



Geelong Organic Gardeners

Address: 26 Albert Street, Geelong West 3218. Registration No; A0012071C

Prof. Tim Flannery, Australian of the Year 2007, on a recent episode of Landline said of sequestering carbon in the soil

"...will be a major industry worldwide in the future....the broad figures are that we can store enough carbon in the living biosphere, particularly in the tropics of our planet, to offset all the carbon emissions since the beginning of the Industrial Revolution"

Quote from Bill Nicholson, Member No 27 *"So, if all the agriculture in the world went organic, the coal and oil industry could go on polluting until they run out...."*

Newsletter April/May 2007

Geelong Organic Gardeners Inc.

is an informal, friendly, diverse group of people sharing the common interest of growing fruit, vegetables and ornamentals organically.

Organic gardening is about working with nature, not against it, and avoiding the use of dangerous pesticides and artificial fertilizers.

Meeting dates 2007

Meetings held Mondays at 7:30pm in Geelong Botanic Gardens meeting rooms. (map page 15)

April 2 June 4 Aug 13
Oct 8 Dec 10

Preserving the harvest

Next meeting:
Monday
April 2nd
7:30pm



Some of our members will discuss their preserving ideas.

- Pam Bolton on Seeded Mustards
- Liz Raimondo, Sauce

making Italian style.

- Perry Mills, drying tomatoes
- Judy Cameron on Olives

Please bring along samples of your food preservation items and useful utensils used in the storing of food to add to the discussion.

WELCOME PERSON-WANTED
primarily to welcome people to the meeting, in particular, new members and visitors. If you could help please call Trish on 5223 2407

Welcome new members !

Katie Gillett—Geelong West **Christine Chivell**—East Geelong
Jen Harriott—Belmont **Chaya Rosenthal**—East Geelong
Tony & Rose Iacono, Torquay **Sue Braun**—Clifton Springs

we now have 92 members !



Diary dates

Our second 3-day **Basics of Organic Gardening course** with Paul Smith April 14/15 and 22.

See details on page 7. Book now -limited to 8 people!

MAY FIELD TRIP

Saturday May 5

CERES Environmental Park, 8 Lee Street, East Brunswick

Contacts: Quill 52434826 and Rachel 5223 2321.

Organic Farmers Market; great café; composting systems on display; permaculture & bushfoods nursery, ecohouse, etc

See their website

www.ceres.org.au/

10 people, plus driver who travels free, needed for a bus. \$10/seat. Book & pay at April meeting or drive yourself & meet us there!

JUNE MEETING

Monday 4th 7.30pm

Seed Saving

Co-ordinator:

Jenni Hornsey 5229 5674

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Geelong West Community Garden

20 year celebrations

By Rosemary Nugent

Member No: 25

Two community arts projects were organised to honour the garden's 20th anniversary. A free event was held on 24 March to celebrate, with a sausage sizzle, a jumping castle and other children's activities plus singing by *Viva*, a contemporary and gospel singing a cappella group. While the much needed rain interrupted the tour of garden plots, it did not dampen the spirit of the crowd! The events included a Tea Party with wonderful visual storyteller and artist Julie Tipene-O'Toole.

The Geelong West Community Garden caters for those with limited space to grow their own produce at home. In 1985 the City of Geelong West initiated the development of this community facility at 129 Autumn Street (or enter via Leckie Place), enabling the provision and maintenance of a "green area" in Geelong West. The site is divided into 35 plots which are available for cultivation to grow vegetables, herbs and flowers. Some areas are set aside for communal use and enjoyment, such as the herb garden, the fruit trees, the barbecue, a sandpit and a soon to be developed children's garden, and so are maintained by the members. The plot holders enjoy this form of family oriented recreation as it is a healthy and enjoyable pastime in an outdoor setting. The community garden attracts those who believe in sustainable practices. It provides a focus for people of different backgrounds to meet, share knowledge and ideas, develop friendships, foster a sense of power and ownership amongst residents and develop a sense of community.

For further information, please contact Rosemary Nugent on 5221 7395 at home or 5221 3033 (work)



Photo: Annette Zealley new Director of Geelong Botanic Gardens (right) admired the mosaic installation at Geelong West community garden. It is made up of 23 individual pieces made in a workshop facilitated by local artist Helen Millar. 4 GOG members made pieces—Jenni Hornsey (next to Annette), Rosemary Nugent and Steph Pollock with sons Finn and Olegas. Kneeling in front are Rosemary's children Claire and Darcy. Judy Cameron, not in photo, also participated.



Above: Rosemary Nugent's interesting plot at the garden is doing well considering the drought. These photos were taken in Feb.



The mandala, painted by a team of volunteers on the car park wall, was designed by another local artist Katie van Nooten following a workshop with local residents.

Library news

By Jenni Hornsey

An urgent reminder to all organic bookworms to return their books on the night of the meeting !



New books:

A selection of books by Gardening Australia (thanks to Betty Breneizeris for spotting these on a bargain table!)

No-Dig Gardening, How to Create an Instant, Low Maintenance Garden

Author *Allen Gilbert*

Recycle Your Garden, the essential guide to composting

Author *Tim Marshall*

Organic Vegetable Gardening

Author *Annette McFarlane*

From Recycle your Garden—

Animal faeces

Domestic animal faeces should be buried deeply because they can cause disease in humans and animals. Dig a deep hole with a post hole digger or spade and insert a kitchen garbage bin or rubbish bin with the bottom cut out. Place faeces in the hole and close the lid. This system can be left in place for several years because some of the humus slowly produced in the pit will be gradually and safely incorporated underground by earthworms. Leave for at least two years before using it for food production.

Composting in a glass house.

Composting in a glasshouse in winter will help obtain desirable temperatures within the compost heap. The heat from the compost will benefit plants grown in the house and also the higher level of carbon dioxide. CO2 is continually released from the heap during decomposition by respiration of compost organisms.

From the Organic Vegetable Gardening book:

Did you know -

Green capsicums are harvested early while red capsicums must be left to mature on the plant.

Paprika is made by drying the seeded fruit of a sweet capsicum, then grinding it into a fine powder.

Non-heading, or sprouting broccoli produces small cauliflower-like heads. Noted for its ability to thrive in poor conditions, it is tolerant of a range of climatic conditions. Slower to form flowers, it produces over a longer period.

Chinese broccoli, or Chinese kale, has smooth, dark green stems and leaves, and small white flowers.

Silver beet and Swiss chard are selections of beetroot that fail to develop a bulbous base but are grown for their abundant leaf harvest.

Silver beet is a good source of iron for vegetarians but is high in sodium and people watching their salt intake should limit consumption.

White asparagus is green asparagus grown under mulch to exclude light.

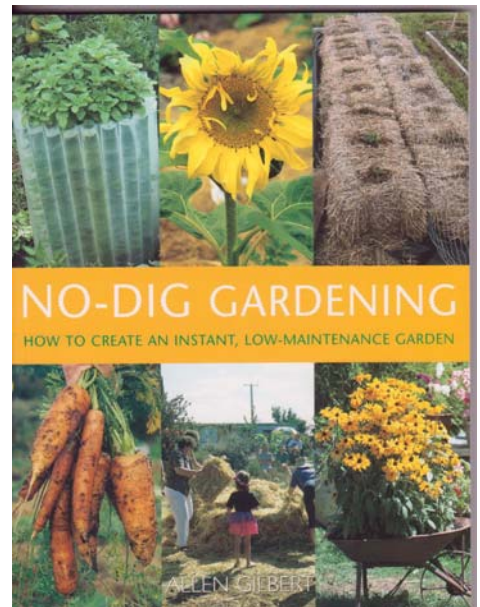
Choko vines produce a mammoth harvest! Chokos are used commercially as an apple substitute in pies and tinned fruit.

Jerusalem artichokes are free of starch and are suitable for diabetics.

Chinese cabbage is easy to germinate, fast to mature, & can be progressively harvested by removing outer leaves .

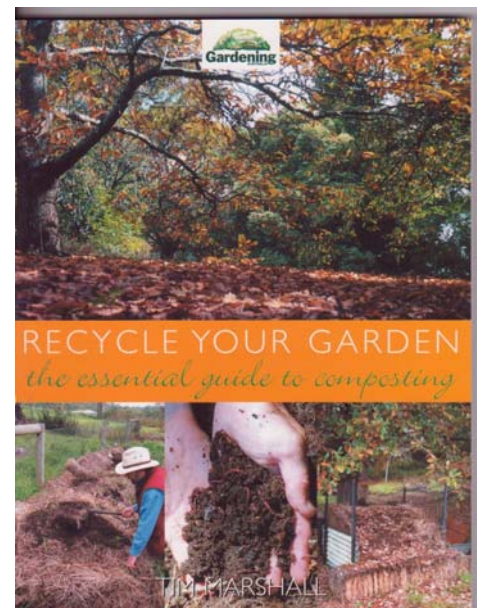
Watermelon seeds may be roasted and eaten.

The seeds of cucumbers marrows and pumpkins have a higher nutritional value than the flesh.



This book has a foreword by Ester Deans, who wrote '*Esther Dean's gardening book—Growing without digging*' in 1977 which is also in our library.

Esther writes "*Some of the no-dig ideas will be of particular interest to gardeners with handicaps—who more appropriately should be referred to as 'handicapped'.*"



This book explores how composting works and outlines the multiple benefits for your garden, but it also shows you how to build a foolproof heap and maintain it well.

From ash to algae, human hair to shredded newspaper this book shows you how the materials used for composting can go further than kitchen and green waste: plus the many ways to use the rich, crumbly organic matter your compost will produce.

Gav's Garden Saver — notes on a grey water system

by Gavin Gamble. Member No 112



Until the last three years in the Teesdale / Bannockburn area most house pipes - other than black water (toilet) and rainwater (often to house tank) - are fed into a sump with an automatic level controlled pump (usually a 240V submersible). The pump typically blasts the 50 to 100 litres of grey water out through a 1 inch hose in a matter of minutes. Best practice is for people to move the hose around and dump it in swales under fruit trees, for example. But most of the water is wasted via run off, not moving the hose enough, etc... Worse still, some people put the hose on to a sprinkler, which is likely to burn out the pump and spread pathogens into the air.

My grey water distribution system is designed to supplement this common rural grey water strategy. One commercial equivalent system sighted costs around \$2500. I've refined parts for mine down to under a couple of hundred dollars, including 150 metres of polypipe and 100-150 drippers. All that has to be maintained is to check and clean the external filter once a fortnight and to check drippers for the odd blockage. The Garden Saver should be there for years to come. It's easy to repair and it will be easy to hook up to: Barwon Water later on if need be; rainwater tank; or even gutter pipe diverters (recommended).

Utilising the ability of the grey water rapid transfer style submersible pumps to deliver a few metres head, I direct the grey water from the sump into a modified UV proof HDPE 120 litre barrel (which can easily be painted sympathetic colours) mounted on a simple platform for a couple of metres elevation at bottom. To run the grey water through a drip irrigation system necessitates internal filtration, an external filter and a diversionary system for overflow situations. The system is totally automatic once set up and it's hard to tell when it's on except for hearing all that lovely shower or washing machine or bath water initially bubbling into the barrel for a silent, deep and thorough drip irrigation and distribution over the next half hour or so.

After a fair bit of R&D I found a run out with 19mm pipe and valve to branch off to a couple of 13 mm lines is the most cost effective set up. Because it's low pressure you can run heaps of polypipe length and over 100 drippers with no clips. The drip watering is deep and effective. One dripper per rose, for example, has transformed the dying plants in only a few weeks with masses of fresh, bronzy new growth now appearing. The picture of the apricot looks healthy enough but you can still see some of the dead, scorched leaves from about a month ago pre "Garden Saver". It was getting in a bad way, but now it's on two drippers in sandy soil. Big plants? – use more drippers spread around.



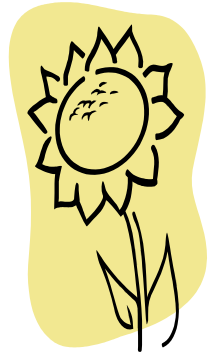
Potentially there could be system blockages with algae build up, etc down the track so cleanable 4 litre per hour drippers are advisable but cost more and tend to blow off if you ever use the system on mains pressure (although you could use a pressure limiter). However, organic material blockages have not been a significant problem in any system I've installed so far. You have to take care what goes into the grey water, of course, particularly if you use it on indigenous plants. If you're using grey water in the vegetable garden do not use it on root veges and veges you, or some child, may eat raw. I run collected rainwater on the veggies. Anyone seriously interested can ring me for help and/or advice on installation on 0410 505 936.

If you don't have a grey water sump you could use a similar approach to set up a simpler type of grey water distribution system by using a largish wide tank/basin type container (such as an old bath outside your laundry) for receiving washing machine water directly from the machine say a meter high. This could run out through filters and a dripper distribution as above. It would also provide an easy receptacle for dumping all the other bucketed grey water. You could even put your saved shower water for example straight into the washing machine and turn the cycle on to get the machine to pump it out. A shallow wide vessel like an old bath would be the go, but you might need a lid if odours are to be a problem but I don't reckon they would be too bad. Certainly what price a garden? Hope these ideas help people make the most of this precious resource without injuries and inconvenience.

.....Gavin Gamble, Golden Plains Gardening, 0410 505 936

Time for planting these seeds.....

Flowers



Alyssum, Calendula, Cineraria, Cornflower, Delphinium, Dianthus, Foxglove, Hollyhock, Lobelia, Nasturtium, Pansy, Polyanthus, Poppy, Primrose, Ranunculus, Snapdragon, Stock, Sweet Pea, Viola



<i>Southern Victoria planting</i>	Apr	May	Jun
Artichoke, Jerusalem	•	•	•
Asparagus crown	•	•	•
Beans, Broad	•	•	•
Broccoli	•	⌘	⌘
Brussels Sprouts	•	•	•
Cabbage	•	•	•
Cabbage Kai & Bok Choy	•	•	•
Carrots	•	•	•
Cauliflower	•	•	•
Cress	•	•	•
Endive	•	•	•
Garlic, cloves	•	•	•
Leeks	•	•	•
Lettuce	•	•	•
Onions	•	•	•
Onions, Spring	•	•	•
Parsley	•	•	•
Parsnips	•	•	•
Peas	•	•	•
Potatoes * - Jun 6 Oct 6 Feb 6	•	•	•
Radishes	•	•	•
Rhubarb, Crowns	•	•	•
Salsify	•	•	•
Shallots, cloves	•	•	•
Spinach	•	•	•

* Potatoes – Plant on dates shown for three crops/year

⌘ Broccoli – avoid bugs by planting from May to July.

Watch for aphids on leaves first, attack with soapy water.

In our seed bank

Current Stock:

50 cents/packet

Angelica
Fennel
Oak Leaf Lettuce
Parsley
Parsnip
Coriander
Stock

Old Stock:

10cents/packet

Parsley
Chilacayote
Celery Grass
Fat Hen
Fennel
Garlic Chives
Silverbeet
Daikon Radish



Photo: Silvana in her garden

SEED PLEASE!

I've not received any new seed from members yet. Probably because people have not grown enough quantity this year. In my own garden, I have managed to collect some rocket, coriander and silverbeet but only in small quantities to replant back into my garden.

Silvana, Seed Bank Cu-

Thanks

to the following members who contributed to this newsletter: Trish Jardine, Jenni Hornsey, Rosemary Nugent, Silvana Benacchio, Bill Nicholson, Gavin Gamble, Andrew Lucas, Quill Walker, Betty Breneizeris, Helen Lucas .



Next deadline: May 15

Articles welcomed by the editor at e-mail: jcameron@ncable.net.au or phone Judy Cameron 5222 1073

Editor note: There are heaps of interesting articles on this website !

European and English Wasps

(*Vespula germanica* & *Vespula vulgaris*)

These closely related wasps have the ability to inflict mighty painful stings repeatedly and a nasty temper to match.



The European wasp was originally from Europe, North Africa and temperate Asia. It was first discovered in Sydney in 1954 when hibernating queens were found in a timber consignment from New Zealand.

It wasn't until 1959 that nests were discovered in Hobart, then Sydney in 1975, Western Australia and Victoria in 1977 and then South Australia in 1978.

The English wasp first showed up Malvern, Victoria in 1958 and the nest was destroyed. Unfortunately more nests were found in 1960. Their distribution seems to be more restricted than that of the European wasp. They are found in Victoria and southeastern Tasmania.

Life Cycle

Queens of both species spend the winter hibernating and emerge in spring to look for nesting sites. Nests are usually built underground, in holes dug in the soil, but as we know, they can be found anywhere there is protection from rain and moisture and warmth, such as inside cavity walls, woodstacks, tree trunks and even inside pots.



The first batch of eggs laid are laid in a cluster of hexagonal cells made by the queen.

Wasps make a type of paper by

chewing wood fibre into a pulp. This is used as a protective layer over the cells, and on the outer covering of nests, which is cardboard like (as seen in the photograph at right, courtesy of J.P.Spradbery, CSIRO Entomology).

These first wasps are workers (sterile females) and take over the nest building work of the queen, leaving her to dedicate her time to egg-laying. The nest will be enlarged continually through summer and autumn.

Each worker only lives several weeks, but there could be thousands present in a nest at any given time during summer and autumn.

Their defence of their nest is legendary. They are vicious. Vibration, rather than sound, alerts workers to an intruder, who come swarming out to attack. Once a victim is attacked, chemical cues guide more wasps to the attack.

Foraging by workers occurs within 50 to 250 metres of a nest. And they will collect just about anything that is carbohydrate or protein, including fruit, insects, and carrion. This is taken back to feed the larvae.

Towards the end of autumn the workers build larger larvae cells. These will host the next generation of several hundred queens and drones (fertile males).

During autumn the queens and drones indulge in mating flights, with the queens then seeking out winter sheltering sites. The males die off, as do the remaining nest occupants, although there are situations where enough food and warmth has ensured survival over winter. The next season these wasp nests have the ability to become absolutely enormous.

Chemical Control

We've all heard enough wasp stinging horror stories to know that this



is one insect to treat seriously and carefully.

Chemical control of this wasp is very efficient but it needs to be carried out in a safety con-

scious manner.

The Museum of Victoria provides the following rules for the 'Do It Yourself European Wasp Pest Exterminator'.

1. Always treat the nest at night when wasp activity is low.
2. Always cover your torch with red cellophane as insects cannot see red light.
3. If possible, position the torch some distance from yourself, yet still illuminating the area to be treated.
4. Always wear loose clothing, fully covering your body, a floppy hat or veil and gloves.
5. Tell someone what you are doing and where you will be.

Above ground visible nests can be soaked with the spray of any commercially available insecticide.

Nests in concealed, confined or restricted areas can be destroyed with a pest strip. Considering that up to 20% of wasp nests in Australia occur in roof spaces and wall cavities, this is a good solution.

Simply place the pest strip near the nest. In a wall cavity, cut up the pest strip and pass it through outside air vents near the nest.

These areas can also be soaked with spray from an insecticide surface spray or the area liberally sprinkled with insecticide dust.

In ground nests can also be treated with dust. Do not apply if rain is likely within 24 hours.



In ground nests will require two applications several days apart to destroy. Refer to:

www.museum.vic.gov.au/wasps/wasp_control.asp

Chemical baiting has been trialed in vineyards in the Yarra Valley and Mornington Peninsula areas of Victoria, with considerable success. Minced meat was laced with the insecticide. It was found quite effective in reducing wasp numbers in areas where it was very difficult to locate nests.

In these trials it was noted that even when wasp nests are totally destroyed by this manner, new wasps will move into the area.

Obviously extreme caution must be taken with this option, as pets could also eat the meat.

Other control methods

Sticky traps can be used to trap wasps and in Britain net traps are used to prevent wasps entering factories. Wasps are also attracted to ultraviolet light and electric traps.



There are a variety of traps that allow entry but the wasp can't exit. The success of these traps depends on the attractiveness of the bait. (The trap photo is courtesy of

www.boltanproducts.com/wasp.htm)

Sanitation (ensuring garbage is in containers with fitted lids for example, and removing food scraps as soon as possible), and proofing buildings against queens seeking nesting sites are also ways to reduce wasp activity.

Unfortunately, according to the researchers in this area, these wasps are here to stay. Total eradication is no longer an option.

Information sources:

Kerruish, R.M. & Unger, P.W., 2003, 3rd Edition, *Plant Protection 1*, by RootRot Press, ACT.

www.gwrdc.com.au

www.museum.vic.gov.au

www.ento.csiro.au

Earwigs

Get to know the earwigs in your garden because not all of them are pests!

There are more than 60 species of earwig in Australia. The common pest species is the European earwig (*Forficula auricularia*), which eats a wide range of plants and flowers. Fruit, vegetables and field crops are favourite foods, but they also like zinnias, roses, dahlias, and will feed on the roots of seedlings, mosses and lichens. In the photograph (right), the female is the top one.

Native Predator Earwigs



There are also several native earwigs that are very useful to have around. For example, the common brown earwig (*Labidura truncata*) (pictured here, right), which grows to about 30 mm long, is found throughout most of Australia.

This large earwig devours caterpillars (even ones that are bigger than itself). It will also feed on other insects (including other earwigs) if hungry enough, and it eats codling moth larvae that are crawling around searching for cocooning sites. It's a common member of backyards so keep a look out for it and be friendly!

Then there's the giant earwig that resides in the wet forests along the east coast of Australia. The giant earwig (*Titanolabis colosseae*) is one of the world's largest. It feeds on organic matter and other insects.

European earwig (*Forficula auricularia*)



This earwig is a pest in Europe and America as well as Australia. Not only does it devour a wide variety of plant material, it can spoil plants by its sheer presence and its excreta. They are most active in the cool moist weather of spring and autumn.

It is smooth, shiny and dark brown, with pale yellow legs, pincers and shoulders. It is usually about 12-20 mm long. The native beneficial (predator) earwigs have reddish brown foreparts and legs, with a darker abdomen and pincers. The beneficial common brown earwig is larger than the pest species.

Control

Remove rubbish, decaying plant material and other debris, as these provide shelter and breeding sites.

Trapping earwigs is the most effective control method in the home garden. Rolled up newspapers, rolled up corrugated cardboard, and upturned flowerpots loosely filled with straw or crumpled paper are ideal trapping sites. The earwigs are attracted to these shelters. Traps should be examined each day. Shake the earwigs into a bucket of soapy water to kill them (or just squish them if you feel inclined) but make sure you have caught only the pest species!

Jenni Hornsey found this recipe at website www.renaissanceherbs.com.au/

General fungicide

for mildew, blackspot, damping off and rust.

Take a selection of: Chamomile flowers; leaves of Chive, Elder, Horseradish and Casuarina.

Cover with water. Bring to the boil. Let stand 30 minutes.

Spray with a wetting agent of pure soap used at 10g/litre of spray.

Thanks to Jenni Hornsey for sourcing this article from <http://organic.com.au/>

Their Home page says: *ORGANIC (Ltd) is a non-profit organisation, promoting organic and sustainable agriculture in Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Ireland and the United Kingdom.* .

She'll Be (Organic) Apples

Author: Allen Gilbert (Source: The Age)

If you want the pick of the crop next season, start planning now.

Apple season is generally considered to be around March and April, but many heritage cultivars can be grown that mature from early December to late July.

This year's apple season is pretty well over, so if you want a healthy crop next year, start thinking about eradicating any pests and diseases, especially if you want to adopt an organic approach to growing fruit.

Growing apples organically can be achieved quite readily with little loss of fruit through pest or disease damage. A main pest in southern parts of Australia is codling moth, and to a lesser extent the light brown apple moth. The two fungal diseases that can attack leaves and fruits are apple scab and powdery mildew.

Home gardeners can adopt a few simple management techniques to help prevent the build-up of pests and diseases in apples.

Practising good orchard hygiene by clearing up around trees and removing all dead leaves and old apples through autumn and winter is a good start.

Apple trees can be helped by companion planting. Bird-attracting plants are ideal because the birds will eat the grubs. Similarly, plants such as borage (*Borago officinalis*) and lavender (*Lavandula spp.*) near the trees will attract bees for pollination.

Daisy-flowered species such as Gray-leafed Euryops (*Euryops pectinatus*) and Paris daisy (*Argyranthemum frutescens*) planted nearby will attract native wasp predators and give them a pollen supply during the winter months.

Species such as wormwood (*Artemisia arborescens*) have proved useful for distracting pest insects because of the aroma they emit. Plant directly under the apple trees - preferably in pots, because they are vigorous growers. Nasturtium, (*Tropaeolum majus*), a ground-cover climbing plant, can also be useful in this way.

Building up a biologically active soil using organic methods so that the soil contains worms and other soil microorganisms will aid the decomposition of fallen, diseased leaves and reduce the risk of infection.

Mulching around the base of the trees in summer also helps. Fresh grass clippings as a mulch around the base of the trees seems, for example, to have some effect on codling moth numbers. Pruning out any split limb ends and scraping loose bark from the trees will reduce the larvae cocoon spinning sites within the tree.

Codling moth larvae burrow into developing fruit, often preventing proper development, or they make holes and damage mature fruit. Damage can extend to more than 80 per cent of the crop if not controlled.

Codling moths hatch during September to October, which is when apple trees are flowering.

A deterrent is tiny pheromone traps, which are shaped like tents. They are hung in the apple trees when the first flowers begin to open. The male codling moths stick to the glue that is smeared within the tent.

During winter or spring, cardboard or hessian wraps can be placed around the trunk or on the limbs of apple trees. At the end of the cycle, the codling moth larvae look for a site to spin a cocoon to pupate, and the wraps are an ideal place for them. These wraps should be taken off every five to six weeks and the cocoons destroyed. It is also a good idea to hang jam jars half filled with a little red wine, or port plus water, in the trees. Mature moths are attracted to the wine and eventually drown.

Removing and destroying damaged fruit during the season is also necessary to reduce moth numbers. Once the fruit has formed, enclose them in bags to prevent insect predation and to help protect against diseases.

The light brown apple moth is another significant problem that can be controlled organically. The light brown apple moth larvae (see right) spins a web and causes leaves to curl. This can easily be controlled by hand squashing or with the use of Dipel*, a natural bacterial preparation that is mixed with water and sprayed onto plants.

Powdery mildew also affects apple trees. It shows as a powdery bloom on leaves or can leave webbed, russet patterns on apple skins. It can be controlled by pruning



out infected shoots and leaves and by applying lime sulphur to the tree. This organic preparation can be applied at bud burst when green buds show on the trees up until 10 per cent of the flowers are fully open. Lime sulphur applied at this time will also help control apple scab, a fungal disease that manifests itself as black spots and blotches on leaves and cracked, blackened areas on apple skins.

Many of the aids for growing apples organically can be obtained at plant nurseries, but some items are only available from specialised biological control firms and specialist organisations.

Further information on apple growing and organic pest and disease control methods can be found in Allen Gilbert's book *All About Apples* (Hyland House, 2001).

* re Dipel—from the Green Harvest website:

http://www.greenharvest.com.au/pestcontrol/caterpillar_prod.html

DIPEL®

A pest control mainstay for organic growers worldwide. Dipel contains *Bacillus thuringiensis*, or Bt for short, it is highly effective and selective against most species of caterpillars. This biological control is a bacterial stomach poison for all caterpillars, which is mixed with water and sprayed onto foliage. It must be ingested by the actively feeding caterpillar, which dies 3-5 days later. It is totally safe to beneficial insects, bees, and mammals. Bt is broken down by sunlight within a few days, so repeated applications may be necessary. Also Cornell University site reports "Bt has not been reported as having harmful effects in fish".



Bonney's Corner Store, 164 Kilgour St, South Geelong now stocks a small range of organic juice, fruit and vegetables. GOG members will receive a FREE 375ml bottle of 100% Australian SunZest Organic Orange Juice on their first visit.

News In Brief

Weekly Times 31 Jan 2007

Food Standards Australia New Zealand will investigate the health risks from eating cloned animals....p19

Gardening Australia presenter Peter Cundall awarded an Order of Australia for services to the environment, particularly the protection of wilderness areas in Tasmania...p19

If a citrus tree is producing masses of flowers, and dropping leaves, it is a sign of lack of water....p62

Weekly Times 7 Feb 2007

KIDSAFE Victoria warn of the risk of young child drowning in buckets of saved water—p2

CSIRO, screening 1000's of varieties in the Australian Winter Cereals Collection held in Tamworth, have found a salt tolerant wheat. The durum wheat, bred 35 years ago, contained 2 genes, which can be traced back to an ancient variety that can exclude salt from sensitive roots and leaves. They

will continue breeding to improve the yield. (**Ed note:** and it is not genetically modified!) - p19

Tough plants in drought times—figs, black mulberries, feijoas, quinces, medlars, loquats, pomegranates ...p97

Weekly Times 21 Feb 2007

Animal Liberation Victoria say the dairy industry inflicts cruelty on cows and dairy products are bad for human health, the atmosphere and our dwindling water resources. They claim it takes as much water to grow one cow as it does to float a battleship.

Weekly Times 28 Feb 2007

The DPI warn farmers not to use 2,4,D herbicides which have been suspended from use from Sept 1 last year to May1 2007. The Australian Pesticides & Veterinary Medicines Authority say there is a risk of damage to the environment and sensitive crops through vapour movement with tomatoes and vines at greatest risk...p12

Weekly Times 7 March 2007

The 'Australian Made' brand and logo will now include 'Australian Grown' if 100 percent of a food product has been grown here and most of the production process occurred locally...p7

'Time for GM to blossom' says article written by Dr Glenn Tong, CEO of Molecular Plant Breeding CRC claiming they have the answers for drought, heat and salinity; can feed the world and reduce greenhouse gasses! ... p7

Weekly Times 14 March 2007

CSIRO had a close call after discovering a fungal infection on imported beetles. They were about to be released into the wild as a biological control of the invasive weed mimosa...p2

March 20 GeneEthics report - Maarten Stapper, who has been a tireless advocate for sustainable farming systems within CSIRO Plant Industry has been fired. At least part of the reason appears to be that he opposed the genetic engineering of crop plants.



News In Brief

Please write letters of protest

about this biased article in the Herald Sun on , 18 March 2007. **Costly organic foods no better**

Here is a summary—

- *'Australian scientists'* say organic food has no nutritional benefit over regular food.
- *'Research'* shows most fruit and vegetables on sale in Australia have the same level of nutrients and no traces of pesticides whether organic or not.
- *'Analysis'* shows some organic produce does contain residual pesticides.
- You would have to eat truckloads of non-organic food to accumulate any meaningful amount of pesticides or chemicals.
- Advocates eat organic food because it is likely to have traveled a shorter distance to the shop making it more environmentally friendly
- Women are in the workforce more, and less responsible for their family's food needs, so guilt makes them buy things labeled 'organic' or 'natural'.

The 'experts' quoted in the article are—

Professor Jennie Brand-Miller (holds a Personal Chair in Human Nutrition, School of Microbial Biosciences, University of Sydney. Her research interests focus on all aspects of carbohydrates—diet and diabetes, the glycemic index of foods. Has written diet books)

Shane Landon, consultant dietician—"If people do want to pay a bit more to buy organic and have an orange that looks a bit funny that's fine, but I'm not convinced it's healthier,"

Erin Pearson, a speech pathologist from Oatley, has bought organic food in the past but didn't notice any difference.

Geelong Organic Gardeners April/May 2007

Climate positive gardening

by Clive Blazey, The Diggers Club Autumn Catalogue. Some extracts from his article—

It has been estimated that 25% of CO2 released into the atmosphere by humans is the direct result of us NOT GROWING OUR OWN FOOD. (In summary, by emissions caused by fuel to plough, harvest, process, package and ship to supermarkets who also emit huge amounts of CO2 through lighting and refrigeration— and then there is the manufacture of fertilisers, pesticides and herbicides. Plus, when farmers till the soil they release CO2 into the atmosphere)

Al Gore's documentary neglected to focus on the importance of building up carbon in the soil. Carbon is the building block of all organic matter.

Alan Yeomans, in his book Priority One, explains we only have to raise the organic levels by 1.6% in the world's cultivated soils to overcome the catastrophic effects of climate change. This is a quicker solution than planting trees since carbon emitted today may take 30-50 years to become embedded in the timber of our trees.

So growing our own food using organic methods is an immediate solution. As climate change increases temperature and reduces rain in Southern Australia we need to go back to food crops with a wider genetic base—the heirloom fruits and seeds. These diverse crops were overtaken by hybrids bred especially for supermarket distribution. Heirlooms are simply good non-hybrid varieties that have been improved through generations that have adapted to regional climates. Regionally adapted varieties are best for locally produce food, not mass market unsustainable monocultures.

This is the bread served at The Future of Food night. Thanks to **Quill Walker** for the recipe.

PERFECT PITA/TURKISH BREAD

750grams (5 metric cups) untreated bread flour

1 tblsp yeast (slightly rounded)

2½ tsp natural improver

1½ tsp salt

1½ tsp sugar

600mls very warm water

1 tsp cold pressed oil

Semolina for dusting

Mix all dry ingredients together, make a well. Pour in ¾ of the water and oil. Mix thoroughly. Then add enough of the remaining water to make moist, stiff dough. Place cling wrap on bowl and allow rise to double size. (Fill sink with hot water and place bowl in water to speed up rising - or place in sunny window)

When dough has doubled in size, (approx half hour) turn out onto a floured board and consolidate into a ball. Divide into quarters, then each quarter into 3 equal pieces; this will give you 12 pieces of dough.

Pre-heat griller on high.

Commencing with the first ball, roll it out to approx the size and shape of a saucer, place to one side on a surface sprinkled with semolina. Continue to roll out all the pita.

Place pita on flat tray under grill for 1 to 1½ mins (allow space for dough to rise) Pita should be pale and just set, edges slightly puffed, turn over carefully with an egg flip being careful not to cut into dough. Replace under griller for further 1 to 2 mins or until pita has puffed and slightly browned. Turn once more if needed and allow to cool slightly then serve.

Reuse, Recycle *from Andrea Shimmen member No: 101*

My father recently took me on an expedition to his favourite shop - the Castlemaine tip! For a couple of dollars, I found many treasures for the garden: 70s ceramic saucers/plates which will be great un-



der pots; several small, dark casserole dishes of interesting shapes and sizes for succulents (just need a few holes drilled); and small, ex-fetta cheese buckets (in the desperate collection of water, I manage to collect quite a bit placing these under the mud guards of my car on dewy nights!).



There were many other possibilities for the garden, such as small tables and shelves, or containers suitable for use as small rainwater tanks.

Photo below: Andrea's father makes garden trolleys from tip finds. (The cute dog is Saffy)



February meeting—"The Future of Food"

Our February meeting incorporated the showing of the documentary by Deborah Koons Garcia on genetic manipulation technologies.



Around 100 people had booked but around 180 turned up so it was standing room only by the time we closed the doors.

The following article appeared in the Surf Coast Times—

"The documentary feature film *The Future Of Food* wowed a capacity crowd at the West Geelong Town Hall last Monday evening. Geelong Organic Gardeners hosted this lively event, in response to rising community concerns over genetically engineered (GE) crops and their products entering our environment and food supply, unlabelled.

The film starkly shows the negative environmental, human health and economic impacts of GE crops.

For instance, herbicide tolerance allows farmers to spray plant killer less carefully and at higher doses, to manage weeds without harming the crop. This hooks farmers on patented seed/chemical packages that prohibit seed saving and replanting.

Many North American farmers have been sued for alleged misuse of patented seed when seed and pollen came over their fences and contaminated their farms. The film showed why GE crops offer no benefit to family farmers or shoppers.

Bob Phelps from Gene Ethics and Louise Sales of Greenpeace answered many questions raised by the film. They outlined gene technology's health and environmental dangers, explained why GE foods are not labelled, backed GE-free and organic foods and exploded the myth that GE crops can feed the

world. Just four commercial GE crops – soy, corn, canola and cotton – with two traits: herbicide tolerance and insect toxins made in the plants, exist.

The companies want to end the ban on commercial GE crops in Victoria when it is reviewed this year. The speakers advocated well-organised public opposition to convince the state government to extend the ban until 2013 at least. To participate in the GE-free campaign, call 1300 133 868 or email info@geneethics.org

We will have a copy of this DVD available for borrowing through our library soon!

GeneEthics received \$295.15 in the bucket passed around the audience—plus we are sending them a cheque for over \$200 from our profit on the night.

Bill's Garden

By Bill Nicholson Member No:27

Photos: Bill's garden same view taken March 2007 & (far right) August 2006

Vegetable Growing with Limited Amounts of Second-hand Water!

With the introduction of Stage 4 water restrictions, my whole growing procedure had to be changed.

As each bed finished its current crop, the bed was closed down: Soil covered with a layer of compost then pads of pea straw. Some time ago I peeked under one of the pads and the underlying compost was moist!

We have been able to harvest some edibles.

The apple trees and pepinos have prospered without any water.

Two rows of climbing beans died after supplying only a few feeds but did produce some seeds for next year.

I was able to keep a few tomato plants going and we have had a continuing supply of great fruits since early December. The 4 remaining scruffy looking plants won't produce for much longer. I had to toss out my December tomato cuttings which was a hard decision to make.

I harvested a lot of every ready onions as, once they divide, their water requirements are minimal.



One bed of early carrots is still going well. I noticed they are much longer than usual, probably looking for water lower in the soil. I must remember this!

The herbs, parsley and mint keep going without any water but the swamp pennywort need plenty.

I hadn't planted any spuds but then I noticed self-sown plants coming up through the pea straw. On harvesting, I found a small crop of 'seed sized' potatoes but very healthy—and remember, no water at all added! So now I have planted rows of spuds, each beside an inverted drink container with the bottom cut



out. They will receive only 2 litres of water each week so hopefully I will get some to eat and a few 'seeds' to maintain my stock.

I will be planting some garlic because the organic varieties in the shops are so expensive and we refuse to buy contaminated stock from overseas.

I will also plant a few greens to see how they survive in our 'laundry water' - which contains no detergents as we use the Miracle Balls.

It hurts me to see the backyard beds covered in pea straw pads instead of the usual healthy green growth. The supply of fresh cut green grass has almost stopped so I can't even make all the compost that I used to. However, it may rain sometime in the future. Here's hoping.

.....Bill Nicholson.

Basics of Organic Gardening course

Following our successful *Basics of Organic Gardening* course last October, we will conduct another led by Paul Smith on the weekend of Saturday April 14th and Sunday April 15th 10am-3pm.



Paul Smith in his organic vegetable garden last week. No sign of drought stress here!

This will be held at the Botanic Gardens meeting rooms.

The 3rd day will be at Paul's property, 255 Parkers Road, Deans Marsh on Sunday April 22 from 10am until finish.

Pruning will be on the agenda at this time of the year!

Course cost, includes a work book, is \$65 or \$55 for concession.

Book and pay through treasurer Graeme Webb (phone 5222 1073) by the April meeting.

Louis Glowinski's garden—March field trip

Louis Glowinski was a wonderful host to the 16 members who visited for this special showing on March 4. It was great to see his garden without competing with a 1000 others as one must do when visiting under the Open Garden Scheme!

We saw many unusual fruiting plants, these are just a few: Jaboticaba (*Myrciara cauliflora*) from Brazil, one of their favourite fruits; *Carissa grandiflora* from South Africa (a thorny plant, would make a great impenetrable hedge; Chirimoya or Custard Apple from Peru; American Pawpaw, a temperate climate custard apple, (*Asimina triloba*) from USA; Azarole, the Mediterranean medlar, *Crataegus azarolus*; the Cornel (*Cornus mas*) an ancient cherry-like fruit mentioned by Homer.



To find out more about these, and many other different fruits, see "The Complete Book of Fruit

Growing in Australia" by Louis. In our library

Because of the drought, and time of year, there were not many fruits to be seen. However, Louis had photographs to show us.

Here are comments by members—"I wish to thank this dedicated and passionate man - it was a privilege to visit his garden. He is so interesting, I

could listen to him for hours! He was positive in spite of the adversity of drought, possums, birds, dogs, kids etc, - and very inspiring." **Betty Breneizeris**

"I loved his attitude towards both growing productive trees and not being afraid to take advantage of micro climates in order to grow subtropical species in temperate climates. He did what all inspirational gardeners do - make you feel like you just need to get out there and grow something!" ..Andrew Lucas (and thanks to Andrew for driving the bus!)

"Having the children playing around and the crazy dog added a lovely homely feel to the experience. I have been inspired to find out about, and grow, more not so common fruiting plants" —Quill Walker.

Looking for some of those unusual fruiting varieties?

Try

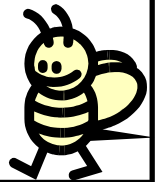
Forever Growing Nursery

Adrian Thomas &

Marilyn Tulloch

RMB 3710 Toris Road

Glenlyon 3461



Grey water

By Katie Gillett (new member No.133) Lily Flax Landscape Design

Here in Geelong, due to being on stage four water restrictions, I get many people asking me what is suitable for using on the garden. There has been almost no research done on the long term effect of grey water on the garden, but there is a lot of information on the internet, from such sources as Sustainable Gardening Australia. Over the last couple of years several things have become apparent from discussion with other horticulturists and soil scientists.

Your house produces three types of water,

Clean water, such as washing vegies etc, where there is no soap been added

Grey water, from bath/showers/sinks and laundry

Black water, from kitchen and toilet. This water should not be used on the garden unless it has been treated, and it is illegal to release outside

Check your laundry powder or liquid, low or no phosphate is only suitable for your garden, however citrus and natives do not like grey water.

It is safe to water you vegies/fruit with grey water as long as you use a drip system or under soil irrigation, otherwise pathogens from the human body will breed on the plants and make you sick.

I have a friend whose husband works as a soil scientist for the CSIRO and he told me that grey water is safe to use on the garden, the only problem would be the al-

kalinity of the water, however as vegies like it slightly limy, this seems to be fine. Any members have any more to add?

Katie Gillett

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TO LET:

2 ROOMS (as package) in West Geelong to share with one male (32) and cat. Spacious red-brick heritage house with large yard and gardens. Ideal person would be vegetarian, clean and tidy, responsible, etc...\$90/week. Ben 5229 0442.

BUNGALOW in central Geelong West (previous person got work interstate) Furnished, kitchen, phone, bathroom (with bath) , toilet and laundry. In a large backyard with organic vegetable garden. \$110/week includes utilities Trish 52232407.

WANTED: 1 acre biodynamic stirring machine; stainless steel knapsack, small garden shed, Howards mulcher suitable for small market garden. Contact: Mary Rose 52645207

HOUSE/FARM SITTER for 2 weeks (probably May). Abundant garden, cert. organic vegetables, herbs, fruits plus bushland in Deans Marsh. Beaut, must see house (below). Animals to care for: 2 goats (Spring & Fall), 2 dogs (Max & Macya), 1 ginger Tom cat (Blacky), ducks and chooks. Interview & references reqd. Contact: Paul or Seona on 5236 3384 or seonagunn@bigpond.com

FOR SALE:

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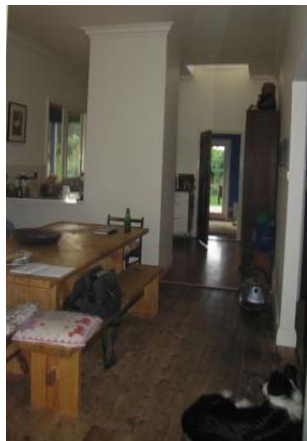
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Newsletter Editor:

Judy Cameron 5222 1073

Librarian: Jenni Hornsey 5229 5674

Correspondence Sec:

Trish Jardine 5223 2407

Volunteer Co-Ordinator

Rachel Brown 5223 2321

Committee Members:

Liz Raimondo 5243 3206

Jan Bullock 5282 4262

Justin Teague 5254 3021

Quill Walker 5243 4826



Geelong Organic Gardeners meet in the Geelong Botanic Gardens meeting room—marked with an X on the map—



About Geelong Organic Gardeners Inc.

Meetings - are held at 7:30pm on the second Monday of the even numbered months (rescheduled if this falls on a public holiday) in the Geelong Botanic Gardens meeting rooms. (see map above)

We have field trips during the odd numbered months, except January.

Membership Fees

are due in September.

\$26 General / Family *

\$18 Concession *

*less \$6 if newsletter emailed

New members paying after April 1st may pay half price.



Members receive 6 newsletters a year and are entitled to use our library, seed bank and sales tables.

Library

Members are entitled to borrow from the Geelong Organic Gardeners shelves up to 3 books per meeting and an unlimited number of magazines and journals. These are to be returned by the following meeting.

Friends Of The Botanic Gardens books, and those of other groups sharing the library area, are not for loan but may be referred to on the night. These must be returned to the correct position on the shelves.

Meeting Sales Tables

Members donate excess produce and plants to raise funds for the club. These are sold after the meeting has ended. (Please price all items before placing them on the table!)

Commission sales Members can also bring their produce and home made products (no commercial items) to sell, giving 10% commission to the club.

Seed Bank

Members donate seeds which can be purchased at a nominal price.

Address:

26 Albert Street
Geelong West 3218
Phone: 5223 240

Disclaimer: Every effort is made to contribute reliable information in our newsletters, however Geelong Organic Gardeners and its committee accept no responsibility for the accuracy or reliability of any information, articles or opinions expressed as these may not be the views of our committee or Geelong Organic Gardeners Inc.

REGISTERED ADDRESS

26 Albert Street
Geelong West, 3218



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Newsletter

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