Great effort by Public Housing green thumbs

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A Darwin man has shown disability is no barrier when it comes to building a glorious garden, taking out one of the top prizes in the Territory Government’s annual Public Housing Garden Competition.

Mark Taylor, from Fannie Bay, was today named winner of Best New/Redeveloped Garden in the Darwin region, which he designed and constructed all from the seat of his wheelchair.

“Mark is a great inspiration not only to our public housing tenants in the Territory, but also to all green thumbs and keen gardeners out there,” said Minister for Housing Matt Conlan who yesterday personally presented Mr Taylor with his first prize.

“His garden looks fantastic and it was great to personally congratulate Mark for all his hard work and dedication.”

The judges said Mr Taylor’s garden was well-presented and easily maintained with special features, which added character and ambiance to the garden. It includes a tranquil outdoor living room, where Mr Taylor has a television and radio set up so he can enjoy the space he’s worked hard to create. Mr Taylor came up with innovative ways to build his garden, like using an electric lawn mower.

Mr Conlan said the standard of this year’s entries was very high.

“This year we had almost 40 tenants enter the competition from Darwin, Palmerston, Katherine, Nhulunbuy and Alice Springs,” he said.

“The garden competition is designed to inspire ‘pride in your place’ among public housing tenants. It’s great to see so many tenants take up this initiative and devote their time and energy to creating beautiful gardens, setting an important example for other public housing tenants to follow.”

Categories this year included best house garden, best unit garden, best recently developed/new garden, most productive garden and best community garden.

Many of the winners showed that size doesn’t matter when it comes to creating a beautiful unit garden, while others demonstrated how to incorporate recycled materials, cuttings and colour into well-mulched and fruitful yards containing tropical fruits, vegetables and herbs.
Winners in each category receive a home/garden voucher to the value of $250. Runners up receive a voucher to the value of $100 and all entrants receive a Certificate of Participation.

The Northern Territory Government is developing a strong society by supporting Territorians living in social housing through programs like the Public Housing Garden Competition.

**Winners of the Public Housing Garden Competition attached.**

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[141113 Conlan - Garden Winners List.pdf]