



Garden Highlights

March 2014

1. Bottle trees (*Brachychiton rupestris*) get their name from their amazing bottle shaped trunks. The trees store water in their trunks – but it is not like a bottle. The wood is like a sponge and the trunks expand and contract depending on how much water is available. Touch the trunk: it nearly always feels cool, even on the hottest days. These three are semi-deciduous, losing their leaves in summer and now have new, reddish tinged leaves for autumn.



2 Cactus are the “traditional” desert survivors. They store water in their stems and their leaves have been reduced to spines to minimise water loss. They also have a neat metabolic trick which allows them to further reduced water loss through their stomata (pores in their leaves) by taking up Carbon Dioxide at night rather than in the day time.



3 Silver plants: nature’s natural sunscreen. Many plants in the silver border have either a waxy coating on their leaves like *Cotyledon orbiculata* or a hairy coating like the lambs ears (*Stachys byzantine*). These adaptations make the leaves appear bluish rather than bright green – although the leaves are green on the inside.



4 Some of summer’s toughest survivors are at home in **The Curiosity Cabinet**. Find out more about how plants survive the challenge of getting enough water and what that Geelong Botanic gardens is doing to ensure the survival of some of our more thirsty residents with recycled water.



Volunteer Guide on duty: Wednesdays 11am & Sundays 2pm to take you for a guided walk or answer your questions

Growing Friends Nursery – open every Wednesday morning 10am-12pm

We would like to acknowledge the Friends of Geelong Botanic Gardens voluntary guides for developing this information.





We would like to acknowledge the Friends of Geelong Botanic Gardens
Voluntary guides for developing this information

WWW.GEELONGAUSTRALIA.COM.AU/GBG

