



GROWING NATURALLY



Toowoomba Community Organic Gardens Association Incorporated

September 2019

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SOCIAL GARDENING

Wednesdays 8.30-11.00am

Come along and join in the fun!

Sundays 8.30-11.00am

All Members & Visitors Welcome



What is Happening at the Gardens

August was a very busy month for us. Everywhere you look you can see improvements. You can hear people talking and laughing. It is truly a great place to be.

A few of our hard working, creative members are working on a project in the Permaculture Garden. It will be fabulous when it's completed, stop and have a chat to them, lend a hand be part of it. Others are chipping in pulling weeds and giving this area a overdue general tidy up. Ken and Andrew have the tank stand ready for the new tank, it have been ordered, awaiting delivery and to be installed. Wouldn't it be great if it rained soon after that.

Just a few things to consider. The main one is out lack of water. I know a few of our plot holders are going to hold off planting their summer garden until it rains and we get the tank filled and each garden has had a good natural drink from the heavens. This of course makes perfect sense as we might not have the luxury of turning on the Council mains as the damns are getting low too. MULCH is also another way of conserving water. It has many advantages. It is also part of each plot holders commitment when they hired their garden.

Many of us are conserving water in our homes and it is great to listen and discuss people's ideas and methods of limiting and recycling the water. I shall attempt to record these and include them in a future newsletter.

The front entrance to the garden is very inviting thanks to Jeanette and Emilio. Inviting for us, our visitors, the bees and native birds- kookaburras, blue fairy wrens, willy wag tails and the magpies. Please be aware the they are nesting in the native area, avoid it if you can or protect yourself from their swooping.

Thanks to their generosity, Carol and Ed, and those with trailers, we will be out soon collecting the cow manure. It will be spread though out the garden but there will be some leftover for us to sell. Marvellous resource to improve the garden, soil structure, feed your plants and a fundraiser for us. Remember this point when planning your summer garden.

Speaking of fundraising, Jeanette does a fantastic job propagating plants for us. Available at the moment are- cherry roma tomato's, green snow peas, Russian kale, bok choy and a variety of lettuce. Limited supply available at the moment, more on its way. Just talk to Jeanette, plan ahead and be patient. I have found that these seedlings seam to do much better a they are raised using organic methods and natural fertilizers. Also a fundraiser for the club and cheaper and better then you would get from the shops.

Thank you everyone, Joanne

A Note From Mike (Secretary)

Most members were advised last year when our Bylaws where updated and reissued that watering hours at the gardens are unambiguously restricted. Watering in the gardens is regulated by the Toowoomba Regional Council (TRC) with the hours for Toowoomba residents - Tuesday to Sunday 4pm to 10am. It is further restricted by an association Bylaw which restricts gardening to daylight hours. In the next month start and end times will be extended as days get longer. Due to problems physically restricting water supply, supply at the taps generally continued until last week. We attempted to get assistance from TRC but recently it was accepted they could not help. They did however approve of the efforts we were making and agreed with our planned action. Since that action was completed on the 4th of August water is turned on from 6 am to 10 am and from 4 pm to 6 pm Tuesday to Sunday. This means the same restrictions apply to watering at the gardens as apply to Toowoomba residents in general. I apologise for the delay in this advice. I know the delay has caused waste journeys for at least one member. You can ring or email me if at any time in the next few months you find that water has not been available within the regulated hours or if seems to be available outside the proper hours.

Jobs for September

- ◆ Fertilise bulbs, paw paws, citrus and roses and water well.
- ◆ Protect seedlings from snails and slugs with non-toxic, iron based baits.
- ◆ Prune hibiscus now and azaleas, poinsettias and snowflake bush after flowering.
- ◆ Repot and fertilize indoor plants.
- ◆ Control azalea lace bug, aphids, scale, leaf miner and bronze orange bugs.
- ◆ Tip - prune native shrubs to promote bushy growth
- ◆ Mulch potted plants to keep away the weeds and keep pots moist as the temperature warms up
- ◆ Weeding (always a thing) to catch them before they run away from you or come to seed

Let's have a Fun Fundraiser for TCOGA

Back in May we applied to Bunnings North to go on their Sausage Sizzle roster. Their offer of SATURDAY 12th OCTOBER is a good time of the year is a busy store.

Historically clubs and charities raise, on average, just under \$1000 for the day, but with the good energy and enthusiasm from our Club members, we could exceed this.

This is a great opportunity to help the Toowoomba Organic Gardens Association to improve what can be done in Goggs Street with extra funding. Please volunteer so that we can have 4 or 5 people available for 7am to 4pm.

Please let us know if you have any previous experience at a Bunnings sausage sizzle or with serving food safely, as that would be an added bonus. However, we really just want everyone to pitch in to help with this great day.

You can email the secretary, or talk to one of the Committee Members at the Gardens, or put your name onto the list that will be created and left in The Shed for you to write your name and preferred time on.

We will all meet prior to October 12th to discuss things and to make final arrangements. We await confirmation of your offer to help.

Creating Your own Terrarium

What you'll need

A glass container such as a fishbowl, jar or even an old wine glass
 Small slow growing indoor plant
 Aggregate ie rocks, gravel or pebbles
 Horticultural charcoal
 Potting mix (well draining, open and coarse)
 Decorative accents: pebbles, stones glass

chips

Step 1: Place the aggregate at the base of glass container for drainage, approx. 1.5cm

Step 2: Add layer of charcoal, which acts like a filter to stop plant from rotting, 1cm deep

Step 3: Layer enough potting mix to cover plant roots

Step 4: Place plant/s into potting mix and firm down then add decorative accents

Step 5: Gently water in with spray bottle

Trips for you Terrarium

Water as needed: when the rocks at the bottom are dry, Avoid direct sunlight



What to Plant in September

Herbs

Alfalfa/ Lucerne Basil Anise Hyssop Borage Calendula Caraway Catnip Camomile Chervil Chickory Chives Chives Garlic Coriander Dandelion Dill Echinacea Endive Evening Primrose Fennel	Fenugreek Feverfew Hyssop Lemon Balm Mint Marjoram Mustard greens Nasturtium	Oregano Parsley Rocket Salad Burnett Sage Thyme Vetch Watercress
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Common Vetch



Vegetables

Asparagus Beetroot Broad Beans Beans— French Cabbage Capsicum Chilli Carrots Cucumber Celery Eggplant Jerusalem Artichoke Kale Lettuce Mizuna	Mustard Greens Onion Pumpkin Potatoes Radish Rockmelon Sweet Corn Shallots	Squash Spinach Spring Onion Strawberries Tomato Watermelon Zucchini
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Echinacea



Veg Out

Some simple reminders about preparing our vegetable gardens ready for spring/summer planting.

War on weeds: We all enjoy the vigorous nature in which weeds grow and seem to pop up anywhere they want, even right in the middle of our garden beds. And that's because that's where the best of everything is; water, nourishment and space to spread out (but more on that later). Best way to deal with your weeds is to pull them right out and dispose of them in the bin!

Out with the old: Removing or harvesting winter veggies that have done their dash is next on the to do list. Collecting them to freeze or pickle if your that way inclined or placing the ones that are far gone into the compost is the way to go. Don't forget anything that's diseased or pest ridden should go straight into the bin as to not spread the problem.

Nourish to flourish: Now is the best time to get in and give your gardens a good feed of organic matter and compost. This we blow your mind later when your spring crops are going crazy! A good dose of a soil improver like Seasol liquid won't go astray either.

Water works: Over time soil can become hydrophobic (water repellent) and this is a problem, especially in this time of drought. So adding a wetting agent to your soil is the way to go, thus ensuring each drop is not wasted and help your plants to thrive, by getting the water to the plant roots.

Preparing for Planting: last but not least, some veggies like spinach and lettuce can go straight into the ground now. While others like tomatoes can be sown in your greenhouse ready to when it's a little warmer. Don't forget to apply mulch to keep those weeds (that we've worked hard to remove) away and keep the soil warm and hold that moisture in.

With Thanks from Bunnings for your helpful reminders

Considering the Wildlife by Jeanette Walton



With the drought biting hard I have started to notice that it is making life very difficult for our wildlife. The birdbath I have in my garden is being patronised by more and more birds needing a drink and a bath, the water level drops very quickly and get rather messy and needs refreshing every couple of days.

Also it is very important for our bees to have somewhere to get water, this was made obvious to me recently when I was watering near my lavender which had a lot of busy bees, suddenly a bee swooped in on a plant that still had water on the foliage and drank from the droplets very thirstily. Please make water available in your garden for the wildlife.

Yesterday I found a Lorikeet that had dropped dead under my Magnolia tree. It had no mark in it and when I felt it's little body it was so thin, it's breast bone was so sharp, there was no flesh on the poor little body.



With it being so dry the gums are not flowering as much and the other good sources for these birds is very limited. Most gardens and parks are planted with exotics, there are very few native plants that our native birds require for food sources. There is just not enough to go around. I have noticed there are not the large groups of parrots flying around any more, and

it's not possible for them to have gone somewhere else; as there is nowhere for them to go. If you can make a safe place available to put out some wild bird seed or spare fruit you may help some of our birds get through these hard times.

The Magpies and Kookaburras are hungry too, the ground is so hard and the grubs and worms are not near the surface, as soon as I'm digging or weeding a Magpie arrives and watches carefully hoping I may turn up a grub.

FRUIT FLY

It is very difficult to beat the dreaded fruit fly. One of the methods I have found to have a fairly good result is a product called Eco-Naturalure, a fruit fly bait concentrate. It is a little pot of dark fruity smelling thick paste that is mixed with a little water and with a brush I paint it in patches around the garden, not on the fruit. It lures the fruit fly to come and have a taste, it contains Spinosad which kills the fruit fly, both male and female. The one problem I found with it was that it would wash off if there was rain or a sprinkler. I found the solution to this problem by making little 'bells' of the cut off tops of plastic bottles or tops of aerosol cans hung off string among the plants, I regularly painted the solution inside the "bell" where it would not wash off. It is not cheap but a little goes a long way and

Quick Notes for Your Calendar

Sunday 1 September 9.30am —TCOGA AGM at The Gardens

Please come along to the meeting and consider joining the committee, it's great fun to be involved

Toowoomba Carnival of Flowers

20th—29th September, for more information and details on the events including floral parade, open gardens and The Chronical Garden Competition visit: <https://www.tcof.com.au/>

27 - 28 September 2019: Springtime On The Mountain Open Gardens Trail

Tamborine Mountain. Five diverse and delightful home gardens for public display. A sausage sizzle at the Botanic Gardens and plant sales. Devonshire tea and light lunches available at the Showgrounds. Local produce and botanical art and craft for sale. 9.00am-4.00pm. Trail passes \$20. Single garden passes \$5.

Trail passes can be purchased at all the open gardens (cash only). For more information, go to www.tmbotanicgardens.org.au or the Tamborine Mountain Garden Club Facebook page.

Sweet Potato Soup

A quick soup to help with those cooler nights we get in September as we welcome spring back for another year.

Ingredients

1kg of Sweet Potato
1 Large Onion
Chicken Stock approx. 1L
Garlic (to your taste preference)
1-2 Tablespoons Peanut Butter
Butter for cooking
1/4 teaspoon (or to taste) ground cumin
Salt and Pepper

Method

Dice onion and cut up sweet potato into 1 cm cubes.
Fry onion in butter until translucent, add garlic and fry till fragrant.
Add sweet potato and fry quickly covering potato in the butter

Add stock, enough to cover the sweet potato and cumin if you wish. Salt and pepper to taste.

Allow to simmer, stirring occasionally so it doesn't stick to bottom of saucepan

Just before soup is blended or mashed add peanut butter and stir in well.

Server hot with some yummy garlic bread on the side!



Toowoomba Mower Centre
Supplying & Servicing

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Supplying & Servicing

Vegetable Seedlings for Sale at TCOG

Contact Jeanette at The Gardens
All proceeds go to
The Toowoomba Community Organic Gardens

2018—2019 COMMITTEE

PRESIDENT: Andrew Hawke
VICE PRESIDENT: Vacant
SECRETARY: Mike Knight—tcoga.secretary@gmail.com
TREASURER: Andrew Hawke (Acting Treasurer) —tcoga.treasurer@gmail.com
COMMITTEE MEMBERS: Oliver Rook, Jane Knight, Chris Walpole

Coordinating Volunteers

Garden Plot Coordinator: Joanne McClelland
New Member Coordinator: Joanne McClelland
Grants Coordinator: Linda Mangubhai
Communications & Marketing Coordinator: Oliver Rook
Newsletter Editor: Carlene Gardiner
Project Coordinators: Andrew Hawke & Jeanette

Newsletter of Toowoomba Community Organic Gardens Association Inc.

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