

NATURELINK

NEWSLETTER OF THE CRANBOURNE FRIENDS ROYAL BOTANIC GARDENS VICTORIA INC.

VOLUME 26 :2| WINTER 2019



Rosy Hyacinth Orchid (Dipodium roseum). Photographer, Amy Akers



CRANBOURNE FRIENDS

ROYAL
BOTANIC GARDENS
VICTORIA

Coming events

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garden cemetery**

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in mysterious
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plant collection
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If print version, this magazine is printed on recycled paper

Historic Boroondara Cemetery with Helen Page and Yarra Bend Park with Leon Costermans

Start a day of contrasts at 10am, with refreshments at Boroondara Cemetery Gatehouse, where we will meet Cranbourne Friends' member Helen Page. Helen, a current member of the Boroondara Cemetery Trust, has been vitally involved in restoring and enhancing the landscape of this important site.

Boroondara Cemetery, which was laid out in the late 1800s as a 'garden cemetery', is thought to be Australia's first such cemetery. In the early 1900s it was the place to go on a Sunday because it was so beautiful. After World War Two gardening was seen to be too expensive, so it was just 'kept tidy'. In the 1980s, the cemetery was blanket-sprayed with the herbicide Glyphosate, resulting in a 'burnt earth' appearance and loss of much of the 'garden' planting.



Since 2013 the use of Glyphosate has been reduced considerably and in 2016 it ended (except for painting of freshly-cut woody weeds). In 2000, Ken Duxbury recalled the cemetery from his childhood, as having 'dense swards of kangaroo grass, drifts of *Dianella*, masses of blue flowers and berries, and innumerable butterflies'. Members of the Heritage Rose Society have also confirmed that up to the 1980s (prior to the widespread use of herbicides) the cemetery, especially the eastern end, contained many wonderful old roses. These recollections are inspiring us to return the cemetery to a garden cemetery with a lot of planting around old and abandoned graves.

At 12 noon we will travel to Studley Park where we will have our BYO lunches near the Studley Park Boat Shed on the Yarra River. Hot and cold beverages will be available there.



From 1 pm we will be led by the renowned Leon Costermans, author of the best-selling *Native Trees and Shrubs of South-eastern Australia*, on a wander in the park to explore the fascinating geology and plants of the area. The Cranbourne Friends are really privileged to have Leon lead us on this day. Yarra Bend Park is made up of two soil types, Silurian mudstone/sandstone sediments and basalt-derived soils. Leon is in the throes of completing a book on the geology of Victoria, so we will have the best of both worlds with his company.

Discovery Day Monday 12 August 2019

9:45 for 10:00am
start (finishing at
about 3:00 pm)

430 High St,
Kew (parking
in Parkhill Road
and High Street)

Members \$50
Non-members
\$55
Students \$10

Please book
via the booking
form

Contact:
Rodger Elliot
rgelliot@
optusnet.
com.au

or
8774 2483

*Photos (top), brilliant
Scarlet Flowering Gum,
Corymbia ficifolia amidst
the graves in Boroondara
Cemetery.
(Bottom) Relatively
recent Australian
plantings in 2018.
Photos: Helen Page*

Increase in subscriptions

Rising administrative costs including for regulatory compliance have led to a decision to reluctantly increase membership subscription fees for 2019/20.

We are grateful for your ongoing support.

Roger Watt, President, Cranbourne Friends

**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.**

Place the dates in your diaries now

This calendar may be subject to change. There have been some changes to what was listed in the Summer *Naturelink*. Open House Events are for Friends Members only.

JUNE

Sunday 2 June:

Friends Planning Day for 2020-2021 events

Thursday 13 June:

Open House: Elliot Centre
African Safari with Laurie Living

Sunday 23 June:

Afternoon Talk: Yarra and Werribee Riverkeepers: Andrew Kelly and John Forrester

JULY

Thursday 11 July:

Open House: Elliot Centre
2018 Friends Sicily Tour with Wendy Smart and Rodger Elliot

Saturday/Sunday 27/28 July:

Growing Friends Plant Sale

AUGUST

Saturday 3 August:

Afternoon Talk: The Earth moves in mysterious ways - Peter Betts, Professor of Tectonics, Monash

Thursday 8 August:

Open House: Elliot Centre

Monday 12 August:

Discovery Day: Kew Cemetery and Yarra Bend Park

Sunday 18 August

Open House Weekend: Gwen and Rodger Elliot: Nature, Gardens and Frank Lloyd Wright in Pennsylvania, USA

Saturday 31 August - Saturday 7 September

Discovery Tour: NW Victoria

Growing Friends Plant Sale Winter 2019

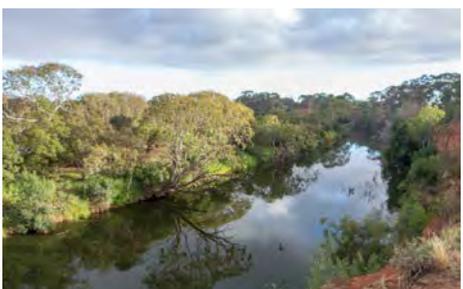
Saturday 27 and Sunday 28 July, 10am to 4pm

Plant list available one week prior to sale -

www.rbgfriendscranbourne.org.au



Yarra and Werribee Riverkeepers: Andrew Kelly and John Forrester



Riverkeepers supporting Melbourne's waterways

The Yarra Riverkeeper **Andrew Kelly** and the Werribee Riverkeeper **John Forrester** will tell us of the voluntary work they do, from enhancing the health of the waterways to minimising or collecting rubbish.

Please book via the booking form if you are coming along to hear more about this vital work. Contact Alex Smart, to find out more.

Afternoon Coffee, Cake and Talk Sunday 23 June 2019

2pm - 3.30pm,
Auditorium

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

Contact:

Alex Smart,
smartie38@bigpond.com

9707 5275

Two views of the Werribee River at Werribee Park in 2015.
Photos: Peter Miller

The Earth moves in mysterious ways Prof. Peter Betts

Professor Peter Betts will tell us about his journey from plumber's son in East Gippsland to becoming an academic geologist and why Earth Sciences are significant for society. He will illustrate how Earth Scientists image the Earth today and what this information tells us about our planet, and provide a short synopsis of the dynamic geology that we stand on here in Melbourne.

Peter Betts is a Professor of Tectonics from the School of Earth Atmosphere and Environment at Monash University. He started his journey at Monash as a student in 1989 and completed his PhD on the geology of the Mount Isa region in NW Queensland. Since 2000 he has been a teaching and research academic at Monash University, and is currently the Associate Dean of Graduate Research in the Faculty of Science.

Peter's research interests are in the large-scale movements of tectonic plates, which form the outer skin of Earth, and how these movements are recognised in the cryptic rock record. His main areas of expertise are in structural geology, which looks at why and how rocks deform under stress, and the interpretation and modelling of the Earth's gravity and magnetic field, which can be used to image buried rocks below the surface of the Earth. Peter applies his expertise to many different research problems including plate reconstructions, the tectonic evolution of the Australian plate, Red Sea tectonics, and collision between the Australian and Pacific plates in New Zealand.



Peter Betts in the Kaikora area, New Zealand in 2014.

**Afternoon
Coffee,
Cake & Talk**

**Saturday 3
August 2019**

2pm - 3.30pm
Auditorium

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

Please book
via the
booking form

Contact
Rodger Elliot
rgelliot@
optusnet.com.
au

Nature Gardens and Frank Lloyd Wright in Pennsylvania, USA

In September 2017 Gwen and Rodger Elliot travelled to Pennsylvania for their son's wedding that took place in the grounds of **Kentuck Knob**, a Frank Lloyd Wright house at Chalk Hill. They also visited Wright's iconic **Fallingwater**, perhaps the most famous building in USA, which has a wonderful natural garden.

While in Pennsylvania they visited highly regarded properties in eastern Pennsylvania (possibly the area most famous for gardens in the USA). They explored the superb **Longwood Gardens** (to which the Elliots have provided Australian plants over the years), and grand **Winterthur**, both of which were created by members of the DuPont family with unlimited budgets, as well as **Chanticleer**. Swarthmore College is a Liberal Arts University that has the wonderful **Scott Arboretum** as the University grounds. In Pittsburgh the **Phipps Conservatory** was displaying an amazing exhibition of glass blown plants in their conservatories.

Come along to enjoy a presentation on an aspect of America we do not often see and hear about in Australia. Refreshments will be served.



'Fallingwater' in rural southwestern Pennsylvania was designed by Frank Lloyd Wright, one of America's most well-known architects. Photo Rodger Elliot



Stunning and beautiful blown glass orchids of Jason B Gamrath on display in the Phipps Conservatory, Pittsburgh Pennsylvania USA. Photo Rodger Elliot

**Friends
Weekend
Open
House**

**Sunday 18
August 2019**
2pm - 3.30pm
Elliot Centre

Contact:
Helen Morrow

helen@
themorrrows.
net.au

9850 9125

Friends Planning Day for 2020-21 events

What events or activities would you like to attend during 2020-21? The Events Subcommittee and General Committee members would like to hear your suggestions for events we could organise, such as workshops, Discovery Days/Weekends, or guest speakers; if you have other ideas we would love to hear them.

We welcome and encourage Cranbourne Friends to contribute suggestions, views and ideas in person on **Sunday, 2nd June 2019**. The morning will commence with a delicious morning tea before the brainstorming session begins, with nibbles served during the session. If unable to attend, email your suggested event to Barbara Jeffrey (bajeffrey@westnet.com.au) so it can be raised, but please ensure that you include the topic title, possible content and suggested speakers.

**Sunday 2nd
June 2019**

9:30am (for
10am start) to
1pm

Auditorium

Proposed Cranbourne Friends Tours

1 Sicily Tour, April/May 2020:

Note FINAL CALL FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST by 21st JUNE, 2019

Alf Reina is prepared to host another Sicilian Tour during April /May 2020 (note earlier start date). Register your expression of interest by Monday June 21 via the Booking Form, as 2020 may be your last chance.

2 Tasmanian Tour, January 2021:

Cranbourne Friends Patron Angus Stewart has offered to lead a Tour. To whet your appetite, here are some places that may end up in the itinerary:

- *Tasman Peninsula walks*, including Tessellated Pavement (Eaglehawk Neck).
- *Hobart region*.
- *Mt Wellington/Kunanyi*: The beautiful mountain lookout also has sub-alpine vegetation. Possible tour of Angus's planned Edible Precinct.
- *Maria Island*: A boat ride to this historic island near Triabunna. Includes walks to sample the dry sclerophyll country of the island's East coast.
- We could also visit the magical *Wineglass Bay* and a winery in this region.
- Visit the rugged *West Coast* to sample cool temperate rainforest vegetation plus perhaps a Gordon River cruise and local bushwalks.
- *Cradle Mountain*: A couple of nights at this renowned region with short walks amongst sub-alpine flora, like Huon Pine and Celery Top Pine.

Such a tour could be very tempting!

3 Lord Howe Island, October 2021: We desperately need more Expressions of Interest in this Tour to ensure this tour will go ahead. Bird-people would have a ball in October as many of the migratory birds will be breeding there. The Tour will be limited to 14 participants but our leader Ian Hutton is happy to do back-to-back Tours if we can get 28 people to register.

4 New Caledonia, possibly 2022: Very early in the planning procedure.

5 USA National Parks, possibly May 2022: Initial work has begun with planning and we are working with a registered travel agent in California. Our itinerary will include National Parks, reserves and top quality Botanic Gardens.

6 New Zealand, possibly 2023: Very early in the planning procedure.

- People wishing to participate in any of the Tours must be members of the Cranbourne or Melbourne Friends.
- **To be listed as interested in any of these proposed Tours, place your name in the relevant space on the Booking Form and send it to the Booking Officer - but avoid sending a second request if you have already sent an EOI for a tour.**
- The Cranbourne Friends run these tours as fund raising events. Tour participants pay a donation levy for each tour with the funds benefiting projects at Cranbourne Gardens.



Above: *Tasmanian Christmas Bell, Blandfordia punicea.*
Below: *Startling Tasmanian mountain landscape with Richea scoparia*
Photos Rodger Elliot



**For further
information**

Contact
Rodger
Elliot

[rgelliot@
optusnet.
com.au](mailto:rgelliot@optusnet.com.au)

0448 013 892



Eucalyptus pauciflora
subsp. *niphophila*.



Matthew Henderson at Mt Little Higginbotham.



Olearia phlogopappa
subsp. *flavescens*.

Below: Volunteers, TAFE horticulture students, Friends and staff, at the 'circles' planting day. Photo: Warren Worboys



Going Wild: A key recommendation arising from the *Cranbourne Gardens Master Plan 2016 – 2026* was to 'develop a Living Plant Collections Plan with an emphasis on the utilisation, conservation and display of Australian plants with a focus on south-eastern mainland Australian flora'. Completion of this Plan is on track for later this year, but it is pleasing that the horticulture team are 'taking the lead' and making significant inroads into developing living collections and collecting wild plant material.

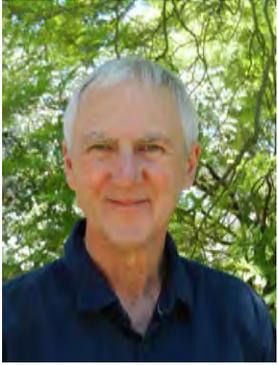
Over the past 18 months the number of wild collected plants in the Australian Garden has increased, with the addition of 200 species of plants collected by horticulture staff. We have been field collecting from locations across the State including the Grampians, Anglesea Heathlands, Ironbark Basin, Mt Hotham, Mt Baw Baw, Mt Buffalo, Feathertop, Wyperfeld, Hattah Lakes, Calperum Station, Neds Corner Station and smaller reserves in NW Victoria.

The term 'plant provenance' relates to the source of material acquired for collections development, and can be from cultivated material or indeed collected from the wild. Given the complexity, time and resources required to wild collect it's reasonable to ask why are we placing an emphasis on wild collected plants for selected areas of the Australian Garden? Botanic gardens hold collections of plants for scientific interpretation, story telling, conservation and of course aesthetic purposes. As such our collections play a number of important roles. Wild collected plants have more scientific, genetic and conservation value as they are from a known source at a known point in time. In addition, as well as collecting material for propagation, we also gather a herbarium voucher and document other valuable information about the collection site including a description of the local ecosystem, a list of associated plants and any other information that might be useful.

Our most current plant collection expeditions (April/June 2019) are going (much) further afield! Warren Worboys will be heading two teams of RBGV horticulturists to collect from the high mountain peaks of Far North Queensland. The RBGV is a part of a broader collaborative group of universities, herbaria and botanic gardens that is aiming to collect 70 threatened plant species endemic to these mountain peaks and for these plants to be grown on in *ex situ* collection holdings across a number of east coast botanic gardens. The main concern here relates to climate change and the prediction for the Queensland peaks to become hotter with less reliable rainfall across the year. Given these species quite literally occur nowhere else on earth, establishing populations in botanic gardens could act as something of a 'backstop to extinction' if the wild populations disappear. The Australian Tropical Herbarium based at James Cook University is the lead agency for this exciting project.

Going wild with fauna, we were delighted to appoint Charlotte Fraser as Southern Brown Bandicoot (SBB) Outreach Officer. This role is responsible for informing and inspiring the local community about the exciting conservation project associated with the Southern Brown Bandicoot. Read more about this project in next (Spring) Naturelink.

This autumn has seen a flurry of planting including two wonderful community planting days in the Red Sand Garden, both of which were well attended by the Friends. Early in April we had over 40 volunteers, Friends, students and staff planting out 1600 *Westringia* 'Smokey' in the Red Sand Garden circles. We will see the grey foliage fill out over the next little while, alongside diverse 'wild plants' settling in across the site.



I've been asked to introduce myself, and I think this is a good idea for all the committee members, so I'll introduce them in forthcoming issues. Here's a picture of myself as I like to be remembered, cycle touring through China. I hope you can still recognise me - because nowadays my crook knee barely allows me to turn the pedals over!



I've spent most of my life in education as teacher, coordinator, principal and consultant. Since resigning from the Education Department, I've been busy building an extension on our house at Mt Martha, and attempting to grow native plants in the surrounding garden. I've been a Garden Ambassador (GA) in the Cranbourne Garden for seven years, which is a joy, but also a learning experience. The education continues for me as President of the Friends, as I'm not a botanist or horticulturalist, and there are so many knowledgeable people about, but that is part of what makes the role so enjoyable.

One of the hardest things for me, since becoming President, is understanding the complexities of the Cranbourne Friends Group, which has evolved over the years to its current structure. That's why, as an incoming President with a relatively short history with the group, I initiated an organisational review to understand where we are at. The picture emerging is fascinating. The group is very successful, as was confirmed in the recent survey of members; you only have to look at the fabulous results of the Growing Friends' Plant sales and the success of the Events Subcommittee with its over-subscribed activities and events, or visit one of our thriving special interest groups, to see that this is so. We can build on our current success to sustain a successful group into the future. We need good communication, internally and externally, not least because we need new members. More work is being done by fewer people; to grow our group, we need to be distinctive and effective in our appeal to the public.

We are already on our way with the new style *Naturelink*. Thank you to those of you who took the trouble to share your thoughts about the last edition - we value your feedback. It gives me the opportunity to introduce and credit the achievements of one of our hardworking Committee members, Rosemary Miller, who contributed so much to the magazine's re-design and editing. That's not to ignore all the other contributors, but when we see such a positive difference in our publication it's great to be able to acknowledge it. We are lucky that Rosemary, our Vice-president and Communications leader, is someone who finds time alongside work commitments to give us the benefit of her professional skills, while expanding and maintaining them and learning a lot about Australian plants and the Cranbourne Gardens.



At our last meeting, the Friends Committee considered a draft vision of what our internal and external communications system could look like three years in the future, and worked out a strategy to make it real. Our aim is to streamline the system to make it more open to participation.

One essential is to establish a clearer definition of our organisation, of "Who we are". After consultation with our special interest groups, the following statement has emerged:

Who we are:

The Cranbourne Friends exists to support the RBGV by undertaking voluntary tasks and organising activities which enhance community understanding and appreciation of the Gardens, and of Australian flora and fauna, and enable the donation of funds to support Gardens' projects.

Cranbourne Friends's tasks and activities are conducted in a spirit of friendship, cooperation and respect between members, to promote feelings of enjoyment and achievement, and in accordance with RBGV procedures.

Friends undertake a wide variety of activities, but we should also recognise that many people are happy simply to support the Gardens through membership. These differences can lead to confusion over people's roles - all are members, but are some also volunteers? And if so, for which organisation? The RBGV or the Friends? A subtle point, but times have changed and there are situations where modern laws specify distinctions. However people see themselves, I hope their participation enables them to feel they are making a difference in our community and also benefiting themselves personally. These two elements are found in our statement and in most definitions of a volunteer.

To refer back to my photo, like so much in life, appearances can be misleading. I appear relaxed, but I had, in fact, just fallen off, and was struggling to lift the heavy bike back up the hill again. But my friend had to take the photo. We were there together and even though it was hard work, we'd shared an amazing experience together, and we'd had fun. That's how I hope it is for all of you.

Membership survey

Thank you to all the members who completed the 2019 Cranbourne Friends Membership Survey. The Friends Committee and Events Subcommittee greatly appreciate the time and consideration that went into your responses. It was lovely to hear from many members their appreciation for the friendly and social nature of Friends events and activities. Please see below a summary of some key responses:

Why did you join the Friends? (Top responses)

- 60% To meet like-minded people
- 58% To support the Gardens financially
- 49% To attend a Friends event
- 39% To join a special interest group

Membership benefits used?

- 97% Read Naturelink newsletter
- 71% Discount at Café or RBGV Gift Shop
- 66% Discount at the Plant Sale
- 66% Read Quicklink e-news

Involvement with events or special interest groups?

- 69% Attended a Friends event (paid)
- 59% Attended Open House talks (free)
- 44% Attended a Friends Annual Lunch
- 33% Participated in a Friends interstate or overseas tour
- 20% Joined the Growing Friends

Thank you also to the many members who contributed detailed feedback and comments, these will be compiled and passed on to the relevant Friends subcommittees and special interest groups. Overall, feedback from members was very positive. However, there is always room for improvement and your comments and suggestions will assist us.



What do you think the Cranbourne Friends do well?

- 88% Offer interesting events and activities
- 79% Offer interesting volunteer opportunities
- 79% Produce interesting and relevant publications, such as Naturelink
- 78% Supply a great range of native plants at the regular Plant Sales

What do you think the Cranbourne Friends could do better?

- 39% Nothing comes to mind
- 33% Online booking events and membership
- 18% More events at weekends/after hours
- 11% More activities for families/ children

Melanie Mantel, Volunteer and Friends Coordinator, Cranbourne Gardens

STAFF
PROFILE



My name is Melanie and I am happy to introduce myself as the Volunteer and Friends Coordinator at the Royal Botanic Gardens of Victoria in Cranbourne. Even though I have only been with the organization and in this role since January 8, I am absolutely loving it!

I will admit I have very little plant knowledge, so please be gentle with me as I am aware and appreciate the immense knowledge a lot of you have. Prior to the Gardens, my employment history was as a zoo keeper, and I am proud to share my experiences.

I studied a Bachelor of Animal and Veterinary Bioscience with a minor in ecology and environmental management with Monash University. Not sure what I wanted to do, I volunteered at Maru Koala and Animal Park, and worked my way up the ranks to Senior Keeper within about 10 months. My primary responsibilities were Tasmanian devils and koalas, as well as: public presentations, school groups, staff and volunteer management. The extent of my plant knowledge came from my duties of feeding, sourcing and harvesting enough and the right species of eucalyptus to feed ten koalas who eat around 1kg of leaf a day!

After Maru I joined the penguin team at Melbourne Aquarium. Caring for a colony of Sub Antarctic Gentoo and King Penguins meant my workplace was an ice playground with temperatures around -3 degrees every day. I was later approached to take up a role at Gumbuya World as senior keeper and head of koalas and Tasmanian devils.

I still work at Gumbuya World on a casual basis, though could not be happier coordinating the amazing group of individuals that are the Garden Ambassadors and the Friends at the RBGV Cranbourne. I am really enjoying my role and I am excited for my future with the Gardens.

I am a local, from Tooradin, and have recently moved to Koo Wee Rup with my partner, our two dogs Georgie and Ted and our pet lizard Jeremy. Outside of work I show Welsh ponies, both led and in harness at various shows including Adelaide and Royal Melbourne. Highlights of my life include my nephew and two nieces and I am counting down till May when I am heading off to Europe for five weeks.

Membership update

Welcome to New Members

This quarter we are pleased to welcome 27 new members: Josh Margalit, Susan Bendyka, Sharon Mountain, Graham Mountain, Kerry Crompton, Cushla Crompton, Therese Crompton, Michele Adler, Rowena Giles, Chris O'Brien, Melanie Mantel, Sue Gilbert, Lynn Demaio, Barbara Grant, Louise Coronel, Chris Long, Danielle Calabro, Neda Sablyak, Igor Sablyak, Lucy Elms, Ana McCloskey, Jo Cavanagh, Richard Cavanagh, Valerie Richardson, Karen Pogni, Pauline Richards and Paul Kearsley. We hope you are enjoying your new membership and all that it has to offer.



Contact

Alexandra Stalder

membership@rbgfriendscranbourne.org.au

0431 025 733

Regular monthly activities

If interested in joining in one of the group activities, please contact the person listed. You don't need specific skills and you will be made most welcome!

GROUP ACTIVITIES



Top: Nature printing demonstration with Christine Grevis-James.
Below: Examples of Christine's cards.



Botanical Illustrators

End-of-year Lunch - 5 December, 2018

Our group enjoyed a convivial lunch at Boon Wurrung Café, reflecting on 2018 and looking forward to more adventures with nature and art in 2019.

Nature Printing - 20 March, 2019

Our colleague, Christine Grevis-James, kindly conducted a productive and enjoyable session of printing directly from plants onto paper using printer's ink and rollers. She guided us through the process and we were able to produce a number of images, including cards. We thank Christine for her generosity, patience and good humour.

Drawing and Painting a Lilly Pilly

We are looking forward to this exciting Botanical art workshop with Dianne Emery on 20-27 May, 2019.

1st and 3rd
Wednesday
of the
month,
10am to
3pm, in the
Elliot Centre

Contact:
Margaret
Kitchen
0413 664
295

illustrators@
rbgfriends
cranbourne.
org.au



Fabricators will be displaying over 30 bags from the group, including this one by Wendy Smart.

Botanical Fabricators

We are interested in creating articles that demonstrate the beauty of Australian Flora and Fauna. For the first time at an Open House in March, we had a table of these items for sale. We will do this again in the future.

From Tuesday 7th to Sunday 12th May, Leesa Chandler's very special **Botanical Bag Exhibition** will be held in the Gallery behind the Visitors' Centre at Cranbourne Gardens. Leesa expects to have over 200 beautiful bags on display. All will be for sale and also eligible to win a competition with a Bernina sewing machine for first prize. See also page 16.

2nd Tuesday
of the month,
10.00am

Contact:
Wendy Smart
9707
5275

wvsmart08@
bigpond.com



Botanical Basketmakers

Join us for a fun day of basketry where you can learn weaving techniques using native Australian plant materials. We meet on the 3rd Saturday every month from 10am to 3pm in the Elliot Centre. BYO lunch (tea and coffee provided) and materials. Beginners are welcome and we can help you with advice on how to get started.

See also page 16

Top: Knotless netting by Cynthia Lai.
Bottom: Muehlenbeckia bowl trimmed with Xanthorrhoea trunk by Liz McDonald.

3rd Saturday
of the month,
10am-3pm

Contact:
Maree Hart,
0412 997 171

maree.e.hart@
gmail.com

Friends in Focus | Judith Cooke

In January, two of us met for a stroll through the Australian Garden. The different colour forms of *Corymbia ficifolia* were a highlight. A photograph of *Brachychiton populneus* 'Jerilderie Red' was later featured on the Friends Facebook and Instagram pages.



Banksia burdettii, Ironbark Garden. Photo Judith Cooke

In February, unexpected heavy showers led to large puddles in the Dry River Bed; even the Dusky Woodswallows were huddling together for warmth. *Banksia burdettii* (top) was in flower.

A 'crowd' of eight attended our meeting in March, including a new member and a visitor, President Roger! The replanted Red Sand Garden, late Summer flowers and birdlife offered a variety of subjects. An image of *Grevillea insignis* subs. *insignis* on Howson Hill received an enthusiastic response on social media, including a Like from CEO Tim Entwisle.



Eucalyptus platypus, Howson Hill. Photo Judith Cooke

Any Friends who enjoy taking photographs and would like to participate in recording the history and development of the Australian Garden are welcome to join us on our rambles.

2nd Saturday of the month, Elliot Centre

Times:
2pm
April to September (Eastern Standard time)

9.30am
October to March (Daylight Saving time)

Growing Friends

The Autumn Plant Sale in March was one of our most successful sales yet with total sales of just over \$21,000.



It was great to see so many members supporting the sale. Lots of people went home with beautiful blue *Veronica arenaria* in flower. If you were one of them, lightly prune this plant after flowering finishes. Another popular plant at the Autumn Sale was *Scleranthus biflorus*.

The success of the Plant Sale is the result of lots of hard work by the wonderful Growing Friends team. Setting up on the Thursday before and packing up on the Monday after are cooperative efforts by the Growing Friends who also welcome the important assistance of Gardens staff. Thank you everyone.

We hope to have good numbers of the following available at the Winter Sale.

Astartea 'Winter Pink' (at right) is a dense, compact shrub that grows to about 50cm x 50 cm and flowers from autumn to spring. It is hardy and long-flowering.



Chorizima cordatum x *ilicifolium* is a small shrub that grows to 1m x 1m with eye-catching red, yellow and pink flowers, mainly in spring. The plant does well in most drained soils with some protection from the sun. It responds well to pruning.

Special Orders

If you are looking for a special plant or multiple plants to plant-out a large area, try the Growing Friends. We may have it in stock or can grow it for you.

Winter Plant Sale
Saturday 27th
Sunday 28th July
in the Gardens

Working Bee
every Thursday
10am - 2pm
at our Nursery

Contact:
growing.
friends@
rbgfriends
cranbourne.org.
au
Marjanne
0431 607796

Nursery open
to members:
Thursdays
10am - 2pm

Friends in the Gardens (FiGs)



Margaret di Nuzzo, Marilyn Bull and Trent, NS line planting day, March.

NS line planting day

Last October the FiGs group helped Mandy Thomson propagate some of the *Chrysocephalum apiculatum* for the Red Sand Garden North South (NS) line rejuvenation. Well, planting day arrived. Not on the Sunday we had planned due to the hot and windy conditions: thank you to the 22 volunteers for this day, it was a pity the weather was against us. We did it the following Wednesday when ten Friends volunteers, plus Mandy Thomson's Nursery volunteers, answered the call to help 20 or so staff members plant up the NS line.



Jason Ceddia NS line planting day.

Five lines of *Chrysocephalum* all evenly spaced were planted by 11.45 am – much faster than anyone envisaged. As a thank you, we were allowed to take home some of the spare plants. Graeme Baker and Jason Ceddia did a splendid job watering in the plants.

Westringia Circles planting day

The *Westringia* plants were ready early and were planted on Friday 5 April. Eight Cranbourne Friends responded, at short notice, to help the Gardens staff and about 20 TAFE horticulture students plant approximately 1,500 *Westringia* – all by lunch time. Again, Jill Burness kindly did the rounds with water bottles to encourage hydration. Saturday found a few of us a bit stiff and appreciating muscles previously neglected. So please stop and admire these plantings as they mature.



Bernie Boulton (planting circles).

Fourth
Wednesday
of the month,
9.45am

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Hookerochloa hookeriana.
Photo, Ivan Margitta

Herbarium Collectors

It is so desperately dry out in the bushland at the Gardens. Even between our monthly collecting days the deterioration is obvious. Plants are struggling and dying. Even tough old eucalyptus are gasping, with leaves drooping. Has the water table dropped?

We have spent some time during the last two collecting days hunting for *Hookerochloa hookeriana* in the bushland. It is unusual for this plant to appear here, as it lives in moist Alpine regions. A plant was dug up and replanted in the Australian Garden where it is thriving. We collected, described and recorded from there, but need to locate it in the bush. With Warren Worboys' help, we believe we have found it, but the area is covered with *Pteridium esculentum* and *Lomandra*. In Spring, we will see its long white plumes.

Our two new members are very enthusiastic and their biology knowledge very useful. We now seem to have access to more Staff plant finders, so our work continues.

1st Monday of
the month,
9am-2pm

Elliot Centre

Contact:
Nola Foster
95835731

'What was I doing over January? Why on earth would you want to go to Mt Hotham at that time of year? There's no snow!'

With us were the very genial and knowledgeable Neville Walsh from the National Herbarium at the RBGV Melbourne Gardens and his lovely partner Jan plus the ever-enthusiastic Matt Henderson, a horticulturalist from the Cranbourne Garden. On the first evening Neville provided an excellent introduction to our High Country flora after which everyone chose a mystery plant card and took on the task of finding the plant and learning everything about it.

The magnificent walk to Mt Feathertop was undertaken on the Sunday, as the weather was expected to get hotter later during our stay. A limited number of people attacked the hike while the majority wandered the Feathertop track until lunchtime under the guidance of Neville and Rodger Elliot to discover a large range of plants with daisies, especially the pristine *Olearia phlogopappa* subspecies *flavescens*, most common. After lunch we travelled in a convoy down the Dargo High Plains Road and stopped to observe displays of *Wahlenbergia gloriosa*, *Acacia obliquinervia*, *Eucalyptus delegatensis*, *Grevillea victoriae*, *Veronica derwentiana*, *Bossiaea bracteosa*, *Bulbines*, Triggerplants, more daisies and also how wildfires can devour some sites but completely miss others.

We were so fortunate to have Neville, as he is a marvellous field botanist who was always willing to discuss any aspects of the plants we came across in our rambles and could always tell us the botanical name of a plant we had found.

On Monday we headed to a little-known gem at the southern end of Hotham Village, Mt Little Higginbotham! This little pimple of a mountain has a very narrow, winding steep track that passes through a marvellous natural garden of shapely snow gums with an underplanting including drifts of clumping *Rhodanthe anthemoides* (Chamomile Sunray), *Podolobium alpestre* (Alpine Shaggy pea) and a number of *Brachyscomes* with *Brachyscome rigidula* the most prolific. Also found were *Aciphylla glacialis* (Mountain Celery) as well as a range of stunning yellow and orange *Craspedias*.

Over the next few days we explored the summit of Mt Hotham, the surrounds of Dinner Plain and the track to Mt Loch. Nicky Zanen provided an insight into the possible danger of rampaging daisy Orange Hawkweed, *Hieracium auranticum*, and how volunteers are helping to control the spread of this State Prohibited weed.

Matt Henderson, who had obtained a special collecting licence, was able to take back a number of species cuttings for propagation at Cranbourne Gardens and a number are now thriving as young plants, preparing for their life in a sub-alpine planting in Australian Garden.

This adventure was a major success with activity, food, fellowship and learning well to the fore. Let there be more of them!



Top 3 photos, Cranbourne Friends at Dinner Plain, with botanist Neville Walsh. Photos Alex Stalder, Gwen Elliot.

Sambar deer on the Bogong High Plains

At our **Alpine Workshop in November**, Zac Walker, from Latrobe University, told us about Sambar deer on the Bogong High Plains. This imported deer is a major problem, with numbers in Victoria recently having grown to 700,000. They could easily spread to Northern Australia, as control using established methods is difficult. Unfortunately in Victoria Sambar deer are classified as 'game', not 'feral'.

In the alpine/sub-alpine areas, the deer trample and eat plants, spread invasive weeds, and reproduce very quickly. They were not seen above the treeline before 2007 and have spread there since the destructive 2009 bushfires.

Open House at the Elliot Centre

Members are invited to come along to hear interesting and inspiring presentations. Events are free and include afternoon tea.

Mining, Macassins and Mangroves

In February Marj Seaton told us of an organised camping trip to Arnhem Land. Starting the year with Northern Australia was great. From Gove, the travellers journeyed through Aboriginal land, focussing on the plants of the area, *Eucalyptus*, *Brachychiton* and *Melaleuca*, and learning about the Aboriginal culture along the way. *Pandanus*, for example, is used for making baskets.

What do Landscape Architects Do?

There were many Friends keen to find out the answer to this question when Barrie Gallacher, Landscape Architect and Garden Ambassador, joined us for the February Sunday talk.

Yamala Mansion in South Frankston, residential subdivisions and public areas around hospitals were typical projects. Selection of tree and plant species, ecology and water systems are important. Earlier, Barry worked on a massive Palace garden in Bahrain.

Maranoa Gardens - Balwyn

Paul Birch, a long-term member of the Cranbourne Friends, is curator of this native garden in Balwyn. Maranoa Garden is a popular place for school visits, locals and any Australian plant enthusiast, with winding pathways, old trees, grassed areas and vistas of the city. A new five level creek ripples through a rain forest area.

The Elliot Centre is open 1pm - 4 pm on the second Thursday of each month.

Contact

Helen
Morrow
9850 9125

Future Topics

June 13 - African Safari

July 11 - Tour of Sicily

August 18 (Sunday, 2pm)
-see page 5

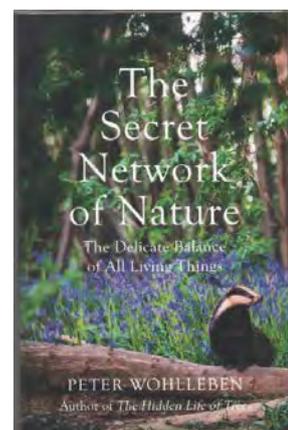
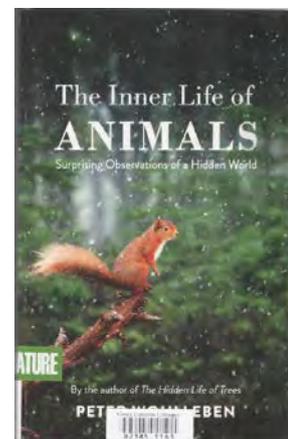
Book Review: Robin Allison

The Mysteries of Nature Trilogy by Peter Wohlleben

The Secret Life of Trees, by Peter Wohlleben, was reviewed in *Naturelink*, Winter 2018, on page 15. That book was the first in Wohlleben's series, 'The Mysteries of Nature Trilogy'. Wohlleben aims to 'act as your interpreter and translate fascinating scientific research into everyday language'. Each book in the trilogy has been beautifully translated from the German by Jane Billinghamurst. These books are published by Penguin and available in bookshops and at most libraries.

The Inner Life of Animals describes how often characteristics we consider 'human' can be applied to animals. Wohlleben and his family are all keen observers of animal behaviour, in nature and in their many and diverse farm animals. The book is full of delightful descriptions of animal behaviour. 'Fridolin' the rooster uses deceit in his sexual escapades (p. 51-52). Wild boar show a sense of danger, fear, and memory of safe places when confronted by hunters (p. 188).

The Secret Network of Nature describes the complicated ways in which particular animals and plants can vitally affect each other within the ecosystem. In Chapter Two he shows the way that the health of forests can be influenced by fish, thanks to the help of bears. It is noted how deeply organisms penetrate the Earth's crust, some being found up to 3.5 kilometres below ground. What's more it was reported at a scientific meeting that bacteria living a kilometre or more below the surface take 500 years to divide! Throughout the book Wohlleben shows how easily ecosystems can be irreparably disturbed, often by humans who sit at the top of the evolutionary tree.



Island Hopping in the Galapagos: In the Footsteps of Darwin: by Lynsey Poore | Rodger Elliot

What a fantastic presentation to start 2019 for the Cranbourne Friends! This illustrated talk on February 10 was outstanding!

We joined Lynsey and her husband Gary aboard a small vessel on a fantastic voyage that visited a number of the ‘outer’ Galapagos Islands that are not often offered on many tours. We learnt about the geology and wildlife of these islands, which so captivated Charles Darwin on his scholarly journey that led to him developing the theory of evolution, expounded in his world-changing book ‘*On the Origin of Species...*’.

Lynsey brought the animals and plants alive as we hopped from one island to another. We encountered a bevy of Darwin’s Finches, giant tortoises with their saddle-like ‘shell’ (‘Galapagos’ comes from the Spanish word ‘galapago’, a type of saddle), blue-footed boobies, Galapagos mockingbirds, flightless cormorants, marine iguanas and the Sally Lightfoot crabs, *Grapsus grapsus*. Plus there were many intriguing plants from the Dry Zone such as the Large (to 12 m) Prickly Pear Cactus, *Opuntia echios var. gigantia*.

Humid Zone vegetation is rich in bromeliads, ferns, orchids and mosses growing as epiphytes which thrive in the prevailing misty conditions. We also learnt that the Candelabra Cactus, *Jasminocereus thoursii* can grow to 7m tall and that the cream/mauve flowers open before dawn. The local subspecies of the Greater Flamingo, *Phoenicopterus ruber subsp. glyphorhynchus* inhabits salt-water lagoons where it devours shrimps and crustaceans.

The Galapagos Dove, *Zenaida galapagoensis*, is under threat from feral cats. Its main foods are seeds, small insects and sometime cactus-fruit pulp. Volcanoes were prevalent and we saw stunningly clear aqua-coloured water in the lava tunnels and a range of adorable seals! Who knew of the Galapagos acacia, *Acacia rorundiana*, found on arid lowlands, or the Galapagos penguin, *Spheniscus mendiculus*, one of the smallest species in the world and the only penguin to breed in the tropics.

There was so much to learn from this marvellous presentation about the extraordinary Galapagos Islands. Post-event evaluation included many comments like the following: ‘Excellent presenter, knew her topic; Great diction – so easy to listen and hear’, ‘Thanks - I’ll visit now’.



Top, View to Island Bartoleme and Pinnacle Rock to Santiago Island.

Bottom, Galapagos Islands Giant Tortoise, Geochelone elephantopus. Photos Lynsey Poore

MIFGS - Flower and Garden Festival

The Cranbourne Friends were invited by the Australian Association of Friends of Botanic Gardens (AAFBG) to take part in their display at Melbourne International Flower and Garden Show in late March. With us in the association’s marquee were the Friends of Melton and Ballarat Botanic Gardens and we shared a table with Melbourne Friends.

Warren Worboys created a lovely floral arrangement for the display, with all the flowers and foliage coming from the Gardens.

Over the five days a rotation of seven members worked at the display. It was small but well worth the time and effort, as it advertised the Gardens and Friends to the public and explained our activities to hundreds of plant enthusiasts. Thank you to all involved.



Top, Native flora from Cranbourne on display at the marquee. Bottom, Helen Kennedy with the Cranbourne display

Thanks to our leaders | by Wendy Smart and Maree Hart

About 13 years ago **Gwen Elliot** set up the **Botanical Fabricators Group** at Cranbourne Gardens. The Fabricators wanted to use materials that celebrated Australian flora and fauna. At that time finding such fabrics required checking out sources for many miles. When Leesa Chandler developed 'Under the Australian Sun', a beautiful fabric range featuring Australian themes, it meant a new level of excitement about items the group could make. Leesa's Textile Exhibitions in cooperation with the Fabricators have brought many visitors to Cranbourne. With the items Fabricators make, money has been raised and many speakers at functions have received gifts.



Gwen Elliot, photo, Rex Shields

Gwen Elliot has now retired as Coordinator so the Fabricators thank her for her enthusiasm and ability to promote Australian Flora and Fauna.



The **Botanical Basketry Group** would similarly like to acknowledge **Lynn Lochrie** who has been Coordinator since setting up the group in 2015. She is now handing over the reins as she is moving to Swifts Creek, East Gippsland. Lynn has been a wonderful guiding hand to all within the group, and has passed on an astounding amount of basketry knowledge. The group is thankful that Lynn remains

with the group as a mentor and fellow basket weaver. Thank you Lynn for your dedication and passion for the Basketmakers group.

(L-R) New Basketry Coordinator Maree Hart with Lynn Lochrie

Calling photographers

Are you interested in photography? Do you have a photograph of Cranbourne Gardens, the surrounding bushland or an Australian native plant that we could use on Naturelink's front cover? We need portrait-shaped high-resolution images; if it is a flower/tree picture we need to identify the plant correctly. Send a small version by email to naturelink@rbgfriendscranbourne.org.au and the editor will contact you if we are considering using your beautiful photo on the cover.

Keen photographer Amy Akers took the cover photo of Rosy Hyacinth Orchid (Dipodium roseum) on the Trig Track at Cranbourne Gardens.



Cranbourne Friends Committee

President: Roger Watts	0409 857 664	Booking Officer	
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Vice President: Helen Morrow	9850 9125	bookings@rbgfriendscranbourne.org.au	
Vice President: Rosemary Miller	0422 8937 45	Events Sub Committee	
Immediate Past President: Indra Kurzeme	0408 002 028	Barbara Jeffrey	Rodger Elliot
Treasurer: Karen Russell	9878 4857	Ros Shepherd	Alex Smart
Membership Secretary: Alexandra Stalder	0458 550 509	Lyn Blackburne	Richard Clarke
RBGV Representative: Chris Russell	5990 2200	Marjanne Rook	Mick Robertson
General Committee:		Naturelink Editor:	
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Christine Kenyon	9589 2154	naturelink@rbgfriendscranbourne.org.au	
Barbara Jeffrey	5998 5410	Quicklink Editor:	
Alexandra Stalder	0458 550 509	Janette Wilson	0477 711 569
Janette Wilson	0477 711 569	Social Media Convenor:	
		Amy Akers	0423 513 281

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