

# The Bushfood Bulletin

Queensland  
**BUSHFOOD**  
ASSOCIATION INC  
qldbushfood.org.au

Our aim is that by sharing the knowledge we gain in gathering, growing, harvesting and preparing bushfoods, we further their use and our enjoyment.

**AUTUMN  
2016**

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**Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> March 10.15am**

**We will be co-joining with Native Plants Qld - Sunshine Coast Branch in partnership with Sunshine Coast Council & Friends of the Maroochy Regional Bushland Botanic Gardens to hear Guest Speakers:**

**Michael Gilles from Sunshine Coast Council on Sourcing and Using Native Plants.**

**Nick Hansa from Fairhill Native Plants will address the challenges of selling native plants to skeptics.**

**Joan Dillon from NP Sunshine Coast will introduce us to Barung Landcare's Gardens for Wildlife initiative.**

**John Birbeck from Sunshine Coast Council on Plants, Reserves, and Covenants.**

**Spencer Shaw from Brush Turkey Enterprises will challenge us about valuing local native plants + Q&A.**

**Venue: Arts & Ecology Centre, Maroochy Regional Bushland Botanic Gardens, Palm Creek Rd, Tanawha.**

**Sunshine Coast UBD Map 77 Ref: K17**

**Our AGM will be held at 1PM after the talks  
BYO cup, lunch and nametag**

**[www.friendsofmaroochybotanicgardens.org.au](http://www.friendsofmaroochybotanicgardens.org.au)**

**Sat 26<sup>th</sup> March Kenilworth Cheese Wine and Food Festival  
<http://www.kenilworthfoodfest.org.au/>**

Look out for bushfood member Peter Wolfe, a Chef, who will be cooking with native food and selling snack food and condiments. You'll also find him at the Eumundi Market on a Wednesday and Noosa Farmers Market on Sunday. Veronica Coogan of Witjuti Grub Bushfood Nursery will also be having a stall there so order prior if you are wanting to pick up a plant.

**Gold Coast Active Healthy program – Bookings essential Ph 07 5581 6984**

<http://www.goldcoast.qld.gov.au/documents/bf/naturallygc-program.pdf>

Bush tucker - Learn to grow, cook and eat a local variety of native. Yugambeh country flavours in this inspiring one hour bush tucker workshop. As we tour the Botanic Gardens, identify a range of local bush-food plants, discover ways to incorporate the flavours in everyday cooking and pick up tips to grow bush foods in your home garden.

Provider: Yugambeh Museum, Language & Heritage Research Centre

Location: Gold Coast Regional Botanic Gardens, 258 Ashmore Rd, Benowa

**Date 27 February** 10am – 11am Cost: Free. 8 years and over.

February date is in doubt – please check when booking

**Date 11<sup>th</sup> June** 10am - 11 am Benowa

**The Yugambeh Museum, Language and Heritage Research Centre** is located on the cnr Martens Street and Plantation Road, Beenleigh Ph 3807 6155 email: admin@yugambeh.com

Open to the public on Wednesdays - 10am till 2pm

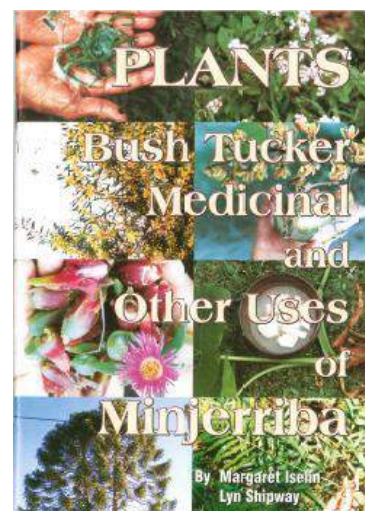
Office hours - Tuesday - Friday 9am - 4pm

**Visits by appointment only** if not visiting on Wednesday.

They have a bushfood book for sale at \$18.00:

Plants, Bush Tucker, Medicinal and Other Uses of Minjerriba additional information. This booklet was produced with two issues in mind. Firstly to educate and give people and insight into the plants used by the Aboriginals of Minjerriba (north Stradbroke Island) Moorgumpin (Moreton Island) and the surrounding areas - these plants were a food source and medicinal source (and other uses). Secondly an introduction to the language used by the Aboriginals of Minjerriba and Moorgumpin. Over the years, the descendants of the traditional owners have strived to revive our traditional languages i.e.; Jandai, Gowar and Moongar - remember the words & language spoken today is a mixture of Goorumpil, Noonuccal and Nguhi tribes of the area. The Aboriginal people of Minjerriba are endeavoring to retrieve, record and revive their language, to preserve their culture and heritage for future generations as Aboriginal culture is one of mans oldest cultures.

<http://www.yugambeh.com/>



**Native bees Bookings essential Ph 5581 6984**

Australian native bees can be many colours of black, yellow, red, metallic green or even black with polka dots. They can be fat and furry, or sleek and shiny. Native bees are also key pollinators of Australia's unique wildflowers and are a critical part of our Australian bushland.

Provider: Tim Heard – Sugarbag

Location: Gold Coast Regional Botanic Gardens, 258 Ashmore Rd, Benowa

**Date: 6 April 2016** Time: 9am – 11am Cost: Free Ages: 15 years and over.

**12th & 13th March**

**Ipswich Plant Expo** 8:00am – 4:00pm \$5.00 per adult Free Parking.

Ipswich Turf Club, 219 Brisbane Road, Bundamba QLD 4304 (enter via TL Cooney Avenue) is only 35 minutes drive west from Brisbane CBD. The site has excellent access to the Warrego Highway, Cunningham Highway, Logan Toll Road, Pacific Highway and Gateway Arterial. Trains are a short 10-15 minute walk. The facility is spacious with exhibitor space options on grass or concrete under cover or in the open. UBD: 214 F14

**Fri 29<sup>th</sup> April Sat 30th Sun 31<sup>st</sup> Mon 1<sup>st</sup> May**

**Woodfordia - The Planting** <http://www.theplantingweekend.com/>

## **Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> May**

Society for Growing Australian Plants – Autumn Plant Sale at Grovely TAFE. Walk in off Dawson Parade or park in Woking St. UBD 138 E1 <http://www.sgapqld.org.au/events.html>

## **Sat 30<sup>th</sup> April – 2nd May**

**Maleny Wood Expo** <http://www.malenywoodexpo.com/> Entry \$15.00

## **Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> May**

Herb Awareness Day at Peace Hall, 102 McDonald Road, Windsor UBD Map 140 C15  
<http://www.qldherbsociety.org.au/>

## **Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> May**

**Maleny Agricultural Show** <http://www.malenysociety.org.au/>

## **Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> June – 3<sup>rd</sup> July**

**The Winter Harvest Festival, Aratula, Scenic Rim** is the signature event during Eat Local Week and offers bush tucker experiences, wine tastings and more from this beautiful region.  
<http://www.eatlocalweek.com.au/winter-harvest-festival/> 2016 Program not up on website yet.

## **Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> July**

**Naidoc Week** [www.naidoc.org.au](http://www.naidoc.org.au) No details on website as yet for 2016.

## **8th-10th July**

**Qld Garden Expo at Nambour.** [www.qldgardenexpo.com.au](http://www.qldgardenexpo.com.au) No details as yet for 2016.

Annette McFarlane is giving talks at several libraries around Brisbane. If you miss her radio show on Saturday morning between 6-7am, you can listen to a selection via her website.  
[www.annettemcfarlane.com](http://www.annettemcfarlane.com) (general gardening talkback)

Yandina Community Centre [http://yandinacommunitygardens.com.au/?page\\_id=40](http://yandinacommunitygardens.com.au/?page_id=40)

(garden related) Free Saturday workshops 9.30am Normal opening hours: Monday and Saturday, 8.00 am to 12.00 noon and Tuesday, 8.00 am to 2.00 pm.

Address: 41 Farrell Street (cnr North Street), Yandina – blue house on the left.

Want to go to a country festival here in Qld? [www.queenslandshows.com.au/](http://www.queenslandshows.com.au/)

Thanks to Marilena Stanton for these highlights:

<http://www.gourmettraveller.com.au/restaurants/restaurant-news-features/2015/7/noma-australia-rene-redzepi-gives-us-all-the-details/>

John & Mary King have a Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/RainforestLiqueurs/>

Check out what they are up to here: <http://bushlandvibes.wix.com/2015#!activities/csub>

## **Honey Joys by Colleen & Geoff Keena [www.hibiscus.org](http://www.hibiscus.org)**

125g butter, ½ cup caster sugar; 2 tablespoons honey; 4 cups cornflakes

In a frypan, melt butter, sugar and honey together over medium heat. Boil for three minutes, stirring continuously. Remove from heat and pour over cereal. Put 1-2 tablespoons into separate patty pans (about 20). Leave in refrigerator until cool enough to eat. Glaze with a teaspoon of warmed Hibiscus Preserve. Cool.

## **Welcome new Member – Astrid Edkins of Cairns.**



This is a perennial herb, up to 50cm high, with bright green succulent stems, and rough-textured, strongly-veined, dark green leaves, mostly 7-15cm long with toothed margins. It is closely related to the Stinging Nettle, but lacks the stinging hairs. Male flowerheads are white or yellowish-green, 12-25mm across, on slender stalks 5-8cm long. Female flowerheads are about 1cm in diameter and sessile. This plant grows along streams in rainforest and moist sclerophyll forest in Queensland and New South Wales, mostly on moist rock faces, often right in the water. The succulent young stems and leafy tips are the parts to use. Boiled, they taste rather like beans, and are a very pleasant tasting vegetable which can be used in many ways. This plant can be cultivated in a cool, moist, shady position in the garden. It makes an excellent container plant. I grow mine in a hanging basket within the shade of my rainforest garden.

**Savoury Rainforest Spinach:**

Cover 2 chopped medium onions and 2 cups chopped Elatostema stems with boiling water and simmer for 5 minutes. Drain.

Heat ¼ cup Macadamia oil in pan. Add onions, spinach and a sprinkle of garlic powder or finely chopped clove of garlic and sauté for 2 minutes.

Serve topped with 2 tbs shaved or grated parmesan.

Ref: Native Plants Queensland – December 2015 newsletter

**Bushfood Sensations** <http://bushfoodsensations.net/add-your-business/>

If you are a grower/supplier/caterer or just interested in what is going on and you are not on their email list, then it is a must! IT'S FREE!! PLEASE NOTE: Change of email & mobile number.

Roxanne Smith, Aboriginal Business Development Manager

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NSW Department of Industry

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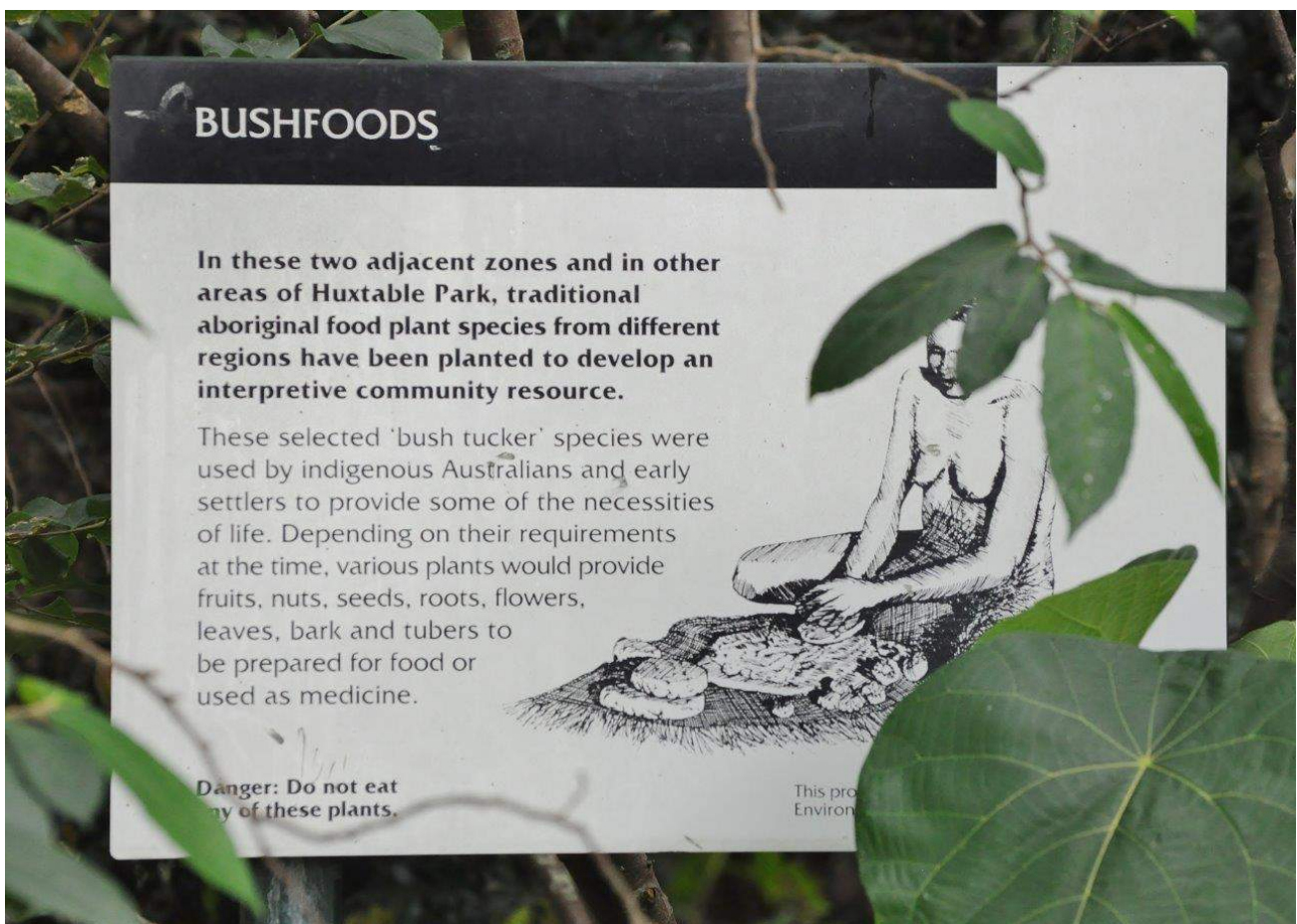
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I was lucky enough to attend a Saturday morning outing in Huxtable Park to look at plants that are of significance in Indigenous culture – used for food and/or cordage. The outing was led by QBA's John Wrench who developed this planting in the park over 30 years ago. Our small group met at the gate into the park on Dundalli Street at the end of Cherston Street at 9 a.m.



John outlining the morning's activities



**Information sign at Huxtable Park**





After signing on, we were immediately offered a delicious cup of ‘rainforest fruit drink’, which had an wonderful effervescent zing caused by the accidental, but fortuitous, introduction of wild yeast (*Saccharomyces sp*).

John began by demonstrating how to make fire, for which you need a very hard stick that you rub vigorously inside a hole carved into a very soft and fibrous piece of wood.

Due to a lack of time, no sparks flew on this occasion, but the principle was clearly demonstrated. He also showed how the bark of *Phaleria clerodendron* (brought from his home) comes off in long strips that can be used to make rope.

We then began to explore the oldest of the plantings. At the outset, John stressed the importance of using only Latin names for plants species, so the cheekier attendees took great delight in pointing out when he later mentioned

‘Scrambling Lily’ and ‘Finger Lime’. He showed us **two Hibiscus species**: *H. heterophyllus* with its pinkish flowers and the coastal *H. tiliaceus* with yellow flowers. John said that the petals of all native Hibiscus can be used in drinks or salads. Towering above was a very large tree of *Cordia dichotoma* (Glue Fruit) from North Queensland and Asia, which has clusters of small edible pink fruit. Another rare species on site was *Elaeocarpus bancroftii* (a relative of the immediately adjacent and familiar *Elaeocarpus grandis*), which was fruiting for the first time, but we couldn’t find any ripe fruit. Perhaps the rarest tree of all was a specimen of *Flacourtia sp*. Shipston’s Flat.

John regretted planting *Aleurites moluccana* (Candle Nut) near the creek, which he feared would have spread downstream. The shells of the nuts were easy to break on a hard surface, revealing a delicious kernel (that may cause diarrhoea in some people so care is needed). The coastal (and very tasty) *Eugenia reinwardtiana* had also spread widely across the site. The other fruit he recommended that gardeners plant for picking and immediate eating is *Austromyrtus dulcis* from the coastal wallum.

A *Pouteria (Planchonella) eerwah*, which originates from our drier rainforests, particularly the Sunshine Coast, was thriving in the bushland and would make an excellent specimen for larger gardens. A smallish *Decaspermum humile* was forming fruit for the first time, but again these were unripe. John finds that the straggliest **Finger Limes** (*Citrus australasica*) tend to produce the most fruit, whereas greener, healthier looking plants are poorer croppers. Another member of the citrus family on site is *Glycosmis trifoliata* with its delicious pink fruit with large seeds.

There were a few ‘lillypillies’ in the planting including *Syzygium fibrosum* and *Syzygium luehmannii* with its clove-flavoured fruit. The figs were represented by *Ficus benjamina*, *F. racemosa* (?), which had fruit on the trunk, and *F. coronata* with its sandpapery leaves.

Near the creek a very large *Elaeagnus triflora* (Millaa Millaa vine) had scrambled over three trees and produces a significant crop of edible red fruit. Another vine with edible parts, *Geitonoplesium cymosum* (John's 'Scrambling Lily'), was widely distributed in the bushland. Afterwards we had a chat over coffee at the Ainsdale St Coffee Shop, just a short drive from the park, from where John collected the coffee waste for his composting system. Thank you John for a memorable morning (and please pass on the rainforest fruit drink recipe).

### Gin with bushfood ingredients

Seen on A Taste of Landline 8/1/2016 was a feature on the Four Pillars Distillery in Victoria who are specialist Gin distillers. Four Pillars experimented with trial distillations for the best part of 18 months before settling on our ten trademark botanicals that are a pretty equal mix of local and exotic. The native botanicals include Tasmanian pepperberry and lemon myrtle, both in the dry leaf form. And the exotic Asian spices range from cinnamon and star anise to cardamom and coriander seeds. Then, of course we include juniper berries (otherwise we wouldn't be making gin), although the juniper really serves as a canvas here rather than the focus. Finally, lavender and angelica root round out our mix of dry botanicals in Four Pillars gin. Perhaps most interesting is our use of whole oranges. It is quite unusual to use fresh stuff in gin but Australian organic citrus is highly aromatic and supports the spicier botanicals. And for our Navy Strength Gin we add some fresh finger limes along with the oranges to give this gin a slightly more South East Asian flavour profile, playing up the coriander and star anise.

Four Pillars Distillery, 2a Lilydale Road, Healesville, VIC 3777 Australia

Opening hours: Seven days a week, 10.30am - 5.30pm and until 9.00pm on Friday and Saturdays.

<https://www.fourpillarsgin.com.au/distilling/pillar-3-the-botanicals/>

### Home Made Vinegar

by John King – Rainforest Liqueurs

I make a light syrup by cooking fruit or leaf in water, straining out the pulp or leaves, and adding organic raw sugar. To a litre of liquid, I add about 250 grams of sugar. I use about the same amount of leaf as to make a cup of tea so about 5 grams per 250 ml, make it just like tea and steep the leaf. To 1 litre of water I would use about 1 kg of fruit, more if you can get the fruit, as much as 2 kg of fruit. I am never precise with the fruit and just use whatever I have, the important part is how much liquid you end up with, you will get more liquid with some fruit than others. You just need the sugar to liquid ratio to be about 250 g to 1 litre of liquid. Once the syrup is cool I place it in a stainless or plastic container and cover with cloth. I place the container in my shed and cover with mesh to stop critters getting into the container. About once a day for the first week I give it a brisk stir to aerate the liquid, and then leave it for 6 months to work. If you have unpasteurised cider vinegar available from your local shop put a cup of that in to the cool mixture as a starter. After a few months it can be strained and boiled and bottled. It can also be used unboiled and raw as the pH should be well below 3 and it should not go mouldy.

**Notes from John King on Small Bolwarra - *Eupomatia benettii*** - it has been 8 years since I have seen a flower on one of these plants. This year they are springing up all over the farm. They have an underground rhizome and do not always come up every year. Usually they have one flower and one fruit per year, two flowers is rare. It will be at least 6 months until the fruit is ripe. I use *Eupomatia laurina* for my Wujigay Liqueur, *laurina* has multiple fruit and flowers. Two species of a monotypic genus.

**Lemon Aspen:** First make sure it is Lemon Aspen, or Silver, or White aspen, or something else. There has been a lot of Lemon Aspen planted here even though it is a NQ species. Try cooking it in a light sugar syrup then eat the fruit and use the syrup in cakes or over icecream or yogurt. Lemon Aspen has a fibrous core, it may be good whizzed in a blender and then added to baking as well to give added tang.

## **Native Lasiandra    *Melastoma affine***

[http://www.saveourwaterwaysnow.com.au/01\\_cms/details\\_pop.asp?ID=207](http://www.saveourwaterwaysnow.com.au/01_cms/details_pop.asp?ID=207)

It is a shrub with a bushy, sprawling habit. Its fruits are edible, but will stain your tongue blue. This plant was growing in dappled shade, so the leaves are rich with chlorophyll and nutrients. Out in the blazing sun, this shrub takes on a much more hardy look.

Rounded rainforest shrub, attractively veined foliage, long flowering mauve-purple flowers in summer and sweet edible fruit (which will stain your tongue blue, thus the common name).

Attracts Miskin Jewel butterfly, birds. Useful wetland plant. Honey bees compete with its natural pollinator, native bees.

Flowers are large with usually 5 mauve petals. These are followed by fruits which split open to reveal red to purple flesh with numerous small seeds.

Leaves ovate, 6-12 cm long, 2-4 cm wide, discolourous, covered with short, stiff hairs; main veins 3, and 2 less conspicuous intramarginal veins; petiole up to 10 mm long.



Photo: Robert Whyte

*M. affine* occurs well beyond Australia, through much of Indonesia and some Pacific Islands.

The taxonomy of the melastoma group is tricky with Meyer proposing to revise this species into *M. malabathricum subsp. malabathricum* in Blumea 46(2): 351–398 (2001). However, this hasn't been fully accepted (Wikipedia)

*M. affine* is important as being a pioneer species that colonises disturbed wet-sclerophyll and rain forest habitats in the Australasian region. It produces no nectar - giving pollinators large amounts of pollen instead, which must be extracted through pores on the anthers -- C. L. Gross. "The Breeding System and Pollinators of *Melastoma affine* (Melastomataceae); A Pioneer Shrub in Tropical Australia". Biotropica, Vol. 25, No. 4. (Dec., 1993), pp. 468-474.

### **Edible Insects**

by Sheryl

I met the The Buggy Bros at West End markets recently. They sell processed insects. They raise crickets specifically for human consumption and not for pet food. Their 100% cricket powder is suitable for anyone with gluten and/or lactose intolerance. Please note, however, that crickets are crustaceans, which means that if you're allergic to shellfish, you should NOT consume this product. Interesting website with recipes! [www.bugsybros.com.au](http://www.bugsybros.com.au)

### **Information Sheets put out by the Arrawarra Culture group**

[http://www.arrawarraculture.com.au/fact\\_sheets/pdfs/10\\_Bush\\_Calendar.pdf](http://www.arrawarraculture.com.au/fact_sheets/pdfs/10_Bush_Calendar.pdf)

[http://www.arrawarraculture.com.au/fact\\_sheets/pdfs/15\\_Medicine.pdf](http://www.arrawarraculture.com.au/fact_sheets/pdfs/15_Medicine.pdf)

[http://www.arrawarraculture.com.au/fact\\_sheets/pdfs/12\\_Trees.pdf](http://www.arrawarraculture.com.au/fact_sheets/pdfs/12_Trees.pdf)



**Bunya Cream Custard**

Boil Bunyas for about 20 mins, then shelled to give 600 gram.

Grind bunyas in a food processor to coarse crumbs.

Combine bunyas, 500mL cream, 400 mL milk, 100 mL milk *mixed with* 30 gram potato flour

2 tabsp vanilla essence, 100 gram raw sugar

Put all ingredients into a saucepan and heat gently while stirring, until thickened.

Take off heat. When warm, spoon into glasses.

**Ke-ril syrup**

Use equal quantities of Ke-ril (*Ficus coronata*, sandpaper fig) and raw sugar with some water. Stir to dissolve sugar and heat at 70-80°C for about 5 mins. Allow to cool then strain.

**Ke-ril froth**

Stir 2 tbsps gelatine into ½ cup water - set aside.

Heat 1 cup of the Ke-ril syrup and ½ cup water to boiling. Take off heat and stir in dissolved gelatine mix. Cool. When just set, whip with a beater until it forms a stiff froth. Chill until set and whip again if needed. Spoon on top of custard. Decorate with toasted coconut and cooked Ke-ril fruit.

Recipe is gluten-free.



**Sheryl: John won 1st prize at the Bunya Dreaming Festival last year with this dessert.**

**Emu Farming**

Farming emus can be a little weird for everyone, because every now and then an emu falls in love with a human. Marburg emu farmer Stephen Schmidt says he has been an object of affection in several emu romances. “They drive you crazy when it happens,” Mr Schmidt said. “They are a pain in the neck. They follow you around the paddock and upset everything. When it happens, I have to put them down the back. You get one in 200 that wants to mate with you and one in 200 that wants to kill you.” Mr Schmidt and wife Sarah expect about 700 chicks to hatch this season from 250 adult birds at their Marburg farm. It is the last commercial emu farm in the state, after many Australian and Indian operations went broke in the past 20 years.

Mr Schmidt said demand was so strong for emu oil capsules sold as an anti-inflammatory that he was expanding. “Even the worst emu oil is better than fish oil,” he said. Mr Schmidt said he gets 15kg-18kg of oil, 15kg of meat, and hides and feathers from each bird. He farms free range, mainly because that is the way female emus like it. “You can put a female with a male and she will not mate with him if she doesn’t like him,” he said. “Instead she will knock a fence down to get to a male she likes better.” He said emus had one other peculiar trait – they eat their own manure. “People come here and ask for manure,” he said. “I say to them, ‘If you can find it, you can have it’.” Ref: Courier Mail

**Sheryl: They only process once a year around March and are currently out of mince.**



Bush tucker researchers say the gubinge industry is about to take off, with the fruit tipped to be one of the next big 'superfoods' to gain international attention. Until now the remote location and unreliable supply of the fruit, also known as the Kakadu plum, has hampered efforts to supply it. But now the fruit's possible use in cosmetics and medicinal products is attracting fresh attention, with strong interest at a recent Californian food expo and rumours Chinese interests want to buy 800 tonnes. Kim Courtenay from the Kimberley

Institute said it was inevitable that the fruit, which has been labelled a superfood due its to its high vitamin C content, would take off. "There's no doubt it is going to be an industry," he said.

"I guess our priority is making sure it's an industry that does give local people the most benefits."

"After the expo, apparently there were Chinese interests who wanted 800 tonnes. And they said, 'Well, look, at the moment there's only about 20 tonnes collected across the entire north of Australia.'" Kimberley woman Pat Torres, who runs a cooperative that involves local families supplying fruit to health shops and restaurants, said her family had been picking the fruit in the bush around Broome for as long as she could remember. "If you eat it as a fresh fruit, it has a sweet and a sour sort of taste, and if you cook it, it's like eating pears and apples cooked up. So it's hard to really describe what it's like. You need to taste it, basically," she said. "Our families, when we're collecting it and we're eating it, can pick for hours because it gives you an incredible burst of energy. "The fruit has been eaten by locals in the region for 40,000 years. "The demand by industry far outstrips what we can offer in terms of collecting it from the wild. So we've had people from overseas come and check out our trees. And they say they want 50 tonnes in order to do their cosmetics or their medicine." Mr Courtenay believes the demand will be met by planting new trees in existing gubinge patches across northern Australia, but thinks the challenge will be transporting it across vast distances. Anne Shanley from the Kindred Spirits Foundation, which previously helped the Northern Territory community of Wadeye to develop its gubinge industry, is developing the answer to that challenge. "We need to have fruit coming from Aboriginal communities which have a permit to pick the fruit and it needs to be quality assured. So we need to have proper freezers and proper transport, and be able to track that everything is going well," she said. The Kindred Spirits Foundation wants to build gubinge hubs in larger communities across northern Australia, and a central processing plant in Darwin. It will also create a national co-op for growers, and Ms Shanley says the next step is securing funding from government and the private sector. In Broome, Ms Torres says Gubinge is an incredible opportunity for Aboriginal people. But she is anxious to keep the control in Aboriginal hands. "So much has been taken from Indigenous people, and this is one of the few things left where we can do business with it," she said. "We understand the tree, we understand the seasons, we know how to protect it, we know how to collect the fruit. "This industry can provide us with honest, hard work that we can connect to."

**Sheryl:** Many Thanks to Marilena Stanton for referring this article.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2015-05-19/gubinge-industry-set-to-take-off/6480204>



In the remote Roper region of the Northern Territory, the chance snapping of a branch has had incredible ripple effects for the community who live there. It was 2013, and Samara Billy was showing off her community to representatives from Indigenous business facilitator Enterprise. The community of Minyerri was keen to start an arts centre, but in doing so, stumbled upon an opportunity to bring one of their traditions to the tea market. "I took them out bush, and we picked a bit of Gulbarn and I told them how we use it," Ms Billy said, outside the now up-and-running arts centre. "You have to just boil it up and wait for it to cool, or you can just have a shower with it. "It's good to relax your body, if you're feeling a bit stressed."

Gulbarn grows wild in and around Minyerri, about 580 kilometres south-east of Darwin. For generations, Gulbarn has been primarily used as a comforting drink to soothe coughs and colds. It does not contain caffeine, but with the same kinds of properties and flavonoids as green tea, it is now taking on new life as a drink for any time of day, and is attracting interest from buyers across Australia, China and Taiwan.



Samara Billy and Felicia Billy pick Gulbarn in Minyerri

Gulbarn tea has been drunk by Indigenous people in the Roper region for generations. "I think Gulbarn is a really good example of the intersection of western market knowledge, and traditional Aboriginal knowledge, and the possibilities that come about when people from different walks of life have the chance to explore enterprise opportunities. There's demand from across Australia, from existing tea companies and tea entrepreneurs that let us know that this is gold really, and it's just a matter of how they want to grow the business." Laura Egan, Founder ELP said. Ms Billy said she initially did not think anyone would be interested in a little bush plant. Now, her sights are set on growing the business, little by little. "I mean it's been there the whole time, but nobody wanted to use it," she said. "I'm hoping that we can sell more, but I want to start small first - then we can build it up little by little." The tea is picked, dried and packaged in Minyerri with the help of the community. Packing days are an all-in community endeavour, and Ms Billy laughed that many could not wait until packing day on Thursdays. "When it's Monday they come in and say 'oh when are we going to do Gulbarn packaging?'"



The business is not without its challenges though. Internet access is an ongoing issue, and at this stage the online sales are managed by ELP from Katherine. "Internet access in the community is a challenge, and the business would be really well supported by having access to internet services which would enable us then to Skype, and maintain regular contact from our base here in Katherine," Ms Egan said. ELP enterprise facilitator Lillian Tait, said that while Gulbarn tea had exceeded expectations, it was also moving at a pace that was directed by the community. "So if people don't want to package, then there's no tea, and that's fine too," she said.



Felicia Billy and Samara Billy pick Gulbarn in Minyerri

The business is not exclusively run by women, but it is being spearheaded by the women in the community. "Samara is hugely inspirational, she's a real trailblazer within Minyerri community and she's showing all of the qualities of a brilliant entrepreneur and is a real role model for the young women in Minyerri," Ms Egan said. The success is also giving others in the community the motivation and confidence to come forward with other business ideas. "Gulbarn is just one of their many bush plants that's delicious as tea, and so lots of people have been coming out of the woodwork saying 'have you tasted this?' So that's really exciting - we're hoping to explore the other options soon," Ms Tait said. "Gulbarn is a great example, but it's really just scratching the surface of what's possible in terms of grass-roots Aboriginal enterprise."







<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2015-12-20/traditional-bush-medicine-finding-new-life-as-gulbarn-tea/7042550>  
[http://wetlandinfo.ehp.qld.gov.au/resources/static/pdf/ecology/soils/information-sheets-with-typology/melaleuca\\_citrolens\\_wetland\\_soils\\_information\\_sheet8.pdf](http://wetlandinfo.ehp.qld.gov.au/resources/static/pdf/ecology/soils/information-sheets-with-typology/melaleuca_citrolens_wetland_soils_information_sheet8.pdf)

**Sheryl:** Gulbarn is *Melaleuca citrolens* and is in the Myrtaceae family and is endemic to northern Queensland and the north-eastern part of the Northern Territory. Its flavonoids and antioxidant levels are similar to that of green tea. It's supposedly quite strong so just use a small pinch in a cup with boiling water. Also try it as a refreshing iced tea with a dash of mint. Many thanks to Marilena Stanton for alerting me to this article.

### Warning for *Hibiscus heterophyllus*

by Peter Hardwick

It should be noted that although numerous references suggest that no hibiscus is known to be poisonous, Peter Hardwick has expressed concern in relation to *Hibiscus heterophyllus*.

In the Australian Food Plants Study Group Newsletter of February 1995 it was reported that he suffered kidney damage from drinking *H. heterophyllus* tea over a few days and that discussions with Aborigines confirmed that they use this plant only sparingly as a medicinal plant, rather than to eat. Peter just wants to confirm that the issue of toxicity with *H. heterophyllus* is very real and unresolved. The most likely culprit is oxalates.

There has been a few tests on *H. heterophyllus* since which have not shown up significant quantities of oxalates (not the same population as the source of the material I used), but different populations can vary in chemistry, and hence in toxin levels.

When there is a known example of toxicity - even if anecdotal - then be very wary. One population of *H. heterophyllus* could be safe, another one not. By the way, the introduced commonly used rosella is a different plant.

**There are four species of the genus *Macadamia***, which are members of the Proteaceae, an ancient family of flowering plants that are largely of Australian origin and include Banksias, Grevilleas and Hakeas. Macadamias natural distribution is confined to the coastal ranges of Northern NSW and South East Queensland, where they occur as evergreen trees in remnants of rainforest communities below 600 m elevation.

**Two of the species bear edible nuts**, from which the global macadamia nut industry has developed.

***Macadamia integrifolia*** Integ = entire; folia = leaves. The main domesticated species of commerce. Commonly known as the Australian, Queensland, Smooth-shelled and Bauple (Bopple) Nut. Endemic from the Gold Coast hinterland to Mt. Bauple north of Gympie. Typically grows to 15 metres with three leaves to each node, creamy green flush, cream flowers born on long racemes, bearing after 3 to 5 years.



***Macadamia tetraphylla*** Tetra = four; phylla = leaves. Also grown commercially but usually as hybrids with *Macadamia integrifolia*. Commonly known as the Rough Shelled Nut or Bush Nut. Endemic from the Lismore district and overlaps with *M. integrifolia* just north of the NSW/Queensland border. Typically grows to 15 metres with four spiny leaves to each node and having little or no petiole. New flush is red/brown and flowers pink to purple. Nuts in shell are pebbly with the kernel not as creamy as *M. integrifolia* but a little sweeter.

***Macadamia ternifolia*** Terni = three; folia = leaves. **Attractive ornamental trees.**

Grows to around 8 metres with three leaves to each node. New flush and flowers are pink. Commonly known as the Maroochy or Gympie nut, they range from Mt Nebo near Brisbane to Goomboorian near Gympie. The nuts are the size of peas and the kernel is very bitter. They make.

***Macadamia janseni* – not edible.** Known only from a single population of around sixty individuals located along a small creek in the Bulburrin National Park south west of Gladstone and discovered in the 1980s. Is similar to *Macadamia ternifolia* with brown new flush and creamy to slightly pink flowers. **Nuts are small, not edible being slightly bitter. It can be difficult to differentiate between the three main species, especially at the seedling/juvenile stages, where the leafs in all species can range up to 300 mm in length and are usually spinose, arrangement varying between 2-5 whorls, with pink flushing of new growth possible in all species.**



A handful of nuts from the rare Jansens macadamia, found only near Miriam Vale, Qld with a common commercial variety of macadamia nut at the far left. (Scott Lamond - ABC)



Leaf morphology in adult *Macadamia integrifolia* leaves are usually entire, but can be spinose in some individuals. In some areas it's not uncommon to find trees that contain combinations of features that are normally associated with one or the other species. For example, Macadamia The pink flush and flowers of *Macadamia ternifolia*. *Macadamia janseni*. flora profile South East Queensland: The Home of Macadamias 4 Land for Wildlife South East Queensland May 2012 Article by Michael Powell Chair, Macadamia Conservation Committee *integrifolia* and *M. tetraphylla* both naturally occur along the coastal ranges and foothills south of Brisbane, where they can occasionally be found growing together. In these places hybridization has occurred over many generations, with crossing and backcrossing in the population resulting in expression of characteristics from both species within individual plants. Another possibility is that trees with multiple species characteristics are hybrid cultivars of *Macadamia integrifolia* and *M. tetraphylla*, that have been planted for their nuts, or have grown from seeds from nearby cultivars. Examples can be found in the foothills of the Blackall Range, where the trees may have derived from seeds of plantation cultivars on the ranges above, and have dispersed down the slopes. Macadamias typically flower in late winter early spring, with nuts maturing over the summer months. They have the capacity to self-pollinate however are more productive when flowers are pollinated from another tree. Pollination is by introduced European bees and native stingless bees. In the wild they do not appear to be highly reproductive, with relatively low levels of flowering, fruiting and seedling recruitment, however once established they are robust and tend to live for long periods of time, with some individual trees assessed as being four hundred years old or more The macadamia nut was valued by Indigenous Australians although the limited distribution of the trees and usually very small crops within the rainforest meant they were a delicacy rather than a staple food. They were one of the first products offered in trade to the white settlers usually in exchange for tobacco, rum and axes. Alan Cunningham probably recorded the macadamia in 1829, and in 1843 Ludwig Leichhardt collected a specimen which is held at the Melbourne Herbarium. Baron Ferdinand von Mueller described the new species naming it Macadamia after the Secretary of the Victorian Philosophical Institute Dr. John Macadam. In the current landscape, macadamias are most commonly found in lower topographic positions along creek lines and gullies, or in roadside reserves. However they also can be occasionally found as single trees scattered across paddocks cleared for grazing where they were left as shade trees and/or for their nuts. They tend to be infrequent and sparsely distributed or can be absent in areas of suitable habitat as their hard shelled nuts have the consequence that dispersal is limited to creek flooding, gravity in steeply sloping areas or dispersal by animals such as rodents who have been known to cache the nuts. All four species are threatened with extinction in the wild and since European settlement possibly 80% of the wild trees have been lost.

As much of the original macadamia habitat has been cleared and remaining areas are small and highly fragmented, all patches of suitable habitat have potential value for the species, whether currently occupied or not. A Recovery Plan has been prepared, adopted by the two involved States and the Federal Government and is being used to guide their conservation. If you have potential macadamia habitat on your property, have information about wild macadamia plants or populations, are or would like more information please contact Michael Powell on [leenamike@gmail.com](mailto:leenamike@gmail.com) or on 0439 854 525. Juvenile leaves of *Macadamia integrifolia* are sharp and strongly toothed in whorls of three. Adult leaves and pink flowers of *Macadamia tetraphylla*. Macadamia trees were often left for their nuts and as shade trees for livestock. Remaining trees can be highly fragmented and their habitat may not allow for the germination and growth of seedlings. Ref: Land for Wildlife – May 2012

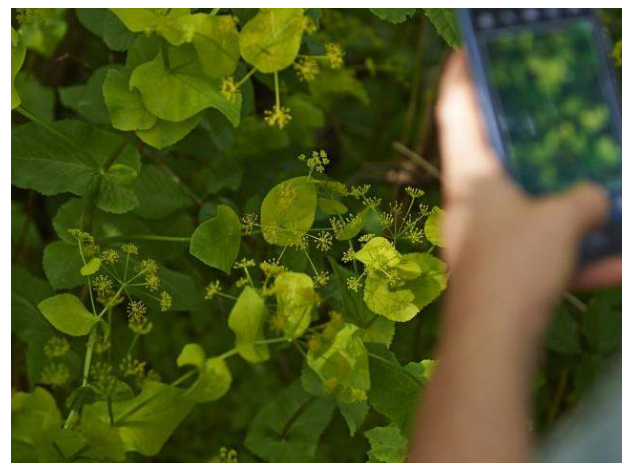
**If you're looking for one of Nigel Anthony's fantastic Macadamia Nut Crackers, look out for him at the Caboolture Markets on Sundays and either Jimboomba, Kawana or Carseldine on Saturdays. Better give him a call to see where he will be! 0417 764 476**

It is a resource for learning about, tasting, and exploring wild food. The project is split into three parts. The first is a curriculum for school-kids in Denmark. We want to encourage kids of all ages to explore their local landscape and taste the abundance of flavours all around us. We aspire to see knowledge of natural food being taught in schools as commonly as reading, writing and mathematics. We believe that providing young children with a basic understanding of edibility and of the landscape will broaden their perception of flavour, connect them to their surroundings in a more profound way, and enable them to understand nature’s resources and flow. In short, it will give them a more vested interest in caring for our environment by building a lifelong connection with it.



The second part of VILD MAD is a foraging and wild food school for all Danes. We will provide you with the knowledge to be in tune with the flavours of the seasons; track down the ramsons blossoming in early spring, and the different stages of wild berries in autumn. Discover the fertile crops of the woods such as mushrooms, wild seeds and flowers, and unearth roots that taste like cinnamon. Become acquainted with the land so that you can stroll through a forest and understand what is edible, to harvest sustainably and learn to cook with these remarkable flavours.

The third component of VILD MAD will be a digital platform that serves as a database for information and imagery on varieties of plants and wild foods. It also provides guidelines for food safety, sustainability, an “edibility map,” and tips on cooking your food. MAD’s ambition is that VILD MAD will serve as model in Denmark. We hope that our project can be an inspiration for others to do the same elsewhere. A fundamental aspect of the project is to be as open as possible with sharing our technology and information to enable this to happen. The project will be developed with some of the leading nature experts in Denmark: the Danish outdoor council, the Rangers’ association, Byhøst (“City Harvest” in English), and the Alexandra Institute. We are thrilled to collaborate with these new friends, and are overwhelmed with excitement to see the positive response VILD MAD is receiving in the community here. Lastly, we would like to warmly thank both Nordea-fonden and our dynamic group of collaborators for all of the support.



**Sheryl: Thanks to Marilena Stanton for forwarding this article.**



**Warrigal Greens *Tetragonia Tetragonioides* by Colleen & Geoff Keena [www.hibiscus.org](http://www.hibiscus.org)**  
**IMPORTANT: Warrigal Greens have a high oxalate concentration**  
**Blanch leaves in boiling water for several minutes. Discard water. Rinse leaves before using**  
**Be sure plants are accurately identified. Exercise caution with unfamiliar foods.**  
**Although the following are usually considered safe, adverse reactions in particular individuals cannot be ruled out.**

### **Warrigal Greens Pie (rice base)**

Gluten Free Delicious both hot and cold. Garnish with lemon myrtle leaves.

Rice (extra tasty if rice is cooked in coconut cream)

Greased dish, e.g. oval dish 27 cm x 19 cm and 5 cm deep.

4 eggs, beaten with 1/2 cup milk (can be low fat milk)

Grated Cheese (can be low fat)

Blanched Warrigal Green Leaves

Put a layer of rice into the bottom of the dish, patting down firmly until layer is about 2 cm thick. Cover rice with a thick layer of grated cheese. Place a layer of blanched Warrigal Greens so cheese is completely covered. Pour over the eggs beaten with milk. Add another layer of grated cheese to finish off. Microwave for approximately 5 minutes on high and 10 minutes on medium, depending on power of Microwave.

### **Warrigal Greens Dip**

Shallots, chopped, tossed until tender in olive oil

Warrigal greens, blanched

2 x 250 g cartons of low fat cottage cheese (I use peppercorn and herb)

1 x 250 g carton of low fat sour cream

2 tablespoons lemon juice

pinch sugar

Process all ingredients. Chill overnight. Do not taste until next day - taste is disappointing when just made but the flavours all go through and it is good the next day. Serve on chunks of French stick.

### **John King on ABC Radio**

If you missed listening to John King on 612 ABC Radio on the 14<sup>th</sup> November, you can listen to TWO different podcasts here:

<https://soundcloud.com/612abcbrisbane/john-king-talks-bush-tucker-with-tim-cox?in=612abcbrisbane/sets/weekends-with-tim-cox>

<https://soundcloud.com/612abcbrisbane/talking-bush-tucker-with-john-king?in=612abcbrisbane/sets/weekends-with-tim-cox>

Tim Heard is also talking native bees:

<https://soundcloud.com/612abcbrisbane/tim-heard-is-talking-about-native-bees?in=612abcbrisbane/sets/weekends-with-tim-cox>

Daleys Nursery has a video on eating a fresh Davidson's Plum ... with a twist!

[https://youtu.be/wt-j\\_mQkQy8](https://youtu.be/wt-j_mQkQy8)



[Torresian pigeons are one of a small number of Australian birds large enough to disperse rainforest trees with large fleshy fruits \(Maurizio Rossetto\)](#)

**Australian rainforest trees with large fleshy fruits are rare because few animals are capable of dispersing them, a new study suggests.**

Especially in sub-tropical areas, such trees have smaller ranges and fewer connected populations, than those with smaller fruit, say researchers today in the Royal Society journal [Proceedings B](#).

The animals that feed on fruit and disperse seed that way are fairly limited in Australia. "We found that species with fruits larger than 3 centimetres have significantly smaller ranges throughout the continent," said lead author, Dr Maurizio Rossetto, principal research scientist at the National Herbarium of New South Wales. The survival of such species may rely on human-assistant transplantation to establish new populations, or even possibly introduction of animals such as cassowaries to help ensure their dispersal, said the researchers.



Rainforest trees that bear fleshy fruit, such as the native 'black apple' *Planchonella australis* (pictured below), rely on animals to disperse their seeds and establish a network of interconnected populations that can replenish ailing populations and are a source of genetic diversity.



Without good dispersal, a plant species is more vulnerable to such threats as climate change, disease or extinction. Dr Rossetto and his colleagues looked at the distribution of over 1000 species and fleshy-fruited rainforest trees and vines across Australia.

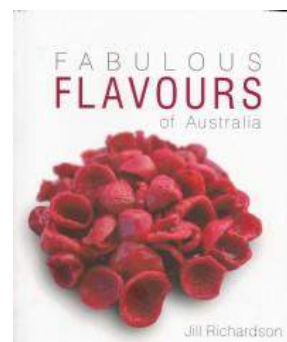
Not only did they find that large-seeded trees were rarer than smaller ones, genetic analysis showed they tended to have fewer and less well-connected populations. Dr Rossetto and colleagues concluded the best available explanation for this finding was a lack of animals that were capable of picking up and dispersing the larger fruit. "The animals that feed on fruit and disperse seed that way are fairly limited in Australia compared to in South America, Asia, and Africa, which have rhinoceroses, monkeys, squirrels and all sorts of birds to do this," he said.

### **Importance of animals in rainforests**

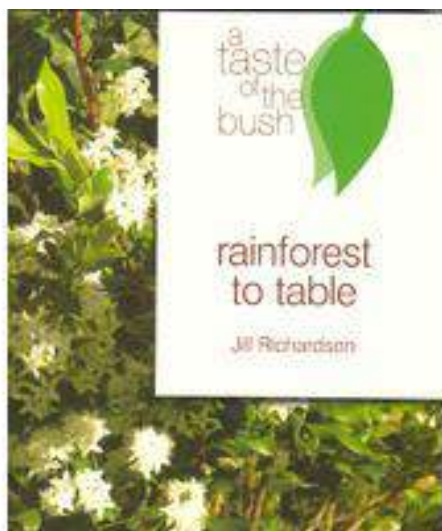
In Australia, the best dispersers of big seeds are a handful of large birds, including the cassowary and Torresian pigeon, which only live in northern Australia. In line with their hypothesis, the researchers found the greatest number of big-seeded trees was greater in the north. They also found areas of rainforest that had been disturbed had no species with large fruit. "If an area becomes devoid of rainforest and is then recolonised and there are no animals capable of dispersing large-fruited species, it becomes recolonised only by small-fruited species," Dr Rossetto said. "So you lose a whole component of your biodiversity because there's no mechanism to bring the large-fruited species back." Dr Rossetto said that past ice ages resulted in repeated contraction and fragmentation of rainforests in Australia and that while plant species may have survived this, many large-fruit dispersers were lost in this process. He said that recent clearing of rainforest areas like the Big Scrub in northern New South Wales was exacerbating the problem. "The more disturbance you get, the more local populations you lose, and the more these species become rare," he said. By contrast, places with a large number of large-fruited species like Nightcap National Park in Northern New South Wales (see video below) had a lot of biodiversity that needed protecting. Ref: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2015-12-09/big-fruited-australian-rainforest-trees-may-need-help-to-survive/7011352>

### **Fabulous Flavours of Australia by Jill Richardson**

It is a beautiful book and the photography was by Jill's husband, Denis. It is almost 200 pages in length and has sections on Entrees, Soups, Vegetarian, Seafood, Indigenous and more. It even has a section on odd and ends. Jill's daughter is Clair Parry from Wattle Tree Creek Bushfood. The recipes are a combination of traditional and indigenous foods.



### **A Taste of the Bush: Rainforest to Table by Jill Richardson**



This exciting new book is crammed full of recipes using Australian native flavours. With over 180 recipes ranging from soups, salads and starters to vegetarian meals, main courses, desserts and drinks, our cookery book is designed to take advantage of the amazing range of Australian indigenous food. With easy to follow, everyday recipes and background information on the diverse range of native ingredients used, this book is a great introduction to a whole new world of flavours, creating our own Australian native cuisine. All of the indigenous ingredients used in this book are available from "A Taste Of The Bush" as well as the entire range of our gourmet products made with Australian native flavours. Detailed product information is included at the back of the book.

*Nicotiana benthamiana*, which originates from the remote regions of northern Australia, is used in many plant biology labs around the world because of its excellent properties for rapid transient expression of transgenes delivered into leaves by [Agro-infiltration](#). The plant is used for many different types of research including gene silencing, metabolic engineering, plant-microbe interactions, protein-protein interactions and gene function studies. Two years ago, the U.S. Department of Defence ponied up \$21 million to see if flu vaccines could be grown in tobacco plants. The project was a rousing success, producing 10 million doses in just 30 days. Next step - getting it past the FDA. The \$21 million was part of a DARPA program called [Blue Angel](#), designed to overhaul instability in the vaccine supply chain. Frequent shortages are seen as a national security issue; the DOD wants soldiers healthy during an epidemic. Currently, vaccines are produced using [an unwieldy process](#) that dates back to the '40s — injecting small bits of flu genes into a chicken egg and allowing them to grow. The current (and slow) production process takes five or six months. Predicting how much vaccine to make is a yearly guessing game, as is devising the right strains of vaccine. Flu genes are constantly mutating; it doesn't take long for a vaccine to become outdated. Enter biotech firm [Medicago](#), jointly owned by Philip Morris and Mitsubishi. This Quebec-based company owns a 97,000 square foot greenhouse in the heart of North Carolina tobacco country. More importantly, they own patents on a system for rapidly growing VLPs (virus-like particles) in plants. 'I think people like the idea of creating something positive from a plant with such negative stigma.' At the core of the process is *Nicotiana benthamiana*, a close cousin of *Nicotiana tabacum*, better known as smoking tobacco. This Australian plant is native to the desert and has historically been used as a stimulant (though it contains less nicotine than standard field tobacco). For the purposes of vaccine production, it has a couple of winning attributes — it is extremely robust and hearty, and it grows to maturity in just six weeks. At the Medicago greenhouse, thousands of these plants are grown for about five weeks. Technicians then suck the air out of each plant with a vacuum while submerging them in a special inoculum solution. "Think of it like a sponge," says Dave Henry, Medicago's manufacturing director. "You start by pulling the air out. Then when the sponge is released it will suck in everything around it. It's the same with the plant's leaves." Once the solution is inside the plant, the VLPs spend a week growing. After a few days the plants' leaves become mottled and discoloured. According to Henry, it's as if they've caught the flu. At the end of a week, the leaves are picked off each plant by hand for processing into a bulk vaccine. Medicago has been tinkering with this process for 14 years, initially using transgenic alfalfa as the host plant. They shifted to tobacco upon realizing it grows quicker and produces much more protein than alfalfa. The tobacco plants are also naturally occurring — unlike the GM alfalfa previously used. Henry says that so far, public reaction has been largely supportive. "I think people like the idea of creating something positive from a plant with such negative stigma," he says. Of course, it helps that the vaccine extraction process leaves no residual nicotine. The new vaccines will even be vegan-friendly — some vegans [currently avoid](#) egg-based flu vaccines. The CDC gave the DARPA-funded proof-of-concept a thumbs up and early clinical trials have shown positive results. Medicago is now in Phase 1 of FDA testing (small, focused trials on humans). So how soon will we be seeing these vaccines available commercially? Likely not until 2018 or 2019. Anyone familiar with the FDA's stringent drug review process knows it doesn't happen overnight. And in this case, you've got powerful preventative medicine - often given to children and the elderly — coming from a plant containing nicotine. One imagines the agency will be taking every precaution. But assuming it works out, Henry says this same process could be applied to any number of vaccines (e.g., rabies or [rotavirus](#)). "We think this is going to forever change how vaccines are produced," he says.



Remember the good old days of heading bush and firing up the billy, bunging a bit of flour, salt and water together, wrapping the resultant damper in tinfoil and shoving it into the ashes with a stick? Anticipating kicking back with a slab of hot, heavy bread, lashed with butter and a bit of honey, and washed down with a pannikin of Bushels Tea with real tea-leaves? Ah, just another night at the star hotel, eh? Fast forward to the big city where I have the genuine pleasure of meeting Head Chef and owner of Tukka Restaurant in Brisbane's West End. I'm here to learn about all things native, including bush foods I wouldn't recognize if I... err... pitched my tent on 'em. Mine all those years ago to spice up my iconic billy-tea and damper had I but known. Think rainforest limes, wild rosellas, mountain pepperberries, native peaches and sugarbag honey to name a few. Add native peaches, sandpaper figs, wild raspberries, cinnamon myrtle and bush tomatoes and a girl begins to wonder why she carried a pack on her back for days on end filled with ration pack fare from the local disposal store. High Tea: Lemon myrtle pumpkin scones with rosella jam and Chantilly cream, profiteroles filled with white chocolate and pepperberry, quandong fairy cakes, dark chocolate macaroons filled with Davidson plum jam and three types of finger sandwiches – anisata salmon gravlax, goats curd and lillputs – bush tomato relish and kangaroo and cucumber and pepperberry. Mother's Day, Tukka Restaurant. It's not that I haven't tried. My efforts at educating my family extended to homemade lemongrass tea, lillypilly mush-up, and my piece de-resistance, my much-anticipated elderberry champagne...hmmm. Not so Bryant. He took a more traditional route, starting as an apprentice at a restaurant on the Gold Coast he worked his way up the cheffing ladder to the point where he had to choose between a Head-Chef job at a highly reputable restaurant or to make his own way. Following a passion to learn he ended up at Alice Springs and began to learn in earnest about native foods. How he ended up owning Tukka Restaurant in inner city Brisbane is due to that same passion and his ongoing success and determination is built on it. Five minutes with Bryant and I know I'm doomed to forever more make my way to his place for gourmet treats like anisata smoked trout with tarragon salad dressing, seared kangaroo with Warringal greens (be warned, the Chef doesn't take requests on medium rare or well-done), Tasmanian possum and pork pie, coconut panacotta with toasted macadamia and cream, and ending with a cheese platter served with crostini, glace quandongs and baby pears. A degustation experience? Count me in.

With my newfound knowledge of all things native gourmet, it's off to farm, Eden Bush Foods Farm, to see what it's like at the paddock end of the paddock-to-plate native food experience. With six hundred or so fruit trees in production and another six hundred rainforest trees planted for regeneration purposes, Eden's name is self-explanatory. Tucked away in the hills of Samford Valley on the outskirts of Brisbane, that I meet a man and his wife who have seeded, planted, and produced enough native product to not only pay off the farm but continue to fuel their passion for all things native through research, education and knowledge sharing for those coming along in their footsteps.

A 'wealth of knowledge' takes on a whole new meaning when talking to Doug and Kath. They have paid off the farm by growing natives and selling to the wholesale market, not a mean feat in an industry struggling with issues of seasonality, the vagaries of supply and demand, and the huge task of educating a keen and growing number of both consumers and fledgling native bush food farmers. Throw in the headache of an industry that is yet to become a cohesive whole and only then do you get the idea of not only the couple's achievements but also an idea of their hard work and dedication to what can still be considered a fledgling industry compared to traditional farming. Doug has a background in traditional agriculture and in 1996 the pair bought their two-hectare property, once an old banana farm and old dairy run. With a lot of nurturing, hard work

and perseverance they have made a success of small-scale production. They use an intermediary who sells their produce at the Rocklea Markets. In Doug's words, they found a niche, hand-picked their produce (at one stage more Warrigal Greens than Doug cares to remember) and helped others interested in bush foods. But scratch a little deeper and it doesn't take long to find out that Doug is being a tad shy. He's had more than a little to do with organisations such as ANFIL, the Queensland Bushfood Association, academia, the powers that be who grant grants, and the various government departments set up to support (but somehow more often than not manage to hinder) the interests of those doing the work on the farm. And it's no more than five minutes into our interview that I cotton on to Doug's expertise.

Ex-school Principal and now higher education lecturer, Doug sums up the current state of the industry succinctly. 'There is no single desk operation. There is no pattern to production. There are still foragers. There are the small semi-commercial growers like us (hobby farmers with a small income). There are those with all their eggs in one basket who have come and gone again. And there's big money come in, too, and they've invested in large scale production – one operation has two million myrtle trees up on the Sapphire Coast – and there are those who are the value adders, the chefs and like. It's become obvious over the years that we need a single desk process. There's not one name I can give where the end user can go and get quality produce on a regular basis in the quantity they require.' Bryant concurs. It's been no easier at the plate end of the production line. Sourcing product is all part of the job for at Tukka. Supplemented by his own native garden, with plans for an education cook-and-tell area for avid wannabe home-cooks, Bryant scouts far and wide for native ingredients to create his seasonal and varied native gourmet menus (so far he's come up with thirty two in the eight years he's owned Tukka). It's Brian that tells me about the native beer distillery out Mt Tamborine way. A quick Google search brings up Tamborine Mountain Distillery with its word-of-mouth reputation for high quality native liqueurs, vodkas, schnapps and eaux-de-vie. It's how things work best, say both Bryant and Doug; word of mouth, cooking up a gourmet native feast at home for friends and family and matching it with local wines and liqueurs, growing a few native plants and experimenting with new ingredients, and keeping an eye out for treasures in an ever growing array of value added products from local native producers. But remember, a little goes a long way with native flavours and it is this reason, in part, that sees me off to the Annual Queensland Bushfood Conference held at Brisbane's Griffith University. Passion and ignorance meets the educated and erudite. Billed as 'Education and Innovation in Bushfoods', the Conference boasts Professor Slade Lee delivering a paper on 'A Model for Ethical Commercialisation of Traditional Bushfoods', followed by ANFIL (Australian Native Food Industry Limited) Chair, Amanda Garner, speaking on the future of the Bushfood Industry. Later, Ralph Bailey of Guymer Bailey Architects talks on growing bushfoods, followed by Roxanne Smith (NSW Dept of Industry) on Business Development in Regional Communities. And finally, my favourite, Dr Narendra Nand, expounds on Bushfood Products and Recipes. It's conferences such as ANFIL's, along with the passion of people like Bryant and Doug for all things native, with their emphasis on education, research and giving back to the industry, that will see the industry work through its problems of unity, supply and demand, education, and a groundswell of value-added artisan products that will see the native food industry flourish into the future. And if there's one thing I've learnt from my plate to paddock and back again educational foray into all things native, it that things sure have changed from the old billy-tea and damper days of my childhood. Oh, and did I tell you Tukka has its own Damper Pack to go? For my next camping trip bugger the Bushels, flour, salt and water. Its four mini native flavoured dampers, macadamia nut oil, bush chutney and a 100g pack of native dukkah packed and ready to sling in the most fastidious adventure's rucksack. Anyone wanna join me for a night at the star hotel native style?

**Ref: Town and Country Farmer Nov/Dec 2015 edition.**

**Sheryl: Doug and Kath are members of our Bushfood Association**



Bushfood researcher Peter Hardwick is warning people not to eat billygoat weed (pictured) after seeing a locally made DVD on bush survival that incorrectly promotes it as edible.

Mr Hardwick, who has researched bushfoods for 30 years, said the DVDs *Bush Tucker With Koa* and *Walking Softly With Koa - Part 2* used a flawed edibility test, suggesting that an unknown plant could be considered safe to eat if there were no negative effects after eight hours.

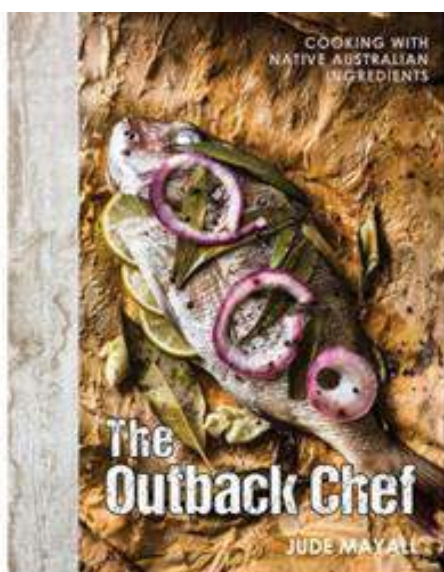
No professional would ever use such a test because some plant toxins have a delayed onset of symptoms like the toxins in billygoat weed, Mr Hardwick said. Analysis shows that billygoat weed contains a suite of plant toxins, including coumarins, triterpenes and pyrrolizidine alkaloids. Health effects from the introduced billygoat weed may be delayed, but could be severe depending on the dose. The severe effects could include necrotic damage to internal organs, especially the liver.

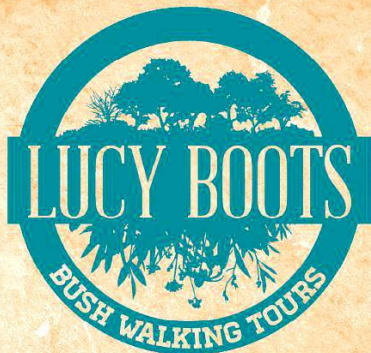


Mr Hardwick recently wrote an article for *The Nimbin GoodTimes* where he raised other concerns about some of the content in the DVDs.

He said grevillea nectar should not be drunk directly from the flower and that many wattles (*Acacia* species) are not edible, and even many of the edible seeds need to be extensively processed in order to be safe. He also said not all hibiscus are edible and Wandering Jew is also likely to be toxic, especially uncooked.

Ref: <http://www.echonews.com.au/news/26832-dont-eat-the-weed-man/687997/>





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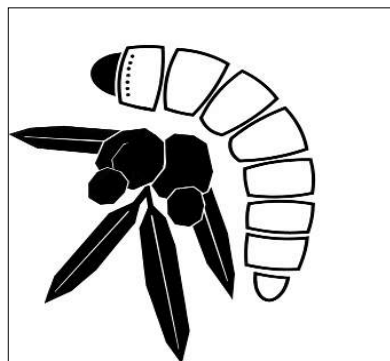
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