



COASTLINE

SPRING 2025

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Accessibility

We are committed to empowering our community to build resilience; we know many people are struggling with the cost of living and we believe that increasing the supply of locally-produced fresh food is critical to maintaining and improving people's overall wellbeing.

A 2020 paper highlights what all gardeners probably already know: that gardening is good for us! *"Gardens and gardening can improve the health and well-being for people with a range of health and social needs. The benefits of gardens and gardening could be used as a 'social prescription' globally, for people with long-term conditions (LTCs)"**

Plus it's fun and you get to eat from your garden too!

Resilience and wellbeing are important for our community, and gardening is a great way to support these outcomes. We are aware that it is not always easy for people to start gardening - the information available online can be conflicting and confusing, frequently with no relevance to our local climate, soil types and seasonal variations.

So thank goodness for our Bountiful Backyards Workshop Weekend on the 4th & 5th October! A full day of beginner-focused workshops covering all you need to know to get started with gardening in the deep south - whether you have an actual garden or not - for adults and kids, and a day of more advanced sessions for those looking to push themselves a bit further.

In a very exciting development, we have secured funding from The Jenkins Foundation to provide cheap transport to the event - accessibility! It's no use sharing knowledge and skills if people are unable to access it.

*Howarth M, Brett A, Hardman M, Maden M. What is the evidence for the impact of gardens and gardening on health and well-being: a scoping review and evidence-based logic model to guide healthcare strategy decision making on the use of gardening approaches as a social prescription. *BMJ Open*. 2020 Jul 19;10(7):e036923. doi: 10.1136/bmjopen-2020-036923. PMID: 32690529; PMCID: PMC7371129.



DATES TO DIARY:

4 & 5 October, Sat & Sun	Bountiful Backyards Workshop Weekend
14 October, Tue	SCES Committee Meeting
October, TBC	Forest Garden Tours Begin

UP FRONT

Editorial

It's a pleasure to bring you another Coastline, packed with updates about our various projects as well as useful tips and introductions to some of the people who make our place special.

Although it is sunny and warm in Riverton as I write this, we have definitely had our fair share of cold weather. In the past week we have had rain, hail and some pretty extreme winds. Hopefully all the plums that have been blossoming will still produce some fruit after the thrashing they've had!

For those seeking to make the most of the rain when we have it, there's some great tips on pg 9 and if you're wanting to get your spring garden up and running, local gardeners share some ideas on pg 3. Of course if it's gardening you're into look no further than our imminent Bountiful Backyards Workshop Weekend on October 4th & 5th - you can see the whole programme for this on pgs 6 & 7. It's a testament to the value of this weekend that we have been able to secure funding to support people to attend.

We hear about some of the reach of our work on pg 4, with the Open Orchard project and our Education team who have been out and about working with Invercargill-based Congolese refugees.

Dylan introduces us to free online will-making service GatheredHere (and how it can support our work) on pg 5 and we meet some more wonderful locals on pg 10.

On pg 11 Steve tells us about Murihiku Kai, which will be of interest to anyone keen on local food matters and Robyn shares some of the Riverton Community Food Co-op's news. We wrap up with some delicious seasonal recipes from Evita and Trish.

Enjoy spring, embrace the changeability and look forward to some warm summer weather coming soon!

Nick, Guest Editor



The South Coast Environment Society Incorporated (SCES or the Society) is a NZ registered Charitable Trust, Registration Number CC41561.

The Society's vision is a connected and flourishing Southland where there are leaders, resources, systems and examples available to assist and support people and communities to adopt resilient lifestyles and care for and about their environment.

Riverton Environment Centre is a project of the Society. Volunteers open the Centre for the public 40 hours a week. The displays, information and resources are designed to be inspiring and enabling, incorporating a blend of traditional ways and new concepts to give people more earth-friendly options in their daily lives.



New Resources

Dylan has been working on developing some new educational resources to support building personal and community resilience. Topics so far include Water Harvesting, Rocket Stoves and Biochar. These will be on display at Riverton Environment Centre. Dylan has lots of knowledge and experience of these topics and is happy to run workshops in your community by request!



Funding for Transport

A huge thank you to The Jenkins Foundation for their support of the affordable transport we are offering to help people get to Bountiful Backyards. We are really happy that we can support more people in face-to-face learning.



Tickets can be booked via the Bountiful Backyards booking platform (see page 6).



Minivans will travel:

Invercargill - Riverton

Ohai - Nightcaps - Otautau - Riverton

Orawia - Clifden - Tuatapere - Orepuki - Riverton

Arriving in Riverton at 9:45am and leaving again at 3:30pm

Riverton Environment Centre is located at 154 Palmerston Street, Riverton. Opening hours are:
Monday - Saturday 10:00am - 4:30pm,
Sunday 1:30 - 4:30pm.



GARDENING

Seedy Goings-On

It's easy to get excited about the delicious bounty of a summer garden but right now is the most important time for your garden to be producing - it's not called "the hungry gap" for nothing!

If you're feeling down about the cool wet weather start sowing some fast-growing greens - these will grow really well in your greenhouse but will also come up quickly in the outside garden. Sow now and you'll be eating fresh salad within a few weeks. Good choices are mesclun, lettuce, mizuna, mibuna and rocket.

Some of these will 'bolt' or start to go to seed heading towards Christmas but you should have had a couple of good harvests before then. 'Tasty Tendril' peas also make a delicious addition to a salad or stir fry.

So what about seeds? Well, recently we have been processing the carrot seed we grew last year to get ready for sowing some more. There is nothing like using super fresh seeds. They practically leap out of the ground!

We just chose the 20 best carrots from our crop while harvesting ('best'? What does that mean? For us, the best shaped, colored, sized) and shoved them in the ground in a new spot all together.

They have just started sprouting their new leaves in preparation for sending up their gorgeous beneficial-insect-attracting white umbel flowers which we get to enjoy all summer.

Once the flowers are finished we just collect the seeds and the cycle begins again!

Nick



Left to right: Carrot seeds ready to process; rubbing them through a sieve; winnowing to remove the chaff; fresh growth from an overwintered carrot; the beautiful flowers ready to make next year's seeds.

Aparima College School & Community Garden

Spring in the garden is an exciting time. We're really starting to look forward to those summer crops coming around again. Anyone else dreaming about the bucketloads of zucchini you'll be harvesting? Or the sweet taste of cherry tomatoes off the vine? To prepare for these summer treats we've been doing a lot of seed sowing and bed prep in the garden. The bench is full of recently potted up cucumbers, zucchini, pumpkins, tomatoes, lettuces, herbs, and more!

In the garden we've been uncovering the beds that have been under tarp all winter to do some bed prep. This involves raking off old plant residue, gently forking with a digging fork so as to not turn over the soil (or in our case, sand), sprinkling on organic fertilizer (there's a great new seaweed product in at the Centre that we are using) and raking it through. Some beds are then getting recovered in black plastic to warm up and wait for whatever will go in which could be onions, or lettuce. Some beds are being sown in spring cover crops.



Left to right: Biochar soaking in seaweed tea. The beds having received their biochar mulch. Covered to stop birds scratching it all up!

At the Harvest Festival in March SCES was donated a cubic metre of biochar from Southland Carbon. We are excited to incorporate biochar into the school garden and see how it supports production from a very sandy soil base. For one set of bed preparation we first did as outlined above. After activating the biochar in water and some seaweed tea for a week we put a layer on half of each of the five beds.

The plan is that the cover crops will grow. When they reach about a foot in height they will be terminated and a tarp put over them. When we are ready to plant a crop in these beds we will pull the tarp off, put down a couple inches of compost and plant right into that. The goal being that the biochar will be deeper in the soil and about where the plant roots are to support growth. In theory, because half of each bed has biochar, we'll be able to see if it's had any impact on production. We'll know more in a few months time!

Rebecca

PROJECTS

Education: Maara Starts

After a very successful 'Maara Starts' session supporting Bluff gardeners a few months back our next foray was to Invercargill to work with a group of Congolese refugees who have settled in Invercargill.



They come together to garden regularly and are keen to build their capacity and skills in food production.

Healthy families Invercargill laid on some kai and after some eating we got on with the gardening. The group had told us they were very keen to grow potatoes so we bought 25kg of 'Agria' as well as some compost and straw for mulching.

Although the group has limited English, with the help of some translation, hands-on demonstration and much enthusiasm we created a bunch of garden beds with paths between, planted and mulched the whole 25kg sack of spuds. In a few months this should yield up to ¼ tonne of food.



So much energy and enthusiasm for growing food!

We hope that with a bit of guidance this group will be able to successfully produce fresh food for themselves and other members of their community. We'll be heading back in a couple of weeks to supercharge their composting too.

A huge thanks to Marion Buxton and her team who support the group to garden together. Also Steve the Kai Guy, Diacks for discounted products and NZAS for the funding support but most of all the Congolese themselves, for their unwavering enthusiasm and keenness to crack on with growing some food. You can read more about this on Murihiku Kai (see pg 10 for the link).

Open Orchards: Fruit Tree Sale

As we near the end of another successful Fruit Tree Sale it's nice to reflect on where some of these trees get planted. Of course most end up in Southland soil but others go further afield...

We recently met Muff, who travelled from her home in Renwick near Blenheim to visit an old friend who has made the excellent choice to move to Riverton. Muff had heard about the huge range of varieties we have available and made the most of her recent trip here to get her hands on some!

The heritage apples she bought, 'Rokewood' (originally from Victoria, Australia) and 'Red Rose' (a Southland original seedling) will start their new lives within the large organic orchard and vineyard she lives on.

Although Muff already has many fruit trees, she couldn't resist a couple more!

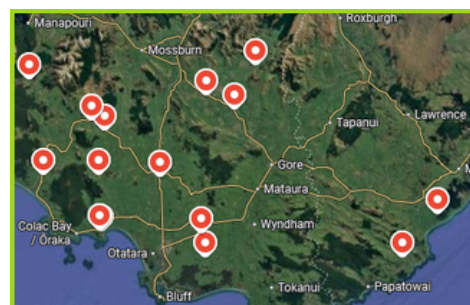
We love knowing that the fruit trees we sell (which themselves raise funds for the planting and care of more public fruit trees across Southland) are enriching people's lives and will provide food, beauty and shade every year for many, many years to come.

There are still a few trees left, but be in quick before they're all gone!



Muff: Chuffed with her trees.

The Open Orchard project has planted and supports the maintenance of fifteen Heritage Orchard Parks across Southland.



Thank you to our supporters!



HAPPENINGS

GatheredHere

GatheredHere is an End-of-Life Services company which has recently expanded into New Zealand. They offer a free online Will writing service to help everyone prepare for their end-of-life circumstance. Charities are encouraged to sign up as potential beneficiaries to help continue their community work.



Peace of mind over the things that matter

- ✓ Nominate guardians for your children
- ✓ Appoint executors
- ✓ Make allowances for pets
- ✓ Determine how assets will be distributed
- ✓ Leave specific gifts to loved ones
- ✓ Write personal messages
- ✓ Specify your final wishes
- ✓ Include bequests to charities you care about

Wills

Write your Will for free in just 10 minutes

Write My Will

SCES has recently joined GatheredHere to offer this free Will opportunity to you with no obligation or expectation that you will bequeath us a gift. However if you have appreciated our work and want to support us into the future to continue or expand what we do then we would be most appreciative.

Private information is protected with "the best security practices and systems" and the service is offered free because some charities choose to subscribe and pay monthly to be featured more during the will writing process. More info is available on their website:

www.gatheredhere.com/nz/make-a-will-online

but use this link to support SCES:

www.wills.gatheredhere.com/nz/c/sces

Dylan

Riverton Promotions

It was great to be invited by the Riverton Promotions group to join other local businesses and organisations for the purpose of sharing ideas around ways to promote our fabulous town.

Alongside local businesses and fellow not-for-profits like Te Hikoi Museum, Southland Rural heritage Centre and Templeton's Flaxmill Heritage Museum, we brainstormed, chatted and snacked while building stronger community connections.

It was also a great opportunity to note the impact that the South Coast Environment Society has had on our small town, with the organisation's work (and of course Robyn & Robert's Forest Garden) well-known throughout New Zealand and around the world.

There are many reasons why people love living in and visiting Riverton and we should be proud of our not insignificant role in that!

Nick

Completely Compost

Doing the Compost Run

This morning I got the chance to do Bryan's compost run with my father, Nick. This is what we did and what I observed.

We started by collecting the full buckets of food scraps from the curb and swapping them for empty ones. I noticed that there were very few buckets to collect.

After we finished collecting them, Nick and I went to the Aparima College garden so we could empty the buckets into the large compost bins that were constructed by the Riverton MenzShed for this purpose.

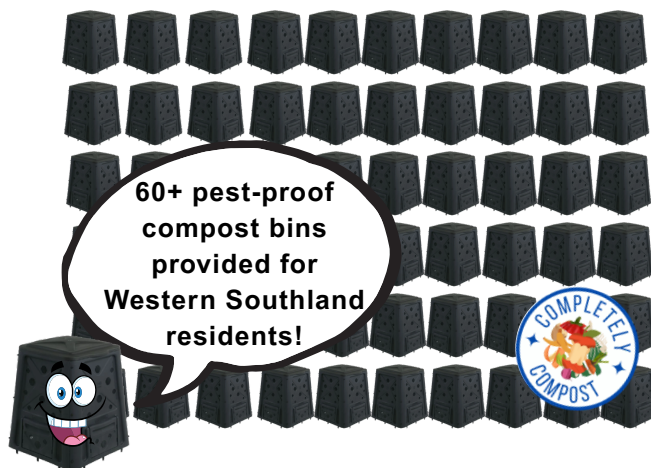
After weighing them, we emptied the food scraps in and spread them around. Then we layered sawdust on top. We also layered grass and biochar over that.

Peat



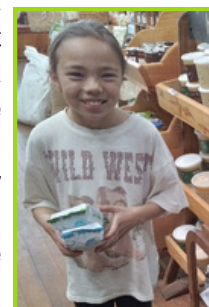
waste net southland

If you're a Western Southland resident and you're interested in composting your food scraps, get in touch - we still have some pest-proof compost bins available for \$20 and we can also help you get your scraps to the school compost if you aren't keen to compost at home!



Mio Recommends

Mio (with dad Don and mum Nami) is a regular at Riverton Environment Centre. She is a fan of the Honest Sea Roasted Seaweed Snacks: "They are delicious! I like the sea salt and mum likes the Wasabi. Mum says it's very spicy, but she likes spicy things! There's quite a lot of them in the packet so they're good value." They are certainly proving extremely popular!



Mio: A big seaweed fan

EDUCATION: BOUNTIFUL BACKYARDS!

Bountiful
Backyards

So many cool inspiring workshops! While you're in Riverton you can also buy lunch, seeds, plants and other resources to get your garden rocking. Tickets are "pay what you can afford" - from \$5.00 for kids and from \$8.00 for adults, but if you can pay more it helps us to do more! www.sces.org.nz/bountifulbackyards

Riverton
4th & 5th
October

BOUNTIFUL BACKYARDS WORKSHOP WEEKEND PROGRAMME: SATURDAY 10:00am - 12:20pm

Saturday Session One: 10:00 - 11:00am	Kids: Nature Investigators	Join Nick to investigate the tiny world beneath our feet... How many different types of poo can you see? Can you spot a ten-legged monster? Dress warm we'll be outside!
Saturday Session One: 10:00 - 11:00am	Soil Health for Beginners	Soil grows plants so how do we steward healthy soil? Dylan will share many strategies to boost soil life and soil condition, including cover crops, compost, biochar and worms.
Saturday Session One: 10:00 - 11:00am	Grafting	Join Robyn & Robert to learn how to graft your very own apple tree! Price includes one tree to take home. Extra trees can be grafted for \$7.00 each - cash only!
Saturday Session Two: 11:20am - 12:20pm	Kids: Bucket Gardens	Make an instant vege garden in a bucket with Robyn! Ticket price includes one bucket garden to take home.
Saturday Session Two: 11:20am - 12:20pm	Taiwanese-Style Tahini Noodles	Learn how to make a quick traditional Taiwanese dish created with whatever seasonal veggies you grow in the garden. Evita will share a real taste of Taiwan that can be enjoyed cold or hot.
Saturday Session Two: 11:20am - 12:20pm	Seed Sowing & Plant Growing	Ace the basics - Nick will show you some simple steps to success with seed sowing and plant propagation.

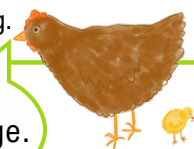
 Lunch break is from 12:20 - 1:00pm. Bring your own kai, buy some yummy simple food on-site and connect with other attendees or grab a bite at a local cafe. Tea and Coffee available too. 

BOUNTIFUL BACKYARDS WORKSHOP WEEKEND PROGRAMME: SATURDAY 1:00 - 3:20pm

Saturday Session Three: 1:00 - 2:00pm	Kids: Wheat Heads	Join Robyn to make a fun wheat head - take it home, water it and watch its hair grow!
Saturday Session Three: 1:00 - 2:00pm	Growing organic food	Nick will get you started with organic gardening, including feeding soil & plants, managing pests and attracting beneficial creatures. Grow fresh food easily and cheaply!
Saturday Session Three: 1:00 - 2:00pm	Backyard Poultry	Dylan has kept a multitude of birds over the last decade. Come and learn the permaculture way of keeping your birds happy, healthy, and useful.
Saturday Session Four: 2:20 - 3:20pm	Kids: Bliss ball treats	A healthy snack made easy! Come and learn two types of bliss balls (dates or shortbread-based) that are low in sugar and fun to make.
Saturday Session Four: 2:20 - 3:20pm	Quick and Easy Vege Gardens	Got a box, a bin or a bucket? Learn how to set up an 'instant' garden in whatever you have to hand whether you have an actual garden or not.
Saturday Session Four: 2:20 - 3:20pm	Forest Garden in Spring	Join Robert to explore the beauty and simplicity of Riverton's Community Forest Garden in Spring.

www.sces.org.nz/bountifulbackyards

Sunday's programme is on the next page.

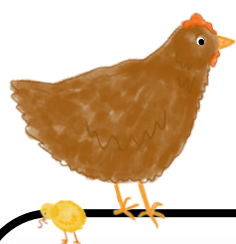


EDUCATION: BOUNTIFUL BACKYARDS!

Sunday's sessions are longer and may be of more interest to those wanting to get a bit more in-depth.

BOUNTIFUL BACKYARDS WORKSHOP WEEKEND PROGRAMME: SUNDAY 10:00am - 3:00pm

Sunday 10:00 - 1:00pm drop-in anytime	Grafting	Drop in anytime between 10am and 1pm and have a go at grafting your own apple tree. You'll need to bring \$7.00 cash for your tree which you'll take home with you!
Sunday Session One: 10:00am - 12:00pm	Soil Wellbeing	Learn more about some of the ways to make sure your garden cranks out healthy plants over the long-term. Organic? Veganic? Budget? We'll cover it all!
Sunday Session One: 10:00am - 12:00pm	Building with pallets	Unleash your upcycling knack. Come along and let's build something useful from a 'waste' product that's easily available for free. Bring a hammer, gloves, safety glasses, and a long steel bar if you have one, crowbar useful too.
Sunday Session Two: 1:00pm - 3:00pm	Biochar	Let's make some fire! Learn about biochar and its amazing cascade of benefits for the soil and the planet in general. A practical burn session to see how it's made. Biochar scales up from backyards to farm level and beyond.
Sunday Session Two: 1:00pm - 3:00pm	Grow the Season	Want to start growing earlier in spring? Keep the crops pumping later in autumn? Pick fresh veg through winter? This session with Nick will look at lots of ways to make the growing season longer!



We are very grateful for the vital support of:

Minivans will travel:

Invercargill - Riverton

Ohai - Nightcaps - Otautau - Riverton

Orawia - Clifden - Tuatapere - Orepuki - Riverton

Arriving in Riverton at 9:45am and leaving again at 3:30pm

More info & bookings: www.sces.org.nz/bountifulbackyards

Only \$2.00
per person
return!



Community Trust South

TE POU ARATAKI POUNAMU O MURIHIKU



Environment Hubs Aotearoa

Supported by
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SOUTHLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL
Te Rohe Pōtae o Murihiku



waste net
southland



MURIHIKU KAI COLLECTIVE



If you are unable to make it to Riverton, our Education Team is available to run workshops on many different topics in your community by request. Get in touch to find out more about any of the following:

- Homemade natural skincare products and household cleaners
- Growing edible mushrooms
- Introductory and advanced permaculture
- Bushcraft knowledge and skills
- Water harvesting
- Alternative technologies
- Beginner home gardening / food growing
- Saving seeds
- Food forests/forest gardens
- Fruit tree selection and care
- Biochar
- Fermented foods
- Small animal systems
- Apple tree grafting
- Composting

GET HANDS-ON!

How-to: Grow a Healthy Diverse Vege Garden - Easy as One, Two, Three...

When planning your garden, it is important to include a wide range of plant types. You should have herbs, vegetables, fruits and flowers. Not only will this provide you with a variety of delicious things to eat and cook with, look at and smell, but it will also encourage a range of beneficial creatures to take up residence in your garden.

A healthy garden is a functioning ecosystem and will have all manner of creatures, including things that fly, crawl, hop, buzz, suck, chew and poo... We want to do our best to encourage creatures which act as 'soil makers', 'pest controllers' and 'pollinators' as they make our lives so much easier! Pesticides, even so-called 'organic' ones, can kill beneficial creatures as well as pests, so avoid using them whenever possible and follow the instructions if you do.



Soil Makers

Use a variety of mulch materials like compost, straw, shredded tree prunings or grass clippings. Grow cover crops to feed a variety of 'soil makers' like bacteria, fungi, slaters, worms, millipedes and landhoppers and minimise digging to reduce soil disturbance.



Pest Controllers

Provide plenty of food for adults and babies. While the babies typically will feast on pests like aphids, adults need nectar so you need a good supply of flowers throughout the year. Don't be tempted to eliminate every single pest as the pest controllers always need a food source.



Pollinators

Plant a variety of flower types in your garden as they will attract the creatures that pollinate our food plants. If your garden is full of flowers it will be full of honeybees, bumblebees, drone flies and butterflies... Honeybees get a lot of attention, but bumblebees are much harder workers!



It is pretty clear that flowers play a very important role in maintaining balance in the garden. All flowers have benefits but those bred for 'double' blooms are less helpful as typically the nectar- and pollen-filled centre is obscured and even sometimes actually non-existent. So stick to single blooms for best results. Top flowers include those from the following plant families: Apiaceae (carrot family), Asteraceae (daisy family), Boraginaceae (borage family), Brassicaceae (cabbage family) and Fabaceae (bean family).



Left to right: Carrot (Apiaceae), Daisy (Asteraceae), Borage (Boraginaceae), Cabbage (Brassicaceae), Bean (Fabaceae).



The 'single' Dahlia on the left is a boon for bees, while the one on the right has been bred only for human benefit.



Instant no-dig garden beds

Available at
Riverton Environment Centre

Hammer in the nails...
Put it on the ground...
Fill it with compost...
And you're ready to grow!

Contains:

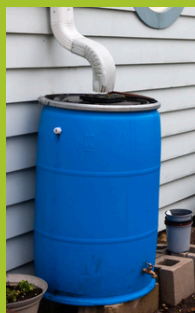
- 4 untreated boards
- 8 nails
- 2 sacks of organic compost

\$50.00

GET HANDS-ON!

How-to: Harvest Water

With the amount of rain we've had recently it might seem crazy to talk about harvesting water, but as they say, we are always only a few weeks away from a drought. Of course it's not just about keeping water for future use. When we have a heavy rainfall event, and remember these are predicted to become more frequent, every litre of water that is collected is a litre not putting pressure on the stormwater system. In many parts of the world local councils give rates rebates to those who store rainwater in tanks *as well as gardens* to recognise this beneficial aspect of rainwater collection. Wouldn't that be nice?! For every square metre of roof, from 1mm of rain you can collect around one litre of water.



A super simple home set-up can be as easy as a 200 litre barrel under your downpipe. Or upscale it by adding more barrels!



Be aware that you will most likely still need to have your downpipe connected to the stormwater drain as these smaller systems can be overwhelmed during heavy rain and cause flooding problems.

If you are considering installing a much larger water tank and stormwater collection system it is worth getting professional advice as there are many things you need to consider. For certain sized tanks you may also need to apply for Council consent. These are good reasons to keep your system at a smaller scale.



For five times the volume, you can usually get hold of 1000 litre IBC tanks pretty cheaply. Plus they're stackable so it's easy to add more!



Residential Raingardens

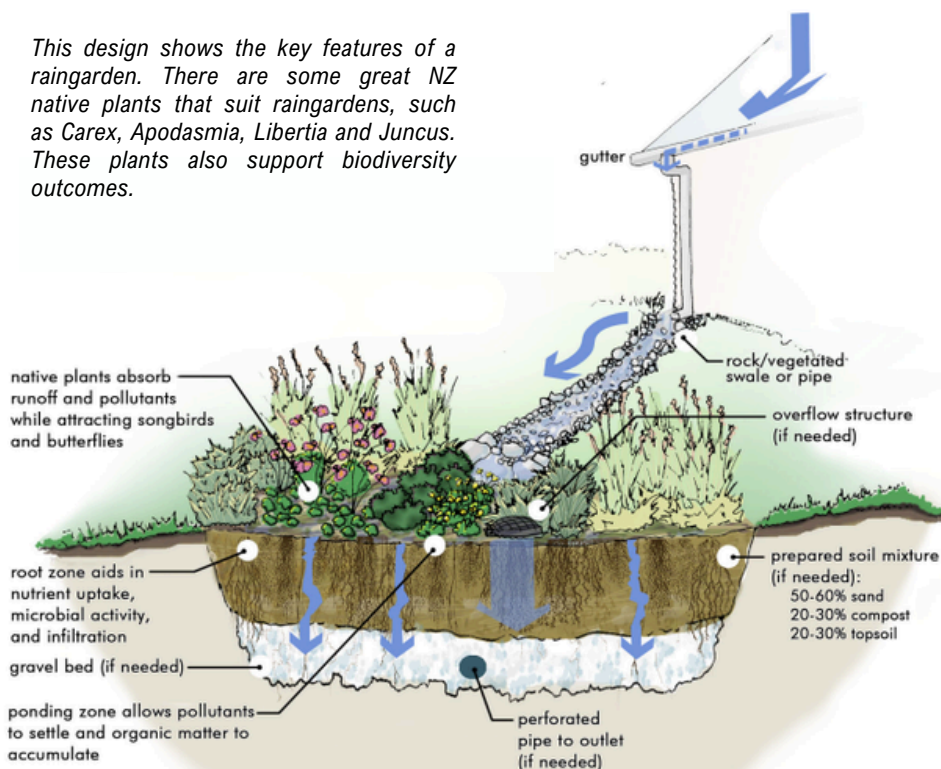
Raingardens are a great idea because they help manage stormwater naturally, reducing runoff and preventing pollutants from entering waterways.

By capturing rain where it falls, raingardens allow water to soak into the ground, replenishing groundwater supplies and reducing the risk of flooding during heavy rainfall events. They can also filter out contaminants like oil, pesticides and heavy metals, improving water quality.

Raingardens support biodiversity by providing habitat for birds, insects, and native plants. They are an eco-friendly, cost-effective solution for sustainable water management and environmental protection in both urban and rural areas and should be more widely used!

The simplest way to make a raingarden at home is to find a damp spot, dig a shallow hole, chuck some gravel in and plant it with *Carex*.

*This design shows the key features of a raingarden. There are some great NZ native plants that suit raingardens, such as *Carex*, *Apodasmia*, *Libertia* and *Juncus*. These plants also support biodiversity outcomes.*



This image is from: www.sustainableroguevalley.org/projects/building-a-rain-garden/

Local Gardeners: Christine

This is a new section in Coastline where we will be interviewing local gardeners to share some inspiration and ideas with others.

How long have you been a 'gardener'?

We shifted to Riverton 10 years ago and within weeks built nine raised garden plots into the side of our small sheltered hilly section. Soon after we planted heritage apple, pear and feijoa trees.

What do you grow?

We grow silver beet, kale, parsley, coriander, lettuce, rocket, cabbages, tomatoes, urenika potatoes and many herbs. What we don't grow we order from the Longwood Loop weekly.

How do you keep your soil healthy?

We plant intermittently throughout the year and use 'no dig' methods with our vege plots. We feed our soil worm juice, our compost, seaweed and peastraw for mulch.

What advice would you give to someone new to gardening?

My advice to new gardeners is seek the best advice to set up and grow what you love to eat and what suits our climatic conditions.



Christine knows how to handle a glut of courgettes. Her floral displays often grace the Environment Centre.

Our Volunteers: Lindsay

Lindsay will be known to many as he has lived in Southland "forever" and has been, variously: Principal of Takitimu Primary and Thornbury Schools, a team member at Invercargill Library and is currently teaching part-time again at Thornbury.



He and his wife Heather live on a lifestyle block in Gladfield with their two dogs and around 350 hazelnut trees from which they make a range of delicious hand-made products, including a gluten-free muesli and mouth-watering dukkah. You can find 'Heather's Hazels' on the Longwood Loop!

Lindsay values volunteering at the Centre because he likes the wholesome feel and just being in Riverton giving something back to the community.

Our Volunteers: Andrew

Andrew has lived in Riverton for about eight years and enjoys volunteering at local places like Riverton Environment Centre and Te Hikoi Museum.

He's looking forward to getting his drivers licence next year so he can get some more experience outside Riverton as well.



Volunteering gives Andrew something positive to do so he's not just getting bored at home. He regularly pops in to see what he can help with - he's been invaluable at helping us manage our firewood at the Centre!

Our Volunteers: Shig



Shig and her tribe of five left Coromandel for a six-month southern caravan hikoi that led to Riverton three years ago. They never left.

They were looking for a community that they felt they could be part of and found it here!

Shig likes volunteering for the Food Co-op and the Environment Centre as she feels that our values align closely with hers. She also likes connecting with people on a regular basis.

With another wee one on the way in November she and parner Shane have recently moved to a space in Palmerston Street that they are looking forward to developing into a welcoming community hub.

Podcast recommendation



The Great Simplification with Nate Hagens.

Nate is the Director of The Institute for the Study of Energy & Our Future (ISEOF), a not-for-profit organisation focused on educating and preparing society for the coming cultural transition resulting from the financial recalibration that is inevitable with a growth-based economy on a finite planet.

The podcast features long conversations with leading ecologists, energy experts, politicians, and systems thinkers. Well worth a listen. The latest episode features water issues - very timely!

You can find more information, and download episodes here: www.thegreatsimplification.com

Dylan

COMMUNITY

Murihiku Kai on Substack

MURIHIKU Kai

Murihiku (Southland) Kai (food) is aimed at highlighting and celebrating the people and community-led initiatives across Southland that are helping support and empower our local food system.

It follows on from the work of the Murihiku Kai Collective and a vision for the Southland region outlined in the "Feeding Murihiku - Our Good Food Road Map". The Road Map offers a blueprint for a food system that's fairer, more sustainable, and more resilient for everyone across the region.

Posts will discuss the challenges and opportunities around accessing quality food in Southland. To celebrate and encourage collaboration across the kai system while challenging those who have the most power to support this vision to do so.

Murihiku Kai is committed to telling our stories. Of our people and our land. Our kai history and its future. A future and a vision we can all share in - together.



You can find Murihiku Kai on Substack here: www.murihikukai.substack.com/about. You can also sign up to get it emailed directly to your inbox.

Steve the Kai Guy

Riverton Community Food Co-op

There is always a lot happening with the food Co-op so it is an interesting place to volunteer and a great way to meet people from all walks of life.

You can become a regular and choose a couple of hours each week you want to volunteer or just pop in when you have time or are sick of your own company. There is always something to do.

We buy bulk and pack into retail packs so everyone gets the cheapest possible price for dried goods. We have recently bought a bulk block of yummy organic cheese which has been cut up and repacked. It is great to have it back in stock.

Eggs are back again now that spring is here. We have all missed them when the hens go off the lay over Winter.

We are constantly being affected by the changes that are happening around the world, with some items no longer available and others becoming more expensive.

Fortunately at the same time we are getting more and more local fresh fruit and veges at really good prices. We put the local produce out on the table at the front to showcase it. On the day of writing there are leeks, carrots, yams, onions, garlic, potatoes and some colourful sprouting broccoli grown right here in Riverton at Aparima College Garden.

Robyn



Such a great selection of fresh, locally-grown produce!



Peat's Patch

As we watch winter end it's a good time to start sowing summer seeds and enjoying the beauty of daffodils.

Over the winter I've enjoyed the cold and rainy weather - coincidentally it's raining as I write this - although this year I'm looking forward to a colourful spring and warm summer!

Unfortunately the spring growth will make my job of gathering the chicken and Muscovy eggs borderline impossible. Even now with short grass I can barely find the cozy little nests our ducks create.

I'm beginning to believe that they're rather more intelligent than I am due to their habit of placing decoy eggs for me to find.

It's not just me who suffers as a result though. Poor hen-pecked Henry our drake gets half his feathers pulled out by our three determined females. He's a big softie so I don't think he minds.

I digress. Anyway lunch is ready so I'd better get a move on! In short: plant seeds, enjoy the weather and I wish you all a fruitful spring!

Peat

Peat is a young Riverton local who volunteers regularly at Riverton Environment Centre.



Peat has been around chickens his whole life. Here he is with 'Snuggles' who is 13 years old.

LOCALS

Local Seasonal Recipes

Evita's Okonomiyaki

"Okonomiyaki is a Japanese teppanyaki savory pancake dish consisting of wheat flour batter and other ingredients (mixed, or as toppings) cooked on a teppan (flat griddle)". Okono means 'how you like' and yaki means 'grilled' - Wikipedia.

Common ingredients include large amounts of sliced or shredded cabbage, any types of meat or seafood and anything else you'd like to add to the meal. The recipe provided here is just my own personal preference. There are a lot of variants of this famous Japanese cuisine that a simple Google search can open your eyes to.

Ingredients

Batter:

1 cup of flour, 3/4 cup water, 1 egg and a pinch of salt, mix well.

1/4 cabbage shredded or sliced, 1/4 cup of sliced onion, 1 carrot, grated.

Sauce:

2 tablespoons of miso, 1 tablespoon of soy sauce, 1 tablespoon of sugar, half cup of water and 2 tablespoons of mirin (optional), 1 teaspoon of minced garlic (optional).

Put all the above in a small saucepan and simmer on low heat until the sauce thickens up.

Method

1. In a large bowl, put the well-mixed batter and all the veggies in. Massage a little bit with your hands until all the shredded cabbage is covered with batter evenly.
2. Heat a medium frying pan with oil. When hot, put the cabbage batter in and spread the mix evenly; turn the heat down and cover with a lid to cook for about 5-8 minutes. Flip to cook the other side (I often use a plate to help).
3. When both sides are cooked (golden brown colour is a good indicator), turn the heat off, brush the sauce over the savoury pancake evenly, and squeeze with some mayonnaise on the top. I often sprinkle shredded seaweed to garnish before serving.

Note, if you want to add any meat it's best to slice it thinly so it cooks properly. When cooking the second side of the okonomiyaki, place the meat in the frying pan first before putting the half-cooked okonomiyaki on top.



Evita (left) had a blast sharing her Okonomiyaki with workshop participants at last year's Bountiful Backyards. Ella loved it.

Trish's Herb Fantastico Paste

Please note: we don't follow recipes in our house because we never have all the ingredients needed. Therefore we "invent" meals and adapt them to what we have available, sometimes it works and sometimes it doesn't. It feels like this recipe is very seasonally appropriate for late winter and early spring.

Ingredients

A few handfuls of parsley

A few handfuls of chives

1 clove of garlic

Handful of sunflower seeds (toasted adds more flavour)

Juice of 2 lemons

Enough oil to blend to a thick paste

Salt and pepper to your taste

1 Tbls Sugar (optional)

Blend everything together to a rough consistency so the herb fantastico paste is a chunky texture.

Support the South Coast Environment Society

Community support enables the South Coast Environment Society to continue to operate the Riverton Environment Centre and manage several successful projects throughout Southland. If you like what we do, and want to help us to do more, please consider; donating money, volunteering time, becoming a member, and / or sponsoring a project.

www.sces.org.nz/donate

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