



Open Gardens West Coast 2019



**The Pike Tropical Garden
18 Agincourt Drive, Willetton**

Development



Work on the garden was begun in 1994 and it was established on two watering days a week to demonstrate that a tropical garden could be grown successfully in Perth. Wherever possible, we have used recycled plants and materials to keep costs down and avoid waste. For example, the garden pathways have been created using broken-up old concrete pavers.

The nutrient poor natural soil on the property has been heavily enriched with organic material to help with root growth and water retention. This is supplemented by continuous mulching with composted leaves and plant matter from the garden. Other organic manures are applied occasionally when the budget allows and a light application of an all-purpose fertiliser, such as NPK Blue, is applied about three times per year during the spring and summer months.

Many of the plants have been salvaged from other gardens or grown from seeds, slips and cuttings scrounged from family and friends. The more rare and unusual palm and cycad varieties have been collected through our membership of the Palm and Cycad Society of WA.

The garden itself creates its own micro-climate. The density of the plantings and heavy mulching help cool

the soil, retain moisture and create humidity. The dense foliage also has a noticeable windbreak effect.

Features



The garden's main feature is its large collection of palms, cycads and tropical plants, including many Australian and exotic species. Ponds, waterfalls, a life-sized terracotta orangutan, a massive carved limestone head and a tree-

house for the grandkids provide some relief from the greenery.

Other features include a Balinese carved wooden figure, a secluded rest area with log bench and table and a large circular paved clearing surrounded by dense jungle. This area accommodates a lift-out rotary clothes hoist which can be removed when the space is required for entertaining.

Pest Control



We do not use any chemical pest or herbicide and this has encouraged birds, frogs, geckos, skinks and predatory insects into the garden. We have found this biological control approach to be very effective as we

have very few significant pest problems. The frogs and native birds in particular, eat large quantities of flies,

mosquitos, crickets, moths and cockroaches. At least 24 species of native birds visit our garden.

Come Again

Thank you for visiting our garden and supporting Open Gardens West Coast. We hope you enjoyed the experience. Please feel free to contact us at any time if you have any questions or would like to visit us again 'out-of-season'. You are always welcome.

Gary & Anne Pike
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