

Naturelink

NEWSLETTER OF THE CRANBOURNE FRIENDS ROYAL BOTANIC GARDENS VICTORIA INC.

Everything About Australian Birds All Day Workshop

Sunday 29 October 2017

Highlights

in this issue

Monash Uni Visit 6



Sensory Garden Workshop 7



Eucalyptus' Status 16



Cranbourne Friends Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria, Inc. 1000 Ballarto Road Cranbourne Victoria 3977

Inc no. A0025281B
ABN 43 551 008 609

Web address:
www.rbgfriendscranbourne.org.au

Sunday 29 October, 7.30am (or 9.30am) to 3pm. Elliot Centre and Australian Garden Auditorium, RBGV Cranbourne Gardens.

National Bird Week 2017 is celebrated from Monday 23 October and Sunday 29 October. Join in the celebration at RBGV Cranbourne Gardens.

There is a very rich and strong relationship between Australian birds and Australian plants. This relationship will be explored at this workshop which will cover aspects such as observing, identifying and photographing birds in the wild and gardens, including the equipment required. We will also talk about the plantings required to attract birds and learn about mind-boggling migration routes and much more.

There will be an optional opportunity to participate from 7.30 am in the "What Bird is That?" presentation conducted by BirdLife Australia's Mornington Peninsula branch in the Cranbourne bushland, followed by a tasty breakfast.

From 10 am there will be a series of presentations in the Auditorium. We are planning to have a range of experienced presenters who will lead us to a greater understanding of Australian birds, their behaviour, their requirements and their conservation.

We hope to cover subjects such as the hierarchy of birds, how birds utilise vegetation, corridors for birds, whether we



New Holland Honeyeater is one of the common honeyeaters in the Australian Garden which frequently visits *Banksia menziesii* flowerheads. Photo: Mack Fenwick

should feed or not feed birds, habitat gardens for birds, photographing and illustrating birds, therapeutical benefits gained from birds and Australian birds in art and craft.

As soon as we have a more finalised program we will email it to all Friends Members.

Costs

7.30 – 9 am (includes Breakfast) Session and 10 am – 3 pm Presentations Session

Members \$80
Non-members \$90
Students \$40

10 am – 3 pm Presentations Session only

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

Cranbourne Friends Annual General Meeting

The 26th Annual General Meeting of the Cranbourne Friends will be held on Sunday November 26 in the RBGV Cranbourne Auditorium and all Friends are warmly invited to attend.

Our Guest Speaker this year will be our own Alex Smart OAM, whose subject will be "From Sand Extraction to Award Winning Cranbourne Botanic Gardens".

From extracting sand, through farming, military exercises, film-making and squatting, to the Botanic Gardens we know and love today - you will be taken on a fascinating

journey through the history of the site. Alex will illustrate his talk with many photos which members will not have seen before.



Alex Chernov, Former Victorian Governor and Alex Smart at Opening of Growing Friends Nursery. Photo: Chris Clarke

Acting Director's Report

John Arnott



The Australian Garden at Cranbourne Gardens is entering into an interesting and exciting phase in its development: that of landscape establishment, managing and maintaining this new garden and of course exploring how the garden is accessed, used and engaged with by our Friends, visitors and the broader community.

With this, our attention has turned to ensuring that we have adequate documentation of the Australian Garden 'as imagined' to enable us to manage the garden into the future.

Our curatorial planning process has been to look at each Australian Garden precinct (there are 21) with a cross-disciplinary team made up of staff from the executive, horticulture, infrastructure, visitor experience, programming and planning units. Looking at each precinct in turn, we have captured: the designer's intent, broad organisational and landscape objectives, horticultural aspirations, the interpretive and educational intent, how we expected visitors would use the space, and the maintenance requirements. This process saw a number of honest and robust conversations where mismatching perceptions had to be negotiated. Staff brought a lot of honesty and patience to the table during this phase, and the rewards in terms of team building and motivation were high.

The most interesting part of this process is what we learnt about the garden itself. How visitors are using it or sometimes not using it as we expected. We captured stories that we didn't expect would be out there and opportunities for future developments we had not yet dreamed of. Our curatorial management planning process has taught us a lot about how we can best utilise our combined skills and strengths to effectively direct and manage the Australian Garden now and into the future.

The theme of "managing into the future" has been front of mind across the broader organisation with the Organisational Structural Review project, now approaching its final stages. The aim of the review has been to design an ideal structure to set the RBGV up for the future. It's been a massive undertaking that will be implemented in a staged manner over the next 12 months and beyond.

I have been assisting with end of financial year reporting for the 2016/17 RBGV Corporate Plan. In doing so, I have been able to reflect on some of the significant achievements that the Cranbourne Gardens has made over the past 12 months.

Some of the highlights have been:

- Completion of the 2016 – 2026 Master Plan which articulates and directs the Cranbourne Gardens' vital role in the cultural and scientific fabric of Victoria.
- Our contribution to NAIDOC (National

Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee) continues to grow year-on-year and the Cranbourne Gardens event is now established as one of the major NAIDOC events in Victoria. The 2017 NAIDOC celebration had over 3000 people in attendance.

- Our contribution to the broader botanic gardens network is significant with Chris Russell appointed to the role of Convenor of the Victorian Chapter of Botanic Gardens of Australia and New Zealand (BGANZ). For the past few years, I have been heavily involved with BGANZ Council, having chaired a number of Council's working groups.
- Our contribution to regional planning continues to be an important aspect of our operations. Chris Russell is an active contributor in regional tourism networks, Terry Coates provides technical expertise to the ecological management and biodiversity values of the region, and similarly Ricardo Simao is active with the Casey Conservation Advisory Committee. For many years, Jill Burness has represented the Gardens in a number of key statutory and strategic planning areas with the City of Casey.
- The Kangaroo Paw Celebration was a wonderful opportunity to partner with the Friends to showcase Haemodraceae.
- The Land Management volunteer program really hit its straps over the past 12 months. Over 20 active volunteers undertook a range of activities in the Cranbourne Bushland, including: a monthly bird survey for BirdLife Australia; control of *Kunzea ericoides* (the prunings were used to create clap sticks for NAIDOC); autumn burn site preparation; decommissioning old farm fences in the bush; and erecting new fences for excluding Wallabies.



John Arnott and Boon Wurrung Elder Aunty Fay Stewart-Muir posing within an Instagram frame. Photo: Louise Singleton



At the Kangaroo Paw Celebration Director of Cranbourne Gardens Chris Russell (l) and President of Australian Horticulture Media Association Australia Jim Fogarty (r) watch Angus Stewart cut the ribbon at the launch of this new cultivar *Anigozanthos flavidus* 'Landscape Violet' which was bred by Angus. Photo: Jill Burness

The Horticulture team has been actively recruiting new team leaders and horticulturists. I am delighted to note that Russell Larke and Jessica van der Werff have both been appointed to the roles of Team Leader Horticulture and Mandy Thomson to the role of Team Leader Nursery. We also warmly welcome Kaishan Qu, Trent Loane, Rachel Rose and Matthew Henderson to the horticulture team, as well as Chloe Foster

who has joined the Nursery team! Many of you would be familiar with Chloe's role on the Friends Committee.

On a sadder note, Michael Robertson recently announced his retirement after 14 years as Coordinator Education. Mick has subsequently joined the Friends and is planning the next phase of his life: that of establishing his dream retirement project, his self-proclaimed Tanjil South Botanic Gardens and Indigenous Food Farm. Thanks Mick for all your efforts in shaping a wonderful education service at Cranbourne.



Five recently appointed Horticultural staff at Cranbourne Gardens with two Team Leaders. From left: Kaishan Qu, Trent Loane, Matthew Henderson, Rachel Rose, Jessica van der Werff (Team Leader Horticulture), Chloe Foster and Russell Larke (Team Leader Horticulture). Photo: John Arnott

From the President

Indra Kurzeme



Late Winter, early Spring is one of my favourite times of the year at Cranbourne Gardens. I was lucky enough to be on staff at Cranbourne Gardens between 2010 and 2013 and there is something very special about having access first thing in the morning before the gates open, or at the end of the day, driving around the bushland at lock up time. You can feel the garden growing. The freshness of early morning, the dart of small birds in the shrubs, the flicker of a bandicoot in the corner of your eye. I don't need to tell you - it is a very special place.

To ensure that the Friends continue to enjoy all that the Cranbourne Gardens has to offer we have been asked to run an Occupational Health and Safety audit over our facilities. It seems by all accounts we are doing well. There have been some recommendations made for additional documentation. I'd like to thank Chris Russell for encouraging us to undertake this process and John Arnott

in helping us with our hazard hunt of the Growing Friends Nursery, and for sharing his and his staff's expertise. We can be confident that the Elliot Centre and Growing Friends Nursery are now safe for all to enjoy.

Margaret Holloway who established the Botanical Illustrators in 2006, has let us know that she is ready to start something new and will be stepping down from leading the group. The Committee thanks her for building a strong community of artists who produce beautiful and important work and for her contribution to the Cranbourne Collection. More details on page 10. Many of the members of the Botanical Illustrators, including Margaret, exhibited their work in the botanical art exhibition, Native Seduction. I hope you got the chance to visit.

See you in the Garden,
Indra

Cranbourne Friends Committee

President: Indra Kurzeme 0408 002 026
Secretary: Helen Kennedy 9560 0185
Vice President: Helen Morrow 9850 9125
Vice President: Amy Akers 0423 513 281
Immediate Past President:
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Events Subcommittee
 Rodger Elliot, Coordinator
 Alex Smart Ros Shepherd
 Amy Akers Chloe Foster
 Barrie Gallacher Marjanne Rook
 Lyn Blackburne Richard Clarke
 Barbara Jeffrey Liz McDonald
 Margaret Clarke

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

ACTIVITIES CALENDAR SEPTEMBER - NOVEMBER 2017

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

SEPTEMBER

Sunday 17

Basketry Workshop:
'Basket over a Mould'

Wednesday 27

Discovery Day:
Inverloch Dinosaur Fossil Tour

****Elliot Centre Open House Days are held on the 2nd Thursday of each month from 1pm. See page 11 for more details.**

OCTOBER

Sunday 8

Discovery Day:
Monash University Gardens

Saturday 14 & Sunday 15

Growing Friends Plant Sale

Monday 23 – Wednesday 25

Beginners Watercolour
Workshop with Marta Salamon

Sunday 29

Workshop:
Everything about Australian Birds

NOVEMBER

Sunday 5

Microbats

Sunday 12

Workshop:
Sensory Gardens

Sunday 26

Annual General Meeting with Guest
Speaker, Alex Smart

Inverloch Dinosaur Fossil Family Discovery Day

Wednesday 27
September 2017

9.30am

Bunurong
Environment
Centre and Shell
Museum, Inverloch

Adults \$20
Children \$5

Contact:
Christine Kenyon
9589 2154 or 0438 345 589
cekenyon@bigpond.com

OR

Lyn Blackburne
9776 4994 or 0419 583 076
lynb1950@gmail.com

- The most common dinosaurs found at Inverloch are hypsilophodontids, but theropods, ornithomimosaurs, protoceratopsians, and ankylosaurs have also been found (Melbourne Museum).

- We can learn about what dinosaurs ate and how they digested their meals by looking at their fossil skeletons, examining stomach contents preserved in some specimens and by peering into their fossilised poo (Melbourne Museum).

- Ankylosaurus had no teeth. It ate only plants - lots of them.

- Were all theropods carnivorous? Apparently not, according to Stephan Lautenschlager from the University of Bristol (Livescience May 17, 2014). Skull, teeth and claw shape suggest several species adapted to become herbivores or omnivores.

Come with us and learn many more interesting dinosaur facts at the family day Cranbourne Friends are spending at the Inverloch dinosaur fossil beds with experts from *The South Gippsland Conservation Society*.

For children, the day will include explaining to Mum, Dad, Nanna/Grandma and Pop/Grandad how to find dinosaur fossils. Of course Mum and Dad will provide a picnic lunch!! Then you can visit the Shell Museum, the best there is, with over 6,000 specimens. Best of all the Museum is free.

Start: 9.30 am. An early start as we must explore the fossil site at low tide.

Unlike Alice's white rabbit 'Don't be late'.

Where: Bunurong Environment Centre and Shell Museum

Corner Ramsay Blvd. & The Esplanade, Inverloch

- All children under 12 years must be accompanied by a responsible adult.

How to get to Bunurong Environment Centre from Melbourne:

1. via S Gippsland Hwy/M420, M420 and Bass Hwy/B460.
2. via S Gippsland Hwy/M420 and S Gippsland Hwy/A440.

- Have you thought of staying in Inverloch overnight?? There is so much to see in the area.

- Access to the fossil site is down steps and over rocks so wear appropriate footwear and clothing.

- Please ensure that you have drinking water, sunscreen, hats & clothing appropriate for the day.

- Checkout the Dinosaur Dreaming internet site <http://dinosaurdreaming.net/>.

- Check out the Melbourne Museum 600 million years exhibit <https://museumvictoria.com.au/melbournemuseum/discoverycentre/600-million-years/>.



A life-size model Theropod meets a human!
(Source: internet Dinosaur Dreaming Exhibition)

(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>.

SEPTEMBER

Wednesday 27 September, 11am to 12.30pm
or Thursday 5 October, 1 to 2.30pm

Secrets to health and well being in the garden

You will learn to improve your physical, mental and emotional condition and cultivate your families health and wellbeing.

Meet at Visitor Centre

\$12.30 per person

Bookings required on 03 5990 2200

Suitable for families.

OCTOBER

Sunday 22 October, 10.30, 12.30 and 2.30 for 1 hour

Choosing native plants for your garden with Angus Stewart

Join renowned native plant expert, Kangaroo Paw breeder, author and former ABC Gardening Australia presenter Angus

Stewart on an insightful tour celebrating the beauty and diversity of the many improved Australian plant cultivars.

Visitor Centre

\$11.90 per person

Bookings required on 03 5990 2200

Suitable for Adults

NOVEMBER

Sunday 19 November, 1pm to 3pm

Secrets of great container gardens

Everything you need to know about growing native plants in pots. Adding seasonal colour, texture and aroma to your home garden

Auditorium, Australian Garden

\$31.20 adult, \$24.60 concession

Bookings required on 03 5990 2200

Suitable for Adults

(Some of) What's On at RBGV Melbourne

The following events are presented by the Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne.

For enquiries contact the Friends office on 9650 6398 or at <friends@frbgmelb.org.au>.

Book events online, or download a booking form from the FRBGM website at <www.rbgfriendsmelbourne.org>.

SEPTEMBER

Thursday 21 September, 19 October, 16 November, 6pm to 7.30pm

Secret life of birds in Melbourne Gardens

Discover the secret life of birds, their calls and habitats during this special guided walk with one of our resident bird experts.

Meet at H Gate on Alexandra Avenue

\$20 adults, \$15 Concession and Friends members. Includes colour bird brochure.

Booking: 03 9252 2429 or RBGV website.

Suitable for Adults

OCTOBER

Saturday 21 & Sunday 22 October, 1 pm to 2.30pm

Special weekend of free activities in the Ian Potter Foundation Children's Garden

Play, explore, create and plant on this fun

day in The Ian Potter Foundation Children's Garden.

Observatory House Lawn

Call T 03 9252 2429 for more information and pricing

Suitable for Children and Families

NOVEMBER

Saturday 18 November, 2pm to 3.30pm

Discover the Herb Garden

Discover the 130 year history of our Herb Garden and the fascinating stories and uses of its highly fragrant flowers and leaves.

Meet at the Visitor Centre, Observatory Gate

\$15 adults, \$10 concession and Friends members

Suitable for Adults

Bookings: 03 9252 2429 or RBGV website.

A New Friends Activity Group

Contact:

Christine Kenyon
0438 345 589
cekenyon@bigpond.com

Who has dreamt of working in the Red Sand Garden, weeding or planting in the Australian Garden or generally helping to keep the Australian Garden well-groomed?

Now is your chance!

With the blessing of John Arnott and the horticulture staff, The Cranbourne Friends are forming a new 'hands on' group that will meet monthly (starting in September).

- Group members will help staff 10.00 am to 12.30 pm once a month

- You will work under instruction from John

Arnott and the Horticultural Staff

- Different tasks, identified by the gardens staff, will be set for each month

- Each day will begin with a 'tool box' meeting when you will be given instructions and tools for the day

- The Friends will provide protective/distinctive attire

It would be wonderful if the group finished the day by having lunch together in the Elliot Centre or with the Gardens staff.

Discovery Day

Monash University Clayton Campus Gardens

Sunday 8 October
9.30am to 1pm
(approx.)

Monash University
Clayton Campus
Wellington Road
Clayton

Members \$20
Non-members \$25
Students \$10

This Discovery Day will be a wonderful opportunity to view the gardens and plantings at the Monash University Clayton Campus. We will have the privilege to be accompanied by Johan de Bree, long-time Manager Grounds at the University who since retiring is now a Garden Ambassador at Cranbourne and also a member of the Friends.

Initially the Clayton site was a series of grassed paddocks with a few shelterbelts. It is now a bustling campus with a wonderful vista of native trees and shrubs that few public open spaces can match. The Clayton Campus has had a very strong emphasis on using Australian Plants since its foundation in 1958 and is a fine example of campus design and planning in Australia. The Australian Institute of Landscape Architects lists the Campus as an Australian Significant Landscape.

There are over 10 specific gardens on campus and many other fine landscape areas.

The Aboriginal Garden is in a tranquil and beautiful setting hidden behind the Monash Sustainability Institute. It features plants and trees originally used by the South Eastern and Eastern Indigenous people of Australia for food, medicine, fibre and implements.

Deceptive at first glance, the Rainforest Garden feels bigger on the inside than it looks from the outside. This garden recreates the environment of a sub-tropical rainforest and promises visitors a refuge from the bustle of the University, and some relief on a hot summer's day. It features a number of rainforest trees and plants notably Bunya Pines (*Araucaria bidwillii*), Wollemi Pines (*Wollemi nobilis*), and Moreton Bay chestnuts (*Castanospermum australe*).

The Monash Earth Sciences Garden is the first of its kind in Australia and the most comprehensive worldwide. It is inspired by the geology and geomorphology of Victoria, Australia. This garden comprises a stunning arrangement of nearly 500 rock specimens, weighing up to 14 tons, laid out to represent a pattern of rocky outcrops and set amongst beautiful native plants representing each geographical region. Head of School, Earth, Atmosphere and Environment, Professor Sandy Cruden, who was part of the team of Earth Scientists who developed the Monash Earth Sciences Garden concept, said the Monash Earth Sciences Garden establishes a brand new, hands-on approach to teaching geology, physical geography and atmospheric sciences. You will find yourself immersed in a 'living' geological map of Victoria.

The Lemon Scented Lawn is one of the largest gardens on the Clayton campus. Situated north of the Campus Centre, the gardens earn their name from the large majestic Lemon-Scented Gum trees (*Corymbia citriodora*) which are planted throughout. With its wide expanse of grass, water fountains, laptop recharge points and the Clayton Sound Shell, the Lemon Scented Lawn is a popular place for student activities and lazing between classes.

.....and there is much, much more with recent plantings around new buildings. Some of them may surprise you!

The meeting place will be supplied to all participants prior to the day along with a campus map.

Rodger Elliot and Chloe Foster



The old darker bark is shedding to reveal the smooth cream bark on Sydney Blue Gum, *Eucalyptus saligna*

Photo: Graeme Nicholls



The young Earth Sciences Garden is a treasure trove of rocks and plants

Photo: Graeme Nicholls

Sensory Gardens All Day Workshop

Sunday 12
November
9.30am to 3pm

Australian Garden
Auditorium,
RBGV Cranbourne
Gardens

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

Come and explore with us the joys of a sensory garden. Whilst all gardens can have healing effects, the idea of 'sensory gardening' goes beyond this. The environment created within a sensory garden aims to stimulate and engage the five senses, be accessible and interactive and appeal to all age groups. This is a hands-on day that will offer you the opportunity to learn how to propagate a variety of plants to help you start your very own sensory garden. At this workshop, we will be introduced to the amazing efforts plants make to stand out from the crowd and will have stunning photos to accompany the descriptions.

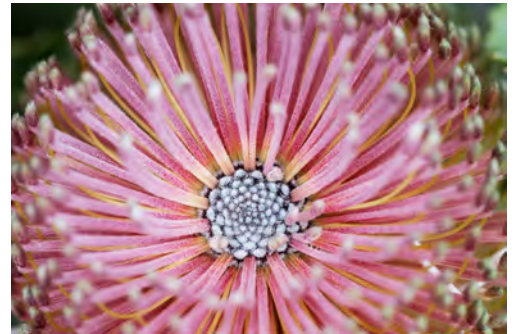
The plants used in a sensory garden all play their part in creating a sensory wonderland for those with or without sight, sense of smell, touch, or hearing. We are fortunate to have Steven Wells as a presenter, in our opinion the most experienced Horticultural Therapist practising in Australia at this time. He is qualified in nursing and horticulture, has achieved a number of awards for his work and is enthusiastic to share his knowledge and experience with others. He also holds the position at Austin Health as Garden and Ground Project Officer.

Steven will present an illustrated talk on his designed and constructed sensory garden at Austin Health in the Royal Talbot Rehabilitation Centre in Kew. As well as using sculptural landscape features, a wide range of plants are used giving varied sensory experiences.

AB Bishop, an experienced horticulturist, devotee of Australian plants and author of a number of books, including co-author with Angus Stewart of *The Australian Native Garden*, will talk about sensory aspects of the Australian flora and enlighten us on those extra special plants that we can use in our own gardens.



Boronia megastigma 'Harlequin': About 30% of people are not aware of the beautiful floral perfume of *Boronia megastigma*.
Photo: Rodger Elliot



There are many Australian native plants that can add a sensory element to a garden
Photo: Amy Akers

Attendees will discover, from Vision Australia, what a vision-impaired person experiences when walking through a garden, as well as learning how to guide and explain gardens to someone with little or no vision – whether they be the exquisitely landscaped Australian Garden or the surrounding bushland.

Time will also be spent in the Peppermint Garden where we will discover Australian native plants that exhibit sensory features.

Basket Over a Mould Workshop

Sunday 17
September
10am to 4pm

Elliot Centre,
RBGV Cranbourne
Gardens

Members \$60
Non-members \$65
Bookings Essential

Here is a wonderful opportunity to come along and make your own unique small basket using native plant materials and traditional basketry techniques.

Special hints on harvesting and preparation of plant materials will be discussed, so that you can use these techniques to make larger baskets at home.

The workshop will be held in the Elliot Centre, 10am to 4pm Sunday 17th September. BYO lunch, a pair of old scissors, and an old towel to protect your clothes. Afternoon tea will be provided.

Limit of ten participants. Bookings required by 8 September.

For more information, contact Lynn Lochrie on 0437 759 610, or at lynnlochrie@yahoo.com.au



Results from creating baskets over a mould
Photo: Lynn Lochrie

REGULAR MONTHLY ACTIVITIES

The Friends RBG Cranbourne 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!

Botanical Basketmakers

3rd Saturday of the month

10am - 2pm

Elliot Centre,
RBGV Cranbourne
Gardens

Contact: Lynn Lochrie
0437 759 610

basketry@
rbgfriendscranbourne.
org.au

Have you ever wanted to know how to make beautiful Basketry from your garden?

We would love you to come and join us on the third Saturday of the month, in the Elliot Centre. Members are happy to help newcomers get started. We can give you advice on how to harvest and prepare plant material, get you started on some basic techniques, and chat about where to get further information, whilst sharing a cuppa.

Members work on their own projects, using native plant materials they have collected, to make either useful or sculptural basketry.

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



Right: "Three Bells" made from *Eleocharis*, *Dianella* and *Cordyline stricta* by Lynn Lochrie
Photo: Lynn Lochrie

Botanical Fabricators

2nd Tuesday of the month

10am

Elliot Centre,
RBGV Cranbourne
Gardens

Contact
8774 2483

fabricators@
rbgfriendscranbourne.
org.au

Our monthly get-togethers continue on the second Tuesday of each month, 10am in the Elliot Centre. They are always very enjoyable times, and at our recent meeting we were shown the technique of gumleaf bleaching to create fascinating and unique fabric designs, as depicted in the photograph.

In addition to our preparations for next year's Australian Textile Exhibition, we have been able to supply a number of gifts for speakers at our Friends workshop days, usually in line with the specific theme of the activity.

New members are always very welcome. Please phone to say you are coming, if you need directions to the Elliot Centre or any further information.

Don't forget that the dates for next year's Australian Textile Exhibition will be changing, and it will be held from Tuesday May 8th 2018 through to Sunday May 13th (Mothers Day).



Mini-quilt with central square design from a bleached eucalyptus leaf.
Photo: Gwen Elliot

Planning Day for Jan 2018 to Jun 2019 Events

Sunday 21 May
by Chloe Foster

This year's Events Planning Day was probably our most successful yet!! Whilst the day is usually split into two parts, brainstorm and planning, this year there were so many ideas that we could only fit in the brainstorming and ideas! And the committee compiled the calendar at a later date. This format seemed to work quite well and we will most likely use this format again next year.

The 2018 program is shaping up to be another exciting year for the Cranbourne Friends. Keep your pens poised on your diary pages for the program release in the Summer

Naturelink.

Many thanks go to the team of Friends' members who attended the Planning Day with so many ideas to share. It was an inspiring day.

Growing Friends

3rd Wednesday and every Thursday of the month

Growing Friends Nursery

Contact

Marjanne
Ph 9769 7881 or
Don
Ph 9736 2309

growing.friends@
rbgfriendscranbourne.
org.au

It is a pleasure to be able to start writing about Spring – full of the promise of birds and flowers with a bit of sunshine thrown in.

Weather permitting, for the spring Plant Sale we should have a colourful selection of plants including a few new ones such as *Persoonia nutans x oxycocoides* 'Golden Lantern', a small shrub (H 0.5m x W 1-1.5m) with yellow flowers. It flowers in late spring to summer and is best grown in dappled shade, making it a good understory plant.

We will also have *Melaleuca thymifolia* 'Cotton Candy'; a small spreading shrub (H 1-1.2m x W 1-2m) with narrow grey-green leaves and clusters of deep pink bottlebrush flowers. It flowers in spring and summer and is excellent for garden beds, borders and rockeries. It also grows well in part shade or full sun positions and in coastal areas. Frost-tolerant and drought hardy once established, this plant is also a good one for attracting birds.

Not a new plant but one that hasn't been available for a while is *Melaleuca bracteata* 'Revolution Green'. This is an adaptable, attractive, medium shrub or small tree (H2-4m x W 3-4m) with small, bright green leaves and fissured, papery brown bark. It produces creamy-white, bird-attracting flowers on its branch tips during summer and is a hardy plant which tolerates poor soils. It is also great for hedging, screening, windbreaks or as a feature plant.

Waiting List

The Growing Friends have become quite popular lately and about 7 people have joined our group with more wishing to join over the past 6 months. For the time being, we can't take any more people and have started a waiting list. If you wish to add your name to this list please contact us at: growing.friends@rbgfriendscranbourne.org.au or phone Marjanne. Alternatively, you may like to find out about other groups such as a new group that will be working in the Gardens under instruction from the Garden's Horticultural Staff. For more information, see page 5 or contact Christine Kenyon at cekenyon@bigpond.com.

Open Nursery

Remember that our nursery is open to members every Thursday from 10 am to



2 pm. If you can't come on Thursdays but really wish to buy some plants, contact Marjanne or Don. Contact details are on this page.

Special Orders

As always, if you have any plant requests, 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 may even have them in stock. Contact details are on this page.

Winter Plant Sale

Our Winter Plant Sale held on 22nd and 23rd July made a total of \$12,412 plus \$30 from second hand books left over from last year's Bookfest. Saturday takings were \$8,030 plus \$20 from books. Sunday sales were \$3,280 plus \$10 from books. Pre-plant sale Wednesday and Thursday takings were \$1,102.

All in all a wonderful effort to which many people contributed in one way or another on this wintry weekend which included a little sunshine, plenty of cold winds and on some occasions quite heavy showers. Many thanks to all who contributed and purchased. Several thousand more Australian plants have hit gardens in Melbourne.

Marjanne Rook

GROWING FRIENDS SPRING PLANT SALE

Saturday 14 and Sunday 15 October 2017
10am to 4pm both days

Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria - Cranbourne



Botanical Illustrators

1st and 3rd Wednesday of the month

10am to 3pm

Elliot Centre, RBGV Cranbourne Gardens

Contact

illustrators@rbgfriendscanbourne.org.au

Wednesday Botanical Illustrators Group

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, hold workshops and talks and work towards exhibitions. We welcome visitors and new members.

Thanks to Margaret Holloway

Our Botanical Illustrators group was established in 2006 by Margaret Holloway, who has been our coordinator, mentor and inspiration ever since. Margaret is now exploring other artistic pursuits and is leaving the Cranbourne Botanical Illustrators at the start of September. It is with much appreciation but heavy hearts that we farewell her and know that she leaves a great gap in our midst.

Margaret has been interested in nature and art for as long as she can remember. She has worked in many media, including pottery, oils, graphite, pen and ink, and watercolour. She has exhibited widely and won many awards for her fine work. She has been involved in botanical art for the past 20 years and her paintings are held in the Victorian State Botanical Collection, the Cranbourne Collection and at Wilson Botanic Park, Berwick, as well as in private collections.

The recent botanical art exhibition, *Native Seduction*, took place at the Australian Garden thanks to Margaret's sustained efforts and is a fitting tribute to her gentle persuasion and guidance.



Margaret Holloway

As well as being a creative, productive and accomplished artist, Margaret has also been an art teacher, including in botanical art at Cranbourne, and has contributed much with her voluntary community involvement, such as with the Cranbourne Friends RBGV. We owe her a huge debt of gratitude for her energy, encouragement, leadership and warm friendship and wish her every joy and success in her new artistic endeavours.

By Margaret Godlewski, with much help from the Botanical Illustrators Group

Pen and Ink Workshop with Pauline Dewar

22-23 May

This workshop covered the background history of the development of monochrome illustration as an art form, concentrating on the modern use of pen and ink, including materials and methods as well as techniques for achieving interesting, accurate and aesthetically pleasing work.

Pauline took up botanical illustration as a retirement pursuit and continues to exhibit in Melbourne and interstate, receiving a Highly Commended Award in the Margaret Flockton Exhibition of Scientific Illustration in 2012-2014 and being accepted as a finalist in the 2014 Waterhouse Art Exhibition.



Pen & ink drawing of Pomegranate by Ann Duncan. Photo: Margaret Godlewski

Her work is represented in the State Botanical Collection as well as in private collections.

Beginners Watercolour Workshop with Marta Salamon

23 - 25 October 2017

Elliot Centre, RBGV Cranbourne Gardens

Following our successful beginners workshop earlier in the year, we are able to provide a follow-up workshop to refresh and extend skills in painting and drawing and give an opportunity to those who would like to begin. In particular, the aim will be to complete a set of drawings looking at the geometrical shapes of flowers as a way of achieving an accurate resemblance. In addition emphasis will be on mixing different greens for painting various leaves. This will be a three day workshop with Marta Salamon, a distinguished botanical

illustrator and fine art teacher; winner of the Celia Rosser medal at the 2016 Art of Botanical Illustration exhibition Melbourne.

Limit of 10 participants. Bookings via booking form only.

For further information about this workshop contact Margaret Kitchen on 0413 664 295.

Members \$285, Non-members \$315

All materials supplied

Open House Elliot Centre

2nd Thursday of
the month

1pm to 4pm

Elliot Centre,
RBGV Cranbourne
Gardens

Contact:

Helen Morrow
9850 9125

At the April Open House, Alex Smart took us on a tour to South Africa. Alex and Wendy started their trip with a safari at a game reserve to view lions, cheetahs and a leopard. They then joined the Cranbourne Friends' Tour with 15 others.

The Friends group started in Johannesburg and visited some stunning private gardens. Many of the National Botanic Gardens receive public funds and one of these is the Walter Sisulu NBG, a formal garden with mountains as a back drop. A walk to Witpoortjie Falls introduced them to a wildflower heathland.

Next they flew to Cape Town for a coach tour of the area. The Cape Floristic Region is one of the six floral kingdoms in the world. Five nights based in Cape Town gave time for visits to the wildflower region of Namaqualand, Stellenbosch Gardens and several more Botanic Gardens. The internationally renowned Kirstenbosch NBG on the eastern slopes of Table Mountain, with displays of Proteaceae members, Cycads and many smaller indigenous plants was one of the highlights of their trip. Thanks Alex, for the entertaining talk.

In May, Rodger Elliot gave a presentation about the setting up of the Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria display garden at the Chelsea Flower Show. These displays must be presented with plants in pristine condition, no leaf out of place and all to be created in a couple of weeks. Many exhausted workers finished the display just in time to win a prestigious Gold Medal. Once again, thanks Rodger for your presentation.

June took us back to plants. Charles Young offered a presentation about growing *Swainsona formosa*. He took us through the history of the plant from early collecting by William Dampier and through several name changes to the current name.

Swainsona formosa is the floral emblem of South Australia and is found growing in the low rainfall desert areas of that state, although it is known to cross the border into WA and NSW. It is best grown in a container from seed; Charles suggested that the seed germinates successfully if covered in hot water (not boiling) and soaked overnight. Use good well-drained potting mix as they like to be moist but not wet and don't water onto the leaves. They also respond well to



Sturt Pea, *Swainsona formosa* thriving in a waterwell pot. Photo: Rodger Elliot

liquid seaweed tonics. Gwen mentioned they have been grown successfully in self-watering pots. At the presentation, a few packets of seed were available. If you took a packet, do let me know if you had any success and I would love to see a photo. Thanks Charles for your presentation.

The Elliot Centre is open to members on the 2nd Thursday of each month from 1pm - 4pm. Members are invited to come along to interesting and inspiring presentations. This is a free event, no booking required and afternoon tea is provided.

The Friends Nursery is open on Thursdays 10am to 2pm.

Upcoming Events:

On 14 September we will be very fortunate to have Cranbourne Friends' Roger Francey and Penny Whetton leading us to a better understanding of the current Climate Change status. Both are highly credentialled climate scientists. Roger will talk about CSIRO's Global Atmospheric Sampling Laboratory in Aspendale which has produced the most comprehensive and detailed 25-year record of greenhouse gases in the Southern Hemisphere's history.

Penny will tell us about the CSIRO and Bureau of Meteorology's new national climate projections for Australia released in 2015, which are based on extensive analysis of the latest climate modelling results, thus providing the most comprehensive and up-to-date projections currently available for Australia.

Future topics are still being confirmed. A promo will be emailed at the beginning of each month. If you don't receive emails contact me by phone and please leave your name, number and a short message.



Ken Gosbell, Winner, J.N. Hobbs Memorial Award

Member wins J.N. Hobbs Memorial Medal

One of our members, Ken Gosbell, has received the very prestigious J.N. Hobbs Memorial Medal from BirdLife Australia. It is conferred for outstanding contributions to Australasian ornithology by an amateur ornithologist. Ken has played a large and important role in studies of the migrations of our shorebirds, identifying the threats that they face, and bringing the urgency of these threats to the attention of both public and government. He has been deeply involved in many aspects regarding the conservation of Australian shorebirds and also been vitally involved in many behind-the-scenes activities of Birdlife Australia. Ken has spoken to the Friends about his groundbreaking bird migration studies. His wife Carlene is a talented member of the Botanical Fabricators.

Useful Australian Plants Day

Saturday 1 July

by Judy Mallinson

This was a very popular and well-attended day and there were six main presenters, all engaging personalities who spoke enthusiastically about their respective topics.

John Thompson gave us an overview of Australian plants in Arts and Crafts covering painting, botanical illustration, sculpture, building ornamentation, illustration, ceramics and glass. How many of us had noticed the gum leaves ornamentation above the clocks at Flinders Street Station?

Hartley Tobin of Wonthaggi Woodcrafters revealed the secrets of turning and carving wood, and the characteristics and types of native woods used since World War Two. Prior to that time only Mulga (*Acacia aneura*) had been used. Hartley talked of burls, knots and the 'inside' of epicormic growth being sought by woodcrafters for their interesting formation and grain. His favourite timbers to work with were Banksia, Casuarina and Callitris.

Pat Dale entertained us with wonderful stories about baskets she had seen or acquired from Aboriginal women and techniques she had learned from them. Both in Aboriginal culture and in the work of Pioneer women, baskets were created for a particular purpose: to carry food or personal items, or huge nets to trap wildlife, even baskets to carry a baby. Weaving materials of grasses, reeds and natural fibres were on display, and Pat explained the treatments required in preparation for weaving.

Andrea Hopgood, a most versatile and talented artist, presented a delightful video of her studio in Berwick and explained her dyeing methods using silk and wool with any natural material from her garden such as petals, leaves, vegetable skins and rusty tins which provide additional colour. Results are subtle and beautiful.

After a break for lunch in the sunshine, Carolyn Landon introduced the keynote speaker, Bruce Pascoe of Bunurong and Tasmanian heritage, and author of *Dark Emu*. In quiet and authoritative voice he presented facts to us about Aboriginal life



Speakers in Q & A session (from left) Pat Dale, Andrea Hopgood, John Thompson and Hartley Tobin. Photo: Judith Cooke

and culture before the advent of white man, giving evidence that the first peoples built dwellings, dammed rivers, sowed, irrigated and tilled the land, citing the native plants they harvested (particularly *Microseris lanceolata* or Myrnong, commonly known as the Yam daisy), dispelling the hunter-gatherer myth that has always surrounded the Aboriginal people. He gave compelling examples of how we should be learning from their ancient understanding of the land and therefore treating the land now.

A delicious afternoon tea was provided by Julian Hills, the Head Chef of Paringa Estate Winery at Red Hill. Julian, son of Cranbourne Friends members Carolyn Landon and Larry Hills, explained that since moving to the Mornington Peninsula, he has explored the use of beach herbs and other native species. We tasted native berries, eel with herbs, quandong, eucalyptus, finger lime and lemon myrtle.

The last speaker was the Friends' own Chloe Foster who explained propagating techniques for Indigenous food plants, with a hands-on demonstration making it all look very easy.

A walk in the Australian Garden with John Arnott and Rodger Elliot to identify 'Useful Plants' completed the afternoon.

This was a highly successful day and great thanks are due to all those responsible for it.

Membership Update

Please contact Helen if you have any membership queries:

Phone: 9850 9125; if you leave a message I will return your call

Email: membership@rbgfriendscranbourne.org.au

The annual membership renewal for the Friends was due on the 1st July. Following the subscription reminder in the Winter Naturelink I have received lots of payments. Thank you to all who have paid and for your prompt response.

For those who have not yet paid, you will receive a reminder in this newsletter. I hope to hear from you soon.

If you are a member who pays directly into the bank or by transfer, please be sure to use the code 'Subs' and your family name as the reference, and send the renewal form and receipt to me by post or email.

We are delighted to welcome 28 new members this quarter and look forward to meeting them at some of our activities and special interest groups.

Welcome to Jason Alcock, Jennifer Allerton, Lyhn & Gordon Barfield, Margaret, Willem, Renata & Vanessa Boon, Tom Gleeson, Maree Hart, Kiersten Jorgensen, Cynthia Lai, Norma McDonald, Kerry McLaughlin, Peggy Muntz, Yvonne & Geoff Preston, Rodney Pitt, Debra & Geoffrey O'Brien, Mick Robertson & Gill Read, Carole & David Scholes, Helen Stalder, Jean Svoboda, Yvonne Turner and Arimbi Winoto.

Backyard Trees Workshop

Sunday 30 April

by Jan Chamberlain

With a stellar line up of speakers, David Cantrill, Executive Director Science at the Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria, started the morning off with a presentation on the Carbon Accounting project at the Melbourne Gardens, being undertaken with Melbourne University accounting students. This explored the many carbon transactions that exist in the gardens. When you know and understand these transactions, you can then make sound business decisions. We know that plants fix carbon but how much of that remains in the gardens and soil and how much is lost? The amount of carbon in a tree depends on factors such as its size, growth stage, and age. We then heard of the types of measurements needed for these calculations.

The second presenter was Dr Greg Moore, School of Ecosystem & Forest Science, University of Melbourne, and his subject was Urban Tree Planting. We were surprised to hear that the tree cover of greater Melbourne is not as dense as many of us think. Liveable cities must have greenery. Trees give us shade, reduce wind speed and stabilise soils. We can't get these benefits from trees in public spaces alone so we all need to plant trees in our backyards.

Dr Alistair Watt, a renowned grower and plant-hunter, provided information on the amazing plant group known as Gymnosperms. Gymnosperm means naked seed and these plants are fertilized directly by pollen. Some gymnosperms that are suitable for backyards are the Wollemi Pine, *Wollemia nobilis*; Cycads (which fall outside the definition of being a tree and are instead very ornamental gymnosperms with *Cycas angulata*, *C. calcicola*, *C. communis*, *C. furfuracea* and *C. media* worthy of consideration for cultivation; Celery Top Pine, *Phyllocladus asplenifolius* and a number of species of Cypress Pines, *Callitris baileyi*, *C. rhomboidea*, *C. pressii*, *C. oblonga* and *C. glaucophylla*.

Rodger Elliot spoke about a range of Sheoaks and other Australian trees that were worth considering for our backyards (and front yards!). Allocasuarinas and their relatives are often known as Sheoaks and are an extremely important component of Australia's vegetation. This group of plants is nitrogen-fixing while the leaf litter is high in nitrogen and prized for cultivating terrestrial orchids. In Australia, there are 61 species of Allocasuarina, 6 species of Casuarina and 1 species of Gymnostoma. The sound of the wind through the foliage of sheoaks can be mesmerising and they can have attractive bark (tessellated, stringy or smooth). Female plants often have reddish flowers clustered on the stems followed by decorative cones, while male plants usually have buff to brown male flowers at the end of the branchlets.

Some trees that were recommended:



Rodger Elliot leading the group talking about *Leptospermum brachyandrum* in background. Photo: Jan Chamberlain

Casuarina pauper (for dry areas), *C. equisetifolia* (for tropical and subtropical areas), *C. glauca* (will sucker and a prostrate selection is known as 'Cousin It').

Cranbourne Friends member John Thompson presented the Social and Cultural Side of Our Backyard Trees. William Dampier collected plants here in 1688 finding 'dragon trees' which exuded a red sap. The first Australians had used local plants for tens of thousands of years before these sailors hit our shores. The Bunya Bunya Pine (food), Plum Pine (edible fruit), Black Bean Tree (food but only after careful preparation), Desert Lime, Quandongs, Macadamia (food) and the Hoop Pine (resin used as a glue) are but some of the plants used.

The European settlers modelled their gardens on those of the mother country and they were a mix of indigenous and exotic plants. Large trees such as Bunya bunyas and Hoop Pines were often planted.

The arts and crafts uses were as varied as depiction on stamps, furniture, icy pole sticks, panelling and building.

Kevin Ritchie, President, Native Bonsai Club, explored Penjing or Bonsai with Australian Trees which are ideal for those of us with limited garden space. The Australian style of bonsai is based on the Japanese style and the aim is to give a feeling of the plant's origin.

Some tips for growing great Bonsai: good potting mix structure, good watering, good fertilising, keep them out of the wind, do not root prune in mid-winter or in January. Australian trees that are quite successful in bonsai include: Grevilleas, *Leptospermum laevigatum*, Bunya Bunya Pine, Wollemi Pine and *Nothofagus cunninghamii*. Some of these plants were included in the amazing Bonsai specimen display.

A walk around the Cranbourne Gardens with John Arnott Manager Horticulture, Cranbourne Gardens and Rodger Elliot followed the presentations where various suitable trees were shown to us in situ.

Thanks as always to the organisers of the event and to Chloe Foster for being the MC of the day.

Attila Kapitany - Australian Succulents; Boabs and Bottle trees

Saturday 16 June

by Helen Kennedy

Attila Kapitany, ebullient and well-known 'Succulentophile', took his audience on a truly interesting journey as we explored the diversity of some of Australia's fascinating, yet often not well-known, Australian plants.

The morning was devoted to succulents, Attila first explaining that xerophytes (plants that have adapted to dry areas with little water) are, perhaps surprisingly, not always succulent (i.e. possessing water storage tissue). And some of the well-known and attractive succulents have suffered from poor public profiles since early settler days when *Carpobrotus* was fed to pigs; since then bearing the ugly name 'pigface'.

Attila and his partner Michele have for many years been exploring the outback, searching for new species. They often make their best discoveries on roadsides as disturbed soil, roadside gravel and rain-holding depressions create perfect conditions for germination and growth.

We were blown away by photographs of stunning Calandrinias in every colour and shape, some like fat jelly beans, others like pink primulas; fleshy leaves as well as tuberous roots being the water storages. (Apparently many desert animals rely on calandrinias for their moisture). The epiphytic orchid, *Dockrillia*, is also a succulent as are the magnificent *Doryanthes* with their exposed stems and roots storing their water. *Halosarcia bulbosa* is extraordinarily coloured and shaped, and found only in one place in WA. It is a rare and protected variety of samphire. This genus includes many of the world's most salt-tolerant succulents.

I think many of us were amazed to learn that there are at least 400 native succulents, many of which are as yet undescribed.

In the afternoon, we met the largest succulent plants in the world, the boabs and bottle "trees". Neither is a true tree, lacking any woody structures; instead they are herbaceous and have fleshy tissue that stores water and which contracts and expands depending on water availability. One spectacular photo showed the huge swelling change wrought by submersion in flood waters!

Adansonia gregorii is the iconic boab of Australia's north-west corner and it grows most successfully there. However, Queensland's *Brachychiton rupestris* or bottle tree is cultivated throughout the country due to its increased popularity. It apparently now adds more value to properties for sale than any other tree! (And we are growing seven of them in our own garden – still babies, alas!). Attila explained the significant difference between the flowers, fruit and leaves of the two genera and expounded on the values of *Brachychiton* as a garden specimen.

Brachychitons can be pruned quite severely and very large trees can be transplanted, as we have seen at Cranbourne Gardens. You can



Boab, *Adansonia gregorii* near Fitzroy River
Photo: Rodger Elliot



This *Calandrinia* species shows an unusual purple colouration to the leaves
Photo: Michele Kapitany

even eat the taproot (it is crisp like an apple) should you so desire! I imagine that some in the audience have, like me, bought one of the large, hard oval fruits of the *Adansonia*, beautifully etched by an aboriginal artist in NT. Every time I see the boat-shaped seed pod of *Brachychiton rupestris*, I'm immediately transported to my childhood when we used to try to put the 'itchy pod' seeds of the Kurrajong, *B. populneus*, down the backs of our 'enemies'. Wiser heads, like Rudolph Schulz, began growing plantations of *B. rupestris* in the 1980s in Bannockburn, Victoria. Attila said that these mature plants now sell for thousands of dollars each.

If you can find a copy of Attila's really beautiful book *Australian Succulent Plants* which was published in 2007, then your effort will be well-rewarded. And make sure you visit his stunning garden in Narre Warren if and when it is open again. Both, like the talks on Saturday, will open your eyes afresh to the beauty and amazing diversity of our Australian succulents.

Visit to RAW Garden and Veg Out Garden

Tuesday 2 May

by Lyn Blackburne

Although rain was predicted, the sun was shining, as we gathered at the RAW Garden in Brighton, where we were warmly greeted by Mariam Issa who is the driving force behind the Garden. The RAW Garden, which is designed using permaculture principles, is set up in the front and back yard of a suburban block.

We started the day with morning tea and a casual wander around the Garden. We then sat in the story telling circle, as Mariam shared her story with us and explained the vision behind the RAW Garden. The Garden is the focal point for developing a sense of community for women from all cultures and endeavours, to overcome many people's sense of isolation. This is done through a variety of activities such as cooking, storytelling and gardening. Some of our group then shared their stories and experiences.

As we toured the Garden with Mariam, we were amazed at the variety of food trees and vegetables that were growing so productively. Community members tend the garden and share the produce. As in all good gardens, composting and chooks played very important roles. Mariam's passion and commitment was very inspiring.

We then travelled to Veg Out Community Garden in St Kilda to meet Hugh and John. Here again we were met by people with amazing passion and an understanding of



Cranbourne Friends at the RAW Community Garden.

the importance of community. Hugh told us about the many features of Veg Out and John gave a detailed explanation of his effective composting system. Although it was at the end of the summer growing season, in many plots there were prolific autumn crops of organically grown capsicums, chilli, eggplants and more. It was interesting to see the variety of materials being used within the garden such as old gates and metal bedframes for plants to grow upon. There were v-shaped raised garden beds constructed to make easy wheelchair access for garden members. Another highlight of the garden was the intriguing art works from the nearby artists' studios, which were woven into the landscape of the garden. The garden was extremely colourful and vibrant. A truly interesting place to visit.

Bushland Breakfast with Warren Worboys

Saturday 3 June

by Chloe Foster and Wendy Smart

Luckily for us the rain held off for a few enjoyable hours in early June. We gathered bright and early in the Elliot Centre for a delicious breakfast of homemade jams, hot coffee, fruit and toast, before wandering into the Cranbourne Bushland with the RBGV's longest-serving member of staff, Warren Worboys. Warren was gracious enough to give up his time to join the Friends and lead us on a morning ramble throughout the bushland. Warren originally worked with RBG Melbourne but about 30 years ago transferred to Cranbourne Gardens. At that time he and his family lived in a house that was situated near what is now the Red Sand Garden.

Warren explained some of the Garden's varied history. During the Vietnam War it provided an isolated bush area for troop training and reconnaissance. At other times there have been cars competing in hill climb racing events over rises and sand dunes, as well as scout group camps.

Moving on to Trig Point, the 360 degree views are outstanding. While the city skyscrapers were not quite visible to the south, Western Port Bay could just be identified. Trig Point is situated well above the Australian Garden and much of the sand for construction work was taken from this area over many years. Remnants of the rail

tracks used for conveying sand around the quarry were found during construction of the Australian Garden.

Down the Perched Lake Track, Warren explained the track is the most reliable area for orchids. With some more dedicated searching we found colonies of greenhood rosettes developing, some already with flower spikes appearing. Unfortunately the Perched Lake is quite dry and has been for some years. It has the unusual characteristic of a layer of peat which was laid down thousands of years ago and which now forms an almost impenetrable barrier to the water. Thus the water is simply sitting on top of the peat barrier.

In an area known to Warren as the "Oily Dam", we learned that there used to be a maintenance and equipment depot for quarry operations. Several years of activities like dumping sump oil meant that the residue has leaked around the area. The result is a contamination of the soil and a lake area now known as Oily Dam. Restoration of the area is problematic.

About 20 years ago, it was decided that some plantings should be undertaken to experiment with various types of plants that could be successful. There is now a large number of very mature Banksias, Casuarinas and Dryandras in this area.

Eucalypts and Their Current Status

Afternoon presentation by Prof. David Cantrill

Sunday 25 June

by Kate Walsh

With illustrated examples of many iconic Eucalypts, this talk gave insights into the complex unfolding of knowledge that leads to name reviews.

Scientific names provide information on relationships, evolutionary lineages, and characteristics. One practical application of this is the identification of wild relatives to improve crop plants for global food and fibre security.

Eucalypts are currently divided into *Angophora*, *Corymbia* (Bloodwood), and *Eucalyptus* species. Morphological features are frequently used for identification but they are influenced by life stage and environment, and there are always exceptions!

However DNA analysis and chloroplast genomics are revealing more about evolutionary lineages. Researchers look for

consistency between morphology and DNA testing. More data are needed but the family tree of *Angophora*, *Corymbia*, and *Eucalyptus* indicates name changes may be on the horizon once again.

Detailed information about eucalypts can be accessed from various books and websites. *Euclid Eucalypts of Australia* DVD, two new books by Dean Nicolle: *Taller Eucalypts for Planting in Australia* and *Smaller Eucalypts for Planting in Australia* and the continually updated online *VicFlora* (<https://vicflora.rbg.vic.gov.au/>) were some mentioned.

One of the privileges of being a member of the Cranbourne Friends RBGV is the access to excellent and clearly communicated scientific research. We were disappointed that Dr Frank Udovicic was unable to attend, but we were delighted that his replacement was Professor David Cantrill.

The true glory of *Corymbia ficifolia* in three flower colour variants.

Photo: Mack Fenwick



Annual Luncheon

Saturday 6 May

by Margaret and Richard Clarke

A very happy and relaxed annual luncheon was held in the Tarnuk Room on Saturday 6 May. Eighty guests attended to hear the guest speaker Elaine Canty, the immediate past Chairperson of the RBGV Board, reflect on highlights of her brilliant career. Originally a lawyer, she migrated to other roles becoming a well known radio host in ABC sport, a member of the AFL Tribunal and Chairperson of various organisations. The challenges she faced of being a female in an essentially male domain were illustrated with many amusing anecdotes. Chris Russell, our Director, outlined the developments that had taken place over the previous year and notably the directions

that the new Cranbourne Gardens Master Plan will be taking over the next 10 years. The Sorrento Catering Company served a delicious lunch, and our Silent Auction was held with the items making a great display at the entrance to the Tarnuk Room. It was a lovely social event with time to chat with old and new friends between courses. Thanks go to the many members and organisations that contributed to the Silent Auction, the production of the attractive menus, the flowers and in particular the personal time donated by many Friends that led to this very successful function.

The Luncheon crowd in the Tarnuk Room
Photo: Gwen Elliot

