



Zero Waste
Magnetic Island

Newsletter

APRIL 2022 By Julie Woodlock

You can reap the benefits by sewing or sowing

After the Xmas break and oh so much ISO, the Zero Waste team started once again with our first monthly meeting held on the 8th of February at Smuggler's Wine Bar. Future meetings are tied up with sewing now but contact margaret.gooch@jcu.edu.au if you are not already on our list. Marg will contact you when the next meeting is on.



Our contributions to date are being attached to a mighty large spiral structure which represents an encrusted giant triton shell (3 metres long).



zerowastemi.org.au

Reaping the Benefits from Sewing

You may have been aware that the Zero Waste team have been working weekly to support Australian Institute of Marine Science (AIMS) in their celebration of their 50th Anniversary. For a bit of background on ghost netting, you can check out <https://www.worldwildlife.org/stories/our-oceans-are-haunted-by-ghost-nets-why-that-s-scary-and-what-we-can-do--23>

“Erub Arts”, in the Torres Straits set up ghost netting art projects in 2009 and 2010 according to Lennette Griffiths, who has worked the Erub mob addressing cross culture art projects. You can find out more about Erub Arts at: <https://www.erubarts.com.au>

Now it won't take long to see who the experts in this project are! However, Libby Evans-Illidge from AIMS has invited the Zero Wasters to develop their skills under the supervision of Marion Gaemers, to participate in this project. We are having lots of fun and laughter despite her constant reference that we are remedial. LOL!

I'm sure I'm not talking out of line when I say we are all pretty impressed to be working along with other volunteers at AIMS and under the auspice of the Erub Torres Strait Islanders. They get we are learning!

Reaping the Benefits from Sowing

Zero Waters love a good garden especially when it uses compost created from food scraps that would otherwise go to landfill. After lots of conversation with those that *can* grow veggies on the Island, and with the onset of autumn, we figured it might be time to get some tips and advice for the novice gardener enthusiast.

First, it is fair to say the summer isn't the time to grow much, but just let's consider what can grow. Next summer you can grow fruit trees and perennial greens.

Now that's over let's move to some sound advice.

1. **Prepare your soil** and that might mean getting rid of any surrounding palms. Palms strip all the nutrients, create root bound soil, and drop fronds which then grow more Palms. Til the soil, remove and feed any *curl grubs* to the kookaburras, dig in compost, and add fertiliser and water. Another option of course is using pots.
2. **Plan** what you want to grow and read the instructions on the packet when sowing seeds to avoid over planting.
3. **Don't start big** unless you really are committed to work daily.
4. If you like **fruit, then this could be enough to start**. Keep seedlings in mostly sheltered area with only a couple of hours of sun until ready to transplant. Some recommendations for the island: citrus such as lime and lemon; mulberry; papaya; passionfruit; finger limes; native cherry; Herberton plum; pineapples; rosellas; and Burdekin plums.

5. **Compost. Compost. Compost!** It's so easy to do you should have beautiful soil within a few months. Some say up



to a year, but it probably depends on you. Click the picture to see the video below.

6. 'As a rule of thumb, it's often best to **sew around or after Easter**, but that does depend on the rain. We are looking at a bit of a drought for the Townsville region so by the time you read this just plant now.
7. **Where to get your seeds.** <https://greenharvest.com.au> is one that was recommended. Also, Mitre 10 has some good seeds or even friends who are willing to share and know what they are doing. In some ways the latter is best as they come from vegetables that have already proved themselves and grown well in the area. And excuse me but when you have success you can simply get seeds from your own harvest. Wash seeds, dry them out on paper towel, and preserve for the next season and voila!
8. **Best information** would come from social media and our one and only <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1441982429439574> Maggie Island Gardeners. Everyone I've spoken with thinks they are the best. They know the island, and someone responds within a very reasonable time. However, another local source is Maggie Island School which has a fruit tree walk (enter from Mandalay St and take the walk entrance right alongside the pool). A great talkback program is on AM, ABC North Queensland radio at 10:00 am on a Friday. And finally, some recommended texts all sold at Mary Who bookshop in Townsville are: *Tropical Food Gardens* by Leonie Norrington; *Tropical Food Gardening* by Yvonne Cunningham; *Fruit and Vegetables in the Tropics* by Pauline Trappes.
9. Now for **what to sow**. First there are the perennial greens such as Samsung Nyam, Okinawan spinach, and Klang Koms. Then there are tomatoes, snake beans, snowpeas, kale, spinach, eggplant, chillies, ginger, galang galang, capsicums, flowers, radishes, and cucumbers. That must be a good start. However, don't miss out on all the herbs. Basil and mint grow for most of the year and rosemary, parsley, oregano, sage, and thyme are very popular too. Just as a tip from me, pumpkins grow all through my garden integrated with all my natives. They provide ground cover and I train them around the plants.
10. We must finish with those **dreaded threats**: native guests, birds, bush scrub, pests, mildew, curly bugs, and the leaf hoppers. If you can cage your veggie garden or use nets to protect your fruit trees this comes highly recommended. There is always Facebook to check out what to do in any given situation. If you are having trouble, then no doubt we all are so just ask. Good luck let us know how you go with your gardens this year. Stay tuned to information on gardens on the verges.

Happy gardening and let us know how you go on our Zero Waste Facebook page. We all like to get feedback and your comments matter. If you didn't get the information on plastic lids, have a look at this article on the latest news.

https://www.zerowastemi.org.au/files/ugd/165d3a_9bf23f764d6542d29c1371cb82bab7f3.pdf