



EDIBLE GARDENS FESTIVAL – MARGARET RIVER: 2023 PROGRAM (AT A GLANCE)

Note: when you purchase a ticket, you'll receive a copy of the program with open garden addresses

1st session: Sat May 20, 9am-12pm. Visit gardens 1-3 in any order. Margaret River/Witchcliffe

Garden 1: Productive, functional and beautiful in suburban Brookfield

Garden 2: Rocking a permaculture life at Reserve on Redgate

Garden 3: Former flower farmer growing a vibrant and colourful food forest

2nd session: Sat May 20, 12pm-3pm. Visit gardens 4-6 in any order. Witchcliffe Ecovillage

Garden 4: Community, sustainability and good growing at the Ecovillage

Garden 5: Magic Mark's secrets to healthy soil and powerhouse plants

Garden 6: An edible laneway linking green-thumb gardeners

3rd session: Sun May 21, 9am-12pm. Visit gardens 7-9 in any order. In and around Cowaramup

Garden 7: Age no barrier to growing bucketloads of food

Garden 8: Cowaramup Seedlings plus suburban fruit and veg with plenty to share

Garden 9: Withdrawn due to unforeseen circumstances. Sorry!

4th session: Sun May 21, 12pm-3pm. Visit gardens 10-12 in any order. Cowaramup/Margaret River

Garden 10: Wild and witchy with dog-friendly design

Garden 11: Brimming with edibles at Burnside

Garden 12: Potager paradise overlooking the bush

GENERAL FESTIVAL INFO:

Tickets: Please buy your tickets online at www.ediblegardensfestival.au – tickets aren't available for purchase at the open gardens. Show your ticket (either printed or on your phone) to volunteers at each garden upon arrival.

Children: Kids 16 and under are free but they still need an entry ticket which can be reserved online (this helps us keep track of overall numbers). Please ensure kids are supervised and well behaved.

Wheelchair access: Some gardens are wheelchair friendly. See the notes on each garden.

Toilets: Are not available for use at open gardens, unless stated in the program. Otherwise please use nearby public toilets.

Parking: Please park respectfully and follow the parking instructions on the program for each garden.

Getting around: Sustainability is a big goal for this event, so please car pool, ride your bike where possible, or jump on the Edible Gardens Festival's Facebook and Instagram pages to arrange a lift with other ticketholders. Gardens have been grouped together by location to minimise commuting.

Your safety: Gardens are working spaces so please be aware of hazards like steps, ponds etc.

Pets: Sorry, no dogs or other pets allowed at open gardens.

Volunteers: Are there to check tickets, provide info and assist where possible. Just ask if you have a question or need assistance!

Fruit and veg: It might look delicious and probably tastes delicious, but please don't pick and eat any produce from gardens. Please also stick to paths and tread lightly and respectfully!

Gardeners: The owners of each garden will be wearing high vis to identify themselves. Feel free to ask them questions! Each gardener will be doing a brief talk about their garden at 15 minutes past the hour, every hour during their timeslot – listen for the "coo-eee" before each talk starts. Gardeners are generously opening their property to share with the community, so please show your gratitude!

Wet weather: Finger crossed for great weather but the event will go ahead in wet weather.

Don't forget to bring: Sun protection, shoes, water bottle, snacks, a notepad.

SPECIAL DISCOUNTS FOR FESTIVAL TICKET HOLDERS

Our supporters are offering ticket holders some great discounts to help with your gardening journey!

Mitre 10 Margaret River: Supporting local gardeners by offering 10 per cent off all plants between May 20 and June 30, 2023. That includes fruit trees, vegetable seedlings and natives. Just show your ticket at the counter before purchase.

Stella Bella: Let's face it, a wine is great after a garden session! Stella Bella (which uses microbial teas to boost vineyard soil health) is offering 10 per cent off online and cellar door wine purchases from May 20-31. Use the code **Garden2023** at checkout online or show your ticket at the cellar door.

OUR VALUED SUPPORTERS

Margaret River Regional Environment Centre: Such great advocates for the environment in our community. See www.mrrec.org.au to become a member.

Shire of Augusta-Margaret River: Our event is supported by the shire's Community and Development Events Grant.

The Margaret River Community Pantry: Reducing food insecurity. Drop your donations to the pantry at 41 Clarke Rd Thursdays 3pm-5pm. Fridays are pantry days for food collection from 10am-1pm.

Margaret River Mitre 10 and Yates: Thanks for generously donating gardener thank-you packs!

Stellar Bella: Thanks for donating wine for our volunteer + gardener thank-you celebration and packs.

Shelter Brewing: Thanks for donating local brews for our volunteer + gardener thank-you celebration and packs.

EDIBLE GARDENS FESTIVAL – MARGARET RIVER: 2023 DETAILED PROGRAM

First session: Saturday May 20, 9am-12noon

Visit gardens 1-3 in any order. Located Margaret River/Witchcliffe

Garden 1: Productive, functional and beautiful in suburban Brookfield

Parking: Limited street parking; overflow parking on grass at bottom of the hill

About: Want to know how to turn a standard block in the burbs into a productive, functional and beautiful place to raise a family? Anthony “Smitho” Smith and his partner Katie have done just that after moving to Brookfield two years ago. You won’t miss this place as you drive down the street – the lawn has been replaced with a front yard vegetable garden featuring brilliant trellis systems made from salvaged materials; paths made from recycled bricks; fences made from salvaged posts; home-made arbour to support climbing edibles; a pond to boost biodiversity; fruit trees including a pair of pomegranates; and citrus and feijoas for fruit, shade, screening and privacy. Smitho runs a wastewater management consultancy called Water Wally, and he’s the full bottle on capturing and storing water, using greywater and building and installing compost loos. You can see all these things in action at his place: stormwater from the roof flows into a frog bog and rain garden to slow, store and direct water; greywater from the house keeps natives and perennials moist; and an amazing compost loo in the backyard looks more like sculptural art than a place for capturing “humanure”, which is recycled back into the garden. The peaceful backyard is also home to a chicken run which fertilises more fruit trees including citrus, guavas and a mulberry, plus Leeuwin wattles used for “chop and drop” biomass and an ancient towering peppermint tree for shade, wildlife habitat – and for the kids to climb!

Garden 2: Rocking a permaculture life at Reserve on Redgate

Parking: On the street

About: After completing a Permaculture Design Course, Certificate 3 of Horticulture and launching a business doing permaculture designs for suburban blocks, Gillian Pearce is also busy constructing her own permi paradise on a 2000sqm block at Reserve on Redgate. It’s a work in progress, so perfect for anyone who wants to see what can be achieved on a vacant block in just 18 months. Gillian and her husband built a weatherboard solar-passive house, while the garden is already home to thriving veg beds, chicken coop and run, rear orchard with 20-plus fruit trees, water tank and native plants to screen neighbours – all kept moist with greywater recycled from the house. Also underway in the initial stages is a front yard forest garden, a microclimate tropical garden, and a potting shed with compost loo. Ask her about mulching fruit trees with wool, growing interesting species like ice cream bean, and knocking up a permaculture design for your place!

Garden 3: Former flower farmer growing a vibrant and colourful food forest

Parking: Drive into the property and follow the parking signs to the vacant grass area

About: Former flower farmer Linda Moran has been busy at her new property creating a netted food forest complete with plums, peaches, nectarines, figs, guavas, pears, apples, cherries and bananas - with a lower layer of berries, a huge variety of native and exotic flowers, seasonal annual vegetables and perennials like rhubarb. What a feast! Linda has only been living here on the 10-acre property with her family for two years, and she has grand plans for the long term. After formerly running the Margaret River Flower Farm, she’s clearly still got a passion for beautiful flowering annuals and perennials. They are in abundance, creating a fun park for pollinators. But they’re also blended with edibles, green manure crops to improve the soil, and bee hotels and a pond to encourage more beneficial predators and pollinators! Chickens provide eggs and pest control, while worm farms turn kitchen scraps into castings, worm wee and garden gold. “Plants were never meant to be alone. Diversity is the key,” says Linda, who has more than 10 years expertise in commercial edible horticulture, has completed a Permaculture Design Certificate and Permaculture Teaching Certificate,

and is the woman behind the “WA Gardeners” and “WA gardeners plant seed cutting exchange” Facebook groups which have 80,000-plus members. Her garden has also come with challenges, such as dealing with heavy clay soil and managing wildlife like kangaroos, birds and rabbits. Make sure you pick her brain for the best ways to manage these critters!

Second session: Saturday May 20, 12noon-3pm

Visit gardens 4-6 in any order. Located at the Witchcliffe Ecovillage

Garden 4: Community, sustainability and good growing at the Ecovillage

Parking: Parking is limited so please enter the Ecovillage via Wolghine Ave, then take the first right onto Willerin Lane. Follow the signs to park your car - Gardens 4, 5 and 6 are all a short walk from there! Please see our volunteers if you have mobility issues and need to park closer.

About: Building – and gardening – at the Witchcliffe Ecovillage has been full steam ahead in the past year so here’s your chance to have a look around and meet some of the gardeners spearheading this amazing experiment in community, sustainability and food growing. Miles Durand is a permaculture elder who studied his Permaculture Design Course back in 1983 with Bill Mollison, the founder and father of permaculture. Almost four decades later, Miles is still living according to the ethics of earth care, people care and fair share. His new home in Cluster 1C at the Ecovillage is as sustainable as they come, and his garden is bursting at the seams with food. Living right next door is Anu and Laurie with an abundant productive garden of their own, so check that out on your way to the shared orchard adjacent. A solid, netted structure safeguards the fruit trees below, with Miles and his fellow cluster residents collectively sharing in the harvest. Pick Miles’ brain about starting a garden on a cleared site; using worm farms and bio char; choosing plants when you only have a tiny block with limited space; dealing with clay soil and winter waterlogging; how the Ecovillage experiment is turning out so far; and what it was like learning permaculture from the man who started the movement!

Garden 5: Magic Mark’s secrets to healthy soil and powerhouse plants

Parking: Parking is limited so please enter the Ecovillage via Wolghine Ave, then take the first right onto Willerin Lane. Follow the signs to park your car - Gardens 4, 5 and 6 are all a short walk from there! Please see our volunteers if you have mobility issues and need to park closer.

About: Mark Tupman is a soil, compost and productive gardening wizard who taught horticulture at TAFE, is the horticulture manager at the Ecovillage and runs Productive Ecology – a local consultancy and education business that specialises in establishing integrated living production systems. If you’ve got a question about soil or plants, we reckon Mark knows the answer. His latest project is turning a 2-acre agricultural block at the Ecovillage – which only a few months ago was bare paddock with a handful of goats – into what will be a vegetable growing powerhouse. See how he’s set out a dozen, 12m-long beds for maximum efficiency and productivity; how he’s pumping life into the soil using cover crops and the power of photosynthesis; and how companion planting and other techniques allow him to go fully organic with bumper yields. This site will also become a hub for workshops and an educational space at the Ecovillage into the future. Mark will discuss how to establish a productive garden from scratch, so if you’re starting on a new site or you’re new to gardening (or even an old hand), don’t miss this opportunity to share in Mark’s extensive wisdom! And, check out www.productiveecology.com to learn more or to book Mark in for a site visit to get your place more productive.

Garden 6: An edible laneway linking green-thumb gardeners

Parking: Parking is limited so please enter the Ecovillage via Wolghine Ave, then take the first right onto Willerin Lane. Follow the signs to park your car - Gardens 4, 5 and 6 are all a short walk from there! Please see our volunteers if you have mobility issues and need to park closer.

About: This garden is actually three gardens side by side, spilling into each other and united by the themes of growing food, bringing back nature and returning life to the soil. Neighbours Zoe, Alix, and

Pam and Ken are all part of Cluster 1A at the Ecovillage and they've hit the ground running (Zoe hasn't even started building her house yet but she's already harvesting from the garden!). The trio of households are still working hard to increase soil life and nutrients, using green manures, cover crops, mulch, seaweed, compost and weed teas. But their efforts so far are hugely impressive considering they've been at it for less than a year, working with compacted, low fertility soils. The three households have all been active participants in the Ecovillage gardening group, an initiative where residents regularly come together, help each other out and share knowledge. Wander the footpath at the rear of the properties, which is like an edible laneway where you'll have an excellent view of the gardens and a chance to stop and chat with the gardeners.

Third session: Sunday May 21, 9am-12noon

Visit gardens 7-9 in any order. Located in and around Cowaramup

Garden 7: Age no barrier to growing bucketloads of food

Address: Unit 10, Lions Village, 26 Waverly Rd, Cowaramup

Parking: Park on Duggan Dr near the intersection with Waverly Rd. Do not drive into the Lions Village as no parking is available.

About: At 81, Ann Thorne is a one-woman food-growing inspiration! She lives in a Cowaramup lifestyle village and her garden is packed with edibles and flowers – a space she soon outgrew. So when discussions were underway to turn the vacant land at the end of the complex into a lawn, she petitioned for a food garden instead. Ten years later, Ann has turned the plot into a productive fruit and vegetable garden – and she's done it all by swapping, recycling and fundraising to purchase everything from the fruit trees that grow in the garden to the sleepers used for the raised beds. She's a shining example that age is no barrier to growing your own – even without your own land to grow it on! In fact, Ann says it's the garden that has kept her so fit, healthy and motivated into her 80s. Smartly designed for wheelchair access, the paths are wide and growing beds accessible. Ann picks bucketloads of citrus and stone fruit, eating some, sharing much of it, and carting the rest to the regular Swap, Shuffle, Share produce exchange she runs at the Cowaramup Community Garden. A compost system minimises waste and returns nutrients to the soil, while a sea of flowering plants like comfrey, borage and calendula attract the pollinators. Ask Ann how she grows interesting edibles such as yacon, ginger, dragon fruit and white sapote, and how she keeps possums at bay with solar lights and other nifty garden tricks!

Garden 8: Cowaramup Seedlings plus suburban fruit and veg with plenty to share

Parking: On the street

About: Building community is front and centre for David and Zee Hatwell, who have turned their 700sqm block in suburban Cowaramup in a food-growing powerhouse. Their ethos is on show from the moment you arrive – much of the front lawn has been replaced with rows of leafy greens and sunflowers, and they have a help-yourself stall offering other nearby residents free bags of lettuce, lemons and whatever else is abundant at the time. The couple are also regulars at Swap, Shuffle, Share days around the region, always contributing above and beyond their fair share. The northern side of their garden is dedicated to rows of diverse vegetable crops to feed the family and flowers to bring in pollinators. At the back is a poly tunnel where David grows seedlings which he sells from home under the label Cowaramup Seedlings, specialising in varieties that do well in our region, with the proceeds used to help cover his garden expenses. Talking about keeping costs down, the couple have used loads of salvaged materials, love low-tech and low-energy solutions like scything the lawn instead of mowing (ask David for a demonstration), and using free tip mulch to add organic matter to the soil. The pair first met while they were both working at nurseries as teenagers, and in the years since they haven't lost any of that passion when it comes to growing plants, food – and community!

Garden 9: Withdrawn due to unforeseen circumstances. Sorry!

Fourth session: Sunday May 21, 12noon-3pm

Visit gardens 10-12 in any order. Cowaramup and Margaret River

Garden 10: Wild and witchy with dog-friendly design

Parking: Street parking along Duggan Dr or in Rosella Court

About: This is an edible garden on a 2200sqm block with a wild, untamed, weedy, witchy twist. Forget landscaped and manicured – Jacquie Nichol and her partner Ryan, who both work full time, wanted edible food amongst a habitat full of birds, bees and bugs that didn't require hours of work, and that their exuberant dogs couldn't destroy. Jacquie, a landscape designer and environmental scientist, wanted her place to have an abundance of nature that's allowed to go "a bit wild", providing habitat and seasonal food for humans and wildlife, following in the footsteps of Irish environmental garden designer Mary Reynolds. The resulting garden has vast array of useful waterwise herbs and attractive flowers including lemon balm, peppermint, white sage, pink clover, rue, stinging nettle, dandelion, borage and plantain, with seasonal produce scattered throughout. There's a mixed grass meadow lawn for the dogs to run and roll, that bees and birds also love, while vegetables like beetroot, carrots, lettuce, asparagus, spring onion, corn, pumpkins, tomatoes, capsicum and cucumber are grown in raised beds out of reach of munching dogs. Fruit trees such as figs, avos, apricots, plums, peaches, macadamia, citrus, olives and bananas are grown here and there for overstory shade in summer, netted individually when and where needed, amid clumps of sweet fennel and rhubarb. The chooks roam in a run placed under large, shady peppermint trees, while natives are being revegetated into a 'mini jarrah forest' out the front of the block. Ryan, a viticulturalist, has squeezed in a mini vineyard to make his own wine and is planning a geodesic dome greenhouse. Jacquie loves her wild garden and the wildlife it brings, saying you can have a beautiful space and enough veggies to keep you going as well as sharing the flowers and seeds with others, like possums, dogs, frogs, bobtails and butterflies. She says allowing the garden to go a bit wild means she has more time to share and learn about herbs with friends and neighbours, and the water bill doesn't make her cry! (For info on Mary Reynolds see www.marymary.ie/)

Garden 11: Brimming with edibles at Burnside

Parking: Enter via the gravel driveway and follow the parking signs

About: It's been a 25-year farming and edible gardening journey for Lara and Jamie McCall, who own and run the 15-hectare Burnside Organic Farm. And this is your chance to wander part of the impressive property and hear first-hand how the couple commercially grow capers and avocados. They also have a hectare of vines planted with another two going in soon - all used to make their premium Burnside Organic Farm wines (the cellar door will be open so make sure you stop in for a taste!). And then there's the market garden and bee hives. An extensive kitchen vegetable garden and netted orchard feeds the family with plenty left over for the 20-plus flock of chickens and herd of pigs. Don't miss the couple's 5-star worm farm that's 10m long and made from salvaged steel and bricks in what was once a raised vegetable bed. "With so much worm castings at our fingertips, the garden's health has gone next level," says Lara. Plus, pick Jamie and Lara's brains about putting their flock of 80 geese to work to control aggressive kikuyu grass; their plans to commercially grow garlic and berries; smart and successful irrigation using only dam water; and how four chalets add a tourism component to their edible landscape. Jamie is also a volunteer firefighter and the property has plenty of fire-wise features, so there's plenty of tips to pick up if bushfire is a threat at your place. For those keen to take a taste of the farm home with you, there will be pickled caper berries, chillies and other produce available for purchase. Note: a toilet is also available for ticket holders to use at this garden.

Garden 12: Potager paradise overlooking the bush

Parking: On the street

About: Lara McIntyre and Shane Gillen only moved into the compact and sustainable home they built overlooking the forest last December, but you'd never know it was a bare block from the amazing state or their property now. Even though young, the garden's structure is well and truly in place. Beauty, productivity, scents and textures combine in a potager style, where recycled brick pathways meander past fruit trees such as avocado, citrus and quince, all blended with perennials, annual vegetables, flowering plants and shrubs. Their property is rated to Bushfire Attack Level 29, so their home and garden is designed to be defensible in a fire. They also faced gardening on a sloping site, until Shane hand-built a series of coffee rock walls to create terraces and maximise the growing space and sunlight, and slow and store water and nutrients. The tireless couple have thought of it all in this house and garden where they plan to "age well and stay social". There's a tropical bed in a sunny microclimate with mango, bananas and pepino; a small lawn for their dog Kevin to roll and lie on; a cooling and tranquil undercover fernery; convenient potting station with worm farm; raised veg beds for convenient growing; compost system and small chicken pen adjoining a soon-to-be-enclosed orchard with apples and stone fruit; a verge-planted lemon and mulberry tree to spread goodwill with the neighbours; and even a secluded sauna and outdoor plunge bath to enjoy the garden and take away the aches from a day spent pruning or weeding.

Bonus: There'll be a soil microscope station set up where you can see the changes in microbial activity between different aged composts and soils, and talk all things soil with local doc Jen Bryce (a student of Soil Food Web).

AND FINALLY...

We couldn't run this event without the support of some great local businesses and groups who lend a hand to grassroots events like the Edible Gardens Festival. Shop local, support local!



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Margaret River Regional
Environment Centre

Water Wally



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