

# BLUE MOUNTAINS PERMACULTURE NETWORK

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## NEWSLETTER AUTUMN 2007

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Hello

Welcome to the Autumn Newsletter.  
The two leading articles in this newsletter are about energy - water and electricity, practical examples of what 2 of our members are doing.

Deb Hurley has written a most helpful guide on what to plant when in the upper and lower mountains.(see p 15)

Our network is being asked to be actively involved in community projects; we provided a letter of support to the Cittaslow application (see p 14), conduct stalls and answer myriad enquiries. As such there is a need to spread the work load of the network and a meeting was held on 23 February (see report p 12).

We urgently need more members who are willing to take on some of the tasks of our network. More volunteers would mean fewer tasks for all.

We have been asked to help crew the Permaculture North display at the Royal Easter Show. Many visit this display and want information about what is happening in their local area. I attended this display at Gardening Australia, I had an enjoyable day, met lots of keen people and volunteers get free entry to the Show. If you are willing and able contact me - 4787 9108.

We are still running our logo competition. We have a small number of entries so there is time for you to enter. As we are setting up a website and a blog we do need a meaningful logo to help identify us as Blue Mountains Permaculture.

All the best

Pat  
BMPcN

## WHAT'S ON?

- Sunday 11th March.                   The **next meeting of Climate Action Now (CAN)** previously called **CAKE Club-** will be at the newly named Hat Hill Gallery, 3 Hat Hill Rd Blackheath at **4.30pm**
- Wednesday 14 March               **FORUM for BLUE MOUNTAINS COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENT GROUPS**  
7:00 TO 9:00PM at the Mid Mountains Community Centre (Dining Rm)  
Contact: Jasmine Payget, Environmental Education BMCC  
[jpayget@bmcc.nsw.gov.au](mailto:jpayget@bmcc.nsw.gov.au) Ph: 4780 5739
- Friday 16 March                   **Meeting Blue Mountains Permaculture Network (BMPcN)**  
1pm - 3pm    Treherne Café, Katoomba St, Katoomba
- Saturday 17th March               **AN INCONCEIVABLE TRUTH - CLIMATE CHANGE IN AUSTRALIA**  
presentations based on the slides used in Al Gore's movie "An Inconvenient Truth" but updated for Australia - They are free and everyone is welcome.  
**4pm Blackheath Public School Hall** (for more information contact Blackheath & District Chamber of Commerce)
- Sunday 25 March                   **WORKING BEE** - Katoomba - 10 - 1.00 (includes lunch) Remove blackberries & agapanthus. Wear long sleeves and pants. Bring mattocks, secateurs etc. Ph Susan Ambler 4782 6564
- Saturday 31 March                **EARTH HOUR** 7.30pm to 8.30pm -  
we are inviting Sydney to turn off its lights for just one hour - Earth Hour - to show that it's possible to take action on global warming.  
More info: [www.earthhour.smh.com.au](http://www.earthhour.smh.com.au) Info also at the BMCC  
Sustainable Living stalls at the Springwood Foundation Day on 31 March 2007 9am to 4pm.
- Tuesday 3rd April                **AN INCONCEIVABLE TRUTH - CLIMATE CHANGE IN AUSTRALIA**  
presentations based on the slides used in Al Gore's movie "An Inconvenient Truth" but updated for Australia - They are free and everyone is welcome.  
**7.30pm Central Blue Mountains Garden Club Inc.**

### **Hazelbrook Public School Assembly Hall**

RSVP Helen Eather Ph. 4759 3866 Email: helen\_eather@hotmail.com

This email address is being protected from spam bots, you need Javascript enabled to view it

Thursday 19 April

### **Climate Change Despair & Empowerment Roadshow**

Ruth Rosenhek and John Seed of the Rainforest Information Centre are taking to the road with their Climate Change Despair and Empowerment Roadshow to help catalyse and support a dynamic climate change movement across Australia.

Proposed venue: Civic Centre, Katoomba Proposed time: 6.30-8.30pm

For more information and roadshow schedule, see

<http://www.climate.net.au>

Sunday May 27

### **Mid-Mountain Seedsavers 2783 Meeting**

Bullaburra Progress Association Hall, crn Noble St and Gr Western Highway, Bullaburra 10.00 - 12.00 Bring a plate to share

Contact 4759 2118 or [mcrun@hermes.net.au](mailto:mcrun@hermes.net.au) to indicate numbers.

Wednesday, 7 March, 2007

### **AN EVENING WITH ERIN BROCKOVICH**

Presented by CLIMATE CHANGE COALITION

Sydney Convention & Exhibition Centre

Dinner 7pm - 10.30pm

Jenny Garber [j.garber@entorno.com.au](mailto:j.garber@entorno.com.au) >0416 262 189

Saturday 17 March

### **CHEESEMAKING COURSE** Macarthur Centre for Sustainable Living

Cost: \$70 includes lunch

Soft cheeses - feta and ricotta - take home samples provided

To book call Lizzie asap on (02) 4647 6594 as places are limited

## **MAKING USE OF WATER ON MY PROPERTY**

by Susan Girard

I know from experience the benefits of ponds in a permaculture garden; by encouraging a higher diversity of species into an ecosystem it can work to its maximum potential. Ponds are also a good way to recycle water

It isn't possible to duplicate the ecology of any sort of wetland exactly. But even so, on my urban block (figure1) I want to make water work for me in as many ways as it can. I have several tyre

ponds, a couple a children's pre-moulded wading pools, a bath-pond and a self excavated area lined with Damtuff® a black butyl-rubber lining. They all have differing functions, and this has dictated where they are placed and what they are made from. In Zones III - V I want to encourage predatory birds, frogs, lizards and insects for better pest management; in Zone II I want to create microclimates and still more predators; in Zone I want to grow water chestnuts and filter my grey water. And being born under a water sign I simply want ponds for their psychological and aesthetic value.

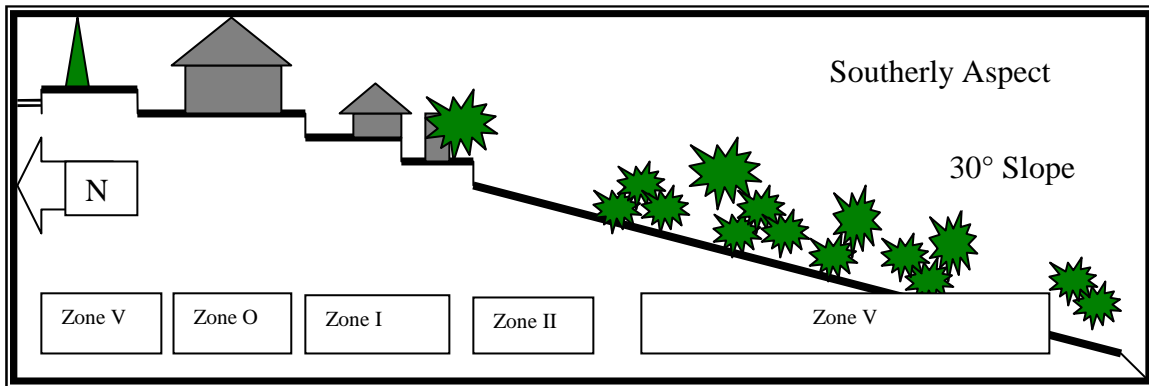


Figure 1 **Side view my site**

I've read that the larger the pond is the less maintenance it will need. One book I read suggested 6 sq.m as ideal, a bit like Pat our Editor's reclaimed swimming pool. But hey, I personally don't have that amount of space. Bigger ponds also have more legal restraints, especially with regards to safety regulations. So instead I have designed small interconnecting ponds, that put small amounts of water over a wide area.

I have used Damtuff® because it is UV resistant, tear proof and non-degradable. Most garden centres sell this or a similar PVC lining that can be glue-welded into large sheets as needed. The polyethylene sheeting used as dampcourse under the foundation of houses is not suitable because it leaches chemicals that are detrimental to plants and animals. In the Upper Mountains we usually have either Hawkesbury sandstone or Nepean bedrock and that means that clay bonding the walls with Bentonite is not so successful. I haven't tried my hand at a concrete rendered pond. Putting down a liner seems much easier to me; my husband, Kevin is not a keen plasterer

Whether using a premoulded pond or one you have made yourself, consider all the uses intended for it in relationship to each zone. The recommended shape has irregular edges and ecotones for habitat; shallow water areas for visiting wildlife to gain ready access in or out of the water, slightly deeper water for plants; and deeper water for fish and amphibians escaping the heat of the day. Then the primary purpose of my bath-pond is to grow water chestnuts, but I have added a few large rocks and a tree branch for the blue tongue lizards to get in and out. I found one madly treading water there one day; it hadn't been able to climb out, poor thing.

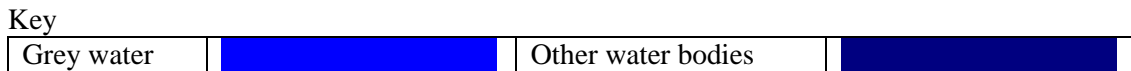
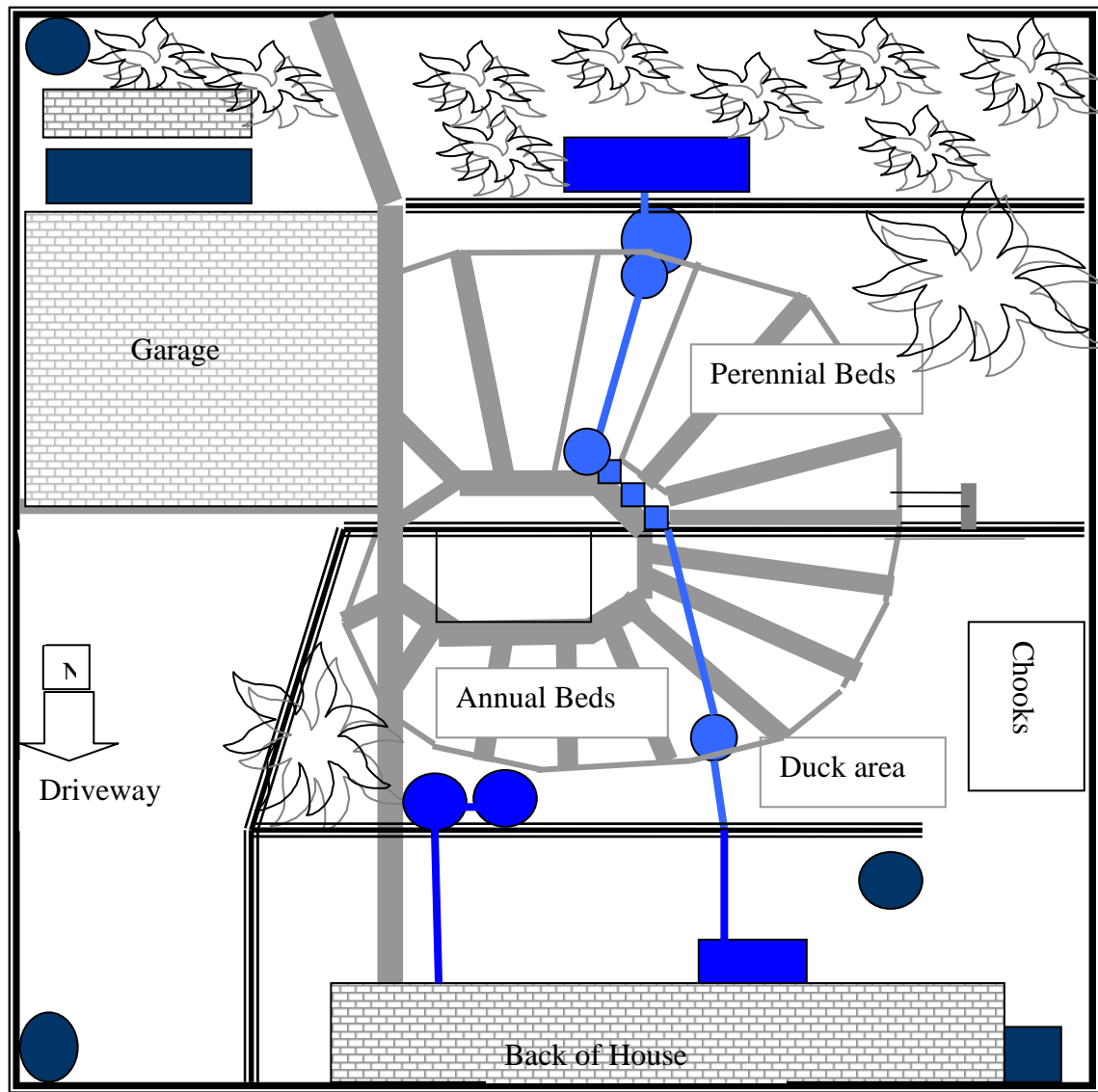


Figure 2 Zones I and II Water design in my garden

Obviously I am careful which soaps and detergents are used. But basically the system distributes the grey water from the upstairs shower and bath. This water is collected in a tank below and then released into a system incorporating three premoulded plastic drainage/sump baskets. The idea is to imitate a homemade water filter that I read about for a Permaculture Disasters Workshop. The first basket contains a layer of large pebbles, the second contains small aggregate type stones and the third contains large grained river sand. They are positioned corner to corner so that the water is funneled directly downslope (figure 3). The idea is that by the time water has passed through the system it will have been filtered and sterilised by the sun

enough to enter the larger 'wild-life' ponds at the beginning of Zone II (figure 4). Frogs spawn in all three baskets as well as the ponds, so I am more than confident that the system is healthy.

Since I do recycle some of my grey water into these ponds I have to watch for nitrification by nitrates, and salinity. Nitrification increases algal growth, and both excess algae and salinity affect dissolved oxygen



Figure 3 **Filtration System**



Figure 4 **Excavated pond**

Water quality in ponds and dams can be a major issue. During a TAFE course last year I visited a site where the colour of the dam was a beautiful yet alarming emerald green - we suspected the toxic Blue Green Algae, as being responsible (figure 5)

Although I am part of a Stream-watch group, I have never tested the pH of any of my ponds, but if I had a rendered pond I would test it occasionally just in case the lime leached and changed the acidity. Fortunately we are not in the Northern Hemisphere where acid rain can cause big problems.

Turbidity (how clear the water is) (figure 6) is more often a personal thing. If I wanted fish then from a visual point of view I might want it clear and would add gypsum; but when I tried 'growing on' yabbies I learnt they didn't mind murky water as a camouflage against predators. The permaculture view is that if you can see a 20 cent coin at arms length then the water is clear enough to introduce fish

For a pond to work effectively as a wild system I've read it needs 8 hours of sunlight a day, although this is more for the plant life I believe. Temperature is important, not too hot, not too cold. Plants should provide shade for insects and larger animals during the heat of the day. In winter most of my ponds freeze over at night to some degree and then melt during the day. Some times the ice has been so thick that my ducks have not been able to break through the ice layer for a drink.

Be it pond or dam a water system needs to age a couple of years. Macro-invertebrates only appear when there are plants and microbes or algae for them to eat. Advanced plants shade the

water surfaces so the water does not evaporate so rapidly. As well as stones aquatic life needs sticks and general flotsam in order to escape predators and as anchorage for eggs during the breeding season. Inoculating a new pond with a bucket of water from an established pond (with a few tadpoles, water snails, mosquito wriggles...) will speed the process up a bit.



Figure 5. Turbidity (90 NTU) with the colour identifying ill-health  
Tap water is 5 NTU.



Figure 6 . High Turbidity in this newly made dam is quite normal as the clay settles and the system ages

So what to plant? Local is best of course - even Australian species are capable of becoming weeds outside their natural area. I have *Azolla filiculides* growing on most of the ponds, and when it gets too dense and thick I harvest clumps and add it to my compost. I tried several types of *Blechnum* sp (water ferns) that grow in the Upper Mountains near natural ponds and look soft and rain forestry; but I found they were very thirsty in full sun, and really need a boggy area - not a feature of any of my ponds. Various types of water loving plants like mints and blue berries do benefit for growing close to a pond, although I have seen several types of mint becoming a weed.

I have been thinking of adding some taller reeds and sedges. A few that are local are:

Common name	Scientific name	Height	Comment
Jointed Twig-rush	<i>Baumea articulata</i>	1-2 m	High nutrient uptake
Bare Twig-rush	<i>Baumea juncea</i>	0.3-1m	Submergent-emergent. High nutrient uptake
Salt Club-rush	<i>Bolboschoenus caldwelli</i>	0.3-0.9m	Flowers profusely, high nutrient uptake, deciduous
Tall sedge	<i>Carex appressa</i>	To 1m	Grows in damp areas including standing water
Common spike rush	<i>Eleocharis acuta</i>	To 0.9m	Prefers wet conditions
Tall spike rush	<i>Eleocharis sphacelata</i>	To 2m	Prefers slow flowing stagnant water
Thatching grass	<i>Gahnia filum</i>	0.2-0.35m	Prefers damp conditions
Red fruit Saw sedge	<i>Gahnia sieberiana</i>	1-2.5m	Prefers damp shaded, high nutrient uptake
Swamp Club-rush	<i>Isolepis inundata</i>	0.1-0.3m	
Knobby Club-rush	<i>Isolepis nodosa</i>	0.5-1.5m	Prefers damp conditions, high nutrient uptake
Toad Rush	<i>Juncus bufonius</i>	0.02-0.3m	Prefers damp conditions, high nutrient uptake

Sea Rush	<i>Juncus kraussii</i>	1m	Controls erosion high nutrient uptake
	<i>Juncus sarophorus</i>	0.7-1.2m	Controls erosion Nitrogen fixation
Finger Rush	<i>Juncus subsecundus</i>	0.2-0.9m	Prefers damp conditions
Spiky Club-rush	<i>Schoenoplectus pungens</i>	0.3-0.6m	Good aerobic activity, high nutrient uptake
Leafy Bog-rush	<i>Schenus maschalinus</i>	2m	Prefers damp water logged conditions

Derived : SA Reedbed Species 2004 (on-line 9 2006)

As part of a Permaculture, garden ponds have aquaculture potential. In the Upper Mountains the temperature is a limiting factor to growing edible plants. I grow water chestnuts which are almost no maintenance; in the Lower Mountains you could try taro and edible water lilies if you had the space.

Space is also a consideration if you want to 'grown on' fish or yabbies. There are 18 native species of fish in the Blue Mountains (600 Australia wide). Yabbies are found in our local streams and are protected, but you can buy live ones from the Sydney fish market occasionally. Trout, although introduced from the Northern Hemisphere like a cool climate and are often placed in local dams, including I believe Wentworth Falls Lake.

Not to be over looked is a ponds ability to moderate temperature and change the surrounding humidity. Many people in the Mountains grow lemon grass as an annual because of the winter frosts. I have grown lemon grass next to one pond which has survived for several years. Water-bodies have great thermal mass and they cool down slower than land during the night and radiate that heat into the surrounding area.

Any bit of water is a plus, from a bird bath or a pot on a verandah to that 6 sq. meter pond or dam. The new edition of *Earth User's Guide to Permaculture* has lots of Ro Morrow's experience and wisdom with water for anyone who would like to know more.

I am learning as I go. Has anyone else got other ideas?

## **GREEN ELECTRICITY JAN 2007 - comparison of electricity products by Celeste Salter**

I recently started to look (again) at the different energy products available for electricity supply in NSW. You probably know all of the jargon and it is clear green energy just ain't a simple colour any more. There is old renewable (which can include biomass and Snowy Hydro) and new renewable green electricity where post 1997 installations fulfill the Green Energy Tick criteria (you might have noticed this on your latest bill).

Integral Energy, AGL, Origin and Jack Green were surveyed for costs, and products for 100% green renewable electricity that includes either all or part as new renewable energy.

The table below contains the costs (including GST), the supply charges, and the amount of new renewable energy you get for your dollar. A total cost has been calculated for an annual consumption of 2800kWh, and a higher value of 4000kWh so that you can compare the costs. Quotes are based on a property in Hazelbrook.

The table's purpose is to assist you in determining the real costs in making the change to a CO2 clean electricity option. Rankings based on costs are in brackets ().

<b>Supplier and Product</b>	<b>% new renewable</b>	<b>cost cents/kWh (inc gst)</b>	<b>service charge/annum</b>	<b>total cost for 2800kWh/annum</b>	<b>total cost for 4000kWh/annum</b>
<b>Integral InGreen Pure</b>	100	17.977 (increases to 19.0990 for 1750kWh/qrt)	\$149.93	\$653.29 (7)	\$869.01 (8)
<b>Integral InGreen Home</b>	10	13.14	\$149.93	\$517.85 (1)	\$675.53 (1)
<b>AGL Green</b>	100	18.74	\$149.93	\$674.64 (10)	\$899.53 (10)
<b>AGL Green Living</b>	20	13.14	\$149.93 + \$51.48 (99c/week)	\$569.33 (3)	\$727.01 (3)
<b>AGL Green Spirit</b>	10	13.14	\$149.93 + \$51.48 - 5% (99c/week)	\$540.86 (2)	\$690.66 (2)
<b>Origin 100 Solar</b>	100	19.27	\$149.93	\$689.49 (11)	\$920.73 (12)
<b>Origin 100 Wind</b>	100	18.64	\$149.93	\$671.85 (8)	\$895.53 (9)
<b>Origin 50W/50Hydro</b>	50	13.14	\$149.93 + \$156 (3/week)	\$673.85 (9)	\$831.53 (7)
<b>Origin 20W/80Hydro</b>	20	13.14	\$149.93 + \$52 (1/week)	\$569.85 (4)	\$727.53 (4)
<b>JackGreen100</b>	100	\$13.14	\$149.93 + \$228.80	\$746.65 (12)	\$904.33 (11)
<b>JackGreen50</b>	50	\$13.14	\$149.93 + \$114.40	\$632.25 (6)	\$789.53 (6)
<b>JackGreen25</b>	25	\$13.14	\$149.93 + \$57.20	\$575.05 (5)	\$732.33 (5)
<b>JackGreen10</b>	10	\$13.14	\$149.93	\$517.85 (1)	\$675.53 (1)

Integral InGreen Home costs the same as coal generated electricity, and the same as JackGreen10. So at the very least, making the change to this type of product means that renewable energy is being used instead of coal fired power. Origin use hydro from a weir source that has no dam attached, whereas other suppliers will purchase from any hydro facility. Also Origin's website indicated I could only get 20W/80Hydro, whereas the person I contacted via telephone informed me I could have all of the products listed in the table. They will also give a 1 month usage of electricity free when you join up. Similarly AGL will do a special deal if you have gas and use the Green Spirit product (and give you a \$50 cash back). No deals if you want more new green renewable than 10%. These have not been taken into account in the table, as a fair comparison is what it really costs over years and not the sweetener to get you in.

In summary, if you want to get 100% new renewable green electricity, based on the costs alone for 2800 kWh per annum consumption, then the rankings for electricity products (most cost effective to least) are:

Integral InGreen Pure  
Origin 100 Wind  
AGL Green  
Origin 100 Solar  
JackGreen 100.

For 4000kWh per annum consumption the ranking is

Integral InGreen Pure  
Origin 100 Wind  
AGL Green  
JackGreen 100  
Origin 100 Solar

Also note that it can take up to 3 months for your provider to be changed over, as a transfer will only occur after your meter is read.

Good Luck!  
Celeste Salter

## **A SHORT MEDITATION ON ROCKS AND STONES IN BUSH ECOSYSTEMS.**

**by Rowe Morrow**

I've spent quite a bit of time lately digging around in my soil which I love. ( I was a wombat in my last life.) However, through sifting through the soil I became interested in the stones and rocks and how they function.

## **Stones, rocks and water**

Our beautiful natural creeks and streams are full of rocks and an archetypal photo is one of clear water running over stones with overhanging ferns or ti-tree. These stones, like everything else in our ecosystem webs function for the good of the whole. They are a defence against the pounding of water in floods which so easily erodes the banks. The rocks accept the force of the water and save the plants and soils on the edges.

Their rounded shapes enable the water to move in its natural spirals. Their naturally graded sizes enable some of the rock to move if the force of the water is very great.

In the riffles, the narrowing of the creek bed, they help to oxygenate the water as it rushes over them. Then the creek widens out again into ponds where some of the water's load can settle and we get one of those lovely bush ponds with stillness and reflexions.

In rehabilitation of creeks and streams, stones and rocks will be an essential resource.

No wonder bushrock is classified a "non-renewable" resource.

## **Stones, rocks and soil**

It's not so clear why rock is so valuable in soils. I have made some observations and from these, some deductions quite possibly wrong but worth thinking about. Soil stones are often flat or angular and so would hold or redirect water on a micro scale.

It also seems that the surface interface of stone and soil is a special ecotone and perhaps an ignored one.

The surface of stones is often damp and any sticky soil clays adhere to their surface and I think there is an exchange of clay minerals here where the rock surface is undergoing a very slow change to a more permeable state. It's as if the soil is slowly removing the skin of the stone.

The processes of condensation and evaporation from the stoney soils seem more active than from stoneless soils. They are active perhaps because of the larger mass of stone and probably its composition. These soils are damper and warmer. It is noticeable that the stones in the soil are quite warm within about 30 cm of the soil surface. They don't seem to cool down as much at night perhaps because the upper soil layers act as an insulation blanket for stones. It seems as if they act as a heat bank for the soil and so would enhance the root growth of plants.

I've seen people sieve and rake soils to remove all the stones because they feel the roots are blocked by them. I'm inclined to think that stoney soils actually enhance root growth by providing an special micro-environment of nutrient and water.

Has anyone else thought about this?

**Rowe Morrow. 2007**

## What's been happening?

### Meeting Blue Mountains Permaculture Network (BMPcN) by Sue Girard

On 23rd February several active members of the Blue Mountains Permaculture Network (BMPcN) team got together to discuss the running of the Network.

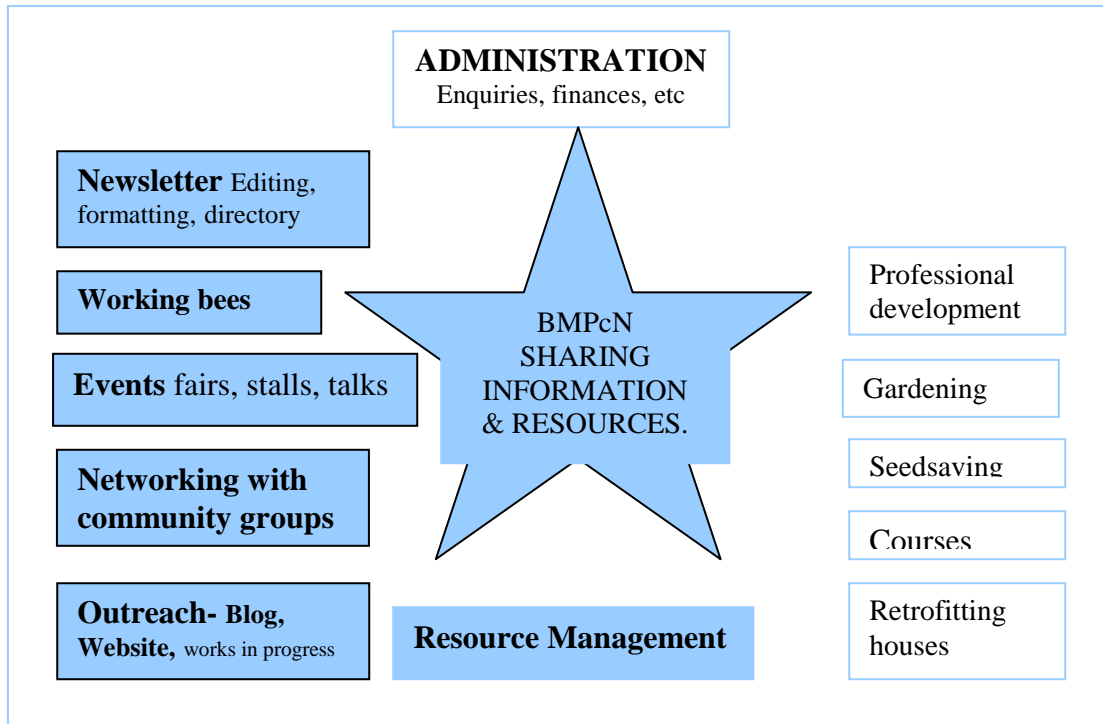
Rosemary Morrow addressed the meeting and pointed out that

*'Permaculture everywhere is under strain with the environmental crises that we have known about, now being public concerns and we ourselves come under pressure for what we can offer in the way of solutions. Without some clear and easy way of working together in the Blue Mountains we cannot meet requests and needs of outside bodies. We have much to offer and our organisation needs to make that easy.'*

The roles and responsibilities of networking between the members of the BMPcN and its outreach were discussed, along with recommendations for a way forward that would be effective and ethical. Seven other outreach/network mechanisms were acknowledged; with the BMPcN being represented in over twelve relevant community environmental groups. Tasks were listed as to their perceived priority and volunteers called upon. Seven main tasks were identified including this Newsletter and Administration; both up until now have been Pat Rayner's responsibility.

The course of action determined includes a monitor and review of the success of dividing tasks amongst members by the next Meeting and 6<sup>th</sup> monthly reviews thereafter.

At present we see ourselves as being involved in:



We could still do with more active members who would be willing to:

- assist at stalls
- liaise with other community groups
- work on Newsletter,

so if anyone is interested please contact me at [pest.asides@bigpond.com.au](mailto:pest.asides@bigpond.com.au)

Also anyone wanting a copy of the minutes should contact me and they can be forwarded.

Susan Girard.

## Blackheath CAKE Club

The Blackheath CAKE Club has been renamed **Blackheath Climate Action Now (Blackheath CAN)**, become incorporated and is holding its **COMMUNITY MARKET** this coming Sunday 4th March from 9am-2pm in the Blackheath Public School Hall. There will be food, live entertainment, recycled toys, arts & crafts and lots of exciting surprises all from within 20km of Blackheath. If you'd like a stall you can contact Bodhi on 47871919.

The **next meeting of CAN** will be at the newly named Hat Hill Gallery, 3 Hat Hill Rd Blackheath at **4.30pm on Sunday 11th March.**

## COMMUNITY UPDATES

### Cittaslow Blue Mountains - Sustaining Community -

The organisers of the application for Blue Mountains to become a slow city are looking for donations of local produce for a luncheon with the Italian delegation to be held on Friday 16 March. Non-perishable goods can be given anytime, and fresh produce 2-3 days before.

Phone Anne from Slow Foods on 4782 7376 for more information, or email [cloudlands@hermes.net.au](mailto:cloudlands@hermes.net.au)

You can also read more about Cittaslow on the Katoomba Chamber of Commerce site <http://www.katoombachamber.com/content/blogcategory/17/34/>

### WORKING BEES

**Kathy Hale & Murray Wilson**

**There is something special happening in backyards up and down the mountains - it's "working bees".** Would you like to spend some time with other local permies sharing ideas, sharing resources, seeking solutions, getting your hands dirty and getting inspired? Then come to, or host, a working bee. "Bees" are usually for a few hours, once a month, on a weekend.

Typically, the person hosting the working bee decides what they would like to have help with in their backyard. So far we have - renovated a huge old apple tree (which is now thriving) in the upper mountains, created a new plucking bed in the mid mountains (including weed suppression, planning paths and building soil) and expanded the diversity of a small citrus orchard in the lower mountains (which significantly reduced the lawn area too, yay!). So you see, it could be a specific project that the working bee can get off to a flying start for you, or it could be regular seasonal work that many hands can make light of.

Getting stuff done is very satisfying, but even better is the conversations we have as we are doing it. We talk about sustainability issues, both on the local and global level, as we work. Depending on the time of day we decide to meet, we usually finish by sharing morning or afternoon tea or a simple lunch together. The companionship is wonderful, it is very low key, and both experienced and beginning permies participate.

We try to be smart about how we get to the "bees", by taking public transport or car pooling, and we usually bring the tools we will need to use and any free or low cost materials relevant to the work at hand (eg. newspapers for sheet mulching). The person hosting the "bee" just needs to have purchased or procured things like mulch, plants, stepping stones etc. All this adds up to a very enjoyable and productive few hours.

**We will be having a working bee on Sunday 25 March at Katoomba - 10 - 1.00 (includes lunch) Remove blackberries & agapanthus. Wear long sleeves and pants. Bring mattocks, secateurs etc. Ph Susan Ambler 4782 6564**

If you are interested in participating in and / or hosting a working bee please contact Kathy Hale on 4784 3572 or [halewilson@bigpond.com](mailto:halewilson@bigpond.com) (with "Working Bee" in the subject line) or Celeste Salter on [cjsalter@austarnet.com.au](mailto:cjsalter@austarnet.com.au)

## Mid Mountains Seed Savers - 2783

Next meeting Sunday 7 May

Please contact Loret or John on 4759 2118 or email [mcrun@hermes.net.au](mailto:mcrun@hermes.net.au)

## AUTUMN VEGETABLES TO PLANT

by Deborah Hurley

This is only a general guide for sowing and planting in the cool, temperate and warmer areas of the Blue Mts. East from Springwood you can plant the whole list and add the section "warmer areas". If you question any of the veges on the lists, please let us know.....but remember the growing seasons are changing, even getting longer so lets see what happens this autumn/winter season. Also a gardener's know how is usually the best judge. Let us know if you have any interesting seasonal planting habits!! And of course, you may have a lovely warm and sheltered microclimate where you can extend the season, it's up to you.

**MARCH SOWINGS:** (seeds): broad beans (mature plants tolerate frosts),  
Chinese cabbage, garlic, green manure crops (eg: alfalfa, broad beans, red clover,  
vetch wooley pod), lettuce, mesclun, onion (Barletta, Creamgold, Red Brunswick),  
parsnip (frost improves flavour), spring onion, radish (French Breakfast, Japanese Diakon),  
spinach (Amsterdam Giant, Bloomsdale Long Standing),  
turnips, warrigal greens (New Zealand)

**PLANT OUT** (seedlings): broccoli, cabbages (Sugarloaf), cauliflower (Paleface),  
edible chrysanthemum, endive (Broad-Leaved, Salad King), leeks (Musselburg),  
lettuce, pea (Sugarsnap - climbing, frost resistant), spinach (English)  
silverbeet (Fordhook Giant - tolerates light frost),

**WARMER AREAS:** add asparagus, carrots, endive (as above, plus Blonde Full Height, Moss  
Curled), parsley, rocket, salsify, silverbeet ( as above plus  
Lucullus, Ruby Red Chard), swedes

**APRIL SOWINGS:** broad beans, lettuce, onions, radishes, peas and  
beans (for green manure)

**PLANT OUT:** cabbages, cauliflowers, lettuce, onions

**WARMER AREAS:** add: leeks, silverbeet

**MAY SOWINGS:** broad beans, winter lettuce, onions, radish  
**PLANT OUT:** cabbages, cauliflowers, lettuce (maybe use a cold frame),  
onions, potato onions, shallots, strawberries  
**WARMER AREAS:** add rhubarb crowns, peas, spinach.

According to information I have read you can grow certain peas, beans, artichoke globe, kale, radish, strawberry, turnip, and spring onions all year round in areas where soil temp is above 10 degrees celcius. Check on the back of the seed packet for correct instruction.

Check out some of the excellent seed catalogues available including Eden Seeds, Diggers Seeds, and Greenpatch Seeds. Eden and Greenpatch are available at the co-op in Katoomba.

Happy planting

Deborah  
March, 2007

# What about having a Sustainable Brunch?

Ask people to

1. Bring something local to share
2. Walk, ride, catch a train. Work towards zero waste (eg you wash up your dishes at the outside washing up area and water the garden when the water needs to be replaced)
3. Use the time to do what sustains then and others and our world eg chill out, breathe, dance, draw, sing, talk about things you want to do or don't want to do, eat and drink slowly
4. have a sustainable brunch at their place (at least once a year)

**Margot Turner**

## Feedback

Newsletter Spring 2006 ...that was an interesting read - I especially liked the street party article and it encourages me to do something in my neighbourhood - I used to do things like that and somehow let it go.

Good also about the Food Alliance work - it's so important.

Vera

Advertisement

### DEVIC VEGIES

**Non-hybrid, organic, seasonal vegetable seedlings grown locally in the Blue Mts.**

**For your old-fashioned, heritage vegetable seedlings ring Deb on 47843157 and leave a message. Sown using lunar calendar.**

**Cheap and cheerful.**

***"SPREADING THE SEEDS"***

**Perm Cert.**

## ODDS & SODS

- If you are interested in participating in the discussion on the **Wind Farm** for the Blue Mountains check out Ian Lett's discussion group. Go to <http://www.yahogroups.com> and search for "community wind farm"
- ABC TV's *Gardening Australia* presenter and permaculture designer Josh Byrne from WA at *Melliodora*

Planned broadcast date 31st March 2007

This 6.5 minute piece due for broadcast in March (repeated in December) includes hard hitting comments from David about drought and water use in gardens including using water for home food production being more water efficient than food from the supermarket.

Although we are having our worst season yet in terms of fruit and vegie crops we agreed to *Gardening Australia* coming on the basis that we could counter some of the misconceptions and wrong directions being peddled by state governments and even environmental organisations about household water use.

See [Garden Agriculture: A Revolution in Efficient Water Use](#) (53kb pdf) for more info from Writings page of HDS website

For more info about Melliodora see the [website](#) .

For the full story, pictures and plans get the [eBook](#)

Back in 1997 Gardening Australia did a 3 part series on permaculture at Melliodora that was rerun on their 'best of first ten years'. We hope this advanced publicity allows permaculture teachers and activists to make use of this in their own activities and help promote permaculture more generally.

Josh Byrne named *Melliodora* as his favourite garden in the world! in a 15 year anniversary issue of the Gardening Australia magazine. Josh has a new 100 minute DVD on the permaculture makeover of his Perth backyard garden from Gardening Australia which provides a good basic permaculture design and establishment info for the mainstream home gardener.

**Su Dennett and David Holmgren**

- **Permaculture International Limited (PIL) Website**

The site is designed primarily as a webspace for members to network, publish and organize published information and content. It's strength is actually in helping organizations like ours to build, manage and make available our information.

Members can publish to the News folder to announce permaculture and related events and they can also publish material in the Articles folder. The Articles folder could function as a kind of online PIJ. Members can post Articles to the site and the best ones could be picked every month to be included in an online journal.

The site is also very good for organizing all the content that members publish and over time this would include an accessible history of the development of permaculture- in Australia at least. The Articles section would also be a good place to post research and case studies.

The site can also be configured to support permaculture groups and associations around Australia and other parts of the world.

If you are not a current member of PIL go [www.permacultureinternational.org](http://www.permacultureinternational.org) and click on the 'join' link at the top left of the home page.

**Tim Winton Director PIL**

## **WINTER NEWSLETTER**

**Contributions for the Winter Newsletter by Friday 19 May PLEASE.**

To **unsubscribe** please reply with subject 'Unsubscribe'.

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