



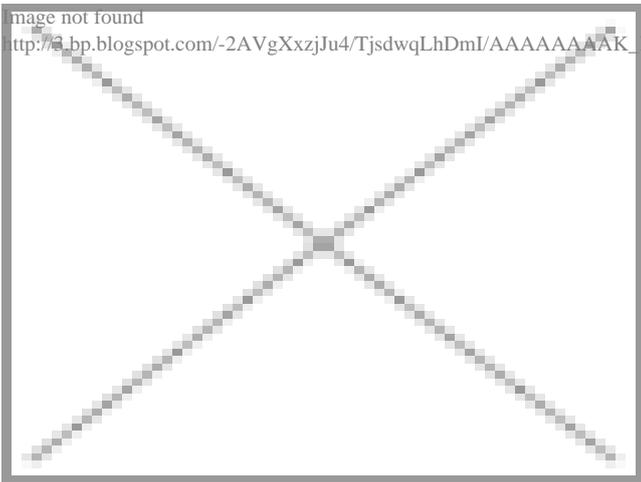
Dry season in the tropics

Thu, 08/11/2011 - 18:44 -- Africanaussie

This is supposed to be the best time of the year for growing vegetables, or shall I say for growing the more "normal" type of vegetables. Lettuces, tomatoes, snow peas and bok choy. I interspersed lots of flowers in amongst the veggies thinking that they might attract beneficial insects, but I cant really say that has worked very well. Some things really got so chewed up there was nothing left of them. The bok choy especially. - gosh mine are down to stalks, no leaf left..... leafy lettuces have been ok though and I have kept up with demand by continual planting every couple of weeks.



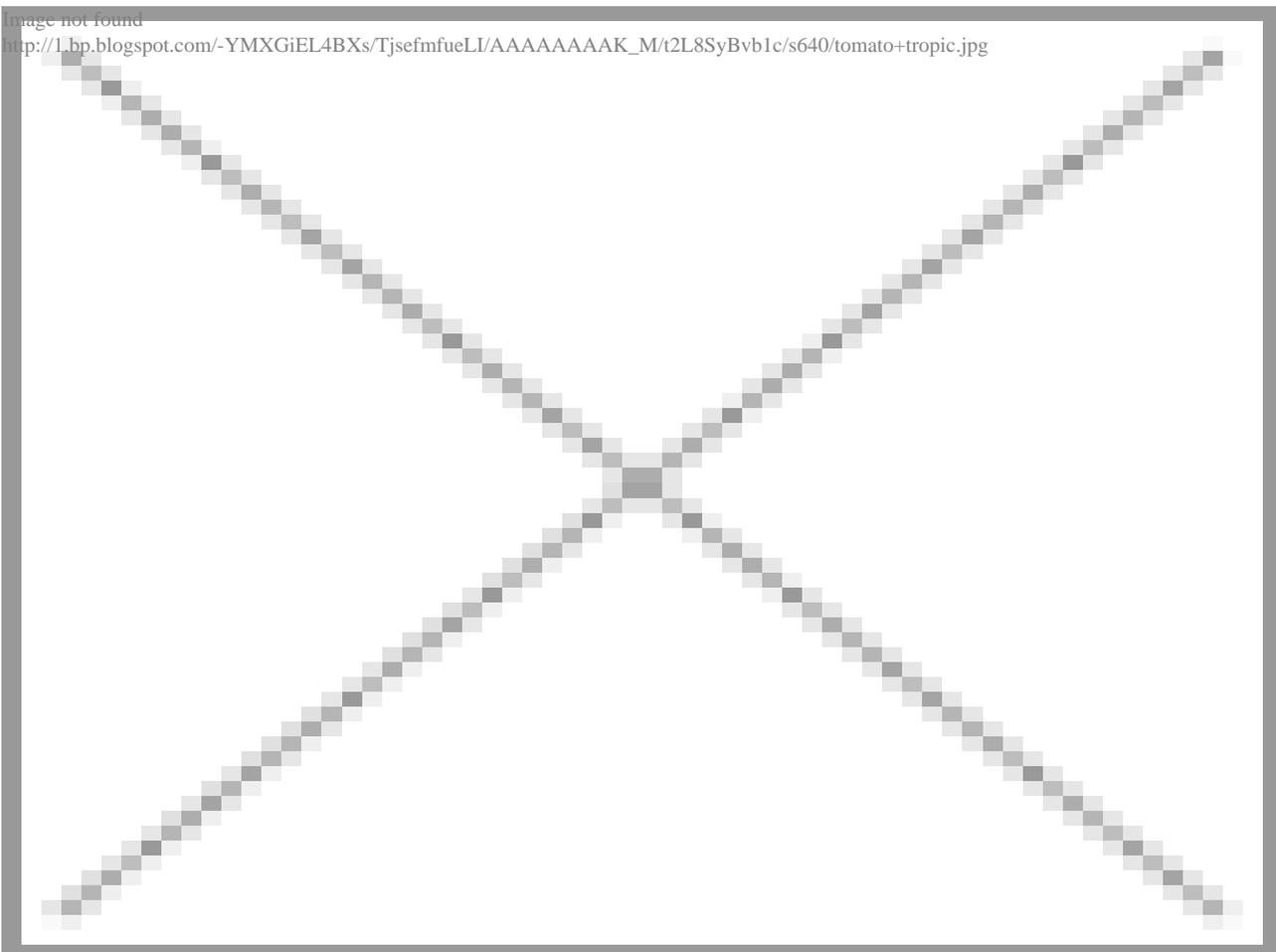
Radishes are supposed to be harvested in four weeks, but I am sure it is months since I planted them and now we are slowly seeing a few that are big enough to harvest. The daikon next to them have not even started to radish out yet. Could it be because I didn't plant them after the full moon? Successful crops have been the celery, lettuce, onions, parsley and basil. The gemsquash looked as though it was going to produce, but the female flowers never really opened up to be pollinated and so the little immature squash fall off. I tried hand pollinating, but that didn't work either.... so maybe I wont try these again. they looked so cute and promising.....



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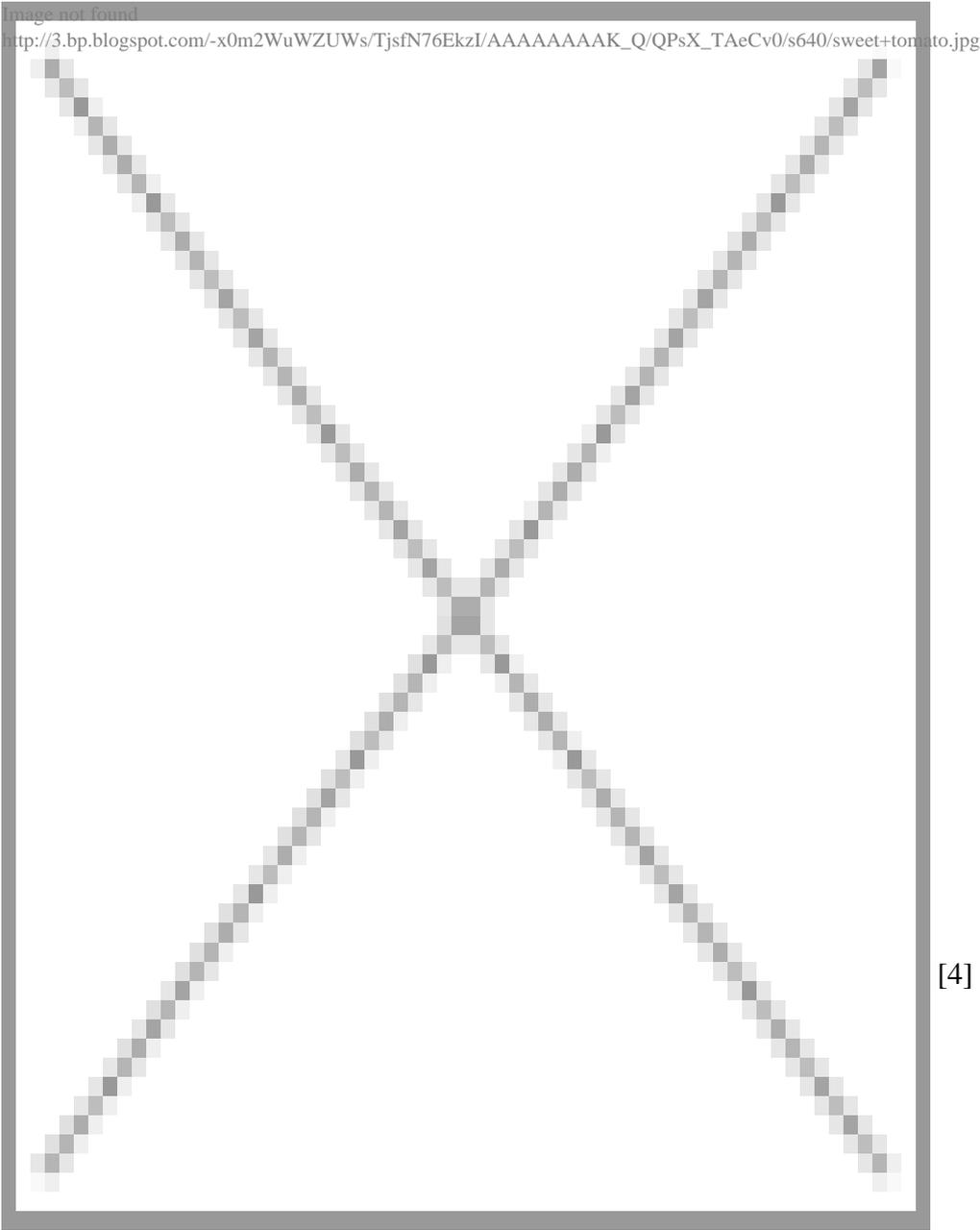
The tropic tomatoes that I planted in lovely rich compost along the fence line seemed as though they were successful. After all they didn't get the dreaded blight, but the first couple had blossom end rot! Obviously being out of the way like that they must have been watered irregularly. That has been rectified and the next lot look fine - perfect in fact :)

The roma tomatoes grown in the grow bag are not as tasty, and I think that is because the coir has no nutrients, sure I could add chemical fertilizers more often (I added some at the beginning as per advice with the grow bag instruction) but then wouldn't we just be eating chemicals in another form? The wild cherry tomatoes around the place are ok, but not as prolific as in previous years, and the snow peas gave up one flush and then succumbed to heatstroke and caterpillars.

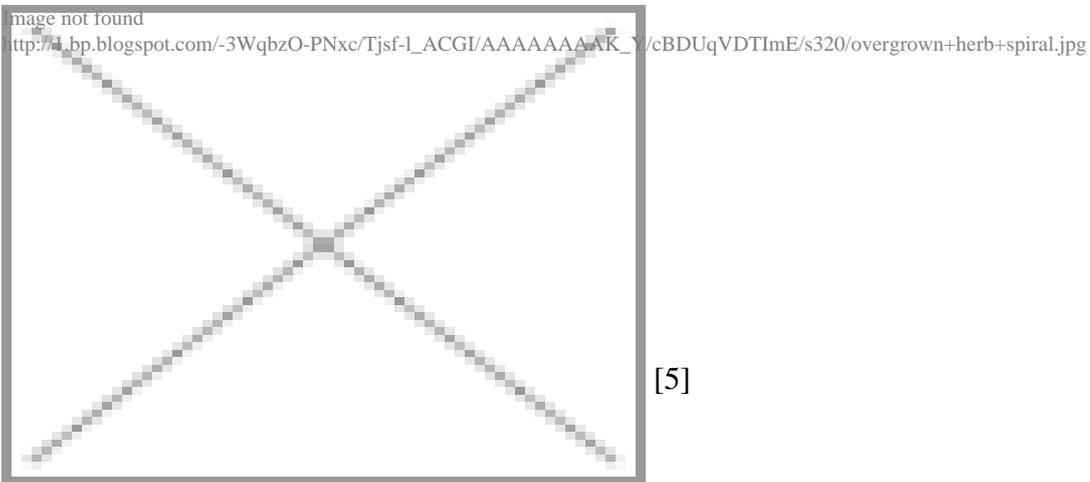


[3]

I am saving the seeds of these tropic tomatoes, they are so sweet and juicy.



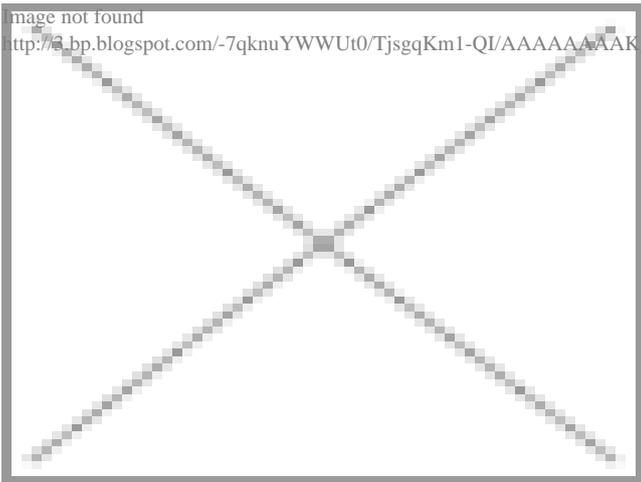
the herb spiral is filled with lovely nasturtiums and parsley and other goodies that makes our salads extra special



the butterfly bath sits awaiting the return of the butterflies, I have placed a painted rock that I bought from

the local art school in the center. Supposedly butterflies like to sit next to the water on a rock sunning themselves. I am excited to be starting a silk painting course there this weekend - I will post my progress on my craft blog.

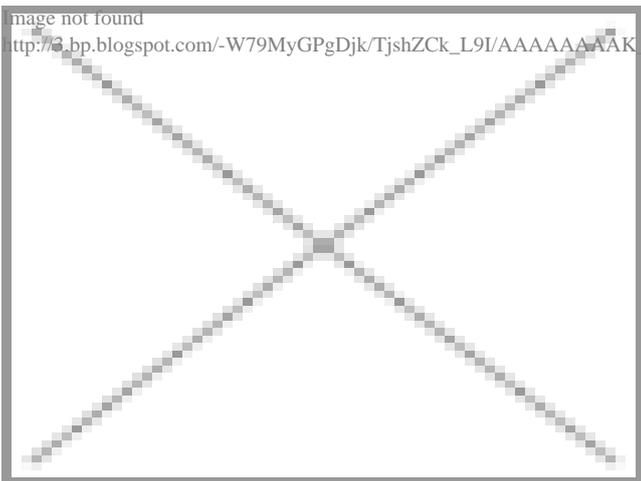
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[6]

I have never even tasted kohlrabi, but planted some this year, and not quite sure when they are ready to harvest. I did pick some and tried them raw in a salad, but the taste was very strong. Next I will try them roasted in the oven with a little olive oil -that is my favorite way to cook vegetables.

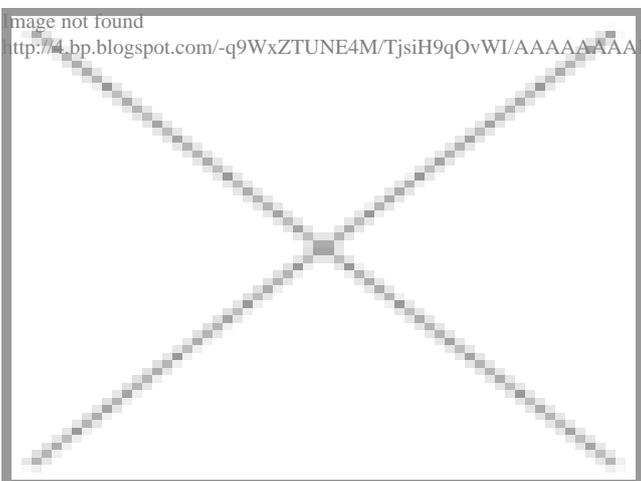
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[7]

Maybe I have waited too long to pick this one as it has split open? I think there are a couple that are ready for harvesting.

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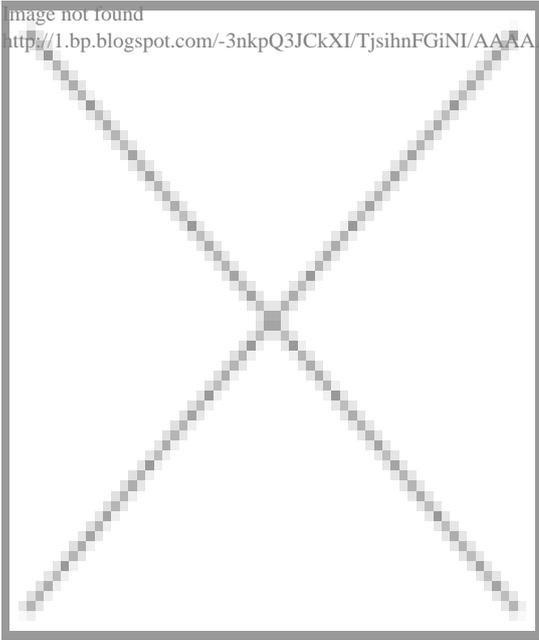


[8]

The passion fruit continually drop their yummy fruit and I just have to go and pick them up - about 10 a day! I have a couple with my yoghurt in the mornings and we give bags and bags away to neighbors and

friends.

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[9]

So as the weather starts to warm up, I have been thinking ahead and planning my wet season garden. I want to try some new things - Yacon and Rosellas, and will also grow the standbys of loofah and asparagus, snake beans, sweet potato, tumeric and ginger. Gosh I even wonder if I have room for a choko vine! All those plants do so well in the hot humid weather, and the bugs don't seem so prolific, even though you would think they would be. I am looking forward to planting and wondering if maybe gardening in the wet season is not so bad after all.

this is the most succesful my dry season garden has been and I think a lot of the credit can go to continually adding my own home grown compost.

Image (optional):

