. During the two world wars, military physicians

used garlic as a preventative against gangrene.

For thousands of years, garlic has been used for worms, tumours, arthritis and heart disorders, against The Plague, for piles, smallpox, hoarseness, TB and rheumatism. Used to cure poisons, remove spots and blemishes, treat venomous bites and even cure lethargy.

These days it's common to take garlic when we have a cold or flu but did you know if you rub a clove of garlic over the soles of your feet, within six minutes you'll have garlic breath!

Other fun and strange facts about garlic include: if a mother eats garlic the day before giving birth, the baby can be born with garlic breath; and well-preserved garlic was found in the tomb of Tutankhamun.

Deirdre loves to do research about the benefits of garlic and has found it can be helpful in the following conditions: cardiovascular disease; hypertension; atherosclerosis; cholesterol; arterial vascular diseases; fungal and bacterial infections including candida and athlete's foot; parasites; respiratory tract infections; catarrhal conditions; colds; influenza; bronchial congestion; asthma; digestions; small intestinal bacterial overgrowth; dysentery; stomach ulcers; cancers particularly cancer of the gastrointestinal tract; type 2 diabetes; insulin resistance; prevent blood clots by inhibiting platelet aggregation; protect against atherosclerosis, coronary thrombosis and stroke; to help asthma, whooping cough and fevers.

Garlic has been found to be as effective as anti-cholesterol drugs at lowering cholesterol levels by 10 to 20 per cent, and doesn't have the side effects that pharmaceuticals can have.

Most interesting to many of our members was the way Deirdre explained that cancers grow and spread: a cancerous tumour needs a blood supply in order to grow and spread so it reaches out to passing blood vessels in the body and takes the blood out of them. Garlic has an "anti-angiogenesis" effect and helps to prevent tumours from developing their own blood supply.

Garlic contains Vitamins A, B1,C and E; minerals selenium, germanium sulphur, calcium, magnesium, potassium, zinc and some iron; and the all-important flavonoids known as "anti-ageing vitamins".

If you don't like having garlic breath you can try eating parsley, apples or lemon afterwards; or pickle it in brine and it will lose its smell but not its potency.

Deirdre recommends the best way to take garlic is fresh and raw, cut or crushed (not swallowed whole). For acute infections you could try 2-6 cloves a day or for maintenance 1 clove a day. Garlic is best eaten raw or only lightly heated as cooking it can remove the allicin which is the good stuff.

### **Garlic recipes**

Deirdre recommended we try a unique way of preparing garlic that can make it taste like chocolate! Fill a jar with peeled garlic cloves, cover them with organic apple cider vinegar, put it in the back of a cupboard for a year and then they will have turned brown and (she promises) taste like chocolate! (I'll let you know next July when mine is ready).

Garlic honey: just soak garlic cloves in honey for a week and take a teaspoon serve at a time. This is a more palatable way to get children to take garlic.

Garlic tincture: Peel 250g garlic and soak

in three cups of brandy, store in a warm place for 14 days. Strain the garlic out and take five drops of the tincture three times a day.

**Garlic syrup:** One garlic clove, piece of fresh ginger, juice of one lemon, one teaspoon of honey, one cup of warm water, a dash of apple cider vinegar. For cold and flu or coughs you can take a teaspoon every few hours.

## JULY MEETING RECAP

At our July meeting we welcomed back a favourite speaker of ours, Lise Racine. With her years of experience as a naturopath, organic gardener and herbalist she had lots to teach us about building up our immunity with what we can grow in our garden (ideally) or buy from our local farmer's market.

Lise taught us about the six defences we have to keep our immune system firing on all cylinders:

### **Nourish**

Eat good quality fresh food. Eat a variety of different foods to feed the different microbiome in your gut (if you eat the same food all the time you're only feeding some of the microbiome); eat enough protein, 0.8g for every kilogram of body weight, so a 60kg person would need approximately 48g of protein a day. Nourish yourself with nettle herbal tea; one pinch in a plunger and drink it during the day

### **Support the liver**

Lise says our liver is our detox centre: it is affected by alcohol, deep fried foods, medications (including pain killers) and stress. Our best way to support our liver is to eat bitter greens

such as a variety of lettuce, radicchio, endive, chicory and rocket. She starts every meal with a green salad and organic Australian olive oil. One week a month you can also drink two cups of dandelion tea each day (simmer 1 tsp for five minutes, infuse for five minutes then strain and drink.

### **Support the blood**

Lise explained that our blood needs to flow freely and be as waste free as possible. Lise grows a one metre square area of red clover which is enough to fill a 2 litre jar with dried flowers. She drinks one or two flowers in hot water as a tea every day.

### **The intestines**

To keep the intestines healthy we need to keep them moving: use whole flax seeds (not crushed as they oxidate) in 1 tbsp of boiling water, let it sit then swallow the whole thing before bedtime. The green salad you're already eating for your liver will also help your intestines. Good quality vegetable oils (like the olive oil on your salad) are good lubrication for your intestines too.

### **Support the lymphatic system**

Keep it moving with exercise, walking or rebounding on a trampoline. Grow calendula and chickweed and drink them as a tea at least one week a month or more if you feel like it (they have no side effects).

### **Support the nervous system**

Lise told us that our nervous system affects our immunity a lot more than we realise. We want to keep our spirit calm, happy and flowing; try to be aware of your thoughts and manage them; keep the brain focused on the positive, or activities which demand our attention (such as gardening!). When the brain is idle it goes to the ruminating part of the brain: scanning for threats. You can grow



lemon balm and make it into a tea to drink daily.

If you're doing all the right things and still get sick, well, sickness is part of life: we are surrounded by viruses and bacteria every minute of every day. Lise advises to act early and go hard with all the treatments; rest, rest, rest; stay in the same room to avoid temperature changes.

For bacterial infections (localized and with a fever that can last more than 3 days) you can use the garlic syrup (recipe below). For viral infections (generalised, fever up to 3 days) ginger is a powerful treatment if you have it juiced and take 1 to 2 tbsp in a cup of hot water and honey 4 times a day for 5-7 days.

Lise has generously shared these recipes that she uses herself if she ever gets sick.

### **Garlic Syrup**

Slice and bruise  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a cup (90 gr) of fresh, peeled garlic. Put 250 ml of organic apple cider vinegar in a glass jar and add the above garlic in it. Let this mixture stand in the dark for four days while shaking it every day. Strain the apple cider vinegar in a saucepan. Add 500 gr of raw honey and gently warm up the liquid until the honey is dissolved (do not cook it – just warm up slowly at a very low temperature). Bottle the resulting syrup in small bottles of 250 ml or 100 ml. You will get two 250 ml bottles. Label the bottle including the date the syrup was made. Keep refrigerated

Indication: Take one teaspoon per day as needed when feeling a cold / flu coming or have low energy. Hide the smell of garlic on the breath by chewing on fresh parsley.

### **Elderberry syrup**

From Richo Cech

Elderberry is a great remedy as a preventative and treatment for cold and flu. Children will easily take this syrup.

1 cup of dried berries in a bowl. Add 2 cup of boiling water. Cover and let sit overnight.

Blend the contents in a blender.

Filter through a fine sieve.

The volume should be around 2 cups. Simmer on low heat, stirring frequently and let reduce to half the volume.

Add 1 cup of honey or glycerine.

If there are still pieces of berries, filter again.

Bottle in amber bottles. Label.

Keeping the glycerine preparation in cool place out of the light. The honey preparation is kept in the fridge. It will keep for one year.

### **Fresh berries**

Two processes are possible

Smash the berries, press the juice, reduce on low heat, preserve with equal part of honey and glycerine. Add to a saucepan with a little water, low heat until the berries are thoroughly softened, let cool, filter/press. Return the liquid to low heat, reduce to a  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the original liquid, measure, add equal measure of honey or glycerine.

Dosage for herbal syrup: One teaspoon per day or as needed during the day.

### **Plantain vinegar for respiratory support**

Harvest fresh plantain. Cut as much as possible without turning into a mush. Place in a jar in a ratio of 1 part of plantain for 2 parts of apple cider vinegar.

This means for 100g of fresh plantain you add 200 ml of apple cider vinegar. Let it sit in the jar, shaking every so day or so for 2 weeks. Filter. Store in a glass amber bottle. Label. Keep in the fridge.

**Getting to Know -  
Philip and Helen Rowlands**  
By Diane Kelly

For this edition of our Club newsletter, I decided to do something different. I have visited a number of members' homes and gardens over the years and it has always been with the goal of (a) getting to know the people, and (b) learning from their years of gardening.

But this time, as I travelled to a very beautiful location in Elanora, I wanted to find out about two people who are quite new to gardening. So, over a cup of tea and a very healthy piece of slice as a snack, and a walk around their garden, I had a chat to Philip and Helen Rowlands. They told me about their backgrounds; why they became interested in an organic lifestyle; and what their plans are for their new property.

Both Philip and Helen grew up in Victoria. A small town called Beech Forest is where Philip grew up, and it is located between Port Campbell and Lorne in the Otway Ranges just under 200 kms south west of Melbourne. The area has a history of potato growing and a timber industry, and now features sequoia trees (the giant Californian redwood) which were planted in 1939 that are part of the nature trails in the area. Philip's parents were not gardeners, but he grew up loving the bush in the area and began a life-long hobby of bird-watching in his 20's.

In contrast, Helen's dad is 89 years old, has green thumbs, and is still propagating plants and growing his own vegetables – and still keen enough that, as Helen mentioned, he grows “different things” – not just your average carrots and lettuce! The family home where Helen's dad grew up was on a large

block in Mitcham (an eastern suburb of Melbourne) which had rather a steep backyard that dropped away down to the bush and the Mullum Mullum Creek. This is a tributary of the Yarra River and its regenerated bushland is still home to platypus, owls, koalas and the yellow-tailed black cockatoo. It was here that Helen would help to “go and pick tea”.

After living in Geelong (where their backyard had fruit trees and a basic vegetable garden) and Traralgon (where they only had trees and shrubs), Philip and Helen moved to a two-bedroomed unit in Essendon where they lived for 13 years. Although Essendon is only 8km from Melbourne's CBD, they were able to enjoy watching honeyeaters making the most of the birdbath in the garden – after Philip changed the garden from “traditional” flowers to include a number of grevilleas.

Limited in the opportunity to start their own vegetable garden, Helen did much of her shopping at the Ceres Environmental Park. This is a non-profit centre on 10 acres of reclaimed wasteland in Brunswick (again, less than 10km from Melbourne, but on the Merri Creek which is one of the most fertile areas in Melbourne) where you can visit the organic grocery and café, their plant nursery, or attend environmental education classes. For example, on the weekend that I write this article, the classes are for “DIY Mushrooms” and cheese-making. Since moving to the Gold Coast, this is one of the opportunities Helen misses about Melbourne.

And now Philip and Helen are residents of the Gold Coast – even if they only moved here four months ago! Their home was advertised on the internet, so Philip came up to Queensland to see it. The house (which is on a 737 sq m





***The beautiful views from the balcony***

block) ticked all the boxes – the view is impressive across to the west (we spent quite a few minutes trying to locate the hills of Springbrook, Mudgeeraba and Tamborine Mountain on the horizon); the aspect is good; they liked the house and its unique design; and there is close access to creeks, parks and to the beach. The house is tri-level, and balconies at the back of the house increase the living space and take in the view. To the east, moonrise can be seen over the ocean from the upper level.

So, what about the garden? Firstly, there are a number of challenges. The block is steep, so both the house and the landscaping have been created to counteract any problems. The soil is rocky, and maybe quite sandy, and at the moment there are plenty of very shady areas. The Rowlands both feel the road frontage of the house is “tired”, and this is one of the priorities in their plan to make their garden into their own.

One thing that impressed me during our chat is that Philip and Helen are very realistic about how long it will take to re-develop their block and build vegetable-growing areas. They don't plan

to do a lot to the front garden – it is a lovely, cool oasis of green at the moment, so it might just be a matter of removing a few plants and replacing them with bird-attracting ones. In both gardens there are a number of golden palms, agave, monstera deliciosa (I didn't know these are also known as the Swiss cheese plant!), bird of paradises and birds' nests. Some will be removed to make way for shrubs that will be havens for birds, water features, and vegetable gardens. Others will be removed just to provide enough sunshine for other things to grow.

So, what are Philip and Helen's other priorities? Primarily, for the next year or so, they want to observe and to learn – after all, they plan to live here for the next 20 years! The climate and soil are very different on the Coast, and they want to get advice on what is suitable to grow here; what thrives; which direction the weather comes from; and when is the right time to plant things. Even sourcing things will be new to them – where to get soil, seedlings and materials. But they want a compost heap, to grow lemons, mangoes and paw paws, and to produce lots of vegetables

Why, then, are the Rowlands applying such effort to their new lives? Primarily the motivation is health. Both Philip and Helen have had long periods of poor health in the past so they decided, as much as possible, to remove the toxicity and certain foods from their diet – and now Philip's serious asthma and eczema are things of the past. Having seen the treatments taken by a family member with similar issues, Philip realized he had to “take drugs – or take control”. Helen's health has also improved and she has learnt to recognize trigger foods. The Rowlands are very careful with their eating and are very interested in knowing



where their food comes from and visiting those places. They enjoy shopping at the Palm Beach/Currumbin markets where Helen buys a wide range of organic vegetables, herbs and fruit. She buys their meat from the organic butcher at the Easy T Centre in Robina. Helen's meals are basically all made from scratch – she wants to know what goes into their muesli, pancakes, cakes and casseroles – and makes good use of her Thermomix. Her favourite cookbooks are *The Complete Vegetable Book* by Mary Norwak, and *The Whole Food Book* by George Sedden and Jackie Burrows – and Helen enjoys searching out suitable recipes on the internet. (Two of Helen's favourite recipes are included at the end of the article.)

Philip and Helen are not just keen gardeners-to-be and foodies. Philip teaches German at Somerset College and he also speaks Japanese and French (his favourite language) – and, of course, English! He is also a capable handyman; plays the piano; makes beautiful timber furniture; takes quality wildlife photos – and enjoys sharing bushwalking, going to the beach, birdwatching and qigong (similar to tai chi) with Helen. In turn, Helen teaches the clarinet and flute; has a counselling practice; and sews.

I enjoyed meeting with Philip and Helen

and found the “Interview With a Difference” very inspiring. I want to come back to Elanora in about a year's time and see what the Rowlands have achieved in their garden and in their lives. In the meantime, have a chat to Philip and Helen at the Club – they've been to a couple of meetings now, and have really enjoyed them. They would appreciate our local knowledge and experience, and I know there is plenty we can learn from them.

And, as promised, here are the recipes:

### **HELEN'S RAW CARROT CAKE - Or RAW CARROT BALLS:**

#### **CARROT CAKE INGREDIENTS**

500g peeled carrots chopped into chunks  
5 pitted medjool dates  
100g walnuts  
40g shredded coconut  
1 tsp cinnamon  
½ tspn ground ginger  
¼ tspn nutmeg  
½ tspn ground cloves  
A few cardamom pods  
55g raisins

#### **CASHEW VANILLA FROSTING**

1 ½ cups cashew to soak overnight  
110g coconut oil  
2 tspn vanilla extract  
1 tbs lemon juice  
Pinch salt

#### **CAKE INSTRUCTIONS**

Combine all the cake ingredients in the Thermomix at speed 6 (or food processor) for about 30 secs or until desired consistency reached. Press into a lined flan dish. Place all the topping ingredients in the Thermomix and process for 20 secs on speed 6. Spread over the carrot cake base.

#### **BALL INSTRUCTIONS**

Roll into balls until well combined. Coat the balls in desiccated coconut.

### **HELEN'S EGGPLANT DIP**

2 medium eggplants or 1 large eggplant (or sweet potato or beetroot)  
 5-6 shallots or an onion unpeeled  
 1/3 cup sunflower paste or tahini  
 Half a can of chickpeas drained (reserve the liquid)  
 Turmeric powder  
 Handful of chopped parsley  
 Salt and pepper  
 ¼ cup lemon juice

Bake the eggplant and shallots in a covered dish for about 60 mins at 180° until a knife passes through the eggplant easily and the shallots are caramelised.

Allow 15 minutes to cool.

Cut the eggplant into chunks and peel the shallots or onion.

Place all ingredients in the Thermomix bowl (or food processor) and puree on speed 8 for 20 secs. Add reserved chickpea water until desired consistency is reached. Season with salt and pepper.

Serve hot or cold.

### **Spring is on its Way!**

By Diane Kelly

I received an email from Green Harvest recently and the subject line was: "Get Organized for the Best Spring Ever!" And just in case you are feeling a bit winter-weary and think this is an overly optimistic idea, here is what L.M. Montgomery (author of *Anne of Green Gables*) wrote "Nothing ever seems impossible in Spring, you know." So, let's get organized for the "Best Spring Ever!"

First of all, remember that we are now viewing spring as starting to occur in August (or maybe even earlier!) – we've seen throughout the past few years how the seasons are creeping forward. Notic-

ing how plants, animals and even the smell of the soil changes for spring can help us be aware of when the next season is starting. For example, the wattle trees around our street have just started flowering – and the official wattle day isn't until the 1<sup>st</sup> of September! There is more bird noise around – and different types than in winter. And the days are getting longer as we approach the spring equinox on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of September.

So what should we be doing in our gardens over the next three months?

One thing we can do is to start preparing for the hot weather that we know will come. Annette McFarlane, in her book *Organic Vegetable Gardening* gives us six things we can do:

1. Consider changing your planting schedule. You may be able to grow the traditional summer crops that are less tolerant of extremes of heat and humidity more successfully in spring.
2. Substitute traditional vegetables with Asian, tropical or arid vegetables which are better suited to where we live. Snake beans and Ceylon spinach are more suited to warm climates than many traditional European crops.
3. Look for heat-tolerant varieties of vegetables, such as non-heartening lettuce, perennial leeks and bunching onions.
4. Forget the traditional north-south orientation of vegetable gardens. Establish vegetable gardens on the eastern side of buildings, where they will benefit from some afternoon shade.
5. Start sheltering plants under shade cloth as the sun gets hotter.
6. Build a pond or other water feature in the garden. Air will be cooled as it passes over the water, providing free evaporative cooling for your garden.

One other thought that I would like to add to the list is to start/continue making

as much compost as possible. Compost is beneficial to your garden as the days warm because it keeps soil temperatures constant; it helps keep the soil aerated; and it helps retain soil moisture – which will help when those westerlies start coming through around Ekka time.

Annette also explains about “Long-day plants” and “Day-neutral plants”: Some plants mature when the days become longer and they are exposed to shorter periods of darkness – these are “long-day plants”. For an example, onions. They are planted during the cooler months while the days are short and the nights are long, but they are initiated into forming their bulbous base as the summer days lengthen and nights shorten.

“Day-neutral plants”, such as tomatoes, flower regardless of the amount of light or darkness they are exposed to. Growth, flower formation and fruit development are determined more by temperature than the amount of daylight or darkness.

If you have a look on our Club website and find the Spring 2020 edition, you will be able to read about the various things to grow, maintain and harvest over the three months of this next season. So, instead of repeating that information, I thought I would focus on the coming warmer weather – and, in particular, on salads. And not just lettuce, tomatoes, cucumbers and carrots – I thought we could add some colour and flavour to our crispy salads. So here are some edible flowers that you can add to your meals – but a word of warning first – only eat flowers that you know are free from sprays; don’t eat any flower that you cannot identify; and don’t bother eating flowers that you don’t like



the flavour of!

Borage (pictured) – the flowers come in either be blue or white. So, if you are adding a few borage leaves (which taste cucumber-like) to your salad, why not decorate it with a bit of borage colour.

Brassica – the sturdy flower stems of brassica plants can be steamed or stir-fried, and you can toss the individual blooms through your salads. Remember – the flowers of mustard greens and other peppery brassicas will have the same flavour as the foliage.

Calendula – one of July guest speaker Lise’s favourites. The flowers range in colour from gold to orange to deep copper and look beautiful when the petals are added to salads. But go easy on the quantity – too much can turn the whole dish yellow!

Chives – break up the flower heads of both garlic and onion chives and add them to your salads or use them as a garnish. The flavour goes exceptionally well with potato, pasta or rice salads.

Hibiscus – as well as using them for decorations, you can eat the blooms of native hibiscus as well as the flowers of rosellas.

Pelargonium – interchangeably called pelargoniums or geraniums, these plants are edible. The leaves can be added to cakes, and the petals can be enjoyed in salads as they have a pleasant flavour with a citrus aftertaste.

So to add a bit of colour to your lunch or dinner in the coming months, put some petals into your salads!

And now onto a rather bitter subject... at our July meeting, guest speaker Lise Ra-

cine recommended that a small salad of bitters was an excellent way to begin your evening meal and aid your digestion. There are a number of plants in your garden that are considered “bitters” – endive (too late in the year to be growing now); kale; Swiss chard (which includes silver beet and perpetual spinach) and collard greens. But rocket, chicory and watercress can be grown now, and here’s how.

**ROCKET:** This green is an annual plant that is grown for its peppery-tasting foliage. The leaves grow to 8-18cm long, and the seeds (which germinate readily) can be sown directly into your prepared garden bed. Rocket will do well in friable, fertile soil that has the capacity to retain water so that the plants have ready access to nutrients. Make a shallow drill at 25cm intervals and drop in 2-3 seeds. The seedling will appreciate protection from the hot afternoon sun, and as the young leaves are the most tender and flavoursome, plan on small repeat plantings.

**CHICORY:** This is a salad vegetable that originated in Europe but is becoming more popular in Australia – and its red form is often called radicchio. Some varieties are bitter-tasting, whilst others resemble lettuce in flavour, so consider your choice if you are looking for “bitter”. Chicory roots can be roasted and used as a substitute for coffee. Plant seeds directly into your garden as chicory develops long tap root and will not appreciate being transplanted. Add plenty of compost and animal manure to your garden prior to planting your chicory if you are growing it for the leaves. If you are growing it for the root, it’s a bit more tricky. Plant the chicory in an area that is following a crop that has been well prepared with manure, so that sufficient nutrients remain without the need to add fresh compost or

manure. Like carrots, chicory roots will become branched and hairy if grown in freshly manured beds. By the way, chicory has a very pretty and edible blue flower.

**WATERCRESS:** This is a more challenging “bitter” to grow, as the seeds are planted in either damp compost or a coir peat mix – and then the seedlings are planted into a rich, peaty compost that gets covered in gravel and put into either a water garden or a self-watering pot. You can also grow watercress from cuttings of self-layered stems – just put them in a glass of water until they form a good root system. Watercress’s favourite location for growing in is clear, gently running streams – and as most of us don’t have one of those in our backyard, then we may have to make do with a shady balcony or pots that receive plenty of watering, or a water garden. Remember to check the pH level of the soil, as watercress loves alkalinity – so get the level up to 7 or more. Use shell grit as mulch to raise the level. When harvesting, regularly clip the top 5-10cms of growth with scissors – this will prevent flowering and stop the plants bolting to seed. When preparing watercress to eat, wash well to remove any dirt or grit and then add the young shoots and leaves to your salad. In Asian soups, these make a tasty ingredient. And a hint from Annette McFarlane – “My favourite way to eat watercress is with cream cheese and fresh tomato in a sandwich – but you can also add it to your salads, grow it as a micro-green or sprout it.”

So “Spring is On its Way” – or as Anita Krizaan wrote “Spring will come, and so will happiness.” Plan your gardening; watch how and when your plants grow; enjoy your colourful salads; look after your health - and enjoy the next three months’ gardening!





Ediblescapes Social Enterprise fundraising to support EdibleScapes Gardens to grow healthy food, provide nutritional food to people in food insecurity and run community education programs.



**BIOL-SOL is dissolved in water to make liquid bio fertiliser (BIOL)**

BIOL-SOL is a concentrated ferment Biofertilisers prepared to nourish, recover, and reactivate life in the soil, to strengthen plant fertility while acting to stimulate crop protection against insect attack and diseases.

**Bokashi Organic Fermented Food Fertiliser**



BIOL-SOL Biofertiliser mixed with compost bokashi style gives a biological boost to soil living organisms and promotes plant growth and bio-protections.

<https://www.ediblescapes.org/biofertiliser/>

**Ediblescapes\_SE BIOL-SOL**

By Jorge Cantellano

Ediblescapes\_SE has created an innovative fermented **BIOL-SOL** vegan manure fertiliser solution for the use of urban edible gardeners.

**How does BIOL-SOL fertiliser work?**

BIOL-SOL works inside plants, activating nutritional harmony as a mechanism to defend them. Through organic acids, growth hormones, antibiotics, vitamins, minerals, enzymes, carbohydrates, present in the complexity of the biological, chemical, physical energy reactions between the plants and soil life.

**How is it applied?**

The application of **BIOL-SOL** is in the form of a convenient tea. Tie the BIOL-SOL up in a muslin cloth to make it like a teabag, and submerge it in a container of water for a minimum of 4 hours.

**How to apply?**

Remove the teabag and apply the tea as a foliar spray, preferably to the underside of the leaves.



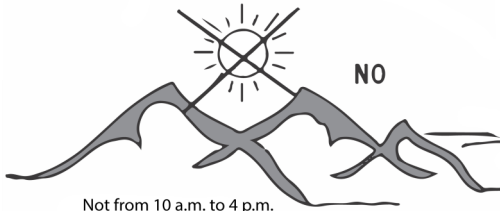
It's best to spray early in the morning before 10am or in the afternoon after 4pm, not during the hottest middle part of the day as plants have generally closed most of their stoma to avoid dying of dehydration due to the heat.

If applying BIOL-SOL to the soil you must apply it directly to the soil's surface. This stimulates the mineral and biological eco-revolution to cultivate fertile, nutritionally diverse, and deeper soil.





Early morning until 10 a.m. and in the afternoon after 4 p.m.



Not from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

*Feed your plants before 10am or after 4pm*

BIOL-SOL ferment biofertiliser increases the mineral diversity, and vitamins of food; thereby improving the nutrition and health of everyone who eats it. It is a technology based on rediscovering knowledge and grower wisdom to achieve success through sustainability.

### How frequently should BIOL-SOL be applied?

Plants eat every day, perform photosynthesis, store and expend energy, reproduce, grow, grow old, die and are recycled. Thus, the ideal thing would be to execute the maximum number of applications, with very short intervals between one application and another, in a low concentration of BIOL-SOL fertilisers.

We recommend calculating the quantity of water use in the garden each fortnight. Then, collect this amount in a container and leave it in the sun for 24 hours (if you wish to reduce chlorine) before submerging the BIOL-SOL in a cotton bag in the middle of a water container to brew like a tea system. We also recommended leaving the sub-

merged tea bag in to brew for a minimum of 4 hours before the first application. Then, leave the teabag in the rest of the water for the subsequent applications over the next fortnight.

### How much liquid bio fertiliser needs to be applied for foliar spray and/or soil watering applications?

We suggest an average of 5%, this is equal to say one portion of BIOL-SOL in 20 parts of water. However, it won't hurt the plants if you use more or less than the suggested 5% BIOL-SOL.

BIOL-SOL liquid fertiliser should be integrated into your regular hand watering regime so your plants are regularly receiving a small dose, rather than large infrequent doses.



In the above picture, taken on July 31, Ediblescapes volunteers were ready to showcase EdibleScapes Gardens accomplishments and Ediblescapes\_SE social enterprise prepared to start fundraising by trading BIOL-SOL, our innovative vegan manure fertiliser solution for the urban edible garden. And then, 10 minutes later, the Botanical Bazaar festival was cancelled.

If you would like to help with our fundraising, you can purchase 5L BIOL-SOL or BOFFF for \$10 each.

Reserve one or two by emailing us at: [ediblescapes.se@gmail.com](mailto:ediblescapes.se@gmail.com) and you can collect them at the following Gold Coast Organic Growers meeting.

## Plant At Your Own Risk

By Leah Johnston

As a naive novice gardener, several years ago, I excitedly set out and planted with wild abandon many plants I would later come to regret. Let me share my misadventures with you so that you may learn from my mistakes...

My first mistake was building one long garden bed: 30 metres long and 3 metres wide along the side of our property. Sure, it looks neat to have one skinny garden bed rather than many scattered around; it gives the kids a large grassy backyard to play in; and it makes it easier for my hubby to mow without having garden beds in the way.

However, it does have one (major) drawback! Opportunist plants can run free and spread the whole 30 metres if they so desire; it's survival of the strongest and fastest growing, and the slower plants often don't stand a chance as they are taken over by the more dominant plants.

Culprit number one - sweet potatoes.

Now I love sweet potatoes. They are delicious and so versatile - we bake them, add them to curries and stews. We would eat them most days, so why not grow them?! They grow so easily, the leaves are edible when cooked, you can bandicoot the potatoes you want to use, and leave the rest to keep growing. So you'll never starve if you grow some sweet potatoes, the only drawback being that they grow too well and take up all the available space they possibly can. They even cascaded over the edge of the garden bed and grew successfully in the clay soil beneath. We dug them all out of the garden bed,

but they keep coming back like a delicious weed and proceed to climb, cover and suffocate anything in their path (unless we want to keep trimming them and removing them weekly)! They are a problem where I planted them, but I now have them in smaller contained garden beds, and they are fabulous. So, learn from this mistake.

Culprit number two - warrigal greens.

I blame GCOG (haha) as I first got this there. Sounds so good on paper: a native green that grows easily, snails and slugs don't like them, and they are rich in vitamin C (Captain Cook used them to fight scurvy in his crew). However, think about where you want to plant them because plant them once and you'll never need to plant them again. After changing their growing area at my place into a butterfly host plant and flower garden two years ago, I am still pulling out new warrigal greens that pop up!

Culprit number three - mint.

Mint is so handy and versatile - in iced tea, as a hot herbal infusion, add to lamb dishes and desserts... but think about where you will plant it. Once it's growing successfully, the runners in the ground will keep sprouting up new mint leaves, no matter how many times you pull them out! Again, it doesn't mind growing in the neighbouring stones, between the pavers or the clay soil next to the garden bed. I'm always amazed when people say their mint died - what's the secret?

Culprit number four - nasturtiums.

I can't believe there was once a time I tried to grow nasturtiums, actually bought seeds and planted them because now all I seem to do is try *not* to grow them. They self-seed so easily and keep coming back, year after year. I love the flowers and watching the rain drops play on the

leaves, and the pepper smell when I brush against them, and they are loved by the bees. They are a bit greedy though, and will take over neighbouring pea plants, herbs and anything else in their path. Last year, Jerry Coleby-Williams told us he found that white cabbage butterflies and their babies, the dreaded green looper caterpillars (which will destroy your brassicas given the chance), were making a nice home in his nasturtiums, so he removed them all. Our members asked if it was okay to grow a small amount of nasturtiums, and he answered, "How many cabbage butterflies would be a good amount to have?" So, if you love them, and want to grow them, just think about where you'll put them; and I recommend keeping them contained because they don't care if you later change your mind and don't want them in that spot.

So there you have it. My short list of "garden herpes": plant them once and you've got them for life! All wonderful plants to grow and eat - just think about where you plant them, and contain them if you can.

"Live in each season  
as it passes;  
breathe the air;  
drink the drink;  
taste and fruit and  
resign yourself to the  
influence of the earth"

**- Henry David  
Thoreau Walden**



## FRUIT TREES

### AUGUST

**Custard Apple:** Leaf loss should occur this month. Low irrigation. Mulch trees. This month is the best time to prune custard apples. 1/3 of old wood needs to be taken off.

**Figs:** Pruning can be carried out. Be very vigorous. 1/3 can be cut off. Figs are only produced on new wood of the new season's growth. Give trees a good feed of organic fertiliser with sulphate of potash. Mulch well.

**Lychee:** Increase irrigation. Flowering should start this month. Fertilise trees with an organic fertiliser with potassium sulphate. Give mature trees 1 kg and small trees ½ kg.

**Low chill stone fruit:** Carry out final thinning. Stone hardening will occur this month. Continue with high irrigation. Prune out water shoots and dense foliage for better sized fruits. Use fruit fly control programs, for example netting or an attractant method.

**Mango:** Don't let trees dry out. Once flowering occurs spray with copper based spray or leaf microbes for anthracnose, if visible.

**Passionfruit:** Vines will start to grow this month. Apply a little organic fertiliser with sulphate of potash and mulch vines at least 2 to 3 metres out from the base. 1kg for large vines and ½ kg for smaller vines.

**Pawpaw:** Spray with wettable sulphur in the evenings for spider mite.

**Persimmon:** Flowering will start in early varieties. Mulch trees. Low irrigation.

**Strawberries:** Apply small amount of organic fertilizer with sulphate of potash. Keep up irrigation. Pick fruit when fully ripe.

**Bananas:** Don't let stools dry out. Keep fruit covered and cut off bells.

**Citrus:** Flowering will occur this month. Increase irrigation. Fertilise tree with organic fertiliser with sulphate of potash, 1kg for large trees and ½ kg for smaller trees.

## SEPTEMBER

**Custard Apple:** Leaf loss should occur this month. Low irrigation. Mulch trees. This month is the best time to prune custard apples. 1/3 of old wood needs to be taken off.

**Figs:** Pruning can be carried out. Be very vigorous. 1/3 can be cut off. Figs are only produced on new wood of the new season's growth. Give trees a good feed of organic fertiliser with sulphate of potash. Mulch well.

**Lychee:** Increase irrigation. Flowering should start this month. Fertilise trees with an organic fertiliser with potassium sulphate. Give mature trees 1 kg and small trees ½ kg.

**Low chill stone fruit:** Carry out final thinning. Stone hardening will occur this month. Continue with high irrigation. Prune out water shoots and dense foliage for better sized fruits. Use fruit fly control programs, for example netting or an attractant method.

**Mango:** Don't let trees dry out. Once flowering occurs spray with copper based spray or leaf microbes for anthracnose, if visible.

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**Strawberries:** Apply small amount of organic fertilizer with sulphate of potash. Keep up irrigation. Pick fruit when fully ripe.

**Bananas:** Don't let stools dry out. Keep fruit covered and cut off bells.

**Citrus:** Flowering will occur this month. Increase irrigation. Fertilise tree with organic fertiliser with sulphate of potash, 1kg for large trees and ½ kg for smaller trees.

## OCTOBER

**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.

## VEGETABLES

### AUGUST

Artichoke, Asian greens, Asparagus, Beans (French), Beetroot, Capsicum, Carrot, Celeriac, Celery, Chili, Cucumber, Eggplant, Endive, Gourd, Kale, Leeks, Lettuce, Luffa, Marrow, Melons, Mustard Greens, Okra, Peanut, Pumpkin, Radish, Shallot, Silverbeet, Squash, Sunflower, Sweet Corn, Sweet potato, Tomato, Zucchini.

### SEPTEMBER

Artichoke, Asian greens, Beans (French), Beetroots, Capsicum, Carrot, Celeriac, Chili, Choko, Cucumber, Eggplant, Gourd, Kale, Leeks, Lettuce, Luffa, Marrow, Melons, Mustard Greens, Okra, Peanut, Pumpkin, Radish, Rosella, Shallots, Silverbeet, Squash, Sunflower, Sweet corn, Sweet Potato, Tomato, Zucchini.

### OCTOBER

Artichoke, Asian Greens, Beans (French), Beetroot, Capsicum, Carrot, Celeriac, Chili, Choko, Cucumber, Eggplant, Gourd, Kale, Lettuce, Luffa, Marrow, Melons, Mustard Greens, Okra, Peanut, Pumpkin, Radish, Rosella, Shallots, Squash, Sunflower, Sweet Corn, Sweet Potato, Tomato, Zucchini.

## HERBS

### AUGUST

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

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

### SEPTEMBER

**Annual:** Basil, Borage, Calendula, Chamomile, Coriander, 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.

### 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.





## From the New to the “Old”

By Diane Kelly

Our interview article in this edition is about two enthusiastic Club members who are relatively new to gardening. So I thought it might be fun to ask some of our long-term gardeners to let us know how long they've been organically-gardening, and how it makes them feel. (Names have been changed to protect the innocent.)

**To Watch and Listen to Nature:** “I started growing some of my own produce and particularly herbs back in the late 80's when I finally had my own back yard, my own place and a young family. I also planted an elderberry tree and paw paw trees.

The garden is where you take yourself to become grounded...most mornings it's what I do when I get out of bed... just walk through my garden...watch and listen to nature...my happy place. I would have to go for a walk somewhere if I couldn't walk in or tend my garden... or belong to a community garden... which I do also...”

**I'm Happiest when Playing in My Garden:** I have been a member of family involved in gardening and raising plants. In all the homes I have lived, we have always had a compost heap or recycled fruit/vegie scraps into the soil. This last 15 years I have learned so much. My worm farm is my most productive venture and I value their tireless production of “gold” liquid and soil. I love to recycle things that others throw away in which to raise my plants eg. unseaworthy boat, polystyrene boxes (with holes), tyres, wire etc. My best tool is my long-handled fork.

I am happiest when I'm playing in my

garden, being constantly surprised by the plethora of nature. If I couldn't continue gardening, I would have to sit and contemplate how beautiful the world is and give gratitude for the time when I did have a garden.

**A Childhood Well Spent:** My family tell me I was always 'flower focused' and I can remember gazing up at a tall sunflower at age 2. Then often asking questions of neighbours over the fence about 4 years old - I can still describe the whole garden scene around the block.

As other kids had pets, I nurtured plants; only had two areas under steps on north and west and in sand. No money, so was given gifts of seeds and cuttings. I earned pocket money watering gardens during Christmas holidays from age 10. From age 12 I stayed with Nana in Brisbane for the Ekka and entered her church flower show with her garden blooms.

This all meant, for a very shy kid, I could interact with adults through gardening.

**Time means Nothing:** “I've been an organic gardener for about 25 years – both my parents set me a fine example! When I am in the garden, time passes. All focus is on the plants, the insects, the soil and the sunshine. It is a dull weekend indeed if I can't get out into the vegetable patch!

