

Nature's way

A bush garden with a contemporary twist acts as the interface between home and studio

THIS AWARD-WINNING GARDEN IS A DESIGN

triumph. Not only does it connect and integrate the house and office-studio into one living compound, it does so in such a highly naturalistic way that the garden looks as if it has simply evolved on its own.

The goal of the design, the credit for which goes to Wayne De Klijn and his design team from AQL Landscape Design, was to seamlessly integrate the old with the new, ensuring the newer, more structured elements near the buildings would

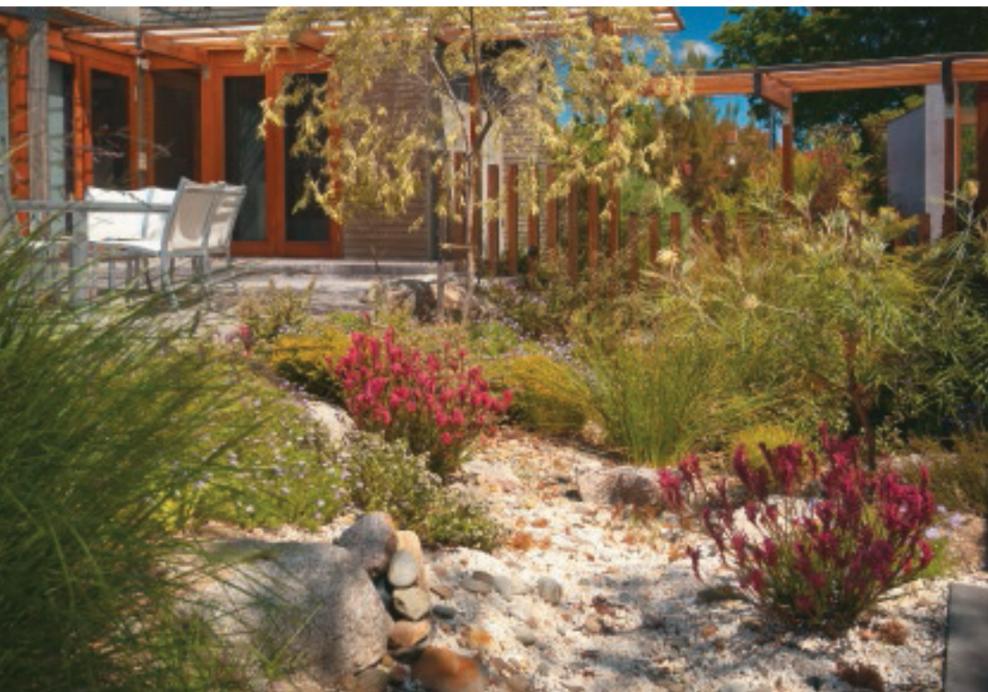
be eased into the “untamed”, natural look of the garden’s outer perimeter. Central to the plan was the introduction of a swimming pool.

“The irregularly shaped lap pool has the look of an organic pond while still providing a lap pool swim line,” explains Wayne. “The blackish-blue water colour changes shades as the light intensity changes, giving the appearance of a deep lagoon rather than a manmade structure,” he adds.

The surrounding Kanmantoo random stone

paving appears to “lift” from the water of the pool and adds an earth tone that complements the nearby basalt rock stone sculpture. The sculpture, which is up-lit at night, was placed at the start of a bubbling brook. Water from the brook feeds the natural, meandering pebble creek, finally coming to rest in the billabong.

While the creek and billabong are the key connections to the outer spaces of the garden, it is AQL Landscape Design’s canny use of natural



materials, such as granite and timber, which gives the overall landscape cohesion and a wonderfully relaxed feel.

"The use of granite gravel, pea pebbles and recycled timber mulch for the pathways and top dressings to the garden beds give an organic feel to the garden while providing a sustainable permeable surface," says Wayne. "The timber bridge, covered boardwalk and deck further enhance the natural ambience of the landscape. They also create a contemporary feel and provide a link between the garden around the house and that of the studio-pool house."

In terms of planting, the emphasis is on colourful, bird-attracting, low-maintenance Australian natives that give the garden a natural, almost wild appearance. Although the planting is as water-wise as possible, a sub-surface dripper automatic irrigation system with automatic timer and rain sensor was installed to keep the garden going during dry times.

The biggest challenge for Australian Quality Landscaping, the construction arm of Wayne's company, was the drainage. "The existing site was very wet, due to the presence of sub-surface springs within the sub-base soil, hence the creation of the natural pebble creek that flows from one end of the garden to the billabong in the front garden, providing a natural drainage system,"

explains Wayne. "Also, we installed raised garden bed mounds to elevate the plants' root systems up out of the water-logged soil. This had the added advantage of introducing more organic shapes into the garden."

The result is a constantly evolving bushland-style landscape that exudes natural appeal and provides visitors with a warm welcome.

Project details

Landscape design by **AQL Landscape Design** Landscape construction by **Australian Quality Landscaping** PO Box 99, Seville Vic 3139 Phone 1300 884 375 (Australian Quality Landscaping) Phone 1300 884 237 (AQL Landscape Design) Website www.aql.net.au Pool design and construction by **Award Pools** PO Box 7034, Beaumaris Vic 3193 Phone (03) 9585 6661 Home design by **Idle Architecture Studio Pty Ltd** 36 Kelso Street, Richmond Vic 3121 Phone (03) 9428 5202 Photography by **Andrew Lecky**