



PERMACULTURE CAIRNS

EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES WITH SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS

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NEWSLETTER FEBRUARY 2024

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PERMIES AT THE PUB: WE'RE BACK!

Do you love plants? Do you grow your own food and flowers? Do you want to meet other permaculturists whilst enjoying great food and drinks?

If you said yes, then come along to the first ***Permies at the Pub*** for 2024!

Where?

Balaclava Hotel - 423 Mulgrave Rd, Earlville QLD 4870

When?

22 March 2024 - From 6PM

We hope to see you there!



MEETINGS AT CRAIG'S PLACE

Craig has kindly opened his house in Manunda for meetings throughout the year, including in March:

Sunday, 24 March 2024 at 09:30am

Address: 336 Fearnley St, Manunda QLD 4870

Members attending the March meeting will be expected to make contributions to hosting workshops and events throughout the year. Some members listed in the AGM minutes, have offered to host.

Should you be willing to host a meeting or workshop at your own residence, please attend the meeting with your potential dates and workshop ideas. It's greatly appreciated!



Other meeting dates that Craig intends to host, are on:

Saturday, 18 May 2024
Saturday, 29 June 2024
Saturday, 24 August 2024

CRAIG'S FEBRUARY WORKSHOP

AQUAPONICS, CHICKENS AND COMPOST!

On Saturday, 24 February, Craig hosted the first Permaculture Cairns workshop of the year following the AGM, to share his projects throughout his garden – including an automatic aquaponics setup, chickens, and the use of materials in his garden.



2024 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

At the recent Annual General Meeting (AGM), Carol Laing has announced she will not be running for Chairperson this year. Permaculture Cairns wants to thank Carol for her dedication and leadership within Permaculture Cairns, which she has been a part of for over 15 years. Carol has helped to build Permaculture Cairns, literally from the ground-up.

Carol will continue to be a part of Permaculture Cairns, taking time now to enjoy time teaching, gardening, and sharing with others (without the boring administration part!)



Detailed AGM minutes, includes the new Executive Committee for 2024:

Chairperson – Craig Phillipson has been appointed to the role after many years serving as the Secretary of the committee, nominated by Carol Laing and seconded by Robyn Ford.

Treasurer - Julia Norton, as nominated by Julia Norton and seconded by Craig Phillipson.

Secretary – Vaughan Griffin, as nominated by Maria Donkas and seconded by Carol Laing.



THE TROPICAL VEGGIE PATCH:

Gardening in the hot, wet, humid Tropics

By Carol Laing

Another long really hot and humid summer and still a bit to come.

February was a dreadful month to grow anything except tropical vegetables or Chinese greens. Although with a sheltered spot where the rain cant go and some shade cloth you can still grow Rocket and Wild Rocket along with the tropical Tenderleaf Amaranthus for the salad.

The WEEDS are growing better than anything else. I have found the best way to cope is to cover weeds with cardboard and weigh down with hay before the wet sets in, this gives more time for making compost, bokashi or tending the worm farms. The worms have suffered another bad year and most of the adults have died but the baby worms have hatched out are filling the farms again.

Thank goodness for our tropical perennial greens. I grow my Sambung, Brazilian, Okanawan and Ceylon spinachs as ground cover plants under trees, they appreciate the shade in the hot part of the day. Kan Kong and Lebanese Cress will grow very happily in a large well-

watered pot with a tray to hold water, fill the tray with pebbles/sand to stop the mozzies from breeding. Amaranth and Timor Lettuce both self-seed and grow easily all year. Lots of greens for salads, or to steam and stir fry. Let's not forget to use the leaves of the Miracle tree, Moringa for salads and baking.

When cooking greens I use Coconut oil for flavour, my never- ending bunching shallots and garlic, just delicious. Sometime with a dash of sauce, lots to choose from.

Compost all kitchen scraps, but be sure to have some hay, dried leaves, wood chips, shredded paper, sugar cane mulch to cover the wet scraps each time you add to the compost bin. Turning a couple of times a week is best and is possible inside the bin with a Gardenmate (a large corkscrew tool) or a garden fork. Insert into compost and lift and shake the contents to incorporate air for the microbes. The Bokashi Bin is really handy for those in home units.

Chop and Drop Banana leaves and suckers but remember to core out the growing point or it will grow again. Make new beds by chop and drop and including sticks and small tree trunks when cleaning up. The trunks will break down over the hot wet months and feed the microbes in the soil. It is always advisable to never leave soil bare, either plant a cover crop or mulch.

Planting time for direct seeded veggies, amaranth, rocket, popcorn and sweetcorn, snake beans, Bok choy, Pak choy, mustard greens, gai choy, Green Gem cucumbers, radish, Timor lettuce and tropical lettuce, pumpkin, melons, and sweet potatoes. Rocket and lettuce seeds are difficult to germinate when hot, so buy some seedling for the early weeks.

Herbs to plant, all the basil, Mexican tarragon, mints, garlic chives, chives, shallots, lemon thyme, thyme, oregano and spices turmeric, ginger, galangal, cardamom, vanilla, Pandan and Five in one herb.

Seeding into punnets or pots is best done next month – March, they take about a month to get going and should be ready to plant out in April hopefully the heavy rain has stopped. Seedlings need to be under a roof to protect from heavy rain and hot sun, but where they still enough light to grow, if they become long spindly, they are not getting enough light.

Tomatoes, Capsicum, Egg Plant Tomatillo, Kale, Broccoli, Calabrese, Cabbage, will germinate now but need to be protected from heavy rain in March & really hot days. A shade cover for protecting seedlings can be made from a stiff fencing mesh curved over to make a tunnel, covered with shade cloth. Helps seedlings to adjust in day or two.

Flowers for the birds and bees: portulaca, marigold, coleus, sunflowers, basil, all sorts, dianthus, five in one herb, bees also love flowering native plants, flowers on palm, pawpaw especially the males, bananas, shrubs and trees. I have native bees and they love salvia and Portulaca, and the butterflies love Pentas and Ixoras. I tried Queens Anne Lace it was beautiful and the bees loved it. Flowers and Pollination.

Good Gardening, Carol Laing.



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM) MINUTES

MEETING DETAILS

Date: 24 February 2024
Location: 336 Fearnley St, Manunda QLD 4870
Time: 09:30am
2023 Chairperson: Carol Laing
2023 Secretary: Craig Phillipson
2023 Treasurer: Jenny Trezise

PRESENT:

- Craig Phillipson
- Julie Lloyd
- Sally Cowan
- Robyn Ford
- Val Carnie
- Joanne Thorpe
- Jeannette Wehrle
- Julia Norton
- Dan Handley
- Petra Geiger
- Helma Naus
- Mat Naus
- Jo Fallon
- Bruce Zell
- Vaughan Griffin
- Meredith Gawler
- Carol Laing
- Maria Donkers

APOLOGIES:

- Sue Sultana

WELCOMES AND INTRODUCTIONS:

The Secretary, Craig Phillipson, introduced himself and welcomed those present to his house. All were invited to introduce themselves to the group. The existing chairperson, Carol Laing, was delayed in attending the meeting due to her chicken struggling to lay an egg.

PRESIDENTS REPORT

Carol Laing provided an overview of some of the biggest items from 2023, including workshops covering soil health, fermentation, and cultivation. She also highlighted a number of great undertakings by members, including alternative composting styles. The president thanked the members for their support and participation and invited them to share their feedback and suggestions for the future.

TREASURERS REPORT

Craig Phillipson provided a detailed report of the financial income, expenses and balance of Permaculture Cairns Inc.

Total Income: \$3,759.15

Total Expenses: \$5,357.77

Net Income: -\$1,598.62

Balance: \$9,816.06 (as of 30 Nov 2023)

ELECTION OF 2023 COMMITTEE

CHAIRPERSON:

NOMINATION: Craig Phillipson (unopposed) – as nominated by Carol Laing and seconded by Robyn Ford.

OUTCOME: Elected unopposed.

TREASURER

NOMINATION: Julia Norton (unopposed), as nominated by Julia Norton and seconded by Craig Phillipson.

OUTCOME: Elected unopposed.

SECRETARY

NOMINATION: Vaughan Griffin (unopposed), as nominated by Maria Donkas and seconded by Carol Laing.

OUTCOME: Elected unopposed.

GENERAL COMMITTEE:

- Julie Lloyd
- Val Carnie
- Joanne Thorpe
- Carol Laing
- Sally Cowan
- Dan Handley

GENERAL BUSINESS

The following considerations were made:

- That members should, where possible, host meetings and workshops to help educate and receive help on projects. Of members present, the following volunteered:
 - Craig Phillipson,
 - Robyn Ford (later in year)
 - Joanne Thorpe
 - Carol Laing
 - Endeavour Garden
 - Meredith Gawler
 - Maria Donkers (through University of Third Age)
 - Dan Handley & Petra Geiger
 - Bungalow Community Garden
 - Endeavour Garden
- That Craig would organise the development of a calendar for the Permaculture Cairns website and organise a recurrent date for 3-4 core meetings throughout the year.
- Craig has encouraged members to organise meetings at their own discretion, in order to 'Share the Excess' of work in organising meetings.
- **EcoFiesta** – Council providing stall, PCI to provide plants, tables, materials.
 - Carol to coordinate plant growing and sales to public.
 - Carol to organise a raffle with smaller plants.
 - Recommendation by Dan and Petra to giveaway seeds.
- **Permies at the Pub** – Balaclava Hotel on the last Friday of the month. Bungalow recommended for consideration due to 2-for-1 Thursdays, potentially at later date. To be organised by Val Carnie.
- **Permies Tour:** Great feedback was received following last year's tour. This year, ideas included an aquaculture barra farm, fruit farms south of Cairns. Show day holiday suggested as best time to organise. Vaughan Griffin (secretary) to organise.
- **Permaculture Library:** at Endeavour Foundation still available, free of charge to borrow and return books. Library list is available on the website.
- Discussion of setting up permanent garden at Endeavour Foundation. Carol has raised that PCI has previously lost money on setup, as garden does not have an irrigation system in place despite past attempts to set one up.

MEETING CLOSED

Craig (chairperson) thanked all for their time and commitment and invited all to stay for a meal before taking them on tour of his garden. The meeting was declared closed at 11:30am.

