



**CRANBOURNE FRIENDS**

ROYAL  
BOTANIC GARDENS  
VICTORIA

# **Welcome to the Friends!**

**A guide for new members of the  
Cranbourne Friends, RBGV Inc.**



## Welcome

We are pleased to welcome you as a member of our group, so you can share our love of the Australian garden and bushland at Cranbourne.

We trust that you will enjoy learning about the activities and interests we foster and that we grow your appreciation of our flora and fauna.

You will gain deeper understanding of the scientific, horticultural and conservation work of our Botanic Gardens. Behind-the-scenes insights will add to your pleasure in exploring and supporting this much awarded and appreciated icon.

We offer you opportunities to join with others to pursue deeper



knowledge of many and varied subjects related to our landscapes and plants, and developing your talents.

You can dig deep or just lightly mulch your interests and be rewarded with good company and thirty years of advocacy, support, and care of our treasured garden.

**Erin Cosgriff**  
President

Cranbourne Friends, RBGV Inc.

*We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we work and learn, the peoples of the Kulin (Koolin) Nation, and pay our respects to their Elders past, present and future.*

## About the Friends

Cranbourne Friends, Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria, is a vibrant group of more than 600 members who share a love of Australian plants and nature, and support Cranbourne Gardens.

Friends have a special involvement in the ongoing development of Cranbourne Gardens through the award-winning Australian Garden and the conservation of the important remnant bushland and its many creatures.

The Friends Group was officially launched in 1991 by a group of people who were keen to support the Gardens and foster its development.

After 32 years we are a mix of plant lovers, gardeners, landscape designers, environmentalists, photographers and nature lovers.

*Cranbourne Friends members come from all over Melbourne, the Mornington Peninsula, regional Victoria, and even Interstate. Friends can enjoy a wide range of activities, events and volunteer opportunities through their membership.*





## Contributing to the Cranbourne Gardens

The Cranbourne Friends was formed to support and assist the Royal Botanic Gardens at Cranbourne.

In particular we try to assist with items they find difficult to fund from their own budget. Since our inception, we have donated over \$700,000 to the Cranbourne Gardens.

Our donations have included amounts for:

- Signage, plant labels, entry development and various items of equipment for the Gardens;
- portable buildings and later renovations;
- books, furnishings, a bike shed and

items for the staff depot;

- possum-proofing for the Gardens' Nursery;
- a shed and library for the Garden Ambassadors;
- renovations to the orchid display and Orchid Research Building, the Auditorium and its sound system and the Elliot Centre including the Herbarium Collection room;
- frames and mounting boards for the Cranbourne Collection of botanic paintings;
- construction of the Friends Nursery; irrigation and propagation equipment;



- funding for the lease of the Garden Explorer (for 3 years);

- travel allowances for staff attending conferences and cash contributions etc from the raffle proceeds, donation box and sales at the annual textile shows to assist with financing public programs;

- wallaby exclusion fencing;

- purchase of a shuttle bus to run to the Gardens from the Cranbourne Railway Station;

- the publication Of Friends and Gardens A history of the Cranbourne Friends;

- supporting RBGC staff to attend the 7th Global Botanic Gardens Congress in Melbourne;

- sponsorship of the Garden Ambassadors to attend the Botanic Guides Conference in Melbourne;

- a Defibrillator for volunteers and staff in the works area of the gardens;

We have also successfully applied for grants which financed re-vegetation, weed removal and water conservation.

We are grateful to all our volunteers who have cultivated plants, produced artworks and organised events and trips to raise funds. As well as members who have paid subscriptions, attended events, purchased items and made donations to make all our contributions possible.

## The Elliot Centre

Opened in 2015, the Elliot Centre is the home of the Cranbourne Friends. It is the administrative and operations hub for the Friends' special interest groups, the Growing Friends Nursery and Open House events.

The Elliot Centre is named after Rodger Elliot AM and Gwen Elliot AM, pioneers in the cultivation of Australian plants and long-time supporters of the Royal Botanic Gardens Cranbourne.



The Elliot Centre includes an office, library, meeting room and a kitchen, as well as space for a range of activities by Friends' groups.

## Membership Benefits

Friends of the Cranbourne Gardens RBGV Inc. receive a wide range of exclusive benefits and discounts.

- Our quarterly magazine, *Naturelink*
- *QuickLink* online
- Discount rates for both Melbourne and Cranbourne Friends' activities
- Boon Wurrung Café, Cranbourne Gardens – offers 10% discounts on purchases
- The Gardens Shops Cranbourne & Melbourne – give 10% off on all members' purchases excluding sale items
- Elliot Centre Cranbourne Gardens,

the activities centre for the Friends; access to the Friends Library (books, magazines)

- Growing Friends Nursery – access every Thursday from 10am to 2pm, and 15% discount on plant purchases
- Activities – discounts on events (tours, workshops, talks, etc.), and art classes. Also opportunities to join specialist activity groups and to volunteer

From time to time Friends also receive discounts from a range of other businesses and organisations such as nurseries. A full list of Friends' benefits and discounts can be found in the members section of the Friends website.

## Friends Publications

As a Friends member you will receive *Naturelink*, our quarterly magazine. *Naturelink* is packed full of interesting articles, reports from our special interest groups and information about events and activities.

Quicklink is our monthly e-news, keeping members informed about upcoming events and what is happening around the Gardens.



## Online Resources

If you are new to the Friends, your first stop should be our New Members Welcome page - <https://cranbournefriends.tidyhq.com/public/pages/welcome-new-members>

Our website at [www.rbgfriendscranbourne.org.au](http://www.rbgfriendscranbourne.org.au) is also an excellent resource to learn more about the Cranbourne Friends. There is information on each of the Friends' Special Interest Groups, upcoming events and news for members. Previous editions of *Naturelink* and our Annual Reports are available under the About Us tab. There are also links to bookings for events and a member's resources page with member-only content such as recordings of talks

and videos, photo galleries and much more.

The Member Resources page can be accessed by clicking the link on the Friends webpage or through TidyHQ at [cranbournefriends.tidyhq.com/public/pages/member-resources](https://cranbournefriends.tidyhq.com/public/pages/member-resources). You will be asked to log in with your TidyHQ password as this is a member benefit (as you do for membership payments or event bookings). Once you are logged in you will be able to access the portal.

The Friends are also on social media. Our facebook page can be found at [www.facebook.com/rbgfriendscranbourne/](https://www.facebook.com/rbgfriendscranbourne/) and our Instagram at [www.instagram.com/rbgfriendscranbourne/](https://www.instagram.com/rbgfriendscranbourne/)

## TidyHQ

TidyHQ is the Friends online administration system. It is used to manage our membership database and facilitate bookings for events. This system was introduced in 2021 to streamline the administration of the Friends and allow for online credit card payments for membership and events.

If you joined the Friends online, you will already have a TidyHQ login and password. If you joined at one of our events or by filling out and sending a membership form, you will be able to set up a login by using the email

address that you signed up with. If you need to update your email address, it can be done online (as long as you still have access to the original email address), or it can be reset by contacting the membership secretary at [membership@rbgfriendscranbourne.org.au](mailto:membership@rbgfriendscranbourne.org.au)

As well as being able to update your personal information and renew your membership online, your TidyHQ login also gives you access to information and resources in the members-only section of the Friends website.



## Special Interest Group (SIGs)

### What are SIGS?

As a new member, you may hear the term SIGS around the place. SIGS are the Friends' Special Interest Groups. There are currently six SIGS: Growing Friends, Botanical Illustrators, Botanical Fabricators, Friends in Focus (FIF), Herbarium Collectors and the Friends

in the Gardens, who are known as the FIGS!

SIGS contribute to the Friends and the Gardens in many ways. Over the next few pages of this handbook you can learn about each of these groups, what they do, when they meet and how to get involved.

## Botanical Fabricators

**WHEN WE MEET**  
2nd Tuesday of the month  
10am to 2pm in the  
Elliot Centre

**CONTACT**  
Wendy Smart  
03 9707 5275  
Email: wvsmart08@bigpond.com

We participate in a variety of fabric crafts (hand sewing, machine sewing and embroidery) using fabrics depicting Australian native plants, or designs highlighting Australian flora and fauna.

Like the Growing Friends and the Botanical Illustrators, the Fabricators also sell their work at Plant Sales and other events to raise money for the Friends.



Our very enjoyable monthly get-togethers are held on the second Tuesday of each month, at 10am in the Elliot Centre.

Visitors and new members are always very welcome. Please phone or email if you would like any further information.

## Botanical Illustrators

Whether you are an artist, an aspiring artist or just dreaming of developing a new interest, you are welcome to come along and see what we do and get friendly advice and support. Once you try your hand at illustrating plants, you may be surprised how quickly you can achieve results you would never have thought possible.

Our group get-togethers, made up of artists of varying experience, allow us to share ideas and information and give each other encouragement and support whilst working on our paintings and drawings. The group holds talks and workshops at Cranbourne Gardens as well as exhibitions at various galleries.

### Botanical Art Workshops

We also arrange botanical art workshops, demonstrations and talks conducted by established artists. With the maximum class size of 10 ensuring



Kerryn Robinson, *Hovea heterophylla*

individual attention and held at the Elliot Centre near the Cranbourne Gardens Main Office, workshops can suit beginners or artists with some experience. Fees vary with the type and duration of the workshop.



**WHEN WE MEET**  
1st & 3rd Wednesday of the  
month  
10am to 3pm in the Elliot Centre

**CONTACT**  
Margaret Kitchen  
Email: illustrators@  
rbgfriendscanbourne.org.au





## Growing Friends

**WHEN WE MEET**  
Every Thursday  
10am to 2pm in the  
Growing Friends Nursery

**CONTACT**  
Marjanne Rook  
Email: [growing.friends@rbgfriendscranbourne.org.au](mailto:growing.friends@rbgfriendscranbourne.org.au)

The Growing Friends propagate a large variety of Australian native plants from cuttings, seeds and divisions throughout the year for the purpose of sale to Friends' members, the general public, local council, etc. Many of these plants can be seen in the Cranbourne Gardens.

Plants are used by the Gardens' Learners and Participation program for visiting school students; the City of



Casey Gardens for Wildlife (G4W) Program and sold for various revegetation purposes.

Plants are available for sale every Thursday from 10am - 2pm at the Growing Friends nursery which is located in the depot area (or at other times by arrangement). Public Sales are held in Spring, Autumn and Winter in the Gardens. Proceeds are generally used by the Friends to support selected projects for the Gardens.

Working together as a group whilst learning about Australian native plant and chatting over morning tea and lunch in the fresh air is a healthy and rewarding activity.



Growing Friends plant sales are held 3 times a year in Autumn, Winter and Spring. Hundreds of species of native plants are cultivated for sale at these events. Prior to the sale, plant lists are emailed to members and made available on the Cranbourne Friends website. Friends members receive a 15% discount on plant purchases.



## Herbarium Collectors

**WHEN WE MEET**  
First Monday of the Month.  
9.30am to 1.00pm

**CONTACT**  
Nola Foster  
9583 5731  
0438548296

The Herbarium Collectors have a scientific focus collecting, recording and preserving samples of all the plants when in both fruit and flower, in the whole of the natural area of the Cranbourne Botanical Gardens.

Extensive details are recorded in field notes. Specific photographs are taken, catalogued, and stored in an indexed database.

After drying, the plant specimens are mounted to a strict format, for preservation and use in the



*Herbarium Collectors, Photo: Mack Fenwick*

permanent collections at both the Cranbourne Botanical Gardens and the Herbarium at Royal Melbourne Botanical Gardens.





## Friends in Focus

Friends in Focus is a special interest group that offers members a space in which to pursue their interest in photography and to practise, enhance and share their skills in a friendly, social and non-judgmental environment. All levels of experience are accommodated.

We meet every month throughout the year to spend a couple of hours in the Australian Garden or the surrounding bushland, making the most of the wide range of natural subjects available for photography. We may record the seasonal changes and flowering times, the various fauna that call the Gardens home, as well as creating a visual archive documenting the ongoing development and history of the site. There is no end to the possibilities. This enables us to learn more about Australian species and

### WHEN WE MEET

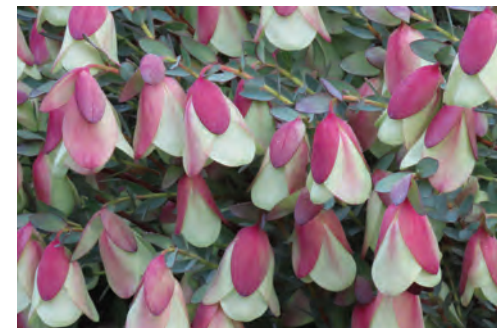
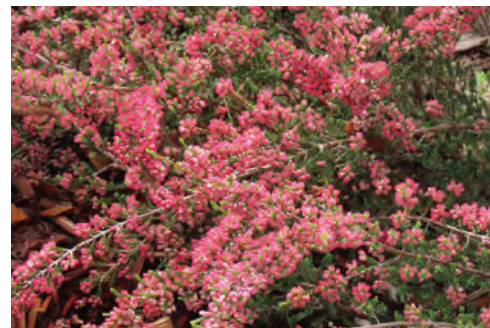
2nd Saturday of the month  
2pm (during Eastern Standard Time), 9:30am (during Daylight saving), in the Elliot Centre.

### CONTACT

Judith Cooke  
Email: friendsinfocus@  
rbgfriendscranbourne.org.au

their requirements, to participate in their protection and to inform others about our unique flora and fauna.

Depending on the time of year, our programme may include a walk in the Bushland to look for fungi, or birds nesting, or to enjoy the spectacular flowering of species such as the Waratahs, Wattles, Flowering Gums



Photos: Left - Fringed Heath Myrtle, *Micromyrtus ciliata*; Right - Qualup Bell, *Pimelea physodes*.

or Kangaroo Paws in the Australian Garden.

Our monthly newsletter, 'Cranbourne Lens', provides a platform for members to share news and images. Members can also contribute images to the Cranbourne Friends' various publications and social media sites. We generally try to arrange a 'Show and Tell'

presentation twice a year, which is another opportunity for members to bring along examples of their recent work, in whatever format they wish.

New members are always welcome, whenever they are able to attend. If you would like to join our email list and find out more about our activities, send a message to Judith Cooke.



Note that our meeting times alternate during the year, with Daylight Saving, to allow us to take advantage of the best lighting conditions for taking photographs.

Photos: Judith Cooke





## Friends in the Gardens



The Friends in the Gardens members are all keen to volunteer in and learn about the Australian Garden with others of similar interests. New faces are always welcome.

Under the guidance of the horticulture staff we help 'beautify and detail' the Australian Garden environment. Yes, you might even be allowed on the Red Sand Garden!

Depending on the plan for the day we may spend our time weeding, edging, sweeping or raking paths, mulching, tidying garden beds; we also help on planting days.

*"FIGS is a fun morning with like-minded friends who enjoy being in the fresh air, learning with horticultural staff in a beautiful garden. It is a great way to give back to these wonderful gardens."*  
- FIGS Member

### WHEN WE MEET

1st and 3rd Tuesday morning of each month  
9.15 am for a 9.30 am start to 12.30 pm, meet at the Visitor Centre

### CONTACT

Christine Kenyon  
0438 345 589  
Email: [figs@rbgfriendscranbourne.org.au](mailto:figs@rbgfriendscranbourne.org.au)  
Sue Spicer  
0434977477  
Christine Kenyon co-ordinates the 1st Tuesday activity and Susan Spicer co-ordinates the 3rd Tuesday activity.



Photos: Christine Kenyon

## Friends events

### WHEN WE MEET

Events are held throughout the year. The Events Subcommittee, which plans events, meets 1st Thursday of the month at 7pm online using Zoom.

### CONTACT

Events (Subcommittee)  
Mick Robertson  
0402 648 998  
Events (Bookings)  
Ros Shepherd  
5932 5611  
Email: [bookings@rbgfriendscranbourne.org.au](mailto:bookings@rbgfriendscranbourne.org.au)

In addition to all the wonderful Cranbourne Friends' groups, each year we offer members an exciting calendar of both free and reduced member-rate events.

These include regular lectures and workshops, field trips as well as interstate and overseas trips.

The Events Subcommittee, made up of member volunteers, meet on a regular basis to organise the calendar of events. Subcommittee members come from a wide range of backgrounds and bring skills in organisation and event management.



Events and activities are advertised to members in our newsletter *Naturelink* and through *Quicklink*, by email.





## Recent Events



Photos: Clockwise from left - Fungi foray with Tom May; Falls Creek Wildflower Tour; Walk & Hawk with John Arnott; Main Photo - Laura, Far North Queensland Tour. Photos: Alexandra Stalder