

Uki Garden Club

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<http://ukigarden.club/wp/>

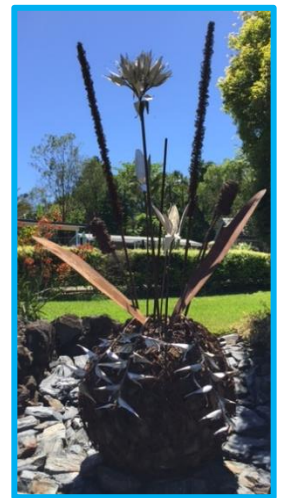


At long last we seem to be slowly returning to 'normal', after such an interrupted couple of years with meetings on and off! It was such a pleasure to see so many of you at Crystal Creek Nursery/Café. I am sure you all gained a great deal of knowledge about paper daisies from our expert teacher, Don. I went straight home and sprinkled some seeds from our garden club seed box – so here's hoping they come up!

Spring rains have continued to make our countryside so emerald green – it is picturesque! The cows are waist deep in long grass and the bees are humming around happily among the prolific spring flowers that are blooming. What a fabulous time of year it is to be gardening in the Tweed!



Your committee has met and made its plans for our grand November Christmas Party. You won't want to miss this event. Don and Sandra Capner's garden is truly amazing. In fact, the first time I visited it I named it 'Don's Botanical Garden', as it has so many species and varieties of plants from the local area. His garden design is second to none, not to mention his wonderfully creative (and prize -winning) sculptures! If you haven't been before, then this is a treat in store.



We also have made it easier for you this year. Instead of you having to bring food and gifts to swap, the committee has decided to provide Christmas nibbles and bubbly (alcoholic and soft) to be served to you on your arrival. We will start at 4.30 pm in the cool of the evening. We'll have a swap table, as we know how much you've missed that these last 5 months. After the short AGM, it will be an evening of fun and friendship, where you can sit and relax or wander the garden, taking in the lookout viewing platform if desired. Hopefully the rain will stay away and we can enjoy the evening lights and cooler temperatures at that time of day.

Jenny Kidd would like me to pass on her thanks again for all the well-wishes, phone calls, garden help, food, etc. that garden club members have bestowed upon her since her accident early in October. Jenny and David have appreciated your generosity greatly, and she looks forward to the New Year (after surgery to remove the pins from her leg) when she can re-unite with everyone. Despite this big set-back for her, Jenny is still willing to hold the position of secretary in our new 2022 committee – a very BIG THANK YOU is well deserved indeed!

My thanks also to the 9 people/couples who opened their gardens and homes so generously to us this last year. It was most big-hearted of you in these uncertain times. You will be receiving a gift from the committee at the Christmas Party, so do make sure you come along! Apologies to those of you who did offer, but unfortunately, due to COVID, we had to cancel our visit to you – maybe next year. On that note, it is time to start thinking (more positively I hope) about offering to host in 2022 – either for Food Group or Garden Gatherings. Marie Luxford is the person to speak to about Food Group, while Jenny Clark will be coordinating the Garden Gathering calendar. Both of these members will be wandering around at the Christmas party looking for potential hosts, so don't be shy. Start thinking about the month you would like to make yours!

There will be one more newsletter in December, but our trusty editor can take a break in January, when we have a breather while the weather is so hot. Our New Year edition will be in your inbox early in February.

Meanwhile, Happy and Healthy Gardening. Gillian

October Garden Gathering Julia Hancock

We had a lovely gathering at Crystal Creek Estate on 30 October – our first get-together since July.

Our host and owner of the property, Jenny Tatton, made us feel very welcome and generously shared her lovely property with us.

In December she and her partner will have been there for two years, spending the first three months cleaning up. They opened on Friday 13 March which turned out to be their unlucky day, as Covid shut their doors 10 days later. Jenny has always been interested in gardening which she learnt from her parents and grandparents, who kept chooks and maintained an orchard. But it wasn't until her late 30s that she started gardening as an antidote to her high-powered job. She still considers her garden to be her sanctuary.



Don Capner's Talk On Propagating Native Daisies

Don is one of our most knowledgeable members and always has something interesting to show us from his gorgeous garden. Don first became interested in growing native plants on his family farm. He then branched out (no pun intended!) into orchids but now he's into both. He has a huge range of native daisies and gave us a fascinating talk on how to propagate and cultivate these stunning plants. They range from annuals to biannuals but it's only the latter that strike readily from cuttings. They grow all year round and just need well-drained soil and plenty of sunshine. He brought along several varieties for us to admire:

- *Rhodanthe anthemoides* – from WA, pink and white;
- *Pycnosorus globosus* – Billy buttons
- *Xerochrysum bracteatum* and its species 'Ivory Queen', 1m across x 40cm high;
- *Chrysocephalum apiculatum* — Desert buttons



The long-stemmed varieties make good cut flowers. Pinch out young shrubs to stimulate new growth. Pests that are a problem include slugs, snails and grasshoppers.

Don's recipe for good potting mix

- 1 part washed river sand (extends the life of the mix)
- 4 parts potting mix
- 1 part perlite
- ½ cup Katex Supergrow, an organic complete fertiliser (can be used on natives)

Hormone gel (for either hardwood or semi-hardwood cuttings) or honey to strike cuttings in.



Don's Show and Tell

Don brought along these traffic-stopping beauties to inspire us all:

- *Alloxylon flammeum* – or Queensland Tree Waratah (pic at left below)
- *Deplanchea tetraphylla* – or Golden Bouquet Tree –pic centre below)
- *Brownea macrophylla* – or Panama Flame Tree (pic at right below)



- *Banksia serrata* – he's growing banksias from seed, using his BBQ as a smoker.
- *Jacaranda* – he's grafted both blue and white onto the same tree

Q & A

Q: Diana asked why her mulberry tree has a huge crop then nothing? A: Night critters stealing fruit.

Q: Who wanted pineapple sage? A: Dot has some to give away.

Q: Jackie wants Jerusalem sage, can anyone supply? A: Laverne says they sell it at Pottsville markets.

Q: Fran planted a lot of bulbs but only her iris survived. Why? A: Too hot for most bulbs here or maybe they were planted too deep.

Q: Fran wanted to know what to plant in the vegie garden now? A: Whatever seedlings are available in nurseries at the moment.

Q: Annie has pin-pricks on the back of her geranium leaves. What are they? A: Rust, red spider mite or both.

Q: Sue Yarrow has diseased tomatoes. Any cure? A: It's probably wilt – no treatment available.

Q: Cheryl asked why her birds' nest ferns have black holes in them? A: Fern beetle.

Q: Sue H has citrus trees which produce no fruit while others produce lots. Why? A: Uneven watering, different soil in each spot or simply just a bad specimen was planted originally.

Q: Martin's asparagus has three years' growth on it now – what to do? A: Harvest every morning.

Q: Pam's potted tomatoes have drowned in their pots. Can they be saved? A: No.

Q: Pam asked whether anyone has a spare choko plant.

Q: Ursula's grass tree got flooded a couple of times in the winter. Will it recover? A: No.

Meeting Happy Snaps

Raffle “Princesses” Marie & Sue with customer Sheila.



A happy group



Don all ready for his presentation



Parking attendants Hartmut & Peter

(Thanks to Jackie Balk for supplying meeting pics)

Can You Answer These?

Faye Martin has come up with these tricky garden questions that she is looking for some help with please. Responses can be sent to the club email address for inclusion in the December newsletter.

1. Does anyone have the succulent with a large liver-coloured bell-shaped flower that I could have a cutting of please?
2. Why is my cycad shedding all its leaves, otherwise seems to be healthy?
3. Solution for containing nasturtiums? My nasturtiums are spreading into both of my neighbours' yards, how can I contain them?



It was a small but beautiful food group meeting at Burringbar on 9 November, and luckily the rain held off for us. Many thanks to Sue H. for organising both venue and weather.

Sally Fitzgerald was our guest speaker. Many of us remember Sally for establishing Burringbar Rainforest Nursery which she ran for many years before selling it to her son Matt with a view to retiring. Not surprisingly for someone as active as she, Sally soon got bored with retirement and so decided to open up a new business, Northern Rivers Natives, at 60 Hunter Street, Burringbar (open Wed-Sat by appointment only. For appointments, phone: 0466 284557, or email: nrnatives@gmail.com). She stocks a large range of natives and rainforest trees, together with a few ornamental shrubs.

Sally ran her first nursery at age 23 and since moving to Burringbar in 1986 has become an expert on native trees and shrubs, especially those from the Tweed Region. Sally raises all her own plants from seed, which she gathers year-round when they are ripe. Sometimes it's a hit-and-miss process, as some seeds ripen and disperse overnight denying her the opportunity to collect. This is particularly frustrating if she has climbed two hours up a hillside to visit the tree.

Despite running a home, raising kids and maintaining a busy nursery Sally still had time to volunteer as a Landcare worker. In 2008 she received a grant to undertake remedial work along the creek at Greenvale Court, Burringbar. When she was successful in applying for a \$20,000 grant the group tackled a larger project – the overgrown site at the end of the park in the centre of Burringbar. The first job was to get rid of the camphor laurels, then the coral trees (which unfortunately came back). Secondly, the initial phase of planting was undertaken, with the kids from Burringbar pre-school volunteering to plant a tree and 'take ownership' of the project. The funding included labelling the plants, but sadly some of the original labels have been stolen (although there has been no other vandalism in the park to date). In 2010 the Landcare group received a \$1500 grant from Australia's Open Garden Scheme (now defunct) which they used towards more name plaques. After a hiatus, the project got back on track last year and how at least 10 members get together one Sunday per month to work on the site.

Council does the mowing along the railway track and has provided some equipment. The worst weed infestations include papyrus, *Ochna serrulata* or Mickey Mouse ears, morning glory and taro. The site also has three huge coral trees that must go, but that is an expensive and difficult job that will have to wait until more funding becomes available.

What Are Sally's Favourite Native Plants?



Grevillea hilliana (pic at left) which despite its lovely white flower is not widely grown. It isn't as big as *G. robusta* but also has good cabinet timber.

The second one is *Bosistoa pentacocca* (pic at right) – very rare, found mainly in the Border Ranges. It also has a white flower which looks similar to a mini grevillea.



Sally's Secrets For Success When Planting Trees

- ✓ Choose tough plants.
- ✓ If possible, do your planting during wet weather.
- ✓ Always use small, young trees. Soak the tree in the pot that you are going to plant.
- ✓ Dig a hole only slightly larger than the pot the tree comes in. Put some water in the hole. Plant the tree, water again, and mulch well. Then walk away.

Tree guards

Sally didn't use tree guards when she first started planting with Landcare but found that the grass grew up around the tree and hid it, and often when they were whipper-snipping the grass they'd cut the tree as well. So she advised that it's worth taking the time to install them when you're planting new trees. Landcare used to use the thin plastic guards supported by three sticks but they would collapse over time and suffocate the plant. Much better to use the more expensive Coreflute guards with one stake as they can be reused multiple times. (Note from Ed: quick google shows these to be fairly cheap when bought in bulk packs on line)



Did you know?

Sally says you can use Dynamic Lifter on rainforest plants.

General Discussion

- Talking about grant funding, Di Morrison and her neighbours were successful in applying for a Tweed Shire Council grant to plant koala trees along their ridge on Farrants Hill, which is a known koala corridor. A variety of trees was planted and Council workers came back a couple of times to do maintenance. Yes they do have koalas!
- Di's question for the group was: what to do about grasshoppers. Stir fry them!
- Di also highly recommended two books by Kate Wall, a landscaper who has an interesting philosophy on gardening, *Working with Weeds* and her new book *Earth Repair Gardening*. She's going to ask Murwillumbah library to buy copies.
- Jenny has just installed a worm farm and asked whether she should squeeze excess moisture out of the soil. No. It should filter out into the tray on its own. She also asked whether it is usual for capsicums to take a long time to germinate. The answer is yes. Finally, she showed us a giant daikon radish which was proudly grown by Jim.
- Bernie wanted to know what everyone's favourite tomato is. Answer: anything that springs up on its own. Sue Y has a wonderful black cherry tomato which she will provide seeds of to Hartmut for the Seed Box. Various people had yellow cherries which were reliable (self-sown) and Peter showed us a photo of three different large tomatoes that he grew from a mixed seed packet.
- Peter also mentioned that he and Marie hadn't bought any green vegetables for over four months as their garden has been so productive.
- Marie is finding the hares in their garden a bit of a nuisance.
- Rodney has been growing an eggplant for over three years but it's yet to produce a flower. Why? Try applying some potash to stimulate flowering. Could be that it doesn't get enough sun.
- Chris has constructed some magnificent raised beds and is now wondering what to plant in them. Anything that is available to buy in the shops currently.
- Sue H told us that their garden is going through a complete overhaul. They are no longer growing things that are cheap to buy, but instead concentrating on what they like to eat. Plus they are putting in lots more fruit trees and flowers.

Well Done Jackie & Michael Balk!

After seeing the advertisement for the Garden Competition run by D J Stringer Real Estate, I decided to enter by sending in photos of our garden. Taking photos was easy but which categories to enter was the hard part. Unbeknown to us they picked the back of our garden, which is not the prettiest but where the best compost is made with the help of our beloved chooks.



We are so delighted to win Sustainable Garden for 2021 (although Julia reckons they could have easily won most of the other categories too!)

Michael and Jackie

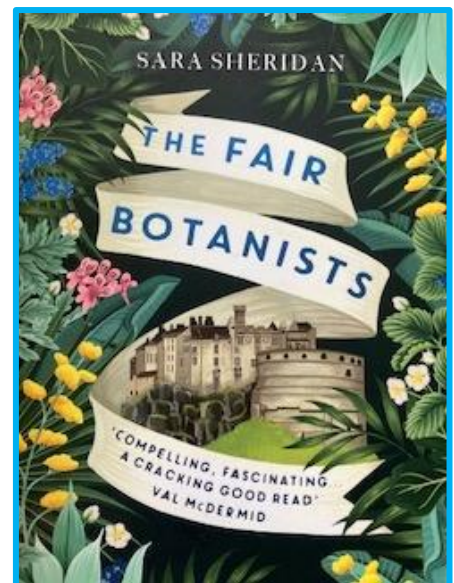
Ed: Our congrats to you both.

Book Review

The Fair Botanists, Sara Sheridan, Hodder & Stoughton, 2021, ISBN 978 1 529 33621 4.

I borrowed this from the Murwillumbah Library for the cover and the title (because I didn't have my specs with me I couldn't read the blurb!). It's a character-driven ramble through early 19th century Edinburgh at a time of great change, both socially and politically.

Centring on the imminent blooming of the century plant (*Agave americana*) – a once-in-100-year event – the intrigue, mystery and fervour surrounding this event are matched only by that of the rumoured visit to Edinburgh of King George IV. Apart from some fascinating insights into horticultural practices of the time, there is the knife-edge of domestic decorum, agonising misunderstandings, rigid class consciousness and the hazards of true love to enjoy.



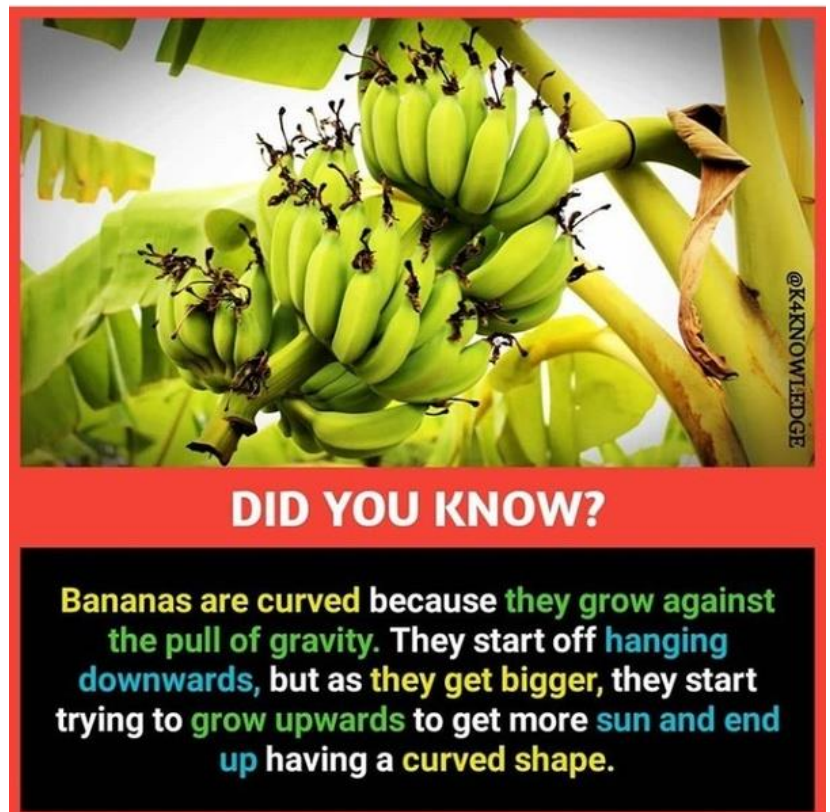
I can thoroughly recommend this book to readers who enjoy an imaginative and entertaining journey into the past.

Julia Hancock

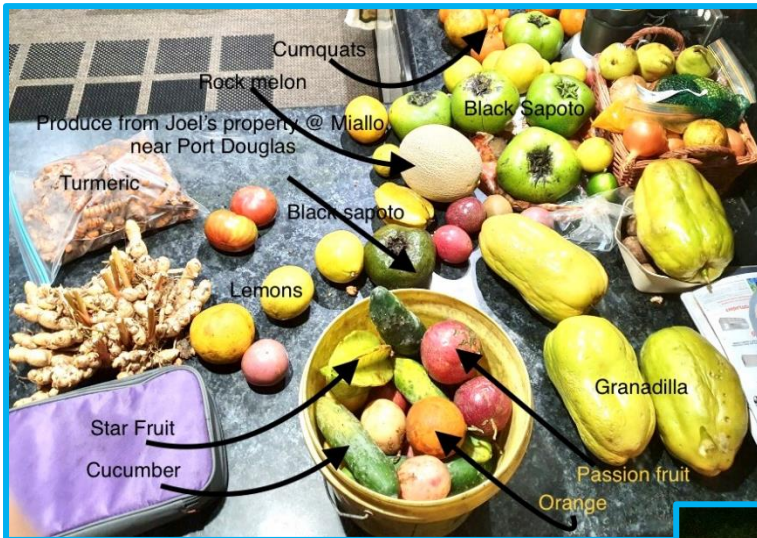




- ☺ I wasn't all that interested in gardening, but I planted a few seeds, and it grew on me.
- ☺ I want to start gardening, but I haven't botany plants.
- ☺ What's a gardener's favourite Beatles song? Lettuce Be.
- ☺ I've started to plant my herbs in alphabetical order. People ask me how I find the time. I tell them "it's next to the sage".
- ☺ What's small, red and whispers? A hoarse radish.
- ☺ Why doesn't Elton John like lettuce? He's more of a Rocket Man.
- ☺ Sherlock Holmes was doing some gardening, Watson asked what he was planting. He replied "A lemon tree, my dear Watson".
- ☺ What runs round a garden but never moves? A fence.
- ☺ What vegetable is always cold? A chilli.
- ☺ I was offered a job as a gardener, but I didn't take it because the celery was too low.
- ☺ Why is The Hulk such a good gardener? Because he's got green fingers.
- ☺ What's a gardener's favourite Harrison Ford film? Raiders of the Lost Bark.
- ☺ How do you make an apple puff? Chase it around the garden.
- ☺ I used to make lots of money clearing leaves from gardens. I was raking it in.
- ☺ Why do gardeners plant bulbs? So the worms can see where they're going.
- ☺ I asked the staff at my local garden centre what to grow in my garden. They gave me some sage advice.
- ☺ Yet again, someone has added more soil to my allotment. The plot thickens...



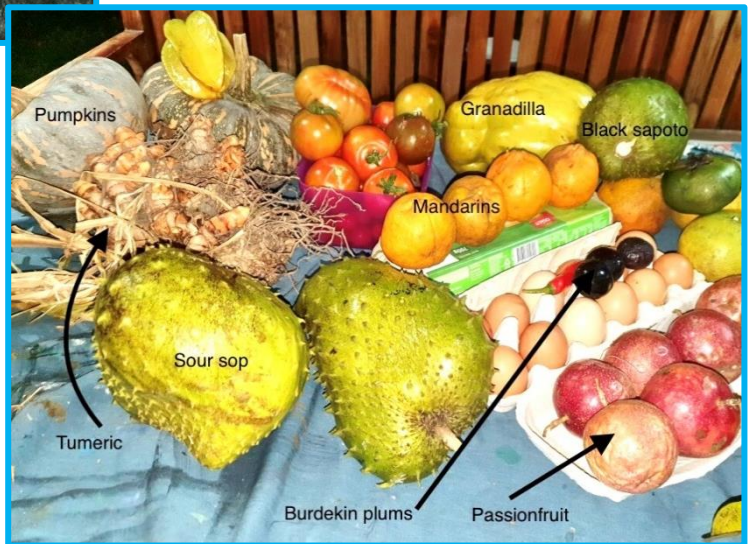
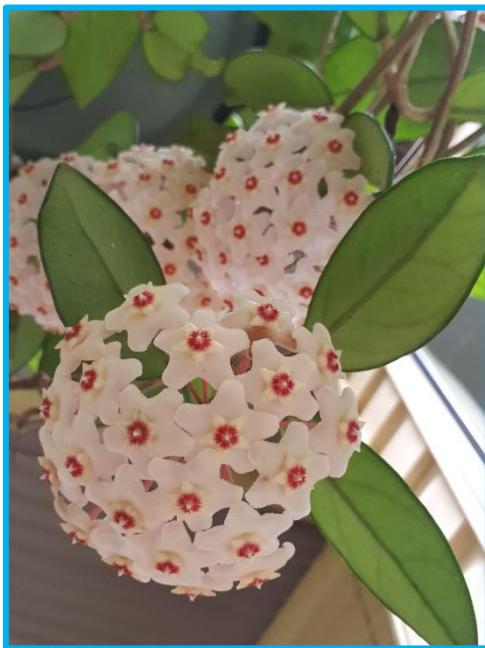
Lovelies From the Garden



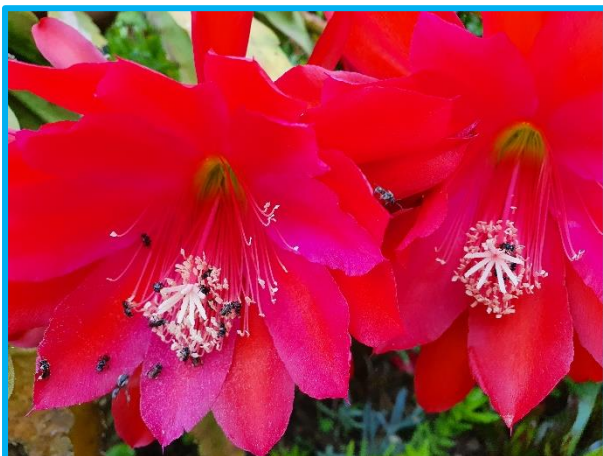
Ahoy Clubbers,

I have become friends with one of the Marina staff here in Port Douglas. He has a property nearby @ Miallo and these pics show the beautiful abundance of tropical fruits and vegetables he grows. He has supplied me with lemons which I have squeezed for juice and frozen. They were huge: 3 lemons made 1 litre of juice, and duck eggs which make cakes and biscuits extra fluffy!

Cheers, Kate Botham



My beautiful hoyas (above left and below right) & a native bee-attracting flower (not quite sure of the name) ?)...just stunning. .Couz'n Lynn



Acidified Suburbia by Clair from Terranora

The dominant hardware and garden mega-store is full of “easy care” plants that anyone can plant and forget – as marketing claims that they thrive on neglect! Many “easy care” plants stray from suburbs to become successful invasive weeds. Or just remain forever in their original suburban garden.

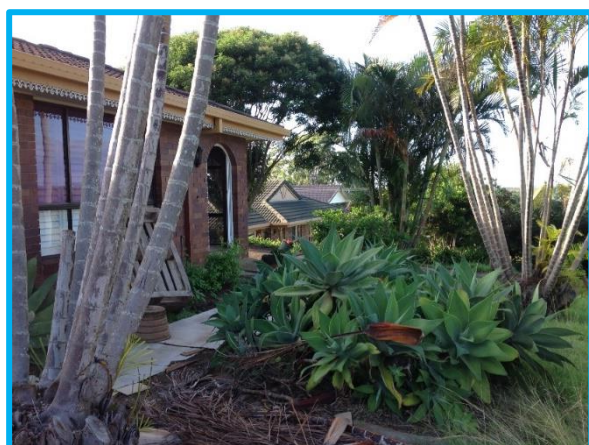
I inherited one of these small “easy care” postage stamp spaces, with multiple invasive plants —mass plantings of agave with invasive asparagus fern, golden cane palm clusters, and Brunfelsia shrubs gone wild, lawn-scapes peppered with crotons and yucca pillars/features, various cactus species with and without thorns.

All the colourful crotons were planted under the roofline (eaves), had never experienced pruning and were bent outwards in order to grow upwards. I took cuttings to preserve each colour type, but they remain unwanted in pots. Are crotons beyond trendy now?

A very small remnant succulent is still a nuisance in amongst favoured herbs and edibles. And I keep digging up bits of golden cane palm roots and sprouted seeds, couch grass runners, onion weed and determined clover-like spreaders that formed the original ‘lawn’.

In this situation there was no possibility for growing an edible garden in compacted acid soil, significant root congestion, and multiple invasive species. Bats and flying foxes were regular nocturnal visitors. It is not healthy to eat plants that bats have visited, sampled with one bite or pooped all over. Drastic action was needed.

According to neighbours, I “destroyed a beautiful suburban landscape”:sacred groupthink of how a suburb “should” look.



At left: Before earthworks

The first stage of chainsaw chopping, up-rooting large agaves and earthworks may have looked gruesome. Clearing fortress-like golden cane palms required serious landscaping help, especially for several transfers of all root material to the council recycling depot. These golden palm clusters had grown on top of each other for a long time and were now almost one meter above ground with a two-meter circumference. Their root systems intersected across the ground creating a massive network that could only be broken up with a mighty little digger.

In the image below, two mounds on the left are entirely golden cane palm roots and earthworks to clear roots and create contour swales.

With such highly acid soil it was essential to make a list of degrees of acidity and equivalent acid tolerant plants (that were also edible). Here's my list:



- ✓ PH 6.5- 7.5: (neutral-alkaline) broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, celery, lettuce, okra, onion, Pak choy, leeks, rocket, spinach, grape, plum, pomegranate and joy of joys – figs!
- ✓ Herbs: lemongrass, garlic chives, rosemary, chilli peppers and basil.
- ✓ PH 5.5-6.5 (moderate acid) corn, cucumber, garlic, kale, mustard, parsley, pea, pumpkin, radish, strawberry, sunflower, tomato, turnip
- ✓ PH 4.5-5.8 (very acid) chicory, endive, rhubarb, shallot, sorrel, sweet potato, watermelon, and blueberry, cranberry, raspberry.



At left: Initial planting of acid loving species (+ dolomite) on earth mounds.

Compost bays were built with discarded pallets and lined with recycled black plastic sheets that are used in between new pavers. Mounds were sprinkled generously with dolomite, compost and watered with seaweed solution. Research suggests that citrus prefer PH 6-7 but my poor citrus (even with additional nutritional inputs) cannot confirm this. My finger lime remains happy in a pot, as does sprouted cuttings from Kate's famous lemon tree.

My garden had a sweet potato-led recovery! Amazing plants that seem to condition the soil and assist with breaking up compaction like underground tractors. Excellent harvest of white sweet potatoes

(if only I knew how to get that photo out of my phone).

Success with lettuce (various types), radish, chives, spring onions and leeks (thanks Julia).

The sorrel, strawberries and sunflowers were lovely though local wildlife often ate my strawberries before me. Experiments began with a wider range of plants and turmeric, galangal, ginger, curry leaf tree and a giant 'miracle tree'.

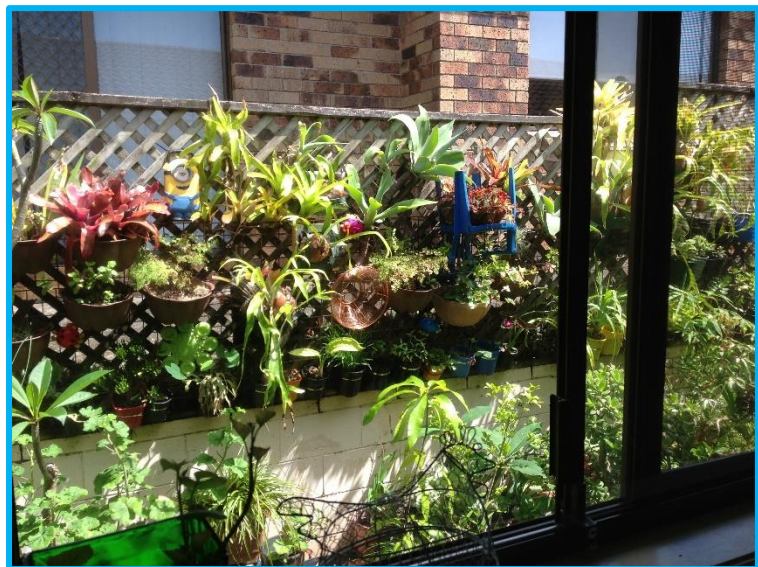
Flowers were added to populate gaps while acidity was reduced. Thanks to marigolds.



Surprisingly an experiment with bare-rooted climbing (and fragrant) roses is another success story with giant garlic planted nearby (it seems roses really do like garlic). I wonder if domesticated 'weeds' count on the future feral list?

At left: Climbing and Fragrant "Mister Lincoln"

While waiting for the edible in-ground garden to establish, the courtyard project became a bit of a wall garden where orphans and rescued botanicals (and Minions) now shelter (pic as below).



Bronwyn & Dave Hancox's talk about Attracting Beneficial Insects at the Murwillumbah Community Garden - October 2021

We were invited by Pam O'Connor to give a talk about organic gardening and insects at the Murwillumbah Community Gardens. We had a couple of hiccups due to Covid but finally got it together on October 2nd, with an attendance of 32 people as well as some of the volunteers.

Usually we would have a slide show of photos but since there isn't electricity connected we made do with some handouts and a lot of ad libbing. We must have sounded very knowledgeable as everyone paid attention and lots of questions were asked at the end.

As we all know, it all starts at ground level in the soil and we need to work harmoniously with Mother Nature. The healthier the soil, the healthier the plants and it follows, fewer problems with insects. It was great to see all who attended really keen and excited to improve their gardening skills.



Thanks Bronwyn and Dave!

Novel way to remove grasshoppers from your car duco

(Found in the *Open Road* contributed by I. Cornwall, Willoughby – June 1, 1955)

Recently the front of my car was smothered with squashed grasshoppers, and I can assure you they take some getting off. My local garageman told me a remedy, which others may find useful.

Get a quantity of couch grass, put it in a saucepan, add water, and boil for about half an hour. When cold, use the grass and liquid to rub the grasshoppers off - I found it very effective.



How About Growing One of These Native Beauties?

Blunt Leaved Passionfruit (*Passiflora aurantia*) By Corinne Jackson



The incredible diversity of colour of *P. aurantia* flowers. Photos: C Jackson

Passionfruit are mostly known for their delicious pulpy fruits from the edible passionfruit (*P. edulis*) and then maybe the more invasive species we find in bushland.

I believe all passionfruit species have the most incredible flowers!

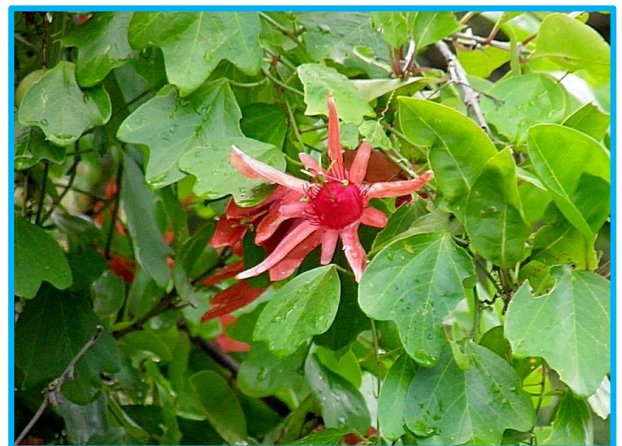
There are about 550 species of passionfruit around the world and luckily, there are 3 species we can really enjoy without



feeling the need to pull them out of bushland, including this beauty *Passiflora aurantia* subspecies *aurantia*.

Like its *Passiflora* relatives, *P. aurantia* is a tendril climber, supporting itself with the filament-like structures. *P. aurantia* is a moderately vigorous climber with entire or tri-lobed leaves which are dark green in colour and up to 70mm long. The red or salmon coloured flowers are seen mainly in winter and spring but some flowers may also occur at other times of the year. The flowers are 40 - 80 mm in diameter and are followed by ovoid, green fruits about 50 mm in diameter containing greyish pulp and numerous black seeds. The pulp is edible but not especially palatable.

The leaves and flowers of P. aurantia. Photo: Donald Simpson



Blunt Leaved Passionfruit has a distribution ranging from Ballina and north along Eastern Queensland. It can be found along the East Coast in warmer rainforest areas but is less common.

To grow your own *P. aurantia*, plant container plants in a sunny position, ideally in a greenhouse, training them up strings or wires. They can also be planted directly into well-drained soil in a sunny position, supported and preferably sheltered.

For more information on native passionfruit, Land for Wildlife have a great page: "[Passion Vines of SEQ](#)".

Reproduced with thanks to Tweed Landcare Inc.

How to Fix Those SOB BOBs in Your Garden!

(Bronze Orange Bug, that is)

Image at right: Adult Bronze Orange Bug image courtesy of Elise Dando.

Bronze Orange Bug (*Musgraveia sulciventris*) is a native insect that can occur on citrus trees. It was once limited to coastal SE Queensland and northern NSW, but has now spread to the far south coast of NSW near Bega, as well as some inland citrus growing areas of Queensland and NSW.



The native food plants prone to attack by Bronze Orange Bug include finger lime (*Citrus australasica*) and desert lime (*Citrus glauca*), but over time the bug has adapted to feed on most varieties of cultivated citrus.

Adult Bronze Orange Bugs are large shield-shaped insects about 25 mm long and are bronze to nearly black in colour.

Bronze Orange Bugs are notorious for their chemical defence system, and their colonies have a strong, unpleasant smell. They are one of several bugs that may be called 'stink bugs'. Adult Bronze Orange Bugs spray a well-aimed pungent and caustic defensive liquid when threatened. The fluid can burn skin and sting eyes to the point of temporary blindness. The defensive fluid will also stain your skin a yellowy/brown colour. Always wear gloves and eye protection when handling Bronze Orange Bugs.

Best Treatment for Bronze Orange Bugs

Sap-sucking pests such as Bronze Orange Bugs can become a serious problem on poorly maintained citrus trees. The secret to pest control is to keep an eye on your plants, so that you can spot pest incursions early. Regular monitoring, along with the prevention and control methods outlined here, will ensure that a major infestation of Bronze Orange Bugs does not occur on your citrus trees.

While you are performing regular garden tasks, such as watering, that is a great time to check your citrus trees for Bronze Orange Bugs. Bugs suck sap from young shoots, and from fruit and flower stalks, causing shoots to wilt and flowers and fruit to drop.

Prevention is always better than cure. There are a number of measures that you can take to prevent or minimise damage by Bronze Orange Bugs:

- 🐛 Look for clusters of eggs on the underside of leaves during summer. Check to see if they have been parasitised. Squash egg clusters (if they are not already parasitised) as you find them.
- 🐛 Look for groups of second stage nymphs on the underside of leaves.
- 🐛 Look for later stage nymphs and adults on shoots and young fruit.
- 🐛 Pick off second stage nymphs in winter where they cluster on the underside of leaves.
- 🐛 Pick off large nymphs and adult bugs as soon as you see them. You can drop any bugs you find into a bucket of soapy water to drown them.
- 🐛 Wear gloves and eye protection when handling Bronze Orange Bugs to avoid their defensive fluid.

If you find adult bugs or late-stage nymphs on your citrus trees you could pick them off by hand, but beware their defence system as stated above.

Whatever control method you choose for Bronze Orange Bugs, you need to be persistent and try to tackle the pest early in its life cycle. Bronze Orange Bugs cause the greatest damage as late-stage nymphs and adults.



- ☼ Mulch around your deciduous trees to protect their roots from summer heat.
- ☼ Do a pre-Xmas chop of straggly petunias to encourage them to rejuvenate. Simply bunch them up and cut off the growth to half way down the stems. Fertilise with a soluble product. Deadheading them helps to prolong their lives.
- ☼ Still got weeds in your lawn? It's not too late to use a 'weed 'n' feed' spray on them but do remember not to compost the clippings from the first cut after spraying.
- ☼ Clean your house windows before Christmas so it's a pleasure for people to look out of them onto your lovely garden during the holidays.
- ☼ Think about ways to make gardening easier for yourself during 2022, so that by the time the weather cools off in autumn you've got a plan of action to carry out before next spring.
- ☼ Do an audit of the tool shed so anything that is broken or not used any more can be taken to the dump or the tip shop. You'll be amazed just how much junk one can live without!
- ☼ Take the time to make good vegetable beds. Deep soil is four times more productive than shallow soil. If you're thinking of making some raised beds for your vegies why not make them twice as high as normal? If you make them with a flat edge around the top you can sit down to plant, weed and harvest. If you make them narrow enough to enable you to easily reach into the middle, you'll save yourself a lot of unnecessary stretching. Future cultivation will require just a gentle whiffle with a fork or trowel, and they won't dry out nearly as quickly. (Note from the Ed: I can highly recommend the fantastic compost produced by Dave Hancox. We recently purchased a 1/3 of a ute load and it was spread straight onto my veggie beds to create a beautiful thick topping that I then popped some matured sugar cane mulch onto and dug my veggie seedlings straight into. The resulting growth on the new plantings is testament to just how good this compost is! Thanks Dave!)
- ☼ Fertilise passion fruit with a fruit tree fertiliser and water in well.
- ☼ There's just time for some last-minute citrus tree maintenance. A quick check to make sure they are scale-free, a session with the secateurs to remove the worst of the gall wasp bulges, and some water, fertilizer and mulch are all recommended to ensure that your trees will stay healthy and productive throughout 2022.

Why aren't my cucumbers growing?

Cucumber seeds will only germinate in warm soil with good drainage. Prepare well ahead by creating a mound full of rich, compost soil with some granulated vegie food mixed in. Water well.

- ✓ Plant at least three seeds on top of the mound, culling all but the best when they germinate. This may seem wasteful, but it will save money in the long run, and produce a much better crop. Cucumbers always grow better from seed sown in the earth, than from seedlings grown in a punnet and transplanted. Scatter some seeds of borage around to attract pollinating bees.
- ✓ Protect young seedlings from bandicoots and brush turkeys by building a stout wire cage around the mound and roofing it with a net.
- ✓ Cucumbers must be pollinated. If they are not setting fruit it means the bees are not doing their job and human intervention is required. Simply take a paintbrush or cotton bud and push it into the pollen in the male flower and transfer it to the centre of the female flower (both sexes grow on the same plant).
- ✓ Water the roots of the plant, not the foliage. Damp foliage encourages powdery mildew and other unpleasantness. Water them in the morning.
- ✓ The more you pick, the more you get.





Uki Garden Club Christmas Party & AGM

It is with great pleasure that we invite you to this year's Garden Club Christmas Party!

We are going to throw a party to celebrate the joy of being able to get back together again.

Welcome drinks (alcoholic and non-alcoholic) & afternoon tea provided.

We will be holding the Club's AGM (very briefly) first and then will get on with the festivities.

And the Mega Christmas Raffle is BACK as is the Swap Table!

When: Saturday 27th November 2021

What time: 4.30pm – 6:30pm

Where: "Morning Song" – 108 Farrants Rd, Farrants Hill in the magnificent garden of Sandra & Don Capner

What to bring:

- Plate, Fork, Knife, Drinking Glass, Mug, additional beverages, chair
- Small change for the raffle and Seed Box
- Swap table items (must be labelled please)

NB: There will be no Christmas gift exchange this year.

No guests please as this is a catered event.

As we are following NSW Health requirements - please don't be offended when we ask to see your proof of COVID vaccination upon entry, because in order to attend the party you must be double vaccinated.

To book to attend please click on the link as below:

<https://www.trybooking.com/BVQPS>

You will be sent a confirmation email and ticket. If you find you are unable to attend after RSVPing, please return your ticket by going back to the original confirmation email and following the **Click here** link.

If you are unable to book online, please either speak with a friend or phone Gillian on 0457 872 040 and she will help you through the online booking process.

Please note that bookings close Wednesday 24th November at 5pm, to finalise numbers for catering and drinks. No booking – no attendance please.

That's all Folks for This Month...

Huge, huge, huge thanks to all the contributors to this newsletter – especially Julia for all her wonderful words bringing the Garden Gathering and Food Group meetings to life.

As always, all of your contributions are welcome and we would love to hear what you've all been up to. Send your hints, tips, recipes, travel stories, bragging photos to us at ugcnews@gmail.com

And thanks as always to our printer – Sandra & Alan Guthrie at Poster Paradise, Murwillumbah.