

TOPIC : “CREATING A DELICIOUS BUSHFOOD GARDEN”.

GUEST SPEAKER : KAREN SHAW

MALENY GARDEN CLUB MEETING : 30 JULY 2019 AT THE OLD WITTA SCHOOL

Karen was a teacher for 20 years and has always been passionate about the environment along with husband Spencer. They have been in Maleny for 28 years where they established Brush Turkey Enterprises for rainforest seed collection. They then moved into tube stock and running workshops in community education and four years ago developed the Forest Heart Nursery in Coral Street. They have 60 to 70 thousand plants at their wholesale nursery at Reesville and 180 to 200 species at Coral Street.

- Bush food has amazing flavours and qualities leaving blueberries etc behind
- Some companies are developing powders and teas from Australian bush foods
- Leaves of some edible native gingers are good to wrap fish in to cook. The berries (blue) are good walking food
- Native yam – rainforest vine – cook the tuber
- Lemon myrtle – leaves are great for tea and respiratory inhalations. Ground seeds are great in biscuits and stuffing for chicken
- Aniseed flavoured myrtle is sold as a tea or ground to make aniseed shortbread. Air dry for three to six days until crunchy
- Cinnamon myrtle has beautiful flowers loved by bees
- Warrigal greens , known as New Zealand spinach, is diverse and tough – grows in shade or sun – good for mulch and golden yolks in eggs. Not as bitter as regular spinach and versatile – use in soups, pies etc. Also good for underplanting to keep weeds at bay
- Native mints of menthe species good in drinks
- Midyim berry tastes like fairy floss and grit. Karen makes Turkish delight with it
- Rose myrtle is most affected by myrtle rust
- Small leaved tamarind (red) makes fantastic jam
- Native tamarind (orange) fruit loved by birds and makes great juice
- Pigface is a great ground cover - leaves are edible
- Davidson plum tree has blue fruit up and down the trunk – easy to harvest as fruit falls from tree. Although taste is sour, good with honey and also makes jam or chutney. Can also mix with Miracle Fruit to alter taste
- Syzygium (lilly-pilly) most are edible. Can freeze fruit and use in fruit cakes
- Karen uses pyrethrum, copper, vinegar and neem oil to treat plants – no chemicals
- Burdekin plums and sandpaper figs dry well, cook well and make great jam
- Plum pine (Illawarra plum) seed grows outside the vivid purple fruit – has the taste of blueberry with a bit of pine
- Finger limes very slow growing – 6 years to bear fruit. Once grown treat like citrus with blood and bone. Does well in a large pot

- Round lime like Tahitian and probably like bush lemon
- Bunya nuts can take up to one year to germinate. Taste like water chestnuts. Can be eaten raw or boiled or ground and frozen for use in baking
- Wattle seed roasted has chocolate/coffee/hazelnut aroma. Flowers can be used in cakes. Not all wattle seeds are edible so better to buy seeds at supermarket
- Barbed wire grass has high food value after a tricky, lengthy process
- Native pepper (*tasmannia insipida*) eat fruit and seed in stews etc
- Macadamia *integrifolia* attracts rats so not good for suburban blocks or close to house
- Native violet flowers are great in salads and for cake decoration
- Lomandra flowers are also edible as is rainforest spinach and sea celery (very strong)
- Grevillea, banksia and bottlebrush (*callistemon*) flowers dunked in hot or cold water flavours the water to drink
- Native hibiscus flowers are edible
- Pittosporum – gumbi gumbi – leaves make tea. 30 leaves in 1 litre boiling water – might need to add honey to drink. Used for eczema and prostate cancer
- Blue quandong edible fruit – jam making tricky
- Grevillea *hodgei* is a great attractor of bees and birds to the garden

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OPENING HOURS: Tues – Fri 9am till 5pm Saturday 9am till 2pm

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