



NOVEMBER 2024

Hello Everyone,

It's such a pity that the world could not be run strictly on Steinerian lines – things would be so much more hopeful and straightforward. At present, dark clouds are gathering in numerous world spheres, and there does not seem to be an antidote in sight.

Nevertheless, we can concentrate on our gardening and farming come-what-may, and even authoritarian rule (short of war) cannot stop us from staying close to nature and honouring biodynamics.

As a particularly bright note to sound in this edition we recommend listening to possibly the most inspiring agriculture/Landcare podcast of recent times. On the eve of her retirement as Company Secretary of Biodynamic Agriculture Australia, Louise Skidmore's YouTube podcast ***Biodynamic Agriculture – achieving both prosperity and environmental protection on the land***, is almost required listening to understand this woman's amazing service, not just in our organisation.

As summer looms, we hope that any plans you have made to grow heat-loving veggies are about to come to fruition.

Best wishes,

Kaz and John



Pruning workshop at Bellinghen's Northbank Community Garden

John Hodgkinson

Do a right turn over the grid just after McNally St on Northbank Rd and treat yourself to a stroll through the town's "new" community garden. New vigour, new plant regeneration, (mostly) new townsfolk attending events, workshops and work groups. I have just become a new member and will try to regularly attend the Wednesday morning working bees.

As you walk into the entrance tunnel, note the recently cleared and mulched areas to your right under the canopy. Take a moment to observe the multi-trunk Chinese celtis, which is one of the weed trees being euthanised by Cas and Tom of *Bellinghen Organic Landcare*, using fungi-infused wooden plugs inserted into trunks.

This process is intriguing to watch, as a group of us witnessed on the Sunday 6th working bee. It is designed to kill the weed tree slowly, to stop any suckering and allow only gradually increasing light to get through the crown, thus preventing a flush of weed germination underneath.

The plugs are put into drilled holes where bark has been removed, both girdling the trunk at chest height and all the way down the south side. Molten beeswax is then used to seal them over.

Tom and Cas are using various species of edible fungi, which invade the tree and eventually produce fruiting bodies, loosely called "mushrooms".

Cas said that there should be a harvestable amount in a couple of years. I suppose they will spread into any stumps, dead branches and the stick mulches throughout the garden.

We were assured that the species chosen are indigenous to our coastal region, or if not, then in the Northern Rivers.

So good to see this ultra-organic approach to weed control.

[This report was written for the Bellingen Shire News.]



An ode to weeds

Kate Martignier, Kate@arealgreenlife.com. (Reprinted with thanks)

Some people spend a lot of time, energy, and money fighting with weeds... I can think of a few weeds that I do cut back sometimes, depending on where they are and how spiky they are, but mostly I love weeds.

Woody weeds - the ones you can't walk through

Right now as I write these paragraphs, my mind is jumping to weeds like the lantana and brambles that crowd along areas of our creek banks where the rain forest is missing... These are seriously big, thick, spiky, impenetrable walls of weeds -- and even these serve some really useful purposes.

They hold the creek banks together and prevent cattle from crumbling them into the water, whence they end up on the reef.

They also serve as "nurseries" for pioneer trees -- fast growing, adaptable trees that germinate from seed underneath the woody weeds, emerge above them, and eventually shade them sufficiently that they weaken and die back - which makes way for the next succession of rain forest plants that couldn't stand the full sun or the depleted soils that were there before.

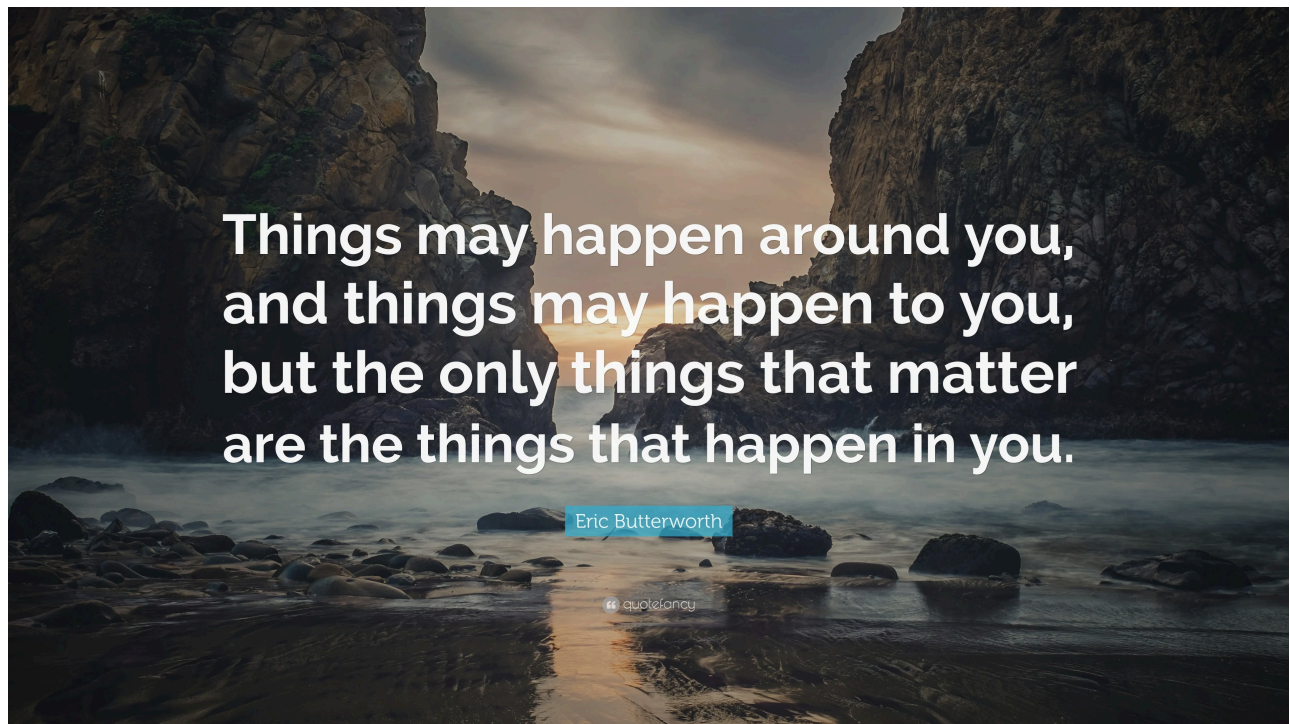
Woody weeds can write the first chapters in the story of soil stabilization and replenishment that needs to be told if complex rain forests are to return to cleared and degraded land.

But back to edible weeds, which is what I was supposed to be talking about...

Wild edibles (edible weeds) are free. They grow with zero effort on my part. The more nutritious or useful they are, the closer they seem to crowd around our doorsteps and amongst our domesticated plants. And some of them are very nutritious and useful indeed.

Here are six wild edibles (weeds) that grow almost everywhere.

[read more here...](#)



A Philosophical Story

Potatoes, Eggs and Coffee. (Author unknown)

Once upon a time, a daughter complained to her father that her life was miserable and that she didn't know how she was going to survive. She was tired of fighting and struggling all the time. It seemed that just as one problem was solved, another one soon followed.

Her father, a chef, took her to the kitchen. He filled three small pots with water and placed each one on a high flame. Once the three pots began to boil, he placed a potato in one pot, an egg in the second, and ground coffee beans in the third pot. The daughter moaned and impatiently waited, wondering what he was doing.

After fifteen minutes, he turned off the burners. He took the potato out of the pot and placed it in a bowl. He pulled the egg out and placed it in a bowl too. He then ladled out some of the coffee and tipped it into a cup. Turning to her he asked, “Daughter, what do you see?”

“A potato, an egg and coffee,” she replied.

“Look closer,” he said, “and touch the potato.” She did, and noticed that it was soft. He then asked her to take the egg and break it. After pulling off the shell, she observed the hard-boiled egg. Finally, he asked her to sip the coffee. Its rich aroma brought a smile to her face.

“Father, what does this mean?” she asked. He then explained that the potato, the egg and the coffee bean had all faced the same adversity – the boiling water. However, each one responded differently. The potato went in strong, hard and unrelenting, but in boiling water, it became soft and weak. The egg was fragile with the thin outside layer protecting its weak interior until it was put in the boiling water. Then the inside of the egg became hard. However, the ground coffee beans were unique. After they were exposed to the boiling water, they changed the water and created something new.

“Which are you?” he asked his daughter. “When adversity knocks on your door, how do you respond? Are you a potato, an egg or a coffee bean?”

The moral in this: things happen around us; things happen to us; but the thing that truly matters is what happens within us – how we create rather than merely respond.

Key biodynamic spray dates – November 2024



[Soil sprays:](#) [Horn Manure (500), Soil Activator, Manure Concentrate]

[Moon descending:](#) Nov 6th– 18th

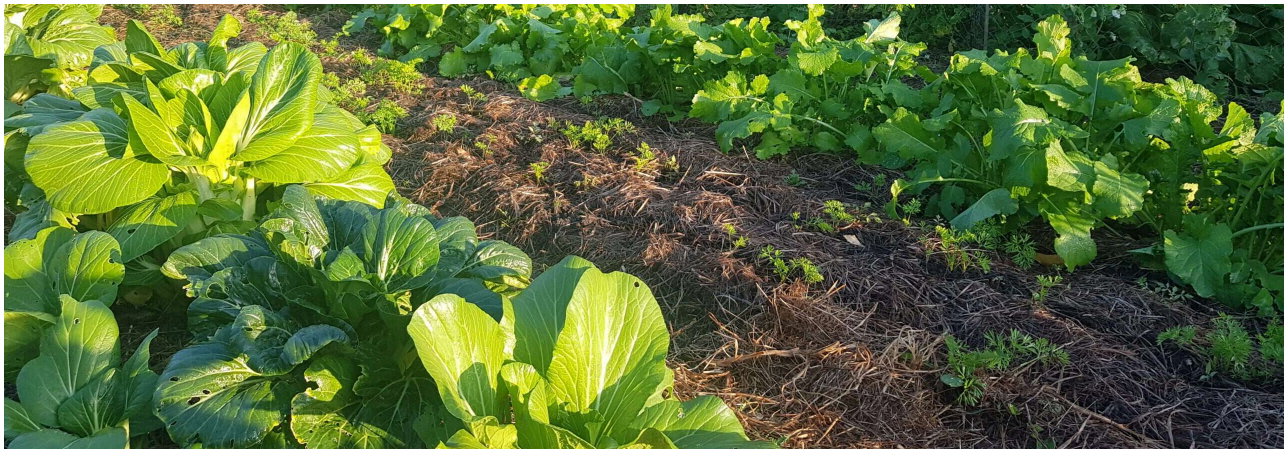
[Atmospheric and foliar sprays:](#) [Horn Silica (501), fresh Equisetum/Casuarina (508), Vine and Tree Tonic]

[Moon opposite Saturn:](#) Nov 24th, 10.23am

[Full Moon:](#) Nov 16th, 7.28am

[Sequential spraying dates to encourage rain:](#) Nov 12th – 14th

WORKSHOPS



Vegetable garden soil improvement with green manure cropping

Sat 9 November - Sun 10 November @ 9:30AM (AEST) - Brisbane.

This experiential two-day workshop provides a balance of practice and theory in a beautiful and productive organic farm setting in Draper, QLD, only 35 minutes from the Brisbane CBD. The workshop is suitable for backyard and acreage food growers, hobby farmers and commercial scale urban/peri-urban farmers who are seeking to enhance their organic food production, reduce the impact of pests and diseases in growing spaces and grow better quality organic food for their own wellbeing, enhanced with biodynamics methods. **[Register here.](#)**

Sat 7 December - Brisbane.

Saturday afternoon workshop from 1-4 pm at the biodynamic garden of Peter Kearney in Draper, Brisbane. Learn the fundamentals of soil management and the critical role of the green manure process in your yearly rhythm of vegetable garden soil management. Hands-on activities and educational content with comprehensive training material and delicious afternoon tea provided. **[Register here.](#)**

For more information contact: peter@myfoodgarden.com.au or 04011 56532

Cosmos - Earth - Human

Biodynamic Centenary Workshops Sydney, NSW

23 Nov Sydney 10.30-4pm - Nutrition, food and wine

Milk from de-horned cows; allergies; soil testing by hand; scientific tests; harvesting and seed-saving.

30 Nov Gladesville 10.30-4pm - Eclipses, rainbows, tropical storms

Finding a way through all the new energies, organic/permaculture/biodynamic.

\$350 Biodynamics Sydney members (\$50p.a., \$20 p.a. under 40's)

Preparations samples to take home. Workshop presenters training provided – please enquire.

biodynamicssydney@gmail.com

BIODYNAMIC WINE AND CHEESE TASTING

Saturday 23 November 7 – 9pm in Glebe



Wines from Rosnay Organic Wines, Canowindra, NSW

Guest winemaker: Sam Statham

Cheeses from Mungalli Dairy and Paris Creek farms

Sam will be coming to Sydney especially for this unique event.

Held in a converted warehouse studio and home, the event will also feature Rosnay's delicious preserves, which marry beautifully with the hard and soft cheeses from Paris Creek Farms and Mungalli Dairy.

All wines will be available for sale - a great opportunity to buy some biodynamic wines for Christmas - your friends will be delighted!

Cost: \$30 pp or \$50 per couple - this gives you a range of 5-7 wine samples and free cheese, with the winemaker also explaining the art of developing the blends and flavours of his award-winning wines. Biodynamic Robinvale and Demeter fruit juices also served.

Biodynamic producers use the carbon in the soil-food-web, thus helping to mitigate climate change!

Prebooking is essential. Please email biodynamicssydney@gmail.com, call 95501682 or text 0422447092 to book or enquire. The address will be given on booking.

Prepayment can be made to BSB 611-100 A/c 100167644.

All Welcome!



Thank you for a wonderful year!

Last orders & closure date Thur 19th Dec

Re-open Monday 15th Jan 2025

Season's Greetings



LIVING GIFTS FOR CHRISTMAS



Comfrey Liquid Manure and Nettle Liquid Manure



Two extremely important plant tonics and preventives for the garden, orchard, vineyard, market garden and farm.

Their potency is bolstered by addition of the biodynamic compost preparations 502-507 and the use of "structured water".

These products come in two sizes for small gardens and modest horticulture settings only.

For larger situations it is best to make your own – refer to our Biodynamic Handbook for directions.



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www.biodynamics.net.au

Biodynamic Soil Activator

- a wonderful way to boost your garden, market garden, vineyard, orchard or farm
- particularly effective at remediating severely degraded or out-of-balance soil
- can be sprayed out monthly, but at least twice a year at active growing times, especially during drought

Also available as *Liquid Soil Activator*, which is pre-potentised requiring no stirring, only dilution.



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Become a member and receive:

- benefits on products and workshops;
- *Biodynamic Handbook* - everything you need to know;
- sample of Biodynamic Soil Activator with instructions; and
- encouragement, motivation, guidance and support.

Your membership assists us to create, share and promote everything biodynamic. It supports our not-for-profit organisation in making preparations and products, giving education, sharing information and spreading the good word. We are on this biodynamic journey together and shared experiences are invaluable.

[Click here to view our product range](#)

If you need any help our team are here for you Monday and Tuesday 9am-3pm and Thursday 9am-12.30pm.

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