



## What's happening in the world of Aquaponics.

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### New Backyard Farming Website

*The Backyard Farming website has a huge range of free articles and information.*

Backyard Farming was launched recently by Backyard Aquaponics and will provide news and information about growing your own fresh fruit and vegetables.

The website will encompass all aspects of food production in the home garden.

This will include the use of poultry and other fowl; fruit and nut trees; permaculture practices and techniques; worm farming; preserving

and cooking produce and much more.

The website also boasts an online forum. A friendly place to share information about your experiences and learn from other members growing their own produce.

There is also an online shop, which over the coming months will be updated and stocked with gardening books, DVDs and information products.

So why not come check it out? If you love gardening and want to learn more about how to garden, then the Backyard Farming website is the place to go.

You can visit the site by following this link

[backyardfarming.com.au](http://backyardfarming.com.au)

# Backyard Farming Electronic Magazine Launched

Due to the enormous amount of information and emerging technologies in the Backyard Farming community, we have produced a strictly advertisement-free electronic magazine.

The magazine features forty-three pages packed full of information on organic gardening.

Unlike most other magazines, the Backyard Farming magazine has no advertisements. And when you compare that to a typical gardening magazine that can easily have more than 50% advertisements, it's a big difference.

The first edition has information on Muscovy ducks, which are absolutely fantastic for almost all gardens. They help control insects and unlike most poultry; they're not noisy! Which makes them great for inner city backyards.

There's an in-depth article on saving seeds in the garden. Which is one of the best ways to save money and

Issue 1 Fourth Quarter 2009 Fantastic information for the Backyard Farmer in us all

Bringing Food Production Home

# Backyard Farming

*Red Currants*  
A colourful addition to your garden

Thyme – An age old herb

Saving Seed – You'll never buy seed again



**Greek salad**  
Real wholesome food



**Apricots**  
Growing in your backyard



**Muscovy ducks**  
Make a great addition to your yard

quickly multiply crops, as well as improving yields, by selective saving.

This edition and all future editions can be purchased from the online store, for only \$7.50AU. Now that's great value for money!

*With no advertisements, this magazine is packed full of useful information!*

## Thyme an age old herb

By Joel Malcolm

There is a difference of opinion as to whether the name thyme originated from the Greek word *thymos*, which translated to the Latin word for under or perfume, or whether it originated from the Egyptian word *tham*, which describes a plant used in the process of mummification.

Thyme leaves are curled, shaped like an ellipse, and quite small. They measure more or less 1 mm long and 0.5 mm wide. The top of the leaves are green-grey in colour, while the bottom is whitish-grey in colour. The plant has small pink or purple flowers in terminal cymes (these flowers are sterile) and greenish-brown fruit (these are also sterile).

There are more than 100 different types of thyme, but they often look so much alike that only a botanist will be able to distinguish one from the other. The most common varieties are lemon thyme and garden thyme.

Thyme is rich in vitamins A, iron, manganese, calcium and dietary fibre.

**HISTORY**  
Ancient Egyptians believed that the medicinal properties were the first people to grow thyme on an organized scale, perhaps as long ago as 3000 BC. They were also the first people to make use of thyme's antiseptic and antibiotic, and the first to use it to combat fungal infections and abdominal worms.

The plant was used to extract Egyptian during the process of mummification. Greeks added it to their bath water and to their incense, to their sacred temples. For them it was a great complement to tell someone that they smelled of thyme!

It was the Romans though that brought thyme to Europe. They

Although fresh time has a more fragrant smell and taste than dried thyme, it nevertheless holds its flavour better than most other spices, when dried

used it for aromatic purposes in their homes, and added it to their cheeses and soups, for additional flavour.

The burning of thyme to drive away poisonous creatures, especially scorpions, was very widespread in those days. This might not be completely foolproof! Even to our day and age, it has been found that insects are repelled by thyme. Some discourage by making a glass of thyme tea, put it in a spray can and spray close to doors and windows in summertime. Thyme's worst enemy is some close to these areas.

During the Middle Ages many people would put thyme under their pillows at night, to keep away bad dreams and to ensure a good night's sleep. Also during this period, ladies would give gifts of thyme, to their favourite knight or warrior, as they believed it will give him courage



## Thyme oil has antiseptic properties, and has been used as long ago as the 16th century as mouthwash

to fight the enemy! Often they also showed thyme on candlesticks during a funeral ceremony – it was believed to help you pass into the next life more easily. Herodotus is reported to have thought that the thyme was born where brass was born with herbs, and that thyme was one of these herbs.

Thyme oil has antiseptic properties, and has been used as long ago as the 16th century as mouthwash and to be applied directly to superficial skin cuts and infections.

The plant is native to Asia, the south of Europe, and also the Mediterranean. Nowadays it is also produced in the United States, on a fairly widespread scale.

**USES**  
If it is at all possible, you should always use fresh rather than dried thyme. The aroma is simply so much better! The colour of the leaves should be green-grey, and they should have a fresh appearance,

without yellow or black spots.

Some thyme is a self-seeder, so keep it fresh. It is further advised that you wrap it in a paper towel that is clean. If you are using dried thyme, store it in a glass jar that seals tightly and keep it in an area free from moisture and light. By doing this it should last more or less six months.

Whether you cook with fresh or dry thyme, always add it to the dish only when it's nearly done. Long periods of exposure to heat will virtually destroy the very special aroma of the thyme leaves.

**TIPS FOR USING THYME**  
Adding thyme to pasta sauce gives it a unique aroma and a great taste.

Add a few thyme leaves to an omelette or scrambled eggs – it will markedly enhance the taste.

If you prepare bean dishes, such as kidney beans and black beans, you can add thyme seasoning for a very special taste.

Thyme can add a delicious flavour to fish dishes, especially when you are poaching fish and you add a few thyme leaves to the poaching water.

If you have never added thyme to your favourite soup, you haven't lived well! Try it and taste the difference.

Another well known use for thyme is to distil the famous, Old of Thyme French Oil of Thyme is the most highly regulated variety available. It



Roasted vegetables with thyme and olive oil



*Backyard Aquaponics has released a new range of aquaponics systems.*

## New Fibreglass System

BYAP's new fibreglass system has been design to maximize production, in a very small space. These new fibreglass systems came about because of our constant diversification and experimentation with new designs and materials.

A revolutionary space saving design helps this unit fit onto a standard pallet; measuring 1.2m x 1.1m. Making it incredibly affordable to be shipped anywhere.

Lightweight fibreglass has been utilized in the design to ensure superior strength and longevity. The system has been moulded into a square shape, which means that it can easily fit into most spaces efficiently, in the backyard.

High productivity can be achieved with an abundance



of herbs and vegetables, year round. And a twice annual harvest of 12 plate-sized fish.

The system is on special for

\$1500AU, for a limited time only, or whilst stocks last. More information on the system is available from our website, and our display centre.

## New Corrugated Iron System

Australia's rustic history is captured in our Outback system. This system provides a more aesthetically pleasing unit, that will suit every backyards.

Customized corrugated iron components offer superior style and visual appeal, that create a stand out feature in every garden.

The fish tank can hold up to twelve plate-sized fish, and has a capacity of 700L.

The growbed measures 1.1m in diameter and is thirty centimetres deep, holding about 250L of media.

With plenty of room for plants in the bed, this compact system makes the most of available space. Whilst maintaining accessibility



from either side, with the growbed positioned at a comfortable 1.4m from the ground.

This system is on special now for \$1700AU, whilst stocks last. That's a saving of \$150 off the recommended retail price.



*Forum get-togethers are a fantastic way of meeting new people, interested in aquaponics.*

## Forum Get Together

As the BYAP forum increases in members, get-togethers are becoming even more popular! All around the country aquaponics enthusiasts are throwing parties and meeting like-minded, individuals.

Get-togethers offer a chance to meet forum members and share information, in a fun and exciting environment.

With over 3000 members on the online forum, you are bound to have lots of people practicing aquaponics, in your area.

BYAP recently held a get-together here in Perth, WA. The night was a fantastic experience, and people openly shared their passion and stories about their aquaponics systems.

Joel and the team served a bountiful meal, featuring beautifully cooked, smoked trout! Members all brought a plate of food to share; most of which was made with produce, that they had grown themselves.

On March 27, there is a forum get-together in Melbourne, Australia. It is being held by *Embi* and is open to all forum members.

Already there have been several confirmed attendees. And the event looks to be a fantastic night.

So check out the forum and attend a get-together or host your own. It's a great way to meet new people and learn more about aquaponics.



## Lifestyle Villages go Green

Lifestyle villages around the country are going green and installing aquaponics systems. The systems benefit the community in a vast number of ways.

In the last six months BYAP has installed three systems for Reagents Gardens, and one system for Amana Living, retirement villages.

The systems provide residents with fresh produce, that can be used in the preparation of their meals.

Residents are encouraged to contribute and participate in the caring and maintenance of the systems. They have shown a keen interest in aquaponics and love the fact that the plants are easily accessible to wheelchairs and walking frames.

The residents and staff have



planted the systems with a variety of crops, including strongly scented herbs and flowers, which help stimulate senses and improve the health of patients.

Amana Livings' system has had a limestone brick wall built around the fish tank

and grow bed stand, this provides a sturdy support for residents to lean against and work on.

The fish tank has been fitted with a steel mesh, for added safety. Residents enjoy watching the fish feed and often bring their visitors out-



## Photo Competition Winner



The BYAP photo competition, for 2009, has ended. We had an enormous amount of entries, from all over the world.

A significant number of the entries were pictures of insects, spiders and other animal life, found around an aquaponics system.

The winning entry was a photo of a Green Tree Frog, taken by *ALostHippee*. They found the frog having a late-night snack on a toothbrush!

As a winner of the competition, *ALostHippee*, will receive a BYAP T-shirt, hat, stubby holder, pen and printed copies of the BYAP magazine. He will also receive a \$100 gift voucher, to be spent at the BYAP shop.

A few of the other entries are shown below. Each year, ten of the entries are selected and forum members are allowed to vote on their favourite picture.

This years' competition has already started. The prizes will

be announced later this year.

So why not have a go and post up your favourite photo. You never know, you might be this years winner.

The competition can be found at:

[www.backyardaquaponics.com/forum/viewtopic.php?f=4&t=6939](http://www.backyardaquaponics.com/forum/viewtopic.php?f=4&t=6939)

*ALostHippee* was the 2009 winner of the BYAP photo competition. Congratulations!



**Announcement**

A new aquaponics display centre will be opening in Victoria later this year. We wish Dean Cant at Grow Fresh Aquaponics all the best.



# BYAP Magazine News

The seventh edition of the Backyard Aquaponics magazine, is packed with useful information. Edition seven focuses on aquaponics in the community, and features articles from local schools and groups in Western Australia. Children are by far the ones who benefit most from such systems; where they can learn about where their food comes from and how it is produced.

This edition also features a major article on the BYAP commercial system, which continues from the last edition of our magazine. In this issue we explain how we built the system and how the system functions.

The edition is packed full of articles that are bound to stimulate your interest, and provide you with hours of entertainment.



## BACKYARD AQUAPONICS

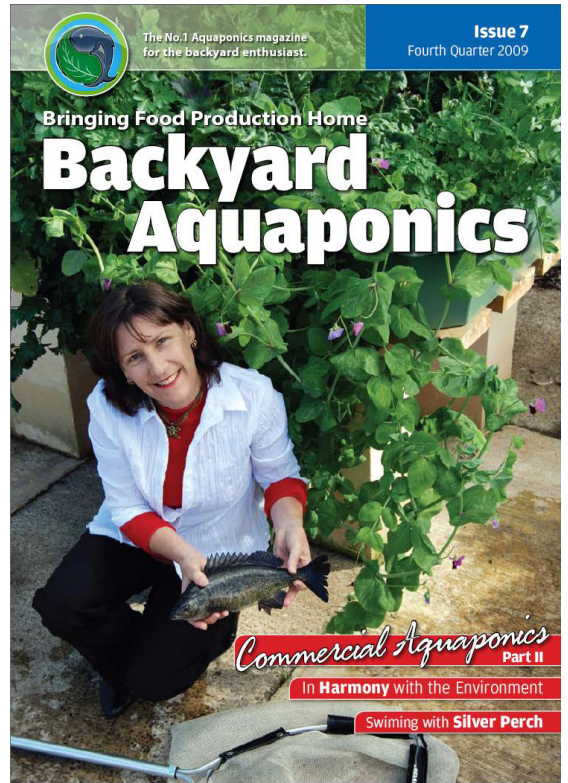
Bringing Food Production Home

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On the Deck Chairs



Green lacewing, a beneficial insect whose larvae prey on aphids.



Ladybird larva feeding on an aphid.

them to curl, distort and wilt. They also leave behind a sticky coating on the surface of the affected leaves, this is known as honeydew. Honeydew is admired by ants who often farm or protect their aphid friends in order to take advantage of this sticky secretion.

Aphids may also lay eggs in the ants nest and the ants will protect the eggs and eagerly await the rich rewards. They are considered to be pests and become annoying or harmful when they invade homes, entertaining areas, gardens and aquaponic systems and as a serious problem for commercial growers.

The production of both winged males and females. This is when sexual reproduction occurs and the pair mate, producing eggs for the following year. The eggs overwinter, producing the emergence of the nymphs and the cycle starts all over again. Once again in the bug world males are only required to reproduce.

### CONTROL METHODS

There are more than 3 000 000 insect species worldwide and of those less than 100 are known to adversely affect crops, animals, health and property. Here we aim for a common-sense approach and offer alternative strategies: the objective being minimal or acceptable levels of damage and looking at positive ways to avoid the adverse effect to beneficial insects and the environment. We also acknowledge the role of insects in the food chain and as pollinators.

**Biological**  
Predators include hoverfly larva, aphid midge larvae, ladybirds and their larva, birds, spiders and syrphid fly. Lacewing larvae can consume sixty aphids in an hour and will stack the dead aphids on their back and carry them around as a form of camouflage.

**Parasites**  
Wasps deposit an egg inside an aphid host that hatches as a grub and grows inside the host, making the aphid swell and turning a papery brown colour, this is known as an aphid mummy. The larva pupates before developing into an adult wasp which then



Yellow aphid.



Reddish ladybird.

cuts an opening in the back of the dead aphid, so it can search for a mate. The female then goes looking for host aphids to lay her eggs and may parasitise as many as 100 aphids in her short lifetime of 5-14 days.

**Mechanical**  
Traps, barriers, lures and baits can be an easy to use and quite effective method of controlling aphids. Aphids are attracted to the colour yellow and when they land on a sticky trap there is no way out.

**Chemical**  
Some of the chemical products available are not compatible with fish and may have an adverse effect on beneficial organisms, therefore they are not recommended for use in an aquaponic system, as there are often safer methods available.

**Organic**  
Aphids may be dislodged by simply applying a jet of water to the plant. Wiping the leaf or stem gently removes them from the plant as well as squishing them between your fingers or gloves. Garlic and chili spray act as a deterrent. You could also plant pest repellent plants such as French marigolds, garlic or onions, all of which repel a range of insects while others such as fennel,

parsley and dill attract beneficial insects. Maintaining healthy growth helps plants resist attack from pests and diseases. Ensure plants receive sufficient amounts of light and good air flow. Remove heavily infested plants and maintain good hygiene, to stop the spread of pests or diseases.

**INTERESTING FACTS**  
• The term parthenogenesis is derived from the Greek word parthenos, which means virgin or genesis-creation. Therefore the word parthenogenesis can be described as virgin creation.

• Ants are attracted to the honeydew produced by aphids and can often be seen protecting or farming the aphids. An ant milks an aphid by gently stroking it, which stimulates the aphid to produce drops of honeydew.



Ant tending his aphid.



**IF WE CAN GROW IT - YOU CAN GROW IT!**  
Aquaponics - Wales - United Kingdom

- From back garden to small scale commercial
- Group visits and courses offered
- Advice freely given
- Consultation work by arrangement

Contact details: Rowena and Philip Mansfield  
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Come down and see us at the Backyard Aquaponics Shop. You can see aquaponic systems of all shapes and sizes producing beautiful fish and vegetables. Come and speak with the experts about how aquaponics can best suit your lifestyle.

The shop is easy to find, about 12 km south of the CBD, just off the freeway on the corner of Berrigan Drive and Jandakot Road. We hope to see you soon.

