



# GROWING NATURALLY



Toowoomba Community Organic Gardens Association Incorporated

February 2022

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## What Has Been Happening at the Gardens

I hope everyone had a wonderful Christmas and New Year. With members returning from holidays we are getting into full swing with projects and the recent rain has everything flourishing at the Gardens.

Trevor, our wonderful landscaper, is doing a great job in the Founders Garden. All the sleepers have now been replaced and it looks terrific. He just needs to finish the back retaining wall and ramp, then the Accessible Garden. It is all very exciting.

The November working bee and barbeque were a great success. Everyone pitched in and in a short time the members made an enormous difference to the Gardens. We want to say a big thank you to everyone who came and contributed to the morning. We certainly earned our sausage sizzle lunch. The barbeque was a brilliant idea for the Gardens to reward the members for their hard work. It was also great as it meant we could end the working bee on a very social note and welcome back Carrie.

We received a request from the "Field Guide" reporter. The Field Guide is a quarterly newspaper highlighting people, places and events in the Toowoomba region. Nicola, the reporter and Zoe, the photographer came to two social days and talked to members about the Gardens. We look forward to reading the finished article. We are letting Toowoomba know we are here with Facebook, our website, newspaper articles, Bunnings sausage sizzles and open days and via all the members of the Community Gardens. I wonder whether we will ever get to the stage where we are not Toowoomba's best kept secret,

Graham from the Australian Native Plant Association paid us a visit with the aim of helping us in the native plant area in particular, as well as in other parts of the Gardens. What a marvellous collaboration between the two clubs. With their knowledge and our underutilized areas we can plan and work together to introduce more native plants into the Gardens.

At the November meeting, Jeanette resigned as Secretary. We thank Jeanette for the many hours of 'behind the scenes work' she did. It has been much appreciated.

The Committee has appointed three new members - Nettie, Sharon and Pauline. We look forward to working together.

Invoices will be sent out over the next week or so. Instead of the annual key hire, the committee have decided to reintroduce the \$20 key deposit system. So, for the plot holders not returning, please provide us with your BSB and account number for a refund when your keys are returned.

All the plots have now been hired out and for the first time since pre-COVID we have got a plot hire waiting list.

The new season has brought new members who bring new energy, new ideas, new learning and new friendships. We welcome Tim, Val and Mason. Life is great when you are a member of TCOG.

Take care and be safe.

Joanne, President



<https://www.instagram.com/tcogainc/>

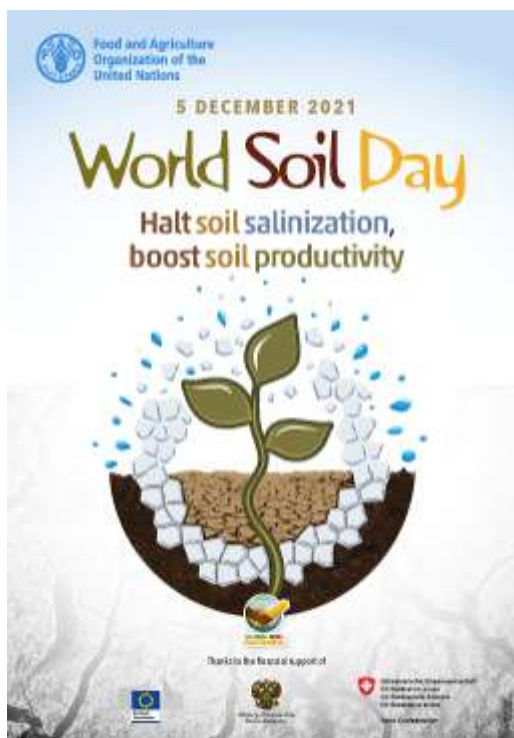


TOOWOOMBA  
community  
ORGANIC GARDENS

## The Importance of Community Gardens and Volunteers in Soil Protection

Each year, 5 December represents two important dates for all the people involved with the activities carried out in the community gardens: **World Soil Day (WSD)**; and **International Volunteer Day (IVD)**. Both dates were designated by the United Nations as international observance days.

The 68<sup>th</sup> session of the General Assembly of the United Nations (held in December 2013) designated 5 December 2014 as the first official World Soil Day. It is held annually on 5 December to focus attention on the importance of healthy soil, and to advocate for the sustainable management of soil resources. This date was recommended by the International Union of Soil Sciences (IUSS) in 2002. The date 5 December was chosen because it



corresponds with the official birthday of the late HM King Bhumibol Adulyadej, King of Thailand, who was one of the main proponents of this initiative.

In 2021, the World Soil Day 2021 campaign is "**Halt soil salinization, boost soil productivity**", and aims to raise awareness of the importance of maintaining healthy ecosystems and human well-being by addressing the growing challenges in soil management, fighting soil salinization, increasing soil awareness and encouraging societies to improve soil health.

International Volunteer Day (IVD) was adopted at the 120<sup>th</sup> plenary meeting of the United Nations General Assembly on 17 December 1985 as an international observance day to celebrate the power and potential of volunteerism.



Volunteers are an expression of the participation of individuals in the community where they belong and also abroad. The citizens become involved in community development, helping to solve problems and to transform the surrounding community through their activities via a non-profit, collective project. Volunteering has been associated with the improved morale, self-esteem, positive affect and well-being of the participants. Volunteers are a real example of the values endorsing solidarity, participation, organisation and gratitude, and are the greatest human and social capital that organisations have. *(continued...)*

### What to Plant in February

#### Herbs

- Basil
- Chives
- Coriander
- Florence Fennel
- Lemongrass
- Mint
- Oregano
- Parsley
- Tarragon



Brussels Sprouts

#### Vegetables

- |                        |                |              |
|------------------------|----------------|--------------|
| Amaranth               | Celery         | Potato       |
| Climbing & Dwarf Beans | Collard Greens | Radish       |
| Beetroot               | Cucumbers      | Swedes       |
| Broccoli               | Endive         | Salsify      |
| Brussels Sprouts       | Kohl Rabi      | Silverbeet   |
| Cabbage                | Leeks          | Tomatoes     |
| Carrots                | Lettuce        | Sweet Potato |
| Cauliflower            | Mustard Greens | Spring Onion |
|                        | Onions         | Turnips      |

## The Importance of Community Gardens and Volunteers in Soil Protection

Soil supports life and provides support and nutrients for the plants. It is a complex ecosystem with an important role in food production and in sustaining life on earth. Hence, the importance of conserving and preserving the soils, and in our case of following **Sustainable Gardening Practice** (see Members' Handbook), and also of reducing soil degradation, maintaining a healthy and perennial plant cover, mulching, planting a cover crop, etc. So you, as a volunteer, have an important role to play in creating awareness about the importance of soil health.

The world will be a better place in which to live with the participation of volunteers, and even much better when they contribute to the conservation and protection of soils.

Whatever the setting where volunteering is carried out, this is an opportunity to celebrate and to thank people who dedicate their precious time and effort to voluntary service. For us in the Community Gardens, this is a great opportunity to give an acknowledgement to all of our volunteers past and present in recognition for their work for a better world. To all of you our

heartfelt  
thanks.



Emilio Anteliz  
24 November 2021

Your World is changing.  
Are you?  
**Volunteer!**



### New Garden Edges

Here is a photo of the work that has been completed in the Founders Garden by Trevor the Landscaper.

### Quick Notes for Your Calendar

Many new events are being planned for 2022 including:

**25 February to 6 March—Stanthorpe Apple and Grape Festival**

Includes open gardens. More information: [appleandgrape.org](http://appleandgrape.org)

**Saturday 12 & Sunday 13 March—Brisbane Garden Expo**

Rocklea Showgrounds, corner Gobarra Street & Ipswich Road, Brisbane

[www.plantexpo.com.au](http://www.plantexpo.com.au)

## Warrigal Greens (*Tetragonia tetragonoides*)

Warrigal **Greens** are one of the most common edible native plants. It is also known as Native Spinach, New Zealand Spinach, or Botany Bay Greens. The leaves must be blanched before eating, as they contain oxalates which in large quantities can have adverse effects. Simply blanch in boiling water for about 10–15 seconds, remove and refresh under cold water. As an attractive succulent (think thick leaves), it is becoming increasingly popular with chefs as a bush food (although it's now mostly commercially sourced), and can be found on the menu of many top-end restaurants.

One of the first native plants eaten by Captain Cook's crew to ward off scurvy, warrigal greens can be found along Australia's coastline where it grows best in saline soil. It's an incredibly versatile, easy-to-grow vegetable. Warrigal greens have a fresh, grassy flavour with a slightly bitter finish.

### Benefits

- *They are a water-wise native Australian plant which grows here so much easier than spinach: they self-seed, so no matter how much love you don't give them, they will grow right back.*
- *Warrigal Greens are high in fibre, vitamin C, and healthy antioxidants.*
- *Warrigal greens are said to be effective as both compost accelerators and soil improvers.*
- *They also attract lizards.*



### Where can I find them growing in the Community Gardens?

You will find them throughout the Gardens. Some are grown 'intentionally' in some hired plots. Also, you will see them in the Permaculture Garden and the Orchard areas.

**Fun Fact:** *The final meal taken on board the Endeavour after leaving Botany Bay was skate and warrigal greens, according to the diary of ship's botanist Joseph Banks. Banks also took some seeds back with him to Kew Gardens in 1771, making them the first Australian food plant to be cultivated abroad.*

- Lyndell

## Accessible Garden Design at our Community Gardens

**Accessible (or Universal Garden Design)** is a type of garden design to make Gardens more accessible and enjoyable to all regardless of age, abilities, challenges, and mobility issues. This design allows people who use wheelchairs or walking aids and for those who may have other impairments (e.g. communication, emotional, or mental health issues) to benefit from improved access, inclusion, and participation in gardens. This design also makes gardens more accessible for people using prams.

*Wicking Beds: Water need is reduced by as much as 90% compared to ordinary raised garden beds. This results in a significantly lower impact on the environment and less money on water bills.*

At our Community Gardens, we already cater for people with disabilities and impairments in some areas of our gardens (but not all areas). Thanks to our Grant from the Gambling Community Benefit Fund, we are now delivering two projects which will not only make our 'Founders Garden' more accessible; but will also fund us to build a new 'Accessible Garden' which will include some seating, shaded areas, and Wicking Beds. Two of these Wicking Beds will be 'wheelchair accessible'. *(continued...)*



## Accessible Garden Design at our Community Gardens

The Founders' Garden Project commenced on 11 January and the Accessible Garden project will commence after completion of this project. The projects are being carried out by a local and licensed Landscaper, Plant & Paves Landscapes. Watch for regular updates on these projects in our Newsletter and on our Facebook page.

### Features of 'accessible garden' design:

- Raised garden beds to help people with balance, mobility, and physical restrictions, and to avoid bending and stooping.
- Containers with wheels, which can be moved around easily to accessible positions and to catch the sunlight.
- Pathways which are smooth, non-slip, accessible, and level.
- Having water supply which is handy.
- Placing plants (vegetables, herbs, and flowers) together according to their water needs.
- Have an equipment storage area or shed nearby.
- Provide shade for working in the garden in summer.
- Provide ready access to toilets.
- Provide tables that are 'wheelchair accessible' where people can do potting and planting together.



*"It was such a pleasure to sink one's hands into the warm earth, to feel at one's fingertips the possibilities of the new season." Kate Morton, The Forgotten Garden.*



### Ways people with different abilities and skills can benefit from community gardening include:

- Volunteerism - opportunity to contribute to the broader community and build self-esteem through 'giving back'.
- Communication and social skills – from being involved in groups and community activities.
- Fitness – gardening is a great physical activity.
- Confidence – gardening helps to develop a range of new skills.

- Wellbeing – gardening is a great way to relax and reduce stress levels.
- Physical ability – through improved motor skills.
- Nutrition – gardening provides an opportunity to learn about healthy food and healthy food choices.
- Knowledge – it's a chance to learn about the environment and nature.
- Enjoyment of life – gardening is a wonderful leisure activity where tasks and routines can be varied and shared.

**NB TCOGA 'Accessible Garden' project is tailored to our needs and preferences as well as legislative requirements.**



## Warrigal Greens Quiche

With all the rain Warrigal Greens are growing rampant in my garden, so what better way to deal with them than to eat them. Here we have a lovely recipe to make them very tasty indeed, not to mention the nutritional benefits!

### Ingredients

2 tablespoons water  
1 medium onion,  
chopped  
1½ cups Warrigal  
Greens  
wholemeal pastry  
2 eggs  
¾ cup skim milk  
½ cup grated cheese  
¼ teaspoon ground  
pepper



### Method

1. Preheat oven to 220°C and oil a quiche dish.

2. Heat water in a frying pan and add onion and Warrigal Greens. Cook until soft and onion is clear.

3. Roll out the pastry and line the quiche dish with pastry.

4. Beat together eggs and milk, add the cheese, Warrigal greens and onions. Add pepper and mix well.

5. Pour mixture into quiche dish

6. Bake in oven for 5 minutes, then reduce temperature to 160°C and bake for a further 25–30 minutes or until set.

7. Serve hot or cold with a salad.

- Bushtucker—Warrigal Greens—Gardening 4 Kids

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