



Promoting the enjoyment, knowledge and benefits of gardens and gardening

# Open Gardens South Australia Welcomes you to **Toolache**

Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> & Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> October, 2024

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Welcome to Toolache. The garden is named after the now extinct Toolache wallaby that lived around the Robe area. The wallabies were shot for their pelts which led to its extinction. The story goes that the last surviving one lived on this block.

The garden started in 2015 from a bare block with sand fill. The house (a new build at the time) and garden are below road level to minimise the effects of the wind as the NW and westerlies are ferocious. A wall divides the garden for privacy and wind protection.

A coastal garden comes with its challenges and the plantings need to be very tough and resilient to survive the ferocious winds, poor soil and minimal water. I have chosen a mixture of natives and exotic coastal plants that do well in the local area.

There was an established Norfolk Pine and Casuarina that I have worked around. The pine is a beautiful tree and a real feature for the garden. It has been challenging to establish an understory but the arthropodiums and clivias are thriving. The large Casuarina gives lovely shade and movement.

The garden has exotics and bulbs which adds plenty of interest. My favourite plants are the Blue Lagoon rosemary which is very tough and provides a lovely blue in winter, cistus, westringia, correas and hebes, providing colour all year round. Succulents love it here and there is such a variety available in different shades. I love mixing foliage colour and shape for a striking effect.

I also grow plants for their produce. There are several fruit trees - mulberry, quince, pomegranates, and espaliered apples on the southern fence. The vegetable garden is positioned in a suntrap and is protected from the wind, so the veggies tend to do well. The raised beds give me better accessibility and I find I can monitor the soil more easily.

As you walk around you will notice the many sculptures and garden art pieces which I have gathered over many years of collecting and enjoy placing them in the garden.

The kirk provides a focus from the east – it's a beautiful old building and one of my favourite features.

The garden has been a challenge but a lovely peaceful place to live. It is not just a sanctuary for me but for the abundant bird and bee life, with plenty of water points and pollen for them to enjoy.

Thank you for visiting Toolache.