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## Weeds are taking off

by Triny Roe

Summer is here and the weeds are taking off. Time to get out in the garden or into the bush and work off the plum pudding and the Xmas cheer.

The sooner you get onto the weeding the easier it will be. Hot sunny days and a bit of rain here and there, is a recipe for rampant plant growth. Some of the common weeds can grow with alacrity, especially in the fecund Northern Rivers.

Here is how to reduce the workload:

1. Try not to introduce new weeds yourself. Water, wind and animals distribute exotic species but you can also carry them in on your clothing, shoes and tyres. Watch where you shake out your car mats after a long distance trip. Pot plants can be infested with weed seed, as can stock feed, mulch and other landscaping supplies.

Livestock can harbour seeds on coats, in hooves and manure. Ensure newly-purchased cattle are quarantined before release in the paddock to prevent further spread of tropical soda apple. Water weeds can transfer via boats and trailers

to new locations. Inspect all equipment before launching or leaving the boat ramp.

Do your research. Before planting something new, make sure you haven't chosen an environmental weed, especially if the location borders bushland or creek bank. Plenty of weedy plants are readily available in commercial nurseries and market stalls.

2. If new species appear identify them early and manage appropriately. Each weed is unique and may need an different approach. Not every new plant is going to be a problem. Maybe you can eat it. Or it's a native and OK growing in the right location. If it is an exotic with a bad reputation, don't wait until there is a solid infestation before dealing with it.

Nip it in the bud, literally. Do not let the pest species flower and set fruit. Remove seedlings by hand. They come out easily when the soil is moist. Use a weeding tool to avoid breaking roots. Woody weed species like giant devil fig can regrow from small root fragments. Be a good neighbour. Everyone must do their part to reduce the spread of pest plants.



Silver leaf desmodium

3. Employ appropriate disposal of waste vegetative matter. Chipping and composting work well for some species. Turn the heap to speed the process. Plants with runners, and those that root easily from the stem, like *tradescantia*, might survive the composting process. Make weed tea with these by soaking fresh plants in a barrel of water with a lid for several weeks or more. The brew will go through a smelly phase as anaerobic digestion takes place. Stir occasionally.

After a couple of months, the weeds will be dead and can be added to the compost heap. The smell is gone and there is a brown sludge at the bottom of the drum. Stir again. Dilute this mixture and apply to vegetable gardens and fruit trees for a

nutritional burst.

Don't chuck weeds over the fence or down the gully. Many weeds can keep growing laying on the ground. *Tradescantia* and other fleshy creepers can live for months without water. Roadside and bushland dumping is responsible for many serious weed infestations of bush and nature reserves. Take your garden clippings to the local tip if you can't handle them on-site. Councils process green waste into compost and sell it to farmers and gardeners.

4. Follow up, follow up, follow up. One year of weed can mean seven years of seeds. If eradication of a species is the aim vigilance is required to ensure it doesn't make a comeback. Happy weeding.

## Meet our permanent care girls

### Koala Kolumn

by Ros Irwin, president

**Lauren** was rescued by Friends of the Koala in December 2014, when she was just a joey. She was found with her deceased mum at the base of a tree after both were attacked by a dog. Although weighing only 640 grams Lauren had no major injuries, so went home with an experienced koala joey carer.

While in care, her carer tried her best to feed her milk and leaf, but she rarely ate a lot and was quite weak, despite being really active. In an effort to increase her appetite her carer paired her with another Koala joey named Kim, who loved to eat but wasn't as active as Lauren, so it was hoped they would rub off on one another. Life for Lauren with Kim was interesting to say the least! Kim was a pretty tough joey and would often pick fights with Lauren who always conceded defeat but as the weeks rolled on, Kim became more active, climbing and exploring their enclosure and Lauren's appetite greatly improved – and she learnt how to fight back sometimes!

Although her appetite had increased, she was still struggling to gain weight, and after a thorough vet check, it was established that she had active Koala Retrovirus also known as KoRV. This is something that all our local koalas have in their genome – they can have it their whole life without any trouble, but because Lauren had such a stressful time being an orphan joey, KoRV was activated. Retroviruses in general are known to cause cancers and other diseases that thrive without an immune system to fight them off. Researchers are still working to understand how exactly KoRV affects Koalas. As Lauren has active KoRV she can't be released into the wild as she gets sick all the



Sweetie



Lauren

time and needs constant monitoring, but otherwise has a good life as a much-loved koala we have been approved to retain permanently for education purposes. She shares an enclosure with her friends Sweetie and Charlotte, gets plenty of milk/paste, her favourite leaf (which varies depending on her mood) and lots of love and affection from all the volunteers. She is featured on the back of our Transporter Rescue van, about which we often receive great feedback.

**Sweetie** was rescued in early October 2012 as a young, abandoned joey. She weighed only 1.18kg and had really bad conjunctivitis in both eyes. Because conjunctivitis is contagious she had to be isolated until she was given the all clear, so she went home with a volunteer koala carer.

Over a period of three months, she was fed milk and leaf and the infection in her eyes was treated daily with injections and eye medications. She steadily put on weight and was eventually declared healthy by the vet and ready to move onto the next stage of her care!

Sweetie was paired with another Koala joey named Kal and they were transferred to a soft release pen where they practised their climbing skills and eating leaf from a real tree! In the soft release pen they were also exposed to

all types of weather. Initially Sweetie was coping really well, but after a period of rain, she was found on the ground, and we were really worried because she had also lost weight. She was separated from Kal and transferred to a normal enclosure, was fed dietary supplements and started to gain weight...until she was weaned off them. After an ultrasound we found out she had contracted urinary and reproductive tract infections which can cause infertility in females if left untreated. Unfortunately the vets discovered she had a small cyst on her ovary, so was taken to the Australia Zoo Wildlife Hospital for further assessment and surgery. She ended up getting a hysterectomy which means she can't breed so is unreleaseable. Like Lauren and Charlotte, she gets plenty of fresh leaf and lots of love and affection from all the volunteers. She is one of the lucky koalas for if she hadn't been rescued and contracted urogenital chlamydia in the wild, she probably would have died a slow and painful death.

Friends of the Koala wishes readers a peaceful and happy festive season with your loved ones. Do keep your fingers crossed.

To report a koala in trouble, or a sighting, phone (02) 6622-1233. More info is at: [www.friendsofthekoala.org](http://www.friendsofthekoala.org)

# Holistic efficiency in organic food production

by Matt Downie

True efficiency is to do only what's required to achieve optimal results. So what are optimal results?

Getting clear about what we really want to accomplish is the only way that we can have measurable outcomes to assess the efficiency of our actions. Most people would agree that we want to see health restored to our environment (food production should not contaminate and denude the soil, waterways and surrounding ecology). We also want our food to be produced organically, available fresh year-round in season and produced as cost and resource efficiently as possible. These two outcomes don't seem unreasonable and yet we are globally in the midst of the worst environmental degradation ever caused by our species and have the situation where organic foods generally cost more than industrially-produced food commodities.

When it comes to cost efficient, reliable and sustainable organic food production, I believe that there are a number of key factors that when combined into a nature-aligned strategy, will ensure reliable and cost effective organic production, true sustainability and food security, and see renewed health for humanity and the entire Earth biome:

- The ecology of any healthy natural site harbours a diverse range of species that co-inhabit to create a productive symbiosis of abundance, resilience and self-regulating balance. We can take this model and create enhanced production ecologies incorporating the widest range of food plants and domestic animals from around the Earth to create production guilds that fill every niche and microclimate, are self-sustaining and create nature autonomous abundance.

- Water availability throughout the year. Natural rain and spring water should be collected in dams as high up in the landscape as possible, with the overflows directed out along contour channels through the production areas. This simulates the natural flow of creeks soaking the adjacent land, promoting lush plant growth, limiting the impact of drought periods and making food production easier and more reliable.

- No-dig cultivation methods keep the natural integrity of the soil



stratum where the essential organisms responsible for nutrient recycling, fertility and health are able to perform as nature designed. Ploughing and tilling should only be used strategically as a onetime event to open compacted soils and allow water, air, nutrients and life to recolonise it.

- Habitat for life. Repeated mowing and slashing are amongst the most wasteful and pointless use of time, energy and resources. Achieving nothing other than a temporary unnatural uniformity. What did our forebears do with grass and weeds before motorised equipment? They had a greater appreciation of life cycles and allowed meadows, prairies and emergent forests to exist, manage their animals within these ecosystems that produced for them wild berries, fruits and nuts, tubers and roots, herbs and grains all flourishing on nature's terms with very little effort. Mowing and slashing should only be used strategically as a preparation to modify the ecology towards new productive crops being established via strategically broadcasting seeds, transplanting seedlings and planting trees into position.

- Heirloom and natural varieties of plants have a long history of growing under organic/natural conditions. These varieties have genetic diversity within them which allows for adaptation to seasonal and climatic variables, they have an ability to co-exist with a diverse range of insects, have a strong history of reliable performance and produce their own viable strong seeds for future planting. Your own seed bank, both living in the field and properly stored have been more valuable than gold in crisis times.

- Heritage livestock are the varieties of domestic animals that our ancestors developed as they selected and bred

for traits such as foraging ability, good natural growth rates, resistance to disease/robust health, predator evasion and ability to reliably reproduce. Many of these strains still exist and can be utilized within breeding programs to further select animals best adapted to free-range self-feeding conditions and to create natural hybrid vigour from combining these heritage forms.

- Nature is an all-inclusive whole. The targeting of a particular plant or insect species to be eliminated through spraying chemicals throws the entire ecological balance into a downward spiral. Any species that seems to be in excess is merely a symptom of other variables that have previously been put out of balance. It really is a can of dying worms... that when you plough and lay bare the soil, apply chemical fertilizers, spray to kill pests and weeds, grow fields with limited diversity, then slash the immediate neighbouring weed vegetation to the ground you are creating an ecological dead zone (The very actions that create desertification). The problems that these actions have created are not solvable with more reactions to the symptoms. This is just chasing your tail and adding further to the environmental degradation. The only solution here is to back away from the ecological war zone created and allowing nature to start the healing process. By learning to appreciate diversity and natural life cycle processes, the window to seeing the bigger picture can be opened and the interconnected web of life which we are an intimate part becomes apparent. The choice now is, are we a parasitic entity ravaging the planet, or an intelligent species living in symbiotic balance with its own habitat.

- Nature is generous and wants to thrive everywhere it can. If we can pause from habituated assumptions and actions and acknowledge nature's 3+ billion years experience, adaptation and success on Earth, we could return to the role of working in collaborative symbiosis with the fundamental life forces energies in our own ecological gardens and farms, localising food security, incorporating more of the Earth's amazing productive species, learn how to optimise nature's conditions to thrive and simply promoting natural momentum towards year-round abundance with ease.

## Plant of the month



### Pandanus palm *Pandanus tectorius*

by Richard Burer,  
*Bush regenerator*

It's a hot and dry start to the year and not so good for planting trees and propagating, so I guess the perfect place to be will be seeking some shade on the beach.

Pandanus, palm is possibly a palm you might be sitting under on one of our local beaches.

Native in Australia from the Northern Rivers to Cape York, Pandanus palm is a cultural asset to Indigenous peoples

of Australia, the Pacific Islands and beyond.

Pandanus has many uses including weaving materials, food, medicine, ceremonial uses and building supplies.

Found on coastal lowland plant communities, Pandanus is found typically on the edge of the ocean and is so stunning on the foredune as you see often.

Have a nice start to the year peoples, take time out, rest up and have at least one day in January sitting under this iconic, beautiful tree specimen.

## Trapping the trapper

When we set a trap for a rat there is always the possibility we might get more than that. Sadly for two pythons recently brought to WIRES, that was the case.

A member of the public was concerned about rats in his chook run and decided to set a number of traps one evening. To his horror the next day he found a lovely juvenile carpet python struggling to extricate itself from two traps. He immediately released the poor snake, placed it in a bag and called WIRES for assistance.

WIRES rescuer Rowan went to the call, but the snake had escaped the bag through a small hole and was found in the garden outhouse. The snake was given a preliminary check which revealed that the spine was intact but that there was likely to be some internal organ damage as well as an external wound and severe pain. Rowan took the snake home and administered some oral

pain relief while waiting for another WIRES volunteer, Martin, to transport the snake to Currumbin Wildlife Hospital.

Fortunately, this snake was given the all-clear at Currumbin and is now back in the care of WIRES until it is ready to be released. A second snake, which suffered the same fate, is still at Currumbin Wildlife Hospital and WIRES is awaiting news of his/her condition.

Spring-type rat traps are an inhumane way of controlling vermin. They are non-discriminatory, and various wildlife can be caught in them. Rat poisons are also not recommended as they also carry a risk of secondary death to predators such as raptors, kookaburras and reptiles that may eat the poisoned rats or mice.

Snakes, and particularly pythons, are our greatest natural rat traps and will happily rid us of these



rodents silently and free of charge. WIRES recommend learning to co-exist with these beautiful animals, and to be grateful for the service they provide.

If you do need to place traps for rats or mice, use live-traps (available at hardware stores and online). And if you do find an animal that has been injured by a trap, please call WIRES immediately on 6628-1898.

If you are keen to make a difference for the wildlife in our area, consider joining WIRES. Now is a great time to join since their next workshop will be held in

Lismore on 23rd February, and there is time beforehand to complete the on-line part of the course. For more information about how you can join and contribute, call 6628-1898.

This 24-hour hotline is for all rescue, advice or membership calls in the Northern Rivers.

An all-volunteer organisation, WIRES relies heavily on the generosity of caring people for support. All donations \$2 and over are tax deductible.

Go to: <http://wiresnr.org/Helping.html> to find out how you can help.

## Check out the sugar gliders

Sebastian and Samson, four-year old sugar glider brothers, will be joining the daily performance of the *Night Creatures Nocturnal Theatre* show at The Macadamia Castle, showing off their natural behaviours and bringing an important conservation message to a new audience.

Sugar gliders are amazing creatures, although tiny, and weighing around 140 grams they have a skin membrane that stretches between its legs allowing it to glide up to 50 metres from tree to tree.

They are important pollinators as they feed from flowers and spread pollen along their feeding route.

They also are important for seed dispersal as the seeds they eat are then spread and fertilised in their droppings.

Sugar gliders are found through the north and eastern parts of Australia, and habitat loss as well as predation by introduced



species is putting pressure on wild sugar glider populations in our region.

Owner of The Macadamia Castle, Tony Gilding said, "Samson and Sebastian are extremely shy, so training them has been a long process.

"We're teaching them to come out of their nesting box and glide over to a keeper and demonstrate their natural gliding behaviour."

The sugar gliders are part of the daily show these school holidays at 2pm. Places are limited to 20 per day. Free, after park entry.

# 2019: The Animal Challenge!

## Animal Talk

by Donna Connolly

Hello Animal lovers, Well it's officially 2019... Happy New Year everyone! Do you feel rested, inspired, fresh... ready to go?

I'm not usually one for New Year's resolutions. However, I do focus on one or two areas of my life that could benefit from developing further. This year I will be assisting the animals to speak to a larger, wider audience.

I will be working closely with people, and facilitating workshops to empower others to tune in to their inner knowing and embrace the kinship that is All Life.

Most of all I would love to meet open minded humans who are ready to step up and receive these messages and more importantly, act on them. No I'm not talking about being a vegan vigilante. I'm referring to practical steps that can help bring this planet back into balance.

The animals have amazing insights and possible solutions. In our own personal life situations and on a global scale. (Obviously we could use some new suggestions. What have we got to lose?)

Animals come from a place of unconditional love, they are

the supreme masters of this. They assist us with our life imbalances giving us messages filtered through love. They have the ability to show us a different, better way.

Often when I see clients, the guardians have a fear of their animals "telling personal stories or secrets". Please release those fears! All the animals I have had the privilege of connecting with have only wanted to communicate for everyone's highest purpose. And usually with a comical edge too.

What I have found interesting: There is the animal's personal perspective, often coupled with the collective consciousness of that particular species. (Some people would refer to this as Source energy, God consciousness etc.) It is a higher perspective, nonetheless. Like a satellite system with a better view of the bigger picture.

We can easily get caught up in our daily lives, focusing on mundane issues. Imagine the difference if we can change our filters.

Here's a challenge for 2019, so keep an open mind and try some of the following:

- Meditate with your fur friends, it's a wonderful way to connect and strengthen your bonds.
- Telepathically or verbally ask

each animal you encounter if they have any advice. From flies to fillies. You may be surprised.

- Thank the creatures you come into contact with, each has their place in our ecosystem. The attitude of gratitude raises your vibrations.
- Send the animals unconditional love, and remember time is a linear human concept. So they can be living, or passed.
- Spend time in nature, and ask the animals for answers or signs.
- Swim in the ocean and communicate with the marine life.
- Live in the moment (as much as possible).

These suggestions are to assist in raising your frequency and developing your intuitive self. It can be simple and profound all at once, I'd love to hear your experiences.

Also, I am participating in a Health and Wellness Expo, this year. We will be touring from the Northern Rivers to the Hunter Valley.

I am offering Reiki at these events, and I am happy to answer any questions you may have regarding Animal Communication, Reiki and Pendulum Dowsing.

The first event is on 12th January at Yamba Bowling Club from 10am to 4pm. See you there!



## Wildlife talks



by Eric Smith

We all love our local wildlife, but do we know what to do to help them?

Starting this month, Blue Knob Market will be hosting a series of talks on wildlife by local Jo Cabalé.

Explore identifying characteristics of species, learn who's who in your yard, find out how to live in harmony with the local wildlife.

Get tips on how to keep pets and wildlife happy and safe, learn what's normal and what's not. Find out what to do if you think there's a problem, or you come across an injured or orphaned native animal. Learn who to call for advice or assistance.

Bring photos for identification, browse books and information, and ask all those questions you've always wondered about our local wildlife.

The talks will be:

- **January 19th:** Reptiles – snakes, lizards, turtles. From blind snakes to lace monitors, and everything in between.
- **January 26th:** Birds – Everything with feathers. From wrens fossicking around in the long grass to the wedge-tailed eagles cruising the thermals.
- **February 2nd:** Mammals (including marsupials) – possums, bandicoots, echidnas, native rodents, bats, wallabies and pademelons.

All talks begin at 10am, and are approximately one hour with question and answer time.

Jo Cabalé is currently an active member of Tweed Valley Wildlife Carers Inc., the volunteer organisation licensed to rescue, rehabilitate and release wildlife in the Tweed Shire.

With over ten years of experience with local wildlife, she has been involved with birds, reptiles, marsupials and other mammal species.

Her practical knowledge and skills range from basic species identification and advice, to rescue techniques, hand raising, assessment and care, and rehabilitation of many of our local wildlife.

*The Blue Knob Market – Farmers, Fermenters, and Fibre Artists – happens every Saturday in the grounds of the Blue Knob Hall Gallery, near the corner of Blue Knob and Lillian Rock Road, between 8.30am and noon. We are always glad to see you.*



# Sun of God is crucified and resurrected

by Cameron Storey

So we all know the story, Jesus was born on December 25th, his birth was located by a star in the East which three kings followed, Jesus had 12 disciples, aka the son of God and the light of the world, he was crucified and placed in a tomb for three days and resurrected ascending into heaven.

It would be safe to say most Christians believe this story as if it actually historically happened, maybe, but there are different versions and influences which predate the Jesus story across numerous Northern Hemisphere cultures spread over a few continents.

First of all the birth sequence can be seen as astrological, the brightest star in the East is Sirius, which on December 24th aligns with the three brightest stars in Orion's belt. These 3 bright stars in Orion's belt are called today, what they were called in ancient times, the 3 Kings. The three kings and the brightest star Sirius all point to the place of the sun rise on December 25th. Hence the three kings follow the star in the East in order to locate the birth of God's son (sun-rise) or the birth of the Sun.

There is another very interesting phenomena that occurs around December 25th in the Northern hemisphere – the Winter solstice. From the summer solstice to the winter solstice the days become shorter and colder and from the perspective of the northern hemisphere the sun appear to go South and get smaller and more scarce. The shortening of the days and expiration of the crops when approaching the winter solstice symbolised the process of 'death' to the ancients. It was the 'death' of the sun.

So by December 22nd the sun's demise was fully realised, for the sun having moved South continuously for 6 months makes it to its lowest point in the sky. Here a curious thing occurs, the sun stops moving South, at least perceptibly, for 3 days and during this 3 day pause the sun resides in the vicinity of the Southern Cross Constellation and after this



God's Sun surrounded by his twelve constellations and four seasons on the cross of solstices and equinoxes

time on December 25th moves one degree this time North toward the Northern Hemisphere foreshadowing longer days, warmth, and spring.

And thus it was said the 'sun' died on the 'cross' (Southern) was 'dead' (stationary) for 3 days only to be 'resurrected' or born again bringing salvation, the 'Light of the World' and foreshadowing longer days.

It has been suggested by better scholars than me that the 12 disciples are the twelve signs of the zodiac.

In 274 AD, the Roman emperor Aurelian had declared December 25th the birth date of Sol Invictus (Unconquered Sun), a sun god of Syrian origin whose cult had been vigorously promoted by the earlier emperor Elagabalus. According to some scholars Christians may have thought that they could attract more converts to Christianity by allowing them to continue to celebrate on the same day.

December 25th also falls around the same time as the Roman festival of Saturnalia, which was much older and more widely

celebrated. Many of the customs originally associated with Saturnalia eventually became associated with Christmas. The Bible never states when Jesus was born[but after Pope Julius 1 decreed it in AD350, Christians began celebrating Jesus' birth on December 25th. In some depictions from late antiquity, Jesus was shown with the halo of the sun god Sol Invictus.

But this ritual of the birth of God's sun which occurs on the 25th of December for the Northern Hemisphere countries (only) does not translate to Southern Hemisphere countries. Southern Hemisphere's celebration of the birth of God's sun would occur around the 21st of June (Winter Solstice).

Willkakuti (Return of the Sun), Machaq Mara (New Year), the Andean-Amazonic New Year is the celebration in Bolivia, Chile and in the Southern Peru which commemorates the winter solstice.

God's sun would move to the furthest point North on horizon on the 21st of June, be 'dead' or stationary for 3 days and be resurrected on the 25st of June each year.

So to recap in Australia, which is in the Southern Hemisphere (SH), on the 25th of December God's sun is NOT beginning to create longer days from the shortest day (winter solstice) as in the Northern Hemisphere, but it's beginning to create shorter days from the longest day (summer solstice) which is the completely opposite meaning to the Northern Hemisphere people.

Celebrating S.H. summer solstice makes sense, even Jesus as a personification of God's sun makes sense if it was celebrated in June. If Jesus were to disappear from the world forever what would happen? And if the sun disappeared forever? Now as for Santa, reindeer, sleighs, fir trees, and snow – well that's a fairy tale for another time.

*The Dharma Centre and Medicinal Gardens is available on AirBnB (Nimbin Eco-Retreat with Yoga/Meditation Studio). (02) 6689-7120 or Facebook "Dharma Centre – Lillifield".*

# The Language of Equus

by Les Rees,  
Equine naturopath

Having worked around horses for more years than I can remember, I've learnt a few things about them.

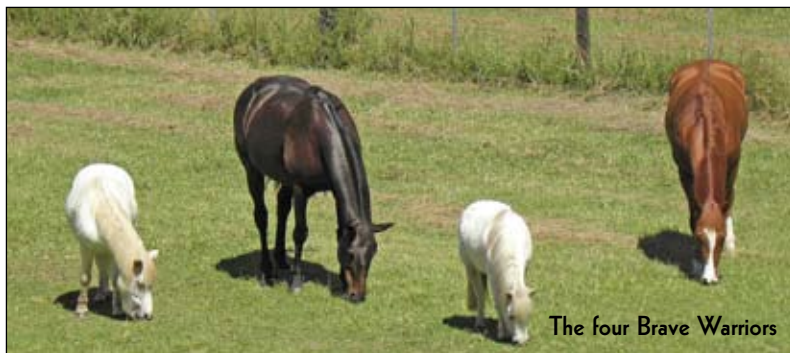
Those who love these noble beasts become obsessed by anything equine and I have to confess to being one of them.

The thing that has always intrigued me is that they communicate with each other in so many subtle ways which are often missed by humans.

It seems that we expect them to understand our language and when they don't react in the ways we want, we get angry and call them stupid. This is definitely not the case.

Most horses make an effort to communicate with us but their language ability is subject to a form of communication skills suited to being able to survive as a wild horse, not as a human.

In fact, they generally put in far more effort than we do on the communication front but are often misunderstood and treated badly because their humans are too arrogant and egotistical to listen to them.



The four Brave Warriors

Many years ago I spent some time studying wild ponies in the Dartmoor and Exmoor National Parks in the U.K. Anyone who has owned ponies will confirm that they can be extremely smart when they need to be.

I remember one who had worked out a way to get across the animal containment grids by lying down, then rolling on its back and manoeuvring its way by wriggling across to the other side until it was safe to stand up.

It wasn't long before others in the herd had learnt how to do it by copying her behaviour. I don't know about you, but I think that this is pretty smart.

A while ago, I watched my herd react to several pigs that had wandered into our paddocks having escaped from our neighbour's farm.

Merry, the smallest in our herd is only 9hh, that's about

up to my thigh in height, but she can be fierce and very smart when she needs to be. On this occasion, she took charge by marching up to these cheeky pigs and stood her ground like a proud warrior confronting the enemy.

Next in line, Pippin (11hh) followed and drew to a halt a few metres away, waiting for the signal. The two bigger horses moved further away, Gypsy blocked the gate and Red moved into the paddock behind it.

After a long stare-down, the pigs broke their line in an attempt to make a run for it but Merry was close on their heels and before the pigs knew it, they were being attacked from the second line of defence.

Pippin led the new charge, scattering the pigs that were now running in all directions. Who said that pigs were clever?

Two made it as far as the gate, but only one was game enough to attempt getting past the giant with gnashing teeth and kicking hooves.

The other pig broke through the fence and was quickly spotted by Red who stood firm. Both pig and the horse stopped and eyed each other, each anticipating who would make the first move.

Red suddenly pawed the ground and the pig ran for his life, with Red in hot pursuit. Meanwhile the rest of the pigs scattered in all directions, each one chased out of equine territory by our four brave soldiers.

How could these horses have managed all these military tactics without some complex form of communication?

I have conversations with my horses every day, because over the years I've gradually learnt their language.

They in turn have met me somewhere in the middle in an attempt to make their communication clearer for me. That's true happiness. Happy New Year

Les Rees, Equine Naturopath  
& Sports Therapist  
0437-580-705  
www.horsetailherbs.com.au

## The Art of Lunging



by Suzy Maloney B.Eq.Sc.

Lunging is the practice of sending a horse in circles around a person.

When a young horse misbehaves, the lead mare may send them out of the herd, running them in circles until they give signals saying they accept the rules of the herd structure. Running a horse around you simulates this situation and creates a response similar to the above.

It's used to engender connection and develop a healthy relationship between human and horse, to burn off excess energy and to condition horses. It can be done using a lunge rope, a 12" training rope or no rope at all if you have a round-yard.

Lunging requires immaculate timing, an ability to stay focused and in the moment, control of your body movements and an understanding of the horse. It also develops voice commands in the horse, which can be handy when riding.

If the horse or human is new to

lunging, start using a rope. Begin with it short, if you give out a lot of rope at the beginning you may find it difficult. Let the rope out slowly as your horse starts responding. If you lose connection shorten it for a while. It's good to be flexible with the length of your rope. Ensure the rope is organised and never becomes wrapped around your hand. If this happens, stop and reorganise the rope into long, safe loops.

Be very clear about which hand is directing and which is driving, this will be of enormous help later when you take the rope off and work at liberty. Change hands when you change direction. The leading hand holds the rope, it doesn't wave around, but steadily points in the direction of travel. The driving hand can hold a lunge or training whip, it moves and drives the horse forward. Lunging is about driving the horse from behind, not pulling them from the front.

If your horse is repeatedly turning in to you block with your leading hand while increasing pressure with the driving

hand. This is the number one problem people have when they start lunging.

If the horse does stop and turn toward you without you asking, and you stop driving them, give them a pat and slowly ask them to go out again, they learn this is a great way to have a holiday, and will do it again and again. This can get incredibly frustrating for the human, so try and avoid it by sending the horse back out straight away. Keep the front of your body toward the horse.

Once your horse is circling nicely at the walk, it's good to ask for halt. Use a calm tone of voice and say halt or whoa, stop driving and stop turning so they end up adjacent to your shoulder. Most horses will stop, if not, squeeze the line, look at the ground, shorten the rope and continue with the voice until they stop. Praise and repeat until the stop is instant. Then ask for the trot. Use your voice and give an aid with the driving hand.

At first the horse is warming up, so let them come back to the walk if they want. After a few small trots, ask the horse to continue for a few laps. Ask them to transition from trot to walk to halt to walk to trot etc. When these transitions are working ask for canter. Again work on the transitions between gaits. Change sides regularly and especially after the horse does something well.

When you're finished, use your body language to invite the horse to join-up with you, and then walk around with you for a while to end the session. This is a very brief introduction but it will get you started. The benefits of circle work are enormous so have fun and give it a go.

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## “What we perceive depends on how we direct our attention.” - Milton Erickson

Perception is an interesting thing. Most of the time we see our world as we have become accustomed to seeing it.

This is generally useful as it means we are not having to work hard at living life, but can assume a lot of things and then get on with making sense of the novel.

Our responses to what we perceive can largely become part of a well-oiled machine, which is not to say that this is necessarily good.

In families, old patterns of behaviour in interactions between members and beyond that to interactions with other people who simply remind us of a family member, can be practically set in stone in a destructive manner.

For example, a little girl is bossed around by her older sister who has been given the care of the younger one because mother is ill. The older sister has always been angry at having to be “mother” to her sister and forced, more or less, to give up her own childhood. The

younger one doesn't really know any difference.

Mum is sort of there, but not as a comforter when she is hurt. “Mother-sister” is unreliable (she's angry, after all), but who else is there? Father works away, and there is no other family nearby, and so the little one has to depend on this person who feels good/not good.

When she grows up, she meets a man who is good and not good. He is familiar, but still not quite known. He behaves unpredictably and erratically, he is there and then he disappears and returns to surprise her, and then goes, and then comes.

Every time the woman meets with her older sister, she feels attacked and sort of depleted. She notices that afterward seeing her sister she eats a lot of sweets even though she isn't hungry and even though she is now pre-diabetic.

She attends psychotherapy sessions and starts to notice the patterns of behaviour in her own life as well as that in the man she's with. She



by Dr Elizabeth McCardell  
M. Couns., PhD

breaks up with him and at the same time, builds an understanding her sister more. She starts to notice that as her perceptions of that woman's behaviour change, so are her reactions changing.

She doesn't feel the same imploded feelings so much and doesn't consume massive amount of ice cream in the way she used to.

The process of psychotherapy interrupts not only tired old modes of interaction that are not working, but brings insights that create an ongoing capacity to change how we respond to others in the world.

This, though, doesn't mean everything is hunky-dory. As anyone who has experienced how it is to stop reacting as one has traditionally done within families and other groups, one's non-reactions disturb the machinery of the family system and certain others can become belligerent and nasty.

My suggestion when such things happen is to walk away and leave the antagonist to fight their own shadows. I'm reminded of the martial artist who, when the opponent lunges aggressively at them, simply steps aside. The opponent topples over. Neat.

In time, the perceptions of other people in response to us change as we change and how they behave towards us changes too. Family and other social systems are not immutable, but fluid and flexible. What once was, doesn't have to be forever. Our perceptions change according to how we direct our attention, and that changes practically everything.

## What to expect for the three stages of labour

### Doula Wisdom

by Kirrah Stewart

Do you know the three stages of labour and why it's important to keep the birth space as private and loving as possible?

#### Stage One – Dilation of the cervix from 1-10cm

In early labour, most women find that they are more comfortable at home. This is because things are familiar and we tend to feel more relaxed.

In early labour, contractions may be spaced about 10-15 minutes apart. It's good to rest in between and save your energy for active labour.

For the right hormones to be released, women need to feel safe and be given privacy. Oxytocin, also known as the love hormone, is very important for regulating contractions and dilating the cervix.

We can boost oxytocin levels by creating a safe space and being massaged. Endorphins are released in response to pain. They are stronger than morphine and act as a natural pain relief and contribute to a feeling of euphoria.

#### Active Labor

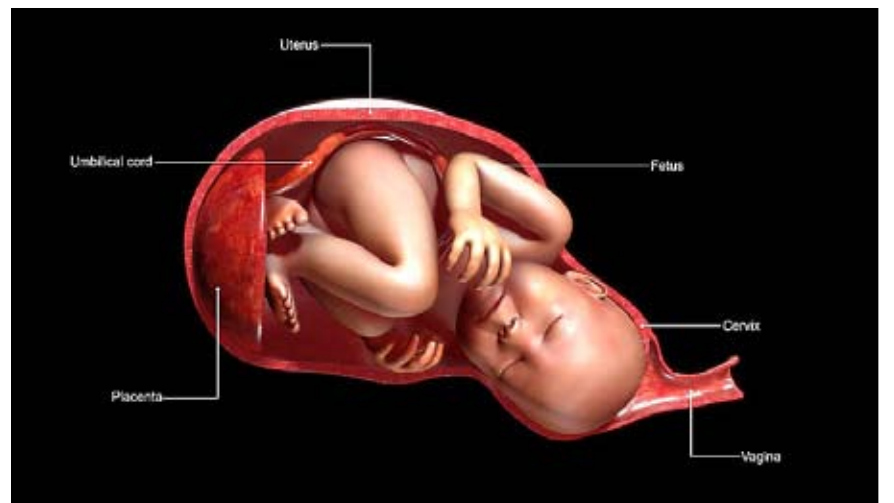
As labour progresses, contractions become closer together, are stronger and last longer. In active labour, contractions may be every 3-5 minutes.

If you're not planning to birth at home, then it's usually a good time to head to the hospital or birth centre when contractions are around five minutes apart.

Labour may slow down in the car or on arrival at the hospital but if it was established beforehand, women can usually get back into a rhythm.

After arriving at the hospital, having a shower can help you get back in the right headspace.

Your support person can then try to re-create a calm environment again. Things like nice music, good smells and familiar items can help you feel more relaxed and



safe.

#### Transition 8-10cm dilation

Transition is usually the most intense phase of labour. Women can feel exhausted and a bit overwhelmed. It's usually the shortest phase but many times people feel they 'can't go on'.

Your support person can remind you that you're doing great and baby is close.

#### Stage Two – Pushing/Birthing

Once dilation is complete, the woman will usually feel an instinctive urge to push.

Being upright or on hands and knees can feel more productive, as gravity is on your side. The baby will rotate through the pelvis as the uterus pushes down.

For a first time mother, the crowning of the baby's head can feel like two steps forward and one step back as her vagina slowly stretches open. Once the head is born, the body usually follows quite quickly.

Keeping mother and baby close to each other helps with bonding and helps the mother to release her own natural oxytocin which helps prevent postpartum haemorrhage and helps her to safely birth the placenta.

By leaving the cord unclamped, the baby can continue to receive oxygen from the placenta via the pulsing umbilical

cord. This gives the baby time to get used to breathing on its own.

#### Stage Three – Birthing the placenta

At the time of birth, up to 1/3 of the baby's blood volume is still in the placenta. It continues to pump blood to the baby for at least few minutes after the birth.

If you can wait for the cord to finish pulsing, the baby will receive most or all of its blood. This blood contains iron, oxygen and stem cells and is beneficial for the baby to receive it.

In many hospitals it is quite common for delivery of the placenta to be 'managed'. This involves an injection of synthetic oxytocin. A natural third stage, without drugs being used, is called a 'physiological third stage'. You can decide if you'd like your third stage managed or not and let your care provider know your preferences.

If you want to feel more confident about birth and postpartum, please get in contact to receive your natural birth checklist which will help you feel more prepared. Visit: [www.doulawisdom.com/natural-birth-checklist](http://www.doulawisdom.com/natural-birth-checklist) or contact Kirrah on 0429-308-851, or email: [kirrah@doulawisdom.com](mailto:kirrah@doulawisdom.com)

**H**eat is the obvious external influence to consider right now.

In terms of Chinese medicine, heat can be external or internal. There is a correlation with external heat, or damp heat, and some medical conditions. In ancient China, if someone was expelled from the temperate Northern China to the subtropical south it was seen as a death sentence, as they would often succumb to conditions and diseases confined to the southern region.

So, prolonged hot and humid weather can be a challenge.

Usually the body is in equilibrium with the environment. This equilibrium can break down if the body is weak or not used to the conditions, or the temperatures are unseasonal or excessive, or if there is a sudden change in temperature. Sudden change can include moving from heat to air con as the skin's pores are open in the heat and susceptible to wind pathogens when moving to the cool suddenly. Working in refrigerated work places is similar.

One specific condition recognised in Chinese medicine as being unique to summer is summer heat and damp. This

# Heat can be external or internal

causes vomiting, nausea, headache, thirst and sweating. Summer heat injures yin and fluids, and can become recurrent if care is not taken during the acute phase.

Conditions recognised as "damp" are often seen in hot humid conditions.

In Chinese medicine damp is a pathogenic factor that can cause a number of problems. Some people have a tendency toward damp, especially if there is a digestive weakness. Diet is a consideration. Counterintuitively, over consumption of cold foods is not always the best in this weather. This is because they are difficult to digest resulting in damp. Cold foods include raw foods – salads, fruit, juices, as well as soft drinks and ice cream. Sugary foods cause damp, which is why cold sugary soft drinks cause many health problems as well as weight gain. External damp can worsen symptoms:



by Brigid Beckett

this may be humid weather or sitting around in damp clothes. Meridian systems affected include bladder, gall bladder, spleen and intestines. Specifically skin, joints, sinuses and connecting channels can be adversely affected by damp.

Often there is a sense of heaviness, tiredness, fullness of the chest and poor appetite. Damp can be hard to move by its nature, and can linger. Chronic skin problems and digestive weakness often have a component of damp.

Phlegm heat is also more common in hot humid weather. It can cause a number of problems, again often lingering. In Chinese medicine many recurrent and difficult to treat problems have a component of phlegm. These include ear problems such as glue ear or tinnitus, chronic sinus problems, coughs and wheeziness, insomnia, bloating, reflux, thyroid disorders, insomnia.

Insomnia usually is due to one or another of the heat patterns, whether it is fire in the heart (which is the organ most affected by heat), phlegm heat or yin deficient heat. Hot weather will aggravate all these conditions.

To best cope with this weather, avoid depletion of yin fluids as much as possible. Drink enough water and avoid strenuous activity during the heat..

As mentioned excessive amounts of cold and raw foods can cause problems, as well as sugary food and drink and dairy. To address phlegm and damp, bitter, drying or pungent foods can help digest richer foods. Examples are chutneys with cheese, mustards with meat, pesto with pasta. Wine, bitter ales and green tea with rich food can also modify damp forming properties.

Acupuncture and herbs are an effective way to treat heat or damp heat problems.

*Brigid Beckett is a fully registered practitioner working at Lismore Community Acupuncture. Phone 0431-702-560.*

## Nimbin's Healing Arts Collective

by Anne Walker

The Healing Arts Collective is an eclectic mix of practitioners working from a beautiful clinic space at the Nimbin Community Centre on Cullen Street.

First established by Naturopath Fiona Maunder, as Artemis Medicinals (now Stoney Chute Herbals), in Sept 2014 with Anne Walker and Tina Featherfoot.

In 2015, Jodie Grist aka Spiral was invited on board and with Fiona's departure to new ventures, soon after the Clinic became known as 'The Healing Arts Collective' with Anne, Spiral, Tina and Betti Willie.

2015 also saw Anne and Spiral's vision of giving back to the community and holding Community Open Clinic Days come to fruition. It has been running every six to eight weeks since its inception. The Community Clinic Days offer 30-minute treatments in various modalities, free or by donation to those in the community on low income or holding a current Health Care Card. All practitioners freely give their own time, energy and love to the clinic days. They are now held bi-monthly on the first Monday of every second month.

Many practitioners of the Healing Arts have come and gone over the years, including Tina, Betti, Spiral, Melanie, Chell and Sarah. Sarah has now moved down the hall and opened her own Herbal Dispensary called The Remedy Room where you will find her concocting her home-grown herbal remedies and offering Naturopathic/Herbal Medicine and Nutrition consultations. She also remains a part of the Open Clinic days.

The Healing Arts Collective also stocks a range of lovingly hand-blended body and skin care products, aromatic medicine prescriptions, essential oils and essential oil blends, a small range of practitioner only supplements, hemp balms and Tea Medica's therapeutic herbal tea blends.

In 2016, Anne Walker took on the lease and has been a founding member since 2014. In 2017 Satya McVeity joined the team and Anne and Satya have been the driving force the past two years.

Our clinic differs slightly from others in town, as although there is a lease holder/co-ordinator, all practitioners



work together as a collective in sharing knowledge, referring clients and decision-making. Everyone supports each other and meets regularly to discuss any issues or ideas. A commitment to the Community Clinic Days also helps keep the rent affordable.

Please don't hesitate to get in touch if you are interested in becoming part of the team. People's circumstances often change and so we are always happy to keep a contact list.

In 2019 we hope to see Caleb coming on board doing Art Therapy sessions on Saturdays.

And now Satya and Anne would like to introduce to you and welcome our newest practitioners, Lisa, Nicholas and Belinda.

The Healing Arts Collective is open Monday to Friday and Market Sundays.

♦ **Mondays 10am-4pm:** Nicholas Maynard 0431-013-501. Remedial, Deep Tissue and Relaxation Massage, evaluation and treatment of Musculo/skeletal impairment. Health Fund Accredited.

♦ **Tuesdays 9am-5pm:** Belinda David 0433-700-903. Raynor Naturopathic Massage and Reiki.

♦ **Wednesdays and Market Sundays 10am-5pm:** Satya McVeity 0428-391-156. Remedial, Deep Tissue and Relaxation Massage, Indian Head Massage, Chinese Acupressure and Pranic Healing.

♦ **Thursdays 10am-3pm:** Lisa Scott 0498-354-225. Kahuna Bodywork, Pregnancy Massage and Polynesian Floor Work.

♦ **Fridays 9.30am-6pm:** Anne Walker 0408-490-385. Clinical Aromatherapist-Holistic Counselling, Remedial, Deep Tissue and Relaxation Massage-Energetic Alignments, Aromatherapy Massage, Pregnancy Massage, Reflexology and Lite-Touch Biodynamic Craniosacral Therapy. Health Fund Accredited.

For bookings, please contact individual practitioners. You may also use our appointment diary outside the clinic.

We look forward to walking alongside you on your healing journeys.

## NATURAL LAW

by Helene Collard

Helene 0405-656-797 or:  
[yemayacentre@gmail.com](mailto:yemayacentre@gmail.com)

### Welcome to 2019.

The intense year of 2018 was not for the faint-hearted, however for many of us, the great change has facilitated the re-coding of our light matrix, bringing us into greater alignment with the Collective Divine Plan.

This Plan facilitates and ensures a sacred balance within the web of life, hence the energy shifts created seek to resolve unhealthy expressions of power and control, including co-dependence.

Willingly or unwillingly, we are invited to activate and develop our unique light coding, to create more balance within. That's right – it's an 'inside job'. As if with a Divine hand, the energies of January literally urge us to surrender to change, to allow the storm to blow away whatever isn't needed. This clearing is available on all levels and in all dimensions, so open yourself to releasing past-life and karmic data too.

Reiki is an energy healing treatment that works on all levels of the Being, and, across all dimensions of space and time (including no time!).

Therefore, it is a powerful tool in releasing and healing residue from all aspects of our existence. Cutting the Chords is a technique I combine with Reiki, to release a person from unhealthy/toxic attachment to any relationship or situation (past or present). Afterwards, the recipient often feels lighter and clearer in that situation, and in a recent case, physical ailments also ceased.

If you would like some guidance and support, in harnessing January's clearing energies, I'd love to hear from you. Contact

### New Year Hours:

Helene: Reiki – taking appointments now for 7th January onwards

Martha: Yogalates back Friday 11th January

Sam: iRest Yoga Nidra back Tuesday 22nd January

Yours in Wellbeing,  
Helene

### Coming up at the Yemaya Centre

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♦ **iRest Yoga Nidra with Sam Woolstra** Tuesdays 9.30am & 5.30pm

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*Helene has a Bachelor of Trauma & Healing (Law & Justice), is a Reiki Master and the Founder of the Yemaya Centre for Reiki & Wellbeing in Lismore. Helene has been practicing Reiki for over a decade and currently practices and teaches Reiki in Lismore. Helene is also employed as a Facilitator with We All-i, delivering their Culturally Informed Trauma Integrated Healing Approach (CITIHA) around Australia. Helene's approach to wellbeing is focused in personal growth, and she has been writing Natural Law and delivering wellbeing workshops since 2008.*

*For information, enquiries and bookings visit: [www.yemayacentre.com.au](http://www.yemayacentre.com.au) or phone 0405-656-797.*