



One Tree Art Prize

Artist: Vivien Budge

Title: Garden Giant

GPS: -33.87194, 115.14409

During one of our first visits to Cowaramup country side, our daughter took us for a walk through a beautiful natural forest that has, wonderfully, been left untouched. She pointed out one of her favourite trees - a weathered old Marri tree whose craggy trunk has streaks of brownish red. We are told that this is kino bleeding, the reddish gum that was used for medicinal purposes by local Noongar people and that Marri is the Noongar word for blood. The thick trunk splits into two heavy branches, making a perfect nesting hollow for the black cockatoos, and the scaly bark is a great habitat for insects.



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The leaf-laden branches make a dense canopy of shade and our boots crackle on the large gum nuts that provide plenty of food for the parrots.

There are still drying clumps of flowers on our tree but we look forward to the warmer weeks when our majestic old Marri will have an abundance of creamy white summer blossoms, rich in nectar.

It strikes us that the true beauty of this old tree lies in the unbroken natural cycle of life: as the branches grow too heavy, they bend gently to the ground, and the dried twigs and leaves sink into the grass - eventually replenishing the very soil that feeds the tree.