

# Garden Highlights August 2014

1. Winter is a good time to admire and compare the shapes of trees, without the branches being obscured by leaves. How would you describe the shape and arrangement of the trunk and branches? You might find trees that are symmetrical, straight, ragged or artistic or branches that are unusual, densely packed, tangled or angular. Also compare the twigs.

Some of the gardens' deciduous trees are shown on the map: Ginkgo, Dawn Redwood, Ligiri, Glastonbury Thorn, Copper (or Purple) Beech, Ombu, Red Horse Chestnut, Cherry, Maple, and Elm. Evergreen trees, Cork Oak and Bunya Bunya have different branch structures, best seen from underneath.

Three Photos: **Ginkgo, Dawn Redwood, Cherry.**



2. **Barker's Koromiko** or Chatham Island tree hebe, *Hebe barkeri* is a small tree that is endemic to (occurs nowhere else than) the Chatham Islands, part of New Zealand, 800 km east of Christchurch. The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species records this tree as vulnerable to extinction in the wild in the medium-term future, because it is severely browsed by livestock and, more recently, by introduced possums. Fire and land clearance also destroy plants. As part of its role in the conservation of endangered plants, the Geelong Botanic Gardens grows a number of threatened species.

This plant flowers from December to March in its home islands. As the Geelong August maximum temperature is similar to that on the Chatham Island in February (although Geelong is colder overnight) this seems to encourage it to flower in Winter.



3. There are more than 500 species of Aloes from Africa and surrounding areas. Although they look similar to the Cactus and Agave plants from the Americas, they are not related. In the 21st Century Garden, several species are displaying red or orange flowers. Their succulent, grey foliage reduces water loss through transpiration and their thorns reduce loss through being eaten. This makes them ideal for garden water conservation.

Photo: Massed **Aloes** planted in Eastern Park Reserve near the Botanic Gardens.



## Events in the Gardens in August

- Discovery Walk: 'Hunters & Collectors', Sun. 17 August, 2:00 pm, gold coin donation.
- Friends Nursery open Wednesdays 10:00 – 12:00.
- See some of the plants used for Chai Tea in the Curiosity Cabinet.

# Geelong Botanic Gardens Map



1a. Elm *Ulmus sp.*  
 1b. Maple *Acer sp.*  
 1c. Cherry, *Prunus sp.*  
 1d. Dawn Redwood  
*Metasequoia glyptostroboides*

1e. Variegated Elm  
*Ulmus minor* 'Variegata'  
 1f. Glastonbury Thorn  
*Crataegus monogyna var praecox*  
 1g. Cork Oak, *Quercus suber*

1h. Bunya bunya *Araucaria bidwilli*  
 1i. Copper or Purple Beech  
*Fagus sylvatica* 'Atropunicea'  
 1j. Red Horse Chestnut  
*Aesculus x carnea*

1k. Ombu tree *Phytolacca dioica*  
 1l. Maidenhair tree *Ginkgo biloba*  
 1m. Ligiri tree *Idesia polycarpa*  
 2. Barker's Koromiko *Hebe barkeri*  
 3. Aloes *Aloe sp.*



This information was developed by the  
 Friends of Geelong Botanic Gardens, Volunteer Guides.

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