



Bundaberg Organic Gardeners

~working with nature~

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NEWSLETTER NOVEMBER 2021

Hello and welcome to our November Newsletter. What an amazing few weeks we have had in regards to rainfall in our area. It is easy to forget that feeling of full water tanks and full dams, flooding roads and soggy veggie gardens when it feels like forever since our last downpour. Unfortunately, it wasn't all easily earned, with some parts of Bundaberg experiencing what has been reported as a tornado, mainly affecting our friends in Bucca, Peter and Pamela Burgess.

It has been heart-warming to hear of how many of our club members have been able to assist them in their clean up, and surely this humidity is helping some of their plants to regrow. Wouldn't life be easy if we could just order ahead as to which weather we would like next rather than this all or nothing? But that would take all the fun out of it too.

We would love to hear about what has been happening at your place. Have your zucchinis ballooned? Your pumpkins all rotted and fallen off? Are your tomatoes waterlogged? Or do you have a smart way of minimising damage to your hard-earned vegetable crops?

Christmas Party This Sunday!

At Baldwin Swamp Shelter Shed
28th November, 10am -2pm.

There will be music, singing, a garden quiz, trivia game, raffle, good food and great company!

Hopefully you have registered your attendance, and the dish you plan to bring.

If we don't see you there, we hope to see you at the meeting.

30th November - Meeting

25th January 2022- First meeting of the year.

CLUB MEETING

Time: Doors open 6.00 pm for a 6.30 pm start **Guest Speaker:** To be advised

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

Tuesday 30th November

Get your lucky door ticket, bring something to share on the giveaway table, share some free seedlings.

Due to Covid restrictions easing 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, and let's try and keep it healthy, in the spirit of organically home-grown food. For example, homemade tomato relish with some store-bought crackers. Please list ingredients to assist those with allergies and intolerances, and share recipes where you can.

From the Last Meeting.

BOGI Meeting Notes – Tuesday 26th October.



Our guest speakers were Mike and Bev McAulay from Corymbia Cottage Craft. Mike and Bev moved from Brisbane about 10 years ago for a 'tree and sea change'. They purchased a 5-acre property at Moore Park Beach. Adopting the permaculture principles, Mike and Bev have re-designed their property from a sandy allotment to an environment where a bountiful food forest now thrives, providing them with a large range of vegetables, fruit and herbs, which are eaten fresh, preserved, ground to make flour and made into household and grocery products. As a result, they are almost self-reliant. Using the permaculture guidelines involves working with the natural environment to become responsible producers. Some of the guidelines Mike and Bev have worked on are: composting directly into fallow garden beds - increasing worm activity; soft plastics - recycled through Coles and Woolworths; and having low waste - rubbish bins are collected about every 6 weeks.

So, what is Permaculture?

Permaculture commenced in the early 1970's, with two Australians, Bill Mollison and David Holmgren developing the idea. In its early development, permaculture was based on agriculture and food systems, but has expanded to include features such as living with low impact technology, utilising urban food production, suburban gardens to larger farming practices to benefit self, family and community living to create a self-sustaining way to live.

Permaculture is based on three ethics:

- Earth Care: caring for the well-being of life systems, living and non-living
- People Care: to look after self, family and community and;
- Fair Share: careful consideration of the care of others: people and animals.

From these three ethics, twelve design principles (thinking tools) have been developed:

1. Observe and interact – observing nature to understand what is going on with the various elements in the system.
2. Catch and store energy – On the property, Mike and Bev have solar hot water, rain water storage, a bore, mulch, food, sauces, jams, pickles and essential oils.
3. Obtain a yield – getting a reward from what you grow.
4. Apply self-regulation and accept feedback – advice and sharing of ideas, reflect on consumption patterns, what's working, what's not.
5. Use and value renewable resources – Green Harvest nursery, Mike has used timber flitches from a sawmill at Yandaran, using chickens to weed areas and selling excess goods produced.
6. Produce no waste, or as little as possible – reuse items, maintain and fix equipment, compost, compost, compost everything possible.
7. Design from pattern to details – observe first, and design how you can work with nature or whatever else is there and working. Sunrise and sunset, water courses, patterns of the sun, seasons of the year, swales, water run-off, elevation of the property, contour banks, herb circles, banana circles etc.

8. Integrate rather than segregate – companion planting – how plants can work together... plants like to live with other plants.
9. Use small and slow – macadamia and fruit trees – take a long time to bare, but then can continue for many years with little input from people.
10. Use and value diversity – plant a variety of plants intermingled with what you want to produce.
11. Use the edges and value the marginal – use fences to grow the vine producers on.
12. Creatively use and respond to change – challenging times – rain, drought. Grow things that thrive in the environment. If it doesn't work out, then start again and try something new or something different.

Mike is also busy with Corymbia Cottage Crafts – named after trees growing on the property. He upcycles many Australian hardwood timbers from land clearing, creating interesting pieces of bespoke giftware and furniture. (Checkout the Corymbia Cottage Crafts page on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/CorymbiaCottage/>)

Thank you, Mike and Bev for sharing your experiences and knowledge with us.

Planting by the Moon

First 7 days: (New Moon to ½ moon) 4 – 11 Dec. Influences balanced growth; a lower gravitational pull decreases and this stimulates root growth. The best time to sow or transplant leafy vegetables. *Cabbage, cauliflower, kale, celery, lettuce, spinach, silverbeet.*

Second 7 days: (1/2 moon to Full Moon) 11 – 18 Dec. Increased light from the waxing moon benefits leaf growth, and root growth slows down. Best time to sow or transplant fruiting annuals. *Beans, corn, tomatoes, pumpkin, squash, peas, capsicum, eggplant, zucchini, chokos and grains.*

Third 7 days: (full moon to ½ moon) 19 – 26 Dec. Gravitational pull decreases and moonlight decreases, so leaf growth reduces and root growth increases. Plant root crops now (below ground). *Beetroot, potatoes, carrots, sweet potatoes, radish, turnip, garlic, ginger.*

Fourth 7 days: (1/2 moon to New Moon) 26 – 2 Jan. The waning moon is good for balanced growth. No sowing or planting during this phase. *Harvest vegetables, weeding, digging, pruning and cultivate. Apply mulch.*

An Update From The Haven.

Peter and Pamela Burgess property at Bucca.

We would like to thank all those who gave up their precious time, energy & sweat to assist us with the rebuilding of the animal shelters & the chainsaw work releasing our back fence from fallen timber. What a Blessing you all have been to us. From the bottom of our hearts, we thank you and appreciate you all. Thank you also to one precious couple who came with an amazing meal that meant I did not have to cook for 2 days! We love you all. May our Creator bless you all.

Here are a few photos of the recovery trail that has been a week of hard slog. We have had 5 working bees in total, between BOGI members, friends & family. All the structures bar one, have been rebuilt. We have now fenced ¾ of the whole property perimeter with hopefully sheep & goat proof fencing. Two men, a big mulcher, & a bobcat spent 2 ½ days here converting the debris & fallen gum trees into precious mulch.

The place looks bare of height & shade, but the lower plants are returning & re-leafing again. The comfrey has recovered, the arrowroots are doing well, the bananas are giving new leaf, the Mexican sunflower has dropped seed

everywhere where it grew and they are sprouting. The sugar cane is sprouting, the root veg are all fine, (except for the odd bare top, courtesy of goats!). The reo mesh arches copped a flogging due to the amount of leaf that was onboard, so the passionfruit needs re bending somehow. The New Guinea Bean arch has been propped up & the vines are reshooting.

All in all, we have been blessed as well as hammered. It could have been far worse. Structurally we are 99% sound.

Hopefully we will be allowed to see one another in the coming months. If not publicly, then we will do so privately. Thank you once again. Pam & Pete.

Photos below are of L-R top to bottom. Seeds sprouting everywhere, Sheep shade rebuilt, New Guinea bean starting again, driveway cleared, mulcher working, Gracie's Garden, bent passionfruit trellis, arrowroot returning, chickee shade rebuilt, our flock.



BOGI MEMBER PROFILE: November 2021 – Jennifer

Jennifer, along with husband Johnny and Kai (2.5 years of age), joined The Organic Garden Club about March this year and have been regular enthusiastic visitors to many of our members' open garden days. The family only arrived in Australia this year after extensive travel, mainly backpacking, through the African countries of Malawi, Botswana, Kenya, and Zambia, the purpose being to seek and learn regarding permaculture. They fortunately knew some groups with similar interests already working and volunteering in Africa so they were able to exchange and share new ideas and techniques regarding permaculture. Thus, a natural country to settle in after desert and hot climate dwelling with little water was, here! And we were lucky enough to have them join us. They have settled on a block in Gin Gin, and are enjoying the challenge of becoming a community member in a town vastly different to their recent past. Oh, and Jennifer is from the Netherlands originally, and so Kai is a very fortunate little adventurous fellow who is learning many languages. They look forward to the delivery of their home hopefully soon, with anticipation of the work ahead on renovations, and the development of gardens, in which we will be invited to be a part of the progress. Please find them at the next meeting have a chat. Welcome Johnny, Jennifer, and Kai.

GOOD WEEDS BAD WEEDS

What is a weed? Is a weed a plant that is out of place?
Is a wheat plant a weed in your lawn? Or in a canola crop?

There are many escaped plants from gardens now encroaching bush. Does that make them a weed? In nature, weeds fill a very necessary evolutionary role. Generally, weeds have a short lifecycle, and are returned to the soil to decompose and improve the soil for the next plant (or weed) in the sequence. As the soil is gradually enriched, different species of weeds are favoured and so the plant community evolves into a mature stand of grassland or forest. That is Nature's way.

The same occurs on farms grazing stock. Often soft weeds grow on bare land or poor areas. Grazing management may allow them to improve soil fertility and be replaced by more productive pastures. In a short time, soil fertility increases and more stock may be grazed. This is a natural sequence of events.

On the Farm when weeds appear, the standard response is:

- # Cultivate. This reduces soil biology, destroys soil structure and speeds up soil carbon breakdown.
- # Spray a weed killer Most weedicides harm soil biology.

An alternate approach of No-till, mulching and biological practices improves soil biology which naturally reduces weed growth as shown below.



The photo shows a regenerative approach to weeds. The *treated* area had one application of good soil biology 12 months earlier. The improved soil biology alters the nitrogen form available to plants which is less favourable to weeds.

In the Garden when weeds appear

- pull them out as they compete with our vegies
- place in compost heap or use as a mulch.

Dr. Carson expressed the view that in today's world, our environment is suffering and our food chain is depleted of nutrients. We are destroying what Nature has given us.

From Trevor

What you can plant in November

Asian vegetables; French Beans and Snake Beans; Capsicum; Chokos; Cucumber; Eggplant; Melons; Marrows; Mustard Greens; Pumpkins; Radish; Rhubarb; Squash; Sweet Corn; Sweet Potatoes; Zucchini.

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Plant seeds at a depth equal to twice their diameter. That is, small seeds are barely covered with soil, while large seeds are covered with more soil.

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.

HERB OF THE MONTH – By Chris Jeffrey

BRAHMI (Bacopa Monnieri)

Description- Perennial ground cover to 10cm high, with sprawling stems that may root as they grow along the soil. Fleshy oval small leaves, white flowers, seeds. Brahmi likes wet conditions and flourishes in bog-like situations but will tolerate sun as long as it is wet, and shade will help it flourish.

CONSTITUENTS: Nitric oxide, Nacoside A and B, Brahmine, glutamic acid, good iron source.

ACTIONS: nerve, cardio brain and overall tonic, diuretic, mild sedative, anti-oxidant and stimulant.

MEDICINAL USES: Brahmi has been used in traditional medicine for over 3000 years. It has been used to treat many conditions: just a few I will list as they apply particularly to today – bronchitis, coughs, asthma, arthritis, inflammatory conditions, skin, cholesterol, forgetfulness, insomnia, mental deterioration, and many more.

* HERE is the important research from 1963, which identified 2 active molecules in the plant. Bacoside A that assists in the release of NITRIC OXIDE allowing relaxation of the aorta and veins to let blood flow more smoothly through the body and Bacoside B, a protein valued for nourishing nerve cells in the brain. In 1996 the British Science published a paper on nitric oxide, calling it the marvel of the decade, explaining the extremely positive effects on learning, memory recall, alleviating inflammation and more. Brahmi has potent antioxidant properties- the task of these in the body is to mop up free radical molecules. A free radical is an unstable chemical fragment (brought on by aspects of modern living, including smoking and certain foods), which can cause havoc by damaging DNA, corroding cell membranes and destroying cells.

DOSE: 3-4g daily. 3 grams are approximately six sprigs 8-10cm long. The herb is prepared as a tea infusion with a little honey, as the leaves are quite bitter – but very good for you!! Use in salads, soups and with cooked vegetables. In summary, Brahmi can help support and improve so many aspects of mental health, recall, circulation, diabetes and more.

At our next meeting, there will be Brahmi seedlings for you to get started. I have found a large round pot-plant base to be an excellent home for my plant, but with the heat last summer, I nearly lost it. Thanks to a generous garden club member, I now have flourishing Brahmi and Gota Kola; another must have herb.

My source: How can I use HERBS in my daily life? by Isabell Shipard

Which of the following is an alternative material for making paper?

- Panda Excrement
- Sheepskin
- Hemp
- All of the Above

All of these materials can produce paper. Hemp, the more humane and clean option, requires less land acreage to grow than timber, has fewer chemical by-products, and can be recycled more frequently than tree timber.

<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/environment/global-warming/green-lifestyle-quiz/>

Feedback Re: Australian WeedScan Project

This project from CSIRO and supported by Garden Clubs Australia has been presented to us. It is interesting to note there are many views on weeds and their management.

View from Peter & Pam, "I disagree whole heartedly with the idea of identifying and locating weeds in our area. I consider many of them to be absolutely essential for the health, well-being and longevity of animals and humanity. I totally disagree with showing the Government their location."

NOTICES

- If anyone has a wild climbing pink, red or yellow rose plant, we would love some cuttings please. Mike Apap
- Grass Roots magazines - I have 20 + older issues if someone would like to read. See Trevor at the next meeting.
- From Jen & Johnny - Urban Kulture runs online events to learn to grow your own mushrooms. It costs \$120 for the day (or \$110 early bird). People will make their own kits to grow mushrooms with (We are doing oyster and reishi mushrooms at the moment). Lots of online materials about how to grow any kind of mushrooms and after-workshop support is included in the price. The link is here:

<https://www.urbankulture.com.au/event-details/bundaberg-ultimate-fungal-wizardry-october-23rd>

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 January 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.

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