

## THE ANSWER IS IN THE SOIL

Recently during a gardening talk I was asked what can we do to improve our gardens?

The answer for the best results in gardening lies in the soil which means the health of the soil.

Healthy soil is teeming with life, most of which is unseen by the naked eye but exists when allowed to.

Numerous species of microbes, beneficial fungi, earthworms and a multitude of soil dwelling creatures make up what we call the 'Soil Food Web'.

They breakdown organic matter, build humus and aid the feeding of plants.

The biggest danger to a healthy soil food web is the gardener that does not understand the principals of nurturing a healthy soil web.

These gardeners are hungry for results in a similar manner that some commercial growers and farmers are hungry for profits. Looking for immediate gains and not recognising long term losses.

I have two thoughts on the matter, the first is do absolutely nothing and over a period of time Nature will find a balance and the soil will return to a natural healthy state.

I have witnessed this aspect a number of times over the years where gardeners have spent a lot of time and money in destroying what nature originally provided them.

Always out with their chemical fertilisers and sprays, killing off the soil life, causing stress and ill health in their plants which then undergo a regime of chemical spray fixes.

These further undermine the health of the soil and plants and the prognosis is death by a thousand cuts.

The final straws to kill a healthy garden is to maintain it weed free by regular use of herbicides such as Roundup and flood the gardens with bacteria destroying chlorine from your friendly local water supply.

One of two things often happen, the gardeners either get too old to garden or they give up trying to make their plants healthy unnaturally.

Then over the next few years a magical thing occurs, the plants progressively become healthier as Nature takes over and restores the balance that the gardeners destroyed.

The second and the preferred option for gardeners that want to have pride and pleasure from their gardens is to stop killing the soil life then start enhancing it..

Personally ban the use of harmful chemicals and fertilisers along with chlorinated water out of the tap.

The chemical sprays as we are quickly finding out are not only unhealthy for the soil, the environment, the plants and our own health.

Chemicals which we were lead to believe were safe and effective answers to various problems turn out to become ineffective and a danger to our own health.

Glyphosate (Roundup and many other brand names) has been proclaimed by the World Health Organisation as a probable carcinogenic. Documents have show that this was known back in the 80's but hidden from us.

A recent news statement said; 'Much of the scientific literature, perhaps half, may simply be untrue. Afflicted by studies with small sample sizes, tiny effects, invalid exploratory analyses, and flagrant conflicts of interest, together with an obsession for pursuing fashionable trends of dubious importance, science has taken a turn towards darkness.'

Another stated that a prestigious 'Scientific Journal' is reviewing and removing many of its past publications as it has been found that the supposed 'Peer reviews' were actual done by paid students in China who have no qualifications to review scientific papers!

Science has become a commodity that can purchased for commercial gains.

Now for really great gardens and very healthy soil we stop the bad practices then we assist Nature by providing the natural elements and speeding up the process of restoring a healthy Soil Food Web.

The first step will be to clean up soil area where the past use of chemicals is hampering health.

Simply take 20 mls of Magic Botanic Liquid plus 1 mil of Mycorrcin per litre of NON-CHOLINATED water and water into your gardens when the soil is moist.

This will clean up chemicals in the soil, increase the populations of beneficial's and reduce the pathogens. Follow this with a treatment of three basic products mixed together in equal parts, these are gypsum, dolomite and soft garden lime. (Note in areas that there are acid loving plants do not use the garden lime)

For nutrition forget about feeding the plants, instead fed the soil life (the plant's food needs will be automatically taken care of) Blood & Bone, animal manures, sheep manure pellets, mushroom compost and any compost that is not made from green wastes (they may contain chemicals and herbicides)

We are now halfway there in obtaining healthy gardens and plants but there is still one aspect missing and that is up to 114 minerals and elements. Many of these are needed by different species of plants for health with strong immune systems.

Two products will provide most if not all of these elements and that is Rok Solid and Ocean Solids.

They can be broadcast, side dressed or spot applied in the planting hole dependent on the situation.

I normally apply the following in the planting hole or in the area to be cropped prior to planting and for existing plants as a side dressing.

Rok Solid, Ocean Solids, BioPhos, Sheep Manure pellets, Wally Neem Tree Granules and chicken manure.

My outside taps have 10 micron carbon bonded filters to remove the chlorine from the tap water.

The results are gardens full of earth worms, very healthy plants and me a happy gardener most of the time.(there still can be problems)

But as one gardener said to me recently when he saw my raised gardens full of vegetables; 'I wish I could grow them like that!'

This gardening season remember 'The Answer is in the Soil' and garden with that in mind.