

The Nimbin Organic Food Co-op has been inundated with pumpkins. Delicious and tender, they are willing and able to jump in the pot or oven to your satisfaction.

Check out the recipes below to take advantage of the season's best.

Another delight of the season is the wonderful range of apples available to us.

The origins of apples (Garden of Eden aside) is an ancient one, going back 10 million years.

Having been spared the last Ice Age, apples continued to evolve in an area of north-west China.

Apples are cross-pollinated, so seedlings are never the same as either parent. This characteristic created a great diversity of apple orchards.

Those sweet apples started moving west with the domestication of horses about 7000 years ago (for obvious reasons) so by the time of the Persian kings 2500 years ago, apples were part of the treasure.

Australia ranks highly in the tale of the apple, when a seedling with potential was spotted by a certain Maria, aka "Granny" Smith in 1868 in what is now, the Sydney suburb of Ryde.

By the middle of the 20th century, "Grannies" had overtaken the American "Golden Delicious" in popularity. Other seasonal varieties available to us are the New Zealand 'Gala' and the Western Australian 'Pink Lady' amongst others, and the full range is now available at the Co-op.

To celebrate the season's bounty, the Nimbin Organic Food Co-op has 20% off to our members on all our organic grade apples for the month of June.

Easy apple tart

200gm puff pastry
6 Granny Smith apples peeled, cored, halved
4 tbsp rapadura sugar
2 tbsp unsalted butter, chopped.
Preheat oven to 220°C. Heat a baking sheet to hot. Roll pastry out to 5mm thick. Cut out a circle using a dinner plate or flan ring.

Slice the apple to 2mm thick, discarding the ends so you have even slices. Place overlapping apple slices



along the outer edge of the pastry. Continue with another small circle, overlapping, just inside the first, then finish with a few in the middle, so the pastry is covered in apple. Sprinkle with the sugar and dot with the butter.

Bake for 30+ mins or until golden and the pastry is cooked. Remove and slide the tart onto a cake rack to cool.

Easy-peasy pumpkin soup

1.5kg pumpkin skin on, large wedges
2 brown onions skin on, cut off ends
1 head of garlic skin on, cut off end
4cm ginger skin on
4 bay leaves
4 sprigs thyme
1 litre vegie or chicken stock
1 cup coconut milk
1 tsp of curry powder (optional)
Preheat oven to 200°C.
Grease a baking tray and ensure both sides of pumpkin are lightly oiled. Place whole onion and garlic on tray with pumpkin and sprinkle bay and thyme leaves and season with salt and pepper. Bake for 40-50 mins until soft and slightly charred.

Wait to cool and scrape and squeeze vegies straight into a large saucepan. Add stock and coconut milk (and curry powder if using). Blitz with a stick blender until smooth. Heat on medium high until warmed through. Until next month, eat well.



My Flo Bjelke Peterson pumpkin scone tea towel



Bushwalkers head to the great outdoors

by Peter Moyle

With the easing of restrictions, the Nimbin Bushwalkers are back in the great outdoors our local area offers.

With the walks currently restricted to 10 participants, we will limit numbers we take, so register early to get

in. You can see the variety coming up, so visitors and new members welcome.

Our last walk before the shutdown was a weekend at Rummery Park in the Whian Whian State Conservation Area, and with the beautiful weather that Autumn has given us, a great time was had.

Walks Program for June

Sunday 14th June

Billinudgel Nature Reserve – South Golden Beach

Leader: Peter Moyle 0412-656-498

Grade: 3. Walking through coastal paperbark forest before finding mountain and coastal views. This is a lovely bit of coastline which has seen rehabilitation and maintenance. Return with a short distance on the beach and a swim for the keen ones.

Meet: 9.30am New Brighton general store and café. Confirm with Peter as numbers are limited. Bring water, lunch and hat.

Friday 26th to Sunday 28th June

Forest Tops in the Border Ranges National Park via Kyogle

Leader: Sue Macklin 0402-220-973

Grade: 4. There are beautiful forest and creek walks in the NP. Trails can be slippery with exposed tree roots and rough in places, so care needed.

Meet: Forest Tops campground North of Kyogle. Arrive at your leisure on the Friday or Saturday morning with a walk starting at 9am. A short walk on the Sunday also at 9am. Camping fees apply \$12 per person/night. Also, a vehicle permit is required.

Bring: camping/walking gear, water and firewood. Confirm attendance with Sue, limited numbers on walks.

Seaweed: the harvest of marine botany

by Thom Culpepper

Among my 'stuff' of life is a rock, a hand-span in size, of Ediacaran-biota origin, collected in the early 60s from the Flinders Range, SA.

For 650-540 million Earth-years or thereabouts, it had lain in repose amid the, now uplifted, sandstone bottom of the Precambrian age, showing life in the sea of a simple (?) existence before the complexity of the landed life-forms.

Some 'Paleos' have decided it was a form of a medusa (jelly-fish), but I have always considered it the mark of a tide-driven weed, swung in a circle by the passing ebb and flow of neap tides or the compound swells of moon-wrung, sea-energy.

The origin of most of the soil we garden and farm is the outcome of the existence of these plants. The soil of the Earth we still manage to stand on was generated by the great families of the botanical.

The food chain of sea-botany was the source upon which all who are still here and whose 'Previous' existed, by having feasted on their botanical co-inhabitants. The algae being their food: in the main, with few exceptions, bringing the 'intelligent' converters of sunlight and carbon into life by photosynthesis.

For millennia, wise cultures by the sea have harvested the bounty of the seas, fibre, element, bio-necessities and culinary fabulousness, equalling or out-numbering in abundance the fickleness of the dry lands, those hounded by their exposed geological airiness.

To the 'Laver-breads' and seaweeds: the green/brown algae Wakame (*Undaria pinnatifida*) is the point of this column this month. Wakame has been a seaweed part of the general Oriental diet since prehistoric times.

The species was utilised by the northern European societies: Iceland, West-Norway, Atlantic France, Ireland and Wales and some regions of SW England, and North-Eastern America. In the south, Chile and the Maori tribes of New Zealand cooked with green and red algae.

There are no records of Australian Aborigines using the seaweeds, though a deeper survey of contemporary notes may throw further light on this matter. I feel they must have. The beaches of the south and all the islands are, after storms, littered with edible seaweeds.

Wakame is now a contaminant of many southern hemisphere ports, probably due to bilge clearance. The main crop in Oz is harvested from Tasmania's clean seas.



Wakame and citrus salad

Ingredients
40gms of desiccated wakame seaweed, or 200 grams of fresh Tasmanian wakame
1 large mandarin, pomelo or blood orange
1 Lebanese or Japanese cucumber, (medium slice)

1 tbsp red miso
1 tbsp light soy sauce
2 tbsp mirin (Japanese rice vinegar)
1 tbsp sesame oil
1 tbsp pomelo, yuzu or bitter orange juice
1 red chilli, (finely sliced)
1 pinch shichimi pepper mix
1 tsp white sesame seeds (lightly roasted)

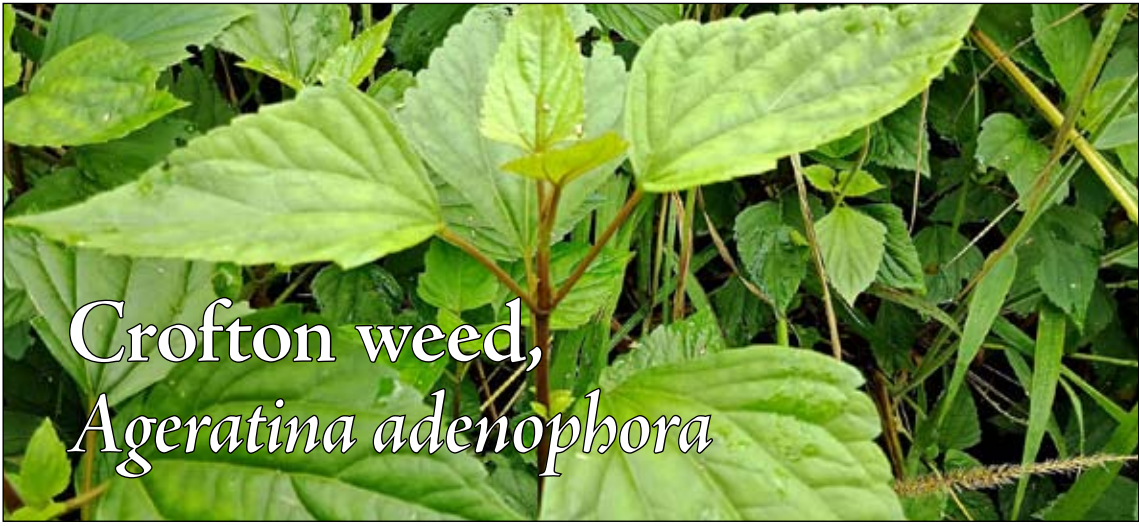
Method

Re-hydrate the dried wakame in cooled boiled water. cover with water and leave for twenty minutes. Free the citrus segments, skin and cut in half. Zest some of the citrus peel.

While the wakame is soaking, prepare the sauce. Add all of the balance of the ingredients to a bowl and whisk together. Should you desire, add a pinch of Oz sea salt. Drain the rehydrated wakame and cut into bite-size pieces.

Arrange the seaweed in a serving bowl, add the citrus segments, toss together then add the prepared sauce, dress with cucumber slices and some extra roast sesame seeds and anoint with a pinch of extra shichimi pepper mix.

Email Culpeper for 'Fermipots', 'Quell', kimchi and fermented sauces: thewholeearthveg@gardener.com



Crofton weed, *Ageratina adenophora*

Weed Words
by Triny Roe

One of Nimbin's most popular weeds has a road named after it! Or is it the other way round?

Crofton weed, *Ageratina adenophora*, is commonplace in the Northern Rivers and probably always will be. Its light seeds can travel long distances on the wind.

Each plant produces from 10,000 to 100,000 seeds. Water can also carry seed to new locations, as can footwear, clothing, animals, vehicles and machinery.

A perennial shrub and a member of the daisy family, it is a native of Mexico and now naturalised in Jamaica, India, Sri Lanka, Hawaii, New Zealand and Australia. In Australia, crofton is pervasive throughout South-East Queensland and on the NSW coast south to Wollongong.

Inland, a couple of separate populations have established on the central and northern tablelands.

The seed requires light to germinate, so it will sprout on disturbed areas after land clearing, on roadsides or abandoned farms. It also invades national parks and waterways. Crofton is found along many local creeks around Nimbin.

As well as being an environmental weed, crofton is toxic to horses, so it's important

to ensure paddocks are free of this pest plant. Exposure causes respiratory problems, eventually leading to death. Inhalation of pollen as well as ingestion of the plant causes irreversible damage to lungs. Horses collapse and die during exertion.

Strategic management works well. Crofton flowers only once a year, unlike blue billygoat weed and farmers' friends, which flower continuously. Hand-weed crofton during June and July to prevent another year of seeding. The roots are shallow and will usually pull out quite easily, especially with younger specimens. Sometimes mature plants sprout new upright growth along the older stems which have fallen over. What looks like several plants growing amongst a patch of grass might be one giant sprawling specimen. The stems can grow up to two metres, especially if supported by other vegetation.

Slashing in winter will prevent spring flowering, but then crofton will reshoot creating multi-stemmed plants with robust root systems that will require a mattock to prise them loose. In moist areas, the slashed stems can take root creating new plants from the vegetative cuttings, making the infestation even worse.

Horses have also been known to eat dried plant material which is still poisonous, so it's important to physically remove it all.

Crofton has a similar flower to

its cousin, mistweed, *A. riparia* but this species has longer narrower leaves. Mistweed is also an environmental pest, so remove it as well when targeting the other.

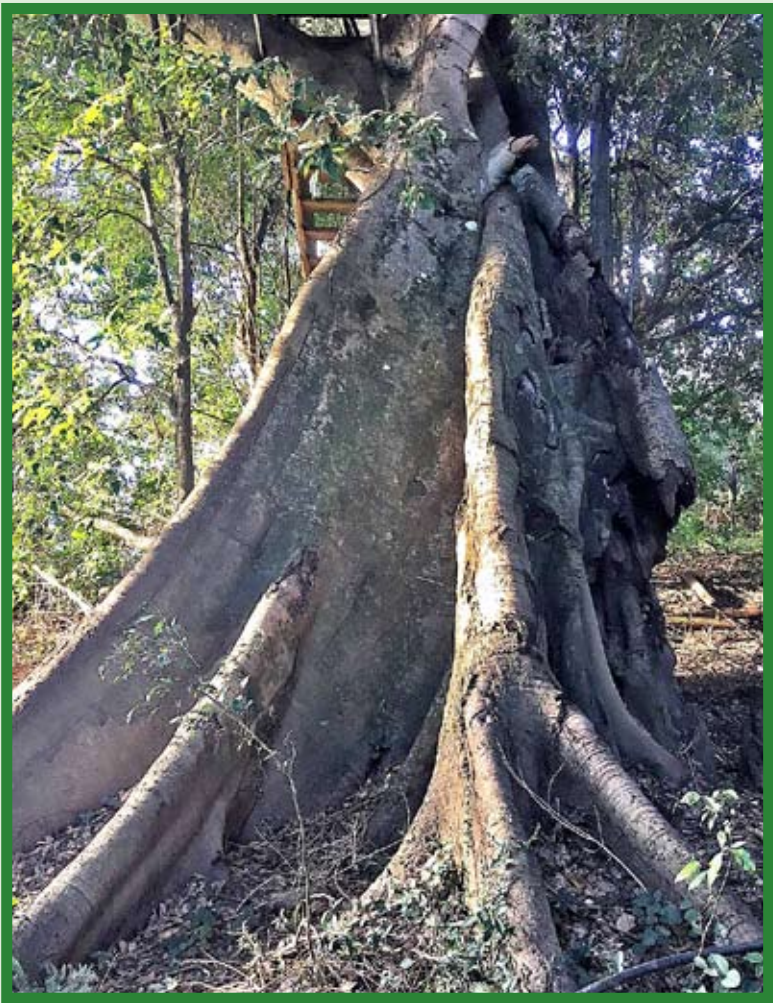
However, mistweed's root system is much tougher. If you don't use a weeding tool, the stems will likely snap off and the roots remain. In time they reshoot and the problem plant remains.

Biological control measures have been around for many years. A gall fly was released in 1953 but results were variable, particularly after the fly was parasitised by a native insect. A fungus and a native crown-boring insect also impact on crofton weed, but not enough to wipe it out. Goats have been used to graze it out, but it's not recommended long term for the same herd and is dependant on other feed being available. Developing a thick pasture can prevent germination of new seedlings. Avoid overgrazing.

Practise strict weed hygiene. Ensure footwear is clean before entering national parks or bush regeneration areas. Mud clinging to the tread on the soles can harbour microscopic seed. Prevent carrying new weeds into vulnerable environments.

Earth-moving equipment and farming machinery are notorious for carrying dirt and plant material around the district. Check contractors clean their machines.

Happy weeding.



Plant of the month

Small leaf Fig *Ficus obliqua*

Selected and photographed by
Richard Burer, [Bush regenerator](#)

There is nothing small about this iconic endemic local Fig tree.

Pictured is a stunning small leaf fig on the Wilson's River in Lismore that certainly pre-dates Europeans. There is even a small room attached in the canopy.

Small leaf fig is a favourite; I love its small fruits and the world that happens in and around this strong character.

Growing to 50m – the specimen pictured does this justice – it's well

rounded and it has seen a flood or two.

Interestingly, its presence has kept the riverbank stable in this part of the river, and regenerating under it are all manner of interesting species.

I recommend this fig for your conservation projects. It's pretty common around the valleys of Nimbin, in particular the dryer rainforest types.

On the farm I've found this tree easy to grow, but it's reasonably slow compared to other local fig trees, and at home it's grown only several metres over the last 20-odd years.

Re/generation and re/conciliation

by Greg Bork

I share here some thoughts following my series of walking interviews with local people in the rainforest they look after. The *GoodTimes* started out as the daily bulletin for the Nimbin Aquarius Festival in 1973, and I see the spirit of the Festival continuing today in our community relationship of care for the forest, so I'm so happy to have shared these interviews with you here.

I learned much about my own relationship with the land through these stories. I'm a first generation Australian, born and raised in Sydney. I moved to Bundjalung rainforest Country just five years ago. These stories are part of my practice of listening to and learning from the land, as part of a research journey I undertook at Southern Cross University.

Shawn Wilson, Opaskwayak Cree scholar, suggested recording myself walking in the rainforest as a final reflective self-interview. I then walked into the forest with the



intention of listening attentively, and gave stories to the trees.

Shawn talks about removing weeds so that the rainforest regenerates itself (in one of my earlier interviews) as a metaphor for reconciliation, in his superb new anthology *Research and Reconciliation: Unsettling Ways of Knowing through Indigenous Relationships*. He says, "all you have

to do is remove barriers and provide the space and people will do it for themselves, or the rainforest will do it itself."

His co-editor Andrea B. Breen thinks "It can also be about weeding out ways of doing things. The act of noticing, paying attention, and making space for something different." Their fellow co-editor Lindsay Dupree adds

"sometimes it's just about getting out of the way."

To which Shawn responds, "Yes, and using your leverage as people who know how the Western system works to clear space for others to do what they want to do for themselves. When we use our power to create and protect space for others it also helps them to find their own place: who they are and the tools that they have to bring to this reconciliation process."

For me, Shawn's metaphor is fitting because Western systems not only perpetuate multiple ecological crises, but also deeply interlinked multiple cultural crises. As a re-gen subcontractor I've spent plenty of days planting rainforest on wealthy landowner's estates as part of their extensive backyard, or remediating roadside ditches for development offsets.

The Western system is so intimidating, and I'm so embedded within it (somewhere at the margins), that it's hard to see the wood for the trees.

I am underwhelmed by the

ethics of the ecological restoration industry which only peripherally acknowledges Indigenous peoples' implicit relationship within ecologies, ecologies that are homelands, places where all entities including people belong.

A unique (and sometimes difficult) story of re/conciliation runs through the Aquarius Festival, the Terania, Nightcap and Bentley blockades, on the streets of Nimbin and in our communities. It's a story that is continually revealed to me through getting to know the rainforest and community.

My interviews in the *GoodTimes* are collected at: [reciprocalrestoration.org](#) where you can contact me. I welcome your thoughts and feedback as I begin a PhD at SCU. I have Shawn's process in mind and ask how I can best pay attention, remove barriers, create space, and get out of the way myself, in re/generation and re/conciliation here.

I'm grateful to everyone I've interviewed, the *GoodTimes*, SCU and Indigenous peoples. I pay my respects to the Bundjalung Elders.

Positive puppy tips

by Donna Connolly

This month's article is about integrating a new puppy into your life.

I totally understand that bringing a new puppy into your life is a huge undertaking, and can be a commitment of 20 years. While it can be a wonderful time, it can be downright frustrating too.

These are all the tips I wish I had when I began this journey with two puppies ten years ago.

These tips are purely guidelines, there is so much research out there on training tips and dietary advice. All of those decisions are individual and personal to you and your puppy.

This information is focused on making the transition smooth and relatively stress-free.

Having met hundreds of dogs and their guardians over the years as an Animal Communicator, also working in the Animal Industry as an Intuitive Healer, animal attendant at a Pet Resort and a student of Animal Science, a lot of this information comes directly from hands-on experience and of course the animals themselves, giving me a privileged and unique perspective,

These tips are guidelines to help you navigate your way through those first few months. Setting up a solid foundation and creating a bond between you and your best friend, that will continue to deepen over time, as most relationships do.

• **Positive Reinforcement:** is one of the biggest keys underpinning all of these tips! Let them know when they have done a good job, lots of praise and love. If they have done something wrong a firm No will do the trick, without emotional attachment.

• **Boundaries:** are really important. Letting your dog know what is acceptable behaviour. This is for your pup's own safety and part of your responsibility as a pet guardian. Make sure if your puppy does do something wrong you let him know in the moment. There is no point punishing him at a later date. He won't understand.

• **Crate training:** prior to industry experience, I would have had the opinion of this being a form of punishment or a jail. I have completely changed my mind. Animals love the idea of a den situation, it assists with toilet training, as they won't wee or poo where they sleep, it's a source of comfort that can assist when your fur-friends are being babysat or boarded (I saw this first hand at the resort, dogs with crates settled quicker). If you move house they always have their



personal haven. You will see them put themselves in there when they are tired. This is a great option if you would prefer your dog not sleep with you.

• **Recall:** This is so very important. You need to know you can call your dog back to you, no matter what! Sometimes leads fail, there is imminent danger such as traffic. A great way to introduce this is getting your puppy to run between you and another person taking turns to call him. Lots of praise, love and perhaps a treat when he gets it right. As they get older throw a couple of distractions in the mix, to reinforce the importance of listening to you.

• **Make it fun:** this is a one time situation with this gorgeous new soul. Training will be a lot better if you create lots of fun memories to look back on. Please don't "over-train". Keep your sessions short and sweet, allow the pup to show you when he has had enough. And don't employ drill Sergeant tactics, you will instill fear and the whole process will be counter intuitive.

• **Supervised socialisation:** is a huge part of your young puppy's life, this is how they learn how to interact with other humans and animals. Take them to the beach, parks etc. I'd also recommend Doggy Daycare, as they will get to interact with dogs of all ages and stages. Older dogs are excellent at letting the youngsters know if they have crossed the line. Also, if you are organising a playdate, it's good to meet in neutral territory to begin with. Please make sure this experience is positive. It will make a huge difference to the rest of their lives.

• **Consistency** is key, there is usually more than one person involved in the integration of a puppy. It is vital that everyone is on the same page. This is not a time for good cop and bad cop. Consistent rules and boundaries make learning easier. Please have a conversation and come up with some general guidelines. And don't be afraid to reassess if need be. Life and training will be a work in progress.

• **Familiarity:** get familiar with your puppy's parts that you will need to touch and inspect regularly. Mostly, his

ears and eyes, for cleaning, his mouth for regular teeth checks and feet to inspect after walks and having his toenails clipped. Also get him used to brushing and clipping if this is something that his breed requires. None of these things should be a chore, and getting them used to you touching these places will be so helpful in years to come.

• **Clear communication:** animals are always tuning into us for information, they fundamentally want to please us. The biggest thing they are looking at is body language and the messages you are projecting telepathically. These cues are their primary focus. The words we use are secondary and insignificant if they don't match our other messages. So when you use words as a command make it one to two words with a clear picture of what you are asking them to do in your mind.

• **Routine:** animals work best when there is a format to follow, they are creatures of habit. This allows them to anticipate the day's activities with enthusiasm. It's okay to mix it up down the track, but initially a daily schedule is very beneficial.

• **Diet** really is everything! After all, we are what we eat! A puppy's diet is the foundation and building blocks for the structure of his bones, skin, hair etc. If you get this right you will be avoiding some major health issues down the track. There are a lot of differing opinions out there. My advice is quality rather than quantity. Please don't overfeed or over treat them. Obesity has its own set of complications. And lastly, avoid feeding them human food, especially off your plate, that way you can eat in peace and you can eliminate the possibility of them accidentally consuming toxic foods.

By using this list you can potentially avoid some long-term problems, such as separation anxiety, phobias, health issues etc.

I would also like to say that I don't believe in hitting animals or yelling at them (if you are raising your voice it says way more about you!) And sadly the animal won't understand.

There's simply no need for corporal punishment if you are doing your part correctly.

Also, each and every animal is unique in their personality and learning style. It is up to you to adapt accordingly.

Donna's last word: Take heaps of photos! We grow up so quickly, and we are so cute when we are little! Make sure you get photos of the two of you together and the whole family too. Memories are precious

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Where's wallaby?

NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) is on a mission to spot black-striped wallabies around northern NSW's Gondwana rainforests, as part of a 10-year project.

NPWS North Coast Branch team leader Matthew Wiseman said sightings of the threatened species could lead to funding for private property owners to help manage weeds, fences or bait for predators.

"We're calling out to anyone living around Mallanganee, Richmond Range National Park, Hogarth Range, Bonalbo and Bungawalbin – all areas around World-Heritage-listed Gondwana rainforest – to tell us if they've seen any black-striped wallabies," Mr Wiseman said.

"If people keep an eye out and report sightings, we'll be able to better understand this threatened species' distribution, habitat and potential threats, so we can develop better long-term conservation outcomes.

"On private property where black-striped wallaby sightings are confirmed, funding may be available to help manage threats including weed work, fencing and baiting for predators."

The quest to spot the wallaby is part of the 10-year 'Burning Hotspots – Gondwana Threatened Species and Fire' project which is funded through the NSW Environmental Trust's Saving our Species (SoS) Partnership Grant.

The black-striped wallaby is a small to medium-sized wallaby, grey-brown in colour with a narrow black stripe running down the centre of its back. It is smaller and more colourful than the more common red-necked wallaby, which has rust-red patches on the shoulders, arms and upper legs and prominent white cheek- and hip-stripes.



The black-striped wallaby is mostly associated with dry rainforest on the North Coast, but also lives in moist eucalypt forest with rainforest understorey or dense shrub layer.

The project is midway, and project partners include NSW National Parks & Wildlife Service in Richmond River area working with Northern Rivers Fire and Biodiversity Consortium, DPIE Biodiversity and Conservation Division, Southern Cross University, University of NSW, Forestry Corporation and the Border Ranges Alliance.

Find out more about the conservation and recovery of the black-striped wallaby on the New South Wales Government Environment, Energy and Science website: www.environment.nsw.gov.au/savingourspeciesapp/project.aspx?ProfileID=10500, or report sightings to: Matthew.Wiseman@environment.nsw.gov.au

Pets in the Northern Territory

by Aniko Papp

What else comes with family life in any part of the world but pets? Here in the remote indigenous communities around the top end of the NT, pets are a story in themselves.

I have encountered a pig, swarthy and black, snuffling for scraps from house to house. He was gingerly petted on his hairy snout by young'uns as he waddled past chain wire fences surrounding community housing.

I heard him trotting on cement front verandas, snorting beneath strewn bedding and startling occupants on his way through. As he is shooed off, I am told he is the town pig and thus unlikely to become part of a BBQ. He safely clops along to the next house, nosing each piece of rubbish on the way in his eternal quest for a meal.

The dusty town horse with streaks of grey sweat has trotted past me. "Watch out, he bites." The warning sounds out as I veered away from his flat teeth.

I am told that he has been transported many times and many hundreds of kilometres away from this community, to protect kids from having their ears chomped. Yet he has always managed to find his way back across red desert, within days.

Giving up on relocation, the people just shrug as this grey and dusty steed just munches his way across the town, baring his big teeth at everyone smaller than him. Which is pretty well everyone.

Every house bears at least one or two dogs, feral and yellow coloured, lounging around the front yard. The slightest encroachment beyond the fence either sees a dog launch itself at one's nether regions or sees a dog lazily raise a fly bitten ear up then down. Closer to dingo than dog, they sprawl on the dirt road, refusing to move even a paw as hulking four-wheel drives approach.

I always thought that these mutts were without owners, so wondered out loud about



how careful I really had to be not to squash them under my tyres. I was admonished in no uncertain terms that these nameless skinny canines did, in fact, belong to someone and woe betide me if I ran one over. I'd be lucky not to be run out of town if I did manage to damage one.

The white town cow trundles along the shady paths, as children try to climb and straddle her back. She shrugs them off and they skilfully fall off, away from her hooves. Some try their rodeo skills on her, to which she just moos and stands her ground, staring down at them as they tease her.

Women shoo away her childish playmates, gather the youngsters and return to their card games beneath the spreading shade. The cow just flicks her tail and plods on to the next shady tree.

I have not seen any pet birds, kangaroos or wallabies on community yet. I suspect they might end up roasted for dinner if they ventured near one of these dwellings. Children who go to kindergarten already hunt and fish with skill so I doubt that a yummy turtle would become a pet.

I haven't encountered any cats either, at least on outside of any of the homes. Perhaps they do exist for brief periods before being munched on by the packs of dogs. But pets like dingoes, tamed buffalos, horses, pigs or the occasional chicken (carefully warded against dogs) are as much part of the community as the humans in them.

Take the pressure off your horse

by Suzy Maloney

I have always said to my riding students to look ahead and focus on where they are going. But today in a lesson I found this going to a whole other level, and realised I need to focus on it much more.

The rider was having trouble keeping her horse straight. He was weaving left to right and she was busy making corrections.

I asked her to imagine riding in a straight line, send her focus and energy there, and then feel her horse and only make small corrections if he moved off that line. The effect was stunning. The horse fitted into her projected straight line effortlessly.

A while later he was being hesitant and almost stopping, it looked like he was thinking about each step! She started asking me what was wrong and why was he doing that. I suggested she totally ignore her horse, lift her head and send her intention and energy forward. He immediately walked smartly off as if it had never happened.

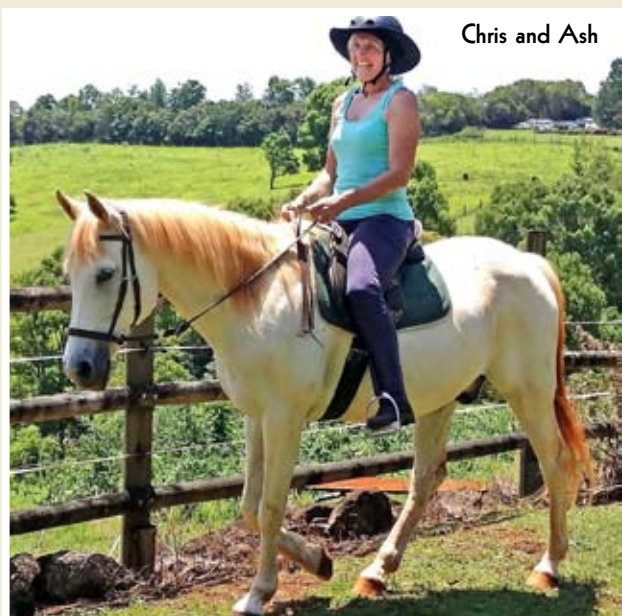
It was an incredible change in his way of going. Both the rider and I were stunned by the huge change in her horse's behaviour when she ignored him and just sent her intention where she wanted

to go. He was then super happy to fit into her wishes.

I experienced a similar effect when I was recording myself painting. I had the camera over my shoulder and was painting a cat. The cat ended up with huge eyes and a very stiff posture. I gave up and decided to quit the session, turned the camera off, but continued painting. Within 10 minutes I had a soft-eyed relaxed cat on the canvas, it was totally different! What a huge effect it can have on us when we think someone is watching.

Now imagine a horse. Their sensitivity rating is about 100X ours. They are prey animals, we are predators. The horse is trying to move along but the human keeps looking at them, thinking about them, micro-managing them, analysing their every move and just generally overwhelming the poor horse with their focus. No wonder they can no longer function properly.

Then look at a horse such as a brumby, whose sensitivity rating is around 1000X ours and it is even more obvious. I discovered one day when out riding my brumby (wild born and captured at the age of five) this exact thing. We were walking alone on a trail and I looked down at him. He stopped. I thought it was strange and asked him to walk again.



Then I tried glancing at his head, making sure I did not change my weight or inadvertently give another aid, and he stopped again! I played around with it and realised that he was feeling the 'pressure of my eyes' on the back of his head! He could feel the change in my focus from forward to down and on to him. What an amazing horse! Domesticated horses also feel this pressure, though it is not always as obvious.

The take-home message is, take the pressure off your horses. Whether you are doing groundwork or riding, give the guys some space. Just focus on your goal and move towards that. And instead of

looking at and focusing on every single little thing the horse is doing, just feel them. Feel when they need a small correction, do not think about it.

Allow them some freedom of mind space. The change I saw in this horse today, when his rider ignored him and just rode, was something else. After riding him this way for a while she commented on how beautiful it felt to ride him with such fluidity and connection. She said she could feel him in a whole new way.

Phone 0401-249-263
happyhorsesbitless@gmail.com
www.happyhorsesbitless.com
Facebook: Happy Horses Bitless Bridles

Our iconic brumbies

by Les Rees

I am saddened that the Victorian Federal Court has chosen to ignore the concerns of thousands of people who added their signatures to petition against the mass murder of the iconic alpine brumbies.

Australian governments have a track record of destroying the ecology of its natural environment, impacting on the poor animals that inhabit it.

A lot of people were hoping that recent catastrophic events would stir them into action, by taking on the challenges using a new approach that is more considerate of finding ways to maintain the balance between human impact and the natural environment.

But already we're seeing the same old negative agenda continues to be at the forefront of their thinking.

From the evidence I have gleaned concerning the brumby cull, it would appear that there are differing opinions between individuals, communities, committees, politicians, conservationists, ecologists and scientists.

Whilst there are claims that the increasing brumby population is causing immeasurable damage to the fragile alpine ecosystems, there are also claims that this is not the case.

Liberal MP Bill Tilley believes that the decision to cull the brumbies is based on flawed evidence stating that: "Brumbies have been blamed for damage being caused by the explosion of deer in the high country... Locals will tell you that deer numbers are out of control."

Who do you believe when there are many with vested interests?

After a long period of drought followed by fire, it is understandable that many people would deem it necessary to remove some of the larger animals for a while in order to aid recovery. I can understand that, but is it necessary to cull them?

There are many people willing to round them up and train them for use as riding horses and there are also people willing to have small numbers of horses on their properties until recovery of habitat has been re-established and they can be returned to the high country.

The proposal to shoot the horses from helicopters, otherwise known as aerial culling, engendered a lot of criticism as it is wrought with horrific outcomes and constitutes extreme animal cruelty. Animals break legs, abort foals, and in some cases are left unconscious.

The consequences of such actions would leave many maimed and suffering a long protracted and painful death. Mothers are killed, leaving their young frightened and alone and the breakup of individual herds causes even more trauma.

Other ways involve the use of gated enclosures to trap the horses. This can also be very severe for the horses as they are easily traumatised and can damage themselves and others when cornered.

Surely these noble animals deserve better than this. Horses have played their part in our history, partnering humans in many diverse ways; they've been used for transport, farm work, as



war horses and more recently for a huge sports and leisure industry.

This is not the way to repay those iconic, majestic beings who share such an incredible bond with humans. Brumbies are a much valued part of our history. They are the subjects of songs, poems and stories that have been portrayed in the arts, film industry and tourism.

Davis Nixon, an Ngarigo elder said, "Our old people were animal lovers. They would have had great respect for these powerful horse spirits. Our people have always been accepting of visitors to our land and quite capable of adapting to change so that our visitors can also belong, and have their place."

It is time to find ways of protecting both our environment and our brumbies, we need to establish unbiased research processes that can develop conservation plans that provide a way to enable the horses to continue to live in the alpine country.

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The value of human connection

Human connection is the thing, our thing. When many of us experience a disconnect with family, friends, meaningful work, school, meaningful values, connection with the natural world, a meaningful and hopeful secure future, even disconnection from a familiar state of affairs, we can lose a sense of belonging and some experience a despair and loneliness that can become clinical depression.

Some take solace in alcohol, drugs and food, while others get caught up in the highs and lows of crazy partying. Some come to believe that connection isn't possible and hide themselves away from community. How poignant all this is now in the time of pandemic. When Covid-19 finally subsides and social distancing won't be quite so critical, we will be left with a very broken society.

Already mental health issues are surfacing everywhere. Depression and anxiety are, after all, more than biological (more than a chemical imbalance in the brain); they are psychological and social responses to particular situations, at the heart of which is disconnection.

A client recently said to me that he wished the relationship, the connection, with his partner was real. He feels a profound sense of

disconnect and that what his partner presents to the world is a world of lies. What is in the gap in this relationship, in the chasm of disconnect, is anger, criticism, resentment, recriminations, stonewalling, and silence. Instead of finding a good way of reconciling actual and perceived differences through effective communication, there is, instead, just more arguing, and on both sides, a descent into depression. This relationship is ripe for mediation, and this is quite critical now if the way forward is to include a reconciliation and a renewal of intimacy.

I'm very interested in this thing we call 'connection' and curious about how we know in our flesh and bones, and very heart, what connection actually feels like. Johan Hari in his book, *Lost Connections, Uncovering the Real Causes of Depression – And the Unexpected Solutions* (2018), titles the last chapter 'Homecoming', and how appropriate this is. Coming home is metaphorically returning to a place that is known and welcomes you, even when that place may be a source of pain. It's coming home to be real. A kind of X marks the spot of connection, which we know best when it isn't there.



by Dr Elizabeth McCardell

It's interesting that until the mid 18th century the word 'connection' was also spelled 'connexion' (meaning 'binding or joining together'). It brings to mind the old Celtic marriage ceremony of 'hand fasting', where the hands of the couple are bound together to symbolize the binding together of two lives. This image is a bit problematic for a range of reasons; for one, it suggests a dissolution of two individual people into an indivisible union and these days most of us recognize the value of our individuality, our pasts and our unique capacities for creative productions, etc.

From a binding together and the dropping of the X (a visual representation of the binding) to form 'connection', connection has become more of an idea than

a felt thing. It's as though the business of joining together in an enterprise that is shared, has lost something of its X factor, in all its pluses and minuses. Maybe the birth of individualism and the idea of a separate ego is responsible (mid-19th century), which, by the way, coincides with the birth of psychiatry. These days, many of us operate as separate entities, with our own individual goals and aspirations, and I think that's not a bad thing, but perhaps we don't need to think that we have to do life all alone and that we can do an individual-in-community thing as well. I don't think we need to conceptualize this as Arvo Pärt, the Estonian composer, has done in declaring in a rather startling manner, moved, as he has done by the reality of the pandemic, that 'the coronavirus has shown us in a painful way that humanity is a single organism.'

We are individual people who are capable of joining others in a joint enterprise, while retaining our own thoughts and feelings and capacity for caring about others, and it is this moral act which can allow us to come through this difficult time healthy in body and mind. Human connection is the thing.

Do you know the signs of labour?

Doula Wisdom

by Kirrah Stewart

Having more knowledge about the signs of labour will help you to have a better birth experience.

There are many ways that labour can begin. You may have a show (lose your mucus plug), you may have diarrhoea, your waters may break or contractions may just begin with cramps and/or back pain. In early labor you may like to try to rest and use a hot water bottle, heat pack or have a warm shower. Resting in the early stages will help you have more energy as labour progresses.

When contractions get stronger and longer and more frequent, you know that you're in labour. In active labour, contractions are around 3-5 minutes apart.

You might like to try:

- Changing positions (hands and knees are great!)
- Movement, like spiralling on a birth ball; and
- Try breathing techniques and/or vocalising.

What is transition?

Transition is the time around 8-10cm dilation. Although it's usually the shortest part of labour, it can feel quite intense and bring up a lot of feelings. Many people get to this point and feel like they can't go on or can't do it anymore. Contractions can feel like they're on top of each other with no end in sight. But soon, you'll be 'complete' or 10cm dilated and you'll feel an urge to push.



Having someone reassure you that you're doing really well and that baby is actually close. If you were thinking about birthing in water now would be a good time to get in the pool. Water can be extremely soothing.

How do you know when to push?

Once the cervix has dilated to ten centimetres you'll most likely get an urge to push. Some people have a small break in contractions also known as the 'rest and be thankful' phase so they can gather their energy before pushing. I really encourage you to follow your

instincts with when and how to push. If you need some reassurance, you can ask your midwife or doula for more guidance. Once your baby is born, it's good to have immediate skin-to-skin contact. This helps your baby regulate their breathing, heart rate and temperature. It also boosts your oxytocin levels which will help you safely birth the placenta.

If you're planning a birth, make sure you have downloaded the FREE natural birth checklist at: www.doulawisdom.com
Email: kirrah@doulawisdom.com

Death, dementia and Powers of Attorney

Legal writes
by John Adams

A popular topic lately, mortality. Clients talk of wills and powers of attorney and guardianship, and nursing homes, and why wouldn't you want to try to control your life after you've lost your marbles – 'capacity', in legalese.

Powers of attorney can be done at home. It's just a matter of following the instructions and filling out the right forms. These vary between States, so if there's property across the border, different forms.

I wouldn't advise filling out the Post Office Will Kit or ticking boxes on one of the online ones. There's a lot of money for lawyers in homemade wills. I only mention wills because they come into effect when the testator dies, the exact moment when powers of attorney die. Not that the court can't still go for the attorney afterwards if they weren't using their powers properly. Elder abuse can be an issue. But let's not go there now.

There are two free downloadable prescribed forms on the NSW Trustee & Guardian site (www.tag.nsw.gov.au). One is the General Power of Attorney (PoA) where a person (the

principal) gives one or more trusted others (the Attorneys) authority to look after their financial affairs for them. Useful if you're going to be out of the country for a while, or can't get to the bank yourself.

The other form is called an Enduring Power of Attorney and continues in effect after the principal has lost capacity. A client calls me with a problem. It's driving her demented. Mum's in hospital again and the social worker wants to put her in a nursing home. NSW Health has completed a neuropsychological assessment and recommends 'additional support when she leaves hospital, which may include nursing home care'. Mum's fallen out with Dad since she lost her marbles and refuses to go home until he's seen a psychiatrist. The hospital social worker likes the nursing home option.

Client's not happy with this. She emails me the PoA. It's headed 'General Power of Attorney'. Mum's the principal and Dad's the attorney. The second clause says, 'I give this power of attorney with the intention that it will continue to be effective if I lack capacity...' which makes it an enduring PoA. But it's on the wrong form. Does this matter? I don't know. Who can I ask? Synchronistically, the

morning I've promised to get back to my client with an advice, I spend two hours in an online seminar for a couple of continuing professional development points. The lecturers know everything there is to be known about powers of attorney. Students ask questions in real time in the chat box. Finally, I ask my question.

The lecturer's answer, that the clause makes it enduring, and the document should be made under section 8 of the *Powers of Attorney Act 2003*, is helpful. The section says: "An instrument (whether or not under seal) that is in or to the effect of a form prescribed by the regulations for the purposes of this section and is duly executed creates a 'prescribed power of attorney' for the purposes of this Act."

So, a 'prescribed' PoA can be enduring, or not enduring, and in my client's case it doesn't matter anyway. Neither gives the attorney power to make 'personal and lifestyle' decisions. For that you need guardianship and financial management. There are forms for these on the website as well. But these are Applications to NCAT (NSW Civil & Administrative Tribunal) for orders.

My advice is fill out the forms and see what happens next. NCAT's good fun.

Got a wonky jaw?

A wonky or unbalanced jaw can cause so many problems throughout your whole body. Hard to believe that it can cause hormonal imbalances, sleepless nights, sore knees or feet or a whole lot more than that.

A couple of weeks ago while I was waiting for my client to arrive in my clinic in Nimbin, I got talking to a couple who were passing by and they both were complaining of pain in different places. The woman had a really sore jaw close to her ear and the man had pain in his elbow. They also said they had restless sleep.

I can do a kinesiology muscle test to see if the jaw is balanced or out of alignment, and I had a go at testing both of them. Both of them tested that their jaw was not balanced, which actually means that your head isn't sitting properly on top of your neck. This then caused other parts of the body to be out of alignment and it can continue all the way down to your feet.

They told me they had bought a new mattress recently but they still couldn't



by Sonia Barton

understand why they weren't sleeping soundly. They thought that had to get used to the mattress. I know that when your body is not in balance your whole body just feels tight, sore or restless.

I told them that they should both book in with me and have a Bowen balance and I was sure I could help them. Imagine if you'd spent a few thousand dollars on a new mattress, and it wasn't helping you'd try anything to get a good night's sleep!

I know from experience in treating my clients over the years that once you get the body into alignment you can have the best sleep, be pain free and feel more energised,

be less grumpy and stop complaining to your partner about whatever it is that's hurting you.

Here is a list of conditions that may be happening to you if your jaw is out of balance:

- Your jaw clicks when you eat or open your mouth wide;
- Your jaw is sore when you eat or yawn;
- Pain in your joints eg hips, knees or shoulders;
- Hormonal imbalances;
- Golfer's elbow;
- Carpal tunnel syndrome;
- Neck and shoulder pain;
- Plantar fasciitis (foot pain).

If you've had a whiplash injury, had braces as a teenager, your wisdom teeth removed or dental surgery in the past then your jaw is probably out of alignment. A few gentle Bowen treatments can help to restore balance throughout your body.

If you'd like more information on how the treatment works or how I can help you just give me a call for a friendly chat. I work in Nimbin and Byron Bay. Phone 0431-911-329, web: www.bowenenergywork.com.au

The role of the heart

I was unsure what to write about this month, it is harder when I'm not working and interacting with people. I do miss my lovely clients.

I have decided to write about the role of the heart in Chinese medicine, as the importance of the heart for physical, mental and spiritual wellbeing cannot be over-emphasised.

The *shen* is the most rarified form of *qi*. It resides in the heart and enables us to interact clearly with the world. Severe *shen* disturbance can result in mania and severe mental illness. More often it causes anxiety, palpitations and insomnia.

The heart affects all other organs. But conversely, dysfunction of the heart is often due to lack of support when other organs are not functioning well. So looking after the rest of the body is also caring for the mind.

An example of one of these patterns is when the spleen is weak. In this case the spleen is not forming blood from food, and also not performing its function of keeping blood in the vessels. This pattern is always preceded by spleen deficiency.

The causes of this are often dietary, from a diet that is either difficult to digest or deficient nutritionally. Over winter, soups, stews and stocks are a good way to benefit the spleen. If there is blood deficiency, sufficient protein in the diet is important, as well as folic



by Brigid Beckett

acid, iron and vitamin B12.

The kidney is also vitally important to the heart function. When the kidney and heart are not harmonised, the heart will suffer. The interaction between heart and kidney is very important with the kidney providing the essence to the heart and the heart warming the kidneys.

If this connection is disrupted, the *shen* will be affected with possible symptoms of insomnia, mental restlessness, palpitations, tinnitus and deafness. This connection can be disrupted suddenly from sadness or shock. Other times it will be from chronic overwork or lack of sleep.

Another way the heart can be affected is by phlegm, termed "phlegm misting the mind". The main symptoms are a degree of mental confusion, extreme lethargy, speech problems and possibly vomiting. Usually longstanding emotional problems are the underlying cause, combined with a diet that has induced spleen

deficiency, and too many phlegm forming foods, specifically dairy and greasy foods.

Another relatively common pattern is heart and lung qi deficiency. This can occur during convalescence after a febrile illness. It is also common with chronic cardiac and lung disorders. Symptoms include a chronic cough, tiredness, easy catching of colds and flu, excessive sweating and depression. Emotionally sadness and grief affect the heart and lungs. The heart and lungs need to be tonified in this condition.

The main message is that while the heart is the all-important connection between ourselves and the base energy of the universe, essential in allowing us to know non-duality and interconnectedness, we do need healthy organs and qi flow to support this possibility.

Diet, *qi* moving exercise, enough sleep and looking after emotional wellbeing are all part of the equation.

I hope everyone is keeping well and happy. I hope to have Lismore Community Acupuncture running again before the next *GoodTimes* issue. The Woodlark Room is no longer available, so I am looking for another space. Please contact me if you happen to know of the perfect space.

Brigid Beckett is a registered acupuncturist. She can be contacted on 0431-702-560.

Natural Law

by Helene Collard

**We are all self-governing.
Let us call upon our ancestors and
teachers – past and present,
to guide us in the way of the Heart.
You are all my relations.
All is One.**

Welcome to the super-potent energies of June, thanks to an eclipse series that will act as an energetic portal, inviting us to step into a new life.

There is no doubt that we are being supported to progress our metamorphosis within the cocoon. Whatever is ready for release and transformation, these eclipse energies will provide the perfect stage to shed, and take an inspired leap into your future.

Eclipses can bring on minor adjustments or sudden and dramatic change. Think of eclipse time as a change in gears, with the ultimate goal of bringing you into alignment with your true passion path.

Whatever seeds you sow now will germinate later in the year, so clearly name your dreams and desires this month.

Practise gratitude and being clear about what you want. Practise forgiveness and visualise cutting ties with the past.

Eclipse times can be emotionally intense, so take care, take your time, and take space to reflect and process through things wisely.

My in-person services are back on, and remote services continuing (as they are equally as effective and amazing)! I'm looking forward to meeting you.

Love and rainbow light blessings.



Back on – Helene's in-person sessions
Helene is now available for:

- Remote or in-person reiki treatments;
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- Martha's Zoom yogalates class on Fridays. Contact her for more details on 0447-669-679;
- Sam's Zoom yoga and grounding class on Thursdays. Contact her for more details on 0487-963-103.

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Helene Collard is a Culturally Informed Trauma Integrated Healing Facilitator, and a Reiki Teacher & Practitioner. She has been practicing Reiki since 2007 and began sharing and teaching Reiki professionally in 2015. For information, enquiries and bookings visit: www.yemayacentre.com.au or phone 0405-656-797.