



Tasman Ecovillage Newsletter

January 2022

Village News

The first month of 2022 has been interesting in the village! We had a storm which filled up the water tanks, flooded The Shed and The REC Room and brought down a large tree branch near the washing lines. There was a impromptu working bee to clean up the flooded areas.

We had two young men (Ben and Harry) stay in the village for a week, lending a hand to anything that needed doing. Ilan has been hard at work slashing the brush over the village land, keeping us fire safe. We have a new arrival (Rick) who will be staying with us for a time, lets do our best to make him feel welcome!

THANK YOU!

- Thank you to Ben and Harry for all their help around the village during their stay!
- Thank you to Beverly, Bridgid, Neil, Ilan and Jason for the beatification of the Pod A centre!
- Thank you to Dave Forsyth for writing an article for the newsletter!
- Thank you to Alan Marshall for writing an article for the newsletter!
- Thank you to Sharada, Leanne, Donna, Catherine, Neil, Ilan, Tony and Emma & Family for cleaning up the shed after the storm!
- Thank you to Jason for taking initiative and clearing the fallen tree branch!
- Thank you to Dave F and Ilan for repairing the broken pipe!

Water Saving Tips

- Install tap timers for garden use, ensuring taps get turned off even if forgotten.
- Mulch gardens to reduce watering, especially on sandy soil.
- Water early or late in the day to reduce evaporation.
- Check plumbing on private property for leaks regularly.
- Use a tub in the shower so you can reuse shower water on garden plants.
- Use a tub in the kitchen sink so you can reuse wash water on garden plants.
- Use a shower timer.
- Install a water saving shower head.
- Check leaking/dripping taps and replace washers regularly.
- Check toilet cisterns for continuous running.
- Replace toilet cisterns with dual flush systems or place a full plastic water bottle in the cistern to reduce the capacity.



Water Safety by Dave Forsyth

Looks like we have been fortunate with the creek still flowing as I write this, which recently enabled the replacement 180,000 litres of water equivalent to half our current storage capacity.

In addition to regular usage, some water unfortunately was lost through a combination of a leak in old plumbing and taps left running. Thanks to Stephen Cole for running a water workshop of 2 sessions.

Some valuable concepts and planning have come out of this and we're looking forward to implementing some improvements.

During the year for those of you who didn't know, improvements and repairs have been made to automatic garden watering systems and filtration systems around the village. There is always ongoing maintenance of our water systems going on in the background.

COMPOSTING FOOD WASTE

Resident Alan Marshall has very kindly offered to do an article series based around our natural resources and ways of using them to enhance our lives without causing damage to the surrounding environment, in this month's article Alan will be covering the composting of food waste.

“We have around us numerous natural resources. Used wisely and with care, they can enhance our lives, at little or zero cost to the environment. My interest and focus is on integrating just a few of those resources for domestic use.”

– Alan Marshall

COMPOSTING

Here at Tasman Eco Village, for the past 6-7 years, I have successfully employed a system of thermophilic composting. I only deal with kitchen food waste. This material often causes people problems because it can, if not dealt with properly, become very smelly and breed flies. (Please note, there are numerous methods of composting, and each person can find the method which suits their particular circumstances. Once you find out which does suit you, stick with it. That is the one that will likely bring you greatest success.)

MY METHOD

The compost bin is ideally 1 metre square or larger. Mine are 1.8m square with sides approx. 1 metre high. If the bin is too small, this can prevent higher temperatures being reached. Before use, a saucer-shaped depression is dug into the soil base. This is about 30cm deep. It causes any excess moisture to be directed into the pile, rather than leaking outwards. Then a thick layer of hay or straw is spread over the soil. Food waste is deposited into the middle of this hay, leaving at least 30cm of hay/straw around the sides. This is what keeps the heat and smell inside the heap and deters flies. Yet at the same time it allows plenty of air which is essential for good aerobic composting. Here is an important point: Whenever food waste is added, it's buried into the middle of the pile, not just thrown on top. Then also cover the heap with more hay or straw. Always cover it, don't leave the surface with fresh waste exposed.

AS THE HEAP GETS LARGER

The centre of the heap will begin to warm up. This is caused by fungal and bacterial activity, similar to what happens inside our own bodies.

The temperature can ultimately reach 55-65°C. When this happens, it can drive off moisture and the compost becomes too dry. Then it's good practice to moisten the compost with a spray of water. Biological breakdown of the compost goes through different stages, some aerobic (less smelly) and some anaerobic (very smelly, can be acidic). Each stage is natural and nothing to worry about. Just let it be, don't try to prevent it. Adequate application of hay will keep the bad smells in. Fungal mycelium can be seen as a white “gossamer” and this is a good sign.

THE HEAP

The heap will gradually settle down as more and more waste is added. There comes a point where the bin is full. It is then closed off with a final layer of hay or straw and left to mature for 5-6 months.

WITH THIS METHOD

The heap is never turned. It is not necessary. There are layered zones within the heap, various organisms adjust their lives according to their needs. By turning the heap that balance can be upset. I just leave it to do its “own thing.” Much less work and better compost with more retained nutrients.



One of our composting bins at the ecovillage that is taken care of by community members.



A WORD OF WARNING

Old hay can develop Aspergillus Fungal Species, seen as a powdery white covering. When disturbed, it can send lots of spores into the air. Some people who are immuno-suppressed can be susceptible to infection. Be careful if this applies to yourself or those around you.

Facebook Pages & Groups

- Tasman Noticeboard (Tasmania, Australia)
- Dunalley Tasman Neighbourhood House Inc
- Country Women's Association in Tasmania (Inc)
- Roaring Beach Wildlife Rescue
- Waterfalls of Tasmania
- Tasmanian Fungi
- Aurora Australis Tasmania
- Whale Spotting Tasmania
- Field Naturalists of Tasmania
- Tasmanian Marine and Seashore Life
- North East Tasmanian Lapidary Club
- Bioluminescence Tasmania
- Tasmania Photography Group



Local Information & Resources

We have so much information on the local area and many local resources and attractions available to us here on the Tasman Peninsula or Turrakana. Beauty and natural diversity surround us including waterfalls, deep sea caves, rugged coastlines, 300 metre high sea cliffs, blowholes, caves, tessalated rock formations and heritage listed convict sites.

Turrakana is also home to many animals including brush tail possums, wallabies, wombats, bandicoots, sea eagles, Australian fur seals, penguins, dolphins, migrating whales, endangered swift parrots and endangered wedge-tailed eagles.



THIS MONTH PLANT...

Asian Roots, Beetroot, Broccoli, Brussels Sprouts, Cabbage, Carrot, Cauliflower, Celery, Chinese Brassicas, Kale, Leek, Lettuce, Parsnip, Silverbeet, Spring Onion, Turnip and Winter Cabbage.



Tasman Ecovillage Events FEBRUARY 2022

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
00	01	02 Discussion Forum 10am-12pm	03	04	05	06
07	08	09	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20 TEVA Meeting 10am
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	00	00	00	00	00	00

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