

PERMACULTURE TASMANIA



Newsletter

Spring 2025

Welcome

Spring has sprung and with it a new year for Permaculture Tasmania.

We have continued to work hard to re-establish Permaculture Tasmania as an active, vibrant group that serves the community. This takes time but we are slowly but surely getting there.

2025 has been a year of regrowth and renewal. At our AGM on Sunday 14th September we said goodbye to our Public Officer, Suzi Read. Suzi has an amazing grasp of the PT constitution and was always on this ball when her expertise was required. I'd like to thank Suzi for her time, dedication and hard work over the past 12 months in helping to re-establish PT and wish her all the best in her future endeavours.

I'd like to welcome to the committee Patrick Casey. Patrick moved to Tasmania to build his own sustainable straw bale house in Deloraine with his wife Rhianna. Patrick's enthusiasm and attention to detail will no doubt put him in good stead for the job as a committee member.

If you would like a copy of the AGM minutes, please email us at permaculturetasmania@gmail.com

Most of all, I'd like to thank you, the general membership; for sticking by Permaculture Tasmania through the dark years, for becoming renewed or recently new members of PT and for giving PT its purpose.

Here's to an abundant Spring!



John Kane
President
Permaculture Tasmania
permaculturetasmania@gmail.com



Got an idea, suggestion or story
that you would like us to cover?
Email us @
permaculturetasmania@gmail.com



AGM

Sunday 14th September 2025



Here's the thing. Attend a Permaculture Tasmania annual meeting and go away full of food.

That's what happened this afternoon when a new organising team was elected and people took away used tools and stuff from the swap table. From Hepburn in the Central Victoria David Holmgren dropped by via Zoom to offer words of encouragement. He spoke of 'process' and 'project' people and the creative tension between them in permaculture, and those home or community focussed. My take: in the rapidly evolving global geopolitical circumstances we need both. David also mentioned the need to link with and support other organisations and individuals engaging with initiatives outside permaculture circles that are compatible with it. The photo shows our edible haul. Sam's tasty wholemeal sourdough, Tania's Greek yogurt lovingly brewed at home and her red onion jam cunningly created on her stove. Not to mention the minestrone soup we had there and that will make a tasty dinner. Permacultures Tasmania was rescued from the doldrums by a dedicated team and has started to grow its membership. Good things are coming.

by Russ Grayson

PERMACULTURE TASMANIA



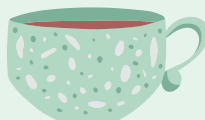
AGM

Sunday 14th September 2025

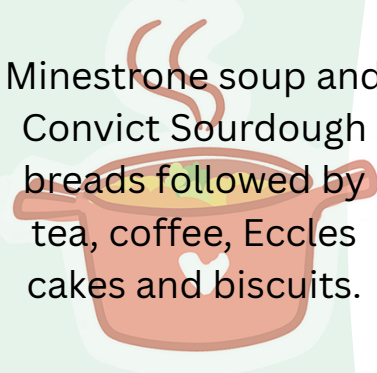
If you would like a copy of the AGM minutes, please email us at permaculturetasmania@gmail.com



Lots to
chat
about



Minestrone soup and
Convict Sourdough
breads followed by
tea, coffee, Eccles
cakes and biscuits.



The Committee (L to R)

Sam Nobes, Karen Hewitt, Loretta Leary (front), John Kane, Tania Brookes (front), Dianne Anderson and Patrick Casey



PERMACULTURE TASMANIA



Our newest committee member: Patrick Casey



You can follow Pat's adventures building his own house out of straw at [Straw House Deloraine](#) on Facebook

What inspired you to get involved in permaculture?

In 2018 I saw David Arnold from Murrnong Permaculture in Violet Town give a talk about community resilience, followed by a tour of his beautiful farm. It showed the abundance that could be achieved with permaculture principles even when you start with an old farmers paddock.

What's your favourite permaculture principle and why?

I love catch and store energy. The most obvious source is the sun! My home is made of straw and timber, thanks to the sun. We have a passive solar design that catches the sun's rays and heats the thermal mass clay walls inside which maintains a stable nighttime temperature in winter.

What motivated you to join the committee and what do you hope to achieve?

I've never been a part of a committee before so I thought it would be a great place to learn from permaculture elders and contribute to running events or making decisions with permaculture Tasmania.

What's one fun fact about you or something that you enjoy doing outside of permaculture?

I enjoy cycling in all forms and would like to do a big tour of Tassie in the future. Hopefully I can combine it with permi house & garden tours!

PERMACULTURE TASMANIA



Events

You will be able to find us at the following events:

Launceston Repair Cafe
Crop Swap Table
Saturday 20th September 2025
Pilgrim Uniting Church
1 - 4 pm

TASMANIAN NATURE FESTIVAL

Sat 18th Oct

10:00 am - 2:00 pm

Kingston, Lutruwita

f @TasmanianNatureFestival



Presented to you by FOREST ORGANICS & INPOPOUGH



9th-11th
JANUARY
2026
EVERY NOTE FOR THE PLANET
CYGNET, lutruwita/TASMANIA
WWW.CYGNETFOLKFESTIVAL.ORG

SUNDAY, DEC 14TH

10AM-2PM

SUMMER EDITION

SMALL TOWN MARKET

Celebrating the change of seasons,
with a focus on community, culture and nature.



Presented by
Small Town Experiences

OKINES COMMUNITY HOUSE Dodges Ferry

artisans \ live music \ food vans
local produce \ kids activities
workshops \ and much more

@smalltownexperiences

smalltownmarket.com.au



Sunday 15
March 2026



Agfest Field Days, Tasmania

26K followers • 51 following

PERMACULTURE TASMANIA



Upcoming Permaculture-aligned Events (near & far)

LINDA & TREV'S
TOMATO
SEEDLING SALE
120 HERITAGE VARIETIES
ORGANICALLY GROWN
+ RARE CHILLIES
COOL CLIMATE RICE!
HERBS & VEGGIES



part of the Surges Bay Hall
Spring Market 10-2pm
SUNDAY 5 OCTOBER
10AM - 4PM
SURGES BAY HALL
BRING A BOX!

TASMANIAN NATURE FESTIVAL

Sat 18th Oct

10:00 am - 2:00 pm

Kingston, Lutruwita

f @TasmanianNatureFestival



FOREST

A cultural revolution to a radically weller, wiser world is possible!

It just takes Us.

We have the extraordinary opportunity to culture create Better

Join us for a weekend tour into the social gardens of Permaculture and Cultural Emergence to explore individual and collective purpose, and transformative practice for inner and outer flourishing.

Come away with meaning and purpose relevant to the times we inhabit, a network of collaborators, new friends, support, and a community of practice for dreaming, learning, growing, creating and BEING in.

We will be tucked away in the misty mountains of northern Lutruwita.

Find us at

Dorje Ling Buddhist Retreat Centre
1078 Lorinna Road
Lorinna, Lutruwita/Tasmania 7806
17th-19th Oct 2025

Cost: \$300

Your People in Arms
Vari Gleeson cloud.hill@hotmail.com 0436 293 304
Liana Guegan liana@seagang.net 0488 999 614

Registration closes 30 September 2025

Hidden Valley Sustainable Living Workshops

Upcoming Past

Sun, 21 Sep at 09:30
Basic Building Skills for Women
12361 Highland Lakes Road, Golden Valley, TAS, Australia,...

Sun, 2 Nov at 08:30
Wood-Fired Oven Bake Day
12361 Highland Lakes Road, Golden Valley, TAS, Australia,...

Sun, 7 Dec at 09:30
Sourdough for Beginners
12361 Highland Lakes Road, Golden Valley, TAS, Australia,...

Sun, 12 Oct at 09:30
Building on the Basics for Women
12361 Highland Lakes Road, Golden Valley, TAS, Australia,...

Sun, 23 Nov at 10:00
Veggie Gardening for Beginners
12361 Highland Lakes Road, Golden Valley, TAS, Australia,...

<https://www.facebook.com/hiddenvalleyworkshops/events>

PERMACULTURE TASMANIA



Resources

TASWATER - stories, videos and activities for water guardians

<https://learn.taswater.com.au/resources/#educator-resources%E2%80%8B>

Free Download :

<https://permacultureeducationinstitute.ac-page.com/morag-12-tips>

Read Morag's 12 favourite tips for creating an abundant edible garden with ease - to help you grow a diversity of natural food without chemicals - and create a beautiful garden and healthy habitat for you, your household and the pollinators too.



Free Guides

<https://www.milkwood.net/category/free-guides/>

Access useful and free downloads and guides on all things permaculture – organic veggie gardening, chickens, growing mushrooms, foraging, sprouts, goal setting, rainwater & more.



Permie Profile : Hidden Valley Sustainable Living Workshops with Bonnie Bickle

Q: When did you first get interested in living a more grounded and sustainable lifestyle?

A: I was doing my politics degree at Melbourne Uni and I was in a shared house and I was feeling really stifled by the way that everything that you do costs money. It was so hard to do anything that didn't cost money and it just felt like I was really trapped within this capitalist system. I wrote this essay on globalisation and really discovered anti-globalization movement and how that turned my thinking on its head and discovered Vandana Shiva and the importance of subsistence work in communities and a life grounded around subsistence work within a family unit just being so much more meaningful. I really just connected with that. I was just like, right, I'm moving to Tassie. I retrained, I did my apprenticeship as a carpenter joiner because that's kind of subsistence work is building structures. And then I kind of went away from that because it was just so much toxic building materials in there and also fairly toxic workplaces. So ended up deciding that I would just be centred around the home and just work around the home. Whether that was building and it's the whole thing, growing the food as well as cooking; it takes ages if you're not just chopping up a few washed things from the supermarket. And I feel like that's something that's often undersold, is that it is a lot of time. You know, like when people are trying to sell the lifestyle, they're like, it's so easy. You know, it's not easy and it's not quick. And that's the point. And it is easy to start. And then there's so much to learn. As you grow and as you develop and you work out how you want to spend your time and what you want to do. Because you can't do everything. And you shouldn't do everything. You shouldn't feel like you should do everything. I just kind of tried everything, to try to work out where I wanted to focus. I tried dairy goats and we had meat pigs and we were dumpster diving to feed the pigs and things like that. And I've just come back to the fruit and veggie garden because I just feel like a healthy diet should be almost all fruit and veggies. And by focusing our energy there, we're providing most of our diet.





And some things are just better For large scale, like with dairying, it felt like it was just really inefficient. You know, with all the sterilising and all the work and you can't go away and things like that. Whereas with the fruit and veggies, you know, and then you can do the preserving from those and the veggies don't have to be milked at 4am.

Q: So that first spark, how many years ago was that to now?

A: We had our starter property in Hobart, which was like a demolisher's delight and renovated that. Then that meant I could dabble with everything and different gardening systems and then I could leave all my mistakes. Then with this place here I could start with everything I've learned and set up really efficient food production systems.

Q: Did you have any mentors along the way. In this process of building your home and gardens that make this lifestyle possible, has there been anybody that's been a particular inspiration to you along the way?

A: I guess probably my parents. Bit cheesy. I grew up in bush, in off-grid place in Jackie's Marsh, which is just down the road. I've come back home. They did all their own building around the place and did their own plumbing and their own electrical stuff. They just did everything and that was a real lesson in life, like, when people are always paying for things, they expect things to be perfect. It's a bit the same as with your veggies, isn't it? You know, people are expecting perfect veggies and everything but, when you're doing things yourselves, it's often not going to be perfect. And if you're doing your own building thing for the first time and you've never done it before, it's probably not going to be perfect. And there's some magic in there. Of course that's the anti-capitalist thing, isn't it? It's like, but I did it. And they kind of taught me about how all the things you can do without as well. And that that's part of enjoying things. Like I just love eating seasonally because it restricts your diet. It's so much easier to meal plan because you go from what is there in the garden to so, we have these meals at this time of year. And then you don't eat strawberries again for nine months. And then you have buckets of them. You know, it's great.

Q. Do you have any advice for people that want to shift into a less commercial and hectic lifestyle into kind of a more balanced, healthy one, like you're living now?

A. I would not underestimate the time involved in setting up. I think almost all the work is in setting up your systems. And I think it's really important to design it and plan a good system before you start. I don't think you should just jump in with a few garden beds because then you can start to get a bit trapped into what you've already done and you have too many failures, and it makes you feel bad, and then gardening becomes this thing where there's weeds everywhere and you feel bad and you feel trapped in these systems that are really inefficient. No, I really think it's so great to design a really good system to start with. And I guess that could be staged if you don't want to start with some enormous garden.



You could design it in two halves and then set that up properly and put in your watering before you start planting because you just don't want to be trapped into negative cycles and it's the same with weeding. Get your border around that garden, you know, like I've got a gravel strip with geotextile fabric underneath and around my garden so there's no weeds running in. Otherwise you're just going to spend hours all summer, with all the weeds that are running in from the edges. And once you eliminate those things, the maintenance is so much easier. Then you can enjoy it so much more and then gardening can be this joyful activity, not this list of stressful jobs. The other thing I would say is I think that people talk about, "oh, we'll start small when you're starting," but often that compromises the vision. So why not start big, but plant with easier crops that are easier to look after when you're learning? And avoid the diva crops like celery and cauliflower and things and stick to easy ones. You could have a whole bed of potatoes. I just discovered onions last season. I never grew them before and they are like the best. And they don't go off and like pumpkins and zucchinis and garlic and broad beans and there's so many easy things that you could grow in your backyard. Then from there ... fruit trees. So many people plant really marginal fruit trees, and then they have unhealthy fruit trees that don't produce well. And I just feel like maybe let yourself have one of those, but you should really be sticking with what's going to be really safe and happy in your climate. Why push the boundaries so that you can have five Japanese plums a year, when you could have a whole tree full of European plums. And people talk about, I don't like apples. Like, really? Why not? We're in the perfect climate for apples. You can grow six different heritage varieties. They all taste completely different. You can have storers and cookers and you can have apple sauce and you can have dried apples. And they're so delicious. Like, I wonder if they're people just coming from what they know from supermarkets.

Q. What are some of the biggest challenges that you've faced along the way to get to this point?

A. Biggest challenges, I guess the biggest challenges are the failures. When I was first learning, my first crop of seedlings that I grew, everything was from seed. I was so proud of them. I picked them all out and I potted them all up. And then Mum came and she said, "Bonnie, you realise that's all sorrel?" None of my original seeds had come up at all. It was just really depressing and embarrassing. I think the real challenges come when you're starting out. Maybe it's the same with parenting, you know, when you're just kind of feeling your way.

Q. What are some of the most rewarding things about your life and work here in Golden Valley?

A. Meaning, I think. You find your life has a purpose. Having a self-directed life as well, even though it often doesn't feel like that. I have to do this and I have to do that, but that's all my choice. Having like a really old-fashioned life, trying to reimagine that life, full of amazing different healthy veggies and interesting things you can do with them and then having fun family time centred around slowly eating and doing things on the property as well. It's being centred in place as well. Like really being a part of this place and understanding it and belonging here and working with it.



Q: That lifestyle of being more centred and grounded and have a sense of place. What advice would you give to that person?

A: We did that in the suburb of Hobart and I guess we just started to centre around the home. It was like coming back to the home and then developing spaces around the home where we could work and where we could have fun. Because you've got to have both. We had the work with the developing the block and developing the garden and everything. But you've got to have the fun. You've got to have the beautiful seating area in the garden where you can look at what you've done at the end of the day. You've got to have the shady pergola and you've got to have scones and tea on a Sunday morning in the garden. You've got to have all those things because that's the meaning. I think a lot of the American kind of homesteading self-sufficiency ethos is like work, work, work, work, work, work, work, work, work, work. You spend your whole life working, and that's not point. Going back to the indigenous ethos, there should be a lot of leisure time in life, shouldn't there? And that doesn't have to be capitalist pursuits. That can just be time with family and friends. Those things are basically free. You're not spending money out at the movie theatre. You're having a cup of tea. And that gives the rest of it meaning. ...And you know, the vibe can be different for everybody as well. That's just my style.





The Garden Sink by Bruce Jackson (PT Treasurer)

A very useful addition to your garden infrastructure is the garden sink.

I bought this second-hand stainless-steel sink plus a tap from the local tip shop for a total of \$47. I built a stand at a comfortable height using bits of timber I had lying around and bought a plug from Bunnings (the only new component). I built a stand for a bucket under the drain hole so that I could collect the water, add a bit of worm juice and pour it around nearby vines.

I sited it next to my hose reel and found an old hose fitting that married with the thread on the base of the tap so that I could attach and detach the hose as required.

Now I can trim, wash and peel my veges out in the fresh air, listening to the birds singing and enjoying the sunshine. A shorter trip to the worm farm with the peelings as well!

I also find it useful for washing and drying items, a good place to store my sharp veggie harvesting knife and a convenient place to wash and dry my hands (section of old flannel pyjamas makes a useful garden towel).

It is interesting to see how much water I now utilise in my garden rather than sending into the sewerage system.



PERMACULTURE TASMANIA



Permaculture Principles for Beginners by Loretta Leary

Permaculture Principle 1 is "**Observe and Interact**", emphasizing the importance of understanding a system's patterns and relationships before designing and implementing solutions. By observing natural ecosystems, you can gain insights to create sustainable human systems that mimic nature, leading to more informed decisions and effective course corrections through continued interaction.

What it means:

Observation is key: Take time to watch, listen, and learn from your environment and to understand how different elements interact.

Understand the context: Recognise that every solution is unique to a specific situation, and a "one-size-fits-all" approach rarely works.

Connect patterns and details: Observe the bigger patterns first (like sun movement over your garden and water flow from rain and watering) before focusing on specific details to fill in the design.

How to apply it:

Engage with your surroundings: Spend time in your garden or local environment to learn about its specific dynamics.

Understand natural cycles: Observe how sunlight moves, how water flows, and what plants and animals are present.

Learn from nature: Mimic natural processes to design human-centred systems that work with nature, not against it.

Iterate with feedback: After implementing a solution, continue to observe across your garden its effects and be prepared to adjust and improve the system based on the feedback you receive.

This underpins one of my favourite permaculture notions; work with nature, not against it. I learnt this the hard way, through trial and error rather than through observation and planning. My lack of patience used to get the better of me but now I see observing and interacting as a way of slowing down, connecting to Country and being present. A wonderful excuse to sit in the garden with a cuppa and watch the sun shine on pockets of it and cast shade on others. Not a bad way to pass some time. You may also encounter some wildlife that you didn't know was there! Or even where that pesky, secretive chook has hidden her eggs!

PERMACULTURE TASMANIA



Spring Gardening

SEPTEMBER

PLANT: Potatoes, Jerusalem artichokes, globe artichokes, chives, rhubarb divisions and seedlings of cabbage, cauliflower, celery, broccoli, lettuce, silverbeet, spring long-keeping and salad onion and leeks.

SOW DIRECT: Carrot, beetroot, parsnip, silverbeet, cabbage, cauliflower, broccoli, lettuce, onion, kohlrabi, summer spinach, leeks, swede, turnip, peas, Asian brassicas, Japanese turnip, peas. Under glass in containers sow tomatoes, pumpkin, zucchini and sweetcorn

OCTOBER

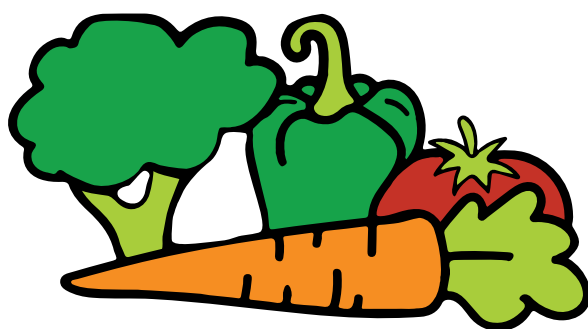
PLANT: Potatoes, globe artichoke and chive divisions. Also seedlings of cabbage, cauliflower, celery, broccoli, leek, lettuce, salad and spring onion, leeks and towards the end of the month seedlings of tomato, zucchini, pumpkin, squash, bush and climbing beans and sweetcorn.

SOW DIRECT: Carrot, beetroot, parsnip, silverbeet, cabbage, cauliflower, broccoli, lettuce, spring and salad onion, leeks, late peas, tomato, zucchini, pumpkin, squash and sweetcorn. Under glass or in containers sow cucumber, eggplant, capsicum and tomato.

NOVEMBER

PLANT: Potatoes, globe artichokes and seedlings of Brussels sprouts, tomato, capsicum, kale, eggplant, zucchini, cucumber, sweetcorn, cabbage, cauliflower, celery, broccoli, silverbeet, lettuce, leek, Asian brassicas and roots.

SOW: Asparagus, bush and climbing beans, beetroot, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, Asian brassicas, capsicum, carrot, cauliflower, celery, eggplant, kale, kohlrabi, leek, lettuce, salad onion, parsnip, late peas (cold districts only), pumpkin, winter squash, radish, rhubarb, summer spinach, swede, sweetcorn, tomato, turnip and zucchini.



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