



## The Gentle Gardening Guide

"A conversation with anyone who loves a garden" Janet Stone



Cooler weather has finally arrived and with it comes the energy needed to get back into the garden to deal with overgrown plants, faded blooms and lingering pests. Long periods of hot, humid weather this year have resulted in higher numbers of garden pests for a longer than usual period, so it's time to put them to rest before preparing gardens for the next growing season.

**Stressed plants:** Weak plants are vulnerable to pest attack. Stress is usually a result of a plant growing in the wrong position or the wrong climate; too little or too much water; poor soil or soil type; or lack of nutrients. Growing plants that attract beneficial insects and birds throughout the garden, and mixing plant species will help with pest management, but when all else fails it may be necessary to take direct action. The following recipes for natural pest control may offer some alternatives to conventional commercial products – remember that even homemade remedies will kill good insects as well as pests, and may affect birds, so use them selectively and cautiously.

**Garlic Spray** for general use and some fungal diseases: Soak 100g of chopped garlic in 2 teaspoons of mineral oil for 24 hours. Strain, add 1 teaspoon of dishwashing liquid and 3 cups of water and mix thoroughly. Use 2 tablespoons of the mix to 3 cups of water as a garden spray.



**Oil Spray** for scale and mealy bugs: Mix 1 cup of vegetable oil and 4 tablespoons of dishwashing liquid. Use 1 part of mix to 20 parts water as a spray.

**Molasses Spray** for grasshoppers and

caterpillars: Mix 1 cup of molasses in 1 litre of water. Spray on foliage.

**Soap Spray** for aphids, bronze orange bugs, leafhoppers and whitefly: Mix 3 teaspoons of dishwashing liquid in 2 cups of water. Spray on insects and foliage.



**Milk Spray** for powdery mildew on vegetables: Mix 50ml cow's milk with 450ml of water. Regular, repeated applications are necessary.

**Fungicide Spray:** Mix together 1 level teaspoon of bicarb soda, 1 litre of water, 1 litre of skim milk, and 1 pinch of Condy's Crystals (available from produce agents).

**Fruit Fly Trap:** Mix 50ml of Vegemite in 500ml water and pour into a large clear plastic soft drink bottle. Drill several holes (approx 5mm) around the top half of the bottle for the flies to enter. Screw the cap on tightly and suspend the bottle from a tree. Renew regularly. This mixture also can be sprayed on foliage to attract lacewings which eat aphids and other pests.

**Sticky Traps:** Use bright yellow plastic strips, pegs or painted timber stakes smeared with petroleum jelly to attract and trap aphids and whitefly. Sky-blue coloured traps attract thrips.

**Best pest management:** Time and flowering plants. Every pest is a food source for some other beneficial creature that brings joy to the garden - even caterpillars may eventually turn into butterflies. As the seasons pass so do the populations of pests, and unless pests cause a serious problem maybe a few chewed leaves can be overlooked. Clusters of allium, alyssum, daisies, marigolds, nasturtium, Queen Anne's Lace, dwarf zinnias, and herbs such as coriander, parsley and thyme provide easy-care sources of food, especially for beneficial insects and birds which cheerfully do the hard-work.

### The Library

Did you know that the garden club library has more than 200 books on every gardening topic imaginable? There are encyclopaedias, dictionaries, books on design and medicinal plants, books on rainforest plants, roses and cottage gardens. In fact the library has books on all topics from azaleas to zinnias. What to know how to do topiary or bonsai, or learn about rhododendrons or conifers; the library has it covered.

Sue and Helen, the club librarians, do an excellent job of making these resources available to club members. They are currently working on re-cataloguing the library. When they have finished this task they want to have the catalogue available on the website. This will make it much easier to find specific resources.

The library is updated with new purchases from time to time. If you have gardening books or magazines at home you no longer want the library is happy to take them off your hands.



### What's on today

Australia's Biggest morning tea—Cancer Council fundraiser.

Guest Speaker: Leonie Kearney—Heritage roses in a country garden

### May Garden Visit

Tuesday 19th May 10am  
Sandy Silabon,  
3 Stradbroke Ave  
Eagle Heights  
BYO morning tea

### Ladies; we need your husbands

The dedicated volunteers at your botanic gardens need help from retired builders, plumbers, horticulturalists, farmers, handymen, brickies, clerks, mechanics, bankers, doctors etc.

We urgently need men willing to lend a hand for the multitude of jobs we encounter every week. Can your husband use a leaf blower or spray plants? We need him. Can he put posts in the ground? Do carpentry, irrigation, mowing? We need him.

In return we offer those great feelings of accomplishment, mateship, increased fitness, being part of the team, - and he will be helping to develop and maintain a unique botanic gardens.

Session time is Thursday mornings, any time after 7am until midday. Just send your husband along with a thermos and bikkie for morning tea - or contact Roger Lenehan on 5545 3815 for more details.

**CONTACTS: President** - Margaret Bell 5545 0797 | **Vice President** - Di Howard 5545 2628

**Secretary** - Robin Pope - 5545 2205 | **Treasurer**— Di Fenton - 5545 026 | **Springtime Convener** - Margaret Pile - 5545 0869 | **Patron** - Mary Wallace

**June 2015 Meeting**

**Tuesday 14th at 9:30 AM**

Vonda Youngman Community Centre Main Street, North Tamborine

**Guest Speaker** Jan Rozanski - Horticultural Therapy

**Competition table**

- A flowering native
- An exotic tree or shrub
- A flowering bulb or corm
- A vegetable or fruit
- A camellia
- A perfumed flower

**Specimen Table**

Bring along a specimen; unusual, interesting, beautiful, unknown. Include a question if you like.

**Question and Answer Segment**

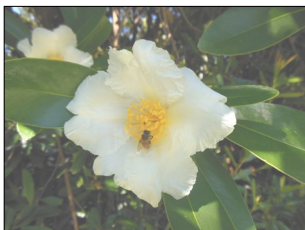
Get the answers you need to all your gardening questions. Use your experience to help with someone else's problems.

**June Morning Tea**

Suzi Leahy  
Annie Brennan

**Welcome to new and returning members**

Kaylene Winnem, Else Tannock & Brian Banks , Ben & Rosie Powell



**From the Vice President**

What a massive amount of rain we have had recently. I hope no one had any damage to your gardens. Whilst we needed the rain it is inconceivable that it all has to fall in two days. Still tanks are full and the gardens are well watered.

After the cool snap, autumn is definitely here. The trees are starting to change colour and it is lovely to drive around the mountain watching the change in the landscape. How pleasant to have the cool weather after our hot, long summer.

Don't forget to purchase your tickets for the Opera at Jarnac on the 5<sup>th</sup> July. Remember you can take advantage of the website and pay using either Credit Card or Pay Pal, which is a safe site. It is going to be a wonderful afternoon. As we have no control over the weather it is hoped that there will be no thunder, lightning or hail.

Don't forget to browse the website for updated information. You will find some interesting tips about chickens and some new recipes.

Margaret will be back next month for the June meeting. I'm sure she will have some amazing tales to tell about their trip. Di Howard

**Upcoming Events**

- Cactus & Succulent Society of Qld Inc. Show Mt Coot-Tha Botanic Gardens Auditorium June 6 & 7
- Qld Garden Expo, Nambour, 10 – 12 July
- Glebe Garden Club (Ipswich) 'Ipswich Home Gardeners Expo'29 August
- Toowoomba Geranium Society Inc. Show and Sale 19-20 September 2015

Last month's garden visit was at Wyn Keats garden in Sierra Drive. This lovely garden was an inspiration to all who visited. Wyn has been working on her garden for around 10 years, and has been lately under-planting beneath already established trees. The Japanese style back garden, complete with flowing water, is a beautiful feature. A huge thank-you to Wyn who is not a member of our garden club. Hopefully, we have convinced her to join the club.



**Join the ant hunt! The search is on for fire ants**

Right now, fire ants could be slowly invading your property without you even knowing!

Fire ants are one of Australia's worst invasive species. They have the potential to ruin our Queensland way of life, affect our health and have serious environmental impacts. These ants are capable of inflicting a sting so painful, you feel like you are on fire. As for our native animals and crops, they don't stand a chance either.

It's time for the ant hunt to begin.

Before 31 May 2015, we need you to check your property and report. We're targeting residents and property owners living beyond the Fire Ant Restricted Area to determine exactly where fire ants are.

**What do you need to do?**

Simply let us know you've checked your property and whether you've found anything or not by visiting our website [www.daf.qld.gov.au/fireants](http://www.daf.qld.gov.au/fireants) or calling 13 25 23

Or attend a public meeting Tuesday 12 May 6 – 7 pm The Ormeau Centre, 3 Cuthbert Drive, Ormeau

