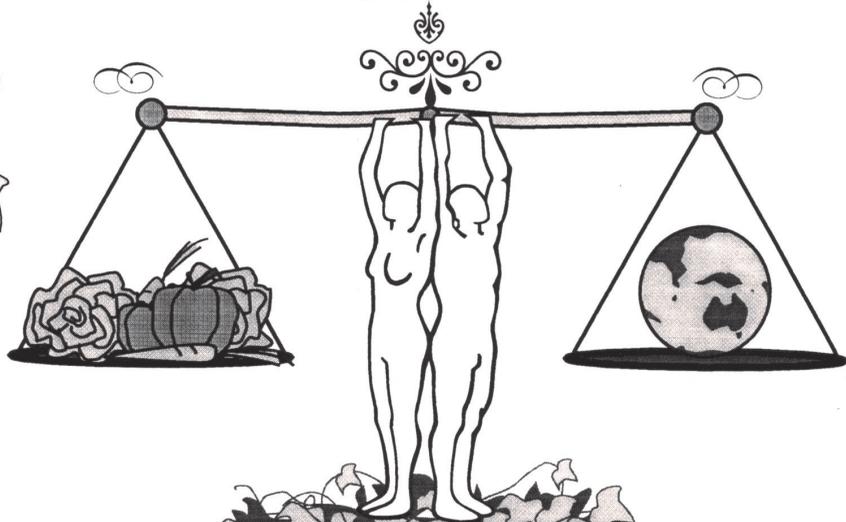


# GOLD COAST ORGANIC GROWERS Inc.

Established 1997



## NEWSLETTER

Volume 17    April 2014    Issue 3  
GARDENING IN AUTUMN

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**OUR NEXT MEETING: Thursday 15 May**

## 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:

3rd Thursday of the Month

The Meeting Place, Cnr Guineas Creek Rd and Coolgardie St, Elanora.

Doors open: 7:00 pm. **Begin at 7:30 pm**

Entry is \$1 members, \$3 visitors.

*(No meeting in December)*

### 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 Diane Kelly, 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:** (Note 11 issues/year)

**1/4 page:** \$10 an issue, or \$100 per year

**1/2 page:** \$20 an issue or \$200 per year

**full page:** \$30 an issue or \$300 per year

## 2013 Committee

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Liaison	
Librarians	Ann Brown 0403 936 360  Kerstein Trueman
Seed Bank	Lyn Mansfield 0409 645 888
Seed Assistant	Heather Ryan 5534 4047
Supper Co-ordinator	Paul Roberson (07) 5598 6609

### Newsletter:

Contributions and ideas welcome. Send in a photo of what's going on in your patch.

Email Angela at [w.a.anderson@bigpond.com](mailto:w.a.anderson@bigpond.com) or text a photo - 0439 488 166.

### Thanks to Contributors:

Diane Kelly, Jill Barber, Maria Roberson, Roger Petersen, Karen Hart, Dorothy Coe and Lyn Mansfield

### Website:

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

## Notice Board

### Membership Renewals

**NEW:** You can now pay your membership fee directly into the GCOG bank account.

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

### Remember to put your Name and Membership Number in the comment field.

Note the number in brackets after your name is your membership number - you will need to quote this number in the comment field, if you pay via online banking.

### Membership Renewals:

**Overdue** - Debbie Jones (254), Ross & Jenny Davis (199), David Wyatt & Helen Wainwright (284), Anissa Loades (228), John Steytler (313), Winsome Gunning (314), Julie Abraham (315), Terri Groth (125), Barbara Morgan (246), Judy McCracken (274), Tali Filip (277), Gaynor Allen (317), Anne-Maree Andrew (337), Andrew, Helen & Claudia Blum (344), Regina Lacgalvs (208), Greg Wiltshire (320), Louise Newell (321), Angela Anderson (323), Judy Reiser (338), John Clarke (345)

**April:** Jude Lai (220), Gai Morrow (309), Kerstein Trueman (346), Rodney Boscoe & Cathy Smith (347)

**May:** Chris Larkin (141), Karen Auchere (147), Mary Frawley (150), Bruce Kelly & Heather Ryan (234), Brian & Lyn Dick (298), Robert Faulkner (303), Virginia Jacobsen (325)

**Welcome to our new members:** Shem Pireh, Keith Rowell, Rachael Lebeter, Fran Janes, Alex Dimos, Maggie Golightly, Lana Beloff, Troa Oh

## Guest Speakers

April - Peter McKelvey, Aussie Chook Poo  
May - Dan Willman, Rocky Point (organic)  
Mulching;

## A Couple of Things ...

### Free Lawn Clippings

If anyone would like free **lawn clippings** for their compost heap please contact Shannen's Mowing. He is local and can drop it off to you – he delivers to areas including Elanora, Palm Beach, Currumbin, Tallebudgera and surrounding areas. His number is: 0418 330 006.

### Seed Potatoes

Ross has 10 kgs of certified Pontiac seed potatoes for sale. Pontiacs are an early maturing potato that are good for roasting, and which also bake well in their skins. April is the best month in which to plant them, and so you can buy some on Thursday evening for \$5.50 per kg. Attached is a photo of Ross's crop last year – if you want to reserve some, please text Ross on 04274 32071, or e-mail him at [rossco12@bigpond.com](mailto:rossco12@bigpond.com).

### Notes for Hobby Bee-Keeping

I'm sure those who attend last month's meeting enjoyed Kate Miller's presentation on bees. Katie has kindly provided her notes on hobby bee-keeping for us – they can be accessed at <http://www.goldcoastorganicgrowers.org.au/Hobby%20Beekeeping.pdf> - just key **control / click** on the link. Another way of having a look at the information and also learning about the Enid Street community garden in which Kate is involved, is to go to our website and click on the "links" option – the first option takes you to their site and lots of interesting ideas. ( **control / click** on <http://www.goldcoastorganicgrowers.org.au/links.html> )

### Willing Worker on Organic Farms

If the idea of someone helping you with your gardening challenges in exchange for accommodation is of interest, how about considering a "woofer" – "Willing Worker On Organic Farms". We've had contact via Facebook from Jennifer who is "looking for some work on an organic farm to count towards getting my 2nd year visa. I am available to start working asap. Please contact Jennifer on 0422 198 148".

## President's Message

Hello Everyone,

Never let it be said that the life of a gardener is uninteresting, one day you are practically doing CPR on dying plants due to lack of water and the next you have to board a life raft to get to the veggie patch. All kidding aside, the 10 to 18 inches of rain (depending on where you live) was truly welcome and about bloody time if you ask me. Now I can finally get on with my autumn planting and I hope you are getting on with it too.

I usually try to plant everything from seed rather than seedlings; it's a skill well worth mastering as it is heaps cheaper and most plants sown directly in the soil where they are to grow will do much better. When you plant seedlings they suffer from transplant shock which can set back their growth by as much as six weeks, often the seed you planted will catch up with the seedlings, leaving you with an expensive garden and no real time benefit. Some plants such as beetroot, carrot and other root crops should never be planted as seedlings; their roots do not take kindly to any disturbance.

Planting Bean, Pea, Corn and Pumpkins from anything but seed is just a waste of money in my books. There are about 30 to 40 Bean or Pea seeds in one of our \$2 packets, compare that to 6 to 8 plants in a punnet from the shop costing about \$3, seeds are by far better value. Another tip, if you do buy a punnet of seedlings be sure they are suitable for growing in the present season, because I have seen all sorts of things be sold out of season at THAT large Hardware store. Remember, nothing grows well when it is planted in the wrong season.

In my role as President, I am constantly thinking of ways to help all of us become better gardeners and one of those ways is with sound, reliable and relevant information that can be passed on through our Newsletter. This month Diane Kelly, Angela Anderson

and I, got together and came up with a new and focussed format for the Newsletter. As you know, Angela is our editor and Diane is her assistant and main article contributor, so I was keen to hear their ideas on making the Newsletter even better.

In a nutshell, the Newsletter will strive to contain high local content narrowing in on South East Queensland and in particular the Gold Coast and its' Hinterland. This will require all members to be active in their participation of contributions regarding the Newsletter, yes, WE NEED YOU.

We will stay with our seasonal theme and will be one month ahead so you can prepare your gardens in advance. Rather than print articles from other publications that are not in our region, we are going to try to provide up to date, cutting edge information from our own members or at the very least, sources that we think provide a high level of competency. We also need recipes that deal with gluts in the garden (jams and preserves) as well as healthy new recipes for modern life; an example would include gluten free, raw food treats, yoghurt, bread and the list goes on. Photos, we want photos of highlights and triumphs as well as the disasters or even the creepy crawly kind, there is a learning opportunity in every photo so please start snapping or clicking then flick it to us.

Another idea is to set up a page on other clubs in our region that our members may find helpful in the pursuit of a more self-reliant life style, for instance the contact details of Bee clubs, Community gardens and Environment groups.

If you know of a group you think we could list let us know. While we transition to the new format the Newsletter will be a bit smaller than usual, however the sooner everyone gets involved the quicker we can achieve our ultimate goal. I hope you will approve of the changes we are making and I look forward to hearing your feedback.

Happy Gardening,  
Maria.

**SEEDS - FOR SALE - \$2.00****Thanks Lyn**

Amaranth Leaf	Chives onion	Nasturtium
Bean Climbing Blue Lake	Coriander	Nettle Dill
Bean Provider	Cosmos Giant	Pea Sugar Snap
Beetroot Bulls blood	Feverfew	Queen Anne's lace
Borage	Flat leaf Parsley	Radish Cherry Belle
Broadbean Coles Dwarf	Jill's Marigold Orange	Radish Daikon
Broccoli Calabrese	Kale Black Toscana	Radish French Breakfast
Broccoli Purple Sprouting	Kale Black Toscana	Rocket
Bush Bean Redland pioneer	Kale Red Russian	Shallots
Bushbean Borlotti Red Rooster	Kohlrabi Purple Vienna	Silverbeet Fordhook Giant
Cabbage bok Choy	Leek Giant Carentan	Silverbeet Fordook
Cabbage Sugar Loaf	Lettuce Buttercrunch	Snowpea melting Mammoth
Calendula	Lettuce Freckles	Soybean Edamame
Carrot Chantenay Red Cored	Lettuce Paris Land Cos	Sweet Basil
Carrot Scarlet Nantes	Lettuce Red Salad Bowl	Tatsoi Green Coin
Cauliflower Snowball	Lupin	Tomato Cherry Camp Jooy
Celery Tall Utah	Madagascar Bean	Tomato Cherry yellow Cocktail
Ceylon Spinach	Marigold Orange	Tomato Roma
Chai White	Mesclum Hot	Tomato Thai Pink Egg
Chamomile	Mesculin Mild	Tomato Tropic
Chives Onion	Mustard Greens	

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*Don't miss it!"*

GC Visitors Guide 2013



## HERB FARM

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## Kate Miller - Bee Keeping

### By Jill Barber

At the last GCOG meeting, Kate Miller was kind enough to come and talk to members about the aspects of keeping bees that most of us seemed to be interested in. Being a member of the Gold Coast Amateur Beekeepers' Society (GCABS) and having eight hives of her own, Kate was clearly a mine of information about this subject. However, initially at least, she chose to be guided in her talk by the response from attendees regarding what they already knew and how basic they wanted the information: she started simple, as I will relate to you, about how a hive is constructed. She went on to talk about the activity of bees, some properties of honey, threats to bees, looking after bees and biosecurity. Her talk was spiced throughout with fascinating, little known pieces of information.

**A hive** consists of a series of frames, in which the bees put the nectar they collect and make it into honey, in part by fanning it with their wings to get rid of excess moisture. They fill the cells on both sides of the frame, and then they cap the cells. When it's time to extract the honey, centrifugal force is used to spin it out. I was very surprised to learn that each frame can weigh up to 8 kg! There are nine frames in each honey super box. Each full depth frame is constructed on the ratio of the **golden rectangle**, though the one that Kate showed us was half size, to have a smaller quantity to manage at a time.

As a point of interest, Kate's husband used to take his bees on holiday with him. Prior to airline security and X-ray he would carry his bees in a small box, place them and their queen in a temporary box on his arrival, let them forage and have a holiday in a new location and then pack them up for the return flight home. Also, in his office he had a display hive made of glass, and the bees would come in and out through a pipe ducted to the outside of the building! Visitors to his office would be mesmerised watching the bees' activity.

**Pollen**, which is protein for bees, along with **propolis**, is exorbitantly expensive. The bees carry it on their legs, in tiny basket-like containers, and it is harvested from them with a fine brush, placed at the opening to their hive, which brushes it off so it can be collected. This process has to be carefully managed, however, because the protein is needed by the bees, so some must be left for them to take into the hive.

The **brood box** houses the queen, who lays 2000 eggs a day, with seven or eight drones. The queen has a lifespan of one to two years usually. **Royal jelly** is made by the workers, who have three glands, the last being the one that makes royal jelly. Workers bees feed royal jelly to a standard egg to produce a new queen. **Manuka honey** is made from male-luka blossoms, and New Zealanders have copyrighted the name. **Australian jelly bush honey** is very similar to Manuka which has a very thick consistency, making it hard to extract. It can be warmed slightly or steamed a little to extract it. It's the same as Manuka, just not copyrighted and cheaper. Honey can be kept forever. If it crystallises, it's real honey rather than shop bought, which can have glycerine added.

When **beginning your hive**, you can build your own box or start with a nucleus hive, with four frames or buy a readymade one for around \$350. The Amateur Beekeepers' Association will help with this, and the GC City Council is supportive of keeping a hive or two on a city block.

**Threats** to bees are fairly numerous: The small parasite **Varoa Mite**, of course, weakens the bees. It's not yet in Australia, but in the USA a whole lot are dying from it. Political: Monsanto has a monopoly on seeds and genetic properties in some places, making strains of **genetically modified seeds** that do not need bees to pollinate them.

**Neonicotinoids** are pesticides which can be sprayed on crops, and there is increasing evidence of them wiping out some insects, and disrupting the innate immune systems of

bees, making them susceptible to viral infections to which the bees are normally resistant.

**Monocultures** give no variety for bee feed.

The impact of **urbanisation** is such that due to the radio frequency....light... the bees don't know day from night, and microwaves and various electromagnetic frequencies disorient them. When Kate put a bee hive in a police station car park, activity in the frames became very odd: the bees were starting to weaken, and displayed very erratic behaviour, with no normal bee pattern being evident.

Then she looked up and noticed the **high tension wires** and radio control towers above! So she split a strong healthy hive, placed it in the same location, and the same thing happened: the bees' neural networks were being disrupted. She also noticed that there were no beetles in the police car park hive.

To conclude, bees are a significant indicator of what's happening globally; they're like litmus paper (used for testing chemical reactions) or the state of the environment.

**The dry** season forces bees to collect fresh water, and at times they can be seen en masse on the beach or in swimming pools.

To **extract** your honey, once your hive is operating and ready, GCABS will lend you extracting equipment for a small fee. Having native bees at the same time as European ones sets up a symbiotic, beneficial relationship as Native bees do not compete with European bees.

**Smoke** is still used to calm bees down when they are agitated, and pine needles are good for this. A slow burn is best, and as they sense the smoke it settles them, and they fill themselves with honey.

The best hives are well worked and **managed**. Kate's bees, for instance, know the intonation of her voice, and recognise stress in a voice. The opening in the box needs to

be preferably due north, and allow a clear flight path for the bees to get in and out, so you shouldn't stand in front of the box, but to one side of the front or the bees will become agitated.

Bee keeping is a lot of work: there are nine frames in a box and once filled with honey they are very heavy: each weighs eight kilograms, so that's **a lot of weight** to lift. Kate uses some half size frames in some hives so there is not as much weight to heave around.

**Biosecurity** necessitates registration with the Department of Primary Industries, which does aerial surveillance to check on the location of hives, and follow up on reported diseases. Hives are becoming more valuable as bees become scarcer, and hives have actually been **stolen!** They've been airlifted out and taken overseas before the owners are aware that they are even missing, as happened to Kate! Hives are now being micro chipped to aid security from theft.

Attendees at this meeting seemed in no hurry to have Kate finish, and continued to ply her with questions to keep her talking, so interested were we all in whatever information she had to give us on this very valuable and fascinating subject. Kate gave me over five pages of very helpful information and contacts for anyone wanting to set up their own hives, which you will find on the GCOG website.

Also, she has been guiding the development of a Community Garden in Enid St, Tweed Heads, for both gardening and for the bee keeping shed that is available for anyone wishing, for instance, to extract their own honey. Should you meet her there, I'm sure she could regale you with exploits of the students in the surf program she runs for disabled students, not to mention her own surfing adventures and the Surf Life Saving Club at Greenmount that she's very involved with.

Thank you, once again, Kate, for enriching our lives that night.

**Getting To Know  
Celia Forrest  
By Diane Kelly**

It was about as good as it gets – relaxing on the deck of Celia’s house, high in the hills above the Currumbin Valley, having a glass of refreshing water with a slice of home-grown lime in it, and looking out over a vegetable patch, fruit trees ..... and approximately 35 chooks!!



***The view to the north-east from Celia’s house deck***

Celia Forrest and her husband moved into their home in the “Highland” section of the Eco-village in the Currumbin Valley just over two years ago. They had moved from New Zealand to Melbourne thirteen years previously, where Celia had established a typical southern garden featuring vegetables, maples, azaleas and magnolias. They spent a year renting a property in Redcliffe while their house was being built, and then they moved to the Coast.

I asked Celia about her gardening background in New Zealand. Her grandfather’s hobby was growing broad-beans, and her mother had a successful vegetable garden, along with a very “English” flower garden, with her greatest interest being in roses. Celia grew up on a dairy farm near Canterbury, which is on the South island of New Zealand. In addition to dairy cattle, the farm consisted of a piggery and a poultry section – Celia’s

father looked after up to 1,000 leghorn fowls at a time. So with a background of growing up in the country, and always having adequate water (her parents’ farm was bordered by a river), Celia was looking to “live in an area where teamwork creates an area where people can come and see how things used to be”. She summarizes this as simply “organic farming”.

The acre block that Celia purchased slopes to the north-east for most of the property, but also drops away from the house to the south, which is a warmer, drier section. The soil is clay-based, and there were only a few trees on the block when the house was being built. There were several camphor laurels growing, along with a tree called a “bumpy ash”. This tree has fascinating seed pods and flowers, and appears to be liked by possums – the only disadvantage is the large roots that have emerged to cause problems in the southern section of the block. In the plan that Celia has for the property, she has included the building of swales, so that run-off is controlled and thirsty plants watered.

Many fruit trees have been planted in the past two years. It is a reasonably unusual list – sand-paper figs, pomegranates, a bollywood tree, a strawberry tree (also known as the Malay cherry), a red dwarf mulberry, a sour-sop, and an acha cha tree (the fruit of which is said to taste like a mangosteen but just a tad zingy). The acha cha tree only grows on the Gold Coast and Cairns, and Celia has read that some regard it as “the most beautiful fruit in the world”. These are in addition to a Davidson plum, various bananas, tropical pears, avocados, an acerola cherry, avocados and grumichamas and a kumquat. Most of these trees have been purchased from Daley’s nursery in Kyogle, but Celia has also travelled to the Caboolture markets to obtain fruit trees there.

Celia describes her gardening style as “natural & native” – but adds the explanation that she will grow “anything that offers food to me, and the bees, butterflies and birds”. The wildlife that visit the property include walla-

bies, goannas, kangaroos, kookaburras, foxes, dingoes, snakes (brown, black & carpet), and various frogs. The vegetable gardens are several long beds, raised by logs cleared from the property when the house was built, and protected by netting. This keeps out the wildlife, and when lifted, displays healthy crops of beans, broccoli, baby bok choy, egg plants, rockets, shallots, garlic and potato onions (an onion that is similar to a shallot, but which produces larger bulbs). Soil was brought in to establish the garden, as the clay soil was limiting, and much manure and lucerne has been added to it to improve the quality. Large areas of sweet potatoes are also grown, part of which are available to the chooks to eat.

There are a few characteristics about the block that are of interest. The winds come mainly from the south, but sometimes the trees and hills add a swirling effect to the gusts. Celia has observed where the winds come from, and has planted trees to counteract them. The house has 60,000 litres of water tanks attached to it, and in the two years they have been living there, Celia and her husband have not needed to purchase water.



***I don't think this is part of the real wildlife, among the pineapples & orchids!***

Now for the fun part (for me, anyway) of the visit to Celia's property – the chooks. With the background of growing up on a poultry farm, and after having read widely on the subject, Celia decided to raise Welsummer hens. These are a light-weight breed, which means that the adult birds are around 6lbs, and they are well suited to sub-tropical conditions as

their feathers are not particularly downy. The markings on their feathers are quite striking.

Welsommers originated from the town of Welsum in Holland, and the birds that Celia is raising are a mixture of five different Dutch breeds. Celia is crossing the fowls with some other breeds to add some vigour to the flock. Being an "old breed" bird, the Welsommers are good layers for many years, producing 3 or 4 eggs a week. They do not lay daily, as do breeds that are developed for egg production only. Some of the birds are currently moulting – I suggested that this indicates winter is on its way, but Celia has been watching the hens, and feels it may be as a result of the recent rain and high humidity.

The chooks have a very satisfactory life. They have a dark and safe house to sleep in, a large animal-proof run with a covered roof to keep the rain out, and then a large grassed area in which they free-range for most of the day. They enjoy dust-bathing in the run area, which also has large amounts of deep litter for them to scratch about in. Apart from the grass, the compost heap and the sweet potato plants that they have access to, the hens are fed mixed grains and kitchen scraps. At night they are fed sunflower seeds and wheat, so that they go to bed with a full crop. They are also supplied with crushed oyster shells as an alternative to shell-grit – oyster shells are flakey and soft, and more accessible for digestion. To keep the birds healthy, Celia sometimes adds garlic to their mash.

Celia also breeds birds, and this year "the girls" have produced sixty chickens, with a success rate of 98%. These are either raised naturally by the mother, or are incubated. Celia does not use an electric system for incubating the chicks, as she feels that the temperatures in Queensland are adequate. Rather she puts the eggs in a cardboard box with one side cut down – this is because when anything peers into a box from above, the chickens become scared as they believe they are being attacked by a predator. A woolly material is pinned at a height just above the chickens, so that when they feel its

***Continued Pg 11***

**Q & A - 20 March**  
**By Karen Hart**

At the March GCOG meeting, Maria spoke about growing **Garlic**.

The best variety for the Gold Coast is Glen Large, available from Green Harvest (buy in October and store until April/May. Before planting, it needs to be refrigerated for up to 6 weeks). Asian Purple is also available. Soft neck varieties are suitable – hard neck types will not grow here. A ph test of the soil should be carried out – it may need lime (gypsum) as needs to be around 6.3 – 7.0. Nitrogen, boron & sulphur all leach from the soil with our heavy summer rains, others could be 'locked up'.

Q. If a big clove is planted, does one get big garlic, and if a small clove is planted, does one get small garlic?

A. The bigger clove would have more energy and if conditions are right it would be big, but a small clove with the right conditions could be as big or bigger. Think 'best' plant to get the 'best' crop – do not plant two 'mongrels' to get a 'thoroughbred'!

Lise had her best yield last year, but did 'best practice' – ie green manure crop, correct ph etc.

Q. What about eggshells as a **calcium source**?

A. Not superfine enough; also will not break down quickly enough.

Q. Where does '**boron**' come from? Borax?

A. Borax is too strong – it will kill organisms. Boracic acid can be obtained from a compounding chemist (Tugun & Broadbeach). Mix with compost when applying it – it can also be added to compost heaps at 'curing' stage – after high heat stage. Ross uses one thimbleful to 15litres of water. He sprayed an olive tree, the whole tree, and obtained a great crop. You need to feed the soil as well. Banana trees often have a calcium and boron deficiency; you need to add lime and boron.

Q. A herb died and was found to have **mealy bugs** on the roots.

A. Mealy bugs can be found on many plants' roots. The soil may be too dry.

Q. Judy found bright yellow **mushrooms** at Ashmore Primary School, so she bagged them and threw them away. She wondered if they were some exotic variety or poisonous?

A. The suggestion was that it is best to destroy them in case they are inedible. Otherwise, it's not worth the risk to children.

Q. How do you grow mushrooms? How do you do-it-yourself?

A. Bunnings sell a kit. DIY is quite a task, and lots of research is required. There is a mushroom farm at Uki, and you used to be able to buy spent mushroom compost, but now it's two to three times more expensive. John says that we need to learn to identify field mushrooms and pick them when they appear after a lot of rain.

Q. Diane wondered what caused her **oranges** to split?

A. Could be a lack of water, or too much water after drought.

Q. Jill has **scale** on her grapefruit tree.

A. Use Eco oil (white oil) watered down and sprayed over the foliage. Don't do it when it's too hot, however, or it will 'fry' the leaves. Wait until cooler weather. You can also pressure spray or rub it off.

Q. A problem with a **mandarin** tree was that it has half yellow leaves and the other half has healthy green leaves. Which has all the fruit?

A. It could have a borer. You should check for 'sawdust' attached to a cobweb. If it's there, chop that part of the tree away. If holes are found, a straightened paperclip can be inserted to squash the grub. Another thing could be over zealotness with a whipper snipper or collar rot from grass mulch around the trunk of the tree.

Marion mentioned that she began taking **folate** 13 years ago and has since found it in many foods such as snake beans, tatsoi, English spinach, mizuna and kangkong.

Heather mentioned that there are lots of **flowers** in the seed bank, in pink packets. There are: giant cosmos – yellow or orange; calendula; lupins – edible seeds; orange marigolds; mixed nasturtiums – also edible, both flowers and leaves in salads; Queen Anne’s lace – attracts beneficial insects; borage – edible blue flower, loved by bees.

### Gardening on the Gold Coast

Continued from pg14

be discouraged. There are at least 50 different varieties which will thrive here, given the right treatment.

Roses can be purchased in containers and planted out all year, but are generally more expensive than the bare-rooted buys, which are only available in late autumn and winter. Even container roses prefer a move in the right months, which begin now.

Roses like deep, rich and well-drained soil. If your soil is acid, add lime well before planting. If the soil is clay, dig deep and wide, and add plenty of organic matter. They love blood and bone and well-rotted manure. Incorporate liquid fertilising, top-dressing and mulching of the roses into your maintenance calendar.

In this area, rose pruning can now begin and continue until the end of July. Remove dead wood, old wood, weak wood and branches crowding each other, and shorten the remainder by one third. Make clean, slanting cuts. New plants shouldn’t need pruning. Leave the older bushes until July. Nematodes are the roses’ greatest worry here, so be sure to plant nasturtiums under the bushes.

**Natives:** It is our responsibility to grow our area’s native vegetation where possible. A wide variety of vines and shrubs inhabited these parts and their beauty – sometimes subtle, sometimes bold – is unique.

Most Australian natives will not handle much fertiliser or cultivation and our coastal varieties prefer a light soil and good mulch. Water well when transplanting with a weak liquid, organic fertiliser. Plantings of container-grown natives can be done all year, but the next three months are considered ideal.

### Getting To Know

Continued from pg 9

soft texture, they identify it as a mother hen. The chickens stay in the box for about ten days, by which time they will have developed adequate feathers to be able to move around.

I asked Celia does she name her chooks. Occasionally she does, and I was introduced to “Road Runner”, who tends to dart around very energetically after bugs. At least this is more original than one of my friends who had a number of Rhode Island Red hens that all looked exactly the same – so she called them all “Ethel”!!



**Part of the flock – a healthy looking group who have plenty of space to free-range.**

Just before it was time to leave this tranquil setting, I asked Celia does she have a favourite chook story, so here it is.

Celia had a number of hens, and one in particular kept escaping out of the run and coming to the front door of the house to lay her eggs. This obviously was not “best practice”. Then the hen raised some chickens that Celia did not wish to keep, so she gave them all to her sister, who also bred poultry. The next spring, when the chickens were grown, Celia’s sister gave the hen back.

So, **after eight months of being away**, the hen returned to Celia’s property – and immediately started escaping the run and heading to the house to once again lay her eggs by the front door.

**Gary Zimmer Workshop  
By Roger Peterson**

1) Key is the soil's microlife and ensuring that the microbes are adequately fed and kept moist. It is the dead microbes and their waste that feeds the plants. Process also includes worms that produce humic acid that stimulates plant enzymes and helps convert minerals to plant food.

2) His evaluation of soil process is:

- ph of soil
- look at Phosphorus and Potassium - phosphorus must be high
- look at Calcium and Magnesium
- trace elements incl Boron and Zinc

3) To feed garden, use mulch (carbon - organic matter >2%) + compost (already full of compounds made by microbes for plants to absorb as a steady release over 3-6 months) + minerals (NPK + trace elements) + green manure crops. Give the soil 2-3 years to develop its microlife.

4) Protect your soil's middle zone. Initially if soil does not easily absorb water, OK to rip middle zone but use compost and mulch to quickly protect. Mostly only ever need to disturb top 5cms.

5) Gary used molasses (sugar) sparingly as a plant stimulator (keep in mind his soil is covered in ice for 6 months of the year) - however a well balanced garden doesn't need sugar added for its plants as this occurs in the normal photosynthesis process.

6) Gary's Soil Mineral Hierarchy

- Boron
- Silica
- Calcium
- Nitrogen
- Magnesium
- Phosphorus
- Carbon
- Potassium

7) Mineral Sources

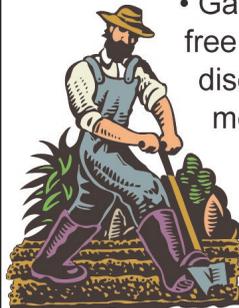
Mineral	Blood and Bone	Dynamic Lifter
Nitrogen	5.4	3.7
Phosphorus	4	2
Potassium	1	1.8
Sulphur	0.8	
Calcium	8	6.7
Iron	0.24	0.1
Manganese		0.06
Zinc		0.03
Magnesium		
Boron		
Cobalt		
Selenium		
Bentonite		
Carbon		
Silica		
Copper		
Molybdenum		
Chromium		
Sodium		

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Note: Products may vary slightly from batch to batch.

Alrock Extraphos & Potash	Charlie Carp	Trace Elements (Richgro)	Bag Poultry Manure	Bag Cow Manure	Purasil*	Seasol
-	10	--	3.1	2.1		0.2
3	2		2.8	0.4		0.5
-	6		2	0.6		4.3
1	yes	11.5	0.3	yes		0.2
8.7	yes	3.5	1.8	yes		0.1
2.7	yes	12	yes	yes		300ppm
800ppm	yes	3.1	yes			5.4
70ppm	yes	1.1	yes			32ppm
1.4	yes	2	0.4			0.04
10ppm	yes	0.1	yes			13ppm
20ppm	yes					0.4
5ppm						0.02
9						
6.8						
1.8					90%	
	yes	0.5	yes			
	yes	0.04				3ppm
	yes					
	yes					



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## Gardening on the Gold Coast & Thereabouts

This is a relatively calm month if the weather has been kind and your plantings have been diligent. It is not too late for plantings which should have been made during the previous two months, but for some of the varieties, the results will not be the same.

There is a little fertilising, pruning, potting and planting out to be done this month and it is also an ideal time for the leisurely planting of native species such as acacia, banksia, grevillia and melaluka. You will be blessed with native birds in years to come.

**Vegetables:** The fact the broad bean is really a cold climate plant does not deter those addicted to the unusual, faintly nutty taste. There are no half-measures with broad beans – you either love them or hate them!

With some knowledge and co-operative weather, broad beans can be grown. They must not have too much rain and they must flower in the cooler months, so sow now and next month. Make sure the soil is fertile from the addition of well-rotted organic matter – a little richer than for other varieties of beans. However, don't overdo, as leaf growth will outstrip the flowers.

Broad beans also like an overdose of lime, so apart from digging some into the soil, rake a little extra into the top surface and then sprinkle some more between the rows. This also deters snails and slugs from attacking the young shoots.

**Flowers:** In the early part of the month, many of last month's selection can be planted, but be quick. (Refer to GCOG March newsletter.)

**Plantings include:** Bulbs, calendula, cornflower, lobelia, lupin, marigold, pansy, poppy, primula, snap-dragon, sweet pea & viola.

**Roses:** Roses will grow in cooler, drier climates with less effort and greater result than in our area, but that does not mean we should

*Continued on pg 11*

## FRUIT TREES

**Custard Apples:** Peak harvest period. Harvest every 3 to 7 days. Watering can be tapered off. If you have not done your spraying for mealy bug, do it now. Spray individual fruit with pest oil or wipe on metho and water (30% metho & 70% water).

**Figs:** Taper off the water.

**Lychee:** Don't let trees dry out. Check for Erinose mite. Spray with wettable sulphur.

**Low Chill Stone Fruit:** Fertilise trees with a high organic potassium fertilizer, 50 gms per sq meter to the drip line of trees. Prune trees now – 1/3 to 1/4 of the tips can be taken off. Any inward or downward wood can be pruned.

**Mango:** Apply gypsum if soil pH is 6 or more. If below 6 pH, apply lime. 50 gms per sq meter of either. Continue with copper based spray for anthracnose or with 25 mls leaf microbes and 5 gms wettable sulphur per 1 litre of water.

**Passion-fruit:** Water can be tapered off. Harvest fallen fruit every 3-4 days.

**Pawpaw:** If you have not applied boron, apply now. 1 teaspoon per mature tree. 40% of annual fertiliser can be applied now to mature trees (20 grams per sq meter of a high organic potassium fertiliser).

**Persimmon:** Main harvest time. Declining water needs. Apply a little super-fine lime and gypsum, 20 gm of each per sq m.

**Strawberries:** Plants should be coming away well. A little organic potassium fertiliser can be applied now. Use fish emulsion or kelp spray regularly over plants to keep in good health. Add 20 mls molasses per litre of water + 10 mls leaf microbes.

**Bananas:** De-sucker plants, cutting at ground level. Cut out centre with a sharp downward motion around the circumference to the centre, forming a well. If they do not die, use 20mls of kero to the bottom of this well.

**Citrus:** If any scale and fungal problems still exist a further spray with pest oil and leaf microbes will be needed. Add the pest oil + 15 ml per litre of the leaf microbes. Early varieties can be picked this month.

## VEGETABLES

**APRIL:**

Asian greens, Asparagus, Beans (French), Beetroot, *Broad beans*, Broccoli, *Brussels Sprouts*, Cabbage, Capsicum, Carrot, Cauliflower, Celery, Chilli, *Celeriac*, Endive, Garlic, *Kale*, Kohlrabi, Lettuce, Leek, Mustard Greens, Onion, Parsnip, Pea, Potato, Radish, *Rhubarb*, Shallots, Silverbeet, Spinach, *Squash*, Strawberry, Sweet Potato, Tomato, Turnip, *Zucchini*.

**MAY:**

Asian greens, *Asparagus crowns*, Beans (French), Beetroot, Broad beans, Broccoli, Cabbage, Capsicum, Carrot, Cauliflower, Celery, *Celeriac*, Chilli, Endive, Garlic, *Kale*, Kohlrabi, Leek, Lettuce, Mustard Greens, Onion, Parsnip, Pea, Potato, Radish, *Rhubarb*, Shallots, Silverbeet, Spinach, Strawberry, Sweet Potato, Tomato, Turnip.

**Please Note:** We have just noticed that our Vegetable lists have had a couple of errors. I need to do a thorough check of this list but unfortunately have not had a chance to check the vegies in italics.

## HERBS

**APRIL**

**Annual:** Borage, Calendula, Chamomile, Chervil, Coriander, Dill, Garlic, Italian parsley, Misome, Mizuna, Nasturtium, Rocket.

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

**MAY:**

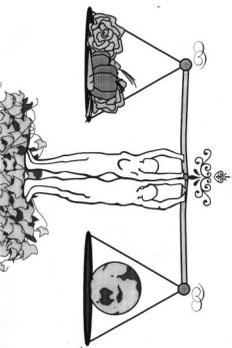
**Annual:** Borage, Calendula, Chamomile, Chervil, Coriander, Dill, Garlic, Giant Red Lettuce, Herb Robert, Italian parsley, Misome, Mizuna, Mustard Lettuce, Nasturtium, Rocket.

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

# Happy Easter

If not claimed in 14 days, please return to:  
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**NEWSLETTER**

**Meetings held:**  
3rd Thursday of the Month

**Meeting place:**  
Cnr Guineas Creek Road  
& Coolgardie Street  
Elanora, Gold Coast

**Next meeting:**  
Thursday 15 May 2014