

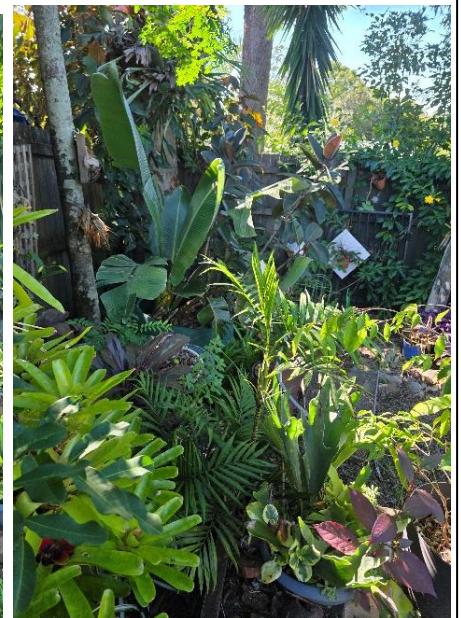
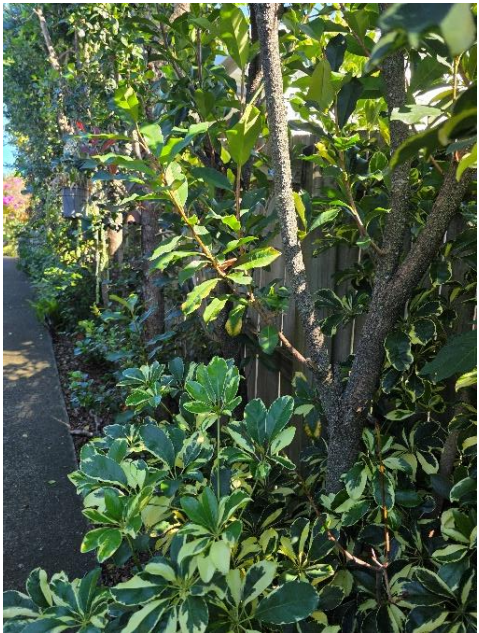
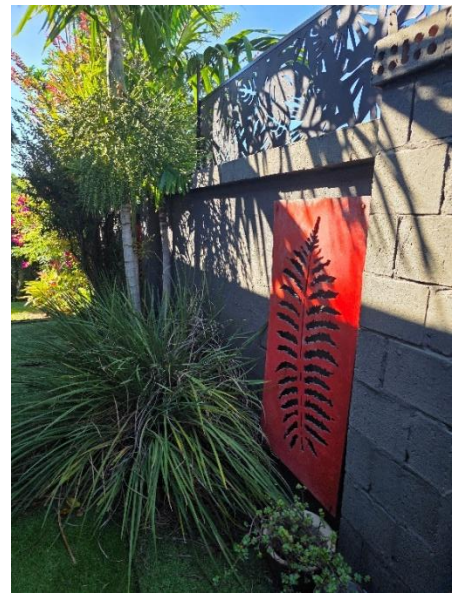
May Home Visit 2026 – Denise's Garden



After every one of our Home Visits virtually the same thought comes to mind – namely, how every garden has a 'personality' of its own even though they all just contain some plants and some 'infrastructure'. In the case of our President Denise's garden that personality is somewhat that of a 'bower bird'. Denise has collected a huge collection of different 'bits and pieces' that help provide support to her plants.



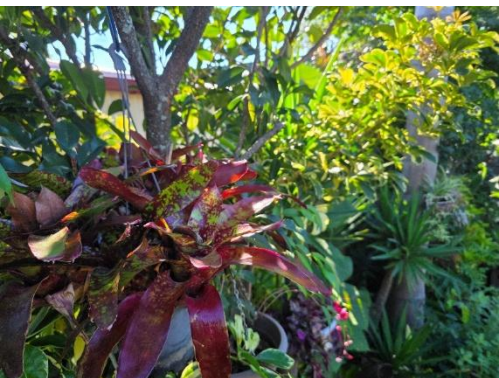
As with virtually all modern homes our gardens are surrounded by boring wood, metal or brickwork fencing. It gives much welcome privacy and protection but demands that as gardeners we find some way to break up that monotony of 'wallspace'. In this case Denise has used a variety of different solutions to this problem. At right bright red metal panels combined with both waist height and tall plants distract from the wall, while (at left) against the house, a wood panel decorated with metal 'flowers' and several types of plants does that job. Elsewhere a simpler tactic works – just flood the 'wall' with plants!



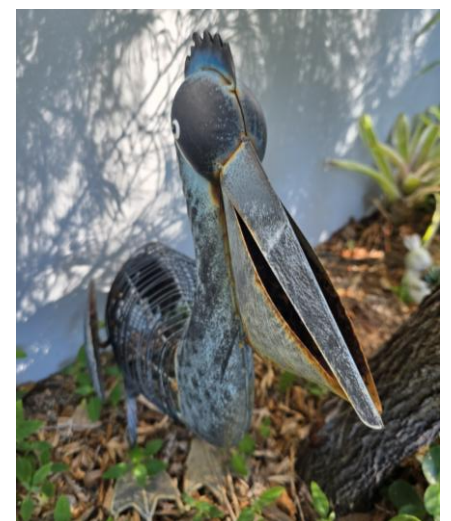
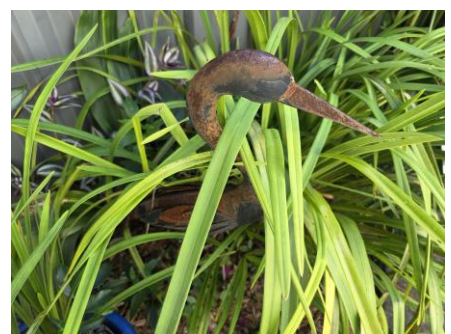
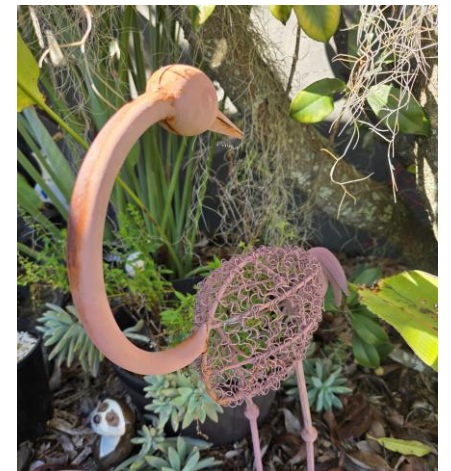
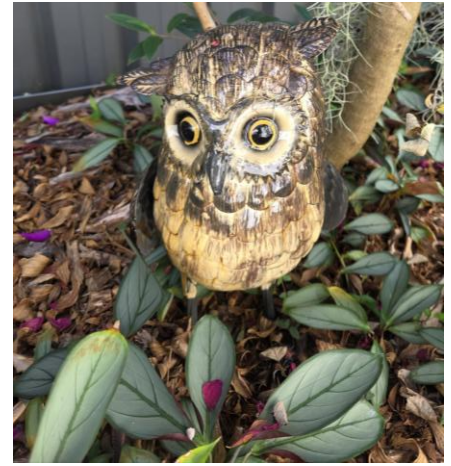
All over the garden one of the most noticeable features is the huge number of 'creatures' there are – mainly in ceramics and metal. As the group at right show many of them are of birds. These peek their beaks up all over the place amidst the foliage. In places (such as below left) they are massed together to add interest to the plain leaves of a Bird of Paradise (*Strelitzia reginae*). Elsewhere (below right) where there is a 'look at me, look at me' purple leafed *Strabilanthes dyerianus* (or the Persian Shield plant) two little creatures peek out as if they are saying "you'll never notice me with this show off just next to me!"



In the largest part of the garden, at the back of the house, a low rock edged garden creates two levels. It is only just the one step down but that helps create a walkway that breaks up the space and adds more interest with a rustic bench at the end inviting you to it.



As many do, Denise creates more interest by using lots of different plants. Some might argue that using a plastic hanging pot (below) is cheating - or is it just a great way to distract from that plain wood fence?



As well as those birds everywhere, there are other creatures that dot the garden. All of these add a touch of whimsy to the space.



Among the plants that garnered most attention were a lovely little dark coloured **Gaura** (Butterfly bush) and a bright orange red everlasting daisy. There are over 1000 species of the Australian ever-lasting daisies with this one appearing to be a variation of **Helipterum roseum**. Among Denise's collection of Desert Roses (**Odenium obesum**) a lovely deep 'red' was still flowering very well. Not that far away a Bee-Hive Ginger (**Zingiber spectabile**) was in bloom. The actual 'hive' is of course a type of 'bract' with the actual flowers small blooms that poke out from one or more of the 'cells' (circle at left). Another old favourite, the **Euphorbia milii**, with its accompanying bird of course, was also flowering well. This time it was the lovely dwarf cream version. A great crop of **Heliconias** (above right) also shone.

Lastly, a big **THANKS** to Denise. It was a great day weather wise and those who came really had a good time together. Special thanks come as Denise is still recovering from a skin cancer operation and was not well at all. What an effort!



As noted above the garden has 'birds' everywhere but as well as them are other creatures that pop up here and there and add interest and a bit of whimsy.

