

Winter 2003

BOTANIC NEWS

FRIENDS of The ROYAL BOTANIC
GARDENS MELBOURNE INC.



AUSTRALIA'S VIRTUAL HERBARIUM

The National Herbarium of
Victoria is participating in an
exciting project of enormous
proportions...

MEL1007504

Ex Herbario Musei Britannici.

NEW HOLLAND
BANKS & SOLANDER
1770
Actinotus helianthi Lab.
Illustr. Bot. Cook's Voyage, tab. p.
136. 44.

NATIONAL HERBARIUM OF VICTORIA

Actinotus helianthi DC.

("Flannel Flower")

Botany Bay, New South Wales.

Leg. Banks & Solander,
early May 1770

FROM THE PRESIDENT

In March this year the Friends turned twenty-one and what better way to celebrate such a significant birthday than to launch the first edition of our re-designed *Botanic News*! In its old form, *Botanic News* served us with great distinction. However Council believes that the time has come to move on as the primary focus of our activities changes from fundraising to more general support and promotion of community awareness of the Gardens. Attracting and retaining Members is also a high priority. We do hope that you will enjoy reading this splendid new-look newsletter – designed for us by Dianna Wells Design – as much as we enjoyed the previous one.

Warmest congratulations to Dame Elisabeth Murdoch, Sir Rupert Hamer, Dr Philip Moors and other Friends who were awarded Centenary Medals. The Centenary Medal is a commemorative medal awarded by the Governor-General to mark the achievements of a broad cross section of the Australian Community at the commencement of a new century.

Members who had the opportunity to see the exhibition of Celia Rosser's *Banksias* at the State Library of Victoria last year may remember a 'work in progress' of an unnamed recently-discovered *Banksia* from North-western Australia. I am now delighted to report that this *Banksia* has been named *Banksia rosserae* in honour of Celia who spent more than 25 years illustrating so beautifully the 76

Banksia species discovered in Australia so far.

It was a great pleasure to join in the 'welcome' to 55 new Friends in March. I have not attended one of these functions before, and was most excited by the enthusiasm and ability of the various committee conveners who briefed new Members on what we do and how we do it. I hope that many of you will become involved in the activities of these Committees and in so doing, enjoy contributing towards enhancing the Friends and thereby our Gardens. If any of you have any ideas on how we might better support the Gardens, I, other members of Council, or committee conveners, would be delighted to hear from you.

Like myself, I think the many Friends who volunteered to help the 'Disturb the Bats' campaign enjoyed seeing sunrise, sunset and the moon from within the Gardens. One must hope that the ongoing disturbance program planned by the Gardens management will eventually result in permanent relocation of the bats which are damaging the flora of the Gardens so badly. If you would like your name added to a register of Friends to 'Disturb the Bats', contact the Friends' office on 9650 6398.

With the approach of Autumn we saw another excellent Growing Friends Plant Sale. Our congratulations and thanks go to all members of the Growing Friends – I know that such success is not achieved without a great deal of planning and extremely



Photo: Judy Jannan

Irwin Newman and Philip Moors enjoying the hospitality of the Cranbourne Friends

hard work. In addition, many others helped run the sale. The Growing Friends could not do without their support and we thank those volunteers very much indeed.

The fostering of a richer friendship between the Friends of the RBG Cranbourne and the Friends of the RBG Melbourne took a very pleasant step forward late in March when most members of the Melbourne Friends' Council accepted the invitation of the Cranbourne Friends' Committee to visit their Gardens. Following an information presentation by Philip Moors and Chris Russell, General Manager of RBG Cranbourne, we walked to view the site of the proposed Australian Garden and then enjoyed a delicious barbecue. Full details of what is being planned for the Australian Garden at RBG Cranbourne were published in the Spring 2002 issue of *Botanic News*.

Continuing drought and the certainty that there will be a recurrence reminds us that the Friends will need to support our *Water Works Water Wise* project for some considerable time to come if we are to eventually complete the Melbourne Gardens' irrigation system. Thanks to those of you who have already made a donation. If you haven't already, and would care to donate, please use the slip enclosed. Please remember that all donations to the Friends' Trust Fund are tax deductible.

When reading the annual report of the RBG Board I noticed that since the formation of the Friends 21 years ago, we have joined the 'Benefactors' by donating more than \$500,000 to the Gardens. This, together with \$500,000 from the Trust Fund is a fantastic effort, but to keep it up in real terms we shall need to do the same again over the next 21 years. We MUST do it.

Irwin Newman

FROM THE GARDENS AND HERBARIUM

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Photos: Meg Miller



Flying-foxes

Over a ten-day period, a combination of recorded sounds, loud noises and visual stimuli such as fluorescent flags was used to help disperse the colony of roughly 28,000 bats that was roosting in the Gardens. This was achieved through the fantastic efforts – at both dawn and dusk each day – of close to two hundred volunteers, including members of Melbourne and Cranbourne Friends, staff from the Royal Botanic Gardens and Departments of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) and Primary Industries. Although flying-foxes have not yet started roosting at Horseshoe bend, the mass dispersal from RBG Melbourne was an important achievement.

Many of the flying-foxes have departed from the area entirely, while those that have lingered in the Domain parklands to the north of the Royal Botanic Gardens, and in other city parklands, have been subject to a continuing dispersal program. The second phase of the dispersal program, currently under way, uses four 'sound buggies' playing a CD of loud and unpleasant sounds to continue to disturb the flying-foxes and prevent them from resettling in RBG Melbourne.

The Royal Botanic Gardens is particularly grateful to the members of the Melbourne Friends, and their family and friends, whose support and commitment to the initial phase of the dispersal program, despite the uncivilized 5am and 7pm starts, was invaluable and greatly appreciated.

Save Water Awards 2003

In recognition of outstanding achievement in water conservation the Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne was recently announced winner of *The Sustainable Garden* (Garden Design/Construction) category of the **savewater!™ awards 2003**. The Royal Botanic Gardens was also a finalist in the *Efficiency in Government* (Government Agency or Department) category. This is a fantastic achievement, and reinforces the organisation's commitment to the Royal Botanic Gardens' *Policy for Conservation of Plant Biodiversity*.

Long Island Launch

The official launch of the Long Island project was recently celebrated with a traditional Kulin smoking ceremony. Through the fantastic efforts of RBG staff and a dedicated and enthusiastic Green Corp team managed by Conservation Volunteers Australia, and with generous funding support of Parks Victoria, Long Island has been successfully rehabilitated to create a billabong and wetland system typical of the Lower Yarra prior to European settlement. The restoration of the site – that is an objective of the RBG Melbourne Masterplan – was completed just a few months ago with the laying of a new path, the introduction of a traditional 'boora' or meeting site, installation of interpretive signage, and seating designed by David Wong made from recycled timber by David Gibbs.

Australian Garden Fundraising Committee

An Australian Garden Fundraising Committee has been appointed by the Board of the Royal Botanic Gardens to raise additional funds for the creation of the Australian Garden at RBG Cranbourne. Chaired by Michael Hamson, long-standing personal supporter of the Royal Botanic Gardens, the Committee has raised a little over \$1 million in the last six months. With the outcomes of a number of funding proposals pending, it is hoped that this initial success will be further consolidated over the remainder of 2003 and into 2004.

Royal Botanic Gardens regulations

The *Royal Botanic Gardens Regulations 1994* will lapse on 4 January, 2004. To ensure that regulations continue to be in force to give full effect to the *Royal Botanic Gardens Act 1991*, and to provide specific controls for the use of the Royal Botanic Gardens, a committee was established to facilitate a review of the current Regulations, and to propose a new set of statutory rules. The draft Regulations are now in the process of being 'settled' by Chief Parliamentary Counsel. A Regulatory Impact Statement (RIS), explaining the need for, and assessing the costs and benefits of, the proposed Regulations is currently being drafted, and is anticipated for release with the proposed Regulations in mid-2003 for public comment.

Philip Moors, Director

ACACIA OR RACOSPERMA?

Australia may lose its claim to the national floral emblem name, the acacia.

This may be a surprising result of the advances in understanding of the world's plant life driven by DNA testing.

Molecular biology is uncovering revolutionary insights into the classification and evolution of plants, said Dr Stephen Hopper, guest speaker at the Friends of Kings Park Annual Wildflower Festival Address on 27 September, 2002.

Australia may lose its claim to the national floral emblem name, the acacia.

Through DNA testing, botanists have discovered that the Australian acacias are not related closely enough to the acacias in Africa to be considered part of the same genus.

Botanical protocol gives naming rights to the first-named species. As African acacias were classified first, we may have to find a new name for Australia's acacia species. And that name may be 'Racosperma'.

So what is the point of exploring the DNA sequences of plants?

It is the very foundation for conservation of biodiversity, said Dr Hopper, who is CEO of Kings Park and Botanic Garden and Bold Park.

"If your taxonomy is wrong, a lot of money, time and effort, all of which are scarce and precious, can be

misdirected or wasted," he explained.

"Similarly," he said, "species that are difficult to classify can go unnoticed because of poor taxonomic judgement."

"It is good risk management to invest in systematic research, particularly in groups prone to cryptic speciation, geographical variation, natural hybridisation, asexual reproduction or other processes that obscure relationships and biological entities in need of conservation management," he said.

There are other practical reasons too. "The search for new medicines among plant products is immeasurably streamlined if closely related plants are classified correctly," he said. "Otherwise much time and effort is wasted following up incorrect leads because classification is wrong, placing unrelated species close together and near relatives far apart."

Unlike trying to classify plants by colour, shape or structure, DNA analysis provides a large, independent and rigorously derived set of characters that test classification ideas developed over the last 400 years.

"The great power of DNA sequence data is that they are completely independent of traditional characters used in plant classification, their



Acacia anarthros



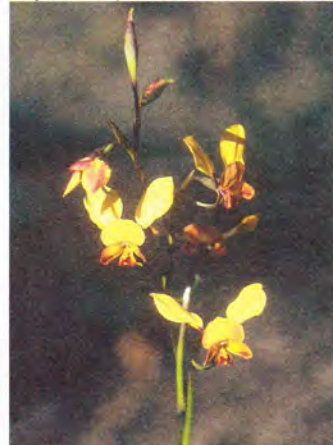
Borya constricta



Cephalotus follicularis



Xanthorrhoea prestissii



Diuris brumalis

STAFF PROFILE



Photo: Lisa Morris

detection is highly repeatable by independent workers, and they are orders of magnitude greater in number than traditional characters."

"The other great strength of the new molecular approach to plant systematics is an unprecedented level of international collaboration, compared to previous, mostly sole-authored, attempts to address what Charles Darwin called the 'abominable mystery' of the evolution of flowering plants."

"The findings of molecular study, when first published in 1993, were fascinating to some, shocking to others, many of whom remained incredulous or at least sceptical until subsequent research affirmed the repeatability and power of this approach."

Flowering plants, known scientifically as *Angiosperms*, are the largest group affected by reclassification as a result of DNA sequence analysis. Given the huge diversity of flowering plant life in Western Australia, the impact of molecular biology promises to be impressive.

"The Australian flora has posed significant challenges to systematic botanists, from the earliest collections by Vlamingh and Dampier 300 years ago right up to the present day."

"While considerable progress in understanding the flora has occurred over the past two centuries, marked changes have emerged from molecular systematic studies in the past decade – a quiet revolution worth summarising and analysing for its implications."

"In some areas, we have had to toss out everything we have learned. Under the Linnaeus classification system, for example, the grasstrees *Kingia* and *Dasypogon* appeared closely related to *Xanthorrhoea*. DNA analysis, however, shows them to be very far apart."

DNA analysis has resulted in *Xanthorrhoea* being moved from the Liliaceae family. Molecular biology is also resolved in upheavals in classifications of *Banksia*, *Dryandra*, and *Eucalyptus*. It has finally resolved the correct relationships of the Albany Pitcher Plant (with the rainforest family Cunoniaceae), and established that orchids have surprising relatives, including pin cushions (*Borya*).

Gail White

Friends Rapporteur

This article has been re-printed by kind permission of the Friends of Kings Park and Botanic Garden, WA. It admirably illustrates part of the research done in any Herbarium, and is one of three articles in this issue commemorating the 150th anniversary of the National Herbarium in Melbourne.

Marco Duretto

By the time you read this, Marco Duretto, recently the RBG Melbourne's Plant Sciences Manager, will be firmly ensconced in his new job as Senior Curator (Botany) in the Tasmanian Herbarium. The herbarium is part of the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, and the job offered Marco the opportunity to concentrate on research, which he prefers.

Marco grew up just south of Brisbane in the Redland Shire on Moreton Bay where, as a youngster, he enjoyed surfing, fishing, crabbing, bushwalking and generally exploring the hinterland of Brisbane. It is no surprise, therefore, that at the University of Queensland he studied Marine Biology. Part of his degree included Botany subjects, and when he discovered that some marine creatures can cause severe poisoning to their handlers, he switched to a 'safer' science study for his Honours year. There followed two years travel to Europe with his partner, Andy, and on their return they moved to Melbourne where Marco started his PhD at the School of Botany, University of Melbourne. On completion of his degree Marco successfully applied for a Research position at the Herbarium and then in 1998 he became the Manager of Plant Sciences.

Marco said he would be sad moving on from Melbourne, where he has enjoyed working with Herbarium staff, but since the Melbourne position concentrated on management rather than research, he regretfully decided to apply for the Tasmanian position which would help him further his work on the Rutaceae family, which includes Boronias, Correas, Eriostemons and citrus fruits.

Tasmania has very strict quarantine laws, particularly regarding soil, even from other parts of Australia. When I spoke to Marco, he had spent the Moomba weekend emptying out his plant pots and scrubbing them clean of soil, ready for the transfer interstate. 'We have some very nice pots,' he said, 'and I don't want to leave them behind. We will have to gather other plants.' The family didn't seem to be aware of the incongruity of moving further from the sun and the tropical marine creatures which were part of an earlier life, into a distinctly cooler clime. With hobbies like bushwalking, birdwatching and cooking they are looking forward to new areas to explore and sampling Tasmania's famous food and wines.

As Manager, Marco has facilitated Herbarium scientists who have benefited from grants from the Friends towards attendance at various conferences to help further the research of the National Herbarium of Victoria. He says there will be plenty of opportunity to keep his ties with Melbourne alive through collaboration on several projects, and I am sure Melbourne's Herbarium staff will be delighted to hear from him as often as possible. Frank Udovicic will be the new Manager.

On the Friends' behalf, the Council wishes Marco every success in his new job and hope he and his family settle into their new life quickly and with as little trauma as possible.

Meg Miller

AUSTRALIA'S VIRTUAL HERBARIUM

The National Herbarium of Victoria (MEL) is participating in an exciting project of enormous proportions which will be of great benefit and interest to botanists, land managers, researchers and keen gardeners. With the other herbaria in Australia, our Herbarium is working on setting up Australia's Virtual Herbarium (AVH), an on-line botanical information resource accessible via the web. Users will be able to access the wealth of data associated with the six million specimens housed in Australia's herbaria. At present less than 50% of these have been entered into an electronic data base so it is a huge project.

The sort of information available about each specimen will include botanical name, who collected it and when, its occurrence and distribution, images of the plants, and associated bibliographic files. When organised on a single national database, a powerful research tool becomes available to answer questions on a national, regional or state level, something that was not possible previously.

Victoria has one of the oldest specimen collections, as many were collected by the early settlers. This provides a unique snapshot of the native vegetation at that time and enables research to be undertaken as to how specimens and distributions have changed over the years. For example, a species that may have been fairly widespread in the early days of European settlement may now be considered rare. Conversely, weed species that may have been found in certain locations, may now have a much wider distribution. The AVH will enable trends such as these to be analysed so that management strategies can be formulated and applied.

Joan Thomas, AVH Project Co-ordinator, says that MEL has an estimated total of 1.2 million specimens to record, and by the end of 2003 approximately 550,000 should be databased. A significant component of the estimated total collection held at MEL is foreign, due to Von Mueller's strong relationships overseas. However, the focus is on databasing the Australian collection first, with the foreign collection following at the end of the project if funding permits.

All Australian specimens of the plant groups which were designated as first priority taxa have been entered on the database. These were from the families Chenopodiaceae, Casuarinaceae and Poaceae, and the genera *Acacia*, *Eucalyptus* and *Callitris*. Second priority taxa are now being tackled which include Myrtaceae, Proteaceae, Asteraceae, Orchidaceae, the Legume families and the Fern families.

The five year project is currently in its second year with a team of 14 staff working on it in MEL. Funding has been provided for the project Australia-wide by a grant of \$8m from the Commonwealth, State and territory governments, and some funds from the private sector. Additional private funding is required for this project to be fully completed by September 2006, so if you can help out, please contact the Herbarium.

The website address for Australia's Virtual Herbarium is:
www.chah.gov.au/avh.html

Wendy Dwyer

ACTIVITIES

Exceptional Stephen

ILLUSTRATED TALK

by Stephen Ryan

Wednesday 18 June at 5.30 for
6.00pm Mueller Hall,
National Herbarium

Cost: \$20

Friends \$15

RSVP by Friday 13 June
on enclosed booking form.

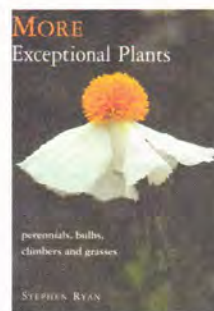


Photo: Stephen Ryan

Once again we are fortunate to snare Stephen Ryan to entertain us with tales of his latest book, *More Exceptional Plants*. Like his first book, *Exceptional Plants*, his latest book is not just a list of 100 unusual plants, but a fun and lighthearted look at bulbs, climbers, ornamental grasses, perennials, some biennials and even a few annuals.

Rare plants are Stephen Ryan's life work, and he is enormously knowledgeable. Not only can he tell us the essential data of the plants, but

all the things that give a plant its personality. It is likely that *More Exceptional Plants* may well be the only book on horticulture which is well researched, authoritative and also capable of giving us a good laugh.

This is a talk not to be missed and Stephen will also bring along copies of this exceptional book to sign and sell. Be sure to book early as Stephen is a very popular speaker.

Wine and cheese will be served before the talk at 5.30pm

Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne Conservation Series

GARDEN THUGS: FROM BACKYARD TO BUSH

Mueller Hall, National Herbarium of Victoria

Wednesday 25 June, 2003 \$6.60 adults \$4.40 concession 6pm-7.30pm.

Join us for a drink from 6pm. Bookings are essential by ringing the Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne on (03) 9252 2429.

Some garden thugs (environmental weeds) may be lurking in your backyard! Join us and weed expert Kate Blood, Victorian Coordinator, Weed Incursion Rapid Response, Department of Sustainability and Environment, to find out the impact of weeds on bushland, wetlands and native fauna, and about the attractive alternatives that can minimise the impact of your garden on surrounding natural areas.

Yummy! Yummy! Yummy!

Cost \$10 per copy. Available from the office (9650 6398) and at Friends' functions.

At long last you will be able to enjoy some of the treats from our functions in your own home. Our catering committee members are sharing some of their favourite recipes. Divided into a Savoury Treats section and a Morning Tea Treats section, this small recipe book with an easy-wipe cover will provide you with many ideas for your next social occasion.



Photo: David Glenn

Gardening through the drought

ILLUSTRATED TALK
by David Glenn

Tuesday 5 August at 10.15 for 11.00am Mueller Hall, National Herbarium
Cost: \$20 Friends \$15
RSVP by Friday 1 August on enclosed booking form

David Glenn is the owner of Lambley Nursery, growers of the best varieties of perennials, ornamental grasses and silver foliage plants. The nursery encompasses lovely herbaceous borders, cottage gardens and five acres of trial and display beds set around an 1870 blue-stone farmhouse in one of the loveliest rural districts in Victoria. The five acres of flower fields, where more than a thousand different varieties are grown, make a flowery oasis in the surrounding dry

grass plains. These are at their best in late summer and autumn and are visited by many interstate and overseas gardeners.

David and his wife, artist Criss Canning have been working for 10 years on these gardens in central Victoria, where winter temperatures are down to -8°C and this summer's torrid maximum was 46°C. Over the last few years they have been battling drought conditions and water restrictions. How have they managed to

keep the garden looking spectacular? The garden is growing more and more heat-tolerant plants with low water requirements. It is not tricks, but careful planning and management that produce a garden beautiful enough to touch our souls.

David is always a popular speaker, so please book early to avoid disappointment. Morning tea will be served before the talk.

Winter video show

The Chelsea Flower Show 2003 and The Garden House
Friday 25 July at 10.00am.
The Lodge, Melbourne Grammar School St Kilda Road, Melbourne
Cost: \$15 Members only
RSVP by Monday 21 July on enclosed booking form

Following the success of the video show held last year, we are lucky to be able to repeat this event in the same wonderful location of the boardroom in the Lodge at Melbourne Grammar School. Two fabulous newly-released videos will be shown.

Just released, *The Chelsea Flower Show 2003*, tells the story of the world's greatest gardening event, held in May 2003 in the grounds of The Royal Hospital Chelsea. You will see the spectacular Show Gardens, pavilions brimming with plants from every corner of the globe and

all the highlights of this year's show.

The Garden House, viewed by experts as one of the best gardens in Britain, sits on the edge of Dartmoor near the village of Yelverton. Ten acres of glorious colour are centred on the enchanting terraced Walled Garden surrounding the romantic ruins of a medieval village. Beyond these walls, the garden is planted in a revolutionary style interpreting some of the world's great natural sights. More than 6000 plant varieties feature in this garden begun by

the great plantsman Lionel Fortescue and developed by his successor Keith Wiley.

Copies of these two videos, and a variety of other garden videos, will be for sale on the morning, plus orders may be made from the complete catalogue of videos available through Michael Pitkin of Viburnum Gardens.

Morning tea/coffee will be served at 10.00am and there will be a short break between the two videos. Numbers will be limited so book early to avoid disappointment.

Victorian tapestry workshop

Thursday 3 July at 10.50am.
Tour starts at 11.00am sharp
Meet at the Victorian Tapestry Workshop 262 Park Street, South Melbourne
Cost: \$10
RSVP by Monday 16 June on enclosed booking form

The Victorian Tapestry Workshop is one of the world's great centres for contemporary hand-woven tapestry. Located in the historic Emerald Hill area of South Melbourne, the workshop is renowned for its artistic approach and its traditional, hand-made Gobelin style which has been used since the 14th century in Europe. What makes tapestry exciting is its ability to combine discipline – to take the traditional and make it contem-

porary; to create an apparent third dimension; to create layers of discovery; to delight! While the Workshop's main function is the weaving of tapestries for local and overseas markets, it also provides a resource for people interested in the medium and maintains a program of viewing times for visitors.

Join with a group of Friends on a guided tour of the Victorian Tapestry Workshop. Learn

about its history since 1976. See their latest work in progress, and visit the collection in the Gallery, where there is also a gift shop. The tour lasts one hour and is just around the corner from the Clarendon Street shops. Take the opportunity to bring a friend and enjoy a coffee after the tour.

Numbers are limited so please book early to avoid missing out on this interesting tour.

ACTIVITIES

Gardens, Villages and Chateaux of the French Riviera, Provence and the Dordogne

ILLUSTRATED TALK

by landscape architect, horticulturist and TV presenter John Patrick

Thursday 11 September at 6.15pm for 7.00pm Mueller Hall, National Herbarium

Cost: \$20 Friends \$15
RSVP by Monday 8 September on enclosed booking form.

John will retrace the journey he took in May this year and introduce us to the extraordinary diversity of natural and human landscapes of Southern France, from the rugged, sun-drenched Riviera coast to the deep gorges and craggy hill-tops of the Dordogne. By exploring the art of gardening and the shape of human settlement in country houses and farms, castles, villages, monasteries, towns and cities of four distinct regions – the Riviera Coast and Alps Maritimes, Provence, Luberon and Vaucluse Heights; Languedoc, and the Dordogne – he investigates how ecological diversity has nurtured human innovation from the Romans to the

modern era.

His observations include how modern gardeners exploited microclimates between Riviera cliffs and the sea to grow myriad exotics; how farmers turned arid rocky Provençal landscapes to advantage by cultivating aromatic flowers and herbs, and how vintners everywhere have coaxed distinctive wines from particular soils.

John's accompanying slides will reflect the visual feast he experienced, which was enriched by encounters with the owners of private gardens and estates including a Provençal cottage garden and the recently restored Chateau Val Joanis in Provence. This



promises to be a mouth-watering taste of a rich and diverse swathe of France.

Join us for a glass of wine and savouries prior to the talk.

Early bookings essential, as John Patrick's talks are usually booked out well before RSVP date.

A mycological mystery

ILLUSTRATED TALK

by Dr Tom May, Senior Mycologist,

Plant Sciences at RBG, Melbourne
Thursday 14 August at 10.15am for 11.00am Mueller Hall, National Herbarium

Cost: \$17 Friends \$12
RSVP by Monday 11 August on enclosed booking form.

In the 19th Century, Australian fungi were studied in Europe by a circuitous route from local collectors, via Baron von Mueller. One local collector was Marie Wehl, one of Mueller's nieces. She prepared delicate paintings of the fungi. The evidence (in the form of letters, publications, paintings and specimens) has ended up scattered between the National Herbarium of Victoria, the British Museum and the

Herbarium, Royal Botanic Gardens Kew. Piecing together the evidence has thrown light on the relationships among the collectors, the intermediary (Mueller) and the mycologists.

In August 2002, generous funding from the Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne enabled Dr Teresa Lebel and Dr Tom May to attend the 7th International Mycological Congress in Oslo, followed by research time spent

in the US and London. Tom May will recount the story of how records of research and paintings of our fungi were assembled from Herbaria at Kew and Melbourne and the British Museum to discover and verify important type material.

Dr Tom May, after completing a PhD in fungal taxonomy, has worked at RBG Melbourne for ten years on the taxonomy, ecology and conservation of larger fungi.

What building where? Winter insiders' Quarterly walk

Friday 22 August at 10.00am sharp
Meet at Gate Lodge (opposite the Shrine)

Cost: \$10 (Members Only)
RSVP by Monday 18 August on enclosed booking form
Payment must accompany booking as this is a restricted number event.

On this walk we will visit some of the historic old buildings in the RBG. Some buildings, such as those on the redevelopment of the old Observatory Site are highly visible but others are less obtrusive, not so well known and partially obscured by plant growth.

Not many of the enchanting Nineteenth-century rustic buildings, summer houses, bandstands and bridges still exist but many of the early residences in the Gardens grounds remain and are used for different purposes. One secret place is a disused cone-shaped reservoir built by Guilfoyle in 1876

to resemble a volcano, and another old shed was brought out from England in pre-fabricated panels.

Come along and discover what goes on in many of the buildings you've often wondered about! A delicious morning tea will be served before the walk.

ILLUSTRATORS

The illustrated garden

In this issue we introduce Terry Napier, one of our botanical illustrators, and detail another plant from our 21st century florilegium – *Nepenthes*, the Tropical Pitcher Plant. The *Illustrated Garden* project was established in 2001 by artist Members of the Friends to create a permanent illustrated record (or florilegium) of selected plants growing in the RBG Melbourne.

Terry says, "Possibly the easiest of all the carnivorous plants to grow (ours lives happily in the kitchen window) *Nepenthes* comes from a large genus of some 70 species, and is found mainly in tropical Asia. The flowers are generally inconspicuous, with colours ranging from pale cream to brownish-purple.

The real star of these amazing plants is the bulbous tube, or 'pitcher', from which the plant takes its common name. The pitcher forms at the end of a tendril which is an extension of the mid-rib of the leaf. On maturity, the pitcher has nectar-secreting glands in the lid and around the rim of the opening. It is these glands that attract the insects on which the plant feeds."

The RBG has some species of *Nepenthes*; they are located in the Tropical House.

Terry Napier was introduced to botanical art in the early 1980s by FRBG botanical



illustrator Beverley Graham while they were members of the Wildlife Art Society of Australasia. Today, botanical painting and teaching it to others fills Terry's days. He is a long-term participant in *The Art of Botanical Illustration* exhibitions, and his paintings can be seen in the RBG Observatory Gate shop.

Current projects include paintings for the RBG Cranbourne collection of Australian native plants, and the florilegium of Government House Gardens, Melbourne.

Rita Parkinson

One-day Workshop:

AN INTRODUCTION TO BOTANICAL ART

Wednesday 2 July from 10.00am to 4.00pm

All materials provided. Morning and afternoon tea included.

BYO lunch.

Cost incl. GST: \$85

Friends: \$75

For more information please contact Dianne Emery on 9523 5397.

Dianne Emery's Term 3 Classes

Will commence in the week beginning 21 July:

Tuesdays 6.15-8.45pm;

Wednesdays 10.00am-12.30pm and 12.30pm-3.00pm;

Fridays 10.30am-1.30pm

Saturdays 1.00pm-3.30pm (conducted by Mali Moir)

For further information and enrolment, ring Dianne on 9523 5397.

Learn to paint floral/botanical on silk

CALL FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

This class is designed for beginners and botanical artists who want either a challenge in a new medium or to relax with a freer painting style. Beautiful finished work can be achieved quickly. Make exquisite scarves, work for framing, colour your own pieces for patchwork and dress lengths.

Classes would be conducted by Mali Moir on a weekly basis, for two to two-and-a-half hours, and would begin mid July.

Please contact the Friends' office on 9650 6398 if you are interested in this opportunity.

Botanical illustrators Quarterly meeting

VISIT TO ROYAL BOTANIC GARDENS CRANBOURNE

Tuesday 19 August at 10.30am

This will be a great opportunity to see the changes in the Gardens since our last visit several years ago. Spring wild flowers will be coming into bloom, and we will look at the

area being prepared for the Australian Garden and meet some of the Cranbourne Botanical Illustrators.

The RBG Cranbourne is located to the right of the South Gippsland Highway on the south side of the town just past the racecourse. (Melways p.133, K10) Access to the entrance is via Ballarto Road. On entering the Gardens, follow Stringybark Drive to the Public Car Park.

Botanical Illustrators are invited to drive to the RBG Cranbourne and meet at the Public Car Park at 10.30am. John Armstrong, President of the Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens Cranbourne, will join us there and show us around.

BYO lunch, drink, hat, camera, folding chair and sensible walking gear. Contact Judy Jarman on 9870 7236 if the weather is inclement.

Please ring the Friends' office on 9650 6398 to have your name included on the list.

Whirlybirds

The Whirlybirds are a group of botanical artists who meet each Tuesday in the Whirling Room Studio.

An informal and supportive atmosphere is enjoyed by all who spend the day painting, sharing ideas and solving queries arising from their common interest – botanical illustration.

If you are a member of the Friends of the Botanic Gardens and a botanical illustrator, and would like to join this group, you will be very welcome.

Contact Miriam Blight on 9583 6098 for further information.

FROM THE MEMBERS



Photo: Meg Miller

'STAR' DAVID AUSTIN ROSE

From the Membership Committee

We welcome all new Members to our organisation with the release of an exciting new format for 'Botanic News'. Hopefully you will endeavour to experience many of the benefits associated with becoming a Member of the Friends of the RBG. Remember to read the activities carefully – and book quickly if something interests you!

We are experiencing a steady increase in Memberships, and thank those Members who have introduced friends, relatives and associates to our organisation. As an icon in our fabulous city, The Royal Botanic Gardens rivals Grandma's passionfruit sponge as part of our being. This is the bond we share (not the sponge). The Friends provide a valuable link between the general community and RBG management and staff, with tremendous goodwill estab-

lished over the past 21 years.

Are you interested in becoming involved? There are a variety of avenues for regular commitment by volunteers within the Friends' organisation. A chat with staff at Gate Lodge may just add that extra dimension to your life that you are looking for. Not much time, but willing to help occasionally? There are a variety of avenues for occasional commitment by volunteers with the Friends' organisation. No time or energy left, but willing to subscribe? A hearty thank-you for contributing toward our 'Water Works, Water Wise' project and assisting in the development and maintenance of Melbourne's most important horticultural and recreational legacy. Perhaps you could introduce a new Friend?

Enjoy your Membership and thank you for becoming an integral part of our beautiful Royal Botanic Gardens in Melbourne!

Pamela J. Eames

Growing Friends

Despite a large variety of plants and numerous plant stock, the recent drought conditions and the prospect of still-tighter water restrictions appear to have discouraged potential buyers at our recent Autumn Sale. As a consequence we have a lot of stock to offer for sale to Friends as usual on Fridays from 10.00am to 1.00pm.

Proceeds from these and all our other sales earn money to assist the Gardens' operations. Current assistance is towards a sophisticated watering scheme for the Southern section of the Gardens.

Membership of the Growing Friends is restricted to members of the Friends of the RBG Melbourne. You need no extensive expertise – one of our most knowledgeable volunteers said that she could just tell the difference between a daffodil and a rose when she joined us. The only prerequisites are an eagerness to learn and a commitment to regular attendance (five hours a week every Friday). The waiting period is 18 months to two years.

Pauline Aw, Geoff Crowhurst, Wendy Dwyer, Peter Kelly, Robin Leszczynski and Joy Ryan-Silveston recently joined the group and are most welcome. The induction process involves an in-depth tour of the Gardens' glass houses and plant husbandry resources conducted by the Gardens' nursery manager David Robbins. The tour is both a fascinating eye-opener and also provides an insight on

the source of most of the material for the Growing Friends. Another useful component of the induction process is a 'mentor' scheme – a mentor is appointed to each new member in order to facilitate transfer of skills and information about our nursery management and operational methods, which we have found useful.

Colin Herbert, Convener

Membership Information

If you're seeing our newsletter for the first time and would like to join the Friends, here is some basic information.

Annual membership fees are:

Household	\$57
Individual	\$39

Country, Interstate, Overseas Pensioner or Full time Student (validation required) \$28

Phone the Friends' office – 03 9650 6398 – for an application form, which also has details of Corporate, Group and Life Membership.

OR visit our website: www.rbg.vic.gov.au/friends

Please make cheques or money orders payable to Friends of RBG Melbourne. If paying by credit card, state card number, expiry date and name on card.

Post to: Friends of RBG Melbourne Gate Lodge, 100 Birdwood Ave, Melbourne Vic 3004.

Members will not be surprised to learn of a modest increase in subscriptions from 1 July. Although we have tried to keep our rates as low as possible, we need to cover increased costs for both postage and insurance.



FORDING THE CAUSEWAY

Western Visions Tour

A MEMBER'S IMPRESSIONS

On a glorious autumn morning at the end of March we set off in a coach from the Arts Centre bound for the Botanic Gardens at Williamstown. We were met by the head gardener, Philip Goode, who took us on a guided tour. These gardens were opened in 1860 and their age is reflected in the type and size of many of the trees. Stunningly tall specimens of the Mexican Fan palm, *Washingtonia robusta*, line several of the walks and are offset by large and healthy elms in the lawns. Philip told us about the Conservation Master Plan under which the Gardens are being restored and developed. Ears pricked up and faces came alight when he said that the Plan includes the removal of many of the roses. Alas, he told us kindly and firmly that he was not allowed to give them away no matter how good their new home promised to be. Members were intrigued by the wide plastic collars on many of the trees, a measure which is an effective deterrent

to the local possums. Covering five acres, these Botanic Gardens are an oasis of tranquillity in suburbia, with their mixture of straight walks and curving paths, magnificent old trees and beds of flowering shrubs and perennials and some wonderful *Crinum* specimens.

These gardens were opened in 1860 and their age is reflected in the type and size of many of the trees.

From Williamstown, we went to Newport Lakes Reserve where we were met by Suzie Inglis, Park Ranger extraordinaire, who was our guide for the rest of the day. Here, in contrast to our first stop, all the plants and trees we saw and walked among were natives. Newport Lakes Reserve is a wonderful area of reclaimed urban bushland incorporating two large lakes which are home to many species of bird life. On our tour of the area we walked on water – using the rock causeway which allows the water to flow between the lakes. Suzie

was able to answer all our questions and provided a running commentary on the vegetation and the animals of the area and the background to the development of the lakes.

After some refreshments it was on to Basaltica, a drylands garden featuring indigenous grasses, plants and trees. City West Water is the major sponsor for this project which has been given a home near the Administration Block of the transport group CRT. We had the pleasure of the company of botanical artist Helene Wild and viewed her beautiful work there in the Gallery. We had lunch here and Elio Comello, the manager of this treasure, took us over the garden. It was clear that he has a close relationship with all of the scores of specimens, having been responsible for their planting and nurture. He knows them all by their names, common and botanical, and he told us all manner of interesting and intriguing details about them.

We left Basaltica and enjoyed the coastal vistas of Hobsons Bay until we arrived at a marvellous place known

as the 100 Steps of Federation. This covers an extensive area where a huge park is being created from a former tip site. We walked up the hundred steps to an eminence on which was an interesting large modern sculpture. From here we looked out across Port Phillip Bay, over the Cheetham Wetlands and south to the Point Cook Coastal Park. Suzie was our guide again and told us that from this point on a clear day, one can see past the city towers to the Dandenongs. The views were magnificent, the sun was hot, the breeze was cool, there was a slight haze; it was a perfect autumn day.

The final event of our tour was fascinating. It was the Truganina Reserve – an historic site in the Laverton area. Here Suzie gave us another guided tour, this time of the Edwardian house, the garden, the stables and the bunkers where explosives – dynamite and gelignite – were stored.

In all, a most interesting, rewarding and well-organised trip.

Frances Hortle

Botanic Birds

One of the great delights of birdwatching in the Royal Botanic Gardens is the occasional visit of the Powerful Owl. It has been sighted a number of times in the last few years, generally in the period early or late in the year. There were earlier sightings in the 1860s, 1964, 1989 and 1992.

The Powerful Owl (*Ninox strenus*) is Australia's largest owl (and one of the larger owls of the world). Its distribution is largely confined to the forests of the Great Dividing Range within about 200km of the coast, stretching from the far south-east of South Australia to around Rockhampton in Queensland. A fully grown adult male measures around 66cm (over 2 ft) with a wing span double that. The female is perhaps 10cm smaller. Of the flighted land birds in Australia, only the Wedge-tailed Eagle and the White-bellied Sea-eagle are larger.

As it is a nocturnal bird, it generally roosts on branches of larger trees during the daytime. Observations in the RBG are often made early in the morning as it settles in for the day. At this time its presence can be guessed by the alarm calls of the resident birds, especially the blackbirds, wattle birds and white plumed honeyeaters. These calls seem to abate after about ten minutes or so as the owl settles for the day.

The bird has been seen, usually about five or ten metres from the ground, on the Oak Lawn; near the Rose Pavilion; closer to the lake or near the Canna bed and Fern Gully. It seems largely unafraid of people peering at it during the day. It occasionally will be holding a ring-tailed possum (or part thereof) on a branch. It will sit this way for the day and feed in the early evening. It generally eats small mammals, but its diet can include cockatoo, magpie, kookaburra and currawong, or even small insects and rodents.

The Powerful Owl is generally thought to mate for life and breeding occurs in the period mid-May to September. It would seem likely that the

The Powerful Owl (*Ninox strenus*) is Australia's largest owl (and one of the larger owls of the world).

visits to the RBG occur outside of the breeding season. It is also thought that a pair stays together but roosts in separate trees during the non-breeding season, so it is possible that the visitors to the RBG are a pair, although this has not been confirmed.

The adult male is beautifully marked: large golden eyes, with a dark grey-brown back and a buff front barred with grey-brown scallops. The tail is barred grey-brown and white, the legs feathered with strong yellowish claws. So, if you hear a commotion of birds in a tree in the Gardens, it might possibly be the Powerful Owl (or a Tawny Frogmouth, or a Brown Goshawk, or a



Powerful Owl drawn by Andrew Plant

Currawong, or even an Australian Hobby or Peregrine Falcon flying overhead). In any case, it is worth stopping to have a look.

Recently there have been two interesting duck sightings on the lake. Pink-eared Ducks were seen in March and last October. Prior to that, 1997 was the last recorded sighting. Of greater interest was the sighting of a Musk Duck in March. It was recorded by Ferdinand Von Mueller in the 1860s and by P R St John who was head gardener in the early 1900s. This is the first recorded sighting since then.

If any readers have also seen these ducks or, indeed, any other unusual birds, the authors would be most interested in hearing from you.

Tony Delves / David Plant

Managing the Living Collections of the RBGM

I was pleased to be asked to give a talk on the subject of 'How we manage the living collections of the Gardens' at the Friends' Annual General Meeting late last year. This was a challenging topic to cover in the space of one presentation.

I contextualised this idea of the development, management and presentation of living plant collections by botanic gardens such as ours within the larger theme of 'doing things which will make a positive difference to the lives of people'.

While I know that often we (the employees or supporters of the Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne) assume that everyone knows what living plant collections are, I think that at times our assumptions are not well-supported by the public's understanding. What that means of course, is that we have not communicated these matters well enough to our community.

It is useful sometimes to use an analogy to help explain the difference between a botanic garden with its living plant collections, and more general civic parks and gardens. I like to use the chocolate chip cookie analogy. What the chocolate chip cookie demonstrates is two elements – the biscuit (analogous with the civic parks and gardens) interspersed with the chocolate chips (these are the living collections in a botanic gardens). Without the chips, the biscuit could just be a Marie dunker. This in itself

may be desirable, but it lacks the elements of living collections.

Within the RBGM Melbourne, the overall green landscape (biscuit), that is the parts which are not managed as living collections specifically, is still important. Much of the 'Guilfoylean landscape' is not included in living plant collections *per se*. It is, however, that which gives this particular garden its unique style and character.

Living Collections are grouped into different themes:

- **Taxonomic**
(eg the genus *Viburnum*)
- **Geographic**
(eg Southern China)
- **Evolutionary**
(eg Gondwanan plants)
- **Cultural** (eg Bamboo)
- **Ornamental**
(eg Perennial Border)
- **Conservation**
(eg Terrestrial Orchids)
- **Research**
(eg any collection which is currently being held for a specific research project – often in the Nursery)

Some of the collections are as old as the Gardens, or older. For example, the remnant habitats of the Indigenous Promontory, or the River Red Gums which pre-date European settlement of Melbourne are valuable genetic resources and part of living collections. Many of the *Araucariaceae* date from Mueller's period as Director of the Gardens, while Guilfoyle's directorship saw the expansion of this and many other collections, including the historic (and internationally-recognised)



Camellia Collection.

Some of the collections are much newer (for example: Perennial Border, Species Roses, Australian Rainforest, Southern China). We are currently actively developing around 15 living collections, while others are maintained, but awaiting time and resources for active development.

Why do we have the living collections? Aside from allowing us the comfort of differentiating ourselves from the Marie biscuit over the road in the Domain Parkland, how can we justify the time and effort spent looking after living collections? In order to see tangible justifi-

cation, we need to step back and view some of the broader missions of botanic gardens. In general terms, they are **places of learning**, and they have a major role to play in the **conservation of plant biodiversity**.

The learning that occurs within the place may be 'formal' (for example school groups, lectures, interpretive signs etc.), or less formal (such as having a picnic, but looking at the variety, form, colour, textures, adaptations of plants, and gleaning ideas for home gardens). The medium for learning is nature – diversity, cleverness, spectacular extremes, sensory pleasures

The important human outcomes of the learning, in this context, are:

- Understanding – of nature and the environment
- Appreciation – of the environment, and of the application of human creativity and skills which, when working with a such a brilliant and dynamic medium as plants, can produce something beyond our imagination
- Inspiration – about nature, and the living landscape

And from an environmental point of view:

- Conservation of plant biodiversity
- Conserving ecological systems
- Conserving individual species in *ex situ* collections (such as the terrestrial orchids in the Nursery) which may then play a role in species recovery plans (returning conserved rare plants to their natural habitats)
- Introducing 'new' plants to horticulture

So, having put the case for having living collections, how do we then go about planning and managing these valuable resources? We have in place a planning and management framework for each individual collection (Collection Management Plans, or CMPs). These are guided by the objectives of the Masterplan, and for each collection they:

- Set objectives for the development of the collection
- Develop strategies for achieving the objectives
- Define individual actions

which will form the strategies

- Set interpretative objectives and strategies
- Provide scope for relevant contacts, sources and other notes to be recorded

The CMPs are monitored, reviewed and refined as 'living documents', and are updated on a regular basis. But... the best plans in the world would come to nothing without knowledgeable and skilled people to enact them. We are fortunate to have a team of professional horticultural staff, each of whom has responsibility for at least one collection. While the CMP organises the ideas and puts in place the framework for consistency of purpose, the quality of the outcome is dependent upon the knowledge, enthusiasm, dedication, gardening skills, and vision of the individual curators.

It's all well and good for our staff to have knowledge and to curate a good living plant collection, but this is only half the story. It is important for the knowledge and information to be communicated to improve public understanding. We do this through talks, interpretations on signs, guided walks and so forth.

No garden stands still. A garden is a constantly changing dynamic entity. Being able to direct and manage the change to ensure that the garden remains a special place for future generations is exciting, challenging and rewarding. Curation and continuing development of a living garden where the focus is on the beau-

ty of nature, and where the human hand has been subtle in its craft, is even more so.

Like so many worthwhile endeavours, many of the outstanding results would not have been achieved without the continuing significant support of staff, volunteers, sponsors and, of course, Friends.

Richard Barley

The Ian Potter Foundation Children's Garden (IPFCG)

As part of the *Water Works Water Wise* donation from the Friends, the installation of a new satellite controller and all associated wiring, as well as a new irrigation mainline and valves, was effected. The first stage of the IPFCG irrigation system is now complete. It is located at the rear of the Observatory Café and provides the RBG Melbourne with an additional thirty-two valves for irrigation of the IPFCG. Pipework and sprinklers have also been installed in the Bamboo Forest and Short Tunnel along Birdwood Avenue and the Gathering Lawn.

RBG Melbourne Nursery staff have been extremely busy with plant production for the IPFCG. Both the works yard and Observatory nurseries are filling quickly with an amazing array of plant material collected from both within the gardens and externally.

Sixteen *Cordyline australis* 'Purpurea' have already been planted along the Birdwood Ave fence line. A green crop will be sown around these to

help rejuvenate the soil before the planting of Phormiums in the spring. A little pine forest will also begin to take shape under the two large *Pinus ponderosa*, with the planting of thirty-five *Pinus mugo*.

Construction of the Kitchen Garden and Discovery Shelter commenced in May 2003. The Kitchen Garden will be constructed in-house by RBG staff, and the Garden will eventually feature a variety of interesting vegetables, herbs, perennials, citrus and berries.

Registrations of Interest are currently being sought from landscape contractors for the construction of the hard landscape, which includes all the water features, paving, Gorge, Ruin Garden, and rock work.

The Public Programs team are currently focusing on the development of early childhood programs using the expertise of early childhood educators, including Michelle Hocking, an ex-RBG sessional teacher.

Raising awareness of the IPFCG amongst the Victorian school community is an important role for the Education Service. This should be achieved by involving schools in the opening week and first year of the IPFCG. Currently the team is workshopping ideas for exhibiting children's creative responses to plants and gardens, and schools will be encouraged to begin submitting expressions of interest.

Matt Howard,

IPFCG Project Manager

BOOK REVIEWS

HORTICULTURAL FLORA OF SOUTH-EASTERN AUSTRALIA

VOLUME 3
FLOWERING PLANTS,
DICOTYLEDONS PART 2
VOLUME 4
FLOWERING PLANTS,
DICOTYLEDONS PART 3

Dr Roger Spencer

Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne
University of New South Wales Press,
2002.

rrp: \$150 each

Available at The Gardens Shop,
Observatory Gate and in bookshops.

The next two volumes in Dr Roger Spencer's user-friendly *Horticultural Flora of South Eastern Australia* are now available. The *Horticultural Flora* is a five volume guide to the cultivated plants as well as many of the more unusual plants found in the parks, nurseries and gardens of south-eastern Australia. It covers both natives and exotics found in South Australia, Tasmania, Victoria, New South Wales and southern Queensland. Volume 3 (Part 2) and Volume 4 (Part 3) complete the flowering plants and will probably be those used most by home gardeners.

The *Flora* emphasises the botanical rather than the horticultural aspects of plants. To make the task of identifying

a plant as simple as possible, plants that are closely related, and therefore generally similar in appearance, are grouped together in their botanical families. Botanical keys, brief descriptions and Su Pearson's beautiful line drawings then guide the reader in identifying genera and species. The plant descriptions are in plain English and cover the origins of the name, history, simple distinguishing characteristics of different species, propagation, uses, recognition, natural distribution, details of where collections are held, the location and size of exceptional trees, and literature references. There are several coloured photographic plates in the *Floras* as well.

Besides his own extensive

knowledge as Horticultural Botanist at the National Herbarium of Victoria, Roger has drawn on many sources to produce the *Flora*. These include the living plant collections at the Royal Botanic Gardens, the Herbarium's dried plant collections and fine botanical library, and a wide range of people with botanical and horticultural expertise. Volume 5, currently being written, will cover grasses, bulbs and their relatives (monocotyledons), completing the *Flora*.

The *Horticultural Flora of South-Eastern Australia* is a magnificent reference and no serious gardener, student or expert can afford to be without copies of these beautifully presented volumes.

Wendy Dwyer

THE AUSTRALIAN GARDEN

DESIGNING WITH
AUSTRALIAN PLANTS
DIANA SNAPE

Bloomings Books. rrp \$55

As a keen member of the Society for Growing Australian plants Diana Snape and her colleagues formed the Garden Design Study Group. The results of their learning and efforts are found in this book. It beautifully demonstrates how far we have come in our knowledge of Australian plants, and how we can use them, as horticulturists and designers since the 70's. It will radically challenge what many of us consider to be the potential of the native garden.

Diana believes we should work in partnership with nature, and that the palette of indigenous plants is far more suitable for our light and climate than that of northern hemisphere plants. George Seddon in his prologue discusses how Australia's environment differs from the European and how this would encourage intricate and dynamic, not static, gardens that use Australian plants to mimic the landscape.

Diana Snape graphically illustrates how Australian plants will suit many different types of garden styles. It is merely a matter of selecting the style you want and design your planting accordingly. The author even identifies a range of Australian plants that can handle the formality of hedging and clipping.

In her own garden she favors informality in design and sensitivity to landscape. She describes many native gardens as 'blended gardens' using indigenous and exotic plants – exotics are any plants that are not indigenous to the local area. She writes of 'walk about' gardens, the Australian version of the Japanese 'stroll garden', where you move about discovering hidden treasures and the scale of attention is often minute.

Creating an environment that mimics the peace and tranquility of the Australian landscape results in different colour schemes and seasonal growth patterns than in gardens using northern hemisphere plants. As we would expect, water conservation, efficient use of soil, water and

energy are important factors in these gardens as is supporting native ecosystems. The important elements of light, colour and scent are also addressed.

The plants of course, feature throughout this book. Information about plant type, habit, use and management – in such categories as trees, ground covers, framework plants, feature plants, ornamental plants, and infill plants – is provided.

The beautifully lush photography by Diana Snape and Simon Griffiths presents images of all garden styles and the plants used in them. Along with her contributing authors, Diana Snape has produced a book that shows us how to use our extremely diverse flora in ways that in the past we may not have considered.

Terri Kay

CRANBOURNE LECTURE SERIES

BOTANIC NEWS

JUNE

Friends of Royal Botanic
Gardens Winter 2003
Lecture Series Day 1

Venue

CRANBOURNE PUBLIC HALL,
South Gippsland Highway,
Cranbourne (Melway Map 133: J-4)

THE FORTHCOMING AUSTRALIAN
GARDEN! THIS IS A SPECIAL DAY!
KEVIN TAYLOR, PERRY LETHLEAN
and PAUL THOMPSON of the
design team which has given us the
extremely exciting Award-winning
design for the AUSTRALIAN GARDEN
which is to begin the construction
phase this year at ROYAL BOTANIC
GARDENS, CRANBOURNE.

KERSTIN THOMPSON, head of the
architectural team who have
designed the Visitor Centre

GRANT CAMERON, Australian
Garden Project Manager at RBG
Cranbourne

JULY

Friends of Royal Botanic
Gardens Winter 2003
Lecture Series Day 2

Venue

CITY OF CASEY OFFICES, Patrick
Northeast Drive, Narre Warren,
(Melways Map 110 D4)

DR GRAEME LORIMER,

Environmental Consultant and
Indigenous Grass enthusiast will
expand our knowledge on local
grasses, their benefits and how
we can use them.

KEVIN MASON, A very experienced
wildlife officer from Healesville
Sanctuary will enlighten us on
The Lore of the Superb Lyrebird:
an Icon of Australian Forests

AUGUST

Friends of Royal Botanic
Gardens Winter 2003
Lecture Series Day 3

Venue

Frankston Lifesaving Club Region
(Melways Map)

Dr RACHEL WEBSTER,

Astrophysicist from University of
Melbourne will be speaking on
Climate Change and Global
Warming – its Relevance to
Melbourne's Coastal Communities

DOUG EVANS, a co-author of
the recently published and highly
acclaimed Indigenous Plants of
the Sandbelt will speak to us about
utilising these plants for our gardens

BOOKINGS ARE
ESSENTIAL
especially for catering
purposes.

Contact

RECEPTION at ROYAL BOTANIC
GARDENS, CRANBOURNE:
9am–5pm weekdays.
Phone: 5990 2200 or
Email: rbgc@rbg.vic.gov.au
Address: 1000 BALLARTO ROAD
CRANBOURNE 3977

Cost per day including lunch
\$25 per person. (\$18 for members
of Friends of Royal Botanic Gardens
Cranbourne or Melbourne.)

Cost per series including lunches
\$60 per person (payable on 15 June
at 1st lecture) (\$45 for members of
Friends of Royal Botanic Gardens
Cranbourne or Melbourne.)

ALL PROCEEDS ARE USED TO
SUPPORT PROJECTS OF THE
RBG CRANBOURNE.

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in the Gardens and the National Herbarium and
to support and assist them whenever possible.

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