

Welcome to the Garden, 2019 – Post-Marcus Magic

It may be a second visit for some people, but since the last open day several years ago, there have been big changes.

Cyclone Marcus, just 16 months ago, knocked down nearly all the tall trees which had shaded the house and garden for about 20 years and more.

The initial impact of the loss of cover and the effect of direct sun after the tangled mess of broken trees was cleared.

Three huge Black Wattles, a Poinciana, and a full grown Mimusops tree, which was part of the old vine forest here, all were felled and mulched back onto the ground.

You can still see logs from the wattles remaining in the lower garden, and the extra tall Carpentaria palm trees showing where the canopy used to be.

The regrowth which you can see has been remarkable. Most understorey vegetation of gingers and heliconias has returned from the root systems protected underground and after all the machines had finished grinding and chipping.

The paths and rocks were re-laid, just a few trees replanted, and tons of mulch was spread, with lots of fertiliser and water applied.

At first, the sun burned many plants, especially the bromeliads. But after a while, most plants adapted to the new intense light levels and started to grow much faster than when in the understorey. The result is that after only 12 months most plants have re-grown, some up to 4 metres.

It is a big garden and lots of work is needed pruning and cleaning up after the ubiquitous scrub fowl, but the enjoyment from seeing this jungle regrow is very special. It is a great showpiece for what can be achieved in Darwin.

Our enthusiasm kindled by the resurrection for this garden keeps it developing and growing, and for Gavin, a gardener who helps, it is the second incarnation since he landscaped it for previous owners more than 20 years ago.

Enjoy, and wonder at the marvels of the restorative power of nature!

This Open Garden is fundraising for Variety NT and Give Me 5 for Kids.

The garden before
Cyclone Marcus in
March 2018



Some of the devastation
to the garden from Cyclone
Marcus

