



Bundaberg Organic Gardeners

~working with nature~

Page |
1

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NEWSLETTER MARCH 2022

Hello and welcome to our March Newsletter. Isn't it wonderful to feel a slight chill in the air and a drop in humidity? With all the rain we have had it feels like it's a great time to get stuck in to the garden again. Dragon fruit, beans, pumpkins and asparagus have been good to us at home over the hotter months but I'm looking forward to seeing what the next season brings.

You don't have to look too hard to find a whole lot of bad news at the moment. Terrible events happening worldwide, and also not too far from home – so let's keep sharing as much good news as we can, and continue to share how we help each other to better our own backyard, and build our communities up.

Remembering the importance of planting, sharing and saving seeds, and growing food organically, creating strong, healthy, resilient, nutrient rich plants, and the same for those who eat them.

Our AGM will be held at the March meeting and it's a great opportunity for you to put your hand up for a role within the club. Small or large, it all helps.

Cathy

CLUB MEETING –

**always the last Tuesday
of the Month.**

Tuesday 29th March 2022

Time: Doors open **6.00 pm** for a **6.30 pm** start

Guest Speaker: Maureen Schmitt, Trevor Galletly and Les DeGunst

Venue: McNaught Hall (Uniting Church Hall)

Corner Barolin and Electra Street, Bundaberg

Attendance \$3-member, \$5 visitor, Tea Coffee avail, Members please be reminded to wear your badges to the meeting

{no masks needed, no vaccine requirements, no seating requirements}

Get your lucky door ticket (free with entry), bring something to share on the giveaway table, share some free seedlings and place your proudest garden harvest on the brag table.

We are now welcoming members to bring along a plate of food to share at the end of the meeting. **Please don't feel that you *must* bring something. Please list ingredients to assist those with allergies and intolerances, and share recipes where you can. We will start up the supper roster once more for the May meeting.**

From the February Meeting. We split up in to 3 groups to learn how our members plant their seeds or seedlings, and go on to produce healthy plants. This creates a healthy discussion about different techniques, everyone does something differently for a different reason. We heard from Trevor, Pam and Lenzie.

Val gave us a really interesting talk on snails and slugs. It might be something you haven't given much thought to, but we actually have a number of native snails in Bundaberg. The non-native / invasive species is called Asian Tramp Snail and are now found from as far south as Bega NSW right up to tropical QLD. Our most common natives are called Striped Snails, Melon Snails and the Leather Leaf Slug. Most people don't think twice about squishing snails or feeding them to the chooks or ducks, however a healthy population in your garden will assist turning your mulch in to organic material (poop), then the isopods (more commonly known as slaters) will come along and break that down one step further. Maybe you will give them a chance in your garden now, knowing that they are a native species and play a part in the eco-system.

I found some really interesting information via this link – especially for the younger members.

<https://factsaboutsnailes.com/> There are also two books available, and to think volume one is 600 pages long, there is obviously a lot to learn about snails.

Lenzie gave thanks to all who helped him after his heart attack, and we reminded Lenzie how grateful we are that he stuck around a while longer too. He then went on to brag that his banana plant has 400 fruit on one bunch. We all want to know the secrets.

March Meeting. We are again going back to basics with 3 of our members demonstrating and giving away their secrets on achieving success when potting up seedlings, pot bound plants, separating plants etc. We will break into 3 groups for this exercise. As demonstrators we have Les de Gunst, Trevor and Maureen. By breaking into groups everyone should be able to clearly see, hear and ask questions of their demonstrator because at the end, we have a trivia questionnaire to test your memory on what you heard and saw through the night. You can do the quiz individually or in your group.

Please bring to the Meeting your seedlings, root bound plants and crowded plants for repotting etc. A bag of potting mix will be on hand. Also – as the meeting will be outdoors, please bring a jumper or wear warmer clothes now the nights are a little chilly.

Next Outing: Attend the Monster Plant Sale in North Bundaberg Progress Hall then walk through the Rare Fruit Tree section of Botanical Gardens. Here is your chance to buy stunning plants at the Bundaberg Bush House and Garden Club Monster Plant Sale on Saturday, 2nd April in the North Bundaberg Progress Hall on the corner of Queen and Gavegan Streets, North Bundaberg. BOGI members will arrive at the Hall around 9am then meet up again at 10.30 am in the Rare Fruit Tree section behind Hinkler Hall of Fame in the Botanical Gardens. Bring chair, cuppa and food to share for a morning tea on the lawn after a walk and talk about the rare fruit trees.

Bundaberg Taste Festival – we will be taking part again in the Taste Festival. We are looking to set up a committee of those willing to help organise, and be there on the day. Previous years have been a great success and a wonderful way to connect with the community. Please see Marlene for more information.

SWAP MEET – SATURDAY, 5TH March

It started as a, "Will We Cancel this event?" as rain once again threatened to swamp us. But we took the risk, started to set up on a large cemented area, and people began turning up. The sun arrived about the same time as tables, garden shed excess equipment, a trailer of very well used bath tubs, a steel ladder, pots of all sizes, gardening shoes, wire of all varieties, and not forgetting gardening guide books. Malcolm and Marlene once again generously donated excess spray packs which were quickly adopted. Trevor lit up his provided barbeque, and we all enjoyed a great morning of catch up and Swap time. Thank you to all who donated and participated.



Members swapping and searching for treasure. Austin thought all his dreams came true when he found an unwanted sun lounge. He was disappointed not to ride home in the trailer while soaking up some rays.

Planting by the Moon - April

(New Moon to ½ moon) 1 – 8 April: Influences balanced growth; a lower gravitational pull decreases and this stimulates root growth. The best time to sow or transplant leafy vegetables.

(1/2 moon to Full Moon) 9 – 16 April: Increased light from the waxing moon benefits leaf growth, and root growth slows down. Best time to sow or transplant fruiting annuals.

(Full moon to ½ moon) 17 – 22 April: Gravitational pull decreases and moonlight decreases, so leaf growth reduces and root growth increases. Plant root crops now (below ground).

(1/2 moon to New Moon) 23 – 30 April: The waning moon is good for balanced growth. No sowing or planting during this phase. *Harvest vegetables, weeding, digging, pruning and cultivate. Apply mulch.*

What to plant in April?

Asian vegetables; Beans; Beetroot; Cabbage; Carrots; Cauliflower; Garlic; Kohlrabi; Leeks; Lettuce; Mustard Greens; Onions; Parsnips; Peas; Potatoes; Radish; Shallots; Silverbeet; Spinach; Sweet Potatoes; Turnips.

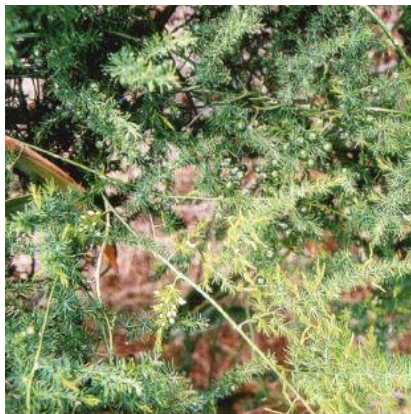
Plant these in seedling trays first: Broccoli; Cabbage; Capsicum; Cauliflower; Celery; Lettuce; Silverbeet.

Can you grow a few herbs in a pot for display at the Bundy Flavours Festival

I came across a flyer from Landcare Bundaberg (put together by Maureen during her extensive time there) called Our Worst Weeds. It is a list of exactly that which are commonly found in our area. Very handy for landholders and explains how to deal with them. In the time since its original printing, I believe we have a new product on the market called 'Slasher' which will do the equivalent to glyphosate (roundup).

We will have copies of the flyer available at the next meeting.

WEEDS are introduced plants growing away from the ecosystems where they evolved originally. Without the natural predators that controlled their growth, they form invasive monocultures by out-competing native species. Brought in for agriculture and horticulture, they are spread by natural forces of wind and water, as well as by humans, birds and animals. Their removal is a mammoth task with an increased cost to the community. When bushland is disturbed, weed seeds often germinate and if not removed these weed species will take over. A combined effort from Council and the community is needed to remove plants that have the potential to degrade our bushland areas and reduce the natural habitat of our native birds and animals.



Climbing Asparagus
(*Asparagus africanus*)

This thorny climber from Africa invades bushland. Spread by dumping of plants and birds spreading seed. Dig out root crown.

Replace with
Wombat Berry
(*Eustrephus latifolius*)
Scrambling Clerodendrum
(*Clerodendrum inerme*)
Scrambling Lily
(*Geitonoplesium cymosum*)
Giant Pepper Vine
(*Piper novae-hollandiae*)

D2 D3



REMOVAL



Hand Pull seedlings



Overall Spray with Glyphosate herbicide mixed with wetting agent and marker dye



Cut and Paint with Glyphosate herbicide and marker dye within 15 secs.

DISPOSAL

D1 Bag and bin every part of plant

D2 Bag and bin viable seeds, bulbs, tubers or roots

D3 Compost plant material not likely to grow

Long term follow-up weeding is an important part of weed removal.

NEVER dispose of ...

... garden waste into bushland or on roadsides
... aquarium plants by dumping in waterways

New Books in the BOGI Library

Organic Gardening in Australia

Pauline Pears (ed.)

A major reference guide to gardening the natural way. It is a fully illustrated, truly comprehensive guide for gardeners committed to a natural, safe and healthy approach.

This book is packed with expert advice and information on both ornamental and kitchen gardens. There is invaluable guidance on “going organic” and incorporating organic principles into garden planning and design. It gives practical information on how to prepare the soil, sow, plant, propagate and harvest. The specially commissioned photographs illustrate key organic principles. There is an easy-to-use reference section with an A-Z directory of vegetable crops and plant problems.

The Herb Book

Philippa Back

This beautifully illustrated guide describes the fascinating history of herbs and explains everything about their uses and cultivation.

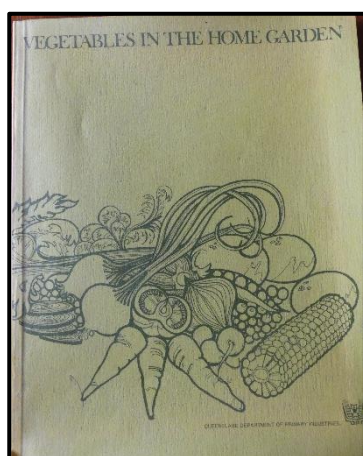
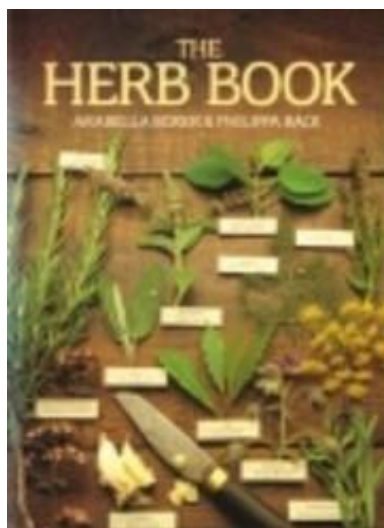
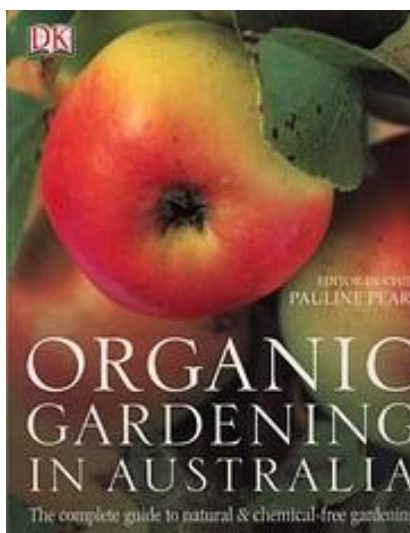
An excellent reference section covers 50 popular herbs, with a description of the herb as well as notes on its cultivation and uses.

There are over 275 exciting recipes using the flavour of herbs.

Vegetables in the Home Garden

E L Hastie

Book provides home gardeners with reliable information on growing 34 vegetable crops. It is written specifically for Queensland. Information covered includes planning the home vegetable garden, raising seedlings, pests and diseases, watering and mulching, growing vegetable crops and sowing guides. It includes a planting table.



Organic Soil or Dirt

For a healthy organic vegetable garden, you need to start with healthy soil. The most important component in soil is the organic matter, such as **manure, peat moss, or compost**, which is the best option because it contains decayed microorganisms of previous plant life.

How can I make organic soil at home?

To improve soil:

1. Work in 3 to 4 inches of organic matter such as well-rotted manure or finished compost.
2. Mulch around your plants with leaves, ~~wood chips, bark~~, hay or straw. Mulch retains moisture and cools the soil.
3. Add at least **10** centimetres of organic matter **each** year.
4. **Grow cover crops or green manures.**

What is the difference between topsoil and organic soil?



Dirt is what you find when you excavate a basement or subsoil. No plants thrive in dirt. **Topsoil, on the other hand, contains natural organic matter from leaves, grasses, weeds and tree bark that can help sustain plant life.**

What is organic potting soil? **Organic potting soil is made from natural, organic matter like bat guano, worm castings, compost, or manures. It does not contain any chemicals or pesticides.** Pine bark is of organic material but does not hold water or nutrients. Generally, pine bark fails to decompose and become active organic matter.

Plants make organic matter!! Plants make soil carbon!! Grow plants to use nature to improve soil. Decomposing plants improve soil. About 40% of plant sugars may be directed to feed soil organisms, without forming plant material. These plant sugars are exudated from the roots to direct soil biology to supply nutrients to the plant and develop insect and disease resistance for the plant.

To harness **NATURE**, to be organic, you need to think and support the workers in the soil i.e., soil biology!!

Handy Tool Storage Idea –

Protect hand tools from humidity with this neat sandy solution. Mix ½ litre of vegetable oil to every 5kg of sand and leave to soak – sand should be moist to the touch. Fill a zinc bucket or trough planter with the mixture, leaving a 20mm space at the top. Clean and dry your tools, then plunge them into the sand to keep them sharp and rust free.

Member Contributions...



One of our members Kay Bishop is moving house by 29 March. She has some comfrey plants to give away. Please phone her on 0403 555 809 at Avoca if you would like some. Also, Kay has 2 ducks that are looking for a new home. These ducks are past laying and looking for a rest home. Again, please phone Kay if you can offer these 2 ladies a safe location

Community News - Bundaberg Stockfeed 138 Enterprise Street Norville. 4153 3200.

Now supplying organic gardening products, seeds and certified organic chicken feed.

Deadline for April Newsletter

Please send through information to the editor by the second Friday of each month.

We would love FEEDBACK from club members on anything and everything.

Tell us about your success and your failures in the garden and help others learn along the way.

Let us know about community events or what's up and coming in the area.

To include notices and details of Club activities

email: newsletter.bundyorgard@gmail.com

Or Phone Cathy 0403 430 969

BOGI SHOP

Products available are:

- Liquid Lime
- Liquid Kelp
- Liquid Fish
- Mineral Granules
- Microlife
- Organibor and
- Katex Organic Super Growth.

They are available for sale at our meetings, but please contact

Bruce McKay on 41544405 for collection from his address in Walkervale.

This is the official monthly newsletter published by and distributed to the members of Bundaberg Organic Gardeners Inc. Whilst every effort is made to publish accurate information, the Club accepts no responsibility for statements made or opinions expressed, or any consequence arising from them. For further information, contact the Secretary.