



CRANBOURNE FRIENDS

ROYAL
BOTANIC GARDENS
VICTORIA

VOLUME 25 – NUMBER 2 – WINTER 2018

Naturelink

NEWSLETTER OF THE CRANBOURNE FRIENDS ROYAL BOTANIC GARDENS VICTORIA INC.

Wildlife Corridors Workshop

Sunday 17 June 2018,
9.30 - 4pm

Australian Garden
Auditorium, Cranbourne
Gardens

Members \$60
Non-members \$75
Students \$30

Bookings Essential

by Alex Smart and
Rodger Elliot

Highlights

in this issue

Bushland Breakfast 6



Dianne Emery Workshop 7



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Since European settlement of Victoria, vast areas of indigenous vegetation have been removed to enable the development of housing, farming, forestry and to a lesser degree, mining. This has severely diminished the previously available habitat for a huge range of indigenous animals: mammals, birds, reptiles and insects. Some have become extinct while others are struggling to maintain viable populations.

Urban and rural developments have left isolated pockets of vegetation but these have not always been suitable for wildlife to sustain a population. In an effort to improve the situation, some major projects have been undertaken in Victoria to provide corridors for wildlife, and you will hear about some of these at the workshop.

Victorian speakers with considerable vision and experience will tell the stories of difficulty, success and opportunities experienced in these undertakings.

There is still a very urgent need for further corridors to both improve the environment and alleviate the situation for our wildlife. Come and learn how we can contribute to bringing these into existence. In recent times momentum has been growing for the creation of a corridor from Healesville to Westernport and Dr Pat Macwhirter will explain why both



Southern Brown Bandicoots need high quality wildlife corridors to ensure their survival. Photo: Rodger Elliot

government and residents need to see this as a major priority.

Other speakers will include Darryl Argall AM, a past Mayor of Hindmarsh Shire Council and member of the Hindmarsh Landcare Network; he is one of the main protagonists behind the successful 'Project Hindmarsh' which began in 1997 and is still going strong. Sarah MacLagan will describe how Southern Brown Bandicoots live in the linear strips of habitat across the former Kooweerup Swamp region. Sarah's PhD thesis researched the habitat use of this species and the threats to its survival. The topic for Chris Russell, Director RBGV Cranbourne Gardens, is 'From Backyards to Bio-links: Role of Botanic gardens'. And speaker Assoc. Prof Rodney van der Ree is one of the world's experts on providing safe access for animals over and below freeways.

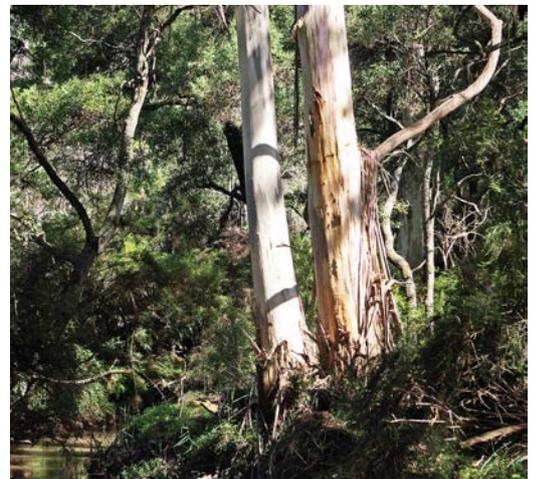
This will be a marvellous opportunity for workshop attendees to be brought up to date with what has happened with wildlife corridor development and learn about the possibilities for the future.



This tunnel provides easy unencumbered access for animals to move to the other side of the road. Note rope for climbing animals. Photo: Rodney van der Ree



This rope bridge over the Hume Hwy enables crossing access for many animals. Photo: Rodney van der Ree



Manna Gums, *Eucalyptus viminalis*, and associated vegetation in Yellingbo Nature Reserve, an excellent example of a wildlife corridor. Photo: Rodger Elliot

Executive Director's Report

Chris Russell



Water in a dry country

The continued dry conditions being experienced through late summer and autumn prompt me to provide a more detailed update on our exciting water sustainability initiative, which will deliver recycled irrigation water to the Australian Garden and nursery facilities at Cranbourne Gardens.

The Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria has had a strong focus on sustainable water use over the past two decades, with a range of initiatives aimed at reducing reliance on, and use of, potable drinking water for irrigation. The Melbourne Gardens Landscape Succession Strategy (2016-2036) - *Adapting a world-renowned botanical landscape to climate change* - has received broad international recognition as an important example of how botanic gardens can actively prepare plant collections for a different climate. In the case of Melbourne, that means actively managing the landscape and plant collections to a projected 2090 climate scenario more akin to current-day Dubbo, with less rainfall and higher average temperatures.

The strategy includes transitioning the plant collection to match the future climatic conditions as well as a focus on irrigation needs being provided through sustainable water sources. Many of you would be aware of the 'Working Wetlands' initiative, which harvests stormwater from surrounding streets, then cleans the water by circulating it through wetlands and a sophisticated treatment centre, before delivering onto the gardens. This is just part of future water initiatives that are adding to our growing reputation as a leader in sustainable landscape management.

Later this year RBGV will be hosting a Climate Change Summit for ten key botanic gardens organisations to progress the collective understanding of what can be done in this space, and my colleague Chris Cole (Executive Director Melbourne Gardens) has been invited to share this story as a keynote presenter to the American Public Gardens Association (APGA) Plant Collections Symposium in October in Vancouver, British Columbia. Tim Entwisle has just returned from speaking on the Landscape Succession Strategy and other environmental initiatives at meetings of Central American and European botanic gardens.

At Cranbourne Gardens we have long held the same ambitions to have minimal reliance on our precious drinking water resources for garden irrigation. When the Australian Garden was designed we had a strong focus on hydrozoning (selecting plants to match the microclimatic conditions in order to conserve water), and also installed the purple irrigation pipes so that we were ready to switch to irrigating with recycled water when it became available. In 2009 we engaged consultants

Permeate Partners to undertake a feasibility study of alternate water source options. The study explored possible availability from: aquifers underlying the Cranbourne site; groundwater and surface water from SBI Quarries (next door); groundwater and surface water from Wylies Creek; recycled water from sewer mining, and recycled water from the Eastern Treatment Plant in Carrum Downs. This last option was deemed the most suitable, allowing us to proceed to develop a funding bid to State government - which was awarded last year with a budget of \$3.25 million. Think champagne popping!

Since the funding announcement we have been busy developing the detailed design of the system, which includes defining the water quantity and quality parameters, recognising that salt and nutrient loads are a prime consideration for a collection of Australian plants. We need to be sure that application of this water to the Australian Garden landscape will not cause any detrimental effects over the long term through, for example, salt and phosphorus build up in the soil. The design outcome is a system that taps into the main treatment plant supply to the north of us and runs the Class A recycled water through media filtration and reverse osmosis (housed in a shed within the depot) to a supply tank, before being delivered on demand to the garden. The system will have the capacity to deliver up to 310 KL a day onto the garden to match our peak summer watering requirements. Over a year this will equate to around 35ML of irrigation water. We plan to commence construction of the system during this spring/summer with project completion by mid-2019.

The completion of this exciting project will mark the achievement of a key sustainability target within our *Cranbourne Gardens Master Plan 2016-2026*. But as they say, one thing leads to another, and the introduction of a reverse osmosis plant, whilst relatively small, will increase our focus on securing funding to supplement our mains power with solar-generated power. Hopefully I will be giving you an update on that project in the not-too-distant future.



Turning back the clock to Australian Garden construction in 2012 - purple irrigation system ready to take recycled water.

From the President

Indra Kurzeme

I am extremely delighted to report that the Cranbourne Friends have raised just over \$600,000 for Cranbourne Gardens since the group's establishment twenty-six years ago. We reached this great figure just as I was about to present to the Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria Foundation Board in March. This amount is a combination of monies raised through events, national and international trips, plant sales and donations. Thank you for helping build one of the very best botanic gardens in the world. However, our work is not yet complete and there are many improvements still underway. The Friends recently funded the removal of the pine trees at the entrance to Cranbourne Gardens and the new entry signage. Working with the RBGV Foundation Board, we have introduced a new donors option on your membership renewal form to enable you to nominate if you would like your donation to go directly to support the work of Cranbourne Gardens.

Congratulations to many of our Botanical Illustrators who exhibited at the Art Gallery of Ballarat in Beckler's Botanical Bounty: the flora of Menindee. I was very lucky to see the exhibition, which included work of twenty Melbourne-based botanical artists who have travelled to Menindee in a group of twenty-six for the past eight years to locate, collect, preserve and illustrate the same 120 plant species that Beckler collected in 1860-61. These specimens are now held at our very own National Herbarium of Victoria. The

artists still have a small number of species to collect and paint. To read more about the project please visit the group's very interesting website:

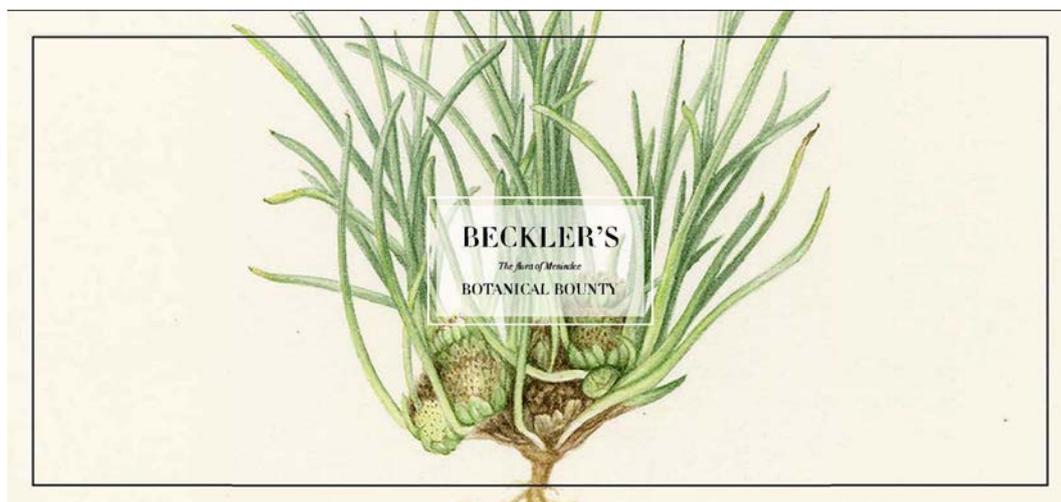
<https://becklersbotanical.weebly.com>

In 2021, the Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria will be hosting the Australasian Botanic Gardens Volunteer Guides Conference. As many of our members are also Garden Ambassadors we will be involved in the development of the program and host conference delegates at Cranbourne Gardens. It is a wonderful opportunity for us to share our knowledge and show off our terrific garden. If you would like more information or wish to be involved in the development or delivery of our program, please contact Barbara Jeffrey, Events Co-ordinator at events@rbgfriendscranbourne.org.au

Finally, I hope that you will be able to join me at Behind the Scenes at the State Library on the morning of June 27. I have worked for the State Library for over twenty years and it has one of the best collections in the country. Please join Pictures Librarian Madeleine Say and me, for a peek at some of the state's botanical treasures. We will be bringing some of the finest botanical illustrations, garden plans and photography out of the collection. If you can't make it I hope to see you at one of our plants sales or events.

See you in the Gardens!

Indra



Left: *Diplolaena grandiflora*, grey-leaf variant in the Eucalyptus Walk.
Photo: Alex Smart

Right: One of the many Blue Banded Bees sighted on *Pimelea rara* flowers in the Lifestyle Garden
Photo: Rodger Elliot



ACTIVITIES CALENDAR FOR JUNE - AUGUST 2018

We hope there will be no changes to the program, but if there are, members will be notified via *Quicklink* and/or email.

JUNE		JULY		AUGUST	
Thursday 14	Open House Elliot Centre. See Page 4	Thursday 12	Open House Elliot Centre. See Page 4	Saturday 4	Breakfast and Bushland - Special Collections with Warren Worboys. See Page 6
Sunday 17	Workshop: Wildlife Corridors. See Page 1	Sat 14/Sun 15	Illustrator's Bird Workshop. NB: This event has been cancelled at late notice. See Page 7	Thursday 9	Open House Elliot Centre. See Page 4
Sunday 24	2019-20 Friends Events Planning Day. See Page 4	Sat 21/Sun 22	Growing Friends Winter Plant Sale. See Page 16	Sunday 12	Morning Talks: Regional Botanic Gardens - Melton, Shepparton and Wildlife Art Museum of Australia. See Page 5
Wednesday 27	Discovery Day: State Library Victoria, behind the scenes. See Page 7				
Saturday 30	Open House Elliot Centre. See Page 4				

Open House at the Elliot Centre

by Helen Morrow

In February, Dr Terry Coates, Ecologist and research scientist at the Cranbourne Gardens, gave a fascinating insight into how the Gardens' highly important bushland and its inhabitants are managed. One of the most pressing management issues for Terry is that this large area is home to too many Black Wallabies, which are putting enormous pressure on the existing native vegetation and upsetting the natural ecology of the region. Staff have trialled a number of exclusion sites, resulting in excellent regrowth of the vegetation. In the future the Cranbourne Friends might be able to provide funding to enable the implementation of larger exclusion sites. There was a definite call to have Terry back again to talk to the Friends. Thanks Terry!

Horticulturalist Nikki May joined to us in March to talk about her role at the Gardens and her experience as a recipient of the Maud Gibson Trust's Elisabeth Murdoch Scholarship. The scholarship offered Nikki the opportunity to visit a number of important gardens in NSW and the ACT which have Australian native food collections, to meet local staff and 'see behind the scenes'. Her tour included Sydney Botanic Gardens, Mt Annan, Booderee Botanic Gardens near Jervis Bay (the only Aboriginal-owned botanic gardens in Australia) and the Eurobodalla Regional Gardens at Batemans Bay. From there she moved inland to the Australian Botanic Garden in Canberra. Her behind-the-scenes experience and contacts at these gardens will help with the development

of the Australian Native Food Garden in the Australian Garden.

We continued the theme of the afternoon with Lemon Myrtle (*Backhousia citriodora*) leaf tea and Midgen berries (*Austromyrtus dulcis*) to nibble. Thank you Nikki for both the enthusiastic account of the trip and your work at the Cranbourne Gardens.

We will have talks throughout the year at the Elliot Centre, on the 2nd Thursday of each month. Future topics will be advertised in Naturelink and Quicklink.

The Elliot Centre is open from 1.00 - 4.00pm. Members are invited to come along to this free event, no booking required. Afternoon tea is provided.

The Friends Nursery is open on Thursday 10am to 2.00pm

Contact Helen Morrow 9850 9125 for further details.



Dr. Terry Coates and Rodger Elliot at Elliot Centre Open House.

Future Topics for Open House - 1pm to 4pm:

June 14 - Cranbourne Horticulture Team; Grampians plant collecting and results.

July 12 - Cranbourne Gardens Development with Alex Smart.

August 9 - To be confirmed.

Planning for 2019 Friends Events

Sunday 24 June 2018, 9.30 to 1pm

Australian Garden Auditorium

All Friends members are encouraged and will be very welcome to attend this most important event on the Friends' calendar. On this day, members will assist the Events subcommittee members to plan the events for the following twelve months.

Your participation ensures that we cater for all members and their interests, so come along with your ideas and views so we can continue to run events that you will not want

to miss out on in 2019.

You will be greeted with a scrumptious morning tea prior to the start of the planning session and nibbles will be provided to keep our energies up during the session.

If you are unable to attend, please pass on your ideas and thoughts to Barbara Jeffrey on

0408 564 379 or email: bajeffrey@westnet.com.au

(Some of) What's On at RBGV Cranbourne

For enquiries and bookings phone 5990 2200. For information about more activities at RBGV, see <www.rbg.vic.gov.au>.

Wednesday 11th July

NAIDOC 2018

10am - 2pm

Free

Australian Garden, Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria, Cranbourne

Come along and take part in a smoking ceremony, craft workshops, hip hop dances, free BBQ lunch plus lots more!

Every Day

Guided Tour - Snapshots of Australia

11am and 2pm daily

Meet at the Australian Garden Visitor Centre in the undercroft area

\$7.50 per adult, \$6.50 per conc.

Booking essential for groups

(Some of) What's On at RBGV Melbourne

For enquiries and bookings phone 9252 2429. For information about more activities at RBGV, see <www.rbg.vic.gov.au>.

Wednesday 6th June

Using plant functional traits to predict woody growth trajectories.

Speaker: Freya Thomas

1pm to 2pm, Free

Mueller Hall, RBGV Melbourne Gardens

Plant height and growth are fundamental to the understanding of species' ecological strategies, to the description and prediction of ecosystem dynamics and to vegetation management. I explore how plant functional traits can be used to predict woody plant growth for many species. I incorporate plant functional traits into multi-species models of plant growth. This approach increases our understanding of trait-growth relationships but also aids our ability to draw predictive inferences from them.

Saturday 7th July and Sunday 15 July

Extraordinary Trees

7th July: 11am to 12.30pm

15 July: 10.30am to 12 noon

Meet at the Visitor Centre, RBGV Melbourne

\$20 per adult, \$15 conc, \$50 family

Booking Essential on 9252 2429

Explore and discover significant trees in the Gardens, meet some of our oldest, unusual and tallest trees.

Thursday 5 July and Wednesday 11th July

Climate Watch Walk

10.20am to 12 noon, Free

Learn how climate change is affecting our plants and wildlife.

Bookings Essential on 9252 2429

Sunday Talk: Our Amazing Regional Botanic Gardens - existing and planned

Sunday 12 August
2018, 9.30am -
12.30pm

Australian Garden
Auditorium

Members \$15
Non-members \$20
Students \$10

Did you know that there are over 40 regional botanic gardens in Victoria, and still more will be planned? This talk on Sunday morning 12 August will provide you with an introduction to some new and exciting developments across the botanic gardens network. We have invited the following speakers to talk about their current projects:

- Jenny Houlihan, on behalf of the Friends of the Australian Botanic Garden Shepparton
- Glenda Lewin, on behalf of the Wildlife Art Museum of Australia, Halls Gap, Grampians
- John Bentley, on behalf of the Friends of the Melton Botanic Garden

This is the equivalent of armchair travel. If you can't visit these sites during the next 12 months, this is an opportunity to see what is happening in some of our emerging regional botanic gardens in Victoria. The sheer energy and passion of our speakers is inspiring. They will welcome your interest and moral support.

John Arnott, Manager of Horticulture, will be the Master of Ceremonies and will provide an introduction to the work of BGANZ Vic. (Botanic Gardens of Australia and New

Zealand). He is championing a program called "Care for the Rare" and some of the above gardens are already involved.

You may wish to stay for lunch in the Boon Wurrung Café, and join some of the Friends for a stroll through the Australian Garden during the afternoon.

Any queries: Please contact Jill Burness on 0402 477 590.



Overlooking the food Garden from the lookout at Australian Botanic Gardens Shepparton.

Bushland Breakfast: Special Collections with Warren Worboys

Saturday 4 August 2018,
8am start

Elliot Centre and
Bushland, RBGV
Cranbourne Gardens

Members \$25
Non-members \$30
Students \$15

In June last year, a group of us enjoyed breakfast together in the Elliot Centre, before embarking on a walk guided by Warren Worboys around the Cranbourne bushland. We all learnt a great deal whilst enjoying the exercise and fresh air. During the walk, we went briefly past the little known Special Collections area, and it was agreed that we should hold another bushland breakfast event where we could learn more about it. Luckily for us, Warren has offered to take us on a tour once more.

The Special Collections area is approximately 2.5 hectares and located within the conservation area of the bushland. It was first planted out by Alf Salkin in 1977, with additional plantings being made by members of the Australian Plants Society and Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria. The main focus of this area was for it to contain native species of the Proteaceae family, as well as some other plant groups. There has been some decline over time and some plants were also found to be weedy. An audit of this area was conducted in 2015. As part of the most recent Master Plan by Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria, it was decided that this collection would eventually be removed from the bushland completely, so that it could be

ecologically restored. Significant taxa will be saved and relocated to and/or propagated for the Australian Garden, as well as other botanic gardens.

We will be enjoying a continental breakfast, including hot drinks, before we embark on the walk with Warren. This will be at a fairly slow pace and will take approximately 1.5-2 hours.

Entry to the Cranbourne Gardens will be at the West Gate (back gate) on Ballarto Road. Please be at this gate promptly at 8am.

For more information, please contact Amy Akers on 0423 513 281.



Announcing our first 'Open House' Free Talk to be held on a weekend

'Current Orchid Research at Cranbourne and further afield' by Dr Noushka Reiter

Saturday 30 June 2018,
1.30pm

Elliot Centre, RBGV
Cranbourne Gardens

This event is free

Dr Noushka Reiter is one of the world's leading researchers in the conservation of rare and endangered terrestrial orchids, with a special emphasis on the orchids of south-eastern Australia.

Noushka has been based at the Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria, Cranbourne since December 2014, when she relocated her orchid research laboratory from Horsham. A portable building next to the Elliot Centre has been fitted-out as a laboratory and is now the Orchid Conservation Centre headquarters. A section of the Cranbourne Gardens Nursery has been set aside for orchid production. It is really fantastic that such exciting research work is being undertaken on site.

Noushka's team are fine-tuning and perfecting propagation techniques for federally endangered orchids and so far they have successfully propagated over 30 of these listed orchids. In the last few years, large-scale reintroductions of threatened orchids have started to take place due to the success of this program.

Come along on Saturday 30th June to be brought up to date with the excellent, fascinating work of Noushka and her team. You will also be able to see the results of some of their endeavours.

You might be interested to know that 42 orchids have been identified within the bushland area of the Cranbourne Gardens and that the Naked Sun Orchid, *Thelymitra circumsepta*, is listed as being of state

conservation significance.

Our previous 'Open House' talks have been held on weekdays. Now there is an opportunity for Friends normally not free during the week, to participate in an 'Open House' presentation.

Make sure that you do not miss this special afternoon. There is no need to book.



Caladenia formosa flower.
Photo: Noushka Reiter

Behind the Scenes at State Library Victoria

Wednesday 27 June,
9am
Members \$20
Non-members \$30
Tour limited to 20
participants

Treasures from the picture collection

After working at the State Library for more than twenty years, I have barely touched the surface of our vast and beautiful State collection. Please join me and Pictures Librarian Madeleine Say, to explore one of the best botanical collections in the country.

State Library Victoria's archival collection of botanical-related material is extensive. Botanical illustrations, garden plans and

photographs are some of the many delights you will get to see on this behind-the-scenes tour.

Meet at State Library Portico, Swanston St, Melbourne. The tour will commence at 9am and go for approximately an hour, followed by coffee at one of the Library's cafes - The Moat. I hope you can join me!

Indra Kurzeme

Two-day Botanical Illustrator 'Silver Princess' Workshop with Dianne Emery

Monday 10 & Monday
17 September 2018,
10am - 3pm

Elliot Centre, RBGV
Cranbourne Gardens

Members \$175
Non-members \$205

Bookings via Booking
Form

We are delighted that Dianne Emery is able to come to Cranbourne. She is a noted botanical art teacher at Melbourne RBGV and a distinguished natural history artist who is motivated to portray her subjects scientifically, realistically and as individual character studies. She will conduct a two-day workshop with demonstrations on the painting of the flowering *Eucalyptus caesia*, 'Silver Princess'. Diane has exhibited widely and won the Celia Rosser Medal three times. Her work is held in public and private collections in Australia and overseas.

The workshop will be open to all skill levels. A materials list will be supplied upon enrolment.

For information contact:
Margaret Kitchen 0413 664 295



Chiloglottis pescottiana watercolour by Dianne Emery.



Syzygium paniculatum watercolour by Dianne Emery.



Dianne Emery.

Bird Workshop with David Reynolds

Our apologies for the cancellation of Workshop which was advertised for 14th & 15th July, 2018.

Hopefully the course will be offered in 2019.

For further information contact:
Margaret Kitchen 0413 664 295

CANCELLED

REGULAR MONTHLY ACTIVITIES

The Cranbourne Friends RBGV, run several regular monthly activities, which are described below. If you are interested in participating in any of these activities, even on an irregular basis, please ring or email the contact person, or just turn up. Don't worry if you don't have specific skills, you will learn on the job, and you will be made most welcome!

Growing Friends

Every Thursday
10am - 2pm

Growing Friends
Nursery

Contact:

Marjanne Rook
9769 7881 or
Don 9736 2309

Nursery Open to
Members: Thursdays
from 10am to 2pm

Winter Plant Sale

Saturday 21 and
Sunday 22 July - more
details on back page

Autumn Plant-Sale

The autumn plant sale started early on a warm Saturday - a very busy day with people waiting for the front gate to open at nine in order to buy those special plants not available elsewhere or to stock up for a big autumn planting. Sunday was much quieter mostly due to the weather. A few dedicated customers braved the morning rain and a very strong, gritty wind which nearly blew us away. Nevertheless, our takings for the weekend were almost a record and we made over \$14,000. Thank you to the many members who attended our plant-sale, sought advice and/or stopped for a chat. It makes our efforts worthwhile. Happy gardening especially when the rain comes.

Winter Plant Sale

There will be some plants we have not sold before of which *Logania vaginalis* - White Spray is one. It's a slender upright shrub to 2 meters with sprays of white, lightly fragrant flowers in spring. It comes from the WA coastal area, prefers gravelly or sandy soil but will tolerate other well-drained soils and a sunny position.

We will also have some more *Hymenosporum flavum* - Native Frangipani, a popular, attractive tree with dark green leaves and fragrant, cream to yellow flowers, flowering in spring to early summer. Flowers darken to a deep yellow with age with the effect of masses of cream and yellow flowers in early summer. With a height of up to 10 meters and width to 5 meters it can be suitable for a small garden. This plant grows in most soils

in a sunny or part-shaded position, it attracts birds and can be pruned.

Large Plants

We have some large plants for sale in 20-30 cm pots from \$10 - \$25. All have been regularly pruned, need space and a good home. There is 1 each of: *Callistemon viminalis* 'Hannah Ray', *Callistemon citrinus* 'White Anzac', *Crowea saligna*, *Chamelaucium uncinatum*, *Westringia* 'Deep Purple', *Scaevola albida* 'Mauve Clusters' and *Adenanthos detmoldii* x 2. Are you interested? Visit our nursery any Thursday or contact the growing.friends@rbgfriends.org.au

Donations of laptop and pots

The laptop request was successful and a suitable laptop has been donated. Thank you to the kind donor. We can now keep and update our propagation records easily.

Also, many people have dropped off suitable small tubes and pots which we clean and store for future use. It is always great to be able to re-use - thank you very much.

Special Orders

As always, if you have any plant wishes, perhaps a plant you have seen in the Gardens or multiple plants for a large area, then contact the Growing Friends with your request and we shall endeavour to grow them; we might even have them in stock. Contact details are on this page.

Botanical Fabricators

2nd Tuesday of each
month
10am
Elliot Centre

Contact

Gwen Elliot
8774 2483

fabricators@
rbgfriendscranbourne.
org.au

Many readers will have visited the 2018 Australian Textile Exhibition which was held in the Visitor Centre from Tuesday May 8th through to Sunday May 13th. We do hope you had a very enjoyable time and that you gained many ideas for your own fabric crafts, and were perhaps able to purchase some lovely fabrics, patterns or items made by the Botanical Fabricators' members. We thank you all for your support, and particularly Leesa Chandler of Chandlers Cottage, who curated the Exhibition.

Thanks also to those who supported the 2018 Quilt Raffle. Details of winners can be found on the Cranbourne Friends website - www.rbgfriendscranbourne.org.au

Our very enjoyable monthly get-togethers continue, on the second Tuesday of each month, 10am in the Elliot Centre. Visitors and new members are always very welcome. If it is your first visit and you are not sure

how to get to the Elliot Centre, just give us a phone call or send an email.



Prizes in the 2018 Quilt Raffle – supplied by Leesa Chandler, featuring 'Under the Australian Sun' fabrics.

Herbarium Collectors

1st Monday of each month
9am - 2pm
Elliot Centre

Contact

Nola Foster
9583 5731

We have not had a good field collection day since October 2017 when we were able to finally collect the Sundews, *Drosera spatulata* and *Drosera glanduligera*. *Drosera macrantha* and *D. pygmaea* still elude us, but when found we will then have collected all the *Droseras* on site. i.e. seven species.

It has been so dry, it's a struggle to find more than two species each time we go out. We are concentrating on seed this time of the year and mostly collecting small herbaceous perennials. The seed is often so tiny, as exemplified by *Platysace heterophylla* found on March 5th, that we need the field magnifying glass.

You know the bush is suffering when even the Bracken *Pteridium esculentum* is dying. Please, we must all increase our rain dances.

Right: *Drosera glanduligera*.
Photo: Ivan Margitta



Botanical Basketmakers

3rd Saturday of each month
10am - 2pm
Elliot Centre

Contact

Lynn Lochrie
0437 759 610

basketry@
rbgfriendscranbourne.
org.au

This small group of Basketmakers has a wide range of skill levels. We use Australian native plant material to create items ranging from useful to sculptural! Working on our own projects using material from our own gardens, we share our basketry knowledge whilst enjoying a cuppa.

We would love you to come and visit us in the Elliot Centre on the third Saturday of each month.

We can get help to get you started on your own basketry project, give advice on how to collect and prepare material, and can direct you to where to find more information on the wonderful world of basketry.

Call in for a chat, and see if Basketry is for you!

If you are an experienced Basketmaker, I'm sure you will enjoy getting to know this lovely group, whilst working on your own projects.



Basketry in progress in the Elliot Centre using *Cordyline stricta*, Cumbungi and *Lomandra* leaves. Photo: Lynn Lochrie

Friends in Focus

2nd Saturday of the month at 2pm

Contact

president@
rbgfriendscranbourne.
org.au

Come along and explore the Cranbourne Gardens with its flora and fauna while at the same time expanding your photographing experience - whether you use a smart phone, a DSLR or something in between.

We gather on the second Saturday of the month.

Right: The endangered *Hakea bakeriana* originates from near Gosford, NSW but it thrives in the Forest Garden at Cranbourne Photo: Mack Fenwick



Botanical Illustrators

1st and 3rd
Wednesdays of each
month
10am - 3pm
Elliot Centre

Contact

Margaret Kitchen
0413 664 295

illustrators@
rbgfriendscranbourne.
org.au

Botanical Illustrators Recent Events

The Botanical Illustrators group meets regularly in the comfort of the Elliot Centre to enjoy the pursuits of painting, drawing and sharing ideas. We support and encourage each other, run workshops and talks and work towards holding exhibitions. We welcome visitors and new members.

We are pleased to offer some fascinating workshops this year, all advertised in this issue as well as on the Cranbourne Friends website and Quicklink. Remember to book early to avoid disappointment.

Watercolour Talk & Workshop with Margaret Holloway

On 21 February, Margaret Holloway gave us a talk and demonstration about the techniques she employs to prepare interesting backgrounds for her botanical watercolour illustrations.

Following her talk, Margaret came to our Wednesday 21st March Botanical Illustrators session and helped us create our own background washes. She went over the techniques of wetting the paper and mixing colours of paint, ink and other liquids to create the background.



Jenny Rollason and Margaret Holloway looking at examples of background washes. Photo: Margaret Kitchen

We were also able to create a more interesting background with the use of found objects - for example, stones, feathers, flowers, netting and gravels. Other techniques included incising the paper, the use of masking fluid, cling wrap and graphite.

Overall a great day was had by all. Many thanks to Margaret Holloway.

Sunday Talk: Beckler's Botanical Bounty Project - 4 March, 2018

A lucky group was both informed and entertained by first-hand accounts from some of the participants in this project. What began as a spontaneous group expression of artistic and scientific curiosity developed into a significant contribution to plant specimen collections, and finally finished in the stunning exhibition showcasing their efforts, currently at the Art Gallery of Ballarat.

Dr Linden Gillbank, Honorary Researcher, School of Historical and Philosophical Studies, University of Melbourne, gave an historical overview of Hermann Beckler's role in the Burke and Wills 1860 expedition. Jan Rosenberg, botanical illustrator and retired science teacher, described her experiences as a participating artist in the trips to Menindee: searching for plants, identifying specimens, preserving and illustrating. Roslyn Glow OAM described the evolution of the BBB project, how support materialised from many useful quarters once word got around about what a group of city artists was up to, and some of the challenges along the way. Mali Moir, project leader and co-ordinator, explained how this project came into being, how her students, the artists involved, encouraged and energised her through their enthusiasm, and also described some of the minute details involved in plant specimen collection and documentation to meet the exacting standards set by the Herbarium. Pam McDairmid's slide presentation gave the audience a comprehensive view of the practicalities involved as well as the role of the local community's support, as understanding and respect developed between Menindee residents and the BBB participants during their annual expeditions in the footsteps of Dr Hermann Beckler.

The project began as a labour of love and an expression of fun and friendship and culminated as living proof of the importance of scientific and artistic endeavour - the very stuff which moves the human soul and fuels true progress.

Visit to Beckler's Botanical Bounty Exhibition in Ballarat - 14 March, 2018

A group of Cranbourne Botanical artists shared a convivial excursion to the Art Gallery of Ballarat to pore over the Beckler's Botanical Bounty exhibition, a wonderful record of the efforts of a group of volunteers who dreamed up an interesting field trip - which turned into the production of a significant scientific document and has kept them busy for nearly a decade. One of the curators talked to us about the large botanical art collection held by the gallery and the botanical art exhibitions of recent times. Liz McDonald, a member of the Cranbourne Illustrators, was also an exhibitor and she was able to impart more particular information concerning the exhibition, which was much appreciated. The day was satisfyingly rounded off with a tasty lunch and a wander through other exhibitions including the recently acquired Bauer paintings. There was much food for thought during the leisurely return train journey.

If you are yet to see this fine exhibition, then plan to do so very soon as it closes on 27 May, 2018, and might never happen again.

Love Australian Plants?

Become a Volunteer Garden Ambassador at the Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria, Cranbourne Gardens

Since 2010, a team of dedicated and passionate volunteers have helped visitors enjoy their time at the Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria, Cranbourne. And for the first time in over 5 years, we are looking for individuals with a love for both Australian Flora and talking with people to join our team.

The Cranbourne Gardens is currently recruiting volunteers to become Garden Ambassadors. The Garden Ambassador Team engage with visitors providing general information, insights into plant collections, history, landscaping, conservation, projects and the goals of the RBGV. They also conduct daily garden walking tours, assist with workshops and attend events to promote the RBGV.

New volunteers will be given full training and a uniform plus support from our existing group of wonderful volunteers. Training will occur over winter to have the new Garden Ambassadors on board by spring 2018.

If you are interested in finding out more about becoming a Volunteer Garden Ambassador please contact Fiona O'Loghlin, Volunteer & Friends Coordinator – Cranbourne, at Fiona.O'loghlin@rbg.vic.gov.au



Young girl potting a plant with assistance by a Garden Ambassador. Photo: RBGV



Five happy Garden Ambassadors waiting to be of assistance to visitors. Photo: RBGV

Would you like to join a vibrant team of the Cranbourne Friends to promote the RBGV?



By becoming a member of the Events Subcommittee you could be involved in organising a tour to somewhere like this wonderful spot in the Baw Baw National Park.

Staff Profile

Mandy Thomson

My name is Mandy Thomson and I am currently in my dream job as Team Leader Nursery RBGV Cranbourne.

From a young age I was introduced to plants through my Mother, who always had a love of native plants and the natural world, as did both my Grandfathers. One had a great love of growing edible foods (you never forget the sweet taste of a green bean picked fresh off the vine), and the other a love of both native and exotic plants in his garden in Beaumaris. Many of the trees he planted are now heritage listed.

After finishing high school this love of plants led me to complete a Certificate in Horticulture at Holmesglen whilst working in my private gardening business, 'Amanda's Gardens'. The certificate wasn't enough so I then went on to the Horticulture Diploma at Burnley (Melbourne University) where I chose the plant production stream.

I was actively involved in growing for the Burnley plant sales for a few years, which got me hooked on native plants, as well as getting me started on my passion for growing edible native plants.

I went on to work in design, propagation and retail work at Gills, Lintons and Gardens Corner Store, to name some of the Nurseries, as well as continuing my own garden design and maintenance business.

My first position at the Botanic Gardens, 10 years ago, was weekend Ranger at Melbourne Gardens, whilst running my gardening business midweek. I then jumped at the chance to join the team at Cranbourne, working variously as Ranger, Visitor Programmes Officer, Landscape Horticulturist and Volunteer Co-ordinator.

I'm a Jill of all Trades at heart and really passionate about connecting people to the beauty and diversity of our native flora.

I find the Nursery a fascinating place to be in. The work we do involves propagating and sourcing material from all over Australia. Making connections with like-minded

organisations and growers is a really fun part of the job. My recent trip to Tasmania for the Australian Plants Society Conference enabled me to make contact with Specialist Plant Study groups, in particular the *Isopogon* and *Petrophile* leaders, who recently ran a workshop at the Gardens for the Horticultural staff on specialist grafting techniques. I look forward to meeting up and connecting with many more Study Groups in the future.

There is also the opportunity to collect plants from the wild, and our recent trip to the Grampians brought over 80 new taxa to the Australian Garden.

The Nursery facility houses part of the science division with the Orchid Conservation Team, as well as the Growing Friends Nursery. We work with a fantastic group of talented, dedicated staff and volunteers. Pop into the Nursery when you are next in the Gardens; I'm always happy to chat with fellow native plants enthusiasts.



Mandy Thomson. Photo: Rodger Elliot

Membership Update

Please contact Alexandra if you have any membership queries: 0458 550 509

Email: membership@rbgfriendscanbourne.org.au

As of the start of March I have taken over fully as Membership Officer for the Cranbourne Friends. Enormous thanks to the outgoing Officer, Helen Morrow who helped so much during the transition with advice and answering of my many questions.

Welcome to new members

This quarter we are pleased to welcome 30 new members: Janene Ammeraal, Dinah Atkinson, Cara Baillie, Heather Ball, Peter Blyde, Claudia Bonnielle, Dorothy & Ron Brooker, Anthony Byrne, Richard & Joanna Cameron, Betty Groza, Stuart & Sandra Haffenden, Phil Horbury, Michael & Gillian Hund, Anne Inkster, Felicity, Ian & Libby

James, Gillian Johnson, Vicki Kane, Margaret Llewellyn, John Robertson, Tracy Rotstayn, Libby Thomson, Elizabeth Triggs, Steve Wiggins and Kitson Wignall.

I look forward to meeting you at one of our forthcoming events.

Membership renewals

Along with this month's edition of Naturelink, Cranbourne Friends members will have also received a membership renewal form. Our membership year ends on 30 June, therefore subscriptions for all members are due on July 1. Please fill in and send your form by post or email with payment.

Australian Garden Update and Development with John Arnott

by Marj Seaton

John directed our attention initially to the endangered Gippsland Mallee or Bog Gum, *Eucalyptus kitsoniana*, growing through the Visitor Centre ramps, and mentioned that it might need some interpretation to explain its location for visitors. He discussed Curatorial Management Planning within the Australian Garden; completion of these plans is a key action in the overall Cranbourne Gardens Master Plan. Each of the 21 Australian Garden precincts has its own curatorial document explaining organisational, interpretative and horticultural objectives and all adhere to the key concepts laid down by design team, Taylor Cullity Lethlean with Paul Thomson. We then visited several areas and John told us about their changes, challenges and future care.

Red Sand Garden: Rabbits have damaged the *Rhagodia* circles and there have been ongoing challenges with implementing a weed maintenance program. In the Dry River Bed, some of the *Hakea corymbosa* and *calothamnus* will need removing in order to re-establish its designed form.

The Gum Garden (the new name for the area of Burrawang *Macrozamia communis* below the Black Sheoke *Allocasuarina littoralis* lining the Visitor Centre pathway): will have a focus on *Eucalyptus leucoxydon* subspecies. Generally across areas of the Australian Garden there will be an increased use of South Eastern Australian plants. This was again a key direction arising from the Master Plan.

Ironbark Garden: An increased diversity of ironbarks is planned and also an understorey which focusses on plants associated with these ironbarks in the wild. John pointed out gaps where soil issues exist. The Bosisto mulch has broken down to humus but there is little penetration of water through to the sand layer below. The problem is exacerbated because of a compacted subsoil layer, resulting in tree roots only growing near the surface in the humus layer, leading to the trees becoming unstable.

Box Garden: The understorey is to be changed to feature plants representative of the Grampians flora. Already over 70 species are being propagated in the nursery.

Peppermint Garden: No major changes are planned here, other than increasing the number of 'not-so-pleasant-smelling' plants. Cinnamon Wattle *Acacia leprosa* is the most important plant in this area.

Stringybark Garden: This garden only needs 'tweaking', including the possibility of a protective boardwalk around the xanthorrhoeas and some pruning of low branches to improve vistas and strengthen the link to fire in the understorey.

Forest Garden: There are significant

soil issues here, which in some areas necessitated major garden bed renovations. (In 2012 some parts had to contend with waterlogging due to clay particles in the sand). Sub-alpine plants are to be included in future plantings.

Rift Walls: These will stay. Along the Gondwana path, some changes in planting are proposed in order to point out and highlight comparisons that can be made between Gondwanan and contemporary vegetation.

Ian Potter Precinct: The back lawn will convert to a picnic area. The front kikuyu lawn will remain as an event space and family area.

Depot Road: A new water treatment plant (reverse osmosis) and associated tanks and infrastructure are planned, to be located near the existing NE gates of the depot. If the chicken farm can be purchased, this will be the site of a Science Precinct, including a research facility and the Victorian Conservation Seed Bank, plus car parking and some visitor facilities.

Bushland Walks: A better connection between the Australian Garden and the bushland is needed. This will be achieved through establishing a wetland walk from the Garden Shed and a wildflower walk from the Eastern Boundary gate, where there is considerable wildflower diversity.

Northern Display Gardens: Little change is envisioned; pleaching of the *Ficus* forest is already planned. However, improvements to the kiosk and toilets are needed.

Access: The City of Casey is expected to create a roundabout at the South Gippsland Highway/Ballarto Road junction. In the future a Cranbourne East railway station should be built on Ballarto Road but a connecting bus will still be needed to access the Australian Garden. The Ballarto Road quarry is to become a solid-fill tip - sealing of some of this gravel road is being planned.

Many thanks to John for a most informative morning.



John Arnott explaining future works to be undertaken in the Peppermint Garden in the Eucalyptus Walk of the Australian garden. Photo: Gwen Elliot

Cranbourne Friends' Brunch

by Indra Kurzene

Twenty four people attended the Sunday Brunch on 4 February to welcome new members to Cranbourne Friends. Of those who attended, two were new Friends, the other twenty-two were members who enjoyed catching up with each other. It was a very relaxed morning with people sharing food and stories about how they became involved in the Cranbourne Friends.

I welcomed the group and then handed over to Gwen Elliot, Botanical Fabricators, Barbara

Jeffrey, Events Sub-committee and Marjanne Rook, Growing Friends, who all spoke about their areas of responsibility. Rodger Elliot then led people on a tour of the Gondwana Garden. The event concluded with Marjanne Rook opening the Cranbourne Friends Nursery which was a good opportunity for people who can't make it on week days.

Look out for next year's event, which we will hold on the first weekend in March.

Water Discovery Day

by Nicky Zanen

Thirty five Friends met at Australian Ecosystems, a production nursery supplying plants for Melbourne Water and other organisations. Wearing hi-viz vests, we were shown around the site by the General Manager, Tim Sansom, who was extremely patient when answering our many questions.

The company tracks the progress of all seeds from collection to the plant's ultimate destination. We visited their large seed collection store where we saw how the seed was cleaned, dried and stored. Tim spoke about the frustration of their collecting teams when, having kept an eye on a patch of maturing grass seeds, they discovered that the local council mowed just before they got there.

Recycling is very important to Australian Ecosystems and they developed a system of 12 and 20 cell trays for more efficient planting, as these trays can be returned for washing and recycling. Regular propagation mix was found to generally work just as well as seed raising mixture. We followed the production process through their sophisticated polyhouses to the hardening-off areas, where tens of thousands of terrestrial and aquatic plants are being grown, using recycled water from the adjacent, Eastern Treatment plant.

Our second visit, to the Bunurong Memorial Park, couldn't have been more different. We were offered a very welcome cuppa and lunch, and a briefing about Bunurong, which is Melbourne's newest memorial park. The park covers over 100 hectares, being designed for development over the next 100 years. Excellent facilities include function rooms, a children's playground, a lake and BBQ areas, all capable of being used for a wide range of purposes.

When the original cemetery opened 20 years ago, the gardens were traditional in their planting and held the customary memorials, which catered for all cultures and religious beliefs. The idea now is to regenerate this land and bring natural life back to the area. In the new area, which has been open for two years, only Australian native plants are grown, in modern Australian garden settings. These new gardens have some elements similar to those found at RBGV Cranbourne, with water features, pergolas, and trellises. The gardens are still very young and it will be interesting to revisit them again in a couple of years.



A pleasant spot for contemplation with *Eucalyptus caesia* 'Silver Princess' and Gold-dust Wattle, *Acacia acinacea*. Photo: Nicky Zanen



Meika Behrendorff (2nd left), Bunurong Memorial Park Customer Care Team Leader, with Cranbourne Friends. Note the healthy *Scleranthus biflorus* on lower left. Photo: Nicky Zanen



Nursery stock at Australian Ecosystems nursery being watered. Photo: Nicky Zanen

Book Review: The Hidden Life of Trees by Peter Wohlleben

by Robin Allison

Wohlleben pursued a professional career as a forester in Germany, managing a forest in the Eifel mountains, where the trees were mostly Beech and Oak. Initially, he eyed the trees with tunnel vision, seeing only their value as lumber. However, he later took a broader view and became fascinated by the complexity and interdependence of life in the forest. After 20 years he changed his job and is now an advocate for conservation.

In 2015 his book was published in Germany and quickly became a best seller. We are fortunate that Jane Billingham's English translation soon followed.

Wohlleben calls on us to use our imagination and think beyond our scientific knowledge, to consider whether trees have language (ch.2), and can learn (p. 82).

Wohlleben uses the phrase "Wood Wide Web" coined by the journal Nature, to describe the symbiotic relationships within the forest, particularly between the trees and fungi, with their wide-ranging hyphae, and also with birds and animals.

The book is classified as non-fiction, but Wohlleben adopts an easy style to present amazing scientific facts, which can be enjoyed by all. As well as a table of contents, acknowledgements (p.251) end notes and index, there is also, following the last chapter, a "Note from a forest scientist" by Dr. Suzanne Simard. The introduction is by Tim Flannery, whose final sentences say it all: "Opening this book, you are about to enter a wonderland. Enjoy it." (p. ix)

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foreword by TIM FLANNERY
PETER WOHLLEBEN

The Hidden Life of TREES



What They Feel,
How They Communicate

Discoveries from a Secret World

Expressions of Interest for Proposed Tours

by Rodger Elliot

We are still seeking expressions of interest (EOI) for the proposed tours listed below.

On the current Booking Form, you will find the following destinations listed:

1. Alpine areas of NSW and Victoria for early 2019
2. Far north-east Queensland after 2019
3. Costa Rica in late 2019
4. New Caledonia
5. New Zealand
6. USA National Parks

Initial planning is underway for the far north-east Queensland Tour. Itinerary and prices are now available for the Costa Rica Tour. Let me know if you would like to receive this information.

We have enough people expressing interest in the New Caledonia, New Zealand and USA National Parks Tours for us to investigate further the possibility of running these tours.

If you would like to be included on a listing for any of these proposed tours, make sure you place your name in the allocated space on the Booking Form and please send it to Ros Shepherd, our Booking Officer.

Many tours organised by the Friends have been very popular and successful. Tours are excellent fundraising events and the funds go to the benefit of the Cranbourne Gardens.



Magnificent colony of Queen Sago plants, *Cycas circinalis* near Bourail, New Caledonia. Photo: Rodger Elliot

Friends Gardening Group

3rd Tuesday of each month
9.45am

Administration Building
Tea Room

For Members who wish to get their hands dirty at the Cranbourne Australian Garden

Each month, this eager and willing group of gardening enthusiasts spend the 3rd Tuesday morning in the Gardens with Jess van der Werff.

The group meets at 9.45 am in the Administration building tea room where Jess tells us about the day's jobs. We then spend 2 hours assisting the horticultural staff with raking, sweeping, weeding, generally tidying up or, as John Arnott puts it, 'detailing and beautifying' the Australian Garden. To all those members who have enquired about the possibility of contributing 'hands on' in the Garden, this is your chance – and you will be

warmly welcomed.

- We work 10.00 am to 12.30 pm once a month
- Different tasks are set for each month
- Each day begins with a 'tool box' meeting
- The Cranbourne Friends provide a distinctive protective vest – just bring gardening gloves, drinking water and kneeling pad.

If you would like to join this group contact Christine Kenyon.

Email: cekenyon@bigpond.com or mobile: 0438 345 589.

Cranbourne Friends Committee

President: Indra Kurzeme	0408 002 028	Booking Officer	
Secretary: Helen Kennedy	9560 0185	Ros Shepherd	5932 5611
Vice President: Helen Morrow	9850 9125	bookings@rbgfriendscranbourne.org.au	
Vice President: Vacant		Events Sub Committee	
Immediate Past President: Richard Clarke	5974 1750	Rodger Elliot	Alex Smart
Treasurer: Karen Russell	9878 4857	Lyn Blackburne	Liz McDonald
Membership Secretary: Alexandra Stalder	0458 550 509	Richard Clarke	Marjanne Rook
RBGV Representative: Chris Russell	5990 2200	Chloe Foster	Ros Shepherd
General Committee		Naturelink Editor:	
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Barbara Jeffrey	5998 5410	Quicklink Editor:	
Roger Watts	0409 857 664	Chloe Foster	9725 3569
Alexandra Stalder	0458 550 509	Social Media Convenor:	
Janette Wilson	0477 711 569	Amy Akers	0423 513 281

The General Committee meets on the second Thursday of the month (except January) at 6.30pm.

GROWING FRIENDS WINTER PLANT SALE

Saturday 21 and Sunday 22 July 2018

10am to 4pm both days

Near Kiosk at northern end of the Australian Garden.
Parking and entry is available at the northern end of the Australian Garden Car Park

Look for large red Plant Sale Banners.

Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria - Cranbourne

Plant list will be available on our website one week prior at:
www.rbgfriendscranbourne.org.au

Right Above: *Logania vaginalis*, White Spray

Right Below: *Hymenosporum flavum*, Native Frangipani

