



RETROSUBURBIA

THE DOWNSHIFTER'S GUIDE TO A RESILIENT FUTURE

CHAPTER 14: HOW TO ASSESS A GARDEN

QUESTIONS:

- Were there any surprises for you in the results of the Retrosuburban Real Estate Checklist (RREC)? Are there features of your garden that you are now looking at in a new way?
- Can you work out how deep the soil is in your local area? Discuss this as a group using clues such as road cuttings, any earthworks that members of the group might have had done, and the size and vigour of vegetation.
- How does tree shading affect your garden (and house)? Are there problems with roots? What can you do about these?
- What is the 'potential pan evaporation' in your local area? How does it compare to the rainfall? bom.gov.au has figures for most areas.
- Where do winds come from in your local area at different times of the year? How does this affect your particular property? (eg they may be buffered or channelled by nearby buildings)
- What is your local council/shire's attitude towards naturalising species? What is your attitude?

ACTIVITIES:

- Undertake the Biological section of the RREC. This could be done beforehand with the results brought to the discussion group, or done whilst in the group with lots of discussion as you go.
- What soil type(s) is in your area? As a group undertake some hands-on soil tests. Is the soil consistent over the gardens of the whole group?
- Dig a hole as far as possible in someone's backyard to look at the soil layers

