

January Home Visit – Josie's Garden



For our first Home Visit of 2025 sunny weather greeted us for our second visit to Josie Capra's at Upper Coomera. The house sits on a 'pad' carved into a steep slope. Facing the street is a wall of plants with things like a colourful **croton**, several **Bird of Paradise** and at ground level various **liriope**. Behind this the front lawn is an open area of grass and palm trees. That tricks the visitor into thinking the garden will be flat and quite simple. Then you notice the red **broms** and the **'Spanish Moss'** together on tree trunks and you realise this is going to be a garden built by someone who knows how to use and present plants well.



This is confirmed as soon as you walk down the side path of the house and head towards the main gardens at the back. Here dense plantings of plants with all types of leaf shapes, colours and types is especially interesting. The rest of the garden uses the slopes excellently with rock steps like those below as well as various wooden steps and more pebble pathways. They are everywhere surrounded by dense plantings that make this the ultimate Gold Coast type tropical garden.



Gerbera



Day Lilly



Zinnias



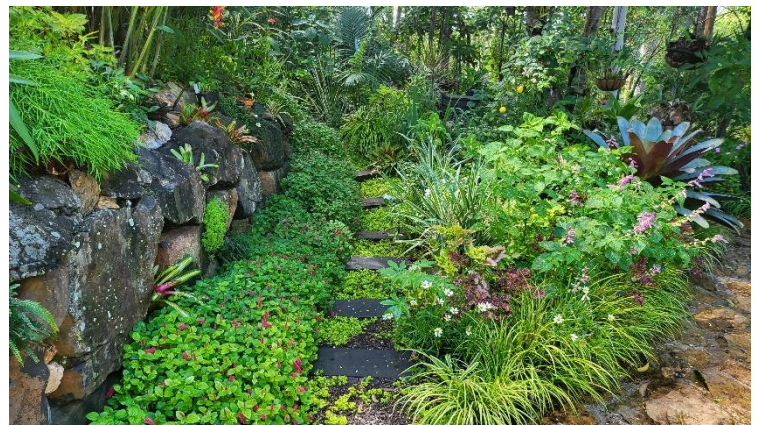
'Pig Face'



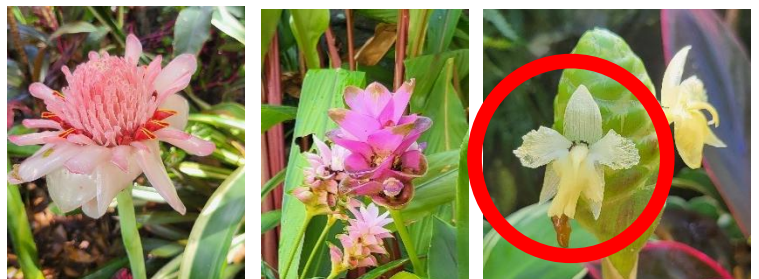
Desert Roses



Turn right at the end of this path and a huge outdoor patio invites you into the house. Gardeners however hardly notice this. Instead, it is a huge crop of `crabs claw heliconias' (*Heliconia rostrata*) that instead pulls you to the left and up over a row of railway sleeper steps onto those two thin rock walled terraces that hover over the garden. Here something else takes your attention.



That is one of the best collections of ginger plants our club is aware of on the coast. Most are the `beehive gingers' (*Zingiber spectabilis*) such as those at left. Massed like this they look tremendous. Josie has an enormous range of gingers – including the two `pink' varieties of seen below. Of course, the `beehive' is not a flower but merely a collection of bracts from which the insignificant flowers (red circle below) emerge.



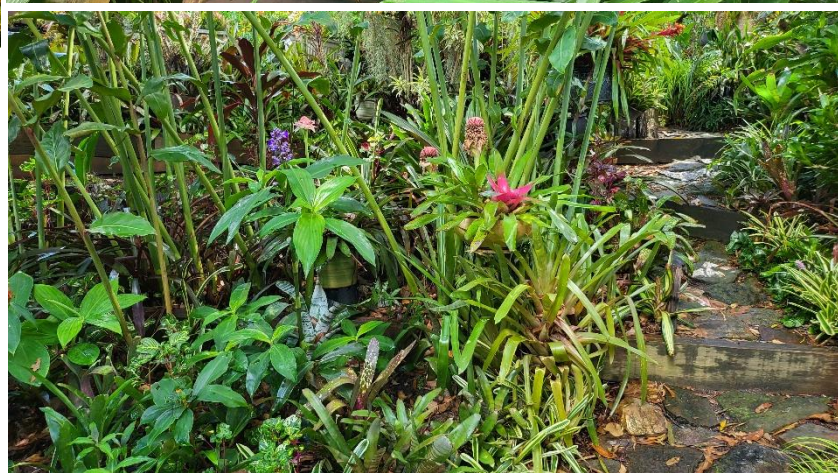
A few people who no longer cope with heights as they once did avoided winding their way down via those various stone and pebble paths to the lowest part of the garden then looking back up to the deck above. (top right). For those who did make their way down they entered a different world all together. Here you feel miles from civilization as you look back (see right) to sights of more gingers, bromeliads of various types, cordylines and in hanging baskets various orchids and the like. It is a very quiet and very relaxing space.



Importantly, all over the garden one of the real delights were the smaller scale 'vignettes' and unexpected things that dot the garden. The lovely yellow orchid below is a perfect example of that.



The bright colour of the impatiens below beside a low railway sleeper seat and the stone path was another standout.



As was a very healthy looking 'hand' of bananas set against a large **poinsettia**.



It is such a lush garden full of so many things to see that even five or six visits would not be enough. Many thanks to Josie. Your hospitality was much appreciated. The terrible weather of yesterday was forgotten in our enjoyment of such a garden. Winding your way back up the stone steps onto the patio and then enjoying the morning tea those who attended had provided was a perfect end to our visit.