

In My Garden

Margaret Lynch

Joy returns to the garden

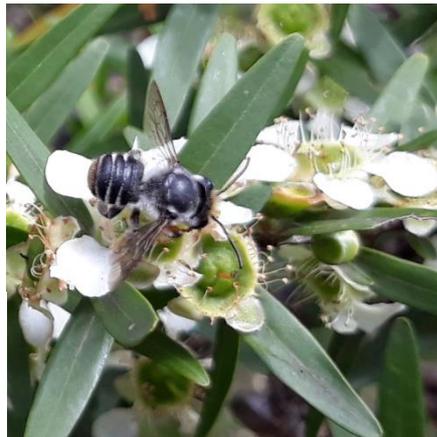
During the tough summer conditions earlier this year I began to curse that I had a relatively large garden by suburban standards. The prolonged dry exacerbated by extreme heat, severe water restrictions and ever present threat of fire meant most plants in the garden were left to fend as best they could. But since the welcome rain and cooler weather I have found a renewed enthusiasm for gardening. The veggie beds are once again full and productive and many birds are back singing and rejoicing in the return of flowers to much of the garden.



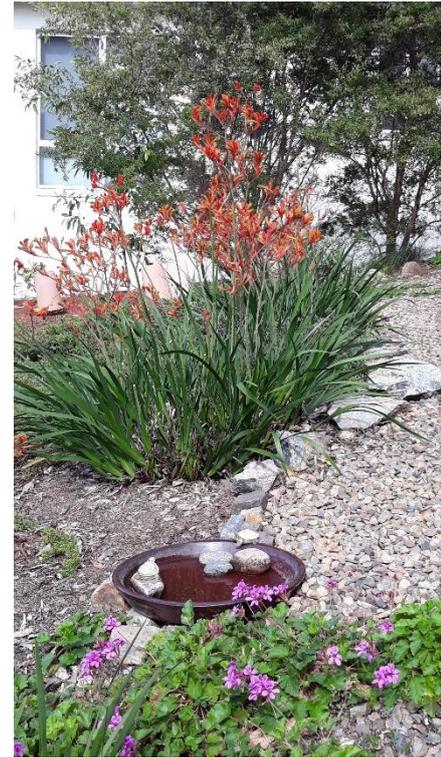
My long-awaited insect house has been completed and there is evidence of the first residents with some holes in the clay now coated in resin. I suspect it is the work of blue-banded bees, one of which is seen attending *Leptospermum petersonii*



Yes there have been several losses but gaps create opportunity for new plantings. Now with enforced isolation as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic there is time to plan and contemplate then browse books or on line as to what new delights may be introduced into those empty spaces.



There is also plenty to be done towards the rejuvenation of many areas around the garden. I'm removing those plants that are no longer thriving and getting ahead on other maintenance jobs like pruning, weeding and mulching. I've also been transplanting a few seedlings that have popped up since the rain. Autumn is also a good time to take cuttings.



Pelargonium rodneyanum* is a reliable low growing and long flowering herbaceous plant which thrives in full sun. Plants may die down during the long dry spell recently experienced, but recover after rain. In the background is a form of *Anigozanthos flavidus

So once more I count myself as very fortunate I can enjoy the wonderful and productive benefits that
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Banksia blechnifolia from W.A. has proved a reliable addition to a number of gardens locally, and can be expected to flower late spring through summer. Its prostrate branches present flowers at their extremities, presenting birds an opportunity to feed, and we gardeners to enjoy.



With the cooler weather of autumn, *Lechenaultia biloba* has started to bloom, and will flower right through to late spring. This is one of the hardier plants in this genus, and is readily propagated by cuttings at this time of the year