

GARDEN NOTES

AMBER'S GARDEN

8 ANDADO PLACE, HAWKER



18-19 NOVEMBER
2023

HISTORY

In 2015 we moved into this property on a large 1,800+ square metre block. We had previously lived in a “Mr Fluffy” home so were forced to relocate. Our desire was to find a not too steep large block where we could establish a decent sized garden and erect both a glasshouse and shade house. Our previous garden on a 1050 sq metre block was terraced and full of both natives and exotic plants, and also had a shade house and glasshouse. We collected seed, divided perennials, dug up bulbs, potted up seedlings and whatever plants we thought were movable. When we moved to Hawker in June we almost brought a plant nursery with us.

The “new” garden in Hawker had large lawn areas, considerable paving and not much diversity in the trees and shrubs generally hugging the fence (pittosporums, photinias, camellias, grevilleas, callistemons), with little to attract bees and birds all year. And one lemon tree and NO vegetable gardens.

With considerable help from friends, many large shrubs were removed and the glasshouse and shadehouse erected in the back yard. Lawn and paved areas have been reduced, garden beds expanded and new beds created. The original rotting deck wrapped around the house to the garage. This northern part was not replaced but turned into a north facing rockery using large rocks from a buried dry stone wall. Large amounts of compost, Seamungus and appropriate fertilisers (mainly Neutrog products) have been dug into the beds. Materials were recycled—bricks, pavers, sleepers and rocks. Rain water tanks (4 x 2,200litres) were installed under the new deck. Excavation for the tanks under the lower deck led to the discovery of a natural spring under the house which required extra drainage and connection to the storm water. Two 5000 litre rainwater tanks have since been installed to service the front garden.

Storms and strong winds in the past few years have led to the removal of several trees in the front garden. Hail damage has also occurred on 3 occasions and the recent years of wet weather has led to excess groundwater and poor draining sections of the garden. A few native plants and some maples have succumbed to the wet. The area adjacent to the garage ramp continues to be a problem. White violets were and still are a weedy problem throughout the gardens.

FEATURES

The garden has evolved as we looked for places for the many plants we had brought from our previous garden. The backyard has a large native garden as well as a rose garden and mixed exotic gardens. Plantings include deciduous trees, rhododendrons, camellias, bulbs, hellebores, aquilegias, Chinese forget me nots, cyclamens and other perennials. Salvias (*greggii* or *microphylla*) are used as borders. Seedling sasanqua camellias have been planted as a hedge at the rear of the deck gardens. The north facing rockery contains many perennials, salvias, roses and ground covers. Many perennials have been sourced as cuttings or divisions from friends. The shadehouse and glasshouse contain a collection of species orchids.

“Paradise Pearl” sasanqua camellias screen the front courtyard. The 2nd courtyard has plum trees (Satsuma, Marioposa), a pomegranate (Wonderful), perennials, roses and the yellow iris-like *Moraea spathulata*. A mulched path (“Salvia walk”) behind the wall connects a granite path with the front lawn. On one side ornamental pears (Capital) and maples are under planted with salvias (Joan, Amante, Amistad, Black and Bloom, Pink Velour, Phyllis Fancy, Kisses and Wishes) and chrysanthemums. Brachyscome daisies, a crimson *Helichrysum bracteatum*, *Grevillea*, *Agastache* and other perennials are on the other side. The thornless rose Zephyrin Drouin is on the arch. The driveway gardens include a *Nandina* hedge, *Salvia*, *Scabiosa*, *Nepeta* (catmint), *Viburnum*, roses, dahlias, bulbs, ranunculus, bearded iris, hellebores and Shasta daisies. Autumn Glory maples, a tulip tree, and a crepe myrtle provide summer shade and autumn colour.

The rest of the front garden is devoted to Australian natives. A small lawn area now creates a sense of space. Many natives in both front and back gardens (e.g. *Calothamnus*, *Banksia*) were raised from seed. Many plants were bought from Cool Country Natives nursery, Pialligo. Of special interest are *Eremophila hygrophana*, *Grevillea leptobotrys*, the sweetly perfumed *Grevillea flexuosa* and the bright green cushion plant, *Scleranthus biflorus*. Other natives include *Eremophila*, *Hakea*, small eucalypts, *Dianella*, *Lomandra*, *Hardenbergia*, *Adenanthos*, *Correa*, *Eriostemum*, *Chrysocephalum* and more.

Raised vegetable gardens now replace a lot of paving at the back of the house. It is a very sunny area and the gardens are very productive. Raspberries, rhubarb, a lemon and an apricot tree also thrive.

We love spending time in the garden checking out the seasonal changes and watching the birds, many butterflies, honey and native bees and other insects. The garden is still evolving but we have tried to create a haven for them and for us.

GARDEN OWNERS

Mark Clements and Anne Mackenzie