

Jubaea

Friends of Geelong Botanic Gardens Inc. Newsletter

October 2022 Volume 23 Issue 1



FRIENDS OF
GEELONG
BOTANIC
GARDENS



Heritage Rose Garden looking toward the Hitchcock Fountain

NEW COORDINATOR'S RETURN TO GEELONG BOTANIC GARDENS

It's been eighteen years, a couple of weeks, a few days, and a handful of hours since I last donned the GBG attire and I find myself back in the land of Botanic Gardens.

What a journey!

Geelong Botanic Gardens has always held an unbreakable place in my heart, and it is most wondrous to be back in a capacity where the future of the gardens is undefined and ready for the next evolutionary phase. To quote a most famous past Curator:

"It is with a fair amount of humility that I find myself dealing with a 150-year-old landscape. It is a responsibility not to be taken lightly" (John Arnott, 2001)

My first few weeks have taken place with an unbelievable amount of warmth, optimism and encouraging interactions with Staff, industry leaders and of course the volunteers. And I have

been fortunate to reconnect with past friendships forged many moons ago. Familiar faces always complement a new journey.

There is a sense of 'Choose Your Own Adventure' now. I have likened the GBG to a sleeping giant, or sleeping beauty, awaiting the call of those responsible for its future to stand up and lead us into the next chapter of this magnificent garden.

What is our role? What is defining us as a Botanic Garden? How do we fit in an everchanging world without losing focus? How can we manage our people to achieve all that we want? Questions like these are on a constant loop. And this is what makes the next phase of the GBG particularly exciting for me.

My time here will be in the arena of 'Opening the Green Curtain'. The GBG Team and I are focused on introducing the Gardens to a broader audience than any seen previously. This is from

function and relevance, collection policy management, user groups, educational purposes inside the gates and outside, to the worldwide institutes of Green Spaces.

Our work will concentrate on saving plants, sharing knowledge and resources, networking, inspiring people and above all else, linking plants with the wellbeing of people. Collaboratively partnering with the Wadawurrung Traditional Owners for guidance of cultural heritage and land management is high on the agenda of the City of Greater Geelong, and that of the GBG. We are fortunate to have an outstanding and skilled team here at GBG and a relevant, viable and productive volunteer group. We also have a skilled manager in Reese McIlvena, and an experienced supervisor in Sheree Parker. Reese is a major support and champion of our Parks and Gardens Department and is an effective presence for the progression of change and opportunity, whilst Sheree brings her collection management skills, nursery management and production, people and plant enthusiasm to work every day.



Gardens staff on a field trip to Cranbourne Botanic Gardens

Over the past two months we have been preparing for the festive season, and have concentrated on maintenance schedules, workshopping and welcoming all new staff to the GBG. This focus will continue into the new year whilst we all find our way with planning and developing our gardens.

The GBG staff, including our Education Officer Kim, Senior Admin Officer Julie Slaviero and special guest Senior Arborist Chani Humphries, enjoyed a field trip late last year to Cranbourne Botanic Gardens to come together as a group. Three new faces have joined the team, so it was great to connect. I would like to welcome Margaret Hogan, Claudia Bell and Josh Oates. We not only enjoyed the day trip out, but found ourselves surrounded by inspiration, awe, and wonder. To be immersed within a landscape, hear the stories, and find yourself enthused by the work of others is an essence worth capturing.



Gardens staff on a field trip to Cranbourne Botanic Gardens

I once co-wrote a paper on understanding the principles of a Botanic Garden back in 2003. It was handed to me on my return to the GBG, and I can honestly say it has stood the test of time! *'Understand the Principle: Break the Rules'* was a clear statement that aimed to prompt discussion about regional botanic gardens and their capacity to facilitate and contribute to the world botanic agenda. This is 100% relevant now as it was twenty years ago. This paper emphatically highlighted the most important element to achieve our goals: people!



GBG Coordinator Kellee Reissinger

We need people to make our Gardens a wonder of the modern botanic world.

I thoroughly look forward to working with everyone to set the scene for our success.

Kellee Reissinger
Coordinator, Geelong Botanic Gardens

FROM THE PRESIDENT

A garden is a grand teacher. It teaches patience and careful watchfulness: it teaches industry and thrift: above all it teaches entire trust. Gertrude Jekyll, 1911.

The Geelong Botanic Gardens is full of wonder and is treasured as a venue for weddings, concerts, artists and as a healing place for all. Tourists extol the Gardens' virtues, children exclaim at the joy of flitting fish in the pond or the awe of a bloom from a very special plant. For the Wadawurrung, it is part of Country. It is also a workplace for both Friends' Volunteers and the Geelong Botanic Gardens Staff.



Goldfish in the conservatory

What I have learnt most about the Gardens this year is how diverse people's responses are to it. For some there is a commitment and loyalty to its history, its safety, its beauty and its importance for learning opportunities. These are not tangible things, but they are real, nevertheless. The Geelong Botanic Gardens is not ours; it belongs to everyone. We are entrusted custodians who preserve it for future generations. This is a great privilege which is generously shared with the Friends by the City of Greater Geelong.

At the recent 7th International Global Botanic Gardens Conference in Melbourne there was an emphasis on preserving plant species for the future. The conference theme was *Influence and Action: Botanic Gardens as Agents of Change*. Botanic Gardens around the world are responding to the need to preserve seed, DNA and plant tissue to ensure that the effects of climate change are mitigated by an accompanying preservation of plants at risk. Plants are at risk not just because of variations in climate, but also from the creeping urban sprawl. Some countries are focused on enormous manufacturing outcomes causing smog to hang over green areas, others are removing huge areas of natural forest. The GBG is a microcosm with its own climate in which we can play our part to ensure that the various collections can prosper. Trees at risk are attended to by arborists with their own form of first aid. Where possible these valued historic living monuments are conserved. I remember

one day when all other work was stopped and the whole GBG team went to assist in saving a tree that had split!

Looking back to 1848, a priority for the establishment and design of the City of Geelong and its environs was to allocate a space for a Botanic Garden. Governor Latrobe thought it should be located in an area that encompasses part of Johnston Park, called Western Gully. However, the City Fathers reviewed this decision and looked east to the rise overlooking the bay called Eastern Hill. And in 1851 the current site was approved. There was a thoughtful approach to its construction and design, and in 1857 our first Curator, Daniel Bunce was appointed. This is our heritage. Trees planted in those days are much valued and some are listed on the Heritage Register. There is much sensitivity in the Geelong Botanic Gardens as Staff make decisions about changes and their impact on the listed heritage site.

Chris Dance, designer of the 21st Century Garden, has agreed to visit. Recently work commenced on increasing the number of indigenous plants and visitors can see some of these in the rusty circular raised beds in the 21st Century Garden.



FGBG Guides planting indigenous plants

At a December meeting, Friends' Team Leaders and Coordinators spoke about their goals for 2023. All have exciting programs planned. Present were:

Jan Cheyne, Coordinator of the Perennial Border.

Allison Martland, Team Leader of Events, Catering and Fund Raising.

Luanne Thornton, Team Leader of the Library group.

Gwen Anderson, Coordinator of the Guides.

Peter Jablonsky, Team Leader of the Weeders, or '*Unwanted Plant Extraction Specialists*'.

Pammi Pryor, Coordinator of the Botanical Art Sub Committee.

Rosalyn Carr Gellie, Leader of the Heritage Rose Growers Team.

Liz Bennetto represented Leanne Barnes, Coordinator of the Growers.

We were sad to accept Leanne Barnes' resignation in December as Coordinator of the Growing Friends. Leanne works as a carer for the disabled and unfortunately felt that she did not have

enough time to continue as Nursery Coordinator. Leanne has worked hard to develop the Friends' Nursery and has established a strong partnership with the Geelong Botanic Gardens' horticultural staff. The Growers will miss her. We all thank Leanne for her work as an important Friends' Coordinator.



The Heritage Rose Garden and Hitchcock Fountain

We welcome Rosalyn Carr Gellie as the newly appointed Leader of the Heritage Rose Growers Team. Rosalyn has a fresh approach to caring for the important rose collection. Our collection has some very rare roses which can no longer be purchased. Currently, plant identification is a priority. A Guides' document on the plantings in the beds has been utilised, and a

visit by Dr Peter Ades, the President of Heritage Roses in Australia, has also assisted in this process.

We have a special reason for ensuring we have the correct name for the roses. The Friends are producing a booklet about the GBG Heritage Rose Collection. The research and editorial work is being led by Rosslyn Jablonsky in consultation with long standing Heritage Rose Growers.

We would like to thank formally all our Friends' Volunteers for their time and significant contribution in 2022: baking cakes, propagating plants, inducting volunteers, conducting research, welcoming visitors or any of the many other tasks that go on every week at the Geelong Botanic Gardens. Our thanks also to the GBG staff who are so inclusive and supportive of our work in the Botanic Gardens. We could not undertake our tasks and achieve our goals without you.

We are indebted to our valued staff Tracey Tilbury and Sally Ann Bird and our botanical art tutors John Pastoriza-Pinol, Amanda Ahmed, Craig Lidgerwood and Amanda Blake Sutterby. Our thanks also to the GBG staff who are so inclusive and supportive of our work in the Botanic Gardens. We could not undertake our tasks and achieve our goals without you.

We look forward to working together in 2023!

Denise Feldman, FGBG President

INTRODUCING THE FRIENDS' NEW PATRON

"Gardening is a never-ending learning curve. Time spent in the garden or learning about the world's amazing plant kingdom not only keeps me healthy but feeds my soul."



Stephen Ryan

At the age of ten Stephen commenced working in his father's nursery. He went on to complete a Gardening and Turf Apprenticeship setting the scene for his lifelong passion for all things horticultural.

His career highlights include:

- Obtaining 2 scholarships to study horticulture abroad
- Establishing Dicksonia Rare Plants nursery in 1980
- Presenting on radio programs 3CR and 774 and hosting Gardening Australia
- Delivering lectures and seminars in Australia and overseas
- Publishing three books which received rave reviews and contributing to Botanica and Flora
- International tour guide with Australians Studying Abroad
- John Pascoe Fawcner Gold Medal for Distinguished Service to Horticulture, 2001
- Patron of the Victorian Royal Horticultural Society of Victoria and the Friends of Geelong Botanic Gardens

Stephen's garden, Tugurium, at Mount Macedon, is frequently featured on gardening programs and has Open Days each year. His garden and nursery hold three national collections: Cornus, Sambucus canadensis, and Acanthus.

Stephen participated in the Friends 2022 Winter Lecture Series with his partner Craig Lidgerwood, who is one of our Botanic Art Tutors for the Geelong School of Botanical Art.

Denise Feldman, FGBG President

INTRODUCING NEW COMMITTEE MEMBER CAROL RICHARDSON

Carol was born in the Hamilton area. Her childhood years were spent on a farm at Coleraine where her parents created a large garden. This resulted in Carol having a lifelong interest in



Carol Richardson

gardening. After leaving school she studied Science at Melbourne University followed by five years working in immunology at the Walter and Eliza Hall Institute.

When Carol married, she settled on a farm at Omeo which had a semi alpine climate. This meant Carol had to create a garden that was beyond her knowledge and experience. She tended this garden for 27 years. During this time Carol and her husband purchased the Coleraine farm and she further developed the garden her mother had started. Following this they sold the Coleraine farm and purchased an irrigation dairy farm at Berrigan. Once again, Carol started a garden from scratch in a different climate. Many years later she and her husband retired to Barwon Heads. And yes, she again established a garden.

Following the death of her husband she purchased a smaller property around the corner. Thankfully this time she had purchased from a lady who loved gardens as much as she did. Here there was a wonderfully landscaped yard with a stone wall. Carol is enjoying the seasonal changes in her new garden where plants shoot up revealing their identity and giving her much joy. Carol enjoys her weekly volunteering at the Perennial Border.

Denise Feldman, President FGBG

FGBG GUIDES TRAINING

Four enthusiastic new Geelong Botanic Gardens Guides have emerged from our Training 2022. Training is quite a long and demanding process, so we were very pleased that all four applicants survived – and indeed excelled! The Guides are delighted to welcome:

Helen Zournazis, Sharon Barrett, Andrew Giles and Maryla Lawler.

As trainees, they have attended Guide Meetings, as well as participating in a course of study which took place over several

months. This included botany and GBG history as well as a detailed study of the plantings in all sections of the Gardens. In between study sessions, trainees were required to spend as much time as possible joining in guided walks whilst observing different guiding styles and developing confidence. Each trainee has had an experienced mentor for support. Our new guides are now well equipped to welcome and guide visitors to Geelong Botanic Gardens.

Liz Bennetto, FGBG Guide

WEEKLY GUIDED WALKS and PLANT SALES

GUIDED WALKS

Every Wednesday at 11.00 am and Sunday at 2.00 pm.

Gold coin donation. Meet at the front steps.

Discovery Table every third Sunday of the month at 2.00 pm.

Self-Guided Walk handouts are also available at the front gates.

WEEKLY PLANT SALES

The Friends' Plant Nursery is **open every Wednesday 9.30 am to 12.30 pm** showcasing a wide selection of plants sourced from the Geelong Botanic Gardens. Located at the rear of GBG.



GEELONG BOTANIC GARDENS – WADAWURRUNG PROJECT

Visitors to Geelong Botanic Gardens will have seen a few changes in the 21st Century Garden during recent months. One of the most noticeable is this new planting:



FGBG Volunteers planting in the 21st Century Garden



Designs inside possum-skin cloak

This garden bed was originally named the Aboriginal Food Bed. In recent years, it had been invaded by weedy species and many of the original plants had disappeared. It seemed like a good place for a new Wadawurrung Resources Bed, displaying plants used by our First Nations' people for food, fibre and medicine.

Sheree Parker, GBG Supervisor, has been engaged in this work for some time. In 2021, we met with the City's Cultural Officer and the Wadawurrung Traditional Owners' Corporation to discuss a project to develop community awareness of Wadawurrung plant use and understanding of Wadawurrung culture. We were keen to extend recognition of culture through interpretive signage and labelling plants with their Wadawurrung names. Rough plans were drawn up for the GBG-Wadawurrung Project:

GBG-Wadawurrung Project

Aim:

Establish a strong connection between Geelong Botanic Gardens and the Wadawurrung, the traditional owners of the land, by working collaboratively to develop community awareness of Wadawurrung culture, with emphasis on their use of plants for food, medicine and materials, their conservation of resources and their methods of land care.

This will be done through establishing enhanced plantings, signage, walking trails and community education. A large sign at the entrance to the Gardens will acknowledge the Wadawurrung and interpretive signage will explain their use of plants. Guided walks will be held regularly, and self-guided walks will be made available on-line via the website and printed in hard copy. Celebrations of the project will be held with Wadawurrung and the general community.

The Wadawurrung will be involved in confirming detailed action plans, and consultations on plant selection, signage and interpretation. They will assist with selecting appropriate plants, providing correct Wadawurrung names for plant labels, advising on interpretation of culture, approving promotional materials and celebrating Wadawurrung culture through ceremony and publications.

The aim is to make Geelong Botanic Gardens a recognized centre for community education on Wadawurrung culture, particularly on plant use and conservation.

Description:

1. Design and install signage for the main entrance of the Gardens.
2. Signify the entrance with a large planting of Murnong (*Microseris lanceolata*) and other plants significant to the Wadawurrung
3. Construct a new Wadawurrung Resources Bed to highlight the importance of plants for Wadawurrung food, medicine, materials and spiritual significance. Install interpretive signage for the bed with the assistance of Traditional Owners.
4. Identify new and existing plants by labelling them with Wadawurrung names and logo.
5. Develop a better understanding of Wadawurrung knowledge and culture and ensure that this is respected and expressed through signage, brochures and guided walks.
6. Develop and foster relationships with the Wadawurrung community, encouraging their involvement with interpreting their culture and plant significance to visitors to the Gardens, through Gardens' Guides, guided walks, working with plants, the Gardens' Education Program and other community activities.
7. Produce brochures, self-guided walks and promotional materials to engage the community.
8. Celebrate the project with appropriate Wadawurrung ceremony, inviting significant members of the Geelong community (Councillors, City of Greater Geelong officials, Tourism officers, etc.) as well as the First Nations community and the general public.

We've now had several meetings with the Wadawurrung to assess and develop the project. Geelong Botanic Gardens Coordinators have always been supportive: Ashley Filipovski (2020-2021), Renee Matthews (2022) and Kellee Reissinger (2022-). Kellee attended our last meeting with the Wadawurrung in December 2022 and strongly supported the idea of reviewing and improving signage, especially in the 21st Century Garden.

When the opportunity arose for a First Nations Cultural Grant, our project seemed an ideal fit. We have just been notified that our application was successful and we now have the funding to go ahead! Look out for exciting developments in the near future. For it to be really successful, **it is vital that we gain the support and involvement of the wider First Nations community in Geelong**. We certainly have formal links through the Wadawurrung traditional Owners, community reconciliation organisations (OneFire) and City of Greater Geelong via Julie Saylor-Briggs, the First Nations Cultural Officer. But botanic gardens are generally organized on formal European lines and can be daunting for anybody who is not comfortable with their structures and philosophy. We need to make our Gardens a safe and welcoming place for the local First Nations community.

We are asking you, as Friends of Geelong Botanic Gardens, to reach out to your indigenous friends and contacts and bring them to the Gardens – for a walk, a picnic, a concert....

Please let me know if you have any ideas for facilitating meaningful contact with the local First Nations community. There may be funding available to support this. We would love to have a genuine involvement, especially of young indigenous people who might be interested in helping on guided walks, in planting activities, in the education program or as volunteers in the nursery or the Gardens.



balout
Exocarpus cupressiformis
Cherry Ballart

S.E. Australia

Draft design for plant label



Wadawurrung logo

Wadawurrung Plant Use – Food and Medicine

For the Wadawurrung, the roots, fruits and seeds from the saltbushes on shore were invaluable, as were the pigface, native mustards and marshmallows. As foragers, the women and children secured fungi, yams, native orchids and convolvuli. Root vegetables such as orchids and murnong were cultivated as they were harvested with digging sticks. Wadawurrung women understood the life cycle of plants, and ensured that no species died out.

Most plant foods were eaten raw or roasted, though where large shells were available, some food could be boiled. Earth ovens were prepared by digging a hole and filling it with firewood. When the wood was all burnt, the ash was swept out and the hole lined with moist grass or herbs. Meat or vegetables were placed in the oven and covered with more grass and hot rocks/clay, followed by a layer of earth. Hot rocks were also used above ground to cook food.

With a healthy diet of approximately 70% vegetables, food was high in roughage, low in fat and sugar, and well balanced in proteins, vitamins and minerals. Food was plentiful from rivers, lakes, bays & plains, and the people were strong and healthy (until they were weakened by introduced diseases, war and dispossession).

Plants were used to overcome various health problems: native geranium and common bracken were used as a lotion for stings and bites, wattle bark used as an infusion for indigestion, and nettle leaves bunched together and beaten on the body to counteract rheumatic pain. "Steam baths", earth ovens lined with aromatic foliage, were used to treat fevers, arthritis and bronchial complaints.

We acknowledge that this is Wadawurrung country and pay our respect to Wadawurrung elders, past present and future. We acknowledge the sad history of Wadawurrung displacement and suffering after the arrival of white settlers. We acknowledge and respect the enduring Wadawurrung cultural and spiritual connection to the land. We acknowledge that as they cared for the land, the land cared for them.

FGBG EVENTS

What a joy it was to get through the whole Friends Events Calendar for 2022 without a cancellation or deferral!

The Spring '22 calendar included several very popular events. Five talented garden owners opened their gardens for *Through the Garden Gates* in the Barwon Heads and St Leonards areas. Attracting over 100 people, we enjoyed lovely weather, stunning gardens, a huge plant stall and amazing afternoon tea. The Events team is already sourcing fabulous gardens in the Geelong City urban area for *Through the Garden Gates* in October 2023.

The Open Gardens Victoria weekend in Peggy Muntz's garden was supported by an army of Friends' volunteers and members, who generously gave their time and/or donated plants and food for sale. The weather deterred large crowds, but those who attended were sincere in their praise of the garden and the event. Peggy's donation of proceeds to the Friends Gift Fund enables us to support important projects in Geelong Botanic Gardens. Many thanks to Peggy and the volunteers.

The Coach Tour to the Yarra Valley in November was, as anticipated, sold out. The many requests to visit Alowyn Gardens and Antique Perennials Nursery were finally answered, and the day did not disappoint. A fun quiz on the way home capped off a long but rewarding day. Keep an eye out, and book early, for the Friends' Coach Tour to the Macedon region later in 2023. It will delight!



Alowyn Gardens on the Yarra Valley Coach Tour

About 30 members and families attended the Annual Christmas Picnic. Perhaps the fear of mosquitoes kept some members away. For those who attended, it was a lovely evening, with few mozzies! The plant auction received wonderful plant donations from members and GBG staff, for which we are grateful. Bidding was keen on some of the more amazing plants. A huge raffle, followed by an entertaining horticultural quiz, ensured a relaxing event to catch up with good friends and meet new ones. Thanks to our new member, Quiz Master David Feldman, for all the work he put into the preparation and presentation!

2023 promises to be a bumper year of diverse, educational and entertaining events. See the Jubaea back page for the first few months of activities. Exquisite botanic art workshops commence in January and the Friends' Seniors' Week event for 2022 is actually being held in March 2023. Encourage your senior friends and families to join in this lovely social occasion. All seniors are welcome.

On Saturday 3 March, it will be the first opportunity in 2023 for the people to come into our Friends' Nursery to purchase plants during a weekend. The nursery plants are sourced from the Geelong Botanic Gardens and we have a wonderful supply of new stock, especially Cannas, Dahlias and Pelargoniums.

Also in March, we will hold the long anticipated self-drive tour to Basil Rose Estate, home of our new advocate Vasili Kanidiadis. Join the Friends with morning tea, a tour of the amazing, landscaped garden of ten acres, followed by a fabulous lunch at the estate.

We are very excited to be travelling by train and tram to visit the historic Melbourne University Systems Garden in April. At Victoria's Parliament House, we will be privileged to tour the private gardens, including the rooftop garden, with trained volunteer guides. A visit to Treasury and Fitzroy Gardens will be included in the program. This will be sure to appeal to our more adventurous members who can independently navigate Melbourne's public transport, albeit in a friendly group!



Annual Christmas Picnic

This year will see the continuation of our usual events and activities: Winter Lunch, Winter Lecture Series, a very popular movie night at The Hub and guest speaker at the AGM. In September we will tour by coach to a historic garden and two special nurseries in the Macedon area. In November we will be offering a very special event, involving the Queenscliff Ferry and a tour of the house and garden at historic Beleura on the Mornington Peninsula.

Spectacular news!! After many requests, the Friends will be facilitating two international tours run by Botanica Travel in 2023 and one in 2024.

Allison Martland, FGBG Events Coordinator

BOTANICA WORLD DISCOVERIES TRAVEL WITH THE FRIENDS

The Friends have negotiated some very special opportunities for members to travel together in a 15-25 group, to three amazing destinations. All fully escorted with experienced Botanica Guides, these tours promise to be popular with those who would love a horticulture-based tour with like-minded people. Botanica will organise everything, including assistance and liaison of airfares.

Botanica Travel and the Friends of Geelong Botanic Gardens invite you to join one of these three tours offered. Two are exclusive to the Friends. When booking any of these tours through Botanica, ask them to note your Friends membership, which will attract a \$100 donation from Botanica World Discoveries to the Friends of Geelong Botanic Gardens.

Singapore Tour – A City within A Garden

9 days departing 22 July, 2023. Group size 15-25 people with Botanical Guide Arno King. Includes- 8 nights in Singapore, 12 meals, comfortable coach travel, airport transfers on first and last day. See the tour itinerary attached.

For more information or to book email info@botanica.travel and include your Friends Membership.

\$6,145 pp twin share. \$8,845 solo.



Exclusive Lord Howe Island Tour

Tailored specifically to the Friends of Geelong Botanic Gardens. Departs Monday 30 October 2023 – Saturday 4 November. Five nights/six days, the tour starts and ends in Sydney. Lord Howe Island is World Heritage listed with an extensive Marine Park and is home to an incredible biodiversity on land and water. See the tour itinerary attached.

\$5,795 pp twin share, \$7,295 pp solo.

Please try to arrange twin share as accommodation is limited. Total number of tour guests is 16 if all apartments are twin share.

Maximum solo bookings available is 4, but twin share is preferred.

\$1000 deposit at time of booking and balance by 22 July 2023. Full Covid Vaccination required. Bookings email info@botanica.travel and refer to Friends of Geelong Botanic Gardens booking.



Exclusive New Zealand Tour

Tailored specifically to the Friends of Geelong Botanic Garden. Subtropical Landscapes and Gardens of the North Island. 9 days Auckland return departing 21 Feb 2024. Only available in 2024 with Friends GBG Botanica booking. See the tour itinerary attached. Group size 15-25 guests. Subject to minimum booking numbers. Please book with deposit early to ensure this tour departs. Bookings email info@botanica.travel and refer to Friends of Geelong Botanic Gardens booking.



Extra itineraries are available from the Friends' Office.
To Book email info@botanica.travel
and refer to Friends of Geelong Botanic Gardens bookings.

PLANT IN FOCUS

THE GINGERS AND THEIR RELATIVES

The plant we know as the true culinary ginger is *Zingiber officinale*. Its genus *Zingiber* is in the family *Zingiberaceae*, which is placed in the order *Zingiberales*. The *Zingiberaceae* family includes plants commonly known as ornamental gingers, as well as *Zingiber officinale*. The order *Zingiberales* has eight plant families: *Zingiberaceae* (the Gingers), *Costaceae*, *Cannaceae* (the Cannas), *Marantaceae*, *Strelitziaceae*, *Lowaceae*, *Heliconiaceae*, and *Musaceae* (the Bananas). This order has 68 genera and about 2,600 species, which mainly grow throughout the tropics. Like many other monocotyledons its roots form rhizomes. We value these plants for display (eg. Bird of Paradise, *Heliconia* and Prayer Plants), for food (eg. Bananas) and spices (eg. Ginger, Turmeric and Cardamon).



Ornamental Gingers

These plants are glamorous tropical plants and are a bright, interesting feature of tropical and sub-tropical gardens. They originate from Southeast Asia. There are many features that make them popular. They are excellent screening plants, growing at least a metre per year. They are easy to grow from rhizomes and are free of pests. They need potassium and phosphorous to thrive, flowering for five to six months per year in shade to 90% sun in all kinds of soil. However, they do not tolerate frost. Mulch is needed to keep the roots cool in hot positions. Some species are:

Dichorisandra thyrsifloras, a huge plant with a tall tower of foliage topped by big flower spikes; Beehive Ginger *Zingiber spectabile*; Shell Ginger *Alpinia zerumbet*; Hidden Lily *Curcuma petiolaten*; Butterfly or Dancing Ladies Ginger *Hedychium coronarium*; Yellow Ginger *Hedychium flavescens*; Red Ginger *Alpinia purpurata*; Red Ginger (Wild) *Etlingera elatior*; Mango Ginger *Carcuna amada*; Kahlili Ginger *Hedychium gardnerianum*; Thai Ginger *Alpinia galanga*; Pineapple Ginger *Tapeinochilos ananassae*; Resurrection Lily *Kaempferia rotunda*; Turmeric *Curcuma longa*; Siam Tulip *Curcuma alismatifolia*.

True Culinary Ginger *Zingiber officinale*

This ginger is originally from Southeast Asia, near the coasts and was widely disseminated with the first people to cross the oceans of the region. It reached Hawaii around 5000 years ago and was one of the first spices to be exported to Europe as far back as the Greek and Roman civilizations. Arabs introduced it into the Mediterranean and it reached Western Europe in the Middle Ages. In 14th century England, a pound of ginger cost the same as one sheep.

The first written record of ginger is in the "Analects of Confucius" who lived 475-221 BC. He was said to eat ginger at every meal. The monk Faxian in 406 AD wrote that potted ginger plants were carried on all Chinese ships to prevent scurvy. However, there is no evidence that Ginger is good for either diet or medicine, but the rhizome has been and is used widely as a spice and as folk medicine.

When the stalks wither, ginger rhizomes are dug up, scalded and scraped to prevent it re-shooting before preparing it for use. It is an herbaceous perennial with annual pseudostems, composed of the leaf sheaths or bases, that grow at least a metre in height. The edible rhizomes of Galangal, Cardamom and Turmeric are grown and prepared in a similar way.

Prepared by Jenny Dean, FGBG Guide



Illustration, *Zingiber officinale* Ginger: (previous page)

A: Plant (original drawing was natural size); B: Upper part of the (broken) stem); 1 Flower bud; 2 Flower; 3 Outer staminode spread out; 4 Flower longitudinal section, with the small, tooth-shaped, sterile outer and the fertile inner stamen enlarged; 5 Three fused petals with central landing lip (Labellum). Each side of the petals there are small (white) tooth-shaped, sterile outer stamens; 6 Pistil with the small, sterile stamens standing on the ovary; 7 Upper part of the pistil with the stigma; 8 and 9 Ovary in longitudinal and transverse sections. Image: Franz Eugen Köhler, Köhler's Medizinal-Pflanzen, 1883, Wikipedia, Public domain

Location Map:

1. Bird of paradise *Strelitzia reginae* growing on the slope above Eastern Beach
2. Rush-leaved strelitzia *Strelitzia juncea*
3. The Conservatory houses: Lobster Claws *Heliconia*, Banana *Musa*, Ginger *Zingiber*, Blue Ginger *Dichorisandra thyrsiflora* (Commelinaceae)
4. *Canna* grow in the Perennial Border
5. Plantain *Musa*
6. Giant white bird of paradise *Strelitzia Nicolai*
7. Banana *Musa mannii* Dwarf Banana
8. Kahili Ginger *Hedychium gardnerianum* (Zingiberaceae)



THE GIFT FUND

The Gift Fund currently has \$409,124.69. The Friends of Geelong Botanic Gardens Gift Fund is registered with the Australian Taxation Office to receive donations, which are tax-deductible. This Fund may only be used to support special projects and programs within, and initiated by, Geelong Botanic Gardens. It may not be used to support the Friends or Friends activities. The Friends of Geelong Botanic Gardens are very appreciative of your generous donations to the Gift Fund and would like to thank you.



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DIARY DATES AT A GLANCE

JUBAEA SUBMISSIONS for the next Edition are due by 8 May 2023.
All articles including high resolution photos. jpeg photos can be sent to the FGBG Office



FEBRUARY

THEMED GUIDED WALK 'GONDWANA'

Sunday 12 February, 2.00 pm at the Front Gates

This walk is an opportunity to see the plants in Geelong Botanic Gardens which are direct descendants of the plants that lived on the southern supercontinent of Gondwana, the ancient land mass attached to Antarctica. The many plants that have miraculously survived Australia's 45 million years of separation are well represented in our Gardens for us to enjoy.

Gold coin donation appreciated.

FREE GUIDED WALK & MORNING TEA;

A GEELONG SENIORS FESTIVAL EVENT

Thursday 23 February

Guided Walk at 9.30 am & Morning Tea 10.30 am.

Free Event -Maximum 60 people. Join the Friends' trained Guides for a guided walk through the Camellia Walk and Fern Gully at Geelong Botanic Gardens. This will be followed by a professionally catered-for morning tea and welcome to the Gardens by members of the Friends of Geelong Botanic Gardens. The Friends wish to encourage Seniors to actively enjoy the Gardens, learn a little about the camellia and fern collections, in the company of other Seniors and the Friends. Proudly Funded by the City of Greater Geelong, Positive Ageing Grant.

Bookings are essential. Please contact the Friends' Office to book your place and receive a confirmation itinerary.

MARCH

NEW MEMBERS WELCOME HIGH TEA & GUIDED WALK

Monday 27 March, 9.30 am

New members will be invited to meet the Friends, with a guided walk through the Gardens, followed by a sumptuous morning tea.

SATURDAY PLANT SALE

Saturday 4 March, 10.00 am to 4.00 pm

All the nursery plants are sourced from the Geelong Botanic Gardens and we have a wonderful supply of new stock, especially Cannas, Dahlias and Pelargoniums. We will also have some bargain priced plants which really want to be planted! Everyone welcome. Located at the rear of GBG

THEMED GUIDED WALK

'PLANTS & PLATES: EDIBLE PLANTS in GBG'

Sunday 12 March, 2.00 pm at the Front Gates

From the vegetables on our plates to the delicious fruit we eat; from spices and herbs to tubers and rhizomes - the Gardens has many of these amongst the thousands of plants growing here. Join your guide to explore the stories and uses of these essential plants.

Gold coin donation appreciated.

SELF-DRIVE TOUR TO BASIL ROSE ESTATE, LETHBRIDGE

Friday 17 March, 10.30 am to 3.30 pm

Join the Friends on a self-drive tour to Basil Rose Estate at Lethbridge, with a tour of Vasili Kanidiadis's magnificent 10-acre landscaped garden. All-inclusive of morning tea, garden tour and lunch. Members \$55 and Non-Members \$65

APRIL

THEMED GUIDED WALK 'INDIGENOUS PLANTS'

Sunday 19 April, 2.00 pm at the Front Gates

Our indigenous plants from the Geelong and Bellarine regions are well represented in the Gardens, from the Red Gum by the gate to the yam daisies on the hillside and the vanilla lilies at the far end. Come and explore some wonders of our local plants.

Gold coin donation appreciated.

MELBOURNE HISTORIC GARDENS TRAIN TRIP

Friday 21 April, 8.00 am to 4.00 pm

Travel to Melbourne by train to join the Friends in a self-guided tour of the historic Melbourne University Systems Garden in Parkville. We will take a tram to Spring Street for a 1.45 pm guided tour (90 mins) of the Rooftop and other Parliamentary Gardens at Parliament House not accessible by the public outside a tour. Visit Treasury Gardens and the Conservatory in Fitzroy Gardens. BYO lunch or café in Fitzroy Gardens.

Members \$15 and Non-Members \$20

MAY

THEMED GUIDED WALK 'PACIFIC RIM GARDEN'

Sunday 7 May, 2.00 pm at the Front Gates

Discover some of the amazing trees that grow around our Pacific Rim. Some of these are rare and threatened in their native habitat. This important collection is displayed in the attractive southern extension to the Geelong Botanic Gardens

Gold coin donation appreciated.

VOLUNTEER WEEK LUNCH

Wednesday 17 April, 12.30 pm to 3.30 pm

Volunteers are invited to celebrate Volunteers Week with a basket lunch and a viewing of the DVD movie "Juliet of the Herbs" – a whimsical documentary about the extraordinary life of a horticulturist who lived an alternative lifestyle amongst her goats and the natural world. Free Event.

FUTURE FRIENDS EVENTS:

June: Winter Lecture Series

June: Winter Lunch Fundraiser Event at Truffleduck

July: Movie Night at the Hub

Visit: <https://fgbg.tidyhq.com/> to find our events and book online