

NATURELINK

NEWSLETTER OF THE CRANBOURNE FRIENDS ROYAL BOTANIC GARDENS VICTORIA INC.

VOLUME 29 : 4 | SUMMER 2022



Paul Sierakowski's gorgeous *Banksias* displayed by Judy Mallinson, at the AGM. Photo: Peter Miller. More photos pp 3-5.



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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.

2023 Cranbourne Friends Events - First quarter 2023

EVENTS

February

- Thursday February 10 - Open House with Jill Burness. The Grampians/Gariwerd Endemic Botanic Garden

March

- Thursday 9 March - Open House
- March, date TBA
Behind the scenes tour, at the Australian Garden. Find out about recycled water program, Arid Garden redevelopment.
- Saturday/Sunday 25/26 March
Growing Friends Plant Sale

April

- Thursday April 13 - Open House with Prue Wright. Adventures in Broome, banding wading birds.

Check the monthly **Quicklink** and emails from the Friends for the latest information about these events and others.

OR visit our event page at:

cranbournefriends.tidyhq.com/public/schedule/events/

Otways Tour September 2023 - EOI

ANGAIR Wildflower and Art Weekend is one of this nation's premier native plant festivals and is timed to showcase the flora and bush at its best. The Eastern Otways has great biodiversity, from the Heathlands around Anglesea, to the wet sclerophyll forests and patches of temperate rainforest. This week-long tour is going to be a botanic, scenic and regenerative feast. We will be based at the beach-fronted Lorne Mantra (formally Erskine House)

mantralorne.com.au from which we will journey out (self-drive, car-pool) on a range of field trips led by local experts and legends taking in the biodiversity and orchid hotspots that are the Anglesea Heathlands and Eastern Otways Ranges. More details and definite dates will be provided closer to the time.

Expressions of interest (EOI) -

Please visit Tidy HQ to register your interest:

cranbournefriends.tidyhq.com/public/schedule/events/47059-otways-tour-september-2023-expressions-of-interest



Triplet Falls, Great Otways National Park.
Bottom, Heath Peas.
Photo ANGAIR

New appointments

Wendy Herauville was appointed **Treasurer** of the Friends at the recent Annual General Meeting. An experienced bookkeeper, Wendy has been an enthusiastic volunteer with the Friends in the Gardens (FIGS) group for some time. Wendy can be contacted at: treasurer@rbgfriendscranbourne.org.au

Mick Robertson is now the **Events Coordinator**. He is a member of Growing Friends, and with a successful tour of Far North Queensland behind him, is looking forward to his new role. Mick can be contacted at: events@rbgfriendscranbourne.org.au

The Committee of Management (COM) is very pleased to welcome Wendy and Mick to their new roles and we are open to an approach by anyone with an interest in contributing to the COM. In late breaking news, **Jill Burness** has also offered to join the committee and we have accepted with enthusiasm. Jill will commence in February 2023 and be another great asset to the committee.



Welcome everyone to the Summer edition of *Naturelink*. I am writing just after the conclusion of the Cranbourne Friends Annual General Meeting (AGM) for 2022 and celebration of the careers and retirements of the much-loved Jill Burness and Warren Worboys.

A keen and interested crowd of 70 heard from our guest speaker Carolyn Landon, the author of our history '*Of Friends and Gardens*'. Carolyn spoke about those who became her special people as she researched and interviewed for her story of the Friends. Later in the meeting Carolyn was surprised to find herself presented with an Honorary Life Membership for her authorial work and contributions to the Special Interest Groups.

The formal meeting saw the current committee of seven reduce by two resignations and have one new appointee as Treasurer.

Chris Russell spoke eloquently of all the achievements of the Gardens in the past year, huge capital works and two major conferences – you will find details in his report here in *Naturelink*. The Royal Botanic Gardens Cranbourne (RBGV) goes from strength to strength.

Prof. David Cantrill deputising for Prof. Tim Entwisle accepted an exquisite painting of *Acacia suaveolens* by Jenny Rollason, of the Botanical Illustrators. Her beautiful work will join the thirty or so other contributions to the *Cranbourne Florilegium*.

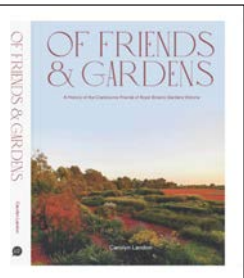
Helen Kennedy and Rodger Elliot each provided us with moving speeches in honour of Jill Burness and Warren Worboys respectively. Jill's and Warren's responses were heartfelt and gave us all insight into their love and passion for their work and the great camaraderie they have been instrumental in creating within their teams and also within the Friends.

For those of you who could not attend, another 600 or so, I've decided to give you my abbreviated report to the assembled meeting:

Another year of COVID contortions has meant that our pivoting and pirouetting has been much practised, and we will no doubt still need to manage the 'new normal' of living with COVID and anticipating more waves. It's been quite the ride! This surfing allusion seems appropriately watery as our gardens here and at home also ride out La Nina.



President Erin Cosgriff welcomes Friends to the AGM, and below , with guest speaker Carolyn Landon.



Carolyn Landon's *Of Friends and Gardens* is available at the RBGV shop.



Jill Burness presents Carolyn with her Honorary Life Membership.



Jenny Rollason's *Acacia suaveolens* illustration.

I recommend that you take a look through the Annual Report for a detailed view of the year. The Annual Report showcases abundant talent and something of our endeavours. It was put together by our very talented committee – you will find it on our website at:
rbgfriendscranbourne.org.au/groups/about-us/annual-report/.

The report shows that we provide a program of events, publications, special interests and activities that bring our Friends together to work, create, learn and share great camaraderie, and Janette's clever QR code cover is a little reminder of times we had hoped we had left behind.

Today is a celebration on many levels of what we as individuals and as a group in collaboration with the RBGV can achieve. In the past year membership has grown - an achievement in challenging times. The committee remains focussed on creating opportunities to tell visitors that we are here and that we have much to offer.

Plant sales, events and tours have continued to sustain our operations and we are in a sound position to assist the RBGV with new projects once the current flurry of capital works is completed.

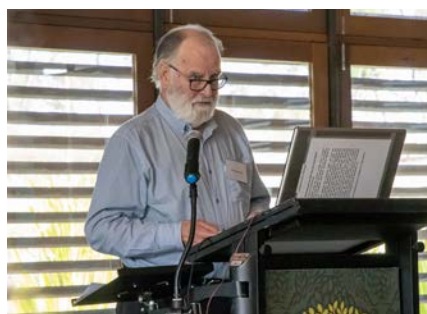
All this activity only comes together when there are people giving of their time and interest and expertise, who organise, create, facilitate and generally get the job done.

There are so many people to thank for their valued contributions. There are the small and very effective Committee of Management and Events Sub-committee – you are so supportive and consistent in your commitment. Without the individual and team efforts of all, we would not be able to achieve myriad offerings for the wider membership and provide support to the Gardens. Thank you.

Thank you to the coordinators of the special interest groups and their reliable members toiling away to bring us experiences, enjoyment and reflections of the amazing Australian Garden. Our proselytising knows no bounds, whether it's the creations of the Illustrators and Fabricators and the shared images of Friends in Focus or our Growing Friends plants now inhabiting so many home gardens. All these endeavours spread the message of the Cranbourne Gardens. On the ground the Friends in the Gardens get their hands dirty and liaise with the horticultural staff and visitors while beautifying special spots in the Gardens.

The Events Sub-committee has seen significant turnover this year. We are so pleased to welcome our new coordinator **Mick Robertson** and new committee members **Tanya Johnson, Tony Anderson, Nicky Zanen** and **Wendy Herauville**. And a special mention to our Tour organisers – they do organisation on steroids! Mick and Alex and Rodger and Alf take a bow. Being a tour leader is no small undertaking, made much more 'interesting' with COVID lurking.

Our very significant appreciation is offered to the three members of the Committee of Management who are retiring this term.



Richard Clarke receives a gift; Helen Kennedy presents a bouquet and a personal photo book to Jill Burness; Jill with Nicky Zanen (L) and the photo book's creator, Prue Wright; Rodger Elliot describes Warren Worboys' long close association with the Friends.
Below: Warren Worboys in the Special Collections area 2018.
Photo: Judith Cooke



Firstly, I wish to acknowledge Barbara Jeffrey. As Events coordinator, Barbara worked tirelessly for many years; now that she is absent we fully understand how much she had contributed for so long. Barbara continues to offer her skills to the Growing Friends and is pleased that we have been able to recruit new talent to refresh the Events committee. **Thank you Barbara.**

Janette Wilson has also signalled her resignation, although I note that she has offered to continue to assist us with the layout and graphic design work associated with future Annual Reports and other artistic challenges. Janette will continue to be a Growing Friend and Botanical Illustrator. Janette's graphic design skills and photography have been used extensively in the presentation of *Naturelink*, *Quicklink* and our *Annual report*.

Thank you, Janette. Your talents, innovative ideas and enthusiasm will not be lost to us. I'm sure we will continue to need and rely on your unofficial assistance.

And lastly but not at all in the least, our **Treasurer Richard Clarke is retiring** from active service. Richard joined the CoM in 2010, becoming President in 2012, following his wife Margaret's term. He worked hand in glove with Alex Smart, as the plans for the re-development of the old staff depot took shape and became the Elliot Centre. He has played a significant part in the achievements of so many elements of the Friends and of the gGrdens. Can I just list a few:

- the Growing Friends nursery,
- the advent of the Garden Explorer,
- consulting on the RBGV master plan,
- manning the sales desk for Plant Sales,
- setting up and taking bookings for annual lunches and dinners.

Richard has had a hand in everything, no job too ordinary or too complex. In 2020 he took over as Treasurer, taught himself the finance software- *Reckon* - and worked with Alexandra Stalder, Roger Watts and Rosemary Miller to trial a new administrative platform-*TidyHQ* and ensure that finance generally and bookings for events could work with the new system. He has done a fabulous job!

We are pleased that a replacement has come forward - **thank you Wendy Herauville** - and that Richard and his beloved Margaret can enjoy the Friends and hand on the responsibilities. **Thank you Richard**, you are such a good, generous and kind person, always supportive and ready with sage advice always given with much consideration and diplomacy. The committee and I will miss you, but we look forward to enjoying your company at many future events.

It was an emotional day as we celebrated and farewelled amazing special people who have contributed so generously and we felt blessed that there are new members keen to be involved and volunteer their time and talents.

If you too feel you could contribute, please be in touch - you will be welcomed!



Warren Worboys is presented with a personal photo book and a bouquet; Warren's bouquet was created by Judy Mallinson who made all the floral gifts and displays at the event; Warren with his wife Di and Chris Russell; Below: Wendy Herauville, elected as the new Treasurer of the Friends.





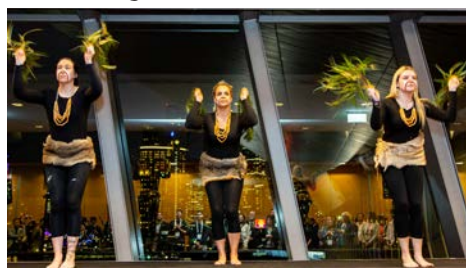
And so, after three years of preparation, two postponements and a great deal of uncertainty due to the global pandemic, the 7th Global Botanic Gardens Congress was held in Melbourne from the 25th to the 29th of September. 500 delegates from 36 countries, inspiring keynotes, amazing field trips, mostly fine weather, and a wonderful appetite to come together to collaborate and celebrate marked a very successful week. Hosting the Congress provided Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria a wonderful opportunity to showcase our global leadership. Perhaps the most pleasing aspect of the Congress was the calibre of input of our staff. From keynote presentations through to leading workshops, symposia and panel discussions to the creative flair of our venue-dressing team – all shone through as highlights, with many positive comments being received. Sincere thanks to the Cranbourne Friends, and others, for supporting staff attendance financially.

The Climate Change Alliance of Botanic Gardens (led by RBGV) took centre stage with the launch of the climate assessment tool and the landscape succession toolkit. Another key take-home was the emerging recognition of the discipline of Conservation Horticulture. Delegates heard about the importance of combining the skills of botanists with those of horticulturalists in achieving meaningful conservation outcomes. Recent bushfire recovery programs provided powerful demonstration of the value of bringing science and horticulture closer together - identifying and locating the species in most need of conservation action coupled with the specialist horticultural skills to propagate material for *ex-situ* collections or reintroduction into the wild.

Close on the heels of the Global Congress was the hosting of the 17th Australasian Botanic Guides Conference, held across both Melbourne and Cranbourne sites from 23 to 28 October. Led by an organising committee comprising volunteer guides and garden ambassadors supported by Volunteer Coordinators Jacqui Winstanley and Jane Griffin, the conference brought together over 100 delegates from across Australia and New Zealand under the theme *Share and Inspire - Guiding for People, Plants and the Planet*. The Cranbourne program component, ably coordinated by Garden Ambassador



500 delegates attended 7GBGC.



Dgirri Dgirri Dancers captivated at the 7GBGC Welcome Reception.



Some dubious cameo vocal performances with the amazing BGANZ Band at the 7GBGC gala dinner.

Barrie Gallacher, provided insights into the planning, design, development and management of the Australian Garden, including a keynote from Taylor Cullity Lethlean (TCL) director Kate Cullity, along with guided walks and talks on various aspects of our conservation activities. Special mention to Tim Morrow for coordinating the audio visuals and congratulations to all contributors and helpers.

In project news, the Arid Garden and Dry River Bed redevelopments are well progressed and looking fabulous as planting gets into full swing. Installation of the new lift and renovated Visitor Centre are also going well and will provide greatly improved access and sharing of information once completed over coming months. We will also soon see a suite of new tourism road signs installed around the surrounding region, a critical initiative to make the Gardens easier to find.

Last but certainly not least I would like to acknowledge the pending retirement of our Curator of Horticulture, Warren Worboys, after a stellar and extraordinary career spanning over 50 years. After making his mark at Melbourne Gardens, Warren was one of the founding forces at Cranbourne Gardens, driving much of the early site development, horticultural trials, and the ultimate creation of the Australian Garden. It is a very rare thing indeed to dedicate one's entire career to one organisation. His achievements are far too numerous to list here and are being acknowledged and celebrated by Friends and staff alike as we wish Warren well in his retirement. The Gardens, and the Friends, have benefited greatly from his expertise and service. Thank you Warren!



Now the fun starts! Planting the mounded beds of the Arid Garden.

Rare plant quiz!

Paul Sierakowski, who donated all the flowers for the beautiful bouquets created by Judy Mallinson for the AGM, also prepared a mystery bouquet of rare plants (at right). You may have seen the bouquet at the AGM.

Can you identify the 13 rare plants present from their blooms or foliage? Check page 15 for the answers.

AND turn to the next page (8) for Charles Young's special **Coastal flora** quiz.

Photo: Janette Wilson



Vale Bernard Boulton

The Cranbourne Friends note the passing of Bernard Boulton, the much-loved husband of Dallas. Bernard was a special interest group member in addition to being a much appreciated handyman for the Elliot Centre.

We mourn his passing and offer our condolences to Dallas and her family.

Bernard Boulton planting *Westringia* in the Red Sand Garden, July 2019.
Photo: Christine Kenyon



Friend Quiz 10 | Charles Young

It's summer and Australians will soon be flocking to the beach! So, how better to get into the summer holiday spirit than with a 'coastal flora' quiz. Look out for some of these plants on your summer break!



1. The adaptation of these trees to frequent coastal inundation inspired a section of the Australian Garden (AG). What are the common and generic names of these trees and what does the latter allude to?
2. Many *Banksias* grow in coastal regions. The Scarlet Banksia grows along the south coast of WA. What is the scientific name of this plant and what are its principal horticultural uses?



3. Sandy, open heathlands adjoining beach front are popular sites for this velvety, herbaceous shrub. What are the names of this plant and what structures form the striking, ray-like 'petals'?

4. It's always fun to discover *Dipodium* or Hyacinth Orchids flowering on coastal hinterland walks. What is unusual about these plants and how do they derive their energy and nutrients?



5. The Grey Mangrove, *Avicennia marina*, has aerial roots (below the trees in the photo) that allow it to thrive in water-logged environments. What is the botanical term for this type of root and what is their principal function?



Quiz continues on page 9

Friend Quiz

10 *continued*



6. *Salicornia quinqueflora* (syn. *Sarcocornia quinqueflora*), a salt-tolerant estuarine succulent, was historically important in several industries; one inspired the plant's common name. What is that name and what industries were supported by these and related plants?

7. These are the berries of Seaberry Saltbush, *Chenopodium candolleanum* ssp. *candolleanum* (syn. *Rhagodia candolleana*), a common shrub in coastal regions. Who is celebrated (twice) in the scientific name and is the plant edible?

8. This wonderful cone belongs to a small tree that grows in the Daintree rainforest north of Cairns. A specimen can be found in the AG's Weird and Wonderful Garden. What are the names of this plant?



All photos by Charles Young

Check your answers on page 16

Membership report | Alexandra Stalder

This quarter we are pleased to welcome 44 new members: Alice Csabi, Martyn Waters, Angela Little, Debra Child, Lisa Fitzgerald, Sue Ward, Elizabeth Plummer, Lyn Bennett, Melanie and Michael Pellow, Betty Lotscher, Christine Lill, Annette Dupont, Michelle Schache, Krista Geist, Katrina Melen, Kerry Gulyas, Jenny Lopez, Rowena Scheffer, Bridget Verwey, Shervin, Marian & Talula Tosif, Jill Langford, Warren Dunn, Allwyn Fernandes, Tania Lloyd, Megan Adams, David-John Jenkins, Julie Streckfuss, Louise van der Werff, Catherine Ashton, Jocelyn Hickey, Darren Jourdain, Yvette Allen, Rose Baumholzer, Cheryl Garland, Kelly Garland, Andrea Hunt, Hilary Breman, Rosalind Chamberlain, Jennie Holland, Leanne Ganey, and Tess Holderness.



Many of our members joined at the recent Growing Friends plant sale. We hope you are all enjoying your new membership and all that it has to offer.

We are currently finalising our updated *New Members Handbook* which will include lots of useful information about the Friends, our special interest groups and how members can get involved. It will be sent to members in the new year.

As always if you have any questions or queries about your membership please don't hesitate to get in touch.

Email: membership@rbgfriendscanbourne.org.au

Phone: 0431 025 733

Botanical Fabricators

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

Fabricators have enjoyed two successful events over the last weeks. The APS Maroondah group held the FJC Rogers Seminar *Fabulous Peas* on October 15/16. It included an exhibition held at Karwarra Gardens, Mount Dandenong, of artwork from our Illustrators and textile work from our Fabricators over eight days. On the last day the APS groups visited Karwarra Gardens and our exhibition. Sales mostly from that day gave us a total of \$327. The Karwarra Gardens are particularly beautiful in October with displays of Waratahs, *Chorizema*, Orchids, and *Prostanthera* varieties and always worth a visit.



Botanical Fabricators textile stall at Karwarra

On 22nd and 23rd October we joined in with the Growing Friends Plant Sale. The previous day and opening morning produced heavy rain and while Growing Friends were able to set up and begin trading, the rain coming in was too much for textile exhibitions. The outlook was depressing. Fortunately after an hour the rain cleared to an overcast day. Suddenly we looked around and customers were appearing ready to purchase plants and our items. From what seemed a gloomy outlook we were pleased with final sales results of \$1,110, and a total for the two events of \$1,437.

Botanical Fabricators meet in the Elliot Centre on second Tuesday of each month. For further information contact **Wendy Smart** on **0425 769125** or email **wvsmart08@bigpond.com**.

Look out for for the craft and textile stall to be held at the Autumn Plant Sale, 25-26 March 2023!

Member resources page

To watch a recording of a previous Open House talk at the Elliot Centre, visit our **Member resources page**.

What the **Member Resources** page looks like:

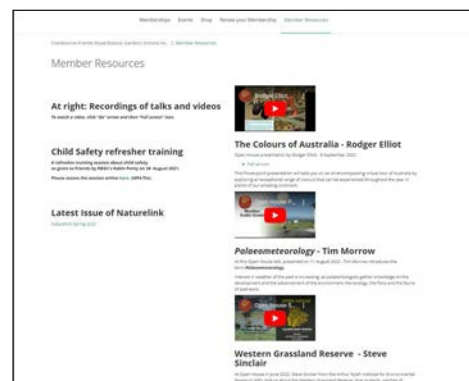
You can find this page:

- from the Friends web page:
rbgfriendscranbourne.org.au/

Click on on the link at the top of the page



- OR go to:
cranbournefriends.tidyhq.com/public/pages/member-resources
- You will be asked to log in with your TidyHQ password as this is a member benefit (as you do for membership payments or event bookings).
- To watch a video Click '**Go**' and then '**Full screen**' icon.
- You are watching the video on **YouTube**.
- You need to come **back** to the **Member resources page** to choose another video (it won't be next on YouTube).



Kate and Peter Walsh speaking and being live-streamed over Zoom at the first 'hybrid Open House' in July 2021. Photo: Judith Cooke

One of the most important FIGS activities recently was to help the horticulture staff prepare the Australian Garden for the BGANZ conference. The horticulture staff worked incredibly hard in the weeks before the conference. Some FIGS members helped spread mulch and with weeding. Well done everyone, the Gardens looked magnificent.

FIGS welcomes new members. We meet on the 1st and 3rd Tuesday mornings each month. As one member wrote: 'FIGS is a fun morning with like-minded friends who enjoy being in the fresh air, learning with hort. staff in a beautiful garden. It is a great way to give back to these wonderful gardens.' If you would like to join, contact:

- **Christine Kenyon (0438 345 589) or Sue Spicer (0434 977 477)**
- **Email: figs@rbgfriendscranbourne.org.au.**

The brief for FIGS activities in the Australian Garden is to '**Beautify and Detail**'. To this end, one of our major activities is raking of paths, hedge prunings and leaves. I thought an article on **RAKES** would be of interest.

The History of the Rake

To rake can be meditative! Today, we have: garden rakes, leaf rakes, shrub rakes, leaf-scoop rakes, hand rakes, lake rakes, roof rakes and the Japanese sand rake (*sanon yo kumade*).

A rake is intrinsically linked to the history of gardens. It possibly evolved from the shovel as an outdoor broom, or possibly comes from words for 'raking' coals in wood-burning stoves – a fire-place tool. The word 'Rake' comes from the old English *raca*, the Norse *reka*, Dutch *hark*, German *rechen* – all meaning *to scrape together, to spread, to heap up*.

The first mention of a rake comes from 1,100 BCE in China - the *patou* - and they are portrayed in medieval paintings. In Egypt they are depicted on walls and in scrolls; the Romans used metal-pronged rakes, and they were used in Scandanavian countries by the 1st century CE. The rake, as a farm implement, is used in every crop-growing culture.

The only changes to the design are the use of new materials, adaptations for particular jobs and to improve efficiency. Originally, rakes were made by hand of wood and bamboo and were prized, expensive possessions. Today they are commonplace, machine-made of wood, plastic and metal and are cheap.

Rakes were also used as weapons in Asia. For example, the monk's spade *Yueyachan* was used to fight bandits, or bury the dead.

The Japanese bamboo rake (*Kumages*) is celebrated in the annual *Tori no Ichi* festival to 'rake in' or 'sweep in' good luck, abundant harvests and fortune. We are more familiar with Japanese raked sand gardens or dry gardens, *Keresan sui*, created in Kyoto monasteries during the Muromachi Period (1336 to 1573 CE). White sand in Zen gardens represents water, or emptiness and distance or *yohaku-no-bi*, meaning 'the beauty of blank space.' They are gardens of meditation. The sand rake (*sanon yo kumade*) was used by Buddhist monks to etch peaceful designs into dry sand gardens, to imitate nature. The sands were raked to represent ripples of water and only entered for maintenance. This design principle is familiar to us in the Red Sand Garden: it is only entered for maintenance. The presence of people would spoil the sense of awe, space and vastness.



Top: Barrie Gallacher raking the Home Garden.
Photo: Christine Kenyon

Traditional farm rake in China, the *patou*.

Growing Friends | Marjanne Rook

Spring Plant Sale

The Spring Plant Sale started out as a rather wet affair with heavy rain for an hour or so. Large puddles were energetically swept away. A mud pool forming near the pay-station was taken care of by placing truck boards on top, thus making the area more comfortable for customers, staff and volunteers alike.

This time the Growing Friends were joined by the RBGV's Raising Rarity project team who were there to share information regarding the project with the public and to sell hundreds of their beautiful plants.

The RBGV website reads:

The Raising Rarity project uses a novel approach to save rare and threatened flora by assessing the horticultural potential of rare species, introducing these species into cultivation, and providing opportunity for home gardeners to grow these plants at home and contribute to the ongoing conservation of these species.

Despite the wet and somewhat slower start than usual, the Plant Sale left us with just a few plants to take back to the nursery, as customers bought \$18,500 worth of Growing Friends plants and almost \$5,000 of Raising Rarity plants.

We now have a nursery with thousand of small plants, making for a bumper crop and great selection for the months to come. Should you need some more plants for your gardens, do come to the nursery to make a selection.

More Everlasting Daisies - a Christmas gift?

We have more colourful Everlasting Daisies - ***Xerochrysum bracteatum*** - for sale at our nursery at \$5 each (mixed colours, treat these as an annual). Also, the bigger ***Xerochrysum bracteatum*** 'Dargan Hill Monarch' at \$10 each (these ones last years). With some regular tip pruning to bush them out, they should provide an ongoing, colourful summer display in a container and your garden.

Nursery Open

The Growing Friends nursery is open to members every Thursday from 10.00 - 2.00, including over the summer holiday period.

Special Orders

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



SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

Growing Friends

Contact:

Marjanne Rook

growing.friends@rbgfriendscranbourne.org.au

Phone: **9769 7881**
(Landline)



Kim, Christine, Deb and Karen, busy propagating.

Growing Friends Autumn Plant Sale

Saturday 25 & Sunday 26 March 2023

10am to 4pm

Australian Garden
Cranbourne

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

Plant lists available online one week before the sale, on our website:

rbgfriendscranbourne.org.au

With the Botanic Guides Conference looming and my Bird Tours locked in, I prepared myself by monitoring the bird activity around the Australian Garden in the week or so prior and I was excited to note the presence of a pair of male and female Rufous Whistlers.

The current season of Spring meant that birds were nesting and flowers were blooming, but I wondered if the excessive rain and cooler temperatures may have had a negative effect on bird activity.

The red Waratahs were swarming with New Holland Honeyeaters and Wattlebirds this time last year but I had spotted only a couple this year.

Likewise the grass trees were in full bloom but there was barely a Wattlebird between them in comparison to previous years.

My list of 'must sees' for the Conference Bird Tours was looking unimpressive, with the exception of the Rufous Whistlers, until Ranger Rick alerted me to the Eurasian Coot chicks that had just hatched!

With their bare heads and collar of red and orange fuzz, they bear no resemblance to their sleek parents. Unfortunately the four hatchlings soon became a group of three and as I write have reduced to just two. This is no reflection on their conscientious parents but rather on the predators, who are strong and swift.

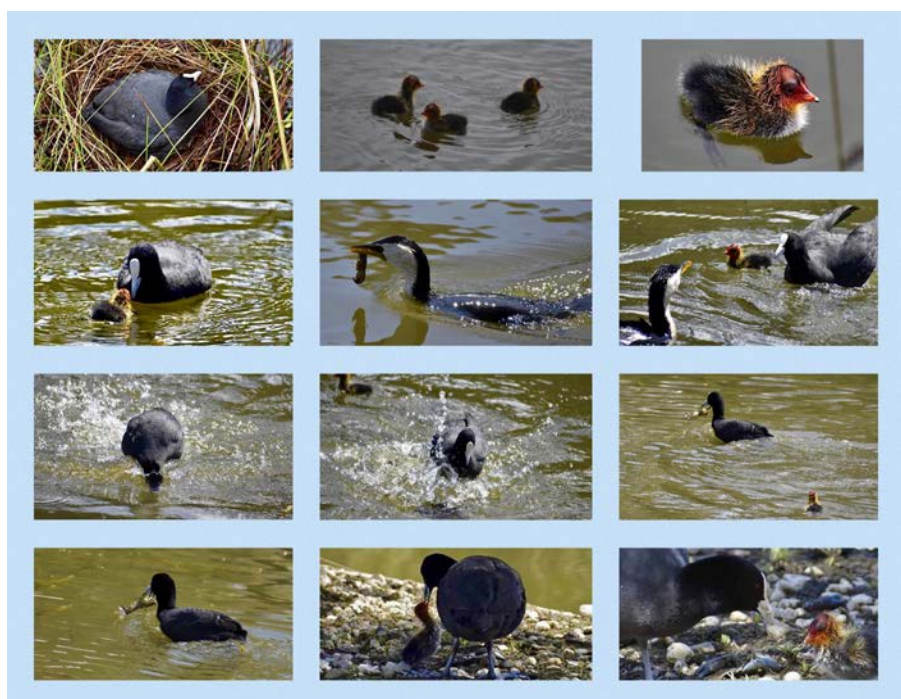
But three energetic Coot chicks were there last Tuesday to greet my delighted Conference group and were the highlight of the tour.

Fast forward to the weekend a few days later and I observed some Coot behaviour that I have not seen before. I had often witnessed one of our resident Little Pied Cormorants diving for yabbies, usually with a Coot or two following close behind to savour the leftovers of the catch. Often legs and claws are shaken off by the Cormorant prior to gulping the body down whole.

On this occasion a Coot with one hungry, squawking chick following, appeared impatient

with the Cormorant's lack of success with the hunt. When finally the Cormorant was successful, the adult Coot lunged at the Cormorant, which then dropped the large yabbie and fled to a safe distance. With much splashing the adult Coot dived to retrieve the yabbie then headed to shore for the kill, with wide-eyed squawking chick following.

Safe on shore the chick was lovingly fed tiny morsels of yabby flesh by its devoted parent. I hope the chick took note of the day's hunting lesson.



Photos of the Eurasian Coot family at the Australian Garden taken by Sharon Start.

Nettleton Park Working Bee | Ruth Scharley and Jeff Patchell

Local community connections, an enjoyable day...and one that all will cherish.

Nettleton Park is a beautiful green wedge in Glen Iris that is located at the confluence of Back and Gardiners Creeks in the green leafy corridor that lines the waterways. It's a biodiversity area and highly valued by the City of Boroondara, Melbourne Water and our **Back2Nettleton Friends Group (B2N)**.



A group of 53 people worked together to revegetate the biodiversity area in the park following the rehabilitation and descaling of the SEWER in Nettleton Park. Special memories for all who participated. Photo: Geoff Pinney

B2N formed in March 2021 to actively take responsibility and care for the park. It's a very popular place for sporting teams, dog walkers, exercisers and anyone who wants to meditate and enjoy some time out while breathing in the scent of the eucalypts.

In recent months the area has been in the centre of significant sewer pipe descaling and rehabilitation works conducted by Melbourne Water and their partners, Safety Focused Performance Joint Venture (SFPJV). These works on the 120 years+ old infrastructure extend along the nominal green corridor between Burke and Warrigal Roads and the manholes GCM17 and GCM18 that are located in Nettleton have been a significant focus.

Unfortunately, the parks and open spaces have suffered unavoidable damage over the wet winter period, as heavy equipment was needed to support the contractors. Senior Ecologist, Carly Martin, was keen to educate all workers who were employed on this site about why it was necessary to preserve and respect this biodiversity site and revegetate the area when the works were completed.

Melbourne Water was keen to restore the natural landscape and leave the parklands in good order. To achieve this, Melbourne Water worked with the Back2Nettleton Friends Group (B2N) to hold a Community Planting Day on the morning of September 15, when some 1500 grasses and herbaceous plants were successfully planted.

It was a great coming together of the project staff, distinguishable in their orange high visibility jackets and pants and hard hats and the local community members of the B2N Friends in their gardening civvies. The morning started with a very powerful Acknowledgement of Country by Aboriginal leader Rev. Glenn Loughrey, the vicar at St Oswald's Anglican Church, Glen Iris.

'Glenn gave a great explanation about what *Country* means to Indigenous Australians. He articulated the reasons we should all care for Country in a way that everyone present could resonate with and it absolutely set the tone for the day, connecting everyone present and making us all feel as one with nature,' said Jenny Hiller, Senior Engagement Advisor for SFPJV.

The morning of planting activity was finished off with a well-earned lunch for all and the swapping of leafy stories.

B2N Friends have a long-term commitment to improving the upkeep of the parklands and recent plantings. Working bees take place on the second Sunday and the second and third Thursday mornings of each month from 9.30 am onwards. For updated information, contact back2nettletonfriends@gmail.com or, look for us on Facebook. Everyone is welcome to join in.

*Article and photo approved for publication by Melbourne Water.
Ruth Scharley is a Cranbourne Friends member.*

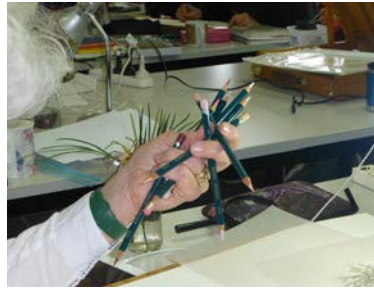
Coloured Pencil Workshop | Helen Morrow

At the end of October we conducted a three-day Coloured Pencil workshop with tutor Geoff Sargeant. This was well-attended and after initially thinking 'Where do you start?', we all successfully drew and coloured our *Grevillea*. It was a most interesting and informative workshop and everyone came away pleased and grateful to have been a participant.

This was one of the many events cancelled last year due to COVID, so we had a full house with all participants very keen to join in. We were asked to prepare an illustration of our selected subject on 300gsm cold-pressed white artist paper, ready to start work on the first day.

Geoff explained the reasons for using the 300gsm paper and the pros and cons of different brands of pencils. With our plant specimen in water, hoping it would last the week, and a photograph to copy, we set to with great enthusiasm. As we worked, Geoff spent time with each of us, commenting, suggesting using a different technique or adding another colour. He had examples of his work available for us to view, and we were able to watch him working on a *Grevillea* sketch, working from a photo he had taken in Kings Park WA.

Everyone declared it was a great workshop. The atmosphere was very friendly; there was much to learn with an excellent tutor.



Photos: Jan Maslen and Helen Morrow

Rare plant quiz answers

Created for AGM by Paul Sierakowski. Do you know what plants they are?

Banksia caleyi

Banksia dryandroides (foliage)

Banksia oreophila

Banksia pilostylis

Banksia telmatiaea

Banksia tricuspis (foliage)

Eucalyptus crenulata

Isopogon dubius

Leucochrysum albicans ssp. *tricolor*

Podolepsis linearifolia

Prumnopitys ladei

Stylidium armeria subsp. *pilolsifolium*

Wollemia nobilis



Photo: Janette Wilson

Answers to Friend Quiz 10 on pages 8-9

Thank you Charles Young for testing our plant and language knowledge again.

A1. These are Paperbarks or *Melaleucas* which often grow on coastal sandbars (Melaleuca Spits in AG). *Melaleuca* alludes to the black (Gk *melas* “as if it had been burned”) and white (Gk *leukos*) trunks of *M. leucodendron*, the first species described.

A2. This is *Banksia coccinea* (L. *coccineus* scarlet). It is a popular garden plant and one of the most sought-after *Banksia* species in the cut flower industry.

A3. This is *Actinotus helianthi*, named for its radial flower (Gk *aktinotus* furnished with rays + *helianthi* the sunflower genus *Helianthus*, for its appearance). Its common name, Flannel Flower, alludes to flannel-like feel of the ‘petals’ which are in fact enlarged bracts.

A4. The plants are unusual in not having leaves – they only make themselves known by popping up their seasonal inflorescence! They don’t need leaves for photosynthesis because they are mycoheterotrophs and derive their energy and nutrients by parasitizing soil fungi.

A5. These aerial roots are called pneumatophores (Gk *pneuma* air + *phoras* bearing). They are specialised for gas exchange, allowing the plants to obtain oxygen from the air when inundation makes it less available in the soil.

A6. This is Beaded Glasswort (a type of Samphire). These plants were burned for their ashes which are rich in soda (lye) used to manufacture soap and glass. The seeds are a vital food for the critically endangered orange-bellied parrot.

A7. The name honours the Swiss botanist Augustin de Candolle. There are reports of the cooked leaves and ripe berries being eaten but the latter are somewhat bitter.

A8. The plant is the Daintree Pine, Daintree Oak or *Gymnostoma australium* (Gk *gymnos* naked + *stoma* mouth, alluding to the exposed stomata; *australianum* honouring Australia, as it is the only Australian endemic in the genus).

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