

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN MAY AT BOOYONG

Booyong has bounced back after the rains, it is lovely and green again, the dams are full, the creeks are running, and the [rainforest](#) undergrowth is rejuvenating nicely. Unfortunately, due to little understory growth the weeds have taken advantage of the available space. We've seen a great



many weeds emerge and are going to have a busy time over the coming months removing all the [lantana](#) and identifying unknown species.

The wildlife is plentiful and we've been fortunate to see [kangaroo's](#) with baby joey's in their pouch. A golden Whistler (bird) has been a frequent visitor on the cabin porch and the honey eaters are loving the flowering salvia's in the food forest.

Due to being in isolation and suspending bookings we were fortunate to spend six weeks at Booyong. It was wonderful to turn a negative experience into a positive one and this enabled us to get into some projects like a poly tunnel for brassica's, transforming the bunny hutch into a veggie patch and creating a wonderful herb spiral. In addition to this we built a grapevine frame and berry beds and the orchard looks fantastic.



Sadly, unlike last year we have little fruit on our trees due to the drought. Whilst, most have survived, we lost two Pecan trees, an Elderberry, Curry Plant and



Goji Berry. The [Persimmon](#) tree looks very healthy and is beginning to lose its leaves as the weather cools. The colours of the changing leaves are so beautiful.

The [Rhubarb](#) is growing well and the turmeric is starting to die off and will soon be ready to harvest. We were also extremely impressed with the [Dragon fruit](#) that has flourished after the most recent rain.

The aquatic [floating pots](#) have been other hardy drought resistant plants, We now have Chocolate mint, [Brahmi](#), Rainbow celery, Vietnamese mint, Water celery, Water chestnuts and Watercress floating in the dam. We are exploring additional aquatics to add, especially now that the dam is lovely and full. Michelle is currently researching their uses and in the process of propagating these to share.



The [herb garden](#) is coming along nicely, and the lemongrass has settled in well to the garden bed near the palm tree. The rosemary, [oregano](#), basil, parsley and mint or a great addition to the cabin herb garden and used often for cooking when we visit. We even had some random pumpkins



emerge in the patch for which we were incredibly grateful. Granddad Doug always welcomes butternut pumpkins and makes a delicious Pumpkin soup, we will have to request the recipe and share it with you. It's delicious!

The [chickens](#) were delightful during our stay at Booyong and we are incredibly grateful to our neighbour Ashleigh who shares them with us and our guests. We are getting quite attached to Amelia and the little Pekinese ones were very entertaining. They were also immensely helpful in the garden, tilling the soil.

SEWING SEEDS IN MAY

- Sow beans (broad beans, fava beans) and peas (snow and sugar)
- Sow garden chives
- Sow cauliflower and carrot seeds
- Sow lettuce and mustard greens
- Sow parsley and radish seeds
- Sow shallots, spinach and leeks
- Plant out strawberry plants
- Plant Legumes - Red Clover March-June for nitrogen under [pecan trees](#)

PLANTING & ROUTINE CARE IN THE FOOD FOREST

- Plant out garlic (we did so around the old Pecan trees – gifted from our lovely neighbour)
- Start digging well-rotted compost or manure into vegetable beds.
- Paw Paw's have been obtained through Crop swap and will also be stored in the greenhouse and protected from frost until Spring
- Compost and mulch Orchard fruit trees for the Winter season



- Continue to clear away plants that have finished cropping
- The [Figs](#), Frangipani and newly planted Malabar Chestnut tree have been surrounded by shade cloth to protect them from frost
- Fertilise [macadamia nut tree](#) - When fertilising use a native or citrus plant product as they are sensitive to phosphorus
- Add coffee grounds to [blueberries](#)
- [Mangos](#) - withhold water for the three months prior to flowering. We have placed the Mango



in the green house and will replant it in Spring

- [Chickens](#) – Scrub water containers daily to prevent algae. Check net litter weekly and replace if soiled. Add crushed garlic to drinking water monthly to reduce internal parasite (1 clove per 2-3 hens)
 - Prune [Finger limes](#) lightly
 - The [lemon and lime tree](#) has once again got some black spot and is being treated with oil

HARVESTING

- Pick winter cabbages, cauliflowers, Brussel sprouts, kale or leeks
- Continue picking spinach and beans
- [Limes](#) are ready for harvest
- Anne's bell peppers are turning a lovely red and are also ready to harvest
- Harvest pomegranate - fruit can be picked prior to maturity and will ripen in storage and can be stored for several months if hung in a cool aired place
- Harvest [finger limes](#)
- Harvest [oranges](#) (not this year as we have no fruit - drought)
- [Macadamia nuts](#) (no nuts as yet this year – drought)

PROPOGATION

- Collect seeds from Anne's Red Bell Peppers
- Divide [Rhubarb](#) crowns
- Herbs are being propagated from cuttings (Pizza Thyme and [Perennial Blue Basil](#))



NATIVE GARDEN & GARDEN BEDS AROUND THE CABIN

- Prune [Grevillea Moonlight](#) lightly
- [Stinging nettle](#) is being harvested and dried in the food dehydrator to make tea and powder

RAINFOREST & CONSERVATION AREA

- Tracks have been cleared for guests to have access and we are so happy to see the creeks flowing again

NORMAL FARM AND CABIN MAINTANENCE

- Start collecting [potash](#) from fire for garden in Spring
- The front paddocks have been slashed in preparation for Winter
- The Mulcher has been used to transform low level branches and fallen trees into mulch
- [Firewood](#) has been purchased for upcoming bookings
- Support has been provided for the Wisteria to grow along the cabin porch
- Brett has sourced a second-hand kitchen with wall cupboards – this will be installed in June
- We have extended the pipes from the [outdoor shower](#) to improve drainage
- We have cleaned out the garden shed and greenhouse
- All the machinery at the farm has been serviced (as we do each Winter)



COMMUNITY

- Due to COVID 19 and restrictions access to community groups has been limited. [We're back in business](#) very much looking forward to having visitors come to stay after the 1st June
- Michelle did visit [The Secret Garden](#) to support people with a disability and purchase some Salvia's for the Orchard (the bees love them)