



Geelong Organic Gardeners

Newsletter: April 2009-May 2009

Editors: Judy Cameron 5288 7005 & Liz Raimondo lizjoe@pipeline.com.au

Diary Dates

April meeting

Monday 20, 7:30pm

Food Gardening in

Extreme Heat



After seeing many a plant wilt before our eyes in the recent and unprecedented summer heat waves,

the April meeting will focus on strategies and ideas on how we can best arrange our gardens to cope with the future likelihood of increasing extreme heat weather events.

Gavin Gamble will give a broad canvas presentation of some of the issues and possible solutions to increase our gardens resilience to extreme heat before we have an open brainstorming session for information and ideas of what worked and what didn't in individual members unique and varied gardens.

Please bring along your best ideas (and something for the supper table) to share with everyone.

Library night

Tuesday 26th May 7.30-9.30pm at the Botanic Gardens meeting room. Come along and spend some time reading the GOG books, finding out what is available in the library and accessing the reference books when it's not as crowded as on a meeting night.

Ponder this:

The concept of Permablitz:

The idea that landscapes of lawn, shrubs, concrete and dog mess are not the pinnacle of human achievement, but an odd manifestation of an age with more oil than sense, and the idea we can change them and change them fast.

Out with the lawn and in with the salad!

said Rob Hopkins, co-founder of the Transition Network



May field trip

Sunday 26th

Garden of St Erth

Sim-

mons Reef Rd, Blackwood.
(Melway ref 609 or 909 E11)

A Diggers Club garden, nursery and café. \$10 entry, Diggers members free (you may join on the day to get free entry). 10 places are available on the bus @ \$10/seat. Bookings & money by the April meeting please. We will also organise car pooling.

The plan is to leave Geelong at 9am for Blackwood, spend a couple of hours St Erth, then head to Trentham for lunch at RedBeard sourdough bakery.

Organiser: Katie Gillett 4203 0447, 0405 569 622

Geelong Organic Gardeners Inc.

is an informal, friendly, diverse group of people sharing the common interest of growing fruit, vegetables and ornamentals organically, working with nature, not against it.

Meetings are held Mondays at 7:30pm in Geelong Botanic Gardens meeting rooms. (see map page 10). Dates for 2009:

Apr 20

June 15

Aug 10

Oct 12

Dec 14

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In brief ...

Weekly Times 25/03/2009

Anti-dumping laws are to be reviewed by the Productivity Commission. Currently, local producers must prove imports are being dumped into Australia and pay the costs for doing so. Recently the Australian Dried Fruits Association proved Greece were dumping currents but it waited 2 years for the decision. SPC Ardmona (NOTE now the *only* company canning tomatoes in Australia) have waited more than 2 years for a ruling on Italian tomatoes costing less here than in Italy.



Wine grape growers say they will destroy fruit rather than take prices below production costs - estimated at \$9800/hectare. Growers have been offered \$2000/hectare and around 65,000 tonnes of grapes are involved.

NSW Murray irrigators have pooled 41,500 megalitres of water rights to sell to the highest bidder. Their agent expects upwards of \$70 million. (Ed note: let us hope the Federal Gov. buys it and not a multinational agribusiness.)

Labelling reforms are being discussed in a Senate inquiry. The pork industry is calling for clearer country-of-origin labelling and the RSPCA want "Freedom Food" standards as in the UK. These prescribed minimum standards for animal welfare in poultry, pork and dairy products. Eg: 'free range' refers only to the need for outdoor access for 8 hours a day. There is no indication that the animals actually went outside or, if they did, there was adequate shade.

A bird repellent from the USA is being trialled in Australia. The

'environmentally friendly' product could be sprayed on turf, grain storage bags and structures being attacked by birds. "When the birds come in contact with it they get violently ill and tell their mates not to go there". The paint is a purple colour only visible to birds. It has been sprayed on chicken farm roofs to stop the spread of avian flu from wild birds.

Chemical ban plan. The Vic. Farmers Federation is not happy with the State Gov. plan to follow the rest of Australia in banning the use of chemicals on crops other than those specified on the label. The VFF spokesman made this interesting statement: "most maximum residue levels set for chemicals on produce were to demonstrate good practices by the farmer rather than because exceeding the limits represented a health risk to consumers" !

Red meat eaters warned again. The Vic. Eye and Ear hospital say those eating more than 10 serves a week, particularly salami and continental sausage, have a higher level of Macular Degeneration. A US study says barbecued meat leads to more deaths from cancer and heart attack.

Meanwhile, in *The Guardian Weekly* 27/3/2009 -

Germans told to eat less meat by their federal environment agency to save the planet. Germans get 39% on their calories from meat and meat products. The World Wildlife Fund claim a single kilo of beef requires 16,000 litres of water taking into account a 3-year lifespan for a cow, the grain it eats in its lifetime and the water it drinks.

New Internationalist Dec 2008

Peak soil. Oil is what most of us think of as a strategic resource, yet in the long run it is soil which is the

most important. Exacerbated by modern industrial farming, global agricultural soil loss of about a millimetre per year outpaces soil formation by at least tenfold. No-till agriculture can effectively maintain crop yields and slow down soil loss. No-till farmers push seeds into the ground through the organic matter left over from prior crops, minimising direct disturbance of the soil.

The Age 'Epicure' 10/03/2009

Nine meals from anarchy. The UK Soil Association's Patrick Holden visited Australia recently. Known as the 'Al Gore of food security' Patrick refers to the fact that almost all the food in the Western world is grown using oil - in tractors and harvesters, pesticides and fertilisers plus the transport used in the distribution. The 2000 fuel protest bought London to within three days of running out of food - hence the quote in the headline above. Richard says governments should put plans into place to achieve sustainable agriculture and grow staples close to where people live.

Invasive Species Council, Australia newsletter January 2009

Worms away. Australia is home to at least 66 introduced worm species mainly from Europe, Asia and South America. Some were introduced deliberately to improve soil structure; others came unannounced in pot plants. Exotic earthworms have the potential to benefit from climate change and to influence the outcomes. Some species already occur near the Arctic Circle in Russia and could be expected to advance northwards as permafrost thaws.



"In the short term, especially in areas previously devoid of earthworms, invasive worms may increase the decomposition of

GOG Communications

For information and stories for the newsletter please email Liz Raimondo at lizjoe@pipeline.com.au or phone Judy Cameron 5288 7005. For communication that people want emailed to members contact Rachel Brown at grbrown@netcable.net.au



organic soil organic matter and re-lease more CO₂ into the atmos-phere. In the longer term, earth-worm activity may increase seques-tration of organic carbon in soil via protection from decomposition within water –stable aggregates resulting from earthworm castings.” Quoted from ‘Pandora’s box con-tained bait: The global problem of introduced earthworms’ Hendrix, P.F. et al (2008).

Weekly Times 25/03/2009

Weed affects honey. Geelong beekeeper John Edmonds says blanket weed, introduced by VicRoads to stabilise areas prone to erosion between Geelong and Bal-larat, has spread to Bacchus Marsh, Melton, Little River and the Bel-larine Peninsula.

John says the bees love but it makes honey taste rank and obnoxious. It also threatens the native grasslands around Werribee.



Blanket weed grows a tap root then spreads two metres around it like a blanket. Once established the weed can drop 40,000 seeds per square metre. The Vic. Gov. say they are aware of it and it is being reviewed as part of the Noxious Weed Review process.

Weekly Times 25/02/2009

Council poisons land. Dairy farm-ers in Wellington Shire, Gippsland are suing their council after road-side weed spraying leached onto their farms killing pasture and ster-ilising the soil. The spraying last July was followed by a downpour. One farmer said that chemical notes state that it should not be applied to drainage ditches, as on roadside ditches, table drains or channels and should not be allowed to drift onto agricultural land and affected areas should not be grazed or cut for stock feed.

Mustard biodiesel. Laverton firm Biomax are trialling mustard oil to create biodiesel. Mustard will grow under harsher drought conditions than other oil crops such as canola.

Weekly Times 4/03/2009

Soil study. The Federal Gov. will fund a 4 year research program into the role of soil in emitting and absorbing greenhouse gases.

Smoke taints grapes. Grapes in the stage of veraison, when they change colour and ripen, are more susceptible to smoke damage from fires and cannot be used to make wine. Growers of affected vines af-ter Black Saturday are removing their nets hoping the birds will eat them to save the cost of picking.

Timboon Farmhouse Cheese closes. National Foods, who pur-chased the factory and shop front in 2002 from local farmer Hermann Schultz, claimed falling demand for organic cheese made it unviable. 20 people will lose their jobs.

Canadian farmer warns on GM canola. Ross Murray from Sas-katchewan is touring Australia in a tour organised by Greenpeace. Mr Murray warns GM canola, resistant to glyphosate, could take hold in the environment. He grew GM ca-nola in 1998 but had trouble con-trolling it as a weed in the following wheat crops. “*I had to add 2,4-D to the glyphosate, then I could not plant a pulse crop on it*”. Agrifood Awareness Australia, a body sup-ported by the major GM companies, said “*GM canola is more about weed control than yield*”. Monsanto said almost all farmers who grew GM canola last season said the weed control was excellent.

Weekly Times 11/03/2009

Chooks for hire. An enterprising Coburg chef, a former country girl, runs Book -A-Chook, a rental for city folk. For \$120/ month they can have 2 chickens and a coop in their backyard. Most decide to buy their brood. Only 2 lots have been returned – one be-cause the chooks wrecked the backyard and the other because the labradoodle terrorised them. Deb Maffescioni says she handles 600 chooks a year and cannot keep up with the demand for quality birds.



Chemical on broccoli. The fungi-cide Cabrio has been found on broccoli heads at Melbourne Mar-kets. The product is registered for use only on grapevines in Australia. The article goes on to say “*Detec-tion of illegally used chemicals above maximum residue levels on produce has the potential to place trade to chemically-sensitive export markets, such as Japan, in serious jeopardy.*” No mention of what it may do to the health of us locals!

Coles reject fruit. The heat wave has stalled apple growth and Coles have told growers they will not ac-cept smaller fruit. They did, how-ever, allow the first Royal Gala ap-ples in despite their not meeting the colour specifications.

Maximum nutrition. WA organic orchardist Jason Jarvis uses sap tests to identify nutritional deficien-cies in his apple trees as an alter-native to expensive tree tissue sampling. He says commercial or-ganic growers still operate under conventional principles by replacing chemical insecticides and fungicides with natural equivalents but these could still be harmful to the tree.

Weekly Times 1/04/2009

USA buy our water. USA-based Summit Global Management has so far bought \$20 million of Australian high-reliability water entitlements from irrigators as part of a \$500 million global water-buying plan.

Bumblebees rejected. Frank Costa is upset that the Federal Gov. have refused the request of com-mercial greenhouse growers to im-port bumblebees. The Environment Minister said the bees posed “a se-rious risk to the environment, na-tive bee populations & native birds species” Mr Costa is the owner of one of NSWs largest greenhouses growing 600,000 truss tomato plants.

Garlic. Despite Australian Garlic Producers expanding production over 7 years, 90% of garlic consumed in Australia is imported from China.



Coming events

As a continuation of our theme 'Working from the Ground Up' Torquay Landcare Group in conjunction with Surf Coast Energy Group (SCEG) presents Russell Burnett -

What is Biochar?

When: Thursday 30th April 7.30pm

Where: Moriac Community Hall, Newling Reserve, Hendy Main Rd, MORIAC

This evening will be of interest to intensive and broad acre farmers, landcarer's and all those looking to reduce their global impact.

Russell Burnett is involved in both the theory and practice of using Biochar and will explain what it is and how we can benefit.

*You will be able to find out how **Biochar** can be used as a soil improver - increase soil fertility, raise agricultural productivity, improve water quality. **Biochar** is said to be a way for carbon to be drawn from the atmosphere and is a solution to reducing the global impact of farming (and in reducing the impact from all agricultural waste). It is of increasing interest because of the concerns of climate change and as a potential tool to slow global warming. On a global scale, soils are an important source of greenhouse gases but also a potential sink if the right management is applied. The evening will close with supper. Everyone is welcome!*

For more information & RSVP please contact Andy Smith 0429 199159

Surf Coast Energy Group (SCEG) Film Festival

Saturday May 2nd 7pm - 9.30pm
Surfworld - Entry gold coin donation

'A Stimulus Package for the Surf Coast' as designed by the Surf Coast Energy Group

Film: The Human Sign Project a short film made by SCEG last year featuring our local schools.

Film: The Power of Community

Presentation: The Transition Town Concept presented by Andrew Lucas, Sustainability Officer Surf Coast Shire



permaculture connections

connecting people to food, the earth and each other

Hello to all you budding Permies.

I will start off by thanking everyone for their interest in the talks I have held in Bannockburn, Meredith, Anakie and Colac in the last few months. I have met some remarkable people and learned a lot about the concerns we share as home gardeners, community members and global citizens.

It is now time to make the next move and draw in this collective interest more formally. I am doing this in two ways.

Firstly, there will be a meeting on the **22nd April 2009** at the Golden Plains Family Services Centre (Multi-Purpose Room) in Bannockburn, kicking off at 7pm. I ask for a Gold coin donation to cover the room rental and Tea and Coffee (any surplus will go towards the next meeting). Oh, feel free to bring some goodies to share with your new friends.

This meeting is for anyone interested in creating a group that workshops relevant issues of the environmental kind. The feedback to me is that people would like a Permaculture focused lead in working towards a sustainable future, that includes information sessions on climate change and peak everything AND the specifics of permaculture design. I see it as a great forum to meet others with vast experiences, to pool this knowledge, swap anecdotes and walk out of each get together more informed and empowered to live and garden more sustainably. I also aim to bring in guest speakers when possible to share their knowledge with us and to show some great videos of interest.

The second step is a short course called "Introduction to Permaculture" to be held at Meredith Community House. This will run for 7 weeks at a cost of \$11 per session (\$77.00 all up). The course will commence on **Tuesday 5th May at 7 pm**. This course will run through the basic principles of Permaculture Design, empowering you to apply these to your own patch of dirt whether it is a suburban block, balcony or farm.

Please let me know if you will be at the meeting so I know how many chairs to get out (and cookies to bake.....), and bookings for the course are to be made with the Community House directly on 5286 1348.

Thankyou.

Bye for now,

Jo Klein

Permaculture Connections 0438 828 042



GOG Seed Bank Curators

Pam & Terry Bolton (ph 5253 2406)

advise the following seeds are in stock and available

at

Broccoli	*	Lettuce	*
Broad Beans	*	Tatsoi	*
Brussel Sprouts	*	Okra	*
Cauliflower	*	Kohl Rabi	*
Cabbage – 3 var.	*	Parsley	*
Coriander	*	Shallots	*
Celery	*	Chives	*
Celeriac	*	Peas	*
Carrot		Snow Peas	*
Capsicum		Spinach – 2 var.	*
Beans		Silver beet – 2 var.	*
Egg Plant		Turnip	*
Cress		Fennell	
Beetroot	*	Tomato	
Mustard – Red Giant	*	Garlic Bulbs	*
Mesclun Mix	*	Seed potatoes	*
* Can be planted at this time of the year			

In times of chaos,
plant a tree

– Martin Luther King



Photo Left:

Yum Tomato Fruit!
Gorgeous red tamarillos
greet visitors to Liz
Raimondo's garden

Photos Right: We grow it
because it tastes good!! Jake
Raimondo eating Honey &
Cream corn and the sweetest
1.5kg watermelon eaten this
year– YUM! Send your
photos to inspire others for
the next newsletter



Seed Sowing Guide

<i>Southern Victoria planting</i>	Apr	May	Jun
Artichoke, Jerusalem			X
Asparagus crown		X	X
Beans, Broad	X	X	X
Broccoli	X	O	O
Cabbage	X	X	X
Cabbage Kai & Bok Choy	X		
Carrots	X	X	X
Cauliflower	X	X	X
Cress	X	X	X
Endive	X	X	X
Garlic, cloves	X	X	X
Leeks			X
Lettuce			X
Onions	X	X	X
Onions, Spring	X	X	X
Parsley	X		
Parsnips	X		
Peas			X
Potatoes		X	X
Radishes	X	X	X
Rhubarb, Crowns			X
Salsify	X		
Shallots, cloves	X	X	X
Spinach	X	X	X

O Broccoli – avoid bugs by planting from May to July.
Watch for aphids on leaves first, attack with soapy water.

Article: Organic foods in demand, despite recession

Link: <http://fw.farmonline.com.au/news/nationalrural/niche/General/organic-foods-in-demand-despite-recession/1467766.aspx?src=email>

Compost — soils best friend

Torquay Landcare and GOG hosted an information session with Tony Cameron of Camperdown Composting Company at the Connewarre Hall on the evening of March 26. A huge roll up showed the interest in the use of compost to improve soils and produce healthier pastures and food.

Our long-term member Steve Findlay (pictured right) gave a demonstration before the meeting on successful ways to make good compost for the home gardener and Tony added his ideas too. Whole books have been written on composting (check our library) so I will limit this article to dot-points from information I gleaned on the night.



- Steve used his mower with catcher to chop up lucerne hay and small garden cuttings. This gives a greater surface area to the pieces for the microbes to attack during breakdown.
- The smaller pieces also make it easier to fork as one should turn the compost at least twice for a fast and successful outcome.
- Anything that has lived once can be composted. Kitchen scraps, grass clippings, weeds, shredded paper and cardboard, manures, etc.
- Most articles on composting talk about layering or sandwich method. Eg: a layer of straw, a layer of grass clippings, then cow manure, etc. This may be OK if you are leaving it alone for 12 months to slowly rot down anaerobically (without air). By aerating the pile with a fork it will mix it & speed up the process.
- Moisture is vital for the microorganisms to work, but not too soggy as water will replace the air in the heap and it will quickly become anaerobic and smelly.
- Steve said he has successfully hot composted with smaller heaps than the recommended 1 cubic metre.
- Use a thermometer to keep track of the heap temperature. Steve believes the ideal is 55°C minimum (to kill weed seeds) and 65°C maximum (so as not to kill good bugs).
- Turn compost 3 days after reaching high temperature, then again after it reaches a high temperature again (usually cooler than the first). Compost done this way could be ready in 2-3 weeks.
- Add rock dust to the compost, the moisture makes the minerals more available to the plants.
- If the heap gets smelly nitrogen is escaping so add more carbon (eg: straw, paper, sawdust)
- Tony's company use wood chips in their compost to encourage fungal growth
- Vegetables and grasses need bacterial compost; the larger the plant (shrubs, trees) the more fungi needed.
- There are 8000 species of fungi

Here is some information about Camperdown Composting Company from their website

<http://www.campcompco.com.au/>

The Camperdown Compost Company takes in organic nutrients from many regional centres, like Geelong, Ballarat, Colac, Warrnambool, Hamilton, Camperdown, Cobden, even as far away as Melbourne and sometimes Castlemaine. Nearly all of it is food processing waste from large waste producers. The material is stabilised using an excavator and then smaller windrows are made where it is turned and monitored using a compost turner. The finished product is then screened, ready for application.

Here in Australia, The Camperdown Compost Company has been doing programs on cereals, pasture, vegetables and orchards. Some of the benefits have been lower vet bills (animal health), higher yields, improved soil structure, reduced input costs, disease and insect reduction. This is because we are adding diversity in biology and out-competing pathogen organisms.

Compost is an artificial soil which is a controlled environment. In compost there is a very rapid growth of biology. This is an ideal environment to have extremely high concentrations of organisms.

We are aiming to reduce reliance on chemical fertilisers. By "unlocking" nutrients in the soil, we can stimulate root growth and disease protection.

We are in the business of building soils and producing healthier produce. This we are very proud of.

from Torquay Landcare Group

re article on facing page

We say a big thank you to all the wonderful support from the Geelong Organic Gardeners members and a special thanks to Ben Nunn and Katie Gillett for organising the technical/visual side for Camperdown Composting Company's presentation by Tony Cameron - and of course a huge thank you to Steve Findlay for his enthusiasm, passion and skill to always bring humility to our gatherings..... Cherie Mordue

Pictured right: Steve Findlay (left) and Tony Cameron compare their compost.

from The Camperdown Composting Company website -

A 1% increase in Organic Carbon in the top 30cm of a soil will increase the soil's capacity to hold water by a massive 144,000lts per hectare, or 14.4 litres per square metre.

32 tonnes of carbon is sequestered per hectare.



Silvana's new garden

....by Silvana Benacchio herself

I moved into my new home end of January. It is an established home of 28 years built on a north facing slope. So I get views of the city skyline and the You Yangs. It is pretty good loamy soil all over the block. It is very dry of course, and hydrophobic, but whose isn't? Underneath though is solid clay, as I found out when post holes were excavated for the replacement of the retaining walls.

I was fortunate to inherit some mature fruit trees albeit a bit too closely planted for my liking. There is an olive, in particular, which I am still contemplating removing as it is cramping the style of an apricot which has the most delicious fruit. (I got to taste it before I moved in). There are also two plums, a peach, Granny Smith apple, Jonathan apple, a lemon and a cumquat.

There was also a small vege plot which did have a couple of things planted in it but in between the settlement time and the busy-ness of moving and settling, went by the by. But I am very happy to say that it has been resurrected and is now planted out with lettuce, spinach, beetroot, spring onions. Being on a slope, the bed had to be retained as there was too much water runoff. It was built using reclaimed red gum sleepers from the old retaining wall.

Last weekend I had a small group of people permablitzing my backyard. It was arranged notice by GOG member Monica Winston who is a Permablitz Facilitator and Permaculture Designer. So I now have a compost heap, a worm farm and a no dig vege plot. Monica also demonstrated swales around the fruit trees which I will continue making once I remove the couch grass.

Yes, I have also inherited a yard full of couch. BUT I must say that because of the drought, dryness and the looseness of the soil, it is very easy to dig out. The permablitzers ((5 of us) dug out an area of about 3 or four square metres in roughly half an hour. I am encouraged to tackle the rest bit by bit. I think it's do-able!

The other bug bear I've inherited is IVY! It was on every fence, front and back. With a bit of help from various friends at various times, it is all off the fences. As much as could be was pulled out but it is re sprouting as the roots are very hard to pull/dig out. I did revert to spraying them with glyphosate (Zero) but that did absolutely nothing. Actually quite the reverse, the leaves seemed to thrive with it. I am loathe to use more lethal chemicals but am quite desperate. Someone said to put diesel into the woody stems. Not sure if that's diesel petrol from the bowser or diesel oil. I would love some advice. Has anyone experience of eradicating ivy?

In the front garden, there were about thirty roses and many geraniums and it would have been beautiful if looked after. I wanted to refresh that area, so sent a call out to GOG members for "free to a good home" and am happy to say that they are now recuperating and getting all the TLC they deserve. It is great to share your surplus or unneeded "things" instead of throwing things away.

In this area I will now plant native and low water plants and those that are bird attracting. I took cuttings of native hibiscus and mexican sage from my previous home so they'll go in there. The birds especially the New Holland Honey eaters love those flowers. I derive much pleasure bird watching and as this particular area is outside my living area, I will have much enjoyment for years to come.

My thanks to the members who have already been part of the history of my garden; exchanging plants, swapping plants for worms, weeding, permablitzing and enjoying the gifts of nature.

Library news

New Books in the Library



Plant Protection 1: Pest, Diseases & Weeds

Plant Protection 3: Selected Ornamentals, Fruits and Vegetables

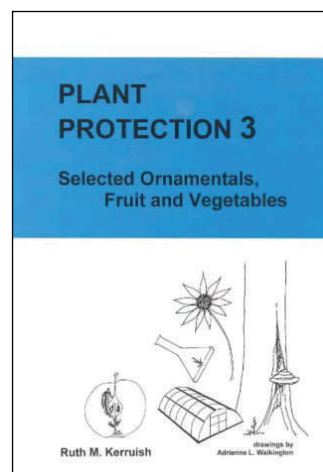
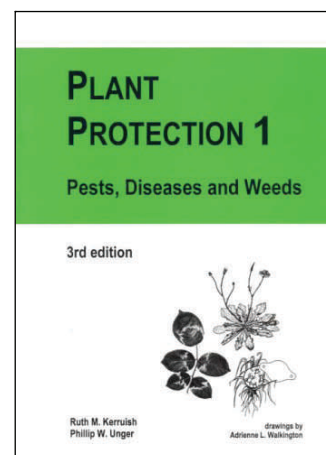
Kerruish, Ruth & Unger, Philip

This is my favourite reference book for everything that affects plants. It's 'Aim is to provide modern horticultural users with a systematic understanding of plant protection and plant management'. It outlines each problem, the damage it does, the plants it affects, the life cycle of the pest, how it is spread and the conditions it favours. With this book you can work out what the problem is and how to treat it, using organic and non-chemical methods. Or even if it is possible to treat the disease.

This book was written for Australia and the price kept low for student use. Although they do refer to chemical use, they mostly advocate IPM, or Integrated Pest Management. That is a system for control pests by looking at the whole plant, nutrients, environmental conditions and physical control. In IPM, the first rule is physical methods, i.e. can the pest be removed or controlled by clearing away debris, pruning or correct watering methods. That is looking at the plant in a more holistic way. As a reference book for pests it also talks about their life cycles and how they attack the plants, or what plants they attack. Outlined in this book are the causes of plant problems, 'Unless a problem is diagnosed correctly, control methods are likely to be ineffective'

Plant Protection 3, lists the plants and outlines the problems that affect them. 'A knowledge of the diseases, pests and weeds that attack your crop ensures that plant management, Integrated Pest Management (IPM), organic standards and Best Management Practice (BPM) programs can be completely prepared'. These books will only be available to read during meetings as a reference book, until we get a 2nd copy, for general use.

Check them out—a fascinating read! *Katie Gillett- Librarian*



Here is a sheet outlining IPM I found on the internet <http://ohioline.osu.edu/hyg-fact/2000/2205.html>

Integrated Pest Management for the Home Vegetable Garden

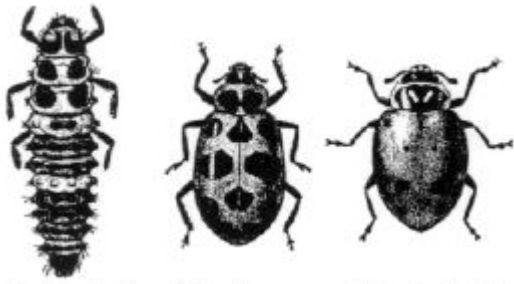
Overview

Integrated Pest Management (IPM) is the name given to the practice of using a combination of treatment methods to keep pests from ruining a crop. With IPM, the term "treatment" does not always imply the use of a chemical control. Non-chemical pest control strategies include cultural, mechanical, and biology controls as well as good sanitary practices. Most of these controls are used as preventive measures in an attempt to help keep pests below critical levels. However, certain conditions can still allow a pest population to build up to injurious levels. If this should occur, a rescue treatment can be used to reduce the population of the pest and rescue the crop.

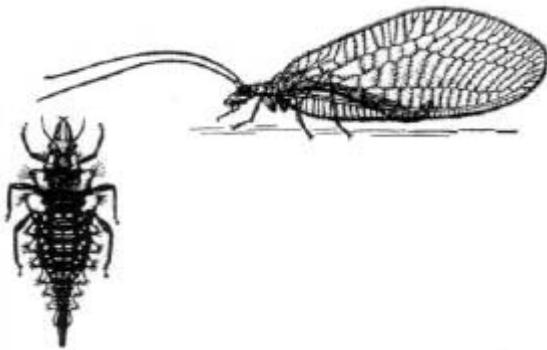
At the heart of IPM is the understanding that many crops can tolerate a certain amount of pest damage. As a result, a rescue treatment is not needed until the pest population reaches a critical level usually referred to as a threshold. In the home vegetable garden, this threshold may be economic, but is more likely to be aesthetic. A commercial grower's produce must be blemish free (or nearly so) for fresh market. If a cabbage is found to have holes in the leaves from insect feeding, it will probably be culled or sold at a lower price, making the threshold economic. On the other hand, the threshold for home grown vegetables is often dependent on an individual gardener's tolerance to the damage.

Thresholds for the different pests may vary greatly. In the case of the striped or spotted cucumber beetle, a pest on melons and cucumber plants and a vector of bacterial wilt disease, the threshold is only one actively feeding beetle in the entire planting. Conversely, the threshold for aphids on silking sweet corn is an average of fifty or more aphids per plant. Because the same pest may affect different plants in different ways, the threshold for a certain insect on one crop may not be the same for another crop. ...continued next page

Beneficial Insects That Feed On Pests



Lady beetle larva (left) and two types of adults



Lacewing larva (left) and adult (right)



Parasitic wasp that attacks aphids

Scouting the Garden

To evaluate the effectiveness of preventive measures and the possible need for a rescue treatment, the gardener should scout the garden on a regular basis.

The first step is to identify the pest. The next is to learn about the pest's habits & life cycle, allowing you to plan the most appropriate strategy.

When examining plants it is important to look at them closely. By doing so you will be able to see the egg masses or small larvae that are present before damage is evident. All parts of the plant should be examined, even if they are not parts that will be harvested. Pests may be found on the underside of leaves, on top of leaves, on stems, in stems, in buds, or on developing fruit. It is only by thorough scouting that you will truly know what is going on in your garden.

Not all insects found in the garden are pests. Lady beetles, lacewings, mantids & parasitic wasps are just a few of the beneficial insects. Ideally, a healthy balance of beneficial insects & pests should be present. Spraying a pest to the point of

eradication should not be a goal. Doing so may kill the beneficial insects as well, or cause them to migrate to other areas. In either situation, pest populations will generally re-establish more quickly than beneficial insects.

Control Measures

Cultural Control

Crop rotation is one of the most simple yet effective types of control for diseases and for insects that have a single generation each year. This involves planting a crop in an area of the garden where it (or a related crop) has not been grown for at least one year. When a crop is grown in the same spot year after year, insects and disease organisms can become established in the soil.

Proper fertility and selection of varieties of plants that are resistant to diseases are also important parts of an IPM program. Plants that are healthy and vigorous are able to withstand pest pressure better than stressed plants.

The use of a trap crop can be a control in itself. A trap crop, which is usually planted around the crop to be protected, can be any plant known to be highly attractive to a pest. Once the trap crop is infested, the insects can be hand picked, or the insects may be left to feed on the trap crop.

Mechanical Control

Several types of barriers may be used to protect a crop. Row covers, which allow for the penetration of sunlight and the movement of air and moisture (but not insects), can be used to protect a crop from migrating insects. If crop rotation is not used, however, this type of cover can trap insects emerging from the soil in with the crop, creating a false sense of security. Collars made of paper plates, or tin cans can also be placed around the bases of individual plants to protect the upper plant parts from crawling insects such as cutworms that live in the soil.

Several types of traps are also available for pest control or monitoring. Traps that attract an insect by colour (usually yellow or white) may be cards covered with a sticky substance or coloured bowls filled with soapy water. Other traps use a scent or "pheromone" to attract the pest to a sticky surface or an enclosure.

Mechanical control also includes simply removal of a pest by hand.

Sanitary Control

Removal of overripe produce will help in preventing the movement of scavenger type insects. Complete removal of disease infested plants can also sometimes help in preventing further spread of the disease. This involves taking the diseased plant completely out of the garden area, not just pulling it and leaving it in the area.

Biological Control

Biological control relies on naturally occurring organisms. In some instances this may be a fungus or bacterium that attacks the pest when weather conditions are right. It can also be the action of beneficial insects and parasites. The lady beetle and its larvae are well known for their habits of feeding on aphids.

To attract and preserve a population of local beneficial insects, grow flowers such as dill, angelica and dandelions.

Free ads for GOG members

GARDENING:

Matt Howard 5229 2517, 0417 314

987 paving; rotary hoeing; light excavation/ dingo work; off-the-plan landscaping



Gavin Gamble 5281 5115, 0410 505 936



golden plains
GARDENING

Enthusiastic, friendly, reliable.
Grey water distribution system,
fully installed.

Alan Scott 0410 549 021

Lawn mowing, rubbish removed, gutters cleaned, pruning, handyman work.



John Purtil 5282 8855, 0418 354 500

Pruning, tree & stump removal; garden construction.



John also owns **Lara Rose Garden** nursery: roses, vegetable & herb seedlings; native trees and grasses; olive trees; mulches, water tanks, mulcher hire, etc.

LANDSCAPE DESIGN:

Katie Gillett 4203 0447, 0405 569 622

Horticulturist email: bom_clothing@yahoo.com



MASSAGE:

Clinical Massage Therapist/Relaxation/Bowen Therapy.
Workcover Accredited **Robert Hindell 5272 1463**



Aromatherapy-Relaxation Massage-Australian Bush
Flower Essences-Reiki **Silvana 0411 520 334**

GEELONG GOES SOLAR

Geelong Sustainability Group has engaged The Solar Shop in a huge community bulk buy and installation of high quality photovoltaic solar panels at discounted rates.

The deal takes advantage of the \$8,000 Government rebate which will change in July this year. People can purchase and have installed the Japanese-made panels for as little as \$2,900 for a 1 kW grid connect system. There is a 25yr guarantee on materials and installation.

For more info contact Aaron Lewtas 0402 931 872 or aaron.lewtas@solarshop.com.au or come to an info session Monday May 4th, 3pm and 6pm and Wednesday May 6th, 1pm and 6pm. Must be a member of Geelong Sustainability Group to take advantage of this deal.

Monica Winston 5241 7086 or 0439 390 557

WANTED:

A Trampoline. Judy Cameron **5288 7005.**

Worms. Help! My worm is lonely. I am desperately seeking some more worms for my new worm farm. Can pick up from 3216 area. **Silvana 52439641**

I am also willing to **swap labour or produce** in exchange for help with digging out couch.

Ideas to eradicate ivy! Silvana 52439641 or 0411520334

Comfrey seedlings can swap for borage! Liz 52433206/0404043206 or lizjoe@pipeline.com.au

FOR RENT

LARGE BUNGALOW, furnished, completely separate, has its own kitchen facilities, phone, bathroom (including bath), toilet and laundry. In a large backyard with big organic vegetable and cottage gardens, fruit trees. Heart of Geelong West; short walk to station or city; very close to bus stops. \$120 week includes gas, electricity & water. Phone **Trish Jardine 5223 2407.**

GOOD PRODUCTS / GIFTS:

Natural baby products; cloth nappies; Fair Trade gifts, etc Quill Walker 5247 0676

Handmade soaps: Paul Smith 5236 3384

Torpedo hoes: the best garden tool! Paul Smith 52363384



MUSIC: Guitar teacher
Paul Monk 0437 856 403



Buy Aussie grown or grow it! (Source: www.moonrocks.com.au, www.gardenate.com)

Many shops stock imported garlic—perfectly white! This garlic tends to have limited flavour profile due to its age and sterilization requirements. Its 'perfect' appearance is because it has been bleached as part of the import process. Imported garlic is easily recognized because the roots have been scraped off leaving a small indentation in the base of the clove. This is done to try and stop contaminated soil entering Australia. By law this garlic must be sold with country of origin labeling information attached. Unfortunately most of it is produced outside the strict food safety programs that Australian farmers are bound to. These processes remove most of the goodness and flavour out of the garlic and supply the consumer with a product that in some cases is up to a year old. When garlic is grown naturally and in Australia it isn't fumigated or treated with dangerous chemicals. Garlic it is best planted about now! (April /May) Prepare soil with lime & blood & bone. Sow seed/clove at a depth approximately three times the diameter of the seed. It is best planted at soil temperatures between 10°C and 35°C. Garlic is planted in cold weather and harvest in summer ("plant on the shortest day, harvest on the longest"). Plant the cloves, point upwards, deep enough to just cover with soil. Healthy soil with regular watering will get a better crop. To keep for later use, dig up and leave to dry out so green shoots die down. To use immediately, pull up a clove when you need it, or cut and use the green shoots.



GOG Committee 2007/08

Chair: Rachel Brown 0430 057 323

Vice Chair: Quill Walker 5247 0676

Correspondence: Trish Jardine 5223 2407

Minute Secretary: Jan Bullock 5282 4262

Treasurer: Jen Harriott 5243 6167

Librarian: Katie Gillett 0405569622

Committee Members:

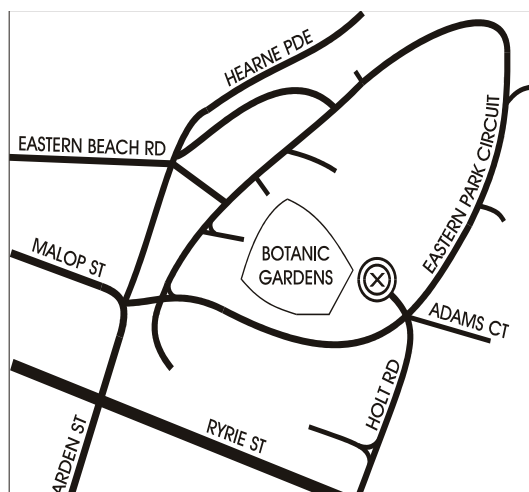
Gavin Gamble 5281 5115

Cherie Mordue 5266 1832

Toni Millar 0421021110



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)

Field trips are generally held in odd numbered months (except Jan.)

Membership Fees are due

on September 1st each year.

\$26 General / Family *

\$18 Concession *

***less \$6 if newsletter emailed (in colour rather than black & white)**

New members paying from June get 3 months free membership.

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

Seed Bank Members donate seeds which are for sale at the meetings at a nominal price.



Seed Bank Curators

Pam & Terry Bolton 5253 2406

Library Members are entitled to borrow from the Geelong Organic Gardeners shelves up to 3 books per meeting, one current magazine and an unlimited number of past editions. **These must be returned by the following meeting.**

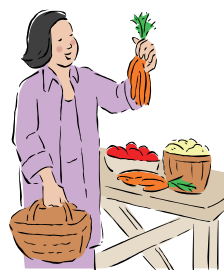


Friends Of The Botanic Gardens books, and those of other groups sharing the library area, are not for loan but may be referred to on meeting nights. These must be returned to the correct position on the shelves.

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 may bring their produce and home made products (no commercial items) to sell, giving 10% commission to the club.

Newsletter Articles are gladly received by Editor Judy Cameron 5288 7005 or email to lizjoe@pipeline.com.au

Registered address:

26 Albert Street
Geelong West 3218
Phone: 5223 2407

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.

Basic tips to build a herb spiral (Source: www.permaculturenorth.org.au)

Build a conical mound of soil at least 1m high & 1.5m in diameter, high enough to cast a good shadow. If you want to make the herb spiral bigger, you can do so, provided you follow the ratio 1:1.5 (height : diameter at base). (If you dig a big hole to get the mound of soil, you can make a pond out of the hole later) Place rocks or bricks around the base edge of the mound & then, starting from the base, place rocks or bricks in a line going upwards around the mound to make the spiral. Cover the soil with a good thick layer of mulch. Part the mulch where you want to put plants, and add a good helping of compost to those places. Plant herbs into the compost patches according to their needs: the herb spiral has a range of micro-climates on it. The Mediterranean herbs (rosemary, oregano, thyme, etc) that like the sun go on the north-western side close to the top where the soil is dryer. Herbs that like a bit of shade, and moister soil, go on the south-eastern side near the base, where they're shaded from afternoon sun. You could also build a small pond at the bottom of the herb spiral, to grow food in water (e.g. watercress, water chestnuts), and to attract lizards, frogs and birds to your garden to control any pests.



SENDER

GOG , 26 Albert Street, Geelong West, 3218



GEELONG ORGANIC GARDENERS INC.

REGISTRATION : A0012071C

Newsletter

PLEASE
STAMP
ME
BABY