

TOPIC: "GROWING UNUSUAL EDIBLE PERENNIALS".

GUEST SPEAKER : KEVIN REDD

MALENY GARDEN CLUB MEETING : 24 SEPTEMBER 2019 AT THE OLD WITTA SCHOOL

Kevin has a PhD in molecular ecology. He has conducted several cutting edge research projects in biochemistry and presented findings at conferences around the world. He is equally happy gardening as a self confessed plant nerd thriving on learning about and sharing knowledge on the diversity of plants. He has a nursery on the Sunshine Coast, had his own restaurant in Hobart and is a member of the Nursery and Garden Industry Queensland. He has a focus on plants that look amazing in the garden as well as being edible, having collected plants from all over Australia to trial here in what he calls Plant Nerd Show and Tell.

- Brazilian Spinach (*Alternanthera Sissoo*) grows like a short bushy plant with nice crunchy leaves which are great for raw or cooked dishes. Easy to grow, prefers part shade but can take full sun if watered. Oddly rare in nurseries
- Longevity Spinach (*Gynura Procumbens*) grows like sprawling ground cover, loves to cascade, easy to grow and is more sun tolerant. Will grow in dry/shady conditions and is anti-inflammatory. Now being referred to as the diabetes plant as is beneficial for good blood glucose levels. Oddly rare in nurseries
- Okinawa Spinach (*Gynura Crepoides*) grows like sprawling ground cover, loves to cascade, more picked the better it does. Easy to grow but not for full sun. Oddly rare in nurseries
- Tamarillo aka Tree Tomato (*Solanum Betaceum*) very handsome small tree, fruits for harvest Feb to Oct. Scoop out to eat. Very popular in New Zealand for chutney and salsa. Easy to grow, likes fertiliser, responds well to pruning. Mulch and water well during summer in Queensland
- Coffee (*Coffea Arabica*) grows in a mostly upright manner as a tree/bush. Yellow/red fruit contain coffee beans. Grows well in shade
- Arrowroot (*Canna Edulis*) grows in a mostly upright manner with nice foliage and pretty red flowers. Tuber used just like a potato, delicious and fairly hardy. Arrowroot flour made from tubers. Easy/fast to grow – takes longer to cook than potato
- Costus Ginger (*Costus Comosus Red Tower*) has edible yellow flower. Grows in upright clump, is fairly hardy, easy and fast to grow. Awesome for cut flower display
- Turmeric (*Curcuma Domestica*) grows in a mostly upright manner with soft foliage and lovely flowers. Most counterfeited yellow powder in the world – best to grow your own. Originated in India, has a 5 – 9 month growing season, is fairly hardy, easy to grow, has major health benefits and produces well in shade
- Perennial Coriander (*Eryngium Focetidum*) grows low rosette with huge spiky flower/seed heads. Year round harvest, grows well in pots, good in shade. Prolific go-to fresh herb – delicious. Bandicoots, birds and possums don't touch it

- Litchi Tomato aka Morelle de Balbis – unique heirloom plant in both appearance and taste. Grows like a tall, upright cherry tomato relatively self supporting. Spiky plant, small fruit – delicious
- Naranjilla aka Golden Fruit of the Andes (Solanum Quitoense) amazing looking leaves, delicious fruit like egg plant. Quick to fruit, suited to Mt Tamborine and Maleny. Needs water and protection from hot Queensland sun
- Burn Jelly Plant (Bulbine Frutescens) snap off leaf and squeeze out the viscous jelly – don't eat but use on skin for sunburn, jumping ant bites and stings. Grows like a delicate, smallish, sprawling succulent. Jelly better than aloe vera
- Tzimbaló (Solanum Caripense) weeping/clumping perennial growing to around 50cm with sprawling growth habit like a cherry tomato plant. Quite easy to look after and fast growing. Will thrive in full or part sun and will produce an abundance of small fruits with a complex flavour somewhere between a grape and a passionfruit in taste

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