

# MACKAY COMMUNITY GARDEN NEWSLETTER



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## GREETINGS FOR 2014!

...and a Productive and Happy New Year to everyone. The newsletter has made it to its second year though Xmas got in the way of the 4th issue, but here it is now. The Garden is thriving and ready to kick off an exciting 2014 with an already busy schedule of courses, workshops and happenings as outlined here with more details on the website.

At our AGM in November Katrina Ogilvie was elected President, with Celeste and Nicole reelected as

Secretary and Treasurer respectively.

Memberships for 2014 are now overdue: apart from all the other benefits, membership entitles you to discounts on all our workshops and courses. Please pass this newsletter along to anyone that may be interested and let us know if you know anyone that wants to be put on our mailing list (see details on the back-page). All contributions, ideas for improvements and feedback are welcome.

## Upcoming Events

Introduction to Permaculture	February 1 & 2
Intro to Permaculture (Rural)	February 14 & 21
Introduction to Composting	May 10
Basic Home Food Gardening	May 11
Wintermoon	May 2-5

## WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE GARDEN?

There was a late and somewhat lame start to the wet season in January and we are still hoping for



*Katrina (and Lara) trimming the asparagus*

some real rain. However the warmth continues to spur new growth. Chop and drop has figured in recent garden activities. With annual crops now mostly died off

with the heat, preparation of raised beds by fallowing and mulching ready for more plantings as the rain continues. has been completed. The rain has encouraged new growth of sweet, tender asparagus shoots and the old growth has now been mulched to encourage more of this delicacy. Zone 1 nearest the garden shed/shelter is being prepared for our more unusual and precious plants where they won't get forgotten in the verdant growth of perennials and self seeding hardier plants in the remainder of the garden .

So bring your friends, be inspired by this beautiful oasis and chat to our volunteers, who are eager to share all their knowledge and passion with as many people as possible.

Also see page 3 to see what you too can create within 2-years.

## Opening Times:

Every Thursday & Friday 9.00-2.30pm  
Saturday 9.00-1.00pm

**See the back page for details on how to find us.**

*Our thoughts and best wishes are with our dedicated Secretary and Volunteer Coordinator Celeste who is currently recovering from a triple by-pass operation after suffering a mild heart attack. The prognosis is very good.*

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# COMPOSTING, BASIC HOME FOOD GARDENING & INTRODUCTION TO PERMACULTURE WORKSHOPS

The composting, gardening and Introduction to Permaculture workshops continue to be popular. The first In-



*Luke conducting a composting workshop at the Garden*

roduction to Permaculture course is on February 1 and 2 at the Gardens ((\$175 for non-members and \$150 for members), with another for rural communities to be conducted FREE with the support of Mackay Regional Council, Healthy Communities also at The Gardens on February 14 & 21.

Please see the web-site for more details.

### Composting Workshop

**Where:** Mackay Community Garden

**When:** May 10 2014

**Time:** 9am-12.00pm

**Cost:** FREE

For further details contact :

Fiona Paterson at  
Mackay Regional Council

07 4968 4402

[fiona.paterson@mackay.qld.gov.au](mailto:fiona.paterson@mackay.qld.gov.au)

### Basic Home Food Gardening Workshop

**Where:** Mackay Community Garden

**When:** May 11 2014

**Time:** 9am-12.00pm

**Cost:** \$50 each

## PERMACULTURE DESIGN CERTIFICATE COURSES



Our 72 hour PDC course is offered in two different ways. Those with limited time available can participate in the workshops on a monthly basis, with workshops held one weekend a month over 6 months, starting on the weekend of the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> February. Those who wish to immerse themselves in the world of per-

*Permaculture Course in progress in the Gardens Mackay*

maculture for a longer period can participate in the 2 week live in course from the 27<sup>th</sup> July to the 10<sup>th</sup> August this year. The volunteers at the Community Gardens are excited to be offering this PDC course and are hoping to involve as many community members as possible. Anyone that has attended any of the shorter workshops will have seen the passion and enthusiasm in the course

delivery that Luke Mathews, Coordinator of the Gardens since 2005, imbues in all that he does. It is impossible not to walk away inspired and the Design course will honestly change your life

Please see the web-site for details of modules and course content.

## STRATEGIC PLANNING MEETING

The Mackay Community Garden Inc. has now been established for approximately eight years during which time we have very successfully established a wonderful Permaculture demonstration garden at our Streeter Ave. site, created a network of like-minded individuals, families and local organizations, as well as facilitated dynamic educational workshops that assist our community to become more resilient, create better health and broaden our minds relevant to our natural environment. All of this has been achieved through

the amazing support of our members and a very keen group of individuals who have made a dedicated commitment to further the community garden's objectives.

We have reached a point in time as an organization where it is necessary for our group to carefully plan our future. I am sure that if anybody was to visit the community garden site that they would be able to see the potential for many creative and community supportive activities and having an incorporated association

to steer the activities, ideas and future developments is a very handy tool for our community to utilize and benefit from.

We will be having a Strategic Planning gathering on March 6 at 6pm at the Mackay Conservation Group Office, 156 Wood Street Mackay for all interested parties to be involved in the future direction of the organization, determine what has worked and what isn't working, how much energy we have as a group and how best to utilize that energy. We would greatly appreci-

ate as much support as we can possibly achieve for this meeting and encourage your presence either at the meeting or please visit our website to submit any comments you feel may assist our endeavours into the future.

We thank you whole heartedly for your past, present and future support.

Please bring a plate to share, we envisage the brainstorming will take about 3 hours.

## MACKAY COMMUNITY GARDEN NEWSLETTER

### PERMACULTURE IN ACTION –CASE STUDY



*BEFORE -The site in November 2011 (looking southwest).*



*Mangoes pruned, swales created by mango prunings and dirt over the top. Post-hole digger digging holes for food trees. Mulch +15cm deep spread over the lot*

The entire process to create swales, mulch and plant edible perennial nursery plants such as arrowroot, tropical spinach varieties, galangal, coco yam, turmeric and other plants readily available in the Garden took two days with four people and a bobcat. Native Lomandra was planted at the bottom of the slope to catch any erosion that might occur. The bobcat was used to recontour the slope and build the swales. A post hole digger attachment was used to create the holes for later planting of target food trees by the client. Some plants such as bananas, pawpaw, coffee, cocoa, black sapote and Cedar Bay Cherry were planted on the

day. The food forest created is now home to over 40 different fruit and nut trees/plants. Several banana crops have now been enjoyed, the mangoes are back in production after the heavy pruning and a few papaws, lychees, mulberries and guavas have also appeared. The dense planting has stopped the erosion problem, provides perfect shelter and a ready supply of green mulch for the target plants., and also prevents the lawn encroaching on the food forest. A garden shelter /potting shed with attached worm farm is located a little further up the slope to the right of the pictures. Raised beds and a chook shed are next!

A client with a 2.5 acre sloping coastal site wanted to achieve greater food production and was also concerned about erosion problems under three Bowen mango trees on part of the slope. The trees had been partially pruned and mulched before the involvement of the Mackay Community Garden Permaculture advisers. After careful examination of the whole site as well as evaluation of the client's objectives and

available time, a single solution was devised that would both boost food production and eliminate the erosion problem.

1. Prune the mangoes further to a more manageable height for fruit harvesting.
2. Create swales utilising mango offcuts.
3. Mulch the entire area to +15cm depth
4. Plant intensively with fast growing edible perennials and pigeon pea for slope stabilization and to provide shelter and mulch crops for target food plants



*End of day 1. The entire area mulched and planted with nursery plants, and some target food trees. Watering in progress.*



*AFTER— yes it really is the same place! A food forest created. The site in January 2014 (looking southwest).*

**If you are interested in help with a permaculture design and/or help with implementation for your property our qualified designers can help you.**

**Please see contact details on Page 4.**



# MACKAY COMMUNITY GARDEN NEWSLETTER

## Co-ordinator

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[permaculturemackay@bigpond.com](mailto:permaculturemackay@bigpond.com)

## Volunteer Co-ordinator and Secretary

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[celeste63@mcs.net.au](mailto:celeste63@mcs.net.au)

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## Newsletter Editor/Compiler

Jennifer Parks, [jennifer@opalops.com](mailto:jennifer@opalops.com)

[www.permaculturemackay.org](http://www.permaculturemackay.org)

The Mackay Community Garden has been operating in its current form since 2005. The Mackay Community Garden (MCG) Inc. was established as a not-for-profit incorporated association to manage the activities of the Garden. The Garden offers a practical demonstration of sustainable food production in the tropics based on Permaculture Design principles that can be applied to all living situations. To make it possible Mackay Regional Council generously provides the land on a peppercorn lease.

Nurtured and maintained by volunteers; memberships and donations contribute to its financial stability along with our stalls at various events and grants from a range of sources.

Our web-site contains lots of useful information such as how to make your own herb spiral and where to purchase rare fruit trees amongst many other things –please have a look!

Membership costs just \$20 for individuals and \$25 for families. Further details are on our web-site. If you don't have access to a computer talk to Luke or Celeste about joining.

## Buy, Sell, Swap, Give-away

- Plants, assorted fruit trees, call Shine Ph. 0415 429 241 or email [yakatoon@skymesh.com.au](mailto:yakatoon@skymesh.com.au)
- Community Garden nursery plants, call Celeste or Katrina to see what is available.
- Mackay Local Food Buy, Swap and Sell (log onto Facebook to join this group)
- For local pasture fed, free range, chemical free eggs and pork, Contact Freckle Farm, Rob & Deb: 0428 380191 or

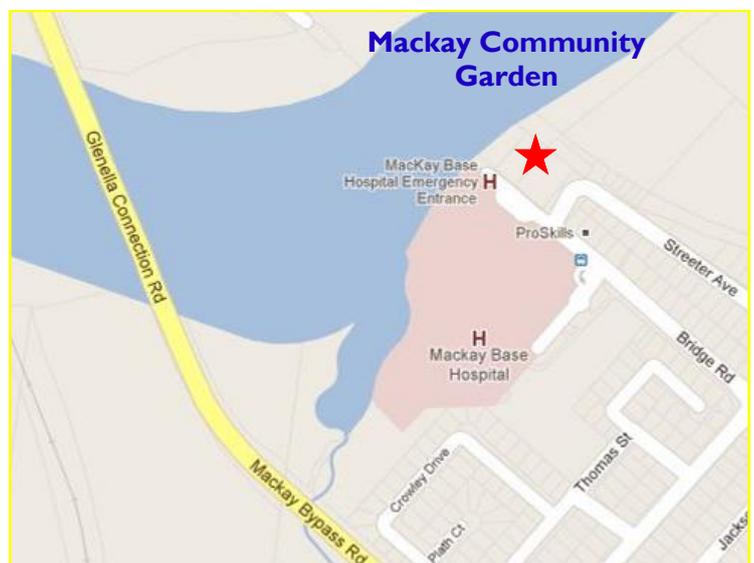
[info@frecklefarm.com.au](mailto:info@frecklefarm.com.au),

[www.facebook.com/frecklefarmeton](http://www.facebook.com/frecklefarmeton)



## So, where is Mackay Community Garden?

Access is most comfortable from the Blue Water Trail. The car park near the fishing jetty at the end of Bridge Road is right next to the Garden. The vehicle access runs off Streeter Avenue, opposite the Base Hospital, into Sarah Street right beside the "Sirrom on Sarah" apartments.



[www.permaculturemackay.org](http://www.permaculturemackay.org)