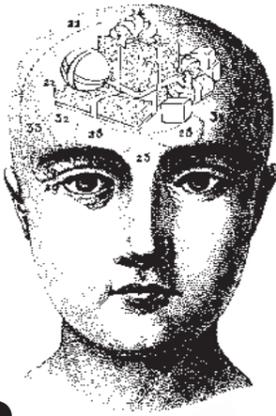


**If you
have ...
and
you
don't
want to
waste ...**



**driving
all over
the ...**

**looking for
presents,**



in Braidwood.

**There's lots to
find.**

**SUPPORT OUR ECONOMY
BY SHOPPING LOCALLY**



not have a pouch. Twenty three days after mating the female echidna will move the egg which is about 14mm in diameter from the cloaca to a pouch she will form on her stomach by muscle action by sitting on her tail and extending the cloaca. The egg is incubated for 10 days before the tiny puggle will break out. At this time mammary glands in the skin will produce milk and in the next 14 days the puggles weight will increase a hundredfold. During this time the puggle will remain attached to the mothers stomach. As it grows it reduces the mothers 'ground clearance' which may cause her to 'tippy toe' with her legs a bit straighter than usually.

At 50-60 days the mother places the puggle in a 'nursery burrow'. This is usually a cool hole where the temperature is around 15 deg C. The mother feeds the puggle for about two hours then blocks the entrance. She returns once every 5-6 days — unblocks the entrance, feeds the puggle which may take on 40% of its body weight then recloses the entrance and goes off feeding herself. She may go many kms away before beelining back for the puggles next feed. This cycle of milk feds will continue for the next five months until the mother decides it is weaning time. She gives the puggle which by now has developed to look like a small echidna its last feed then leaves the burrow open. This will be the last contact between the mother and puggle.

Echidnas only interact with other echidnas during the winter breeding time. A female may be seen with one or more males following her. It is thought that the female leaves a scent trail. When the female becomes receptive there will be a pushing and shoving between males if more than one is present and the female will only mate with one male.

So there you have it — unusual creatures aren't they? The author acknowledges that much of the information comes from Dr Peggy Rismiller's book 'The Echidna — Australia's Enigma'. Dr Rismiller explained about caring for echidnas to NARG (Native Animal Rescue Group) members at the Services Club. Her book contains a large bibliography if I have whetted your appetite.



AS THIS EDITION GOES to press everyone should be well into their garlic harvest. It is garlic harvest time in Braidwood, from November through December. It has been quite an interesting garlic growing year. Looking back over the vagaries of the weather it was clear that we had an incredibly windy season which had a big impact. A lot of people found their garlic was browning very early and a lot of it couldn't stand up; it just fell over in the wind.

We also had rain at funny times, and not really the best times for garlic, so if some of you have garlic and it's not looking the best, that's probably why. All of those things have worked against you.

We didn't really do a spring roundup in BWD however spring is often late in Braidwood. In terms of when you would be planting out your summer fruits — tomatoes, capsicums and eggplants and all of those sorts of things — you really wouldn't be getting them into the ground until November and into December.

You can still be planting potatoes here in January and get a good harvest before winter. You may have to do a little bit of covering of your summer fruits during the cold weather that we tend to get in Braidwood.

In preparation for the change of season, that is the autumn and winter that is to come, you need to start your winter brassicas as seed now — from December into January. If you are growing from seed — things such as broccoli, cauliflower and brussell sprouts — these seeds have to be put into the ground now so that they are

ready to transplant by the end of January to ensure a winter crop. If you don't have your brussell sprouts seedlings up and started before Christmas you will not have brussell sprouts for the season.

At this time of year it is a matter of keeping water up to your garden on the hot days. I am still covering some of my plants on the cool nights and we have had quite a few cool nights. I am harvesting a lot of beautiful summer veggies, so your garden should be fairly abundant.

**BRONWYN'S
GARDEN IN
SUMMER**

Bronwyn Richards gives us
her seasonal garden tips

You might find things like rocket and lettuce over the next couple of months. The weather could get quite warm and they would be happier under shelter where it is a bit cooler for them. Coriander is a spring and autumn growing plant. Even though lots of people like to eat coriander in the summer it actually doesn't grow well in the full heat. If you want summer coriander that also would have to be grown under shadecloth.

In Braidwood things can go from needing covering from the frost to covering from the sun within a day. It's quite amazing and this season has been very changeable. A lot of people have lost fruiting crops with the late frost in October. We had some very mild weather through August and September. Our apple trees came into flower two weeks before they came into flower last year and by the October frosts we had apple buds, small apples and they all got frosted. So there was a minus two, a minus five and a minus three. The minus five really did in a lot of things right at the end of October.

We have an eating grape that got very badly hit by the frost. It's come back and it has leafed up nicely however we probably won't get fruit. It may be a slow year for fruit production in autumn next year but these things happen. We don't have any plums.

Finally, if anyone has damson plums that are actually going to make damsons, we'd love to hear from you. Please give us a ring. We love making damson gin and we haven't been able to make it for a few years as there have been no damsons. So let us know — that is my Christmas plea.

THE WYNLEN HOUSE MARKET STALL IN THE DOJO ALLEYWAY. "YOU SHOULD HAVE BEEN HERE AT 9 O'CLOCK," COMPLAINED BRONWYN. "WE HAD THREE TABLES-FULL. IT'S NEARLY ALL GONE NOW."

