



THE ECLECTIC GARDEN

My intensely planted garden is nearly 12 years old and is filled with interesting planting combinations and favourite plants with space to trial others. Many have been successful while others have not. The less successful combinations have been quickly replaced to complement their neighbours.

Front garden

In the front garden there remains two plants from the garden's earlier life – *Camellia* 'Cinnamon Cindy' and a feijoa (*Acca sellowiana*). Everything else was removed. The front lawn area was flattened and a volcanic rock wall along the side and front boundaries installed to retain additional soil. This has created more reusable space.

Whilst there are no front fences, the planting scheme has created a seasonally varied living screen giving our family a private outdoor space. Components that contribute to the success of the front screen planting include:

- repetition of key plants such as cordylines that link the garden together;
- seasonal vegetation via deciduous trees;
- foliage and flower combinations; and
- my favourite plants.

Please take time to wander along the outside plantings and compare them to the inside plantings.

South outside planting

This boundary has a narrow long border backed by a painted timber fence – a challenge! The stainless-steel wire work has added another dimension, allowing the *Stachyurus praecox* to be trained flat against the paling boundary fence. *Stachyurus* is a beautiful deciduous shrub with stunning 'chains' of yellow flowers on bare branches in spring. A limited plant selection that is repeated underneath gives a coherent appearance.

Back garden

The back garden faces west and a screen planting of Quandong (*Elaeocarpus eumundii*) obscures the house behind – creating a private outdoor space. Underneath this planting is a chicken run. Vegetables, fruit and herbs are planted here, pollinated by bees and providing a great food supply. I believe in reusing everything where possible.

You will also see various collections of wrought iron, metal pieces and other oddities, used in different fashions that speak to me.

Trees of interest

Mexican Strawberry Tree – *Arbutus glandulosa*

Cabbage Tree – *Cussonia* species

Yellow Jade Orchid Tree – *Michelia champaca*

Coral Bark Maple – *Acer palmatum* 'Senkaki'

Bloodgood Japanese Maple – *Acer palmatum* 'Bloodgood'

Queensland Firewheel Tree – *Stenocarpus sinuatus*

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These notes can be downloaded from the Open Gardens Victoria website
www.opengardensvictoria.org.au

Open Gardens Victoria is a not-for-profit organisation that promotes the benefits of gardens and gardening by assisting garden owners to open their private gardens to the public. Monies raised at the gate are shared between OGV and the garden owner – whose share is often directed to charity. Surplus OGV funds are allocated to horticultural, educational or community projects.