

Permaculture Cairns Inc.

Permaculture Cairns News

Volume 2 No 2 ~ November 2007

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Public Meetings of Permaculture Cairns take place every month except January. We have a great guest speaker every time, Feb- Nov. At the December meeting we have the AGM, and end-of-year Christmas party.

Meeting Format

- Minutes from last meeting are reviewed to check progress on activities
- Plans for the upcoming weeks
- Plant of the month
- Invited Speaker
- Tea and chat afterwards

Visitors welcome

\$5 suggested minimum donation

Members News

Membership fees are due! All memberships taken out before Feb 2008 remain valid until Dec 2008!

\$20.00 Individual per year

\$30.00 Family per year

Next Workshop

When: Saturday 8th December

Time: 9am - 11:30am

Where: 8 Bosanko Street,
Manunda

What: Homestyle bread making
Learn how to make your own healthy bread from scratch, faster than the time it would take you to go to the shops!

Next meeting Monday 18 February

Yes that right, it's time for our holiday break, but only so far as the monthly meetings go! There will be further PET Days, workshops and other events going on prior to our next meeting scheduled in February 2008.

We already have a number of Guest Speakers lined up for next year including representatives from the following: **Kuranda Butterfly Sanctuary, Enviromart Australia, and Frog Decline Reversal Project** to name but a few.

If anyone has any suggestions for a Guest Speaker for one of our monthly meetings, who you feel has something beneficial to offer the group, please contact either Kym or Georgie so we can have them come and share their knowledge with us!

President's Report

Kym Kruse

This month brings to an end our first official year as Permaculture Cairns. Since our inception backing July, the group has been actively holding PET Days, Workshops, participating in Festivals and attracting new members on a regular basis. We've even had the opportunity to be on local ABC radio to talk about the group and there is the possibility of a regular spot there next year. Once our successful application for incorporation is returned we'll be all set for bigger and better things in 2008. Of the many plans in the pipeline for 2008, there is one that I'm keenly interested in pursuing. Some councils in Australia are warming to the idea of turning our medium strips in productive food zones. An energy audit on the amount of energy required to maintain a cities medium strips is extremely poor. In fact, that same amount of energy, in terms of fossil fuels used, hours worked etc, could be used to produce food for the whole city with surplus in return! Much like manicured front lawns, our non-productive, yet highly expensive to maintain medium strips, are an unsustainable excess our society can ill afford. In 2008 we'll be approaching the Cairns City Council for the purpose of acquiring one, to demonstrate a Permaculturally designed and productive food forest. And who would receive the produce? People in our community who are hungry and need it of course.

What's coming up?

During the month of December we'll be having our end of year **Christmas Party**. It's a chance for us all to get together and celebrate how much we've achieved in such a short time. The venue will be on the Esplanade, but stay tuned for more details, which will be posted shortly.

Australia Wide

**9th Australian
Permaculture
Convergence
March 20th to
24th, 2008**



As Permaculture celebrates its 30th anniversary, delegates from around Australasia will converge to discuss: **Yesterday's Achievements, Today's Challenges & Tomorrow's Aspirations** at the Glengarry Training Centre, North Turramurra, Sydney.

Thursday, March 20 Registration, opening ceremony and dinner
Friday, March 21 "Celebrating 30 Years of Achievements"
Showcasing successful Permaculture projects from Australia and abroad.
Saturday, March 22 "Solutions to Today's National Water Crisis"
Water specialists present tried and tested solutions to urban and rural water management issues relating to drought, flood, retention and reuse.
Sunday & Monday, March 23 and 24, are for delegates and members only.
Tours begin on **Tuesday March 25.**

The event will be hosted by Permaculture North Inc. and sponsored by local ethical businesses.

www.apc9.org.au

One more thing. If anyone is interested in designing a poster to be displayed at APC9 (see below left), please let me know. Our poster should be representative of the work Permaculture Cairns is doing and showcase the unique tropical environment we practice Permaculture in. Finally, I'd like to thank everyone who has been involved in supporting the group through your attendance and participation. As Bill Mollison says, "Personal independence depends on co-operative human society.... only what we share gives us access to all necessary possessions."
A happy & peaceful festive season to you all.

November guest speaker highlights - Geoff Thomas

Renewable Energies - Our only future

Geoff Thomas, visionary and fore-planner of Advanced Wind Technologies, spoke to us at our November meeting about renewable energy, carbon sequestration and a myriad of other matters. His talk focused on what our landscape of the future might look like if we are to significantly cut carbon emissions and reduce our dependence on fossil fuels for energy. Geoff believes such a future will require us all to become more energy efficient, self-sufficient and informed citizens.

From Geoff's talk we learnt that a home Solar Energy system attracts an \$8000 government rebate on a \$12000 1KW system which is enough power for a modern family with usual appliances, computers, televisions etc. However, he noted that for a solar system to be effective, energy efficient appliances with an energy rating must be used. Also, people could invest in a solar hot water system that also attracts a \$1000 government rebate that is means tested. We should also not underestimate having energy efficient light bulbs and turning off power at the switch. It can make a huge difference to reducing our personal energy consumption. Geoff also reminded us that we are the electorate and individuals can make a difference by pressuring government to take energy responsible action. Action such as, helping to transfer the skills of our coal miners over to geothermal and investing in alternative energy industries like renewable wind, solar and tidal technology rather than in radio-active waste producing nuclear non-renewable fossil fuels. Geoff also touched on "Terra preta" and it's potential in locking up CO2 emissions and increasing soil fertility. A very interesting subject and one we're sure to ask Geoff to come back and talk to us about in the future!

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