



Promoting the enjoyment, knowledge and benefits of gardens and gardening

Open Gardens South Australia Welcomes you to **The Big Little Garden**

Saturday 2nd & Sunday 3rd March, 2024

We moved from our first home and garden in Bridgewater in 2022, where we had lived for eight years. Our previous garden, called The Little Big Garden was part of the open garden scheme. We began our journey with our new property in April 2022, and with our first baby on the way, we wanted to quickly start a garden full of colour and abundance for our family.

Over the following months, I removed the old lawn and a portion of the driveway with an excavator. I incorporated several truckloads of organic compost into the existing soil and let it sit for a few weeks over a very wet winter. In November and December 2022, I laid out and planted the new garden, aiming for something different while incorporating my favourite plants, including lots of tall perennials for a sense of being enveloped by the garden and are easily visible from inside the house.

I wanted a natural style of planting incorporating a mixture of herbaceous perennials, grasses, shrubs, bulbs, and my favourite local natives. This allows for a long succession of flowering throughout all the seasons, with a very short downtime in the middle of winter when everything gets cut back to the ground.

Growing organic vegetables is a shared passion for both of us, emphasizing the importance of knowing where our food comes from and enjoying the nutritional benefits of being connected with healthy soils. We've dedicated approximately 80 square meters of our garden to vegetable growing, attempting to cultivate most vegetables from seed or using seedlings from local growers. Our vegetable garden is entirely organic, employing insect netting on most brassicas and greens to control the majority of problem bugs and insects. We also maintain a dedicated cut flower patch, selling our favourite cut flowers on a roadside stall.

We strive to be responsible with water usage, employing basic automatic irrigation with overhead sprinklers. The area is watered based on weather conditions, varying greatly throughout the year. In the heat of summer, this greener section provides a cooling effect for our home and reduces the bushfire risk. For that reason, and because we love the garden and growing vegetables, I prioritize watering in concentrated areas with plants of similar water requirements.

During my working week as a professional gardener and plants person, I create and work in beautiful gardens in the Adelaide Hills, greater Adelaide, Fleurieu Peninsula, and at the Ukaria Cultural Centre, while also creating our own space for us to enjoy.

In the coming years we hope to develop the garden further. This includes the backyard which will incorporate natural play elements and landscaping for our daughter, blending the front garden into the surrounding landscape, a larger dedicated cut flower patch and begin to control the invasive weeds in our native area. We will also work on a more established infrastructure and landscaping, hopefully including an outdoor dining area and raised vegetable garden beds. We hope we will open again in the future as the garden grows!

Open Gardens South Australia Inc: is a not for profit organisation opening private gardens to the general public. The purpose of Open Gardens SA is to educate and promote the enjoyment, knowledge and benefits of gardens and gardening in South Australia and to build strong public support for the development of gardens.

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