

Jubaea



Friends of Geelong Botanic Gardens Inc Newsletter

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FRIENDS OF
GEELONG
BOTANIC
GARDENS



Tall Trees Living Sculptures...

Eastern Park, Geelong's Urban Forest, A Future Secured...

Throughout 2011 the United Nations is calling the world's attention to the role that Forests play in our well-being. The United Nations International Year of Forests is a celebration of 'Forests for People', highlighting the value of forests and their economic and social relationship with humankind. The purpose is to raise awareness of sustainable management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests.

The term 'forest' intrinsically links species diversity and habitat. In the minds of many the forest is pictured as a pristine environment. In the imagination of the child the forest conjures an image of a wild place full of mystery and wonder. For the benefit of human kind all descriptions have equal value. The

biodiversity held within the world's forests together with the carbon 'locked' into this living bank is critical to the long-term health of our planet. The knowledge that wild places exist offers hope.

Of equal importance to these natural places are the forests planted in our cities, the world's 'Urban Forests'. These places enrich the lives of city dwellers; cool our world, clean our air and bring a natural cycle, complete with habitats, into our midst. Half the people living on this planet live in cities. Urban forests offer psychological calm to busy city dwellers worldwide.

The City of Greater Geelong is fortunate to have its own urban forest in Eastern Park. However the age and plight of the trees growing throughout the park has been a topic for much discussion. An assessment of trees in 2007, as part of the development of a Strategic Plan, identified that over 60% were in serious decline. Loss of trees through the impact of drought and senescence (natural ageing of species) has taken its toll.

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Geelong's urban forest has been at risk but action to rectify this situation is now underway.

The development of the Eastern Park & Geelong Botanic Gardens Tree Planting Report in 2010 guides the replanting of Eastern Park. A program of gradual replacement of trees and the enhancement of the Pinetum collection is being implemented.

The first stage of planting can already be seen along the northern section of Eastern Park where young *Eucalyptus leucoxylon* 'Elite' (Yellow Gums) and *Pinus pinea* (Stone Pines) are successfully establishing through their second season. Over the coming decade further areas will undergo renewal. The intention is to implement a program of continual planting – this will ensure that the age of the Urban Forest in Eastern Park is spread across the whole parkland, with a healthy mix of young, middle aged and older trees. Change will be gradual and will only be noticed over a long time span. Our children's children will reap the benefit.

To support this planting an exciting new initiative is about to be implemented in the southern section of Eastern Park. A 'Storm Water Harvesting' project is planned that will utilise a wasted local resource and offer a permanent source of water for maintaining the park. This visionary project will collect storm water from residential streets in East Geelong, directing it through a series of filtration processes and into a catchment area. The result will be a permanent water source available for use at both the Botanic Gardens and for tree establishment throughout Eastern Park.

The planning stages for the 'Water Harvesting Project' are almost complete, and weather permitting, construction will commence this summer. The new wetland will be located near Holt Road, in the vicinity of 'Bunce's Billabong', an area well known and documented as a natural wetland until the early 1920's. The creation of this wetland is an added bonus. The edges of the wetland have been carefully designed to support plant life – vital

for water filtration – these same plants will provide a new habitat within the park. In the near future visitors are sure to see freshwater birds not sighted in the area for many decades.

All new planting growing in Eastern Park faces a tough existence. Young trees must compete with surrounding mature trees, those growing on the northern slopes must cope with salt laden gale force winds and all must establish themselves in poor, highly reactive soil. These harsh conditions demand high levels of water at regular intervals for successful establishment. The Stormwater Harvesting Project will provide certainty for the City as it undertakes the planting of trees throughout the whole of the Eastern Park precinct. Over the coming decades a new forest will be established in our City, ensuring future generations have the benefit of the magnificent trees that have been part of our own history.

The City is to be commended for this truly smart program for our Gardens. City of Greater Geelong staff have collaborated on this project, utilising the combined knowledge and skills of Engineers, Arboriculture staff and Horticultural knowledge through the GBG. Funding for the project is being shared between the Federal Government and the City of Greater Geelong. Most importantly harvested water will also significantly reduce the Geelong Botanic Garden's current dependence on potable water – securing a sustainable and vital water source for the GBG's future.

Plans for the Eastern Park Stormwater Harvesting Project will be on display at the Geelong Botanic Gardens Meeting Room. The best viewing time is 'Friends Day', Wednesday morning, 10am to 12 noon, when the library is operating and the Growing Friends meet for their weekly work program.

Helena Buxton

President - Friends Geelong Botanic Gardens

Cover image *Sequoiadendron giganteum* (Giant Redwood) photo by Jenny Possingham

From the President

September marks the start of a new committee year and the first challenge has been to consider a new Business Plan for the Friends Geelong Botanic Gardens. This will result in changes to the way the organisation delivers some of our activities, a step which is necessary as the Friends adapt to a world of volunteering where new workplace standards apply.

One of the items we are reviewing is *Jubaea*. Some members have offered gentle criticism, suggesting the newsletter is 'tired'. A number of members have asked if *Jubaea* could be printed in full colour and others have requested us to send the newsletter by email.

Jubaea provides the organisation with a mechanism for discussion and for many members, is the way they learn about FGBG activities. During the July membership renewal a question was asked about receiving the newsletter by email. Amongst 500 members very few said 'yes' to this question. What the FGBG is seeking are creative ways to reach our membership and keep

people informed and stimulated. Members who have ideas should forward them to our office, via email or post.

In closing I would like to offer a word of thanks to the City of Greater Geelong for funding provided to the FGBG Education Program. Our Education Officer, Ro Noone received the happy news of support for her Children's Week activity, providing \$300 for the 'Very Hungry Caterpillar'. In another piece of good news BGANZ (Botanic Gardens of Australia and New Zealand) has also offered assistance for Ro to attend the upcoming BGANZ conference in Albury Wodonga. With a focus on 'Staying Valuable and Viable' this conference is sure to inspire Ro in her work at the FGBG.

Helena Buxton

President - Friends Geelong Botanic Gardens



Subtropical Splendour...

was the theme for the 12th Australian Conference of Volunteer Guides in Botanic Gardens, held at Brisbane this September. 180 botanic gardens guides gathered from all around Australia. Canberra, Melbourne, Sydney, Adelaide, Hobart & Perth were well represented, with smaller numbers from a few regional gardens. Guides from Christchurch NZ were welcomed with sympathetic applause, they will be hosting the next conference in 2013.

Eight guides from the Geelong Botanic Gardens enjoyed a week of learning, conversation & discovery centred on Brisbane's Mt Coot-tha Botanic Gardens.

The conference opened with a stimulating keynote address entitled Botanic Gardens as a Community from Ross McKinnon, Director of Mt Coot-tha BG. Ross outlined the role and relevance of botanic gardens today, with success measured by "the number of species saved and the number of lives changed".

Exciting programs at Mt Coot-tha, both current and planned, were described to illustrate the garden's active role in the community. Geelong's first curator, Daniel Bunce, was mentioned as one of the rugged individuals of the gardens community: "a rake of a gardener" with a somewhat dubious reputation. Some of the Bunce stories were new and prompted a request for Ross's reference material, to check the facts. If proved authentic these new tales will certainly add spice to our guided walks! The full text of Ross's address is available from the FGBG Office.

A range of workshops, lectures and guided walks was offered, and most were attended by at least one Geelong guide. We look

forward to incorporating many new ideas & themes into our guided walks:



The City Gardens are often overlooked because of the lush newer developments at Mt Coot-tha, now 40 years old and in its prime, and the Roma Street Parklands, a rich recreational garden established only 8 years ago on the site of the old Brisbane railway yards. However, the Brisbane City Gardens form a real oasis on the edge of the high-rise CBD and include historic trees, restful undulating lawns and mangroves on the edge of the river. They have survived both drought and flood to remain a favourite respite for city workers and tourists.

Full day field trips were offered to; Maroochy Regional Bushland Botanic Gardens, Mt Glorious & Mt Tamborine. Included were visits to impressive private gardens, ranging from vistas of more than seven acres to intensively cultivated bromeliad gardens. We had many opportunities to network and exchange ideas with other guides. Morning teas & lunches were buzzing with animated conversation. The conference dinner was a grander occasion, but the talk was still mainly of botanic gardens & guiding. Lawrie Smith, AM, the guest speaker, was the designer of landscapes for Brisbane's Expo in 1988, as well as many other public gardens including the Roma Street Parklands.

There is never much "down time" at Botanic Gardens Guides conferences, but they are always well worthwhile. We have returned energised and inspired, looking forward to the next conference in 2013 in Christchurch, New Zealand.

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The Otways...

the story of a forest saved

The scenic landscape along the Great Ocean Road has become famous with millions visiting Victoria from across Australia and around the world every year. The Otways is an incredible biologically diverse landscape that includes tall mountain ash forests, cool temperate rainforests and complex heath lands. Many visitors may not be aware that until as recently as 2008 these forests were threatened with clear-fell logging for woodchips, a threat that many forests across Australia and around the world still face. Given 2011 is the “International Year of Forests” this short discussion reflects on how the Otways was saved...

The threat to the Otways came to a head in March 2000 when the former Victorian Premier Steve Bracks and Prime Minister John Howard signed the West Regional Forest Agreement (RFA). The West RFA was an attempt by the woodchip industry to secure logging and wood-chipping in the Otways for at least 20 years (2020), also ensuring it would continue at the rate of at least 3-4 sq kilometers per annum.

Yet a little over two years later Premier Bracks government announced, during the November 2002 Victorian State election, that a re-elected Bracks Government would ban Otway logging by 2008. The Victorian public rewarded the government. Bracks was re-elected with the biggest parliamentary majority in the history of the Victorian parliament with a clear mandate to change policy, to abandon the West RFA signed only two years earlier and end logging in the Otways.

To understand this story, it is necessary also to understand the six year (1995-2002) campaign by the Otway Ranges

Environment Network (OREN) to end clear-fell logging. OREN comprises individuals and groups who wanted logging banned in the Otway Ranges. The group was structured as a non-hierarchical network where there were no ‘leaders’. Instead OREN encouraged individual initiative, self-organisation, and accepting self-responsibility as a way of empowering the broad community to take action to save the Otways.

OREN promoted discussion on how logging impacted cool temperate rainforest, threatened endangered species and was changing a complex bio-diverse landscape into a commercial tree farm monoculture. The Network repeated what many environment groups had done in the past to confront logging in other places throughout Australia. OREN supported protesters who placed their personal safety on the line, living up in trees for weeks and camping in remote locations to hinder logging operations. These actions were taken in a bid to draw public attention to logging. The network also used the courts to show that, on some occasions, logging activity sanctioned by Government was unlawful.

Despite these activities OREN took the view that this was still not going to be enough to change Victorian State Government policy towards the Otways. Like many groups seeking change OREN realised they were often holding discussions with people who had already converted to their campaign. To achieve policy change there was a need to massively expand OREN’s support base and raise the community’s voice in favour of nature conservation.

While tree climbing and confronting loggers are brave actions these strategies are not easily undertaken by the average person, in fact they are often viewed as threatening and confrontational. The threat to the Otways needed to be translated into language and actions that could be easily understood by a diverse section of the Victorian community. Support for change required simple mechanisms that engaged the broad community in actions that were both practical, realistic and within their means. OREN decided to conduct an integrated community campaign.

It is important to understand, and ironic, that although OREN was motivated to save bio-diversity, it was the conversation OREN was having with the public regarding non-biodiversity issues that generated the broadest public support. It was also the acceptance by OREN that only arguing the facts or science about how logging practices impact on biodiversity was not enough to change public policy in favour of forest preservation.



Clear-fell logging, Cumberland River 1997



OREN protestors

This broad base public outreach campaign had three distinct phases.

From 1996-1998 the Network conducted the “refuse to use Kleenex” or “don’t wipe your bum on the Otways” campaign. Kimberly Clark, an American multinational company who owns the Kleenex brand, had a licence to source 44,000 tonnes of Otway woodchips per year. These woodchips were used to make Kleenex facial tissues and toilet paper. The OREN ‘consumer awareness campaign’ involved the promotion of tissue paper products made from 100% post consumer waste paper product, promoting these recycled paper products over the use of Kleenex native forest fibre products. The OREN campaign was successful following a two year campaign. Kimberly Clark listened to their customers and quit the Otways.

From 1999-2000 there was a focus on the “Water not Woodchips” campaign which occurred in conjunction with the West RFA process. At issue was the fact that about half of the Otway State Forest is the domestic water supply for over 250,000 people in South West Victoria, including the major regional cities of Geelong and Warrnambool.

Scientific research had demonstrated that clear fell logging was reducing both the water yield and quality from the Otway water supply catchments. During this time the region was experiencing an extended drought and the public was subject to growing uncertainty about water and water restrictions. OREN conducted thorough research and demonstrated that logging was economically woodchip driven and that the economic value of water lost through logging was far greater than the value of the woodchips taken out.

The Network made presentations to local governments throughout South West Victoria. The City of Greater Geelong, Surf Coast Shire and Warrnambool City Council all came out

opposed to logging within their Otway water catchment areas. These local government views were expressed as part of the West RFA process.

Finally OREN made a tactical decision to engage directly in dialogue with Government on all levels (not just politicians). This action helped build a level of trust and integrity between OREN and the broader community. In the past many environmental groups have utilized boycott processes to seek policy resolutions to forest conflict. OREN committed itself and worked with government processes in good faith. The Network strategically used these processes, such as the West Regional Forest Agreement (West RFA) to publicise all that was wrong with logging.

Today anyone can visit the Otway forest, free from logging. The kilometers of clear felling that threatened our forest have not occurred and the pristine environments that support species like the rare Spotted Quoll are intact. The results of the Otway Ranges Environment Network’s campaign speak for themselves and provide a powerful insight into how the community can be encouraged to take action that changes public policy in favour of nature preservation for future generations.

Simon Birrell
OREN member and activist

All images www.oren.org.au



Glasgow Falls

Director's Report

The Global Trees Campaign

During the International Year of the Forest the United Nations campaign is a call to action to manage the world's forests sustainably. Our first thought of threats to forests usually conjures up large scale logging and clearing for roads, dams and urban developments. In many places the relationship between human impact and the survival of trees is far more personal. The UN reports that 1.6 billion people rely on forests for their primary livelihood. This direct relationship, although seemingly small scale has an impact on the survival of plants in localized areas. A well known example of this impact is the loss of trees on Eastern Island but there are many more throughout the world.

In many countries Botanic Gardens have a significant role to play in the conservation of trees. In 1998 the Global Trees Campaign was launched by Flora and Fauna International. The campaign responds to The World list of Threatened Trees which had identified that less than 12% of globally threatened trees are protected within National Parks or other ex situ locations. Botanic Gardens Conservation International (BGCI) is a key partner to the campaign and supports it through partnerships.

Information and action is critical to the success of the Global Trees Campaign. Primary information comes from the IUCN (World Conservation Union) Red Lists which document species and their conservation status, clearly identifying those plants and animals at risk. Red Lists for trees include Oaks, Magnolia, Maples and Trees of Central Asia.

The Red List for Magnoliaceae has identified that of the total 245 species, 131 are in danger of extinction in the wild. You may be surprised to hear that half the species are under

threat given the popularity of Magnolias in cultivation. BGCI undertook a global survey of Botanic Gardens to establish which species were held in ex situ collections and thus available for conservation programs. The survey established that records existed for 37 of the threatened Magnoliaceae leaving 72% unknown in cultivation. Chinese Magnolias are quite well represented in Botanic Garden collections. The plants of most concern are those from Latin America which are not represented in collections. If uncultivated then the potential to propagate plant material from previously wild sourced material for reintroduction to native habitat is not an option.

Following the identification of the degree of threat to conservation of the Magnoliaceae family BGCI formed partnerships to take action. These actions include further developing ex situ collections and establishing conservation projects to reintroduce species while raising awareness of the issues in the local and global community. These are long term programs involving many agencies which will see the conservation of threatened species continue to be a priority.

As a regional Botanic Garden we have the opportunity to participate in surveys of ex situ collections. This adds significance to our work in developing a complete record in our database of the plant collection held here. Through the delivery of the Eastern Park Planting Plan we also have the opportunity to conserve the worlds' flora through the development of the Pinetum. One day we may be able to contribute to one of the global conservation programs as we have a threatened plant within our collection in the Geelong Botanic Garden or Eastern Park.

Annette Zealley
Director, Geelong Botanic Garden

Music in the Gardens 2012

Every Sunday In February

A Fabulous line up of bands for the 2012 season, some old, some new.

Relax with 'The Friends' and enjoy the last of Summer at the Geelong Botanic Gardens.

Arrange to meet your family and friends for a picnic and book these dates into your 2012 diary.

- **Rickety Bridge ~ 5th**
- **Hip Cats ~ 12th**
- **Soul Sister Swing ~ 19th**
- **African Agogo ~ 26th**

The post-conference tour

Three of our guides treated themselves to three extra days on the post-conference tour, organised by the Brisbane Botanic Gardens guides. This was an opportunity to get together with people from other botanic gardens in a more relaxed atmosphere.

We travelled by coach to the hinterland of the Sunshine Coast, staying at Montville, high in the Blackall Range. From there we could explore rainforest, markets and several amazing private gardens.

A highlight was the walk in the sub-tropical rainforest of the Mary Cairncross Scenic Reserve, led by Leon, an engaging and enthusiastic volunteer guide. In the cool shade, we made our way past huge red cedars and feathery palms, with ancient vines overhanging the track and massive strangler figs enveloping their host trees. Bird calls accompanied us all the way: Leon not only identified each one, but usually had a story to tell about it. And then there was the fascinating story of the Richmond Birdwing Butterfly, threatened with extinction by the introduction of South American Dutchman's Pipe *Aristolochia elegans*, which was toxic to the larvae, but bore a striking resemblance to their habitat food plant, native Birdwing Vine *Aristolochia praevanosa*. A natural habitat for the Richmond Birdwing has been created with the planting of hundreds of the Birdwing Vine to provide a food source for the larvae of the butterfly as well as many nectar-producing flowers for the butterflies themselves. The butterfly's sparse remnant colonies have been revived – a good news story for the environment!

On one unforgettable evening, in the local park, we met Bev Hand, a wonderful young woman who proudly represented her local aboriginal people, yet was completely at ease with a very white audience. Bev spoke of her family's history and their traditional harvesting of the Bunya cones. As the shadows lengthened, the aboriginal legends about the bunnies, hoop pines & agathis added magic to the evening. We felt honoured to be part of this experience.

The organisation of the tour was seamless: with varied activities, comfortable accommodation, excellent catering and pleasant company, we could not have asked for anything more. We returned to Brisbane via Noosa and the Buderim Ginger Factory: options for shopping and tourism as well!

Special thanks to Annie McGeachy, Diana Sawyer & Liz Bennetto



The Richmond Birdwing Butterfly



THE FRIENDS FAMOUS SPRING PLANT SALE

10am - 4pm Saturday 29th
and Sunday 30th October

Purchase pre-loved Gardening Books at the Growing Friends Nursery, Saturday Only

Enjoy High Tea at the Friends Teahouse, Sunday 12 noon - 4pm

What's on Events, dates for the diary

October

- What:** **'Where Horticulture Meets Ecology' – with John Arnott**
Presented by the Geelong Field Naturalist Club
- When:** Tuesday 11th – 7pm for 7.30 start
- Where:** GBG Meeting Room – rsvp HYPERLINK "mail to: vandenbroek1@optusnetcom.au / 5243 3916
- What:** **Special Guided Walk – Garden Artistry: The Tapestry of Trees**
Colour, shape and texture in the Gardens through historic trees, sculpture, installations and the palette of plants.
- When:** Sunday 16th October 11am and 2pm
- What:** **'Inspired by Nature' – Botanic Art Exhibition**
The Geelong School of Botanic Art biennial exhibition of selected works
- When:** Opening Night, 19th October, entry \$15
20th – 30th October Weekdays 10am to 4pm,
Weekends 12.30 to 4pm
- Where:** Gordon Gallery, Fenwick Street, Geelong
- What:** **Children's Week – 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar'**
Storytelling, Activities & 'Bug Walks' with GBG teachers
- When:** Monday 24th, 10am, 11am, & 1pm, a free event for preschoolers, all children must be accompanied by an adult.
- Where:** Meet at GBG Teahouse : Bookings are advised to avoid disappointment
- What:** **Friends Nursery – Spring Plant Sale**
Spring is a great time to get planting, so come along, meet the Growing Friends and choose that special plant for your garden.
- When:** Saturday – Sunday 29th-30th October 10am – 4pm daily
- Where:** The Growing Friends Nursery, rear of GBG, vehicle entry via Nursery Gate, or enjoy High Tea at the Teahouse on Sunday and follow the red flags to the Nursery.
- What:** **High Tea in Spring**
Sip a special blend of tea, enjoy cucumber sandwiches, cupcakes and delight your friends with sweet delicacies from the Teahouse. \$15 per person
- When:** Sunday 30th October 12 noon – 4pm
- Where:** Friends Teahouse; bookings essential @ the Teahouse 0409 031 358

November

- What:** **Botanic Art two day Workshop – 'Using Artwork to Design Giftcards'**
With Rita Parkinson & Delores Maloni
Cost \$120
- When:** Saturday 5th & Sunday 6th 9.30am - 4.30pm
- Where:** GBG Meeting Room
- What:** **Wreaths & Decorations - two day Craft Workshop** – join Raelene Marshall working with plant material collected in and around the GBG to create 'festive decorations' for the coming Christmas Season.
- When:** Saturday 12th & 19th - 10am to 4pm
Cost \$120 – Students will be required to bring or purchase some materials.
- Where:** GBG Meeting Room

- What:** **Special Guided Walk – 'Musical Trees'**
explore the many associations between trees and music: from inspiration and composition to the use of plants in making music and musical instruments.
- When:** Sunday 13th 11am & 2pm
- Where:** Meet your Guide at front steps of GBG – gold coin donation
- What:** **Spring Members Day – enjoy a Guided Walk & morning tea**
with new members and old Friends & view the Growing Friends Nursery in action.
- When:** Wednesday 16th 10.30am
- Where:** GBG Meeting Room
- What:** **Spring Garden Tour to the Blackwood & Daylesford District**
Visiting the Garden of St. Erth, Musk School House with afternoon tea at Wombat Hill House.
- When:** Saturday 19th November 8.30am – 5.30pm
- Where:** Bus departs Oval carpark at 8.30am
Cost: \$55 FGBG members, \$60 non Members
BYO Picnic lunch or purchase food at Musk School House Fair
- What:** **An Introduction to Botanic Art half-day Workshop**
With tutor Dolores Malloni
- When:** Saturday 26th 9.30am-12.30pm
- Where:** Cost: \$40
GBG Meeting Room

December

- What:** **Join the Friends for Christmas Drinks**
Members, Volunteers and GBG Staff are welcomed
- When:** Monday 5th 5pm – 7pm
- Where:** Walnut Lawn, Geelong Botanic Gardens
- What:** **Special Guided Walk – 'Trees & Tall Stories'**
Plants in fable and folk lore. Trees and plants are associated with religious ceremonies, myth and folklore throughout the world. Discover some of the stories associated with the trees that have found their way to the Geelong Botanic Gardens.
- When:** Sunday 11th 11am & 2pm
- Where:** Meet your Guide at front steps of GBG – gold coin donation

January

- What:** **Special Guided Walk – 'Australia Day @ GBG'**
explore our unique flora and see plant material used in traditional ways.
- When:** Sunday 11th 11am & 2pm
- Where:** Meet your Guide at front steps of GBG – gold coin donation
- What:** **'Strawberries' Botanic Art Masterclass**
with John Pastoriza-Pinol
- When:** 20th, 21st, 22nd & 23rd
- Where:** Cost: \$240
GBG Meeting Room
- What:** **Indigenous Basket Weaving with local expert Helen Brotherton using plant material from the GBG**
- When:** Australia Day, Thursday 26th & Friday 27th – 10 am to 4 pm
- Where:** GBG Meeting Room & GBG lawns (weather permitting)

A Special Note to Members

The Friends email and website has changed info@friendsgbg.org.au www.friendsgbg.org.au