

Permaculture Cairns Newsletter

EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES WITH SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS FOR 10 YEARS



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

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

PERMACULTURE CAIRNS APRIL MEETING

Tuesday 16th April 6pm for a 6.30 start

**Venue: Endeavour Learning and Lifestyle Building
4 Warner Street Manunda**

Members free, please bring some nibbles for the cuppa break, non-members \$5

AGENDA

Welcome to all and info on upcoming local events including

Permaculture Expo Day

Guest Speaker will be Sally Cowan from Quarantine and her talk is titled

Northern Australia Quarantine Strategy: Exotic Pest and Disease surveillance across northern Australia. Sally will also bring specimens and slides of good and bad insects in the garden.

Meeting closes 8.30pm now time for a chat, a cuppa and a snack with like-minded people

The Permaculture Expo on the 12th May, hope you can come and bring your Mum.

If you would like to help out on the day, contact Carol Laing on email or facebook

info@permaculturecairns.org.au

Permaculture Cairns Workshop Series

“Grow your own food in the tropics”

No.4. Preparing the soil and planting out



Saturday 27th April 9am to 12 noon

Venue: Endeavour Foundation Bld. 4 Warner Street, Manunda

Included in this workshop

Preparing soil for planting out:

The importance of pH, organic matter, nutrients and microbes explained.

Planting out of seedlings

On-going maintenance of plants

This will be a practical workshop. Bring hat, closed in shoes and gloves

Workshop Cost: \$30 for Members of Permaculture Cairns, \$35 for non-members.

You can pay on the day, it's easier that way.

All materials, Notes and Morning tea included in cost

YOU MUST REGISTER AT:- info@permaculturecairns.org.au

My experience: Commercial vegetable grower for 6 years, plant nursery owner/operator 10 Years. Study:- Certificate in Horticulture 1983, a two weeks Permaculture Design Certificate Course 1992, Microbe Course and Chromatography Course with Mas Humas 2012, Elaine Ingham's online Microscope Course' 2013, 4 day Nutri tech Solutions, Certificate in Nutrition Farming 2014, and while attending National Biological Farming Conference 2016 I attended David Hardwick's Workshop on Soils. Other Soil workshops with Terrain, Northern Resource Management and FNQ Biodynamics.

Permaculture Expo

Sunday 12 May 2019 - 10am to 3.30pm

Hosted by Permaculture Cairns

At Endeavour Foundation, 4 Warner Street, MANUNDA

*Come join
in the fun
and
learning*

TALKS & DEMOS

- * FNQ Biodynamics-
 - o Ishtar on **What is Biodynamics**
 - o Satya on **Pruning correctly.**
- * Jay from Organic Motion, on **Edible Landscapes.**
- * Michael and Linda Alba on **fruit trees and tropical plants,**
- * Kym from Dept of Agriculture & Fisheries to show and talk about our problem with **serious weed species in the Tropics**
- * FNQ Seed Savers on **seed saving.**
- * Richard on **Mushrooms**, Peter on **Sprouts**, Andy on **Raised Beds**,
- * Len on **Wicking beds and backyard Aquaponics**

* DEMOS

- * William will display how he uses recycled timber to make useable items
- * Margaret from Fibrecrafters will show us how to relax and make some useful craft items.
- * Carol from Permaculture Cairns on **Growing Oyster Mushrooms**

KIDS ACTIVITIES

and there will be Chooks.

FOOD

Hamburgers - beef and vegetarian
Tea, coffee, soft drinks
Cakes

FOR SALE

Tropical Perennial Plants
Fruit trees
Veggie Seedlings
Art and crafts
Wicking beds
Raised beds
Timber pieces

Some tips for growing food in a challenging climate

Seedlings Care a couple of tips. It has been a difficult time for growing seedlings but they will come good with care.

The continual rain this month has washed out the nutrients in the seedling mix. If they look a little yellow you need to use a seaweed or fish emulsion foliar spray and drench them.

Be careful when you mix the foliar solution or you may burn the seedlings, read the instructions for seedlings.

If you need to "prick out" seedlings, do it in the early morning or late afternoon and keep them in the shade for two days before putting them into a sunnier position. Do not put them in the late afternoon sun for a few days

All seedlings will need sun now, so if you have them in part shade gradually move them to a sunnier position until you have them in full sun.

What to plant now

Fruit trees,

Tropical perennial greens- Aibika, Arrowroot, Ceylon Spinach, Okinawa Spinach, Sambung Spinach, Brazilian Spinach, Kang kong, Leaf Ginseng, Sweet potato leaf

Annual Greens Chicory, Wong bok, Bok choy, Pak choy, Silver beet, Rocket, Lettuce, Kale, Broccolini

Fruiting Plants. Cucumber, Melons, Pumpkin, Okra, Tomato, Capsicum, Egg Plant, Beans,, Guada bean, Sweet potatoes, Daikon radish, Peas, Radish

Herbs and Spices, Coriander, Genovese Basil, Sweet Basil, Italian Basil, Thai Basil, Lemon Basil, Holy Basil, Garlic Chives, Chives, Bunching Shallots, Mexican Tarragon, Mexican Coriander, Shallots, Turmeric, Ginger, Galangal Comfrey Rau Ram Or Vietnamese Mint, Anise Hyssop, Watercress, Parsley, Spring onions

Flowers for the birds and bees Cosmos Marigold, Dianthus, Sunjewels, Sunflower, Calendula, Gerbera, Pentas, Golden Candle, Zinnia, Basil All Sorts

Events in the Region

Committee for Waste Reduction invites you to join us for these FREE events.

How To Throw An Eco Party - Delivered by Funki Trunki

Sat April 13th 10am - 12pm

St Andrews Catholic College

Come along to this fun and hands-on workshop suitable for eco-warriors big and small.

Have you ever wondered where does the waste end up? And what is this 'global warming' grown-ups talk about? Eva and Lala from Funki Trunki are going to tackle the hard questions about environment and what can kids (and adults) do to help.

They've prepared heaps of fun & educational activities for kids and easy & practical tips for you on how to throw a party that won't wreck your little ones' future.

Suitable for ages 5-10, workshop is limited to 20 families max.

PLEASE REGISTER TO SECURE YOUR PLACE

<https://cfwr.org.au/event-3334250/Registration>

CFWR Social

Come along to our bi-monthly drinks (first Wednesday of each month)

1st May 5pm - 7pm

The Conservatory Bar on Lake St.

An informal evening with no specific agenda...it is an opportunity to engage with like minded people for inspiration and opportunity. Get to know what each other does and how we can help each other reduce waste by collaboration or even initiatives you would like to start.

Recent examples:

Junk Weavers connected with Cairns Regional Council and this now enables banners to be weaved instead of going to landfill.

CAFNEC connected with The Holiday Inn to divert used sheets from landfill.

Rob's Rubbish Removal connected with Cairns Airport and are now involved in a fantastic program redistributing coffee grounds.

EVENT DETAILS

<https://www.facebook.com/events/378673829560062/>

cairns and fnq seedsavers



**starting at mim's from 10am ~ sunday april 14th
at 25 weinert st., edmonton**

*where we pack our organically-grown seeds into the seedbank
and check out the raised garden beds, have a talking-circle,
and enjoy a beautiful shared seedsavers lunch...before
heading to edmonton botanical reserve 1/1.30pm til 4 pm*



**with 'friends of sugarworld gardens'
hambledon drive edmonton, next to 'sugarworld'
we'll have a walk and story of the gardens
and also pot up some seedlings for the
'friends of sugarworld gardens' fundraiser**

*this event is hosted by cairns and fnq seedsavers and all are welcome to join us
and 'the friends of the sugarworld gardens' who have protected this historic orchard-
please email beth at cairnsseedsavers@outlook.com or contact seedsavers@kurandaregion.org for more details
and to receive our fnq mailouts with seedsavers dates and other inter-related events :) hope to see you there!!*

BIODYNAMICS FNQ Inc Field Day Information

Biodynamics and Gut health
Nutrient lack in modern food, how to clear toxins, Fermenting foods
Guest speaker Dr. Alex Bernardi
Sunday April 28th, 10am - 4pm,
Patrick English Pavilion, Malanda

Dr. Alex Bernardi's (<https://doctorex.com.au/>) topic list:

1. Gut Health and its strong relation to physical and mental health.

- pre-/probiotics, healthy gut
- connection between gut and brain/physical health,
- effects of medication and lifestyle on gut health (intermittent fasting, stress, sleep)
- If the gut is sick, (Leaky gut, inflammation, mineral and vitamin deficiencies, chronic conditions)

2. Environmental and nutritional toxins:

- What are toxins? where do they come from?
- Natural detox pathways of the body
- Effects of toxins in the body
- How to support your body

Obviously, we expect you to have a lot of questions, so there is a Q&A planned for each section.

After the ever-delicious lunch this talk leads us to our practical approach on how

Here is a link to a printable

flyer: https://gallery.mailchimp.com/2f9321d9892b4bf77b644949e/files/7fd9b732-4171-4871-9fc0-61746eb052ee/BDFNQ_11.5_NUTRITION_28.4.19_4.pdf

A share and buy table is available for you to bring your produce.

to ferment and prepare different pre- and probiotics to support our gut health.

Upcoming events:

Permaculture Expo

BDFNQ stall

Come and join us for a social Mothers Day

Sunday 12th May

Endeavour Foundation, at 4 Warner Street, Manunda and Horn Burial and AGM

Sunday, 26th May 10am - 4 pm Kaban



**kuranda-sprouts
seedsavers
from 10am to 4pm
sunday 5th of may 2019
at helen's lovely garden
2 fallon close, kuranda
(go thru roundabout
from fallon road...)**

seedsavers

we are happy gardeners, who love our soil and our plants,
and growing food organically, and collecting and sharing
heritage variety, non-hybrid/non-gmo foodplants and seeds
which we store and make available from our local seed-bank...

we also love getting together and having a good yarn
over cups of tea and kombucha and lovingly prepared share meals,
we love our seedsavers meetings and invite you to join us...

please contact seedsavers@kurandaregion.org for more info
or go to [kuranda tv youtube channel](#) and on the [fnq seedsavers group](#) page on social media

Mareeba Seed Savers and Gardening Group

Notice of next meeting

**We welcome you to a COMBINED EVENT to be held on
Sunday 26th May 2019**

Venue

Michael and Lindy Alba ~ 17 Middlemiss St, Mareeba

This combined event will include members of the Seed Saver groups from
* Mareeba * Mount Molloy * Kuranda * Cairns *

**many members of the *Herb Society of North Qld*,
based in Townsville, will also be joining us for the event**

Commencing at 10am to 4pm

There will be numerous guest speakers
throughout the day, speaking on various topics
Please bring lunch to share / coffee & tea supplied / Gold coin donation

THIS IS AN EVENT NOT TO BE MISSED
For more information please contact
Maria Gillies 0421 210 136 or Lindy Alba 4092 1116

VERY Interesting News Items

ONE THOUGHT ON “DESERT GREEN: JORDANIANS ON FRONTLINE OF CLIMATE CHANGE TURN TO PERMACULTURE”



This article by Marta Vidal was first published in [Middle East Eye](#)

Olive, lemon and palm trees provide shade over the small garden where Abu ElHajj recently started growing carrots, tomatoes, beans and herbs.

Surrounded by arid cliffs and a harsh desert landscape, it seems an unlikely place to start cultivating food.

‘Geoff taught us how to work with nature, not against it’

– Abu ElHajj

Facing [drought and rising temperatures](#), Jordan is on the frontline of climate change.

Overgrazing and inappropriate cultivation practices have contributed to increasing desertification across the region.

Abu ElHajj’s mission is to green the desert in Jordan. She quit her job as a teacher in Amman in 2017 and decided to buy a small piece of land in the Dead Sea valley.



"Most of what I eat comes from my garden," says Abla Abu ElHajj (MEE/Marta Vidal)

"In a few years, I will have more fruit trees and everything will be greener and more stable," she says.

WATER SCARCITY

Jordan is three-quarters desert and one of the world's most water-scarce countries.

A study published by [Stanford University](#) in 2017 found that water shortages in Jordan are likely to get worse over the coming years.

The study suggests that without better land use and improved water-sharing agreements, by the end of the century rainfall in Jordan will decrease 30 percent, temperatures will increase by six degrees Celsius and the number and duration of droughts will double.

'When I bought the land a year and a half ago, I was so happy I started crying'

– Abu ElHajj

Abu ElHajj is proud of the 600 square metres of rocky arid land she has managed to turn into an increasingly fertile garden.

She spent most of her life in [Baqaa](#), the largest Palestinian refugee camp in Jordan.

"I wasn't happy with the atmosphere there. I got sick of the city. People live inside boxes, and there is so much traffic and pollution," she tells MEE.

"I could only afford this tiny piece of land. But when I bought it a year and a half ago, I was so happy I started crying," says Abu ElHajj, whose parents were Palestinian refugees from the West Bank district of Hebron.

"I finally have my own land and I can see Palestine from here. It's only a few kilometres away."

[\(amazing what a determined person can do\)](#)

Geoff Lawton from the Permaculture Research Institute talks about Green the Desert in Jordan

SUSTAINABLE LIVING

Her garden is right next to [Greening The Desert](#), a project established ten years ago by the Australian permaculture expert Geoff Lawton.

Lawton created a permaculture demonstration site where he is showing people how to live sustainably with limited water and resources.

Developed in the 1970s by Australian biologists Bill Mollison and David Holmgren, permaculture – a contraction of permanent agriculture – is a design system that mimics natural systems. It seeks to integrate human activity with natural surroundings to create a sustainable ecosystem.

“Geoff taught us a lot of lovely things. He taught us how to work with nature, not against it,” says Abu ElHajj.

Ten years ago the area was just a rocky hill in the Dead Sea valley. Experts have warned that the Dead Sea is on course to dry out.

SAVING THE DEAD SEA

In 2015, [Jordan and Israel](#) signed an agreement to save the Dead Sea and improve access to water in the region. However, the [deal](#) has been delayed by diplomatic tensions, financial difficulties and environmentalist objections.

Extreme heat, dryness, and high salinity levels are making the Dead Sea valley, the lowest place on earth, an increasingly hostile environment.

Lawton and his Jordanian wife Nadia were looking for land they could purchase in Jordan. They didn't have a lot of money, so were only able to afford a 3,000 square metre plot with very poor soil in the Dead Sea valley.

Lawton saw it as an opportunity to show the potential of permaculture techniques by transforming the arid land into a fertile forest garden.

“We funded Greening the Desert by ourselves, with our own work. We started very small,” Lawton tells MEE.

THE STRATEGY

After buying the land in 2008, Lawton and his team started by capturing all the water they could and establishing hardy trees and nitrogen-fixing plants that would provide the garden with anti-evaporation strategies.

Water from the showers and sinks began to be used to water the trees. In permaculture, all waste is reused, and water is always harvested.



Ali al-Waheidi runs Greening The Desert's eco-lodge and organic cafe (MEE/Marta Vidal)

They then started increasing the diversity of species by including crops, herbs, and small animals like chickens and rabbits, which produce natural fertiliser.

A forest garden started flourishing in the desert.

"We proved that we can get great results even in incredibly difficult situations," says Lawton.

By implementing techniques like intercropping and using every niche and level to create different layers of plants, permaculture can produce more food using fewer resources.

Greening the Desert runs entirely on solar power and everything is recycled. The forest garden also functions as an institute, where both local communities and international visitors can learn about permaculture's principles.

HELPING HANDS

Hayel Abu Yahya was involved in building the project ten years ago. He was hired by Lawton, who runs another permaculture project in Australia, to manage the site.

His family helps him with watering and harvesting, but like most permaculture projects, it requires little maintenance.



Hayel Abu Yahya and his family manage Greening The Desert's farm (MEE/Marta Vidal)

Along with twenty other families from nearby villages, Abu Yahya took the course taught by Lawton and learned to apply permaculture techniques.

“I come from a family of farmers. My parents used a lot of chemicals and we would grow the same kind of crops. With permaculture we can grow more things,” says Abu Yahya.

“A lot of neighbouring families adopted the same techniques and started getting better results. They are producing large quantities of food in small gardens.”

HEALTHIER LAND

Conventional farming is characterised by monocropping and the use of synthetic fertilisers, which reduce biodiversity and contribute to soil erosion and environmental degradation.

Permaculture uses mulch and irrigation canals to restore the soil’s fertility.

Even though it is a modern design system, permaculture draws on indigenous farming practices and traditional knowledge. Greening the Desert introduced forestry techniques, but also adopted local food processing and animal husbandry techniques.

“We take a lot of traditional techniques on board,” says Lawton. “We can combat climate change with novel ecosystems. With a combination of native and non-native species, we can totally re-green the Middle East.”

Greening the Desert tries to address sustainability issues, food security and water conservation. The project aims to show people how to provide for themselves in a way that also benefits the environment.

“We can solve all of the world’s problem in gardens,” says Lawton. He believes permaculture is the most effective way to fight against climate change, and that Greening the Desert’s model can be replicated throughout the region.

WEATHER EXTREMES

As one of the world’s most water-scarce and dry areas, the Middle East is particularly vulnerable to climate change. Jordan has been increasingly affected by [floods](#), droughts and soil erosion.

“Weather extremes are getting more common in Jordan,” says Safa’ al-Jayoussi, a climate change expert and advocate for environmental justice. For al-Jayoussi, permaculture’s use of renewable energy is particularly important.

“Jordan has [huge potential](#) for renewable energy but we are still importing most of our energy from other countries,” she says. “We need a just transition from fossil fuels to renewable energy.”

She believes grassroots movements like permaculture can inspire others in Jordan to become more engaged with environmental issues.

Some projects are also implementing permaculture techniques in urban spaces. [Greening the Camps](#), a project run by international and Jordanian volunteers, is trying to spread rooftop gardens across refugee camps in Jordan.

“Refugees can have a chance to grow their own food and be in closer contact with nature,” says the co-founder Machiel Van Nieuwenhove, a 27-year-old architect and designer from Belgium.

The gardens aim at improving food security and living conditions in Jordan’s overcrowded refugee camps.

Greening the Camps’ pilot project was established on the rooftop of [Jadal](#), a social-cultural community centre in Amman.

It has two greenhouses built with recycled materials and organic compost installations.

“We chose Jadal because it’s a community space where people can come together and learn from each other,” adds Van Nieuwenhove.

The aim of the gardens is not only to care for the environment but also to look after the community.

Memberships are now due for 2019, \$20, Family \$30

**Please pay online into our Cairns Penny Permaculture Cairns Account –
BSB 704-966 Account No. 100009440**

And don’t forget to put your name on it so we know who you are

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

Permaculture Cairns

Membership Form 2019

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

- Household membership \$30 Renewing Member
 Individual membership \$20 New Member



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

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