



# Past Show Gardens

Today, I am just as passionate about the topics which I demonstrated in past show gardens. Over the years my Show Gardens have covered topics such as 'Backyards for kids' promoting Nature Play for kids; 'Habitat' demonstrating how every backyard can become a biodiversity hot spot; 'Buzz' showing how to create a bee friendly garden; 'Balance' showing how to balance the different elements of a garden from hard and soft landscaping to exotic and native plants, produce and ornamentals, and more; and 'Grow Up' in 2022 was in response to urban infill creating smaller outdoor spaces, showing that we can green up and cool down no matter what the size of space. When you have time, grab yourself a cuppa and check out the photos and explanation about each of them at [sophiespatch.com.au/category/show-gardens](http://sophiespatch.com.au/category/show-gardens)

**Sophie Thomson, Environmental Educator, Media Presenter, Speaker & Author**

[www.sophiespatch.com.au](http://www.sophiespatch.com.au)  
 email: [sophie@sophiespatch.com.au](mailto:sophie@sophiespatch.com.au)  
 For 'all things gardening' subscribe to my monthly newsletter via [www.sophiespatch.com.au](http://www.sophiespatch.com.au)  
 or follow me on

Sophie Thomson public figure  
 @sophiespatch

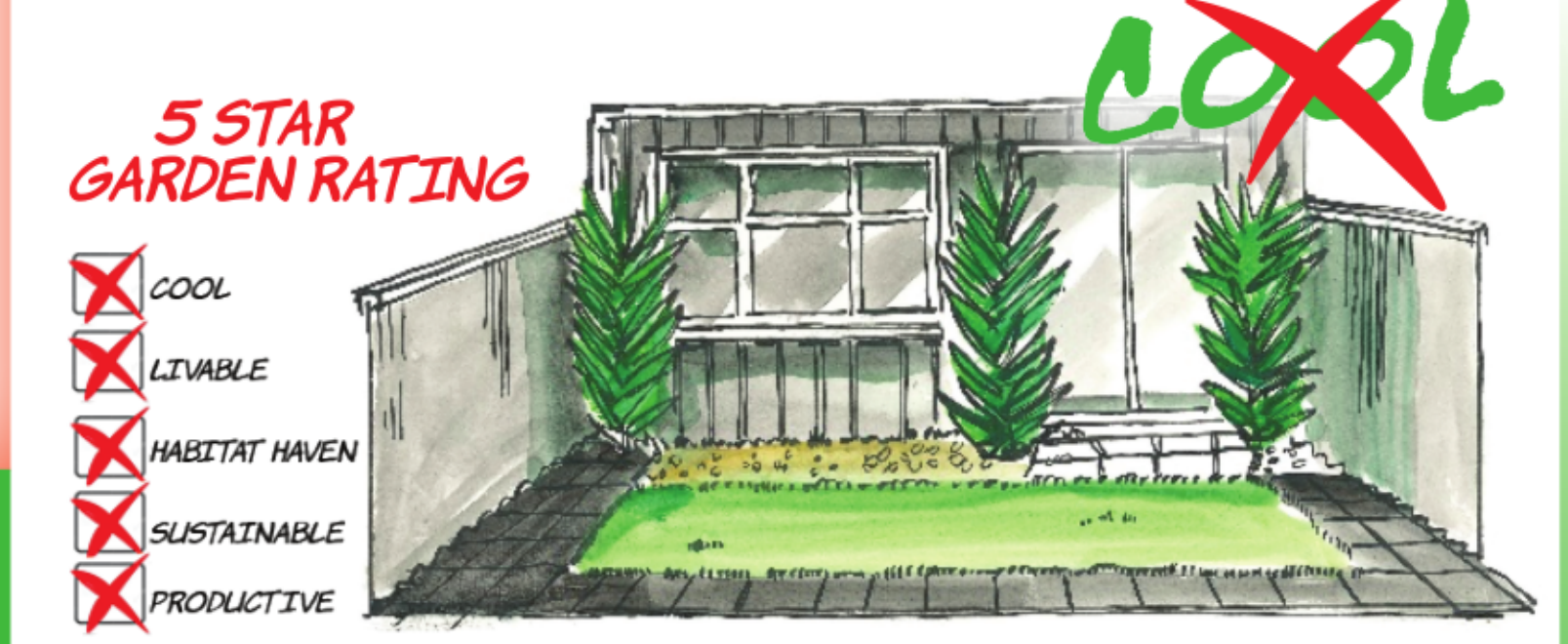


**COOL** would not have been possible without the support of the Nursery and Garden Industry and other Sophie's Patch suppliers and supporters. Please check out the full details of suppliers at [sophiespatch.com.au/2023/05/17/cool-royal-adelaide-show-garden-2023](http://sophiespatch.com.au/2023/05/17/cool-royal-adelaide-show-garden-2023)



While three sides of my display will be **COOL**, verdant, colourful, productive and abundant, there will be a dark side to my display, literally, and that will be very **un-COOL** !?

One side is dark Monument grey, with exposed metal fencing, black pavers, fake turf, pebbles and a few Yuccas as the only living things. This combination is stereotypical of many gardens I see as I drive around Adelaide, South Australia and even across Australia for that matter. It is **un-COOL**, in every sense. It's hot, harsh and there is no biodiversity, and when multiplied across multiple properties, it is making our suburbs, cities and towns less liveable.



Each year I get the opportunity to create a feature garden on a theme that I feel passionately about at the time, and I try to physically demonstrate it, so hopefully it can impact homeowners to change the way they create and view their gardens.

This year my show garden is **COOL**, hopefully in every sense of the word. Cool as in not hot, and also cool as in hip and fashionable, after all - gardening is becoming very trendy and green is the new black!?

My goal is to show that gardens can be **COOL** whatever their size, in response to the prospect of a hotter, drier, harsher future; to mitigate the urban heat island effect; to deal with global issues such as food security and a lack of urban habitat; and to help support the mental and physical health and wellbeing of individuals, communities and cities. I hope this garden appeals to everyone, especially a generation of young people, new to gardening and for those wanting a hip and fashionable outdoor living space.

I want to show something positive and use my feature garden **COOL** to show how gardens make outdoor spaces more liveable. My aim is to demonstrate how to adapt to gardening in tough growing conditions, including limited ground space, radiant heat, and the need for creative gardening options. Finally, I also want to show that even small spaces can still be highly productive.

In addition, I have also designed a '5 Star Garden Rating' which will be demonstrated with either a green tick ..... or a red cross. How does your garden rate?

My hope is that we, as a community, can **COOL** down and green up our cities and towns.

Happy gardening,  
 Sophie

