

# BEEELARONG COMMUNITY FARM

*To encourage, educate, share and nurture interest in sustainable living  
by creating a vibrant community farm within an urban environment.*



Winter around the farm



# WINTER WORKSHOPS

*by Judith Raue*

## BEELARONG WORKSHOPS IN JUNE, JULY AND AUGUST

The following are **GOLD (age 50+)** workshops and run from **9.30 to 11.30am**

All workshops are **free** except for **Monoprinting** which is **\$5**.

**Thur 5 June Gardening: How to care for your veggie patch:** Learn about crop rotation, weed identification and eradication, how to measure and adjust pH levels and the correct fertilisers to use.

**Thur 19 June Cooking: Cob oven cooking:** Take a tour of the farm to collect produce to use in the preparation of the food for the cob oven. While the food is cooking attempt to identify the herbs growing in the garden, then consume your creation.

**Thur 26 June Cooking: Preserving fruit and/or vegetables:** Depending on the season, you will make chutney, jam, relish or pickles. Walking tour of the farm included.

**Tue 1 July Monoprinting:** Learn the skills of monoprinting and create a unique work of art to take home. Take inspiration from a walk through the community garden. (A fee of \$5)

**Tue 8 July Monoprinting:** Learn the skills of monoprinting and create a unique work of art to take home. Take inspiration from a walk through the community garden. (A fee of \$5)

**Sat 12 July Gardening: Establish and grow your own veggie patch:** Plan and prepare a vegetable garden from scratch without any digging, collecting material to plant from within the farm.

**Sat 19 July Gardening: Seed saving and plant propagation:** Learn various propagating methods and how to save seeds for another cropping season.

**Fri 25 July Cooking: Christmas in July:** Prepare Christmas dishes that will include produce from the farm and then cook it in the cob oven. Take a tour of the farm while the food is cooking and then consume your product.

**Sat 9 August Cooking: Preserving fruit and/or vegetables:** Depending on the season, you will make chutney, jam, relish or pickles. Walking tour of the farm included.

**Sat 16 August Gardening: Compost and worm farm:** It's all about recycling! Learn which ingredients to use for a good compost and how to care for a bunch of worms. Walking tour of the farm included

~~**Thur 28 August**~~ (**This date to be re-scheduled**): **Ukulele:** Have fun learning simple chords to get you started on this trendy musical instrument, in the tranquil surrounds of the community garden. (The new date will be announced in the e-news)

**Sat 30 August Gardening: How to care for your veggie patch:** Learn about crop rotation, weed identification and eradication, how to measure and adjust pH levels and the correct fertilisers to use.

## BOOKINGS FOR WORKSHOPS ARE ESSENTIAL.

To secure your place please call Beelarong Community Farm on  
0401 168 657.



# HOW DOES YOUR GARDEN GROW?

*by Liz Scully*

It's June already! Winter, what winter? Yes people are telling me it's unseasonal. It's normally cooler by now! To them I say. Nine months of summer is better than 9 months of winter and as a Victorian 18 months ago I know what it is to be freezing I can tell you time passes very slowly when its grey and cold.

The community garden is abundant. Lettuces, pumpkins, bok choy, okra, rocket, sweet potatoes, and the list goes on. The weather has dictated our planting this year. With the seemingly perpetual summer, the ground has not cooled enough for us to plant potatoes or any

other tuber for that matter. We will watch to see how the sweet potatoes produce.

The wheelchair garden beds are now being trialed as seed raising beds, Especially the fast growing seeds. By using this area we can control our seed planting and crop rotation. It will also allow us to appeal to those bound by a wheelchair and have an interest in gardening. Often people just need a job.

Now's the time to be planting! Strawberries, eggplant, beetroot, carrots, leek, and spring onions.



I have included some of our wonderful produce and pictures of the hard work of all the members of the community garden.





# THE HERBAL SPIRAL

by Jan Deans

## Five Spice or Mother of Herbs

It is said that when made into a tea (chop up a leaf and put in boiling water) it can be used to relieve the symptoms of bronchitis, asthma, coughs, viral conditions, and to relieve indigestion and stomach cramps, convulsions, and as a liver tonic.

It is also said that the tea will help you sleep and is a cure for insomnia.

This plant has many names: Queen of Herbs, Five in One Herb, Five Seasons Herb, Country Borage, Indian Borage, Five Spice Herb, Chinese Three in One, Broad Leafed Thyme, Spanish Thyme, Spanish Sage, Puerto Rican Oregano.



FIVE SPICE



ALOE VERA

**Aloe Vera** is probably the best known of all the home-health medicinal herbs, and has a multitude of medicinal uses. Peel or break the leaf and rub the sap onto the skin for soothing relief from sunburn and burns, and to help heal cuts and abrasions.

If you are the sort of person who collects interesting facts - check this out on Wikipedia.

*6000 year old stone carvings in Egypt contain images of the plant, which they referred to as the "plant of immortality". It was given as a burial gift to deceased pharaohs.*

So Aloe Vera has been around for a while!

Jan is off to France for a month so thanks go to Di Ferguson who is taking over the care of the herbal spiral while Jan's away.

I caught Jan giving the herbs a final drink before she heads off.





# AROUND THE FARM

by Jean Burke

## Okinawa spinach

**botanical name** *Gynura crepioides*

We have an interesting spinach growing in the Kitchen Garden, behind the cob oven. It looks quite different to the soft leaved spinach we are used to. Okinawa Spinach is native to Indonesia, it is a hardy plant and relatively pest-free.

Okinawa Spinach does best in subtropical and tropical areas. An attractive plant with shiny leaves that are green on top and purple underneath; the flowers are very small and orange. It grows best in full sun to partial shade.



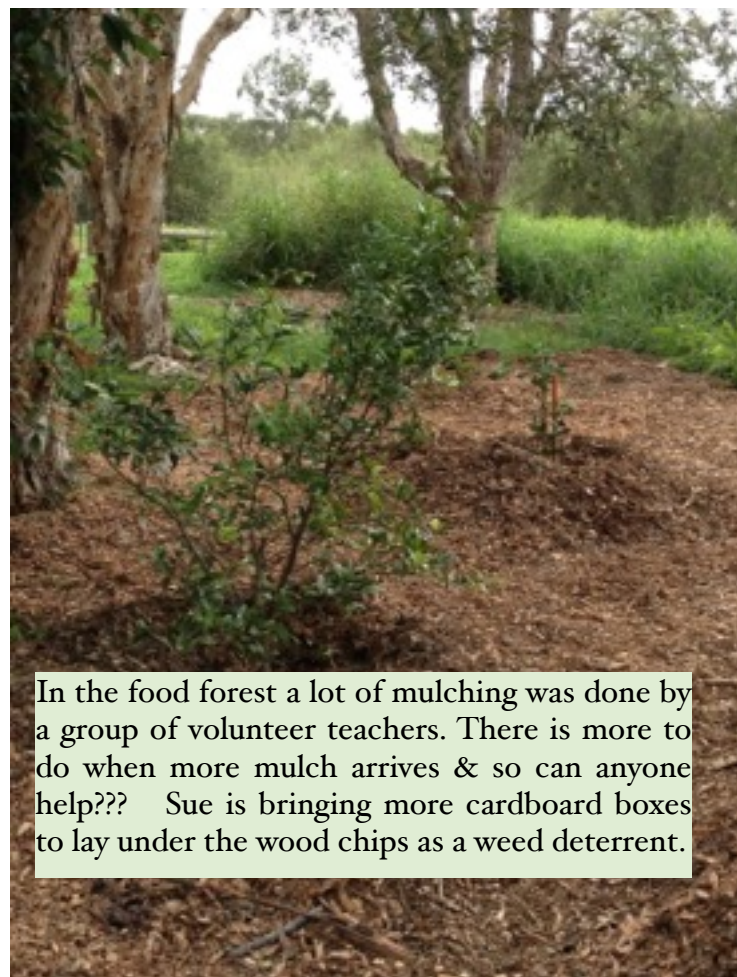
It is a very nutritious vegetable, eaten raw or cooked. The leaves and young shoot tips are steamed, used in stir fry, tempura, stews, and soups. Try not to overcook it as it can become slimy. The leaves have a crisp, nutty taste with a faint hint of pine.

In Okinawa the leaves are often fried and served as tempura. It can also be steamed with rice if it is added for the last 7 minutes of cooking time.

Thank you to Sue Brett from Darling Point Special School for sourcing this interesting plant for Beelarong.



Leona harvested the first beetroot and cabbage of the season



In the food forest a lot of mulching was done by a group of volunteer teachers. There is more to do when more mulch arrives & so can anyone help??? Sue is bringing more cardboard boxes to lay under the wood chips as a weed deterrent.



# ALLOTMENTS

*by Kevin Melican*

Last year I joined the Beelarong Management Committee and have taken on the responsibility of coordinating the allotments for the farm. We have 52 allotments to let out on an annual basis of which 2 lots (18 & 20) are currently being used by the farm for perennial plants that produce food.

It's the time of the year now where the ongoing rental of allotments for the period March 2014 to February 2015 has almost been finalised. Over the last 6 months, 19 of the allotments have had new lot holders so there are many new members familiarising themselves with the working of Beelarong. If you wish to rent an allotment you can catch me at the farm most Wednesdays or send an email to [info@beelarong.org.au](mailto:info@beelarong.org.au).

We have a supply of sugar cane bales available for \$7 each. Payment can be made direct to the Beelarong Bank account or directly to a committee member. Purchases are to be recorded in the clip board on the bench in the amenities area.

New number blocks have been fixed to the allotments. The numbers will need to be repainted soon. Looking for a volunteer with a 'steady hand'! Thanks to Joseph Melican who assisted with this task as a Volunteer worker by painting and fixing the blocks.



If you have an allotment it is your responsibility to keep it tidy. This year we had a few allotments that were neglected for some time which was both unsightly and caused problems for neighbouring allotments with weeds and runners encroaching.

If anyone has any questions regarding allotments contact can be made via the Beelarong email.

Kevin

# WILDLIFE AT THE FARM

*by Di Ferguson*

## KOOKABURRA

This Kookaburra was spotted one early morning sitting on the water tap fitting, between the clumps of vetiver grass and the above ground garden structure.

It is sometimes called the Laughing Kookaburra and is easily recognised by the plumage and amazing laughing type voice. It is usually off-white below, faintly barred with dark brown and brown on the back and wings. The tail is more rufous, broadly barred with black.

They have very conspicuous dark brown eye-stripe on the face and is one of the larger members of the kingfisher family.

These birds are found in eastern Australia and have been introduced to Tasmania, south-west, Western Australia and New Zealand.

They inhabit most areas where there are suitable trees and feed mostly on insects, worms and crustaceans, although small snakes, mammals, frogs and birds may also be eaten.

The prey is seized by pouncing from a suitable perch and small prey is eaten whole, however, larger prey is killed by bashing it against the ground or tree branch.

They can become quite tame around humans and will accept meat scraps. Kookaburras are believed to pair for life and nest in a bare chamber in a tree hollow or in a burrow excavated in a tree dwelling termite mound.

Both sexes share the incubation duties and care of the young. Offspring of the previous one to two years act as 'helpers' during the breeding season.





## A PERKY HEALTH DRINK *from Di's kitchen*

1 cup spinach, 1/2 cucumber, 1/2 cup chopped pineapple, 1 small apple, 1 inch knob ginger, 2 sprigs or mint, 1 cup coconut water, 1 cup filtered water, 1/2 lime, 1/2 cup ice.

Pulse all ingredients in a blender until smooth and creamy. Pour into a glass and garnish with sliced lime and mint and simply enjoy!



Use flowers amongst your vegetables to attract bees and other beneficial insects.

Suggested flowers are alyssum, cosmos, marigolds, calendula and sunflowers - and try borage, it's a magnet for butterflies, honey bees, and other pollinators.





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## DI AND JOHN HAVE THE FINAL WORD

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### TIP VOUCHERS

Does anybody have any spare tip vouchers - both green waste ones and general waste ones? If so, could you bring them to the farm and hand them to John O'Donnell as we do continually need to take rubbish to the tip.



### WATERING TIPS from Di Ferguson

Water only when needed.

Use recycled water if you can.

Water plants in the early morning or late afternoon, to avoid evaporation.

Always apply the water to the base of the plant, not the foliage.

Make sure you water deeply.

Use a watering can or trigger gun.

Regularly check fittings for damage.

Mulch to aid moisture retention.

