

Balance

by Sophie's Patch



A garden for the Royal Agricultural
& Horticultural Society of SA Inc.



Hello and welcome to the 2019 Royal Adelaide Show. The Horticulture Committee of the Royal Agricultural and Horticultural Society of South Australia are pleased to be working again with Sophie Thomson, South Australia's eminent organic gardener, author and environmental educator to present this amazing feature garden display *Balance*.

With these ever-changing times and our lives getting busier, our climate changing and population growing, getting the balance right has never been more important. Whether it is the balance between green or hard space, ornamentals or edibles, or even just bringing the garden inside with indoor plants, the benefits to our health, the environment's health and the entire planet's health are in your hands.

It all starts with you and we hope this display helps to demonstrate to you the simple steps we can all take in our everyday lives to try and help restore some of that balance. Thank you for coming and enjoy!

From the Horticulture Committee.

Balance, my 2019 feature garden at the Royal Adelaide Show is where I hope to demonstrate what a balance in a garden and inside our homes could look like when plants are involved.

As I drive around our city, observing how urban infill is replacing one house on a block with three or four new houses, I feel that balance is sadly lacking. Our climate is getting hotter and harsher, and yet we are covering our city in hard surfaces ... which just make it hotter again! And every time we turn our air conditioner on, while it may pump cool air around your home inside, it pumps hot air outside.

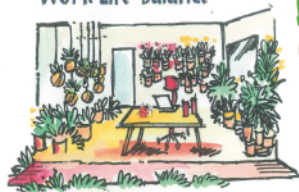
We have houses with big footprints covering most of the available ground space, and areas for garden are reduced to a minimum. We are being told that we don't have time to garden, and people don't want to garden, yet I think we are being sold a lie. OK, I am totally biased, as a self-confessed obsessive-compulsive gardener, however I think gardens are the solution! They can help to cool and green our homes and our cities, provide us with exercise, reduce our stress, offer us physical and mental health benefits, and give us access to optimal nutrition when we grow at least part of our fruits, vegies and herbs. All these personal benefits are on top of the obvious environmental benefits that gardens provide, which include increasing biodiversity and providing urban habitat.

There are many elements in our gardens which are seen to be competing, yet I believe they can be balanced to provide harmony in our outdoor spaces. These elements include sun and shade, produce and ornamentals, foliage and flowers, natives and exotic plants, hard and soft landscaping, and water use. When we balance these things, garden organically, compost our green waste, and reduce-reuse-recycle where we can, we are living more sustainably and creating balance in our backyards.

So, let's bring the urban balance back by having gardens again. Happy gardening,

Sophie

Home Office
WORK-LIFE Balance



Balance

by Sophie's Patch

Lounge
Home - Life Balance



Native
Bee BnB

Bird Bath

Wildlife
Garden

Chooks

Shade

Fruit
Trees

Beehives

Vegie Garden

Pumpkin Palace

Shade

Plant-Life Balance

Balance Within our outdoor spaces



Sun and Shade

As we try and adapt to a changing climate where it's getting hotter and harsher, deciduous trees or climbers grown over a pergola are a great choice to create summer shade, while letting the precious winter sunshine through. For short term summer shade, why not try growing vertical vegies (read more at www.sophiespatch.com.au/2019/04/06/favourite-vertical-vegies/).



Native and Exotic Plants

In urban settings where space is limited, verges could hold the answer to urban biodiversity if they were planted with local native plants, creating wildlife corridors to bring back the butterflies, native bees, and birds. As well as growing local native plants, choose natives from similar summer dry part of Australia, and climate compatible exotics from regions like the Mediterranean, South Africa, California and the Middle East, provided they haven't got weed potential in your area.



Hard and Soft Landscaping

Ideally the hard landscaping (such as paving and built structures) and soft landscaping (the plants) should work together. Try to reduce unnecessary areas of hot reflective surfaces such as paving, exposed walls and fences, and use plants to cool down these surfaces. When paving is necessary, look at permeable pavers which let the rain soak back into the ground.



Produce and Ornamentals

While growing fruit and vegies feeds us, growing the right ornamentals can feed the birds, bees and butterflies, as well as beneficial insects which manage pests on our edibles. You can also choose productive plants which are highly ornamental from persimmons and quinces to coloured kales and rainbow chards.



Balancing water use

Getting a balance between hardy waterwise plants and those needing supplementary watering can be as simple as creating watering zones in your garden. Aim for 50% of your garden to be a 'No Water' zone once established, by using native plants and climate compatible exotics. 25% could be the 'Low Water' zone for fruit trees, roses and ornamental plants needing weekly watering in the hot weather, and 25% 'High Water' zone for plants that need frequent, even daily watering such as in ground vegies or plants in a shade house.



Foliage and Flowers

While some landscaping styles in recent years have focused on foliage rather than flowers, we need gardens which have lots of different plants, flowering at different times of the year to help sustain urban biodiversity.



Composting:

Recycle your green organics into compost to enrich your soil, help your plants grow better, make your vegies tastier and reduce the amount of water you need to apply.



Bring the garden inside with Indoor Plants

Transform the inside of your home with cut flowers, displays of fresh produce, and an abundance of indoor plants. Apart from their obvious aesthetic enhancement of our living spaces, indoor plants have numerous health and wellbeing, and productivity benefits. They improve air quality and have a positive effect on our wellbeing, with a marked improvement in our mood and concentration, creating feelings of relaxation, inspiration and positivity.

Other ways to Achieve Balance in Your Backyard:

Garden organically

Stop using pesticides such as insecticides, fungicide, miticides and herbicides. Even organic sprays such as pyrethrum, garlic, chilli and soap sprays will be toxic to bees and other beneficials if sprayed carelessly.

Reduce Reuse Recycle

Let's reduce our waste, reuse materials for practical purposes and recycle as much as we can, creating a sustainable home and garden.

Composting

Recycle your green organics into compost to enrich your soil, help your plants grow better, make your vegies taste better and reduce the amount of water you need to apply.

thanks to the following businesses who have supported my Display

Barrow & Bench Mitre 10

Suppliers of the indoor plants and pots in the display.
321 Unley Rd, Malvern. Ph (08) 8272 8566
Insta: barrowandbenchmitre10 FB: barrowandbench

Tupelo Grove Nursery

Suppliers of the exotic and native climate compatible plants.
104 Bradbury Rd, Mylor. Ph (08) 8388 5456 FB: Tupelo Grove Nursery

Bickleigh Vale Organic Farm

Suppliers of the vegies.
197 Hunt Rd, McLaren Vale. Ph 0407 339 660 FB: Bickleigh Vale Farm

Hillside Herbs and Succulents

Suppliers of the vegies, herbs and succulents.
43 Sands Rd, McLaren Vale. Ph (08) 8323 8385 FB: Hillside Herbs and Succulents

Thanks to the following organisations and individuals who have supported my display

Richard Elston, metal work - Giant Pumpkin, metal ladybirds.
For more of his work visit www.sophiespatch.com.au/richards-metal-creations/ Ph 0431 704 451

Erik Johansson, carpenter, handyman - container conversion, pergolas and raised vegie beds. Ph 0402 834 410

George Cooper, artist - painting bee hives, stepping stones & artist's impression of the garden. Ph 0438 839 142

Nature's Abode - chook house. www.facebook.com/naturesabode2015/

Rustics of Seaford - wooden signs. www.facebook.com/Rustics-of-Seaford-1500315523553236/

Adrian Burgess (poultry expert) - chooks. Ph 0428 628 144

THANKS ALSO TO THE FOLLOWING WHOLESALE NURSERIES WHOSE STOCK IS AVAILABLE FROM LEADING RETAIL NURSERIES AND GARDEN CENTRES

SA Grown (Heyne's Wholesale Nursery), Poplar Grove Nursery, Native Plant Wholesalers and Amazon Plant Growers.

For further information on Balance visit the 2019 Royal Adelaide Show Feature Garden pages at www.sophiespatch.com.au

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