

## MAKING A GARDEN ON TAMBORINE MOUNTAIN – Elwyn Paton

Last year, a week before Christmas, I had a large tree cut to the ground. It was a Lagunaria, commonly known as a Cow Itch Tree, Pyramid Tree or Norfolk Island Hibiscus. I find that it is native to our forests as well. I saw it growing first in South Australia. It was a neat pyramid shape there in that climate and situation. It has lovely pink tubular flowers after which it produces seed pods that cause itching if you place them close to your skin. Hence the name “cow itch”.

Poor cows.

To start with it was a handsome tree but eventually grew tall to catch the light. It was never free of fallen leaves in dry weather, squishy flowers or layers of sticky seed pods. So, sadly, it had to go.

Also, nearby, a large lillypilly tree was cut severely. This has opened up the area to sun for a few hours a day. I noticed that the lillypilly is already starting to shoot, which will provide a little more protection for some of the exposed plants. No doubt I will be able to indulge myself and buy a ‘few’ more flowering plants to fill in the new open space.

While the chain saw was going and the mulcher in full swing, I had a Magnolia liliflora nigra, a Camelia japonica and Gordonia axillari cut to about 1.5 metres. The Magnolia recovered very quickly and now is a small green rounded shrub. The Camellia took a little longer and I was watching it anxiously, but it now is showing fresh green shoots up and down each stem. I am not sure about the Gordonia.

Originally its centre branches weren't very healthy, no borers were evident so the tree man said he would cut it low to give it a fresh start. There are a few small buds appearing on two of the outside cut branches but none on the centre branches. We will have to be patient and wait to see.

Another thing that happened was the appearance of a bower bird bower. The bower bird must have felt that the change of landscape suited his building very well. I was rather perplexed as I expected to see a glossy black bird building the bower, but it was similar to the female colouring. I have been reliably informed that he was a young male that hadn't developed his adult plumage. He must have been trusting as well because, most of his blue cache disappeared one day, including two blue pegs that he accepted from me, placing them carefully at each end of his bower. He made do with blue agapanthus flowers. Gradually the blue items made their appearance back in the bower. During my observation, I noticed three birds together near the bower and thought that he had attracted two females until one of the ‘females’ picked up a curved stick and started to mend the bower. I also noticed a nest, of sorts, made in a camellia tree just above the bower. It looks as if it will blow away in the slightest of breezes.

I may have to resort to Google to find out more about these birds or maybe our birdie experts can fill us in a little bit more. Welcome to 2018 Ellie P.



# TAMBORINE MOUNTAIN GARDEN CLUB INC.

PO Box 63, North Tamborine, 4272 ABN 281 058 436 76 www.tmbotanicgardens.org.au

## NEWSLETTER

Editor: Bernadette Stacey - bernadette1859@gmail.com 0409 759 838 **February 2018**

### For The Garden of Your Daily Living



Plant three rows of peas

1. Peace of mind
2. Peace of heart
3. Peace of soul

Plant four rows of squash

1. Squash gossip
2. Squash indifference
3. Squash grumbling
4. Squash selfishness

Plant fours of lettuce

1. Lettuce be faithful
2. Lettuce be kind lettuce be patient
3. Lettuce really love one another

No garden is complete without turnips

1. Turnip for meetings
2. Turnip for service
3. Turnip to help one another

To conclude our garden we must have thyme

1. Thyme for each other
2. Thyme for family
3. Thyme for friends

Water freely with patience and cultivate with love. There is much fruit in your garden because you reap what you sow.

**CONTACTS:** President / – Di Howard 5545 2628 | Vice President / Secretary - Bernadette Stacey - 5545 0605 | Treasurer – Helen Walsh 5582 7902 | Patrons - Margaret and Roger Bell |Springtime Convener—

**March meeting**

**Tuesday March 13th at 9:30 AM**

Vonda Youngman Community Centre Main Street, North Tamborine

**Guest Speaker: TBA**

**Competition table**

- A flowering native
- An exotic tree or shrub
- A flowering bulb or corm
- A vegetable / fruit
- Perfumed leaves – one cut
- An hibiscus
- A rose

**Specimen table**

Bring along a specimen; unusual, interesting, beautiful, unknown. Include a question if you like.

**Question and answer segment**

Get the answers you need to all your gardening questions. Use your experience to help with someone else's problems.

**February garden visit**

February 20th – 10am BYO Morning Tea  
25 Manitzky Road

**From the editor**

This will be my last newsletter after four years as I have only very recently been diagnosed with breast cancer and will begin treatment very shortly. Thanks to a mammogram the cancer was discovered early. Nonetheless I will be withdrawing from active participation in the club for a time. I have really enjoyed putting together the newsletter and my time as secretary. I hope someone else is willing to have a go at either of these roles. They are not difficult tasks at all, it just takes some computer skills. Thanks for your support and don't forget your mammograms . Bernadette

**From the President**

I certainly hope everyone has enjoyed a safe and happy festive season and are now ready to face 2018. Your committee's aim is to see you all enjoying club activities and involvement.

The hot weather has been draining but at least there has been some rain. The gardens have responded well and now it is time to cut everything back. A gardener's work is never done. Rob and I have recently been in Tamworth where the temperature was 43 degrees for a consecutive number of days. After watching a show in a lovely cool theatre I jokingly suggested that they would need a taser to remove me. It was so pleasant to arrive home to a cool change. How fortunate are we to live in such a wonderful place.

The Botanic Gardens have received a very generous donation of \$200 worth of plants from Spectrum Plants, 69 Currie Road, Wongawallen ph. 0412 614242. This is now a retail nursery open from 8.00 am to 3.00 pm every day. As well as a very wide variety of healthy plants they also have a Petting Zoo to amuse the children. The money will be used to buy spathiphyllums for the revamped bed near the Salah Pond.

Our March meeting is the AGM, anyone wishing to nominate for the committee may obtain a nomination form from me. The form needs to be lodged no later than 14 days prior (27th February).

The AGM brings with it time for membership. Fees are \$40 a couple and \$25 single. These fees are necessary to cover club costs such as hall hire, insurance, library books, morning tea etc. Please consider volunteering for any of the various jobs at monthly meetings. Anyone who has been involved has found it a rewarding experience.

My best wishes to you all for a fantastic 2018.

Di Howard

Upcoming events—check the noticeboard for more details

Orchid and Foliage Show	School of Arts, Canungra	10 &11 March
Palm and Cycad Show	Mt Coot-tha Botanic Gardens Auditorium	10 & 11 March
Brisbane Garden & Plant Expo	Doomben Racecourse Ascot	16 &17 March
Open Garden Viola's Patch	280 Beaudesert-Beenleigh Road Bahrs Scrub Q 4207	14 & 15 April
Wondai Autumn Garden Expo	Wondai Sports Ground	21 & 22 April
Coucals Garden	8 Belah Street Mount Crosby	28 & 29 April

Unusual flowers in my garden.



Three years ago purchased an *Amorphophallus bulbifer* on the 'dead and dying' table at Bunnings. I knew nothing about this plant but thought it sounded interesting. I planted it in a shaded part of the garden and wasn't too upset when it died completely a few weeks later. I accept that I take a risk planting sick specimens.

The following summer I had a lovely surprise when a strange spear-like pink shoot appeared. It was with much anticipation I watched and waited to see what would be revealed. One large

beautiful leaf unfurled. It had a strangely mottled stem and small protuberances on the veins of the leaf. Once again it died down in the cooler months.

This past November the small pink spike appeared and grew and grew. Finally opening to reveal a stunning flower. The flower was a deep rose pink in the throat fading to a stunning pale pink at the edges. In the centre it had a beautiful spadix common to all arum lilies. Apparently this flower has an unpleasant perfume for the first few hours after opening but I didn't notice this at all. The flower lasted for weeks and I never stopped admiring it.

Additionally I have discovered the small protuberances on the leaves are mini bulbs and when the leaf dies down they take root. That would explain the multiplication of the plant as I now have a small forest of them.

Great joy can come from unexpected surprises in the garden. Despite what my husband says, no visit to Bunnings is complete without stopping by the 'dead and dying' table, you just never know what treasure you might find. Bernadette

