

# The Self-Sufficiency

# Shoppe Newsletter



Issue No. 38

P.O. Box 390 Park Holme 5043 Sth Aust.

[www.theshoppe.com.au](http://www.theshoppe.com.au)

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## The Magic of Mother Nature

*There is something very wonderful about time spent in the garden. It's one of those rare occasions in life when we transcend time, relax and forget about the pressures of everyday life. I often say to myself: "I'll just duck out into the garden and do a couple of things before moving onto other tasks that need doing". But once in the midst of the tranquillity of trees, earth, birds, plants and animals I relax, feel less stressed and quite at peace - subsequently 'time' is of much less importance. It's a form of meditation - when our mind is put to rest so that we connect with our soul - the peaceful part of ourselves that guides us through life and seeks the very best for our growth and change.*

There are not many things in life that have such a powerful affect on our state of being. The simplicity of children and animals, Mother Nature, meditation, prayer and similar practises, love, undertaking some sort of craft or relaxing activity or even just walking or running all help take us away from the preoccupations of busy lives to be able to connect or 're-connect' with something deeper.

Over the years I've tried many things in an effort to find deeper understanding (both of myself and the world around me) - but found myself restless and unable to focus (meditation being an example). But gardening - particularly growing produce - I found easy to do and came quite naturally. Witnessing the process of a small seedling (or seed) starting from

germination, through growth and development to production never ceases to amaze me. And the grand finale is picking the produce - taking it from the garden to the kitchen - as food for the table. Every time I experience that process it would remind me of the wonderment of 'the planet' - the earth - which sustains and nurtures us through life. It gives appreciation of how the simplest of things can have the biggest impact.

Of the people I have met that also 'garden' the same message is relayed - the great pleasure of producing via the resources of Mother Nature. It's the process of stepping from the kitchen into the backyard to collect food/produce for the table that holds the key to why people choose to grow their own food. Not only is

it very resourceful but instills a sense of independence and control that is slowly being eroded in today's 'fast paced' consumer-commercial society.



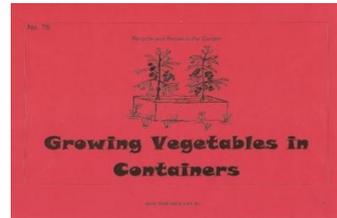
When discussing gardening and vegetable growing people often express a sense of bewilderment of 'where/how do I start?' Unfortunately working with the earth is a task that requires practise and experience to be truly understood - as opposed to theory and input. So the best place to start is 'small and simple' by just growing a plant or two in a container (which is more manageable). If you work with the understanding that a plant requires three things to grow successfully: nutrients, sun and water it makes the process a little easier. Once you have those three components mastered the rest will fall into place. In effect a 'feel' is developed of what the plant needs for it's growth, how much and when and what a healthy, developed and productive plant looks like.

My suggestion is to start with, for example, a simple polystyrene tub (which is just the right size to sustain growth for two tomato plants - the most popular vegetable to grow) or 4 or 6 lettuce plants. For the soil (or nutrients) start with just simple mushroom compost (available cheaply from hardware or garden stores). Mushroom compost is high in nutrients sufficient to sustain the plant to production stage. Don't use your own garden soil or compost until you get an understanding of 'normal plant growth' and can judge any problems that may arise later. That's it - then all that is required is sun (of course) and water (keep the mushroom compost damp). Growing vegetables via this method can be done almost anywhere: backyard, front yard, sunny verandah, patio, balcony,



driveway, etc. All it will take is one season of growing in this way and next season you'll have sufficient confidence to develop your own vegie patch.

I've put together some e-books on the topic of growing cheaply and easily which offers further information:



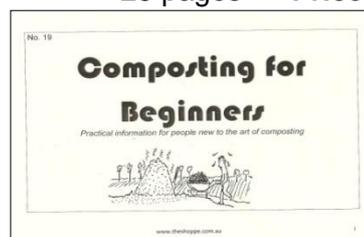
**Booklet No. 76: Growing Vegetables in Containers** – Step by step guide for growing vegetables cheaply and easily in recycled containers. A 'fool-proof' way to help you get started in producing a successful first crop of vegetables.

14 pages **Price: \$8.00**



**Booklet No. 36 - Recycling & Improvising in the Garden:** Creating an environmentally friendly garden, recycling and re-using household items in the garden: such as newspaper, tin cans, plastic containers, egg cartons, old garden hose, car tyres, buckets, curtain material and netting! Deals with soil enrichment, repelling insects, water saving.

25 pages **Price: \$12.00**



**Booklet No. 19 - Composting for the Beginner:** Easy to follow and concise information for people new to the art of composting. Covers various methods for composting, container options (commercial or recycled), how to make compost, uses and trouble-shooting.

13 pages **Price: \$8.00**

All booklets can be downloaded from [www.theshoppe.com.au](http://www.theshoppe.com.au). See page 4 for details.



## Pet Care Alternatives

*I'm an avid lover of animals. As the highest evolved entities on Earth it is the basic duty of care of humanity to ensure the welfare of Earth's beings - including animals of all kinds. To date we have failed miserably at this task.*

When I moved into my current home some 14 years ago I was appalled at the number of sick, stray and starving cats that came onto my property searching for a means for surviving. I began taking in and caring for these animals - including vet care, worming, desexing, food and re-homing. Although it has been a very rewarding experience emotionally the costs incurred have not! Over the years I've discovered and devised many ways to care for pets as cheaply as possible. My philosophy has been that every little bit of money saved can be used to enrich the

life of another little stray that comes my way. Such things as flea control treatments, food and minor ailments can be dealt with effectively without paying a high cost. I've documented some of my recipes, ideas and experiences in booklet No. 35 - Natural Pet Care. If you are a pet owner you may find it very useful.



**Booklet No. 35 - Natural Pet Care:** Chemical free, money saving and practical. Includes homemade dog and cat food, dog biscuits, healthy food options, making a birdseed cake, natural insect repellents, homemade flea collar, deterring pets from the garden (and furniture!), dealing with bad breath, puppy care, fur-balls, and more.

23 pages. **Price: \$12.00**  
(See page 4 for ordering information).



## Turning Old Clothes into New

I recently cleaned out my wardrobes and sorted my clothing. Not to be the type to discard anything that may still have some value or wear I transformed some of the items into new 'life'. I turned old blouses into tank work tops (with sleeves and collars removed), cardigans and coats into vests, skirts into cushion covers and a couple of pairs of trouser pants became carry shoulder bags. For most people the clothes they buy are dictated by (not only the cost and usefulness) but by the appeal of the fabric (colour, design, sentimentality, etc.). So it's quite rewarding to re-use that pretty fabric (that Grandma gave as a gift - for example) by creating a 'new life' so that it can be appreciated for even longer.

Although I have some sewing skills that have been valuable in transforming the clothing - there are still many, many other ways to change the structure of clothing into something else or re-use the fabric, buttons, lace, etc. I've documented my ideas and experiences in Booklet No. 77 - Recycling Rags. It predominately covers suggestions for the 'non-sewer' so that it does not matter whether you have any special equipment (such as a sewing machine, over-locker, etc). I find it particularly rewarding when I wear a newly designed clothing item and receive comments from friends such as: "I like that - where did you get it from?"



What a wonderful frugal and environmentally friendly way to inspire family and friends! However, if re-using discarded clothing is not to your liking (or time) - PLEASE discard it thoughtfully by donating it to a worthy cause.

**Booklet No. 77 - Recycling Rags** - 23 pages - **Price: \$12.00**  
(Download from [www.theshoppe.com.au](http://www.theshoppe.com.au) - see page 4 for details)

## How to Purchase Booklets

There are 3 ways to purchase publications:

### **Method 1. From the website:**

All booklets are available for **immediate download**. This is the quickest way to access the booklets.

1. Go to **www.theshoppe.com.au**
2. Click on 'Shoppe Publications'
3. Scroll down to find your chosen title
4. Click 'ADD TO CART'
5. Click 'Continue shopping with The Shoppe' to order more booklets or
6. Follow the prompts: 'Proceed to Check-out' to pay. (You do not need to have a Paypal account to order via this method. You can pay by debit or credit card, Mastercard, Visa, American Express or Paypal)
7. When payment has been processed your booklet will appear immediately for download in PDF (Acrobat) format on the screen.
8. Save to your computer for printing (full booklet or just relevant recipe pages) or use ebook reader.

### **Method 2. Internet Banking or Direct Payment:**

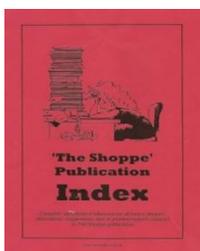
Electronic funds transfer into The Self-Sufficiency Shoppe account. Booklets can then be emailed or posted\* to you. Email: [pam@theshoppe.com.au](mailto:pam@theshoppe.com.au) for The Shoppe's bank account details for payment transfer. \*Please add \$2 to the price of each booklet to cover printing and postage costs.

### **Method 3. By Mail**

Send cheque/money order to The Self-Sufficiency Shoppe - P.O. Box 390, Park Holme, 5043 **OR** pay in person in cash (at a workshop). Your booklets will be downloaded and printed for you and sent to your address. Please add \$2 per booklet for postage and printing costs.

**If you have any problems or queries contact: [pam@theshoppe.com.au](mailto:pam@theshoppe.com.au) - ph: (08) 8374 2531**

**Booklets are 20% cheaper when purchased as a set.  
To order 'Booklet Sets' simply follow the same procedure - go to: 'Booklet Sets'**



## **FREE DOWNLOADS**

- **The Shoppe Index** (*A to Z resource of all The Shoppe publication information*)
  - **Publication List** (*of all 90 titles currently available*)
  - **Workshop Presenter Introductory Manual** (*information about the workshops*)
- All available for free download: Go to [www.theshoppe.com.au](http://www.theshoppe.com.au). Click on 'FREE Downloads'. Scroll down to find your chosen item. Double click - your download will appear as a PDF document for printing, ebook reader, tablet, etc.

### **'The Shoppe' Newsletter Mailing List**

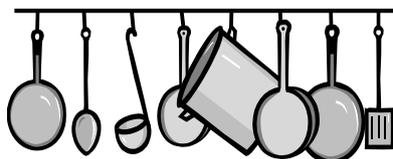
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**Receiving The Shoppe Newsletter by mail:** Newsletters are free but postage is not. If you would like to have the newsletter mailed to you on a regular basis send 6 postage stamps to The Shoppe for postage of next 6 issues.

**Back Issues of The Shoppe Newsletter:** Available for free download at 'The Shoppe Newsletter' - [www.theshoppe.com.au](http://www.theshoppe.com.au) or contact The Shoppe for hard copies.

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**Your letters, comments, recipes are always very much appreciated. Send to: Pam, The Self-Sufficiency Shoppe: P.O. Box 390 Park Holme 5043 or email: [theshoppe@tpg.com.au](mailto:theshoppe@tpg.com.au)**



## Your Favourite Recipes

Hi Pam

I often watch the cooking programmes on television. It just drives me crazy when they offer recipes that have numerous stages of preparation and take up time that could be best spent doing other things! So here's a couple of quick and easy cake recipes that I make for the school fete that other people may appreciate.

Trudy - via email

### **No Fuss Patty Cakes**

*This recipe does not involve creaming the butter and sugar - which saves time.*

**You'll need:** 3 tablespoons **thick cream** (the 'richer' the better - such as pure cream),  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup **white sugar**, 1 **egg**, 2 cups **self raising flour** (sifted). approx.  $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{3}{4}$  cups **milk**,  $\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon **vanilla essence**

**Method:** Mix together cream, sugar and vanilla (do not over-beat the mix). Add egg. Blend well (by hand). Fold in flour and milk. Add more milk if necessary to form thick batter. Place rounded dessertspoonfuls in patty pans and bake in hot oven (250°C) for 10-15 minutes.

### **Simplicity Chocolate Cake**

*I like this recipe because everything is just placed in a bowl and mixed!*

**You'll need:** 2 cups **S.R. Flour**,  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup **castor sugar**, 2 **eggs** (beaten),  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup **milk**, 3 rounded tablespoons **butter/margarine**, 2 tablespoons **cocoa**, pinch of **salt**

**Method:** Sift flour, cocoa and salt into bowl. Melt butter – add milk. Pour eggs, milk, melted butter along with sugar and vanilla in with the other ingredients. Beat together (with an electric mixer) for 3-4 minutes. Pour into 8" round cake tin and bake at 180°C for 30-40 minutes.

*Many thanks Trudy for your recipes - I completely agree with you - impressive dishes can be made from simple recipes without the need to fuss or spend hours*

*preparing. Here's my favourite cake recipe that is also quick and easy to make. I often take it to my workshops for participants to have with their tea or coffee. I know I have printed it previously in The Shoppe Newsletter - but here it is again in case people missed it! Pam*

### **Easy Quick Mix Date-Walnut Cake**

**Place in bowl the following:** 1 cup **S.R. Flour** (sifted),  $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon **bicarbonate of soda**, 2 teaspoons **cinnamon** (or mixed spice),  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup **raw or white sugar**,  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup chopped **dates** and  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup chopped **walnuts**. (Or substitute with nuts and dried fruit of personal preference)

**Place in saucepan:**  $\frac{2}{3}$  cup water and 1 tablespoon butter or margarine. Heat to melt the butter. Stir the water-butter mix with the dry ingredients.

Pour into greased round cake tin. Bake 180°C for 30 minutes. That's it!

*(Recipe from Booklet No. 12 - Improvising in the Kitchen. Price: \$12.00)*

Hi Pam,

*Do you have an easy recipe for muesli bars? I always have homemade muesli in the pantry and I'd like to find an easy way to turn some into bars which I can take with me on my bus trips. I could experiment of course, but if you've already done something similar it would be good to know.*

*Thanks Sue*

*Hi Sue, Here's a recipe that is quick easy and always successful.*

*Pam*

### **Muesli Bars (Slices)**

**Mix together:** 2 cups **muesli**,  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup **plain flour**,  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup **sugar**,  $\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon **baking powder**, pinch **salt**. Add 150g melted **margarine/butter** and 1 good tablespoon **honey**.

**Method:** Mix well. Pour and press into slice tin. Bake 15 minutes in moderate oven (350°C). Cool in tray before cutting into fingers.



# Your Questions & Comments

Dear Pam,

I am hoping you can help me with a remedy for my itchy scalp – drives me mad! It confines itself to the back of my head & above my (L) ear. Do you have a treatment for this? I do not want to use expensive products.  
Vicki (via email)

Hi Vicki,

I'm not sure what you are using in terms of commercial products (and chemicals) on your scalp – but I suspect that may be causing the problem. I have the same issue and also have thinning hair as a result. I attribute it to chemicals in some commercial hair care products. As a result I do not use commercial shampoos (or similar products) – as they are, effectively, detergents which destroy the natural hair oils. **Booklet No. 14 - Natural Hair Care** (e-book that can be downloaded from: [www.theshoppe.com.au](http://www.theshoppe.com.au)) contains lots of information about safe, chemical free hair care. You'll find other general information in the 'Natural Hair and Body Care' section (page) on the website. In the meantime here's a couple of natural things that I practise to help deal with the problem.

- Apply a herbal hair rinse (after shampooing - do not wash out - leave in the hair to dry naturally). To make a hair rinse infuse 3 tablespoons (approx.) fresh rosemary, thyme or sage in 1 cup boiling water. Strain. Leave to cool before applying.
- Use soap in place of commercial shampoos for washing the hair.
- Massage cider vinegar into the scalp once or twice weekly. Rinse out with clean water.

(There are many more suggestions in **Booklet No. 14 - Natural Hair Care** - 22 pages - **Price: \$12.00**. See page 4 for ordering information)



Hi Pam,

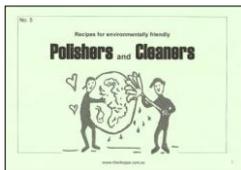
What's the best natural way to clean marble tops?

Wendy - Two Wells (Sth Aust)

Hi Wendy,

Many, many times during workshops people ask for information on how to clean a specific type of item - such as marble. As most of the time my memory is limited on the specifics on how to clean or maintain the many different types of household surfaces, fabrics, materials, etc. I've made a point when re-writing my booklets of documenting all the options and suggestions so that all bases were covered! I've listed the two relevant e-books below - it would be useful to download them and have on hand for future reference. In the mean-time here's some suggestions for cleaning marble from Booklet No. 5:

- **To clean:** Rub with a mix of methylated spirits and vinegar.
- **To remove stains:** Cover with salt and lemon juice. Leave 5 minutes. Polish with a soft cloth.



**No. 5 - Homemade Cleaners and Polishers:** Suggestions and recipes for restoring "as new" shine to many household items using natural (and cheap) alternatives - such as vinegar, olive oil, cold tea, lemon, linseed, newspaper, Vaseline. Covers: floors, wooden surfaces, glass/mirrors, walls, stove top, shoes/hand-bags, removing polish build-up and more.

19 pages **Price \$8.00** (Download from [www.theshoppe.com.au](http://www.theshoppe.com.au))



**No. 59 - Caring for Natural Woods & Fibres:** Many natural mediums respond best to specific types of care and cleaning methods. Covers woods, cane, bamboo, sea-grass, cork, canvas, wool, etc. Recipes and ideas for cleaning, polishing and rejuvenating.

19 pages **Price \$8.00** (Download from [www.theshoppe.com.au](http://www.theshoppe.com.au))

Hi Pam, I just wanted to say that I recently downloaded a couple of your e-booklets (No. 30 and 19) and really enjoyed them immensely. I particularly like the idea of being able to print out one page (recipe) when required - not the entire booklet. Thanks for all your work. Mary - via email.

**Hi Mary - Many thanks for your positive comments. Here's wishing you and all my readers, workshop attendees and supporters a fulfilling 2012. The years ahead will bring great change so 'stay strong' and take heart from the simple, small things in life. Pam ♥**