

Permaculture Cairns Newsletter

EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES WITH SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS



Care for the Earth, Care for people, Fair share the excess

Permaculture Cairns Incorporated Web Site: www.permaculturecairns.org.au

PERMACULTURE CAIRNS MARCH MEETING 2018

Tuesday 20th March 6pm for a 6.30 start

Please NOTE !!!! new venue

**Venue: Endeavour Learning and Lifestyle Building
cnr Monk and Warner Street, Manunda**

Members free, but bring some nibbles for the cuppa break, and a dollar for the raffle.

Non members \$5

Agenda

Welcome to new members and visitors

News items - Permaculture workshop, Seed Savers groups and other groups events

The proposed changes to import rules for vegetable seeds will be discussed and the affect these changes will have on imported organic seeds.

Jacqueline Waters will explain what the University of the Third Age does

Sue will tell us how she grows food in small spaces

. Carol will talk about the Pigeon Pea, its numerous uses, and the food it produces and

Carol will bring tropical perennial vegetables and herbs for sale or swap.

Have something to share? Bring it up before the cuppa and chat time.

Meeting close and now time for a chat, a cuppa and a snack with like-minded people

All finished by 8.30pm.

March in the garden of the hot wet humid Tropics

The Veggie Patch. Not much in the veggie patch at present, although the basil, anise hyssop and Mexican tarragon are going ok and herbs in pots are holding their own against the inclement weather. They do need some worm juice/casting, compost/organic fertiliser to help them to totally recover.

Tropical Perennial Food Plants now- The greens - Okinawa, Sambung, Brazilian, Kang Kong, Aibika. The root crops - sweet potato, cocoyam, taro all enjoying this wet humid weather. Lots of Bananas and dragon fruit.

Paddy Straw Mushroom - I think we have missed out this year, they did come up but not when my tissue culture friend was in Australia and now it is almost too late to grow them. Some food for thought - some PS mushrooms emerged in next doors council mulch heap, maybe we can cultivate them like that. They also came up beside the compost bin in which I have composted everything, including meat products, fish and prawn heads, coffee grounds, kitchen scraps the worms wouldn't like, shredded paper, aloe vera plants and lots of garden greens/browns and sugar cane mulch. To compost meat scraps, you need to stop rodent access by placing a wire mesh under the bin before starting to fill.

Wet season actions - Empty the compost bins in readiness to top up the garden beds before planting out your home grown seedlings. If doing seedling now, keep them out of heavy rain, even pot them up until the storm rains have gone. Recently I planted some Wombok cabbage in the open raised bed and a couple in pots to grow on in case the others didn't survive. Those in the open are half as big as the ones in the pots. This is because the nutrients in the open bed have been leached away by heavy rain.

What to plant now - Fruit trees, tropical perennial greens, tropical root crops, snake beans, bok choy, rocket, basil, garlic chives, chives, bunching shallots, cucumber, melons, turmeric, ginger, galangal, daikon radish, pandan, comfrey, corn, melons, pumpkin, okra, tomato, capsicum in fact just about anything that will mature in 5 to 6 months.

Moon planting dates for above ground growing crops 19th to 29th March.
Edible root crops 30th to 5th March.

The lettuce did germinate inside the kitchen in the airconditioning next to a window for light. They don't germinate if the temperature goes over 25 deg.

I have been collecting and growing tropical perennial food plants for 10 years and it is still my hobby/passion. I grow to sell, if you are interested, see me at the next meeting or at one of Permaculture Cairns workshops. Grow & eat fresh pesticide free, nutrient rich food in your landscape all year to keep healthy. I wish you success in the garden for 2018.

*Cheers Carol Laing
Editor*



Permaculture Cairns Gardening Workshop

Empowering communities with sustainable solutions

COMPOST AND WORMS WORKSHOP

*Who is interested in making Compost and learning
about keeping worms???*

*There are many ways to make compost: - in bins, in heaps,
anarobically, aerobically, in stationary bins, with lots of effort
and without much effort at all, and depending on how it is done,
with varying amounts of plant nutrients*

*Compost fertiliser is another way to include humus and
plant available nutrients at the same time*

Workshop - Saturday 7th April 9.30 - 12.30.

*Cost: \$30 for members, \$35 for non members.
Membership \$20 singles and \$30 families
LIMITED NUMBERS FOR THIS WORKSHOP
Venue advised on registration.*

Register at workshops@permaculturecairns.org.au

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**An urgent message from Frances Michaels of Green Harvest and
Gerry Colby Williams about proposed changes to import rules for
seeds into Australia**

The hole in our food security is about to get a lot bigger, our seed supply is under threat!
Please sign our petition <http://bit.ly/2FGSaVH>

You may not be aware that over 98% of Australia's vegetable seed is imported. Australia has virtually no vegetable seed industry of its own, which leaves us very exposed to the future and our ability to quickly adapt to the changing and variable climate.

The Department of Agriculture and Water Resources through the Biosecurity Import Conditions System (BICON) is changing the import rules in a way that is only visible to 'stakeholders'. This process is invisible to the wider Australian community. On the surface it appears to accept submissions but it has no accountability to explain why it makes the final choices it does. I believe that as a result of these changes, we are at risk of losing something very precious, our vegetable biodiversity and with it, our future food security. The general focus of the quarantine revisions taking place is to make Australia 'safe' from possible pests and diseases. This is clearly a worthwhile thing to be doing, it is the way it is being done that may lead down a road that many of us find very undesirable.

Last November-December the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources reviewed the Cucurbits (Pumpkins, Squash, Watermelon, Rockmelon, Zucchini, Cucumber), the result was greatly increased testing and therefore increased costs but the real problem was the requirement for a mandatory systemic fungicide treatment on all rockmelon and honeydew seed. **This means that other than hybrid seed imported by Monsanto and other multinational seed companies that heirloom open-pollinated melon seeds are no longer being imported.** Australia now has all the cultivars that we will probably ever have in the country. Those that are not being saved and sold commercially will gradually disappear over time. Why? Because all Australian-owned small seed businesses pack seed either by hand or using small machinery. This puts the fungicide dust in close proximity to the people handling it daily. This is a completely unacceptable risk to the health of these workers.

Now it is the Brassicas turn and the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources has already suggested it intends to impose besides a range of tests, a mandatory systemic fungicide treatment on all Brassica seed including Bok Choy, Broccoli, Cabbage, Cauliflower, Kale, Mizuna, Radish, Rocket, Tatsoi and Turnip. Read here for info <http://www.agriculture.gov.au/biosecurity/risk-analysis/plant/brassicaceous-crop-seeds>

The first impact on any organic seed supplier, is that they won't be able to maintain an organic seed supply to growers, or even maintain their organic certification. Seed suppliers are asking Australian Certified Organic (ACO) to confirm what the impact on the organic growers will be. There is no doubt these changes will massively reduce the range of open pollinated, pesticide-free seed.

In the last decade or so we have seen a vastly increased number of school gardens, community gardens, farmer's markets, young people getting into farming and growing. An inspiring food revolution with a richness of interesting greens, heirloom and ethnic vegetables has also been taking place.

These regulatory changes will impact all of this positive change and possibly send family-owned seed companies to the wall, leaving our food supply wholly in the hands of just 2 or 3 massive international seed companies. It will greatly increase the cost of seed for seedling growers and small acre farmers. Home gardeners will be left with a greatly reduced range of choices.

Action is needed

- The deadline for submissions needs to be extended, as so few people who will be impacted by this change are even aware of it. A change of this magnitude should have involved publicity in nation wide newspapers to alert the community.
- An organically acceptable treatment for seed is needed as an alternative to the expected mandatory systemic fungicide treatment. This would allow organic growers and organic seed companies to maintain their organic accreditation, protecting the valuable, expanding organic industry in Australia.

The deadline for submissions on these proposed changes is the 19th of April 2018.

Make your submission here, no matter how long or short it will help.

<https://haveyoursay.agriculture.gov.au/brassicaceous-crop-seeds>

Please also sign our petition <http://bit.ly/2FGSaVH>

Kind regards,

Frances Michaels CEO

Green Harvest Organic Gardening Supplies

PO Box 92, Maleny QLD 4552 Australia

Ph 07 54357000

www.greenharvest.com.au

New post on Jerry Coleby-Williams



[Saying farewell to organic seed imports and goodbye to Australian food sovereignty](#)

by [Jerry Coleby-Williams](#)



The Health of Our Harvests

Sydney Botanic Gardens, 1998.

I've signed a petition to the Federal Minister for Agriculture and Water because Australia is a party to the UN's Resources for Food and Agriculture.

I oppose government quarantine cost cutting because it directly restricts access by growers to the genetic diversity and consumers the right to choose to import, retail and buy pesticide-free seed.

Rather than cutting jobs and the level of service provided by front line Australian Quarantine and Inspection protecting Australia from imported pests and diseases - it would make us all more secure if imported seed was for on-selling.

[Read more of this post](#)

[Jerry Coleby-Williams](#) | 16/03/2018 at 2:30 pm | Categories: [Uncategorized](#) | URL: <https://wp.me/p2wpjM-2Lo>



[See all comments](#)

[Unsubscribe](#) to no longer receive posts from Jerry Coleby-Williams.

Change your email settings at [Manage Subscriptions](#).

Trouble clicking? Copy and paste this URL into your browser:

<http://jerry-coleby-williams.net/2018/03/16/saying-farewell-to-organic-seed-imports-and-goodbye-to-australian-food-sovereignty/>

Editors note

“More reason than ever to save your seeds for next year and the next year and the next year and so on forever.”

Please give lots of thought about signing the petition, we need to stand against the Monsantos of this world

And please share the post on facebook, twitter etc etc so everyone knows and has a chance to have a say.

Please sign the petition

CAIRNS SEEDSAVERS



SUNDAY 18TH MARCH 2018
AT ZAK'S PLACE:
7 HILLVIEW CRES, WHITFIELD



cairns seedsavers is an informal group of individuals with a passion for saving seeds and growing fruits, vegetables, and other useful plants that have been passed down through generations, and are adapted to our local conditions...

cairnsseedsavers@outlook.com

mareeba seed savers and gardening group

25th march from 10:00am

pieter & noelle saraber

~ 207 de lacy road,
(off leadingham creek rd),
mutchilba, via dimbulah...

car-pool at 9:00am in mareeba,
from michael and lindy alba's
phone 40 92 1116



Friends of the Botanic Gardens Plant Sale

Sunday 25th March

The Friends of the Botanic Gardens pre-Easter plant sale will be held on Sunday March 25 in the staff amenities area (behind Friends House). It starts at 8am and finishes at midday. Prices begin at \$8.

THE DR EDWARD KOCH FOUNDATION

INVITES YOU TO ATTEND A

Standard Mental Health Training (2 Day Course) | Cairns | March 27 & 28, 2018

Learn how to assist people (friends, staff & colleagues) experiencing mental health problems

Course Information and Registration – [Click here](#)

Dates: Tuesday 27 March & Wednesday 28 March, 2018

Time: 8.30am – 4.30pm (12 hour course)

Location: Manunda

Cost: \$250 (incl. GST)

Course materials, lunch, morning and afternoon tea included

Mental health first aid is the help given to someone developing a mental health problem or in a mental health crisis. The first aid is given until appropriate professional treatment is received or until the crisis resolves.

The Standard Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) course is based on the international MHFA Guidelines. These guidelines were developed using consensus of mental health consumers, carers and professionals from English-speaking developed countries. Further information here: www.mhfa.com.au

The Mental Health First Aid Program was developed in 2001 by Betty Kitchener and Prof. Tony Jorm. It was then auspiced as a training and research program at Orygen Youth Health Research Centre, University of Melbourne from mid 2005. Since mid 2012 it has operated as a non-profit health promotion charity called Mental Health First Aid Australia.

The Program has been well evaluated and found to be effective in improving mental health literacy, reducing stigma and increasing helping behaviours. These evaluations have been carried out in workplace and community settings. Further information and links to MHFA related evaluations here: www.mhfa.com.au/evaluation.shtml

REGISTRATION MUST BE RECEIVED: By Thursday 22 March 2018.

Numbers are needed for catering and resource purposes. Regards Dulcie.

Dulcie Bird

Chief Executive Officer, Dr Edward Koch Foundation

Unit 1, 78 Anderson Street, Manunda / PO Box 115, Manunda Qld 4870 P 07 4053 6757

dulcie.bird@kochfoundation.org.au www.kochfoundation.org.au

Patron, His Excellency the Honourable Paul de Jersey AC, Governor of Queensland

An email message about April APC14 from Bruce Zell

Bruce Zell

Hello Craig Jenny and Carol

Could you please consider posting this in the newsletter and forwarding on to your networks. PA and APC14 committees are doing the same. I actually not going unfortunately.

Yes its that time again to remind each other this event is on. The Short of It is - Ring a Mate or Acquaintance - BUT read on

Certainly this world class event has attracted a fantastic involvement with extraordinary presenters bringing cutting edge information and awareness. Not to mention the inspiration and evidence that will come with them.

Delegates that are attending themselves are working in the field on projects at home and abroad have brilliant tales to tell. Success, challenges, stories and experiences barely leave a stone unturned.

I am encouraged by a holistic view of the Australasian Permaculture Convergence inspired by the ANZAC spirit of Being Australian - Mate-ship, A fair Go and Having a Go

Cutting edge design technology etc aside it is the mateship that draws me to the convergence every time. To sit and have a cuppa, a meal or a drink with someone you have just met or a colleague of 40 years adds a load of power to the experience. You will never know who you are going to meet as people from all walks of life just seem to turn up there.

I was fortunate to catch a chat with Bill Mollison at APC9 in Sydney. We talked about hunting rabbits and little things that didn't matter that much. Bloody fantastic for us both

At dinner one night sitting with Graham & Maree Brookman from the Food Forest in South Australia we shared a yarn and their farm fresh pistachios.

I rang a few mates just a week or two before the Sydney convergence APC9. Two of them Peter Cumming and Max Lindegger long time Permaculture professionals and mates of mine had either not planned to come or had been very busy and hadn't thought about it all that much. Well they came, had a lot of fun and ended up contributing by leading a workshop and delivering a presentation. Great things happen just like that.

Even if you can't make it for some reason, ring a mate anyway they might just attend because of your call and bring you the action to catch up with later.

So please Ring a Mate

FNQ Community Exchange - LETS: Local Energy Trading System

March 2018 Calendar of EVENTS

MOUNT MOLLOY – Saturday 3rd March 8am-12 noon.

First Mount Molloy market for the year. Lyn and Reece will be manning a stall at the market. Bring along your priced items and a trade sheet and we will sell them for you. New members can come along and find out how to enter trades and navigate the website. Phone Lyn 4094 1431 for assistance.

WONGABEL – WORKING BEE – Sunday 4th March at Wongabel Stables, 148 Deep Creek Road, Wongabel. Early start, digging out coffee tree seedlings and other plants in overgrown garden. Very shaded area, mulch thick, so mostly easy digging. Earn Bartles in great company! Bring morning tea and/or lunch to share. Contact Sheila on 4091 2070.

PEERAMON – WORKSHOP – Sunday 4th March 10am

Sauerkraut harvest for attendees of the January 21st production session. Bring a large container or

two (clean buckets will suffice) for your share of the bounty! Contact Patt – patti.flynn@gmail.com or 0439 561 266.

MALANDA – Saturday 10th March 6-9pm. Trade Night at Katrin & Jaap's place, 33 Park Avenue (opposite the Caravan Park). Trade starts at 6pm followed by a shared dinner at 7pm. Bring a shared plate & trade items. Busk for Bartles or entertain the crowd otherwise if you like! Come & enjoy this social and trade opportunity. Contact Katrin – 4096 6755.

ATHERTON – Sunday 11th March 9-11am Open Day at Irene's Edible Garden. Got edible plants to trade? Bring them along. Guided Tour, Morning Tea with Tasting of Edibles. Recipes available. Entry 2B per person. Contact Irene – -wheelieeasy@gmail.com

TARZALI – WORKING BEE – Sunday 18th March 8-10am. 44 Hosie Rd Tarzali. Please help Lyndel clear her garden of wet season weeds and spread mulch and manure for 2 hours. You're welcome to swim in the creek and share smoko too. Payment is 25 B/hr. Please bring a hat, sun protective shirt, swimmers, shoes, and your favourite gardening tools. RSVP to 4095 1091 or 0488 559 281 or email lyndnlew1@bigpond.com.

TULLY – Tuesday 20th March from 5pm Trade & Tostadas in Tully. Tostadas. Tuesday @Tully Trade is now the 3rd Tuesday of the month! 5pm for garden tour, trade at 6pm, shared Mexican-themed meal at 7pm. 117 Tully Gorge Rd [3rd drive on left after Syndicate Rd] only 2km from Tully Post Office. Bring along something to trade and a plate to share. This is a great event to attend! Event Host: Michael 4068 3669 or text only 0439 729 469.

ATHERTON – WORKING BEE – Saturday 24th March, starts 8.30am. Catherine urgently needs to clean her shed out where she stored most of her furniture and other items when she moved from Cairns. Help is needed urgently. Please contact Catherine on 0402 109 818 if you can assist anytime or can join the working bee on 24th March. Payment 25B/hr.

YUNGABURRA – Saturday 24th March from 12-2pm that Retro Café Trade Afternoon. The RED SHEDS SHOPS 20 Eacham Road, Yungaburra. Bring along something to trade a rug to display your wares. That retro café is offering 100% Bartles for drinks from the menu, you will need cash for lunch and drinks from the display fridge. On the Verandah is offering pre-loved clothing for 100% Bartles. Event Host: Melitta 4095 2340.

PEERAMON – WORKSHOP – Sunday 25th March Spicy Fermented Carrot Session. See: trybooking.com/349169 for details. Contact Patti – patti.flynn@gmail.com or 0439 561 266.

What to bring to Trade Events where not specified above: food & drinks for yourself or to share, or money and/or Bartles at some venues, friends, Trading Record Sheet and pen or smart phone to enter trades direct, any goods you wish to trade, table/rug to display them upon is often useful, your own chair at some venues, promotional material of any services you are offering if applicable, \$20 if you don't yet have an FNQ CES account (one-off fee).

fnqces@gmail.com- 4096 6972 – www.fnqces.org- www.communityexchange.net.au

March 15th Deadline for April Calendar. Details to fnqces@gmail.com to be included in Calendar, Website, Facebook and other Promotions

Editors note – I have included the early March ones because you will then know next month when they are on. Check out details on the website above.

Biodynamics Far North Queensland

The field day advertised for March 18th has been cancelled

The next event is scheduled for April 15th in Malanda

www.biodynamicsfng.org.au



Hello

We had a great time at our last meeting and camp-out on 17/18th February 2018. Shared meals, playing with the kids, planting trees, exploring the land, discussing some major issues and some honest heart-felt sharing, in short a real great community feeling.

To keep things flowing we will have another camping and skypeing weekend on 24th/25th March. So please mark that on your calendars already.

We will be out on the land from Saturday 10am until Sunday noon and then go to Koah for the skype session from 2pm until 5pm.

Looking forward to seeing you there...

If anyone has anything they would like to see on the agenda, please let me know by Monday 12th March. I'd suggest to spend some more time nutting down the basic guidelines around working share capital off and also explore further what we can put in place to facilitate ongoing strong community glue. I'd also like to see some group action in the lake to get the new big drums under the pontoon.

Please feel free to email any suggested additions to the agenda, whether it is a tour of the property which you'd like or you have a suggestion for a discussion subject or a community action or game.

On a different note, there will be a men's group camp on Kanjini from 6th April (evening) until 8th April (yes sorry, its for men only).

The focus of that weekend is to learn about actively listening; developing emotional intelligence; being present, building confidence and trusting in one's own personal awareness and intuition. Cost will be about \$300 including camping and food.

If you are interested please contact Simon (0459 755 553 or simbbo@gmail.com). Feel free to pass this on...

All the best.

Svargo

0499620260

Kanjini Co-Op

www.kanjini.org

Website for Permaculture videos info and blogs

Permaculturenews.org/category/how to

Geofflawtononline.com

Check out the Friday Fives, join up for insights and benefits

David Holmgrens Permaculture Principles

Thinking tools for an era of change website:

<https://permacultureprinciples.com/>



Australasian Permaculture Convergence 14

ACT PERMACULTURE FESTIVAL – SUNDAY 15 APRIL 2018

CONNECTIVITY is a theme of the Permaculture Festival on Sunday 15 April 2018, the event that launches the APC14 convergence.

Like other festivals before previous convergences promises to be an exchange of ideas, of knowledge, of products, of tools. It's the opportunity to meet the inventors, the innovators, the people making permaculture happen.

[Learn More](#)

CONVERGENCE – APC14 – 15-19 APRIL 2018

GETTING GOOD THINGS DONE needs collaboration, collaboration needs communication and communication needs **connectivity**. That's why connectivity is the theme of this year's Australasian Permaculture Convergence. Between 15 – 19 April 2018 we meet in southern NSW to improve our connectivity. Talks and workshops will be supplemented by the opportunity for personal networking where fresh ideas bloom and new projects are hatched.

[Learn More](#)

TOURS AND COURSES – BEFORE AND AFTER APC14

TOURS ARE A WAY OF LEARNING BY SEEING... They are the direct evidence that permaculture ideas work. A traditional wind-up to permaculture convergences, the tours to follow APC14 are presently being planned.

A RANGE OF COURSES before and following APC14 that will deepen our permaculture experience and knowledge may also be offered. These, too, will be advised.

News from Home and around The World

From the CSIRO news

SAVING LIVES WITH PLATYPUS MILK

A breakthrough by Australian scientists has brought the introduction of an unlikely hero in the global fight against antibiotic resistance a step closer; the humble platypus.

Due to its unique features - duck-billed, egg-laying, beaver-tailed and venomous- the platypus has long exerted a powerful appeal to scientists, making it an important subject in the study of evolutionary biology.

In 2010 scientists discovered that platypus milk contained unique antibacterial properties that could be used to fight superbugs.

RIGHT: The Platypus is one of a small group of mammals that lay eggs and produce milk to feed their young. Picture: Laura Romin and Larry Dalton.

Now a team of researchers at CSIRO working with Deakin University have solved a puzzle that helps explain why platypus milk is so potent - bringing it one step closer to being used to save lives.

The discovery was made by replicating a special protein contained in platypus milk in a laboratory setting.

"Platypus are such weird animals that it would make sense for them to have weird biochemistry," CSIRO scientist and lead author on the research published in [Structural Biology Communications](#), Dr Janet Newman said.

"The platypus belongs to the monotreme family, a small group of mammals that lay eggs and produce milk to feed their young. By taking a closer look at their milk, we've characterised a new protein that has unique antibacterial properties with the potential to save lives."

As platypus don't have teats, they express milk onto their belly for the young to suckle, exposing the mother's highly nutritious milk to the environment, leaving babies susceptible to the perils of bacteria.

Deakin University's Dr Julie Sharp said researchers believed this was why the platypus milk contained a protein with rather unusual and protective antibacterial characteristics.

"We were interested to examine the protein's structure and characteristics to find out exactly what part of the protein was doing what," she said.

Employing the marvels of molecular biology, the Synchrotron, and CSIRO's state of the art Collaborative Crystallisation Centre (C3), the team successfully made the protein, then deciphered its structure to get a better look at it.

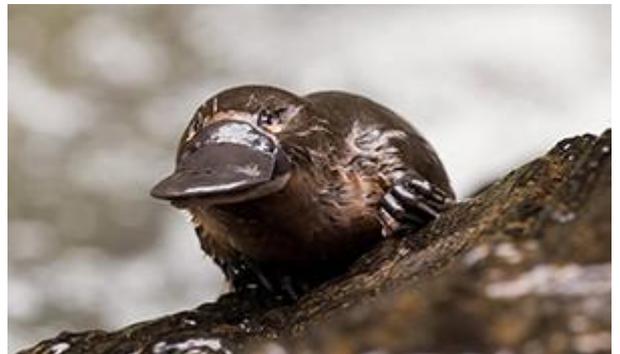
What they found was a unique, never-before-seen 3D fold.

Due to its ringlet-like formation, the researchers have dubbed the newly discovered protein fold the 'Shirley Temple', in tribute to the former child-actor's distinctive curly hair.

Dr Newman said finding the new protein fold was pretty special.

"Although we've identified this highly unusual protein as only existing in monotremes, this discovery increases our knowledge of protein structures in general, and will go on to inform other drug discovery work done at the Centre," she said.

In 2014 the World Health Organisation released a report highlighting the scale of the global threat posed by antibiotic resistance, pleading for urgent action to avoid a "post-antibiotic era", where common infections and minor injuries which have been treatable for decades can once again kill.



The team of scientists at CSIRO and Deakin are seeking collaborators to take the potentially life-saving platypus research to the next stage.

Background:

Antimicrobial resistance occurs when bacteria that were once responsive to antimicrobial treatments like antibiotics build up a resistance and then pass that resistance on to their next generation. This leads to ineffective treatments and more persistent infections, caused by these resistant 'Superbugs'.

SUNFLOWER FALLOW BENEFITS SOIL HEALTH



Ingham cane grower Michael Waring has planted tens of thousands of sunflowers on his property as a fallow crop, and the result is a blaze of yellow across 16 hectares of land.

Sunflowers are a relatively new addition to the cane cycle in the Far North, with only a handful of farmers growing them as an alternative, or addition, to cowpeas and soya beans.

“They are a good plant for the soil,” Michael said. “Diversity is important when it comes to soil health and sunflowers bring in another element.”

Fallow crops of legumes and other plants between cane crops have proved beneficial for both productivity and the environment, building the soil's chemical and biological health and breaking weed and pest cycles. In some cases, they also provide another income stream.

Soya bean crops are an established break crop in a sugar cane fallow, with good waterlogging resilience, soil health benefits and high nitrogen fixation.

Michael said sunflowers offered something extra in terms of balancing soil life.

“Sunflowers are not legumes so they don’t fix nitrogen but they do have soil benefits that soya beans don’t provide. Sunflowers encourage mycorrhizal fungi, which takes mineral phosphorus and converts it into plant available phosphorus,” he said.

“What we are learning from soil experts is that we need diversity in our fallows to gain the most from them. The challenge is finding beneficial plants that will grow together and survive the rigors of the Wet Tropics in summer.”

This is Michael’s second sunflower planting. He plants soya beans in amongst the crop but says the sunflowers are dominating at the moment.

“The strike rate this year has been really good, in fact, it’s a bit too good. I would recommend that you don’t plant them so thick so you give a bit more space to the soya beans.”

“It’s about trying new things, something a lot of farmers are continuing to do to improve soil health and, by doing so, improve water quality leaving their farms.”

Please PRINT – SIGN – SCAN and RETURN by email to
treasurer@permaculturecairns.org.au.

Permaculture Cairns

Membership Form 2018

One year's membership fee - 1 Jan – 31 Dec:

- | | | | | |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Household membership \$30 | <input type="radio"/> | Renewing Member | <input type="radio"/> | |
| Individual membership | \$20 | <input type="radio"/> | New Member | <input type="radio"/> |



Name(s) of all applicant(s) & DOB if under 18yrs):

.....
.....
.....

Postal Address:

..... Postcode:

Phone(s):

Email:

Signature:

Payment may be made at Meetings, at Cairns Penny or Online Direct Deposit to Permaculture Cairns A/c at Cairns Penny in Grafton Street. BSB704-966 A/c No. 100009440 please include your Surname as reference.

If you have a Permaculture Design Certificate could you please complete the following survey.

YOUR NAME:.....

Who was the Course Presenter:.....

When did you do the Course:.....

Where did you do the Course:.....

Enquiries

| | | |
|----------------|--|--|
| President: | Jenny McGrath | info@permaculturecairns.org.au |
| Secretary: | Craig Phillipson | info@permaculturecairns.org.au |
| Treasurer: | Carol Laing | treasurer@permaculturecairns.org.au |
| Past President | Carol Laing | newsletter@permaculturecairns.org.au |
| Website: | www.permaculturecairns.org.au | |