



Permaculture Projects

Lizzy Smith - Permaculture Designer

Design intent

Live an abundant life by building an edible garden for the family and guests to enjoy. Keep 2/3 of the block as habitat for native wild things. Grow enough surplus to brew, preserve and share.

Urban 1 - cold temperate climate, shale & clay, north facing slope, family of 4.

Before



After



North terrace

Top photos - high summer 2019

Top 2 photos - what the area looked like after building. Facing due north.

(yes I was watering for a change)

The initial concept for the terrace was lawn with flower borders under the eaves (before I really understood permaculture and my climactic zone). Then we paved a path under the eaves, built a 'squerbal' (a square pyramid herb spiral garden bed) and added a 'meadow' (too dry here) and then a bulb garden. Then I thought what the feck am I doing? This is prime Zone 1 accessible from the kitchen/living area by the deck. So then I double dug it all, composted and planted an edible garden built around keyhole beds with flowers. The bulbs kept coming up regardless. Amazing how blinded we can become to what is bleedingly obvious.



Orchard path access (east)

Easier to access orchard path with a ramp for the wheelbarrow and easier to access composting solutions.

1st photo - 2014 the design for the orchard access was OK but as I hurt my shoulder I couldn't maneuver the loaded wheelbarrow along the gravel path and around the corner to the orchard gate anymore

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Before



2nd photo Finishing the wicking bed with helpers (PDC graduating students).

After



8 weeks after finishing and planting - Abundance at last due to available water for the plants.



Top 3, 4 photos: View to the northeast from the house deck after terracing.



3rd photo - autumn planting 2018

4th photo - autumn with the 'straw bale garden' experiment in the foreground. This was really good for earthworms and energized the soil under the bales, not so great for growing (too dry a climate here)



Last photo - winter frost patterns over the terrace. The squerbal has the dark pot on top.

This one is personal....one acre is a lot of land to garden intensively. The design concept is 1/3 for us (edibles), 2/3 for them (habitat). Permaculture was a saving grace when I had an epiphany looking down the block with the first wheelbarrow load of mulch - there had to be a better way. Permaculture as a system of design to save and create energy was the answer.

Seventeen years in the making we are still improving and learning. Design is an iterative process with natural systems. As the family grew, our needs and time waxed and waned. For 8 years the garden fended for itself while I worked full time in a demanding job and raised kids. It still brought me pleasure and supplemented our diet (the beauty of edible perennials).

Now it is time to rejuvenate the layers and soil for the next phase of an abundant life, growing surplus to preserve, ferment and share and more habitat for the other beings with whom we share this place.

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