

TOPIC: “MINIMISING THE USE of PESTICIDES”

GUEST SPEAKER : STEVE FLOOD (Bachelor in Horticulture)

MALENY GARDEN CLUB MEETING : 28th JUNE, 2016

- Steve
- Know where plants naturally grow eg. rainforest trees prefer to be grown in groups, not stand alone
- Plants can be put under stress by too much water, not enough nutrient or weather - insects prefer plants that are stressed
- Think about companion planting – information can be sought from books or the Internet
 - eg. don't plant pumpkins near potatoes
 - plant Marigolds near tomatoes, to protect against nematodes
 - plant garlic around fruit trees (sulphur fumes)
- Practice crop rotation in your vegetable gardens (eg. give tomatoes a 3-year break)
- Bird-attracting trees and water will reduce incidence of insects
- Water skinks love ants and grasshoppers – introduce skinks to your garden
- Shade houses – open on one side to encourage birds (this will help to keep the insects down)
- Micro-tea made by Steve has 13 beneficial soil bacteria and fungi to break down organic matter (NB: this is to be used within 2 weeks)
- Root tips stop growing when under stress - seaweed extract is a great product for strengthening your plants
- Understand ecology – whether your plant has a disease is affected by pests
- Spider mites like a non-humid area, therefore increase humidity
- Predatory mites on bean leaves can be used to get rid of spider mites, they also don't like cold weather
- For scale insects, use home remedies eg. garlic sprays and/or soap sprays. Check out the Queensland Bromeliad Society website for homemade remedies
- A good weed killer is salt and/or vinegar but be careful not to spray on anything else
- Pyrethrum is a good natural product for caterpillars – pour onto crown of plant rather than spraying on plants like Spider Lilies
- Witchetty-like grubs (larvae beetle) grows under the bark, however Currawongs will seek them out
- Borer will attack any tree that is under stress – suggest using a syringe with a garlic/chilli spray
- Don't over feed – this can also put a plant under stress. Suggest getting a soil analysis
- Stink Bugs – use a soapy water spray mixed with canola oil (weather protective eyewear and clothing)
- Nobby leaves on citrus – citrus gall/wasp – prune out nodules on the branches

END