

July 2020 to June 2021



Tamarindus indica

Northey Street City Farm
ANNUAL REPORT

We acknowledge the First Nations custodians of the land on which we work, and their continuing connection to land, waters and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures and Elders past, present and future.



NSCF Supporters

We thank the following for their support of our programs this year :

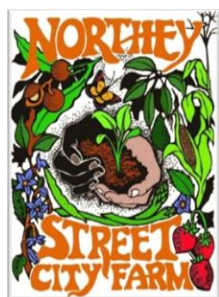
- Our members
- The NSCF First Nations Advisory Group
- Brisbane City Council
- Gambling Community Benefit Fund
- Five Mile Radius
- OzHarvest

Our purpose is to be an inspirational model of an urban permaculture farm which promotes and educates for sustainability. We believe that the dominant way of life is unsustainable, but by practicing permaculture we can create an environmentally, socially and economically just world.

NSCF Goals

- 1. To provide a demonstration urban permaculture site.**
- 2. To provide permaculture and sustainability education programs and learning opportunities.**
- 3. To promote biodiversity and responsible use of natural resources.**
- 4. To model effective participatory and inclusive processes and organisational structures.**
- 5. To provide services to the community through environmentally, socially and financially responsible enterprises.**
- 6. To encourage community involvement in our activities.**
- 7. To foster the growth of the Permaculture movement.**
- 8. To include First Nations culture & knowledge in collaboration with First Nations people.**

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Nursery - @cityfarmnursery



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<http://twitter.com/northeystreet>

2020-21 Management Committee COORDINATOR'S REPORT

Dick Copeman

After another year of the pandemic, I am pleased to say that Northey Street City Farm is managing to keep operating effectively and even to expand its activities.

Despite several more lockdowns, our markets and nursery have kept operating successfully, thanks to the efforts and adaptability of our staff, the cooperation of our stall-holders and the loyalty of our customers. Our education programs and volunteer activities have been somewhat more disrupted but are still operating successfully, as and when permitted.

Two initiatives this year have been the taking back of the Chai Café lease into direct operation by NSCF, and the appointment of a Farming Coordinator to increase production and sale of food at the Farm. Both initiatives are still in their early days, but both are going well.

After its postponement last year, NSCF hosted a very successful Australian Permaculture Convergence in April, with good local attendance and significant, though Covid-reduced, interstate numbers. The Convergence helped consolidate the Farm's role as an important permaculture hub, both in our local region and nationally. We also ran a successful Winter Solstice Festival this year after not being able to run it last year. Our event organisers and staff are to be commended not only for the success of these events but also for the extra efforts they had to go to in order to keep both events Covid safe.



On the downside, the pandemic has caused a postponement of the construction of two planned pieces of essential infrastructure, a new toilet block and a new stage. We hope that, once the pandemic situation eases, we will be able to progress these important initiatives.

On the staff front, Jody left the position of Site Coordinator, to be replaced by Ben, and Carissa finished up as Nursery Coordinator, with her replacement yet to be appointed. We welcomed Elaine as Chai Café Coordinator, Kai as Events Coordinator and Hamish as Farming Coordinator.

I wish to record my sincere thanks and appreciation to all our staff, Management Committee members, volunteers and supporters for their perseverance and commitment through what has been another difficult and disrupted year.

Now, more than ever, Brisbane needs Northey Street City Farm, so it is great that we are surviving and, in some respects, even thriving.



To model effective participatory and inclusive processes and organisational structures.

First Nations Engagement and Decolonisation Activities

The current NSCF 3-year strategic plan integrates First Nations engagement and decolonisation activities at the farm, with our farm goal *'to include First Nations culture and knowledge in collaboration with First Nations people'* incorporated into the work of all teams.

We give thanks to our First Nations Advisory Group for 2020-21, Michael Williams, Odette Best, Derek Sandy and Dominique Chen for their wisdom and guidance in our First Nations engagement and decolonising work at the Farm.

In the 2020- 21 financial year some of our activities and achievements included:

- providing discounted places for teachers from the Murri School to attend our 2020 School Gardening workshop
- providing two free tours for year five students from the Murri School (one in 2020 and one in 2021)
- offering half-price discounts for First Nations people to attend our Introduction to Permaculture weekend workshop
- awarding a part-scholarship place to 2 First Nations participants on our Permaculture Design Course
- involving First Nations performers at each of our Solstice and Equinox events
- taking steps towards 'decolonising' our Decolonisation Action Group meetings by holding them around the fire
- providing a free workshop to First Nations participants – *'Foodways, Our ways, Always: First Nations Urban Food Growing and Food Usage'* - with the support of a grant from Bank Australia.
- hosting a 'Decolonising Food Forum' at the Australasian Permaculture Convergence with First Nations presenters Dominique Chen, Gerry Turpin and Jacob Birch.
- holding quarterly meetings with our First Nations Advisory Group
- welcoming Dominique Chen to our First Nations Advisory Group
- changing the FNAG terms of reference to increase the number of members from 4 to 6
- inviting Jacob Birch to join the FNAG and he will join us in 2021/22.



Cooking fish at the DAG campfire



Bush foods



Winter Solstice Festival workshop

To include First Nations culture & knowledge in collaboration with First Nations people.

FARMING & SITE MAINTENANCE

- Redesigned and converted the orchards to Forest Gardens.
- Installed Forest Garden and salt-tolerant planting information signs .
- Increased the number of native plants in the forest gardens.
- QUT students continued monitoring the native grass and groundcover plantings on the Green Roof.
- Continued trialling different bush regeneration techniques.
- 100+ punnets of seedlings and tonnes of NSCF compost donated to the Growing Forward movement.



It was a good year for citrus



Turmeric wicking bed



Salt tolerant planting

Informative signs

Forest Garden



Orchard becoming a forest garden with diverse understorey and groundcover



Tree Group redesigning the orchards to become forest gardens

To provide a demonstration urban permaculture site.

Vegetable & seedling production



- Only 1900 meals served (due to numerous COVID lockdowns and reduced work force)
- Approx. 1000 bunches of produce sold to Bulk Buyers
- 3057 punnets of seedlings supplied to the City Farm Nursery



Compost production



- Approximately 100 cu m of compost made from local organic waste
- Strong team of keen volunteers
- Started selling bagged compost



Honey production

- Approximately 130 kg honey harvested
- 4 Native beehives harvested and split
- \$1000 worth of native beehives sold
- 242 jars of honey sold
- Approx. 100 beeswax cakes sold



Construction and site maintainence

- Installed a commercial dishwasher to help with zero waste events
- Replaced Peach Tree education area shade sail
- Repaired and upgraded City Farm Nursery retail area
- Integrated rainwater tanks into irrigation system
- Improved storage for Events equipment



Peach Tree education area roof



Drinks display rack for the City Farm Nursery



APC Awards made at the Farm



Bamboo harvest



Installing the dishwasher



Housing for irrigation system valves

To provide a demonstration urban permaculture site.



Bob restoring the cob oven

BIODIVERSITY AT THE FARM



Glycosmis trifoliata
Orange Berry



This year, we have focused on increasing the number of native plants at Farm, including native grasses propagated on site. These have been planted in the forest gardens as well in the bush foods area.

A bush regeneration group is meeting regularly on the third Tuesday afternoon of the month to maintain the riverine rainforest along the Bowen Heritage Trail which runs beside the Farm. They are planting a variety of understorey plants, then watering and maintaining the plantings.

The dwarf sedge frogs reappeared in the water plant sales area in the City Farm Nursery, and the possums and brush turkeys were their usual troublesome selves.



Spangled drongo



Superb fairy wren



Staff and volunteers prepare for the bird observation walk

Bird Diversity

A highlight for many of the Earth Kids over the past year has been spotting the group of Superb Fairy Wrens that live amongst the river mangroves.

In late 2020 we were grateful to have members of the 'Bird Education Group' (see their website:

www.ourlocalbirds.com) visit for bird presentations and bird walks with an Earth Kids group, and on another occasion with a group of NSCF staff and volunteers.

In our 30-minute staff and volunteer bird walk along the Bowen Heritage Trail adjacent to the farm, the group observed 15 species including two Sacred Kingfishers, a Mangrove Gerygone and our resident Southern Boobook Owl. The full list from that day can be seen here:

<https://ebird.org/australia/checklist/S75203836>

The Bowen Heritage Trail is a great urban area to spot a diversity of birds, with 47 species of birds recorded on eBird Australia over the past few years. [eBird Australia is an online checklist program, which enables recreational and professional bird watchers to report on their bird observations. See:

<https://ebird.org/australia/home>]



Bush stone-curlew family in the carpark

To promote biodiversity and responsible use of natural resources.

ORGANIC FARMERS MARKET

COVID-19 continued to have a major impact on the operation of the Organic Farmers Market. However, thanks to the dedicated staff and stallholders, the Market supplied fresh local produce on every Sunday of the year.

A handful of long-term and beloved stallholders left the Market in 2020-21 - including Charlwood Organics and Moorhead and Rutter Bananas. At the same time, we welcomed several new and committed organic growers from around the region.

The Market hosted a World Bee Day event in May and the Community Gardens and Permaculture Festival in April. Other highlights included the introduction of a mobile dishwashing service aimed at reducing waste and the reopening of the Chai Cafe.



Permaculture & Community Gardens Festival



Chai Cafe



Simon social distancing while at the office

At 30 June 2021 we had a total of 93 stalls:

- 9 Charity and Community stallholders
- 5 Coffee and Hot Food stallholders
- 20 Farmers
- 6 Farmer-Resellers
- 13 Resellers
- 10 Food Makers
- 13 Makers
- 11 Upcycle stallholders
- 6 Wellness stallholders



To provide services to the community through environmentally, socially and financially responsible enterprises.

CITY FARM NURSERY



The Nursery was affected by a few shutdowns due to Covid19, but we adapted by trialling an online shop. We focussed on increasing our supplies of native plants, adding more informative signs, and on possum-proofing our display shelves to reduce stock losses overnight! We also introduced a pot swap bin as part of our commitment to reducing waste.

We held free demonstrations in the Nursery including one on composting for National Recycling Week. We celebrated World Bee Day with a demonstration on how to split a native beehive.

This year we used the Nursery as a venue for a bar and a dance space during the Winter Solstice Festival and as the Jungle Bar during the Summer Solstice event and an event during August.

We really rely on the support of our volunteers and have missed them during the times we had to shut down the program due to Covid restrictions. We look forward to being able to restart our volunteer program again in the very near future.



- 4171 small pots of herbs and veggies were the biggest sellers, making up 17% of total sales for the year
- 597 native plants
- 1868 seedling punnets
- 734 packets of seeds
- 969 Flying Fox Ice blox

To provide services to the community through environmentally, socially and financially responsible enterprises.

EVENTS

Events at Northey Street City Farm are always a great opportunity to showcase the Farm with permaculture workshops, seasonal plants for sale in the Nursery, organic markets and celebrating with the community.

The **Summer Solstice Cabaret** offered a great line up of local music, circus, drumming and dance performances with thought provoking workshops, nature-based kids' activities and wonderful organic food.

Our annual **Winter Solstice Festival** expanded the site layout this year and limited numbers to be Covid safe. The program featured many local bands, First Nations knowledge, and introduced Permaqueer workshops. Our ceremony, lantern parade and bonfire are always loved by the families that attend. This year we also introduced a Pay It Forward ticket system, where people in the community paid for the tickets for others who may not have been able to afford a ticket themselves. The festival always has a family friendly community vibe, and we thank the Brisbane City Council for their on-going sponsorship to keep the tickets affordable.



Dance Masala
Bollywood dance workshop



Winter Solstice Bonfire



Windsor State School Choir



Derek Sandy First Nations welcome



Riff Raff Marching Band

Summer Solstice Cabaret
4 Performers
8 stalls
500 tickets sold

Winter Solstice Festival
14 Bands and performers
23 stalls
20 workshops
1,100 tickets sold



To encourage community involvement in our activities.

ADULT EDUCATION



Urban Forage workshop with Dick

The adult education program has faced challenges in the last 12 months due to the COVID outbreak. 8 workshops had to be cancelled due to lockdowns which did affect our income, though there was an increase in numbers for our gardening courses and the PDC numbers have remained consistent over the last 3 years.

We ran popular short courses and workshops including Worm Farming and Composting, our Introduction to Permaculture, Integrated Pest Management, Hands on Wicking beds, Witchy Brews and many more.

In April we ran a Permaculture teacher training course with Rowe Morrow in the lead up to the Australasian Permaculture Convergence which we hosted.

The 2 Permaculture Design Courses were taught by Michael Wardle, Adult Education Co-Ordinator, and the teaching team.



- 27 Sustainable Living Workshops & short courses
- 367 workshop participants.
- 190 APC Participants
- 41 participants from the 2 Permaculture Design Courses

To provide permaculture and sustainability education programs and learning opportunities.

Australasian Permaculture Convergence

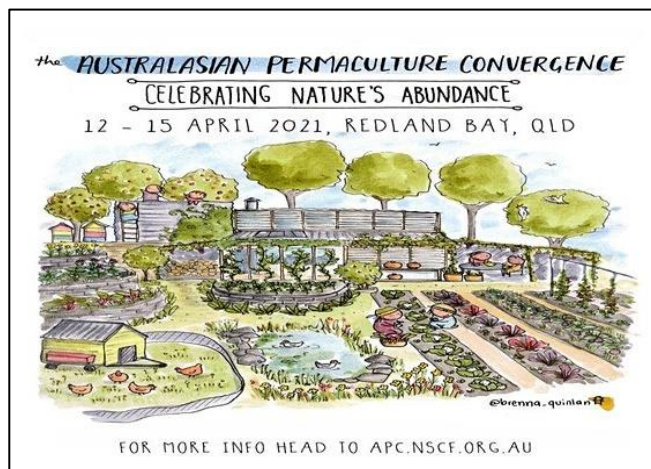
The Farm hosted the biennial Australasian Permaculture Convergence on behalf of Permaculture Australia in April 2021. The APC offered 4 days of workshops and talks from a variety of experienced leaders in the world of permaculture.

The program included topics relevant to the three ethics of Permaculture, which are Earth Care, People Care and Fair Share.

Keynote speakers were Starhawk, David Holmgren and Robyn Francis and each provided thought provoking presentations on the role of permaculture in dealing with the bigger picture issues like climate change.

The workshops were each 90 minutes long to allow for more participation and hands-on activities. Some workshops shared practical skills like fermenting food or building rocket stoves. Others looked at social issues like how to facilitate dynamic groups or queering permaculture. Another strand looked at ways to involve children and youth in permaculture. And there were many opportunities to explore the theory and practice of permaculture.

Evenings offered campfire chats, a participatory play, the traditional APC quiz night and the Permaculture Australia Awards Night.



Shannon Ruska, Quandamooka
Welcome Ceremony

- 44 Workshops
- 4 Keynote presentations
- 190 participants
- 17 volunteers/workers



To foster the growth of the Permaculture movement

APC CONTINUED...



Erin Young - Sociocracy workshop



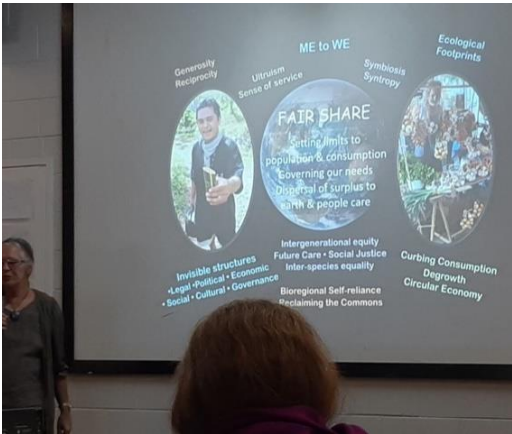
'Get Your Limits On' play



Quiz Night



Permaculturing your wardrobe



Robyn Francis Keynote:
Fair Share in the Anthropocene

YOUTH EDUCATION

Tours and Excursions

We had a range of people of all ages visit the farm for excursions and tours in the 2020 – 2021 financial year. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, international tour groups have been unable to visit, but we have had plenty of local schools and other groups experience the Farm through our tours and activities. These groups have been able to see how our urban permaculture farm operates and do a range of hands-on activities including composting, propagation, feeding chickens, tasting from the garden, ecoarts and more.

For schools, student visits are an opportunity to integrate learning on a range of topics including sustainability, food security, reducing waste, living things, and food webs.

We receive a lot of great feedback from our tours and activities, thanks to our team of casual education tutors. In 2020 – 2021 our team included Belinda, Desi, Gavin, Jenny, Lucy, Nadine, Rachel, Stacey and Richard, who worked alongside Youth Education Coordinator Emma Brindal.



In the 2020 – 2021 financial year:

- 933 participants in total visited; 643 were from schools; 249 were from out of school hours care (OSHC) groups; and 41 were tertiary students.
- 23 groups of people visited; 14 schools, 6 out of school hours care groups and 3 tertiary groups.



Professional Development Workshops for teachers

We piloted a one-day 'Successful School Gardening' workshop for teachers and school community members, run by Jenny Kato and Emma Brindal in August 2020. We had lots of positive feedback and will continue to offer this workshop into the future to support schools to establish and maintain thriving gardens that the school community can engage with and learn in.

We also ran a one-day 'Outdoor Learning and the Curriculum' workshop for teachers in October 2020, run by Emma Brindal and guest presenter Bethan Burton from Journaling with Nature. Workshop participants learnt about approaches to outdoor experiential learning, and experienced and reflected on a range of outdoor activities that can be linked to the curriculum, including nature journaling, 'Sit Spots', a 'Web of Life' activity and a 'Council of All Beings'.

To provide permaculture and sustainability education programs and learning opportunities.



Earth Kids



We ran five Earth Kids school holiday programs and two homeschool programs in the 2020-2021 financial year, with 81 participants in total. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, our Winter Earth Kids program ran for one regular day before being cancelled due to a short lockdown. We then ran a second day in the second week of the school holidays. Luckily, this was the only Earth Kids program which was disrupted due to the pandemic.

Our Earth Kids staff Rachel, Gavin, Christel and Nadine joined our Youth Education Coordinator, Emma, to run these programs through the year. We also had parent and student volunteers who joined in the fun and helped Earth Kids to run smoothly. In particular, we want to acknowledge our regular volunteer Cristyan Leal for her commitment and contribution to Earth Kids.

To provide permaculture and sustainability education programs and learning opportunities.



Favourite activities of Earth Kids through the year included planting, tasting from the garden, tree climbing, games, shelter building, fire tending, cooking on the fire and adventure challenges. We were grateful to our guest presenters through the year: Aaron Saunders a First Nations man who shared his knowledge about native plants and their uses; and members of the 'Bird Education Group' who presented and took the children for a bird walk to discover and learn about the birds that live on site and along the creek.



EARTH ARTS



Thank you to our long-term volunteer Bob Mud, who continued to provide free Earth Arts activities on three days a week, including during the Sunday Organic Farmers Market. Bob provides activities around Earth, Air, Fire and Water to encourage toddlers and their carers to experience contact with nature. The informal playgroups gather at the Farm on Tuesday and Friday mornings.



SUPPORT ACTIVITIES

We continued to promote the Farm through our social media and the website. The format of our ENews was updated and some changes made to the look of the website. A staff satisfaction survey was held in February. One outcome was to further define the roles and responsibilities of the various groups, teams and individuals.

We continued to share our experience and to support other Community Gardens with advice about policies and procedures.

We worked with Carers Qld to improve inclusion for people with disabilities at community gardens by planning and presenting at a Community Gardens Forum.

Although our volunteer program was disrupted by Covid shutdowns often, a skeleton crew kept the Farm maintained and the plants and animals alive throughout. We celebrated the contributions of our volunteers at the end-of-year volunteers' lunch.



Volunteers end-of-year Lunch



People

At 30 June 2021 we had:

- 184 members
- 13 part-time staff

Social Media

- 33094 NSCF Facebook fans
- 6949 Instagram followers
- 5172 E News subscribers
- 76,796 website visits/year

Finance

- 411 payslips
- 2620 invoices issued
- 1105 payments made

To encourage community involvement in our activities.