



# Mediterranean Gardening Margaret River

W E S T E R N A U S T R A L I A

November 2016

Hello all

I couldn't wait to put pen to paper about today's meeting at Leonie Maslin's garden in Dunsborough. The other option was to do some more thinning in my garden but that can wait. We had a good turnout with a huge display of plants to talk about and show as well as the usual sharing plants, which quickly disappeared as they weren't left for Leonie to dispose of. It is good to know our thinnings/castoffs find a new life. Today the Pelagoniums and the colourful Alstromerias were popular flowers, which many brought along to show as well as Leonie having plenty in her garden.

It was a joy to wander with Leonie through her many roses in full bloom underplanted with so many perennials. There was something for everyone. Spent green poppyheads were eye-catching and cause for discussion.





We meandered through the orchard, formerly their commercial vineyard and down by the flowing creek through the bush which is just filled with wildflowers in their seasons. Gnarly paperbarks and beautiful native ferns overhung the paths and at the rear of this property was a huge weeping peppermint (*Agonis flexuosa*) of indeterminate age. We later passed quickly under what Leonie's husband Bob calls a widow maker (*Eucalypt* sp.) which had dropped a dead branch overnight. Leonie had small pink ties dotted in the bush to remind her of special wildflowers and orchids that she has seen for the first time this season. Bearing in mind the many years she and Bob have lived here you wouldn't imagine there would be any surprises left. It is so exciting to have new plants appearing unaided.

We tore ourselves from the garden to have a quick cuppa on the deck and discuss next year briefly before Leonie led us to her surprise garden a couple of blocks away. The owners were away but had kindly given us permission to go anywhere and what a treat. Leonie had warned us that this garden was chockas with plants but that in fact was an understatement. It was lush from the front gate thru the tiny paths burgeoning with overhanging plants. Redolent of the tropics and yet just downtown Dunsborough. From wonderful Brugmansia and Cannas to Fuschias and the Maidenhair fern so lush and ethereal as the sun caught it while we were standing there.





Crepe Myrtle (*Lagerstromia*) with beautiful speckled trunks, Silver Birches and *Cercis canadensis* Forest Pansy that great small tree which performs so well for us. Yellow was a significant colour in every shade. It (the garden) was overwhelming and then the decorations were something again. From the large blue patterned tiles covering the wall of the front verandah wall and the cane chairs with tropical design cushions. Nowhere was the street in evidence. One could have been on an island, except there were too many of us, all in single file making too much noise as we commented on every detail. I can't believe anything went unnoticed. If the owners had been home all our questions would have been answered and we might still be there. A tree in both gardens today caused discussion and admiration and this was the twisted/tortured *Robinia Lacy Lady*. A great small tree for a big pot.

So a huge thank you to Leonie for a great outing.

We have members joining us not only this region but Perth, Balingup, Nannup and Manjimup and others from elsewhere on the mailout who follow with great interest. Not the least being our associates across the seas. We love receiving all their informative news and thank them so much for including us. We have a long way to go to reach the strength of their organisations but I do believe we have something worthwhile.

People in the community have enjoyed our open gardens and we may be able to commit to more of those in the future.

We have been able to donate funds to our local Margaret River charity River Angels. I have been asked the question of who River Angels are. For those who aren't familiar with them these quiet achievers support families with cancer sufferers. At any one time there might be 10-12 families struggling to cope. This assistance might be in the form of meals and housekeeping, fuel, loads of chopped wood for winter fires, presents for birthdays as well as a cake for the children. They also need gardening assistance sometimes. To date we haven't participated but perhaps we might see our way clear in the future. This wasn't what we set out to do but a great by product.

Happy gardening.  
Julie