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NEWSLETTER JANUARY 2022

Hello and welcome to our January Newsletter, although January is all but over, we still wanted to get this out to you with stories and photos to share. The summer months are never easy when growing in Bundaberg and this summer rain has been both a blessing and sometimes just a tad too much. My advice would be, even if you can't grow anything, (or have given up trying) at this time of year, try to keep your soil covered to maintain a soil temperature that is not going to overheat and kill all the healthy bacteria, otherwise known as the zoo, you have been creating in your garden until now. Shade can also be given by way of manmade structures, using shade cloth for example, also by growing your smaller, newer plants close to established taller plants. For example you could plant your tomato seedlings close to the shade of your silver-beet.

Thank you to Les and Kay De Gunst who have submitted a thought-provoking article about their findings of growing through this hotter time of year. I have also attached the Companion Planting Guide from The Diggers Club that may be a useful reference. Did you know there are plants that should NOT be planted near each other?

Looking forward to seeing you at our next meeting if not before,

Cathy

CLUB MEETING

Due to the ongoing changes regarding Covid-19, you will have noticed that there was no meeting for January. Future meetings will be assessed and club members will be notified if they are to go ahead. In the meantime, please refer to your member list of phone numbers and contact details if you are needing friendship, assistance or advice. For those of you who use social media, you can also stay in touch via the club facebook page. Just search for Bundaberg Organic Gardening Inc or go to <https://www.facebook.com/groups/717598841992819/>

From the November Meeting.

John came to visit from Fraser Coast Micro Bats. He was so full of knowledge and information. Some of us were able to purchase Micro Bat boxes and books. Here is some of the information taken from the night.



Micro Bats roost in many different places i.e Caves, trees, homes, farms, old buildings, fence posts, umbrellas around pools, sailing boats, old bridges etc.

Due to the continuous clearing of forests and cutting down trees in suburban areas to provide land for the steady increase of population growth, micro bats are in decline and this is where the public can step in and become interested in these little mammals. Fraser Coast Micro Bats Group have designed a range of micro bat boxes / tubes that are suitable to be installed in any private garden.

Australia has 300 different species of mosquitos and due to climate change mosquitos are moving from the tropics down to colder parts of Australia. This means they are introducing diseases such as Ross River Fever, Dengue Fever and Australian Encephalitis, Barmah Forest Virus etc.

Fraser Coast Micro Bats Group are introducing micro bat boxes and tubes to the farming industry and by doing so are replacing trees with wooden poles. Fitted to the poles are bat boxes or tubes, thereby creating an artificial rainforest. This should entice micro bats to roost in boxes and tubes and resulting with not only crops being pollinated, but also damaging insects being considerably reduced as they are serving as food chain for the micro bats. Farmers can therefore greatly reduce the usage of chemicals and lowering spraying costs. That's where biological control starts and this will reduce or stop some of the poisonous runoffs currently going into our rivers and oceans.

At the beginning of 2019, the first 50 wooden poles with 50 boxes and tubers each were installed at a Nikenbah farm (Fraser Coast). More farms will be approached in the future to join projects that will put them under the umbrella of biologically friendly control.

It is estimated there are about 22 species of micro bats in existence in the Wide Bay area and Central Queensland. Australia has 76 species and about 1400 species are know to exist all over the world.

Great to see Lenzie out in the garden growing some healthy looking melons.

Thanks for the photo Trevor.



Member Contributions...

January in our garden *by Les & Kay de Gunst*

Sweet Potatoes spread vigorously during the summer months and need to be pruned back frequently to be contained in their allotted space in the garden. Sweet potatoes grow best on a mound

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Sweet Corn is also a vigorous crop during the summer months though the humid heat during this time makes the crop impracticable in January and February in our garden because of insects that multiply during this period. The main problem with sweet corn is grubs which attack the crown of the plants for which we do not know of any natural remedy. Better to forget about controlling the grubs and concentrate growing sweet corn during the cooler months.

Peanuts also withstand the heat and humidity and do not require much maintenance except for regular watering and fertilizing. Peanuts require hilling in the same manner as potatoes.

Cucumbers. At this time of the year cucumbers are a useful crop except for the heat and humidity which encourages fungal diseases that are very difficult to control. Some say that regular spraying with a milk mixture is of benefit though personally, we have not used this method.

Turmeric corms are usually planted around November and some of our turmeric plants are currently 20cm tall. All are doing well but also need adequate water.

Galangal. We also have a sole Galangal plant growing. We purchased a corm at Start Fresh and propagated the corm in a pot and later transferred the propagated plant into the garden. Both galangal and ginger (of which we have a small bed) both seem to benefit from mulching.

Milo. We also have Milo growing in vacant beds, the purpose of which is green manure. The plants are mulched into the soil when a height of 50cm is achieved. The late Peter Cundall of Gardening Australia fame, often expressed the opinion that garden beds should not be left idle.

Ceylon Spinach and Salad Mallow. The heat and humidity also encourages the rampant growth of Ceylon Spinach and Salad Mallow. Both readily self-propagate from the previous season.

Our experience is that January and February months are the most inhospitable time for gardening. This is the time for preparation of the garden for the oncoming cooler months which in our garden have the most satisfying results.

We understand that this contribution may cause some contention among members. We realize that the sharing of opinions among members will ensure the vitality and viability of the club.

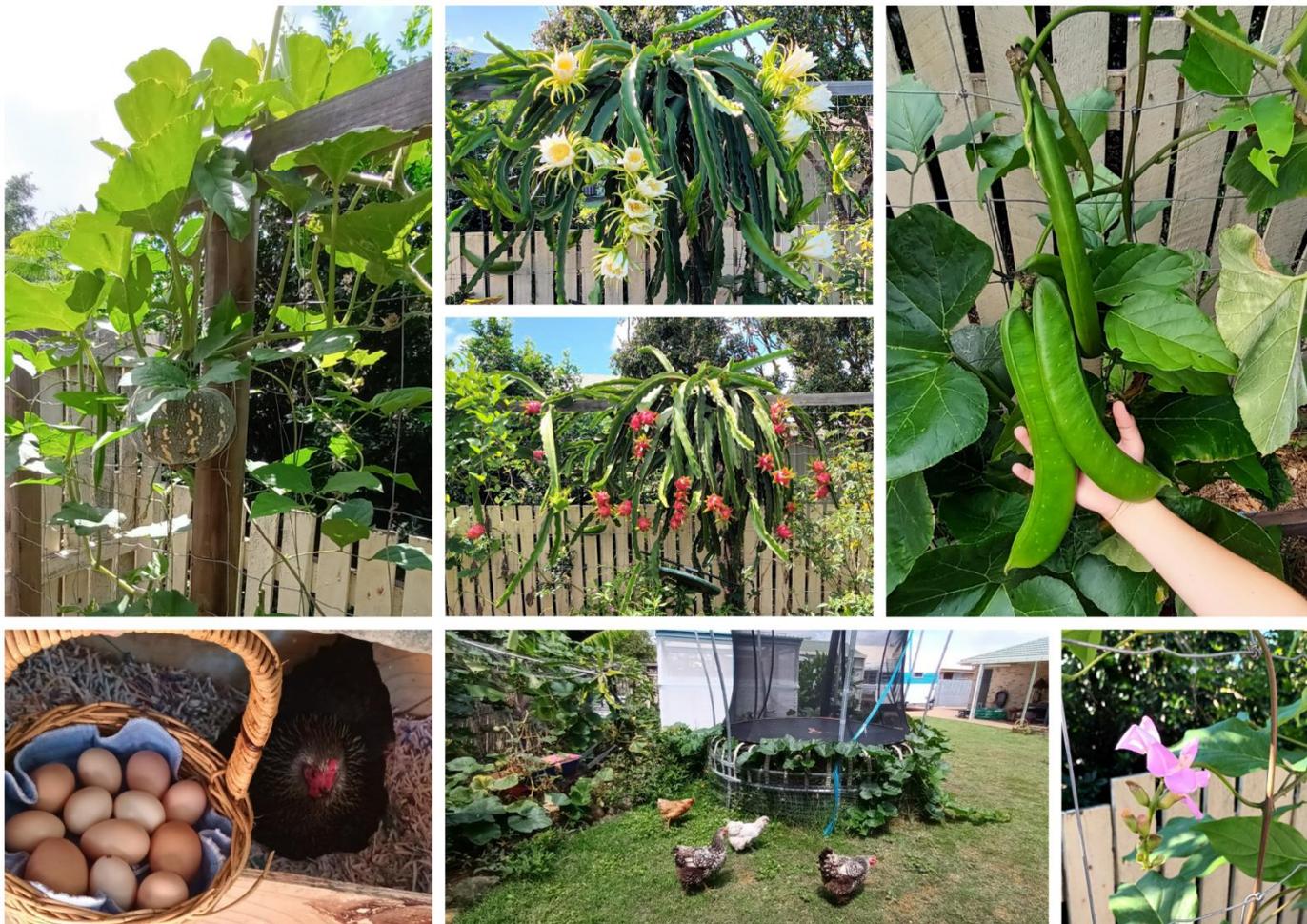
A Seed Germination Time sheet is available at club meetings. Germination time depends on the climatic conditions prevailing when planting. Nature needs you to do your bit for success.

From The Critchlow family.

Summer time for us usually means we take a break from everything. Work, school and somewhat gardening too. However, the garden had other plans for us and has been surprising us with fruit, vegetables and flowers.

Dragon fruit have been our main source of enjoyment with over 30 large fruits picked from one plant already. There is something quite magical about cactus flowers and I love watching the children head out to the garden at night time to count the flowers. My dad who loves to grow dragon fruit also, claims that by eating one a day; it helped him to increase his iron levels. Of course, this is based on his own research and trial, but I am sure you will agree it is always refreshing to find a food or plant-based alternative to prescription medicine.

Pumpkins have self-seeded all over the place with the strongest vine attaching itself and wrapping right around the trampoline. I thought it would surely get damaged with kids jumping and kicking soccer balls all around it, but it produced about 4 pumpkins surprisingly. We also have a vine that has climbed the back fence with pumpkins hanging at about 5ft high – a great way to grow them if you don't have the space for them to sprawl across the yard. The other photos below are of giant beans, and the pink flower before the bean sets. We are patiently waiting for them to ripen but are very impressed by the size. Bottom left is of our smallest hen Bingo, who was sitting on (hiding) an amazing amount of eggs. Purple asparagus has been my daily treat. It never makes it inside the house as it is always eaten at the time of picking. It is a great reminder to plant for the future, look after your plants in the early days and they will pay you back when you are least expecting it.



From Joan Smart

My Ole Garden Hat

It breaks up cobwebs

It helps to undo tight bottle tops.

It can hold hot pipes.

It holds the eggs.

It can pull out prickles

And, of course as soon as I step out the back door

It's on my head!

From Trevor



No Smell Flytrap

Believe it or not. I have just returned from a trip to NSW, including Sydney. And found this fly trap in an outdoor market along the way. I suspect there are more COVID cases here than in Sydney, per head of population. Down there along Manly and northern beaches of Sydney, people wear masks everywhere. Here in Bundy, mask wearing is not a common sight. In Kempsey, I found old mate. He was sitting under a tree having a beer and would not drink in the local. Many of his mates had COVID that was spread via the pub. Back to the fly trap. I am trying one and for \$15 you can be another guinea pig and see if they work on house flies and also Queensland fruit flies. Yes, male and female fruit flies, so I was told. The bait can be refreshed ongoing for very small cost. I figure if this is successful it will be cheaper and superior to other fruit fly traps – and we can make them also. Instructions on use and bait sources are included. Trap is about 15 cm high.

From the Christmas Party.

We had a lovely time at the Christmas party in late November. Thank you to all who organised the food, the music, the dancing, and of course the Trivia and prizes.



Planting by the Moon

(½ moon to New Moon) 26 – 1 February. The waning moon is good for balanced growth. No sowing or planting during this phase.

Support the club by purchasing some products from our shop which is always open on meeting nights, or pick up can be arranged at other times.

Deadline for February 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.