

GARDEN NOTES
DHULWA
5 BOYCE PLACE CHIFLEY



HISTORY

The Ngunnawal people called banksias Dhulwa. It is both an appropriate name for our garden and a respectful nod to the thousands of years of Aboriginal stewardship of the land on which we currently live. It is also the reason for our resolve to plant native as much as possible on our block, which backs onto Mt Taylor Nature Reserve.

When we arrived in 2017, the planting was somewhat overgrown and haphazard. Our goal was to make the space more fluid and manageable. Whilst we have access to trails and paths just beyond our gate, our own nature trails await within. The large established trees of ash, oak, pears and white cedar serve as a shady canopy as you move from garden bed to garden bed. Our additions to the garden are many and varied including a repaired drip irrigation system, an expansion of river rocks to aid water runoff from the reserve, artificial grass in the pool area and the expansion of the chicken run. It takes 16 cubic metres of mulch to cover the yard resulting in some sneaky bribes getting the kids to help!

Meandering paths take you to all corners of our happiest place. The endless birdlife never disappoints. King Parrots, Wrens, Rosellas, Wattlebirds, Eastern Spinebills and Pacific Koels, all make themselves at home in our home but the highlight each year is the migration of Black Cockatoos who feast on the banksias out front.

Daisy Drive along the eastern wall housed only the weeping cherry and the oleander. The symmetrical planting of Loropetalum, Viburnum, Buddleia and Hebe has been optimised for viewing from inside the rumpus room, with the weeping cherry taking centre stage and softening Convolvulus cascades over the rock walls.

Ash Avenue: Walk beneath the archway to be greeted by the established Ash tree. The centrepiece Ash brings with it lots of shade and a lot of work come autumn! Winter bells, Lomandra and Viburnum are now beginning to fill the space left by dead acacias.

Happy Place: Here sits the perfect locale for shady relaxation whilst having a view of the pond and the happy clucks of the chickens. The structure to the left of it provided much needed privacy before the Callistemons took hold.

Japanese Junction: A row of maples and an ornamental pear sit aside the koi pond. A Japanese temple statue links the garden bed to the pond. The addition of river rocks aid in the extra water runoff during heavy rain. The elevated patio allows one to take in the calming sounds of trickling water.

Firepit: The sleepers provide a calming space for yoga and meditation. The hakea here has thrived in this space, prompting us to plant more in other parts of the garden. The white cedar, bay leaf tree and correa enclose the space delightfully. The dwarf weeping Japanese Maple slowly reveals a kaleidoscope of shades over the seasons, ensuring it remains in focus in this area.

Cockatoo Island: Some very hot summers saw the demise of several correas despite the garden being enveloped in shade. More correas have been replanted, mixed with other plants which all seem to do ok in the shade. This garden is framed by native grasses.

Grass tree: Almost like a monocarpic, our grass tree has only once graced us with a flowering in our time here but what a show it put on with the cockatoos reaping the benefits! We await the next big reveal. Providing an exceptional cool place to sit in the height of summer, white cedars create an amazing canopy with the grass tree as the centrepiece.

Omelette Ranch: With the roosting house and cage already established, we extended our chook run along the back fence to provide them a greater free-range experience and to allow us better opportunities to enjoy the company of some truly great women: Ruth Bader-Eggberg, Laylor Swift, Yolko Ono, Princess Lay-a, Amelia Eggheart & Eggatha Christie.

Penny's Place: Once an unused vegetable garden, the original fruit trees (grape, pomegranate and olive) have been joined by native shrubs to aid privacy.

The Three Sisters: Native mint, boronias, correa, two new hakeas, a young acacia and westringias have been added to this in-progress garden.

Molly's Place: The ivy along the wall has been extended to beyond the pool filter room over into the pool area, softening the brick walls.

Pool area: The original garden bed went to the pool's edge, leading to dirt in the water. We added artificial grass and a sleeper wall to allow a shady spot to sit in the hot months. The acacias shade almost half the pool in the summer. The leaf clean-up is worth the effort due to the natural shade - better than any umbrella.

Front Garden: Once overgrown with large woody correas, we've enjoyed finding complementary native plants and trees to make this space more interesting. Acacia, eucalypt, hakea are all feature trees and happy wanderers live up to their name. A river of kangaroo paw crosses the path leading to the established banksias. Our lemon and fig tree continually provide fruit, and the callistemons are a boundary marker and provide privacy. The quiet seated platform allows a spot to view Woden Valley.

TOILETS

Through the back door, first door on your left.

GARDEN OWNERS

Kelly Mara & Brendan Eve