

BLUE MOUNTAINS PERMACULTURE NETWORK

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NEWSLETTER WINTER 2007

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Hello

Today it seems as if Winter is really happening as winter should.

This edition of the newsletter starts with a full on account of two weeks at Sisters Creek with Bill Mollison and Geoff and Nadia Lawton. A new contributor Steven then asks us to consider growing Cherimoyas, Deb Hurley details what to plant and grow during the winter months and Sue follows with her pest report on how to protect your plants.

Check out what is happening with community organisations and events. Don't overlook the advertisements as these local businesses provide us with our only source of income to produce this newsletter. We have deliberately decided not to have subscriptions and we are keen to promote local ethical enterprises.

We are developing a web diary so that the articles will be available on line - see Celeste's article.

Thank you again to the contributors

All the best

Pat
BMPN

WHAT'S ON?

- Sunday 10 June **Blackheath Climate Action Now** meeting at 4.30pm at the Hat Hill Gallery
- Sunday 24 June **Working Bee** at Pat's place - build a swale
10:30 until 12:30 and lunch,
RSVP: bmpermac@inet.net.au or ring 4787 9108
- All winter **Webs and wings - a one hour self guided activity**
Mt Tomah Botanical Gardens
Discover clues to find the hiding places of spiders and butterflies scattered throughout the garden.
Cost: \$2.80 per person
Enquiries: 4567 2154
- Saturday 16 June **Learn to Dowse Workshop**
Presented by Lyn McLean from Sydney. Time - 2 to 5 pm
Upper Mountains, location to be advised depending on participants.
Contact info@beegreen.com.au or www.beegreen.com.au
- Saturday 30 June **"Local Action for Sustainability - A Blue Mountains Forum on Climate Change"** 1-5pm
Mid Mountains Community Centre, Lawson
Free Event Exciting speakers, Exhibits, Discussion & debate
Childcare available (please advise)
Afternoon tea provided
RSVP Essential: 4780 5000 or rtempest@bmcc.nsw.gov.au
- Sunday 16 July **Working Bee** at Maryanne Bell's place.
10:30 until 12:30 and lunch
RSVP; 47589705
- Tuesdays 17 July to
25 September **Creative Strategies with Permaculture** at Blackheath Area
Neighbourhood Centre 9.00 - 12.00
Enquiries Pat 4787 9108 or Sue 4782 5810
- Sunday 20 August **Working Bee** at Liz Connor's place
10:30 until 12:30 and lunch
RSVP; 47829380
- Sunday 26 August **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 to indicate numbers.
- 10/28/2007 Blue Mountains Permaculture Network Newsletter Winter 2007

September

Permaculture Design Certificate with Rosemary Morrow
Enquiries bimpermac@iinet.net.au
Phone 4787 9108

Saturday 16 June

Randwick Ecoliving Fair The ECOLIVING FAIR 2006 will highlight the community-based approach to sustainable suburbs. The fair commemorates international World Environment Day.
10:30am to 3:30pm, At the new Randwick Community Centre, 23 Munda Street, Randwick

For What It Was Worth - Training at Sister's Creek **Two weeks with Bill Mollison and Geoff Lawton** **by Lynette Correy**

When I returned in April after two weeks training in Tasmania at Bill & Lisa Mollison's farm, my head was bursting with new ideas and processing the experience, and my soul desperate to spend the days working outside. I had a great urge to tell everyone about it in detail and write articles to 'distribute the excess' I was having trouble containing. But then when Pat asked me to write something to share in the next newsletter, I felt overwhelmed at the idea of trying to condense the experience into something that would be useful and make sense.

Should I describe practically what we did, and the learning, like hand digging swales through the middle of a young oak tree plantation (when I asked Bill if he had intentionally neglected to dig the swales before planting all those years ago to challenge future students, he responded with that cheeky grin and said yes with a dry snicker)?

Or should I talk about the more unusual and extreme experiences that you would expect when around extraordinary people - of course the sheep and chook butchering from day one would have to be mentioned since I'm largely veg, and some of Bill's fireside stories 'from the lounge chair' had to be shared, especially the childhood recollection of the beached whale slippery dip in Stanley.

Then, I could easily write something more than interesting about the people and what I brought home from them, with teachers like Geoff & Nadia Lawton from the Permaculture Research Institute who are literally 'changing the world, one site at a time', along with Cam Wilson and Dave Spicer.

There are a dozen different stories that could be written, and I've decided to share some of the simple yet profound concepts that although I understood them at an intellectual level, they each had one of those moments of awakening for me at or after the camp. One of Bill's evening talks was about patterns, and both he and Geoff talked about reaching a point where you really 'get it', and from that point there's no turning back, and I guess that's what happened for me with the sinking in of a number of things (not patterns yet unfortunately).



Permanence, and working in ways that respect the concept and the future beneficiaries of our actions. Geoff is very much an 'if a job's worth doing, do it well' type of person, and made a point of demonstrating the finer art of properly mulching a tree that would potentially live for a thousand years, and could then become furniture for a thousand more. If done well, this may be the last weeding ever needed for that tree's life, and if not, slowing down and spending an extra ten minutes to get it right will potentially buy an additional six months before the next maintenance is needed, which introduces the next concept of efficiency.

After reading in the camp outline that 'you will sleep well', I feared I could be in for a sunrise to sundown boot camp. But I soon noticed some of the other students starting to raise their eyebrows a little at what we thought were somewhat generous breaks, and not too early starts. Don't get me wrong, we worked hard for a lot of the time, but it took us a few days to realize that we could work hard because we hadn't overworked our muscles, and because we hadn't become drained since we had good breaks, often with entertaining tales from Bill, and shared plenty of fun and laughter as we worked together. Hard work can and should be fun, and doesn't have to be exhausting, and is probably a lot more efficient when it isn't (having said that, we all did sleep well). This is one of those concepts that I often just don't 'get', the whole less is more idea, minimum effort for maximum gain.

'Edges and boundaries, it's at the limits where the most creativity and productivity happens, that's where you want to be'. This was the message from Geoff in relation to lots of practical examples, encouraging us to explore the limits, question what is too much, too little, when is the start, end etc. in everything that we do. This one has finally started to sink in for me. I left with the impression that Bill does more exploring the edges and boundaries by intentionally not doing a job quite so well, so that nature can be tested and we can find the limits of what we must do, and what can be left alone and done for us.

He recounted a situation where he simply threw potatoes around a patch of earth, and then covered them with mulch. An old farmer said something like 'if that fool's right and they grow I'll never dig a hole again', and they did. I think this concept is especially relevant to how we live our lives too. It would be difficult to find a more creative and productive existence than Bill's, whose stories of his most interesting and surreal experiences have taken place on the limits of many edges and boundaries. Read his autobiography if you want to be amazed and inspired to adventure.

Permaculture is a lifestyle, not something that is distinct or separate from the other things we do, not just about growing food and providing for our own needs, but a way of living and working together with other people, as much as we do with the natural world around us. This idea was reinforced by the bright sparks of passion in Geoff's eyes as he talked about he & Nadia's next program of training and

projects around the globe on a whirlwind tour, and his love of spending his days living, learning and teaching permaculture, especially at their farm, the Permaculture Research Institute. This idea was again reinforced when I was consumed by my all too busy lifestyle on returning home, and found myself yearning for the permaculture community lifestyle for our family, and plotting ways of making it a reality.



Positive role models are our best source of inspiration. How humbled I was to be around such special people, in our resource-rich Australia we hear and know so little of the impact they've had and will have on the world. Bill talked with such respect and feeling about the women that together have dug around 85 miles of swales by hand in a dry rocky hillside, where they say they didn't realize just how sick their children were until they fed them on the now established avocados, and abundance of other fresh foods supporting their communities. Yet I found myself sitting around a table sharing meals and everyday conversation with this group of most welcoming and 'down to earth' people, happy to answer the same questions from me that they had undoubtedly answered many times before.

From that point, we should always remember the strength of women, and that they are not all so scary as Bill makes out, although Nadia wielding a knife could appear threatening to the newcomer. I have to acknowledge Nadia's outstanding efforts with the catering, going the edge and boldly testing out new recipes on 20 hungry workers (the lavender ice cream standing out for me), introducing the culture of consuming all of an animal if you choose to eat them, and being responsible for your own meat production and consumption, all of this in between merrily working on the end of a mattock with us.

Lisa too was the ever creative organiser behind the scenes, Bill described her as an inventor, constantly testing new ideas. She gave us the opportunity to share their first compost tea brewing and application, and talked with me about developing community supported agriculture, or subscription farming (would love to hear from anyone interested in our area). Lisa makes misery not possible, she would always welcome me with a smile and go out of her way to help out, she is the essence of what working together is all about.

Working together is so much more productive and fun than on your own, and vital to our future together. I had a conversation with Bill about making the most use of your energy and resources, he says he leaves his door open and is ready when people come through, but he doesn't waste time knocking on closed doors anymore. I agreed that I am getting closer to reaching that point, but added I do like to knock and rattle the handles now and then so that they know something's going on outside.

Focusing on solutions is the most productive thing we can do, both practically and emotionally, especially heading into a future where problems will consistently arise before us. Geoff laughed at the contrast of presenting permaculture at a peak oil conference after an audience had sat through three days of dire predictions for the future. Bill laughed even more at the concept of peak oil issues

given the vast array of energy alternatives we have used and are using successfully (look into trompes for something interesting, if you can).

Plan and allow for climate change now. Not only do we have the challenge of learning how to use plants and ecosystems productively, we now have a new set of rules that will keep changing, and that's where observation and reflection become even more important. For example, as we questioned the amount of mulch we put around some rare nut trees, Geoff raised the issue of too much mulch retaining the cold in the soil from winter for longer than is healthy for the plant. However, with early warm snaps, or false springs starting to happen more frequently followed by late frosts with our climate warming, it can actually be healthier for the plant to believe it's still winter and save new buds being burnt by frost.

Appreciate every moment of our health, happiness, good fortune and valued relationships. Watching Bill & Lisa together reminded me of how much we should never take those things for granted, as I had been of late with my husband who was showing Tasmania to our two children so that I could focus on the camp. I certainly appreciated all of my time there and have found myself missing the nights lying on Bill & Lisa's lounge room floor listening to his surreal stories, where it was sometimes easy to forget that I wasn't back in front of my own grandfather's fire.

For everyone at the camp the experience and learning was personal, I can only share my subjective experience of the people and events. The diversity of backgrounds and personalities is what you would expect at something like this, with the most common theme shared being the excitement of the realisation that permaculture fuses each of our skills, interests and passions together, as individual as they may be, and I think therein lies the strength of permaculture.

For me, the camp was one of those special experiences where so much happens that you learn almost as much after the event, as you process and integrate not only the new information and experiences, but also the many attached emotions as you adjust your thinking and actions to accommodate. Was it worth the considerable expense of time, money and energy at a time when I was poor in all, and would I recommend it to others? Definitely. When friends asked how it was when I returned, I could only say that it was one of those rare experiences that happen in your life that you will always be grateful for, and though deep inside will always stay close to the surface.

Oh, I didn't get to the whale story, I guess you'll have to wait for the DVD, and it's worth waiting for.

Lynette Correy 25 May 2007

WHY YOU NEED TO GROW CHERIMOYAS

by Steven Schwarz

Described as the best tasting fruit (Mark Twain, if you need to know) it is the progenitor of the less esteemed "custard apple" sold in shops. The true cherimoya grows in upland South America ("It likes to see the snow but not feel it") The problem for much of the world was that it dislikes the subtropics and warmer climates. Move now to Israel and some cerebral farmer noticed natural hybridization between *Annona cherimoya* and *A. squamata*, the so called sugar apple. It was this offspring that graces our shelves as a consequence of its adaptability to warmth.

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But here in the Blue Mountains we do not have to pander to this incestuous hybrid but can grow the much better tasting original *Annona cherimoya* (or *moya* to the cogniscenti.) And it gets better. It produces its crop in the Blue Mountains around May to August when there is little else around and too late to be spoiled by fruit fly. Moreover it falls to the ground hard so feathered thieves and possums leave it alone. I have yet to notice any disease or pest on my trees. What more can you ask for? Yes, the tree can be large but given its taste I would recommend taking down a bed room or two to give it room.

The tree grows to, say, 5 metres and is about 5 metres wide in good conditions. Fruiting occurs in 3 yrs with grafted specimens and in 5 yrs from seedling. Seedling trees produce good fruit. Grafted trees can be bought from Daleys Nursery in Kyogle (no association) or if you can wait I can supply seeds to whoever wants them. They germinate and grow without fuss.

cherimolla@yahoo.com.au

What's been happening?

SPRINGWOOD FOUNDATION DAY

By Sue Girard

The Blue Mountains Permaculture Network had an information stall at Springwood Foundation Day as part of Blue Mountains City Council Environmental Information area.

For anyone who missed us we were down near the railway bridge tucked away with National Parks, WIRES, Worm farming and Springwood High's Climate change information display. Those involved spoke heaps to an enormous number of people who on the whole were interested in what we had to say (and advise).

Some of you newly on this email list - we welcome you.

For those of you who helped us on that day - we thank you for your help

For those of you who just came to say 'Hello' and have a chat - we also thank you; it's always good to see a friendly face in the crowd.

Sue in front of display at Springwood



Following that stall I received 8 requests to join the email list, one person joined our Creative Strategies with Permaculture class in Blackheath and one person Steven Swartz has written an article in this newsletter. (Editor)

Newsletter for BM Permaculture Evolving by Celeste Salter

For several years Pat Rayner has been producing this newsletter for the group on her own, sourcing the articles, editing the content and putting the whole lot into the email attachment we open each season. Like the seasons this too is changing.

Recently Pat, Sue Girard, Pete Sharman, Helen Nelson-Rush, Liz Connor and I (Celeste Salter), met to discuss how we would reallocate the tasks involved in making this newsletter come together amongst the six of us (also included is Maryanne Bell).

With this change we are also going to turn the seasonal newsletter into an electronic affair. When it is complete, instead of downloading an attachment in your email, there will be a hyperlink that will take you to the web location where the newsletter sits.

We think this is the way to evolve this communication tool. Benefits obtained from moving to this system are: articles will be always available on line; you will be able to search for specific topics of interest (as the info grows); and you will be able to comment on specific articles that are published. From the editorial group's perspective the work will be shared and the benefits to us all multiplied.

This web newsletter will take us some time to set up, as many of us are learning how to make this work as we go. We are aware that some of you have more experience with the internet than others, and we will be providing some information on what you will need to do to be able to access the newsletter.

We expect that the full transfer from word document into web version newsletter will take a season or two to complete. We will keep you informed with progress, via the newsletter in its current form, and plan to have info sheets on how to submit articles, and other info you might need before we stop the word doc version of the newsletter.

If you would like more information now on this activity, please email bmpermacnewsletter@gmail.com

Cheers Celeste

COMMUNITY UPDATES

Mid Mountains Seed Savers - 2783

Next meeting Sunday 26 August

Please contact Loret or John on 4759 2118 or email mcrun@hermes.net.au

A cake stall is to be held on 30 June.

If anyone can help either to make or bake or help on the day, could you please reply and let me know

Many thanks
Loret

Permaculture Working Bee

A working bee, removing blackberry and agapanthus, was held at Susan Ambler's place in April. Next working bees are at Pat's place on Sunday 24 June, Maryanne's 16 July and Liz Connor's on 20 August. Join us for a fun cooperative morning learning, sharing and helping. RSVP to the host - see What's On section

Blackheath Community Garden

There's renewed enthusiasm at Blackheath Community Garden. Gardeners meet on site every Saturday morning from 10am to 2pm.

This keen group has been concerned to increase their own knowledge and skills; they have conducted a site analysis, repaired compost bays and made compost in preparation for Spring planting, planted a wind break and weeded existing gardens. They have also started moving the huge pile of pine logs from the middle of the garden.

The Creative Strategies with Permaculture course at Blackheath Area Neighbourhood Centre has made a mulch garden bed as a course demonstration and will use this site for further demonstrations in the next course.

For more info call BANC 4787 770 or Belinda 0425 299 217.'

SLOW FOOD CAFE AT WINTER MAGIC FESTIVAL

Slow Food Blue Mountains will be conducting a cafe at the Winter Magic Festival in the kitchen at the Civic Centre. This is part of the Body Mind and Soul component of the Festival. As much local produce as possible, will be sourced. There will also be a Slow Food Blue Mountains and Cittaslow Photo Gallery display, literature available and Slow Food/Cittaslow banners in the dining room area. Stalls selling seedlings for a kitchen garden and East Timorese coffee on sale will add more interest.

If any supporters can spare time on the day serving, clearing tables, washing/wiping up, please advise by return email or phone, so we can get a roster organised. We also need supplies of donated locally-grown vegies and can arrange collection if necessary. Ideally all fresh produce would be collected at the beginning Winter Magic Festival week.

In time for next year's Winter Magic Festival, it is hoped a WINTER MAGIC VEGIE PATCH can be established in the Blue Mountains Community Gardens growing old varieties of potatoes and other vegetables, specifically for the Slow Food Cafe. This can also have a dual role as a **demonstration**

kitchen garden when the major Cittaslow goal of A KITCHEN GARDEN IN EVERY HOME gets underway.

Proceeds from the cafe will go to Slow Food Blue Mountains and the Community Gardens.

Best wishes
Forever Slowly!
Anne Elliott
Ph 0247827376

www.katoombachamber.com

LIST OF WINTER VEGETABLES TO SOW & PLANT IN THE BLUE MOUNTAINS

Hope you enjoyed and utilised the autumn list of vegies. As the days grow shorter and colder it's still inspiring to get out in the garden to plant the last crops before winter sets in and to enjoy any last remnants of an autumn sun. I am nurturing my onion seedlings at the moment. They are under shade cloth and are inspected everyday for moisture and still they have not made an appearance. Has anyone got a secret about raising onion and broccoli seedlings? I read broccoli doesn't like rich soil. Let me know because I am getting a bit obsessive about it.

I get so excited when I first sight a little seedling poking its head out of the soil. To actually watch the Daikon radish seedling take form in a matter of a few hours is fantastic. Don't tell me to get a life because I can't think of a better one. Also, following the moon calendar is defiantly worthwhile, even time saving, and you get less rotted seeds. Look into it if you haven't already. Remember with potatoes, if the frost gets them they will always re-shoot. My sister in Blainey says Sebago potatoes where her most successful potato crop. I planted some Nicola potatoes in a couple of polystyrene boxes on my balcony and got a lovely little crop of 30 potatoes. It is really worth the effort.

JUNE SOWINGS: broad beans (Coles Dwarf, Long Pod), chives, cress, endive(warm spot), green manure, lettuce (Frilly Pink, Loose Leaf, Red Cos, under glass/plastic or in warm spot), mustard greens (Red Giant), peas (Telephone, Sugar Snap), radishes (Daikon, French Breakfast), shallots (bunching onions, Straight Leaf), swede (Champion Purple Top)

PLANT OUT: comfrey and horseradish roots, rhubarb crowns, potato onions, fruit and nut trees, all small fruits

WARMER AREAS: **ADD** cabbage (Sugar Loaf, Pak Choy), capsicum (Long Red Cayenne, under glass), brown onions (Creamgold, Gladalan), peas, tomatoes (under glass)

THINGS TO DO IN JUNE: ***Plant out a mix of seeds including corn, pea, oats, sunnies, broad bean and mustard for nitrogen fixing green mulch which should be up by August (courtesy Peter***

Cundell). Add some sheep, horse or cow manure plus some blood and bone to soil before planting. Stake the broad beans, do some cautious pruning, clean and preserve your gardening tools, stockpile manure (eg above). Bull kelp is excellent to include if you can get it. It rots quickly but needs to be cut up first.

JULY SOWINGS: broad beans, cabbages, lettuce, brown onions, peas, radish, incl. Daikon, swede.

PLANT OUT: Globe artichokes, asparagus crowns, comfrey, currants, gooseberries, horseradish roots, raspberries, strawberries and other berry fruits.

WARMER AREAS: ADD potatoes, parsley, parsnips, carrots, spinach, tomatoes (under glass) and capsicum (under glass).

THINGS TO DO IN JULY: Plan and create new raised garden beds and new trellises for climbers, read up on crop rotation, add straw, dead leaves and seaweed to the compost, build a hot bed (look up on internet), spread last years compost over top of soil and mulch thickly with straw/lucerne on top.

AUGUST SOWINGS: broad beans, beetroot, all cabbages, carrots, globe artichoke, herbs, kohlrabi, leeks (Musselburgh), lettuce, parsnip, peas, radish inc. Daikon, salsify, spinach, swede, turnips.

UNDER GLASS: cape gooseberries, capsicum, celery, cucumbers, melons, tomatoes

PLANT OUT: asparagus, cabbages, summer cauliflowers, comfrey, horseradish, Jerusalem artichokes, brown onions, potatoes, small fruits

WARMER AREAS: ADD Brussels sprouts, celery, kohlrabi, silverbeet.

THINGS TO DO IN AUGUST: Create a potato plot either in the ground, in some car tyres or even in some poly boxes on the balcony. Treat curly leaf on fruit trees checking if it's not aphids first. New fruit trees should be planted out by end of August and should be well sheltered. Spread well-rotted manure or blood and bone around established fruit trees. Graft plums, peaches and apples.

Remember the above is a general guide only and some experimentation can take place in the warm and sheltered areas of your garden.

Happy gardening,

Warmest regards

Deborah
June 2007

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Leading relocalisation speakers to address Sydney gathering

Helena Norberg-Hodge, international campaigner for local food systems and relocalisation, is to participate in the annual Ecoliving Fair in Randwick on Saturday, June 16.

Ms Norberg-Hodge will be supported by Tim Winton from the Permaforest Trust, a Permaculture training initiative in northern NSW. Tim promotes understanding and preparing for peak oil, climate change and the transition to a low carbon future.

Relocalisation seeks to boost local culture, food systems, livelihoods and local economies as a means of strengthening communities against the impact of global warming and the peaking of the global oil supply. The speakers will address ways in which Sydney could look to local resources and skills as a means of becoming a sustainable city.

Co-originator of the Permaculture design system, David Holmgren, has spoken publicly in favour of relocalisation.

International reputation

Helena Norberg-Hodge started ISEC - the International Society for Ecology and Culture - to promote local food systems in the UK and to support work already underway in Ladakh. That work forms the core of her well known book, *Ancient Futures*, and she is co-author of *Bringing the Food Economy Home*, a book that explores the social, environmental and economic benefits of local food economies.

Tim Winton started the Ecoforest Trust on a rural property where he offers training in nationally accredited Permaculture design courses and other skills.

Audience as participants

Tim will join Ms Norberg-Hodge, Dr Chris Reidy from the UTS Institute for Sustainable Futures and Randwick City Council sustainability manager, Peter Maganov in a facilitated conversation - Conversation for the Future - led by Noel Winterburn who facilitated the popular Conversations for the 21st Century. Peter will bring a local, Eastern Suburbs perspective to the discussion and introduce ideas that local government can undertake to move municipalities towards

sustainability. Chris Reidy is a leading global warming specialist with a continuing interest in the development of public policy that delivers an effective response to climate change.

The structure of the session will include the audience in the dialogue on sustainability in the Eastern Suburbs and what local people can do to deal with the changes we face in the neighbourhoods where we live.

The event is one of a number that makes up Randwick City Council's annual Ecoliving Fair. In the morning, Conversations With Designers will explore ways to develop your sustainable home and garden with designers from the UNSW - landscape architect, Linda Corkery; interior architect, Kirsty Mate; solar electricity specialist, Alistair Sproul; and water expert, Greg Leslie.

A wealth of workshops

Workshops at the Ecoliving Fair include the Permaculture home with Permaculture-trained solar architect, Terry Bail, the Permaculture garden with Permaculture-trained landscape architect, Steve Batley from Sydney Organic Gardens, and integrated pest management in the garden with Dr Tim Lockett. Other workshops include: Using Water Wisely; Slow Food Fair Food; Home Green Makeover; Backyard Poultry; No-Waste Shopping for Smart Buyers; Young Children in the Garden and more. A seed mosaic will be constructed under the guidance of horticulturist and landscape designer, Emma Daniel, and there will be other arts events, a schools sustainability expo and kids activities.

WHEN: Saturday June 16, 10.30am to 3.30pm.

WHERE: Randwick Community Centre, 27 Munda Street, Randwick. Turn south down Hendy Avenue and right into Marida Street and into Munda Street.

COST: All events free.

FOOD: Available from food stalls.

INFORMATION: <http://www.randwick.nsw.gov.au/ecoliving>

A YEAR IN A DAY

from Lis Bastian

Helen Deane and I have started a blog called A Year In A Day in which we're committing to a new personal and a political action every single day.

We are demonstrating to ourselves and to anyone who reads the blog, that setting targets leads to REAL ACTION. You can comment on each blog and have your actions listed too.

We are also hoping to get 365 people clicking on the subscribe button of our blog so that we can go to the media of the world to say that 365 people care, 365 people have joined together in a movement for change because action on global warming is simply not fast enough.

The actions of 365 people daily is equal to the action of A Year In A Day. If we get more than 365 even better ... imagine if we could turn back the last 30 years!

Please click on subscribe - it will mean only two things:

1. You get a brief daily notification in your email that people are acting on a daily basis to change - this is not linked to any organisation or commercial interest and your address will not be passed on to anyone - you may even be inspired to take action yourself. You can participate by commenting on each blog.
2. You will go down in history as having cared about the world our children are going to inherit and that you did not want to squander their inheritance.

All it takes is three clicks:

www.stoplaughing.com.au/wordpress

PEST REPORT

PEST CONTROL IN WINTER

by Sue Girard

Winter is the time of year that I take stock of my pest reduction strategies for the past year. I always mean to have monitored the seasonal happenings and interchanges of pests and predators, but usually I forget to write it down. So this year I have bought a special exercise book and drawn up a spread sheet to record everything ...

With Climate change the balance between the populations of pests and their predators is changing. Most insect pest species hatch due to daily heat changes whilst the predators often hatch as a response to day length. This means the pests are getting an extra generation in before predators are around in sufficient numbers to stop them.

One of my proven integrated pest strategies has been to sow an early crop of whatever (eg cabbages that would be well past seedling stage before the White cabbage moths) but that has not been as successful this year. Consequently I am relying more on companion planting than ever before.

I can divide these anti-pest plants into four categories:

1. those that are repellent to the undesirable insects
2. those that are attractive to beneficial insects
3. those that can be made into a spray
4. those that can be used as sacrificial decoys.

The list is huge and often pest specific.

Plants that are repellent to the undesirable insects

Penny Woodward in her book *Pest Repellent Plants* recommends 35 different plants. For example repellent plants such as tansy, wormwood and dog-bane have unpleasant smells that drive pests (large and small) away. While another 31 plants such as thyme, feverfew and scented pelargonium produce pungent oils that will hide the smell of the plants the pests are searching for.

I have planted feverfew around my pear and cherry trees to ward off 'pear and cherry slugs' (which aren't slugs at all, but the larvae of a Sawfly)

I have a pot of lavender in my hothouse to deter white fly and aphids, and I plant nasturtiums under the fruit trees for the same reason

I am thinking of putting wormwood in with my cabbage and broccoli and keeping the plants small to deter Cabbage moths.

The list of repellent plants goes on but to name a few more, marjoram will deter Pumpkin beetle from cucurbits, garlic will deter Carrot fly, and yarrow will deter flies and ants.

Plants that are attractive to beneficial insects

Dill and fennel are attractive to Hoverflies - one of our best pollinators and a predator as well. Bulbs of all types are useful in the orchard because they flower early and attract bees. Borage is also recognised as a bee attractant.

Plants that can be made into a spray

Some of the toxic plants include fennel, feverfew, chamomile, and of course pyrethrum daisy. Many common edible plants double up as poisons as well. The leaves of tomatoes, rhubarb, coriander, lemon grass, onions and rosemary can be boiled in water and made into infusions to be used as sprays. Care must be taken because these are often as toxic as synthetic store bought chemicals. Even without the effort of boiling up strange concoctions tansy rubbed onto dogs and cats will kill fleas.

Plants that can be used as sacrificial decoys

Cabbage moth will eat nasturtiums - if you want nasturtiums to add to salads or for aesthetics reasons well you probably need to protect some of them. But for my garden they are a sacrificial decoy to attract the cabbage moths away from the Brassica but still attract these caterpillars for predator species to feed on.

It is a huge **on-going** understanding of food chains and food webs. Not all strategies work all the time. There are lots of variables and hence the need for self regulation and revision. Okay I have the exercise book but where is a pen? I should write it all down before I forget!

COURSES/WORKSHOPS

Creative Strategies with Permaculture at Blackheath Area Neighbourhood Centre

9.00 - 12.00 Tuesdays 17 July to 25 September

Enquiries Pat 4787 9108 or Sue

Permaculture Studies at a Tertiary Level

Those interested in furthering their permaculture studies at a Tertiary level may like to look at the following offering.

The School of Rural Management at Charles Sturt University, Orange, NSW, is again offering a second year subject in Permaculture, as part of its Bachelor in Ecological Agriculture, this coming semester starting late July. The subject is delivered on-line by Distance Education mode.

The unit explores how Permaculture can be used to redesign the Australian agricultural sector, focusing on the ecological relationships of a farm in the landscape and the social and economic relationships between farm enterprises and the bioregional communities that they serve. It's not designed to replace the PDC, but as an advanced post-PDC unit of study.

Primary texts for the course are Holmgren 2002 *Permaculture principles and pathways beyond sustainability* and Holmgren 1994 *Trees on the treeless plains*. Written assignments cover the description and assessment of a rural property and the development of a conceptual design for its re-development taking students beyond the traditional site design done on a PDC to a detailed examination of how a farm can contribute ecologically, socially and economically to the landscape and community in which it is situated. On-line assignments consist of a discussion forum examining the application of Holmgren's design principles to agriculture. There is an extensive reading list as well, of course.

The subject is designed to take those who've completed a PDC more deeply into the application of permaculture to agriculture. Those with a PDC may claim advanced standing for one level 1 subject, as an elective, towards the degree in Ecological Agriculture. Those without a PDC are expected to have completed one of several level 1 subjects as a pre-requisite and to read up on the traditional Pc texts before commencing studies. A suitable rural property with an associated economic enterprise is essential for use as a study site for the assignments.

More information about Charles Sturt University and the Ecological Agriculture Degree course out of Orange campus can be obtained by visiting www.csu.edu.au. Prospective students are invited to contact and discuss the course with

Kerry Cochrane
Course Leader,
Bachelor of Ecological Agriculture
School of Rural Management
Charles Sturt University
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- The Blue Mountains City Council sustainable website is www.sustainablebluemountains.net.au

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