

NATURELINK

NEWSLETTER OF THE CRANBOURNE FRIENDS ROYAL BOTANIC GARDENS VICTORIA INC.

VOLUME 28 : 3 | SPRING 2021



Pincushion Hakea, *Hakea laurina*, displays its very ornamental flowerheads in autumn and winter. This is one of many plants in the Proteaceae family to be examined at the Plant Lab workshop on Sunday October 31. See [page 6](#)

Photo: Rodger Elliot



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the Arid Garden
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VOLUME 28 | 3
SPRING 2021

ANGAIR Wildflower and Art Show Saturday 18th September 2021



Angair Wildflower and Art Show is Victoria's premier wildflower show. The show attracts visitors from all over Australia as the Anglesea heathlands are of international significance.

The show includes spectacular displays of native flowers and opportunities for people to take guided walks to visit the bushland and flora reserves to see indigenous flowers in their natural habitat.

We are hiring a 12 seater bus and self-driving with a stop at Roraima Nursery and coffee shop at Lara en route. If you want to go on this trip, please book as places are limited.

For this event try booking through [TidyHQ](https://tidyhq.com), where you can pay by credit card. See below for details. Alternatively, book via the booking form.

EVENTS

**Sunday 18
September**

Members \$70
Non-members \$80
Students \$70

Contact:
Mick Robertson:
randr3166@gmail.com, or
0401 648 998

*Photo: Caladenia
tentaculata. ANGAIR.*

Booking into an event via TidyHQ.

Go to: cranbournefriends.tidyhq.com/public/schedule/events

- Select the event you want, decide the tickets required, and click on **Get tickets**.
- If you are buying a 'Members' ticket, you will be asked to **Log in**, before you purchase the ticket.
- If you have not used TidyHQ before, when you try to log in, you will be asked to **Activate your account**, by confirming your email and setting a password.
- Once you can log in to TidyHQ go back to the Events page and continue purchasing tickets.
- If you get lost, go to "Events" tab in middle top of Tidy HQ homepage: cranbournefriends.tidyhq.com (then choose the relevant event).
- After booking with your credit card, you will receive two emails – "tickets" and a receipt.

Membership

Thank you to those with recent membership due dates who have renewed their membership. Membership cards have been posted and we thank Chris Clarke for his lovely photo from the Dry River Bed area in the Australian Garden of New Holland Honeyeaters, *Phylidonyris novaehollandiae* perched atop a *Hakea corymbosa*.

The TidyHQ system has on the whole been well received by members (notwithstanding a few small teething problems!) with feedback indicating members are happy to have the option to pay their subscription online with a credit card. **A reminder to those members paying by bank transfer, please make sure you enter the reference 'Subs' and your surname in the payment details during your transaction, as well as emailing or posting your renewal form, to ensure your payment can be reconciled.**

If you think you may have made a payment and not included your details, please email membership@rbgfriendscranbourne.org.au or call 0431 025 733 with the amount and date of your payment.

Place the dates in your diaries now

NB: This calendar may be subject to change. All events may be affected by COVID restrictions.

Zoom/Open House events are for Friends members only.

SEPTEMBER

Thursday 9 September:

Zoom talk/Open House.

Trevor Blake: Voluntary Citizen Science in Central Australia

Saturday 18 September

Angair Wildflower Show (Bus Trip)

Tuesday 28 September:

Discovery Day. Sensory and Arid Gardens, Melbourne RBGV, with Andrew Laidlaw

OCTOBER

Sat/Sun 9-10 October:

Growing Friends Plant Sale and Fabricators/Botanical Illustrators Sale

OCTOBER

Monday 11, Wednesday 13 and Friday 15 October

Grevillea coloured pencil workshop, with Geoff Sargeant

Tuesday 14 October:

Zoom Talk/Open House. Suzy and Andrew Speirs: Moroccan Gardens

Sunday 16 - Saturday, 23

October, and

Sunday 23 - Saturday, 30

October

Tours, Lord Howe Island (fully booked)

Sunday 31 October

Plant Lab Proteaceae workshop with Chloe Foster and Rodger Elliot

NOVEMBER

Sunday 7 November

Annual General Meeting

Thursday 11 November

Prue Wright: Broome Expeditions

DECEMBER/JANUARY

Thursday 2 December

Celebration of Warren Worboys' 50 years at the Gardens

15-21 January 2022

Hotham Wildflowers Adventure

Drawing Foliage Workshop

Botanical Illustrators are again running a coloured pencil workshop with Geoff Sargeant in October 2021. People who attended his workshop in 2017 found it very enjoyable. This three day workshop will feature the *Grevillea*, and will be a great opportunity to gain some more skills with a master of coloured pencil drawing of botanical flora. Some experience is preferred but not essential.

Geoff Sargeant is a colour pencil artist based in Melbourne, Australia. He exhibits regularly around Melbourne in both solo and group shows. Below is a link to his website: geoffsargeantartist.com

Geoff Sargeant also has a Facebook entry which may be more up to date.



Grevillea subsp. insignis,
by Geoff Sargeant.

Grevillea 3-day Workshop

Monday 11 October,
Wednesday 13
October and
Friday 15 October

Elliot Centre

Members \$210
Non-members \$250

Please book via
[TidyHQ](https://tidyHQ.com) (see page
2) or the booking
form

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.

Hybrid event a first for Friends

Kate and Peter Walsh's recent Costa Rica presentation was the first Friends Open House/ZOOM event presented in 'hybrid' fashion.

Under COVID, the Elliot Centre could accommodate 15 people, with a full complement of Friends viewing Kate and Peter's talk in person. Simultaneously, another small group were able to watch the presentation online on Zoom.

Tim Morrow has helped us to set up presentations on Zoom and now to offer a hybrid model, where Friends may have a choice of either attending in person or by Zoom. It is hoped to offer this choice again in the future.

Costa Rica combined Zoom talk and Open House event, Elliot Centre.
Bottom shows the speakers, Kate and Peter Walsh
Photos: Judith Cooke



Cranbourne Friends

Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria



Growing Friends - Spring Plant Sale



**Saturday 9 &
Sunday 10
October 2021
10am to 4pm**

**Australian Garden -
Cranbourne
Near the kiosk**

Come along and select from
a range of small and large
plants, many of which you
will find in the Australian
Garden

Grasses, climbers, clumping
plants, ground-covers, small &
large bushes and trees

w rbgfriends.org.au
f [friendsrbgcranbourne](https://www.facebook.com/friendsrbgcranbourne)

Plant-list available one week before sale
at www.rbgfriendscranbourne.org

Discover the Arid Garden and Sensory Garden with Landscape Architect Andrew Laidlaw

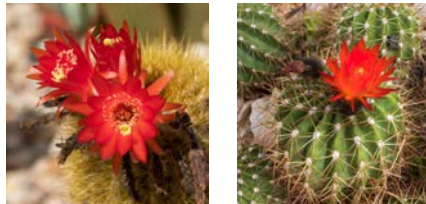
This Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne excursion promises to be a really exciting and wonderful afternoon.

We are extremely privileged to have as our guide for this event the renowned and very talented Landscape Architect Andrew Laidlaw, who designed these two gardens as part of the 20-year Masterplan for the Melbourne Gardens.



Arid Garden

Over a century in the making and with the help of generous donors, the revamped Arid Garden is designed to mimic in shape the internal cellular structure of a succulent. For many years this site was not regarded as one of the highlights of the Melbourne Gardens but is now an exceedingly vibrant place to observe cacti and succulents in a marvellous setting.



The collection features more than 3000 arid plants including 400 different species, with many sourced from world-renowned international collections including the Field Collection, created by Ralph and Robert Field in Tennyson, north-central Victoria.

In the Arid Garden you can admire these gorgeous plants, deep-dive into the weird and wonderful world of cacti and succulents, and be immersed in the history of the site.

Sensory Garden

There is more to come, as we will move on to the Sensory Garden, recently completed with the support of the Melbourne Friends and other donors. This space at the foot of the Fern Gully is accessible to all and provides visitors with the ultimate plant-based sensory experience, from delightful herby fragrances to glorious colours and sounds, and even a special barefoot walk. The garden has been designed to connect with your senses through smell, touch, sound and sight.



The Sensory garden, across the lake
Photo: Mathew Lynn.
Top photo: RBGV, The Arid Garden.

The Sensory Garden is described as an immersive oasis where you can disconnect from city life and 'get your Zen on'. It is accessible for wheelchair users and designed to benefit Melburnians' health and wellbeing.

'It is best to travel slowly through the intense, colourful flowers and scents to help you relax and reconnect with nature by the beautiful central lake. You can chill out and make friends with the local snails, butterflies and bees.'

**Tuesday 28
September
2021**

Time: 1 pm

Meeting place:
Guilfoyle's
Volcano
(entrance
via Gate C
on Anderson
Street)

Members \$20
Non-members
\$30
Students \$10

Contact:
Rodger Elliot
rgelliot@
optusnet.
com.au
or
0448790570

Please book via
[TidyHQ](#) (see
page 2) or the
booking form

Plant Lab: Proteaceae

An exploration of the Protea family

Presented by Chloe Foster and Rodger Elliot

At this Plant Lab, which is in a hands-on workshop format new for a Friends event, you will learn much about this exciting and important plant family which contains many plants extremely popular in cultivation.

This family comprises over 80 genera and about 1,700 species, with representation in Australia (which has the greatest concentration of diversity: 46 genera and about 1100 species), South Africa, South America, China, India, Madagascar, South-east Asia, Malaysia, Fiji, Philippines, Indonesia, New Guinea, New Caledonia, New Zealand and in the mountains of tropical Africa.

Plants classified as members of this family have many variations in the flower arrangement but close inspection reveals that there is an all-embracing simple theme, with all the flowers having one style: four petal-like tepals and four stamens that are often embedded in the tepals, no matter the size of the flowerheads. Close inspection of flowers of *Adenanthos*, *Banksia*, *Grevillea*, *Hakea*, *Isopogon*, *Lambertia*, *Macadamia*, *Petrophile* and *Stenocarpus* will reveal these same floral characteristics, but plants will also have other differentiating characteristics.

In the Plant Lab we will explore the relationships between the genera and focus on differentiating characteristics that help with identification. There will be plenty of live examples of foliage, flowers and fruits for you to explore at close quarters with help of scalpels, microscopes and hand lenses.

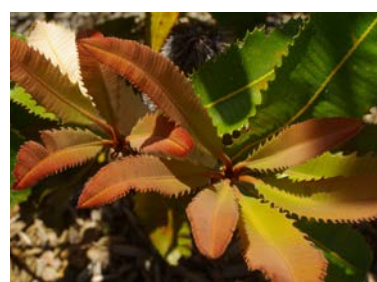
We will then head into the Australian Garden for a couple of hours to view the plants in-situ. There we'll observe their growth and discuss aspects of the plants including cultivation requirements and other information about plant qualities and their use in gardens.

This Plant Lab Exploration event will be coordinated by Cranbourne Friends members: Chloe Foster, Science graduate, Horticulture teacher and radio broadcaster and Rodger Elliot, Horticulturalist, author and Australian plant enthusiast.

NB: A 10X magnification hand lens would be very useful on the day so if you have one bring it along. We are also hoping to obtain enough microscopes for people to share. Participants will need to bring along a chopping board for use when dissecting flowers.



Hakea bakeriana flowers on leafless branches. It is an endangered species confined to the Gosford region in NSW.



The new foliage growth of *Banksia robur* can be stunning!



Bellendena montana from Tasmania is the only species in the genus and is confined to regions above 1000 m.



Urchin Dryandra, *Banksia undata* subs. *splendens* (previously known as *Dryandra praemorsa*) has flowers with pink tonings.

All photos Rodger Elliot. See also the *Hakea laurina* on the front cover and *Banksia blechnifolia* on page 14.

EVENTS

**Sunday 31
October
2021**

Time: 10am
Duration 4- 5
hours

Australian
Garden
Auditorium
& Australian
Garden

Members
\$30
Non-
members
\$40
Students \$15

Contact:
Rodger Elliot
rgelliot@
optusnet.
com.au
or
0448790570

Please book
via [TidyHQ](https://tidyhq.com.au)
(see page
2) or the
booking
form



It's a wintry July day and once again we are in lockdown, and I am reflecting on the season and our curtailed lives. Storm and power outages have affected our gardens and many of our homes. We hope you are all safe and well, and are weathering the storms, actual and metaphorical. Our connections to each other and to the natural world could not be more essential.

COVID's spectre is now the wallpaper of our existence, influencing all our planning. Events and activities continue to be enthusiastically planned, sometimes they go ahead, and many times are cancelled or rescheduled as we respond to the pandemic.

The Far North Queensland tour was thwarted again by closed borders, Sicily is rescheduled to 2023. We live in hope!

The program of Open House both in the Elliot Centre and online has been reinvigorated and we are offering interesting speakers and a chance to catch up socially - do join us in person when permitted or virtually when you can. *Quicklink* will keep you updated.

Our Events Subcommittee met in early July to plan activities for 2022, undaunted by the constant insecurity of COVID. Optimism and enthusiasm infused the workshop and well considered ideas were put forward - we are sure there will be things that interest and engage you, the wider membership and other Gardens appreciators.

A recent Walk and Gawk with John Arnott was a great opportunity to see all that has been underway in the Gardens and also talk about the plans now in train as the result of the very welcome new funding announcements. Covid has not dimmed landscape and horticulture activity - the new recycled irrigation water system is almost ready to be commissioned, many refurbished areas of the garden are looking fabulous with their new plantings sourced from material collected on expeditions to the Grampians and far north Queensland. The latter 50+ species collected through the Tropical Mountain Plant Science Conservation project are being used to create a new visitor experience - we will be able wander on a new pathway through the depths of the Gondwana garden enfolded by this new vegetation - our own 'cloud forest'.

Our curated walk ended and as we wended our way back to base, lo and behold there was a bandicoot just pootling about on the pathway to the forest garden. Not a care in the world and blissfully unaware of our approach, the pootling continued...then alert, adrenalin surged and Bandi shot about like an animated cartoon character in a chase. Hither and thither until the right shrubbery presented itself and 'poof', gone.

A bandicoot tale that has echoes of our state of being. Do come out from the undergrowth when it's safe to do so and reconnect at an event or a talk or a plant sale. We'll also see you online if precautions prevail.



Ros Shepherd and others choosing Friends events for 2022 at the recent Planning meeting.

Photo: Barbara Jeffrey



Southern Brown Bandicoot.
Photo: Janusz Molinski



It's official - there is a lot on! My report to you for this edition is somewhat dominated by our capital project works which took another exciting step forward recently.

On Saturday 3 July, we were delighted to welcome the Hon Lily D'Ambrosio, Minister for Energy, the Environment and Climate Change, to Cranbourne Gardens to announce \$8.52 million in funding for Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria. While the day was very chilly, the sun lit up the Red Sand Garden backdrop as the Minister announced that the funding would contribute to improved access, including the western entry, and upgrades to the Visitor Centre, whilst providing for much needed pathway and fence refurbishment at Melbourne Gardens. Member for Cranbourne Pauline Richards MP also spoke, noting that 'Melburnians love the Botanic Gardens in Cranbourne and this funding will help to make sure it remains an attractive place for families to relax and exercise.'

Work on these projects has commenced with the engagement of TCL with Paul Thompson for the western entry and Australian Garden precinct reviews, and architects BKK for the addition of shade and shelter to the kiosk building. For the hard-working Growing Friends amongst you (or avid plant buyers) imagine Friends plant sales under cover and sheltered from the wind with a roofed extension of the kiosk building to the east. This will also be designed to support schools learning programs, with a similar extension at the western end of the building providing shade and shelter for kiosk patrons. The full suite of projects is an exciting new chapter for the realisation of the Cranbourne Gardens Masterplan and we are grateful for the Victorian government support - a strong recognition of the increasing value of Cranbourne Gardens to our community and our precious environment.

Recycled Water Project

The recycled irrigation water project will be completed this spring allowing us to move away from use of potable water for irrigating our landscapes, with the electricity consumption from treating the water (microfiltration and reverse osmosis) offset by solar panels on the administration building. Our nursery extension accommodating our new orchid shade house has been completed, driven by the increased activity of this important element of our plant conservation work. Generally, plants are propagated for reintroduction to the wild under controlled conditions



Chris Russell, Tim Entwisle, Minister D'Ambrosio, RBGV Board Chair Chris Trotman and Cranbourne MP Pauline Richards on an Australian Garden tour after the funding announcement.



Minister D'Ambrosio chats to Garden Ambassadors Ray Turner and Eva Kowal



Our new recycled water treatment plant and 500kL storage tank will take us off potable water for irrigation
Photo: Chris Russell

(ongoing land management is critical), with ex situ holdings also important. The research and production of these exquisite but close-to-extinct species of terrestrial orchids is greatly supported by a core group of volunteers.

Out in the Australian Garden there has been a renovation of the Seaside Garden through improved soil and drainage which will improve plant performance and broaden the suite of taxa we can grow in the space. The Gondwana Garden is undergoing a major change with the addition of a new secondary path which will lead visitors through an exploration of wild-collected plants from our tropical mountain top conservation collecting trips to Far North Queensland. More on that exciting project later.

Seeing the Invisible

In closing, something that is not so much about new infrastructure or landscapes but dwells more in the virtual world. *Seeing the Invisible* is an outdoor exhibition of 13 contemporary artworks by renowned artists created with augmented reality (AR) technology and will be open across both Cranbourne and Melbourne Gardens from 20 September 2021 to 31 August 2022. The exhibition will be held simultaneously with 12 other botanic gardens around the world including founders Jerusalem Botanical Gardens (Israel) along with Kirstenbosch Botanical Garden (South Africa), Eden Project (England), Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh (Scotland), with RBGV being the only Australian exhibitor. If AR is as new to you as it is to me, I understand that the works will be accessed via a smartphone or tablet through the *Seeing the Invisible* app, with the artworks placed around the garden in curated locations. Through your device you will be able to view, move around, move into, and listen to each of the art pieces. If you are not viewing the space through your device, you will be none the wiser as there will be nothing to see (apart from lots of people looking at their phones in wonder!).

With so many events and activities over the past 18 months being cancelled due to lock downs and COVID restrictions, this is an ingenious and contemporary response providing stimulating engagement with our landscapes. See you out there with your device!

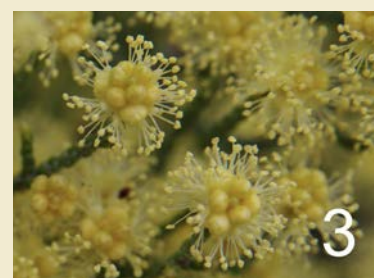
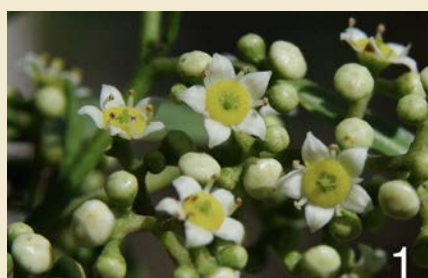


Minister D'Ambrosio and Pauline Richards MP enjoying seek and find with young visitor Violet.

Minister's visit photos: Mathew Lynn

Friend Quiz 5 | Charles Young

'Sprinter' is here and many Australian plants, especially those in arid inland regions, are busy flowering before the hot weather arrives! This quiz is based around plants that flower in the short, cool days of winter and early spring. Enjoy finding the answers! See *answers on page 16*.

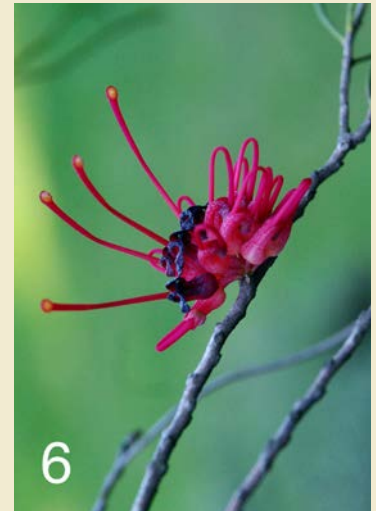


1. These are the tiny flowers of the drought-tolerant inland tree that inspired Mary Gilmore's books *Rue Tree* and *Under the Wilgas*. What are the common and scientific names of the tree and what family does it belong to?

2. This small Central Australian shrub appears to be upside-down, as its red flowers are around the base of the plant, underneath the foliage. What are its common and scientific names?

3. These are the wattle-like flowers of an attractive *Melaleuca* with *tiny leaves* that is endemic to southwest Western Australia (WA). What are its common and scientific names? *cont. page 10*

Friend Quiz 5 *continue from page 9*



4. This is the biggest botanical drawcard of Pindar, WA. People go out of their way to see it – because Pindar *is* out of the way! What is the plant and why does it grow so reliably on Pindar's roadsides?

5. These are the buds of *Eucalyptus erythrocorys*. What is the etymological connection between *erythrocorys*, erythrocytes (red blood cells) and the antibiotic erythromycin?

6. These are the flowers of *Hakea orthorrhyncha*, endemic to the Murchison River area of WA. What is the common name of the plant and what is unusual about its flowers?



7. These are the flowers of *Thelymitra mathewsii*, propagated in the Orchid Conservation Lab at Cranbourne. What does the generic name *Thelymitra* allude to and what is the common name usually given to these orchids?

8. Many wattles are flowering ahead of National Wattle Day (1 Sept). The unusual, red-flowering cinnamon wattle, *Acacia leprosa* Scarlet Blaze, was cultivated from a single wild plant found by bushwalkers. Where was the original plant found and what does the common name allude to?



Check your answers on page 16. **All photos by Charles Young.**

Donations to the Royal Botanic Gardens Cranbourne

In previous years, in response to an invitation on the renewal form, many members have made a donation to the Cranbourne Gardens when renewing their yearly membership. Some have been querying why the invitation was not included on the 2022 membership renewal form. The reason for this suspension is that the Committee is in the process of upgrading our administrative, booking and accounting systems to reduce the workload on volunteers. Likewise, the RBGV has been reviewing and updating some of their processes that happen to integrate with Cranbourne Friends who make donations.

The Royal Botanic Gardens Cranbourne still welcomes donations to support projects in our magnificent gardens. Currently this can be achieved by going to the donation form on the Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria website at:

rbg.vic.gov.au/support-us/make-a-donation

Cranbourne Friends will note there is a blank 'Leave a comment (optional)' box at the end of the form. This should be filled in by stating 'Cranbourne Gardens' (and a specific project, if any). This will ensure that your donation is directed for use in the Cranbourne Gardens.

Spotlight on Gillian Hund

Phoebe Danaher, (former) RBGV Private Giving and Bequests Coordinator

In the various roles Gillian has held at Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria, her role as a Perennial Gardener is one of her most fulfilling. Through a gift in her will, her legacy at the Gardens will live on. Gillian remembers her first visit to Cranbourne Gardens vividly. 'The vibrant reds of the *Leptospermum morrisonii* swaying by the water at Lilypad Bridge,' she reflects, 'It's a different kind of beauty at Cranbourne.'

As a passionate arts supporter and lover of nature, these two interests blend beautifully in the Australian Garden for Gillian.



Gillian and Michael Hund, Photo: Mathew Lynn

Having lived in cities across the world, she recognises that, 'The Cranbourne Gardens has a vibrancy and artistry that is unique. I feel so connected to beautiful plant life and design in a way that's very different to the places I have lived across the world'. Cranbourne Gardens conveys the strong sense of adventure that Gillian and her family have always loved about Australia.

From a young age, a love of plant life was developed in Gillian. Both her grandmothers passed down to her a love of place and of gardens and this has connected her deeply to Cranbourne Gardens as a place for the community to share experiences in nature together. She has found solace in the nurture you give a garden, and in return, the stories they hold for you. This is something she fondly reflects on in being a Friend of Cranbourne Gardens. 'It is that element of nurturing and storytelling that exists so strongly within the Cranbourne Friends,' she says. 'It's a network of wonderful people that share such incredible knowledge'. Similarly, Gillian's bequest ensures this knowledge and care carries on for a future generation to enjoy.

In the process of redesigning her own property, she has developed a deep appreciation of the precious native plants and remnant bushland around her, something Cranbourne Gardens has imparted to her. 'The things you learn from the people at the Gardens changes how you view your own surrounds'. For Gillian, husband Michael, and their family, being so close to the beauties of nature is one of their great joys. 'It's about knowing what to look for and how to appreciate it', Gillian says.

Their decision as a family to remember Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria in Gillian's will was made to safeguard one of the places that has given them so many rich experiences. 'It was important to me that I made this decision and I let the Gardens and my family know, so they too can share this journey with me'.

Gillian sees this as a continuation of her lifetime love of plants and deep value of what Cranbourne Gardens offers the community. 'It gives me a lot of comfort to know that my passion for these two remarkable landscapes and vital research and conservation work will live on and offer a future generation the same connection it has offered me'.

Gifts in wills have played an important role over Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria's history, providing critical financial support that has allowed the Gardens to develop living landscapes, continue important scientific research, and deliver best-practice public engagement programs. Decisions like Gillian's help to secure the future of the Gardens and ensure the donor's passion lives on for generations to come.

Friends in Focus - Judith Cooke

We held our May 'Show and Tell' in the Elliot Centre, where six members shared examples of their recent work, including photobooks illustrating their travels as well as local plants and wildlife. This was followed by a walk in the Australian Garden to look for flowering plants to photograph. *Pimelea physodes* and *Hibiscus insularis* were among the highlights. The walk concluded at the Plant Sale.

In June, once again, we had to cancel our meeting as the elements produced a wild storm and widespread power failure.

Six members attended the July meeting in cold and foggy weather, when we did a walk in the Bushland, photographing a koala, wattles in flower and a variety of fungi.



Acacia spectabilis.
Photos: Judith Cooke



Scaevola calendulacea



Hibiscus insularis



Geleznowia verrucosa

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

2nd Saturday of the month, Elliot Centre.

2pm, April to September

9.30am, October to March (Daylight Saving Time)

Friends in the Gardens - Christine Kenyon

The group continues to increase in number: we are now 13. Our May day was spent weeding, raking and generally tidying up the Children's Backyard Garden. This happens round the young children who scamper through the Garden at the same time. This garden needs regular maintenance - weeds need to be hand pulled as spraying is not carried out in this garden. July saw us again in the Children's Backyard Garden and raking the path beside the Rockpool Waterway. Then we moved on to continue weeding the Research Beds with Matthieu. The Horticulture staff are always pleased to have the extra help to keep the Gardens looking spic and span.

FiGs meet on the 1st Tuesday of each month at 9.30 am and help in the Gardens until 12.30 pm; then finish the day with lunch in the café. We are always happy to welcome new members. If you are interested please contact Christine Kenyon.



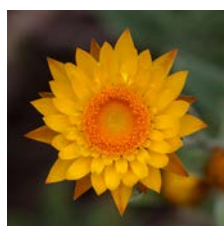
Christine Kenyon in action
Photo: Judith Cooke

1st Tuesday of the month, 9.30am.

Contact:
Christine Kenyon

figs@rbgfriends
cranbourne.org.au
0438 345 589

Growing Friends - Marjanne Rook



On this cold wintry day, spring is a season to look forward to and as always, we work towards the next Plant Sale.

The Spring Plant Sale will be on the weekend of October 9 and 10 near the kiosk in the gardens. All going well, if the seeds all germinate, we will be selling a range of paper daisies ranging from the small, white *Rhodanthe anthemoides* 'Paper Baby' to the gorgeous pink shades of *Rhodanthe chlorocephala* ssp. *rosea*, the bright yellow *Xerochrysum viscosum* and *Xerochrysum bracteatum* 'Dargan Hill Monarch' as well as a mix of *Xerochrysum bracteatum* in pink, yellow & white.

We hope it will be as successful as the May sale attended by many of our regular customers – thank you for doing so. After a year of several lockdowns, it was a liberating and cheerful, sunny event. We sold many of our special plants such as the *Brachychiton rupestris*, *Macrozamia communis*, *Rhododendron viriosum* (previously labelled in our nursery as *Rhododendron lochiaie*). \$20,800 was raised that weekend.

In early May we supplied the City of Casey with some 700 plants for their **Gardens for Wildlife** (G4W) program which was to be launched from mid-2021. This program aims to foster the community's understanding of the connection between local flora and fauna and encourages residents to become involved in caring for the local environment by improving their own gardens and thus improving habitat for native animals.

It equips gardeners of all abilities with the support and materials they need to create a wildlife-friendly garden in Casey. The program is run through a partnership between the City of Casey, Casey community and in affiliation with Gardens for Wildlife Victoria. Through the program, residents receive a property visit by a volunteer, a wildlife gardening information kit and updates on local activities where they can build new skills and meet like-minded residents. They will also be given a voucher to purchase indigenous plants at local nurseries including the Cranbourne Friends, Growing Friends Nursery. (Indigenous plants are plants that occur naturally in a particular area). For more information about this program, visit www.casey.vic.gov.au/g4w

A number of Victorian Councils and Shires provide similar free programs to their community and for more information contact your local council or visit: gardensforwildlifevictoria.com

Our nursery is open to members every Thursday from 10am to 2pm. If you can't come on that day and/or time email growing.friends@rbgfriendscranbourne.org.au or phone/text Marjanne **0431 607 796** as it may be possible to organise for a different day or time.

Special Orders

Any wishes? Perhaps a plant you have seen in the Gardens or multiple plants for a large area? If so, then please contact the Growing Friends with your request and we shall endeavour to grow them or may even have them in stock. Contact details are on this page.

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

Contact:

Marjanne Rook

growingfriends@rbgfriendscranbourne.org.au

0431607796

Nursery open to members every Thursday 10am - 2pm



Rhodanthe anthemoides 'Paper Baby', above, and *Rhodanthe chlorocephalum* ssp. *roseum*.

Top left: *Xerochrysum bracteatum* Dargan Hill Monarch.

Open House 2021 - Helen Morrow

It will not come as any surprise to our members that Open House has been a 'Closed' process so far this year. This did not deter our Events Committee. They are always very keen to keep us involved and active. In this year of COVID-19, ZOOM talks have been the way to go. We have had three interesting and successful talks in the last few months. Thanks to Tim Morrow for the Zoom technical support.

In April, our guest speaker, Lynsey Poore, took us on a tour of the **Fitzgerald River National Park, the Southwest Australia's Biodiversity Hotspot**. Her talk followed many of the Nature Walks throughout the area including Mt Barren Ranges and to Bremmer Bay. She started the talk with a stunning photograph of *Hakea victoria* in superb colour, then continued showing photos and talking about the wonderful array of the plants in flower, which she assured us are easily found with each step.



Banksia blechnifolia, a species from the Fitzgerald River area
Photo: Rodger Elliot

Lynsey's presentation showed us how important and interesting this area is and why it is the place to visit if touring in Western Australia. Thank you, Lynsey for spending time to tell us about this stunning area.



The TROMP collecting team on a rarely visited mountain ridge, habitat of one of the target species, *Rhododendron lochiaie*.

In early May a ZOOM talk entitled **Tropical Mountain Plant Science and ex-situ Conservation Project**, was presented. Warren Worboys led some members of Cranbourne and Melbourne Gardens horticultural staff on field collecting trips to the high peaks in far North Queensland. The trip was organised by the Australian Tropical Herbarium in Cairns.

The plants on these peaks are under threat from climate change and the botanical institutes from along the east coast of Australia are working together to collect and preserve the rare and highly threatened flora. Warren gave us a great pictorial view of this rugged and 'off-the-beaten-track' area, showing the extraordinary flora, their habitat, the discovery of new species and some of the species thought lost to extinction.

Warren, thank you for taking the time to tell us about the important work being done by the Gardens. The trip received support from an Elisabeth Murdoch Scholarship awarded by the Maud Gibson Trust.

On 28 May a presentation originally planned to be 'in house' at the Elliot Centre became a ZOOM presentation due to the latest lock down. The **2018 Cranbourne Friends tour of Sicily** was introduced by Alf Reina who was the leader of the trip. Sicily has been at the crossroads of civilization for centuries. Wendy Smart talked about and showed fine examples of the archaeology, architecture and art. Rodger Elliot then joined with a discussion about the abundance of the local flora, showing photos of landscape and the stunning scenery. Wherever we travelled, we were walking in the footsteps of history as in past centuries, the Island has welcomed or been invaded by Greek, Arab, Norman and now Italian colonisers.



The amazing floral carpet at the 'Noto Infiorata', Sicily.
Photo: Rodger Elliot

Another tour is in the planning for 2023. The date will be dependent on when we are able to travel safely. Alf will once again be the leader. See *Naturelink* or *Quicklink* for more information.

The Nature Of My Art by Sandi Steward

– Kerry Margalit

Despite the uncertainty of COVID lockdowns, the monthly lectures for 'Friends' continue on Zoom. On 24 June, the artist, Sandi Steward, spoke of her book that she created and published during the long Victorian lockdown, showcasing her fascination with far West Gippsland and particularly the plants she encountered there, such as mangroves. She alluded to Tim Winton's idea that a more intimate acquaintance with the natural world is needed.

In her book, pastels are used in a series of art works which depict the black swans, mud flats and mangroves that live in the tidal zone around Westernport and far West Gippsland. Despite its flat and featureless characteristics, the landscape unexpectedly produced a strong reaction in Sandi, a fascination which was not simply a point of artistic differentiation from more traditional landscapes but a journey which built a more intuitive, personal understanding.



She continued to be drawn to the mangroves despite their lack of visual appeal. Her environment and that of mangroves seemed intertwined and they offered a means to interpret her personal world. By contrast, early settlers were challenged by stands of mangroves, on the shoreline near Port Pirie, for example. However, Sandi's artistic work brought her an understanding of the interconnection between mangroves and the environment around them, to which they make a considerable contribution. She became concerned about the 400 kilometres of mangroves in the Gulf of Carpentaria which were reported by James Cook University, as being dead or damaged. Fortunately, white mangroves still fringe forty percent of the coastline of Western Port in Victoria despite the inroads of climate change.

The rhythm of tides, seasons and weather gradually began to influence Sandi's art. There was the ebb and flow of the orderly nourishment of life through the tree-like limbs of the inlets. Occasionally, tides and gales disturbed the sediment and the power of king tides would upset the everyday balance. She became more aware of this distinctive habitat, where the mangroves and saltmarshes are the home of birds, crabs and other sea life. In her art and life, she felt her reality as part of this landscape.

At the conclusion of her lecture, Friends acquainted with Sandi's art work commented on her lovely control of light and her ability to represent water as animate. Sandi suggested that she is now becoming increasingly interested in samphire, a small plant growing along the coast. Its green, jointed 'beads' and varied colourful appearance provides her with visually satisfying effects. Sandi likes to work in pastel because it is a medium she finds immediate and vibrant and equal to capturing the flora of the frequently undervalued mudflats, saltmarshes and inlets of coastal Victoria.

Upcoming Open House/Zoom sessions for members

- Thursday 9 September - Trevor Blake: Voluntary Citizen Science in Central Australia
- Thursday 14 October - Suzy and Andrew Speirs: Moroccan Gardens
- Thursday 11 November - Prue Wright: Broome Expeditions
- Thursday 2 December - Celebration of Warren Worboys' 50 years at the Gardens*

These events are free for members, but booking is required. See the monthly *Quicklinks*.

*Held in the Auditorium, rather than the Elliot Centre, and on an early December date.

Answers to Friend Quiz 5 on pages 9 & 10

Thank you Charles Young for our special Spring season plant quiz.

A1. This is wilga, Australian willow or small-flowered geijera, *Geijera parviflora*, which belongs to the *Rutaceae* (rue or citrus) family. Writer Dame Mary Gilmore is featured on the \$10 note.

A2. This is the upside-down plant or ikulyukulyu, with the scientific name *Leptosema chambersii*. This desert species is found in the red sand plains and dunes of Central Australia and eastern WA.

A3. This is wattle honey-myrtle or *Melaleuca micromera* (Greek *micro* small/tiny + *meris* part, named for its tiny leaves).

A4. This is the wreath *Lechenaultia*, *Lechenaultia macrantha*. The plant thrives on disturbed sandy soils with subterranean water; grading of Pindar's roadsides into water retaining swales likely encourages the reliable growth of the plant.

A5. All are derived from the Greek *erythros* meaning red. The usage in *E. erythrocorys* (Illyarrie or red-capped gum) and erythrocyte is self-explanatory. The colourless antibiotic is named after *Saccharopolyspora erythraea*, the red soil bacterium it was first isolated from.

A6. This is the bird beak hakea (Greek *orthos* straight + *rhynchos* beak). The specific epithet alludes to the long, straight beak of the woody seed capsules. The flowers are unusual in erupting, often in abundance, from the bare, woody stems of the plant.

A7. *Thelymitra* is derived from the Greek *thelys* women + *mitra* headband/hat, referring to the plumed or decorated wings of the column. *Thelymitra* orchids are commonly known as sun orchids as their flowers only open when it is warm and sunny.

A8. The plant was found near Wilhelmina Falls, in what is now the Murrindindi River Reserve, northeast of Melbourne, in 1995. The common name alludes to the cinnamon scent of the leaves.

Annual General Meeting

This year's Annual General Meeting of the Cranbourne Friends will be held on **Sunday 7 November**. This is an important chance for members to come together socially, hear an interesting guest speaker and reflect on the year past.

Please consider if you might contribute to the work and longevity of the organisation by nominating for a role on the committee. We plan to hold this meeting at the Gardens but will meet virtually if necessary.



The Friends Committee has been meeting virtually in 2020 and 2021. The 2020 AGM was held on Zoom.

Cranbourne Friends Committee

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Vice President: Rosemary Miller 0422 893 745
Treasurer: Richard Clarke 0418 148 792
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The General Committee meets on the second Thursday of the month (except January).