



Bundaberg Organic Gardeners

~ working with nature ~

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NEWSLETTER MAY 2024

Hello and welcome to our May Newsletter!

I looked up the term 'learning' the other day and it said, 'Learning is the process of acquiring new understanding, knowledge, behaviours, skills, values, attitudes, and preferences.' I can certainly apply that to my BOGI journey and also include my approach to nutrition! I use Celtic salt at home, however I learnt about the dangers of table salt! 'Table salt is manufactured salt that is stripped of its natural minerals. Salt in and of itself is not a dangerous food – we need salt in the body. However, during salt processing the balance of sodium in comparison to other valuable minerals is lost. And that's not all – companies add [anti-caking agents](#) to salt to keep it from clumping together. Some of these common anti-caking agents contain aluminum, which is [potentially carcinogenic](#) and can [accumulate in the brain](#), leading to neurological diseases [such as Alzheimer's](#).' We'll learn more about this next month! Until then, Happy gardening and Learning! All the best, Deltry <https://explore.globalhealing.com/dangers-of-salt/>

June Meeting

Our speaker for June will be John Parsons – the Bat Man! "The public should be educated how important bats are. But most importantly they should be aware of the differences of mega bats and micro bats... They are the world's biggest pollinators and without them, we would miss out on fruit, flowers, and trees." <https://backyardsforbiodiversity.org/blog/f/champions-of-biodiversity-john-parsons>

Could members on our supper roster (see last page) provide a list of the ingredients of your contribution due to various dietary concerns of our attendees!

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CLUB MEETING – Tuesday 28th May 2024

Club meetings are always the last Tuesday of the Month.

Time: Doors open 6.00 pm for a 6.30 pm start

Venue: McNaught Hall (Uniting Church Hall)
Corner Barolin and Electra Street, Bundaberg

Attendance \$3-member, \$5 visitor, supper available

Members, please wear your badges to the meeting.

Get your lucky door ticket (free with entry), bring along produce to show on the 'From My Garden' table and share in the free seedlings at the end of the meeting.

May Speaker

Our speaker for May will be member Val Wright. She has a wealth of knowledge re weeds – often thought of as the bane of the life of gardeners! Val will give us a totally different outlook on the beneficial benefits of these important plants. We should come away with very valuable information and also have the ability to identify them as either Friend or Foe!

Dear Members,

Could you please check your phone number against the recent phone list, which you received in April, to ensure it is correct. If an adjustment is needed, you can contact Treasurer Kay or make corrections at the May meeting.

Thank you!

Knowledge is knowing that a tomato is a fruit! Wisdom is knowing not to put it in the fruit salad!

April Meeting Report – by Lara Hawker

At our April meeting we had a very interesting talk from one of our members, Francine Gerraty. Francine grew up in a family that had an indoor plant nursery where she worked as a child. She went on to have a very varied life that allowed her to experience many different cultures and ways of life. These experiences allowed her to look at the world in different ways. In Calcutta, she saw local people using sandalwood, yogurt and cinnamon as treatments. In France she learnt that doctors there are also trained in naturopathy. Francine learnt that each culture has its own way of dealing with medical issues and she likes to incorporate some of these into her own life.

Francine came to live in Bundaberg when her father required palliative care. She was told that he would only have a few weeks to live. This inspired her to research and find other treatments that may help him. She gave him oysters to increase his zinc levels and used cayenne pepper for its coagulant and anti-bacterial properties when nothing else would work.

Francine now runs a B&B here for couples and their pets. She provides onsite assistance for her aged care visitors and checks in on them throughout the day. Francine explained that she is not a registered nurse, but she has worked in aged care before. There are many plants in her garden, and she has been able to make use of the miracle berry to help people with taste following medication.



A West African berry (Miracle Berry) that temporarily masks your taste buds and make anything sour or bitter, taste sweet naturally.



Francine has used many things to treat herself and others, such as mulberry leaf tea, honey instead of sugar, gelatine in soup, cinnamon, arnica cream, comfrey, castor oil, St John's wort, sensitive weed and gotu kola. She also uses some Schuessler and Brauer homeopathic products as well as some veterinary creams such as udder cream and white healer (for horses).

It is important to do your research before trying alternative medical treatments. Speak to your doctor, pharmacist or naturopath about alternatives if you are interested.



Francine was delighted to receive a Blue Banana Plant from our club President Marlene, as her 'thank you' gift! She has been looking forward to growing one of these special plants.

The Blue Banana Plant is an unusual variety with a skin that begins a powdery blue, then ripens to traditional yellow. The soft, sweet flesh is creamy white and tastes like vanilla ice cream. That sounds delicious!

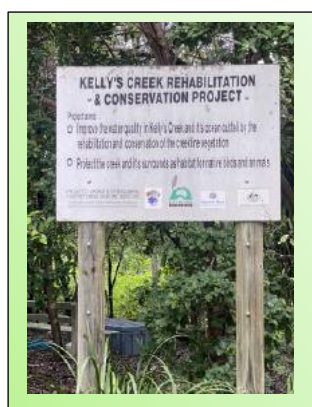


Field Visit to Kelly's Creek Reserve and Crawford Park – 20th April: by Karyn and Maureen

Despite the weather looking a bit overcast and drizzly, a keen group of BOGI members and visitors thoroughly enjoyed the guided walk by Karyn Ennor and Maureen Schmitt, through this natural area near Kelly's Beach on Saturday April 20. Kelly's Creek Reserve is a small riparian forest which borders Kelly's Ck. (*riparian i.e. relating to or living or located on the bank of a natural watercourse (such as a river) or sometimes of a lake or a tidewater-riparian trees.*) The Creek runs in underground pipes and then emerges from various housing estates, through Kelly Beach Resort and out to sea at Archies's Beach, Bargara. Tucked in behind Woongarra Scenic Drive and Trevor's Road, the only signage is a brown street sign at Larder Street corner saying "Kelly's Creek".

The History of the Rehabilitation and Conservation Project

In 2001 a small group of locals, who belonged to Landcare, became concerned about of the degradation of vegetation and water quality. Our Maureen Schmitt, then President of Landcare, made an assessment of the native and invasive species growing in the forest. Friends of Kelly's Creek group was formed, and an application to council for a \$10,000 grant was successful. Over the next 5 years, the group managed to remove non-native trees and vegetation, and to redevelop the native species with mass plantings and created space for the trees to repopulate. Introduced grasses were replaced with native grasses such as Creeping Beard Grass (*Oplismenus aemulus*) and weedy shrubs such as lantana (*Lantana camara*) were replaced with native shrubs.



Fast forward to 2016! Karyn Ennor showed her friend Todd Fauser this remnant, weedy forest. Todd had experience with Land for Wild Life projects. With his vision and help from the council and records of the original grant, the major large weeds were removed. New plantings began and in 2020 a second grant of \$6000.00 was acquired. The old and new members collaborated and with a group average of 10 people, the forest has been transformed, with mulched pathways, a development of grassed understorey (Lomandras and Dianellas) and natural regeneration of trees. The most serious weed trees, namely broad leaf pepper (*Schinus terebinthifolia*) and South African tulip (*Spathodea campanulata*) were removed and this allowed the massive on-site fig tree to take centre stage.

Three members of the Friends of Kelly's Creek were also present for some of the walk. These included Pam Soper (OAM) a well-respected environmentalist and Sandra Quarrell, a long-term Kelly's Beach resident who has been a member of the group since its inception.



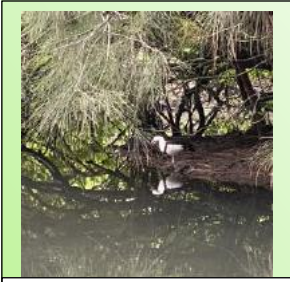
Pam Soper and Maureen

With the grant money, a large toolbox was purchased, which also doubles as a coffee table. The creek is now lined with reeds, Mangrove Ferns and Lillypilly groves. There are some ancient fig trees and many other species which provide food for swarms of butterflies and birds. The first thing that you notice is the quiet and the chorus of birds. A family of five kookaburras live in the space as well as numerous water dragons and the occasional eel. Black Cockatoos visit once a year for the Casuarina seeds. Burdekin Ducks, Egrets and Spoonbills are now common in the creek.



Karyn, Sandra Quarrell & Todd Fauser

40 different species of birds have been counted to visit throughout the year. Much of this was due to the consistent rain over the last few years. This means the group spend less time on watering and more on pruning and hand weeding. The forest is self-mulching with leaf litter and forest grass. Maureen has managed to identify a few new native species that have been brought in by birds. With Maureen, you not only get a description of the plant but a lesson in Latin as well!



Admiring a Burdekin Duck



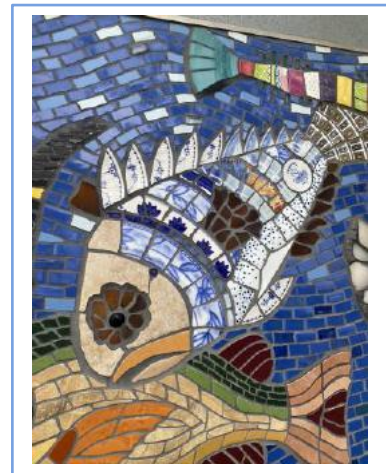
Bridge over the creek



Our group then moved on to Crawford Park to have a cuppa and view the mosaics on the amenities block. These beautiful mosaics recently gained 3rd prize in the National Awards for Community Art. This project was Initiated by the artist Paul Perry, from Bargara, in 2020.

After acquiring a grant, he began the project to depict the reef, marine, indigenous and islander links. Over 250 people were involved with the project including 100 contributions from other parts of the world. Eight panels depict many aspects of marine life and environment. A Rainbow serpent weaves a colourful pathway, as it moves through an assortment of fish, crustaceans, reptiles, turtles and whales.

Many of the pieces have been made with ceramics acquired from crockery and op shops, some of which had interesting little logos. Each piece is precisely cut to fit the overall image. We all kept on saying “oh look at this and that and this!” The communal effort involved is amazing. Sitting by the ocean having a cuppa with art and sea and sky is as good as it gets!



WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBER



Our newest member, Brenda Beauchamp was welcomed into our club in April!

We wish you all the best on your BOGI gardening journey!



In My Garden with Maureen



As a follow up to the April Newsletter article on Okinawan Spinach, Maureen gave us some practical hints on growing this beneficial plant! She also brought in a number of plants for the Give Away table which she had grown in water from the cuttings! Thank you!

Organic Gardening with Trevor

Here is a follow up to the recent information we have concerning testing the pH of your soil!

This concerns a question of variability and sampling and then treatment of the soil. The subsequent management area determines the sampling area. This particularly concerns large garden areas.

If you are happy to treat each garden bed separately, then sample each separately. If paying for tests, this is probably prohibitive for gardeners. Therefore, this is a good opportunity to borrow one of the testing kits from our club to test your soil.

For each separate gardening area, ensure that several samples are taken, mixed together and then sub-sampled for testing.

There is another opportunity at this month's meeting to test your soil! Please remember to bring in a dry soil sample! Lenzie will be happy to assist you!



Do you know it is still Compost Week? Here are some tips for you!

Remember that smaller pieces decompose more quickly than larger ones.

For example, grind up leaves before you add them to the pile instead of putting them in whole.

The correct moisture level in your compost heap should feel like a wrung-out sponge, not a sopping wet one. Too much moisture can lead to anaerobic conditions, which slow down decomposition and, well, cause your pile to stink! If it gets too wet, use a pitchfork to mix it up and add some more dry or brown materials.

If your compost gets smelly, add some air. This is when you need to turn the pile and add dry materials if the compost feels too wet.

Compost is not the same thing as fertilizer. Yes, it does contain nutrients, but it's not sufficient for plants that are heavy feeders, such as tomatoes. Compost's biggest job is to serve as a soil amendment to improve drainage and soil compaction and to increase the activity of soil organisms. You'll need additional fertilizer to feed your hungry vegetable garden. Snippets from:

<https://www.countryliving.com/gardening/a43043/composting/>

HEALTH TIP OF THE MONTH

The saying 'genetics loads the gun, but lifestyle pulls the trigger' is truer today than in the past. You see, lifestyle is a choice. You choose how you use your life force on a daily basis, how you fuel your body and how you structure your activities that constitute your life. Living is nothing but a series of choices, good ones and not so good ones.

Ultra Processed Foods (UPF) "... often contain additives like flavourings, colourings or emulsifiers to make them appear more attractive and palatable."

"Think sodas and energy drinks, chips, candies, flavoured yogurts, margarine, chicken nuggets, hot dogs, sausages, lunch meats, boxed macaroni and cheese, infant formulas, most packaged breads and cakes, plant milks, meat substitutes and breakfast cereals."

In a large review of studies that was published in 2024, scientists reported that consuming UPFs was associated with 32 health problems, with the most convincing evidence for heart disease-related deaths, Type 2 diabetes and common mental health issues like anxiety and depression." May 8, 2024, The New York Times

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7399967/>



We will examine the various aspects of healthy lifestyle over the coming months!

Herb of the Month – Coleus amboinicus

Herb for May is.....Mother of Herbs...aka...Mexican Oregano...aka...*Coleus amboinicus*...aka...Queen of Herbs...aka...Five in one Herb...aka...All Herb...Country Borage...Indian Borage...Five spice Herb...Chinese 3 in 1 herb...Broad leafed Thyme...Spanish Thyme...Spanish Sage... Puerto Rican Oregano.

Whew...from all those varied names (and in English to boot) it is widely grown and loved as a pot herb. It is sprawling, aromatic and perennial - hails from sub-tropical Asia and is very easy to propagate and grow.



It can be found as a pale green leafed variety, or a darker green with white edges. Many think it to be ornamental only, but oh! no...no...no! It is an absolutely amazing herb that should be in a shady, moist spot in every garden. Mine has been let go wild (as many of my plants are) underneath one of my Old Hamii Bamboos. It's happy and I get heaps of leaf anytime. If it gets a dose of sheep poo, the leaves double in size.

I personally use it continually as a tea leaf with a teaspoon of honey (3 large leaves torn in a cup); oh! what a lovely cuppa it makes, especially last thing in the evening. It will send you off to la-la land very effectively. So, if you have any young - uns who would rather stay up all night, this can be safely given as a warm, sweet drink, or from the fridge as a cold drink. From my experience, cold in a glass jar in the fridge (made with honey - 1 teaspoon per cup of tea) is a lovely drink any time but warm is best before bed, and the tea can last for a few days in the fridge.

Isabel says a leaf can be laid on the forehead to relieve headaches (wouldn't know, don't get them); you can chew a leaf for a sore throat or coughs, viral conditions, to relieve indigestion or stomach cramps, (mmm..which I believe usually comes from eating something processed, unnatural or far too much of whatever).

It can even be used as a liver tonic or for pain relief...I wonder if that's why I don't hurt? Seriously though, I personally use this herb almost daily since Angie pointed out to me that it makes a great tea. Thanks Angie! Isabel also says that anyone who has insomnia and may be on sleeping tablets, can safely go from big pharma to Mother of Herbs and get a good sleep with no junk in the system, no side effects and it's not addictive. That sounds like plus, plus, plus to me! Please share this information and this plant with others who you know may have this problem; they will thank you, I am sure.

The crushed leaves can be used as an insect repellent, rubbed on your skin before going outside. It can also be used for your dogs, cats, sheep, or whatever animal is being hunted by mozzies. Just rub a crushed leaf on the head, back and under their belly and the mozzies should not bother them anymore.

From a culinary perspective, its flavours are varied; it has a strong hint of oregano and marjoram, with lesser notes of thyme, savory and sage. As a result of this, it is handy for Mediterranean dishes like pizza, for meatballs, in chicken stuffing, in soups, stews, casseroles, curries, marinades, with cheese, in salads, with cucumber, with eggs, in stir fries - the list is endless. Just remember, recipes are really guide-lines, so it is up to you to mess with them and make your own creations.

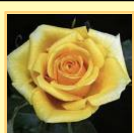
Happy gardening and even more happy and healthy eating!

Till next month, Pam

Reference: Isabel Shipard's book - *How can I use Herbs in my Daily Life?*

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dbd_Qr9UePE

This is a link to a fun snack recipe using the leaves of this beautiful herb! Ed.



Here are some special flowers for members who have a May birthday!

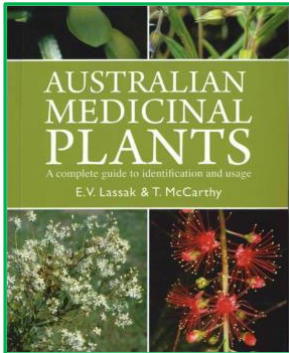


We also send get well wishes for those members who have some health issues!

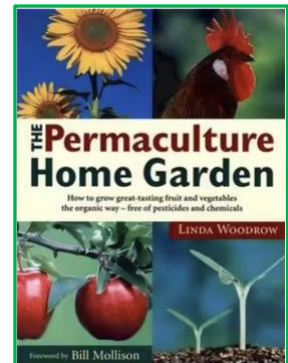


Seeds and Seedlings Give-away

Several club members collect seeds from their own gardens. At club meetings these selected seeds and seedlings are available for members to plant out in their own gardens. This a good chance for you to try some new varieties.



Do you have gardening books that would like a new home? Joy, our librarian, would love to hear from you! Our library supply has reduced in size and we would love to offer more choice to our members! Are there particular topics you interested in? Please use the suggestion box or speak to one of our committee members! Thank you!



SAVE THE DATE - SATURDAY JUNE 15th - SWAP MEET

Soccer Club Shed – North Bundaberg

9am – 2pm

*This is a great opportunity to sort through unwanted goods! One man's trash is another man's treasure!!
Morning tea and Lunch provided! Lovely time to enjoy each other's company!
More details to come!*

Planting by the Moon – June - submitted by Kay de Gunst



Planting by the Moon – June

(New Moon to ¼ Moon) 6 – 13 June: Influences balanced growth; a lower gravitational pull decreases and this stimulates root growth. The best time to sow or transplant leafy vegetables.

(First ¼ to Full Moon) 14 – 21 June: Increased light from the waxing moon benefits leaf growth, and root growth slows down. Best time to sow/transplant fruiting annuals.

(Full Moon to ¼ Moon) 22 – 28 June: Gravitational pull decreases and moonlight decreases, so leaf growth reduces and root growth increases. Plant root crops now.

(Last ¼ to New Moon) 29 June – 5 July : 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 June:

Asian vegetables; Beans; Beetroot; Broad Beans; Cabbage; Carrots; Cauliflower; French Beans; Garlic; Kohlrabi; Lettuce; Leeks; 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; Tomatoes.*

*Your mind is the garden, your thoughts are the seeds.
The harvest can be either flowers or weeds! William Shakespeare*



Members – Do you have herbs to share for our teas at supper time? Tony would love to hear from you on 0497 173 169 or 4159 9559 before the meeting to tell him which herbs you are bringing in for our supper tasting. Thank you!



BOGI SHOP – See Chris Jensen before or after the meeting to purchase any of the following gardening inputs. This is one way that the club supports its members by buying in bulk and sharing the savings.

Products available are:

- Liquid Kelp
- Fish Hydrolysate
- Mineral Granules
- Microlife
- Organibor
- Katex Organic Super Growth
- Molasses



They are available for sale at our meetings, or please contact Chris on 0412 992 191 for collection from his address in East Bundaberg.

Executive and Committee 2024

President – Marlene Kent-Fuller
 Vice President – Maureen Schmitt
 Treasurer – Kay de Gunst
 Secretary – Karyn Ennor
 Committee Members – Pam Biden, Lenzie Duffy, Jo-Anne O’Callaghan, DeeDee Sorenson, Deltry Dickie
 Herbal Teas – Tony Wolfe - 4159 9559 or 0479 173 169
 Library – Joy Millett
 Supper – Pam Biden
 Workshops and Field Trips – Linda Cameron
 BOGI Shop – Chris Jensen - 0412 992 191
 BOGI Shop Support – Bruce McKay
 Newsletter Editor– Deltry Dickie – 0414 992 553
 Assistant Editor – Joan Smart
 Note Taker – Lara Hawker
 Facebook Co-ordinator – Cathy Critchlow

Deadline for June 2024 Newsletter

Friday 7th June 2024

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 successes 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 Deltry 0414 992 553

Please send through articles at any time, if they miss one newsletter, they will make the next.



Our Objectives

- *To promote the understanding of the health and environmental benefits of organic gardening and food production.*
- *To encourage members to grow some of their own herbs, vegetables, fruit and flowers using organic principles.*
- *To help preserve traditional, non-patented and seed heirloom varieties.*
- *To provide fellowship and enjoyment in growing and eating organic food.*
- *To encourage active participation by members in supportive and fun social activities in pursuit of the above objectives.*

Treasurers Report April 2024

Opening Balance 1 st April	\$ <u>7230.12</u>
Income	\$ 25.28
Expenditure	\$ 1056.92
Closing Balance April	\$ 6198.48
Visa Account	\$ <u>66.16</u>
Income	\$ 500.00
Expenditure	\$ 0.00
Balance	\$ 566.16

This Month’s Supper Roster Tuesday 28th May

Michael Apap, Lenzie Duffy, Bhavana Shukia
 Julie Burry Allan Harkness Pam Biden
 Chris Jeffrey, Jennifer Campbell
 Kay de Gunst Peter Van Beek

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.