

Friends of The Australian Arid Lands Botanic Garden,

Port Augusta Incorporated | ABN 72 979 332 415

Newsletter



President's Report *by John Zwar OAM*

August 2017

Acacia toondulya at AALBG - Chris Nayda



Recently I returned from a visit to western and northern Queensland where I enjoyed walking around towns and cities and observing plantings and landscaping and botanic gardens in particular. In Winton a nursery visit, aquaponics project at a hotel and town plantings were of interest and at Richmond besides town plantings I saw a grove of native food (bush tucker) plants near the town Lake. In Hughenden I visited the botanical walk along the Flinders River and in Charters Towers appreciated some massive old mango trees along with other well established exotic and native trees and shrubs. Townsville has three botanic gardens and I was able to visit each of them. The old heritage Queen's Gardens BG, dating back to the mid 1800s with some very impressive trees, Anderson Park BG with extensive lawns, arboretum plantings and some interesting shrub beds and other plantings, and the impressive Palmetum, a newer botanic garden alongside the Ross River, with rain forest plantings, a huge palm collection, lakes and aquatic plants and a xeriscape garden, with views of the imposing Mt Stuart through the trees. In Mackay I was met by some of the "Friends" who proudly showed me their developing

garden, in Rockhampton I had a brief evening visit to the world heritage listed botanic garden with beautiful silhouettes of trees and water birds as the sun set over the garden's lagoon and in Bundaberg I visited the Botanic Garden with the Manager. This Garden is home to five museums and a heritage steam train, a former sugar cane loco and train which takes visitors on a 2km ride through the Garden. It is always interesting to visit other regional gardens to see how they operate and to meet staff and friends groups and share experiences.

In our Garden the Arid Explorers Garden is proving very popular with local and visiting children. Acacias are in bloom at present and eremophilas covered in buds, but with some extremely cold nights there has been frost damage to some plants this year. A promotional video for advertising the AALBG is being produced and will be shown on regional TV. In Brian Reichelt's report you will see how the Friends Outdoor Group has been involved in a great deal of development, maintenance and garden upgrading work; a magnificent effort by this small group of volunteers.

Our wonderful AALBG Manager, Cherie Gerlach has resigned to take up another position which better suits her family situation and we wish her well. I am pleased that she will continue involvement with the Garden through the Friends. The AALBG will no doubt be in the spotlight when The Governor General Sir Peter Cosgrove and Lady Cosgrove visit the Garden on the 24th August. We look forward to seeing as many Friends as possible at our AGM on 2nd September, following which we will be treated to very entertaining

presentations by Pat Wright supported by husband Warwick, Friends of the National Botanic Garden in Canberra.

Best wishes to all Friends of the AALBG and thanks for your ongoing support. - John Zwar, President.



Friends participating in the making of a promotional video, AALBG, Brian Reichelt

NEXT MEETING

Short Annual General Meeting and Free Public Talk

Venue: WMC Herbarium and Meeting Room, AALBG

Date & Time: Saturday 2nd September 2017 at 1pm

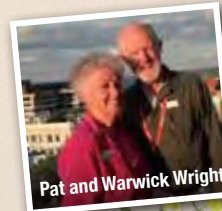
Guest Speakers: Pat and Warwick Wright

Pat and Warwick represent the Friends of the Australian National Botanic Gardens. They make themselves available to speak as ambassadors of the Australian National Botanic Gardens to groups needing a speaker. They do not charge a fee.

Pat is a trained adult educator, having retired from the Institute of Technology towards the end of last century. As well, she is a trained Botanic Guide and Explainer (with groups of young people from pre-school to university level). Pat is accompanied by her husband, Warwick, a retired agronomist, educator and trained guide. Warwick is prepared to respond to questions, on Pat's behalf.

Pat's first talk, entitled (somewhat grammatically incorrect!) is 'Who's the Smartest - Plants or Animals'. It is a quirky approach to the often complex relationships between plants and animals. Pat presents the facts, in a light-hearted way, leaving the audience to draw their own conclusions. The second topic offered is 'Celebrate our Wattle'. The talk brings out many lesser known facets of the role that Acacias, or wattles as we know them, have played in the history, and prehistory, of Australia. Pat emphasises the aesthetics of these beautiful plants, their uses and their symbolical importance.

'Beautiful Flowers of New Zealand South Island.....' is another talk presented once more with Pat's quirky sense of humour. The audience is led to look anew at some surprisingly familiar and beautiful flowers that we share with New Zealand; their uses and their history.



Pat and Warwick Wright

DIARY DATES

Next Meeting of FAALBG:

Saturday 2nd September 1.00pm.
Annual General Meeting followed by 3 fascinating short talks by Pat & Warwick Wright.

Eremophila Study Group Conference:

Friday - Sunday 8th, 9th, 10th September.
Venue - Acacia Ridge Motel

School Holiday Activities at AALBG:

2nd - 13th October.

Thursday Night Dinners at AALBG

Commence 26th October.

These were extremely popular last year. You are advised to make your bookings early to avoid disappointment.

Bird Watching Field Trips of the

Birdlife Australia Club, Port Augusta Group:

Saturday 30th September, Sunday 1st October 2017,
Monday 2nd October 2017 - Argadells Station
(\$50/vehicle) Meet at Quorn pool, 8am
(Camp out \$10pp/night - facilities available.)

Sunday 22nd October 2017 - Chinamans Creek

Meet at turn-off on Highway One, 8am

(Wear beach walking footwear.)

Sunday 12th November 2017 - Dutchmans Stern

Conservation Park Meet at Quorn Swimming Pool, 8am

Please bring sturdy footwear, hat, sun protection, binoculars, morning tea and lunch if staying longer.

For further info contact:

Peter 86425723 / 0457708859;

Bernie 0419863834 / b.haase@telstra.com

Volunteers at Work *by Brian Reichelt*

Since our last newsletter the Friends Volunteers and Garden Staff have been busy. The Nursery area has been producing a lot of plants which have been selling extremely well, in fact I believe that we are well on the way to a record year of plant sales. The outdoor group as we are known has been busy during the entire period.

As reported in the last newsletter rainfall has brought out the weeds and so we have all been busy weeding and spraying to control these pests.

Refurbishment of the Arid Smart Gardens has begun, with upgrading the dripper system and commencement of new plantings. The desert region garden is now completed and the other four gardens have received a cleaning up and pruning, however, they are still to undergo dripper system upgrade and new plantings.



Arid Smart Gardens, Desert Region

The main entrance path is also being upgraded with a complete new dripper system being installed, some landscaping being carried out to bring extra life into the area.

Next will be additional plantings and re-mulching of the area.



Entrance Path



Entrance Path



Entrance Path

The Arid Explorers Garden is being very well patronised by local and out of town children and their parents and guardians. We have completed the large education shelter building, only to finalise seating in this area; installed rubbish collection bins to encourage recycling from the children; the timber work on the seats, bridges and first shelter have been re oiled to aid preservation of the timber; and some path restoration work has also been undertaken.



AEG completed Education Shelter



AEG recycling & rubbish bins

Also on the work programme is the upgrading of the Flinders lookout area with upgraded irrigation, plantings with plants specific to the Robert Brown collection and refurbishing the mulch.

Bird Talk From the Garden *by Peter Langdon*

Rufous Fieldwren (*Calamanthus campestris*)

The small (12cm) and secretive Rufous Fieldwren is one of the species that birders come to the AALBG especially to see.

It lives in the open "chenopod" area to the north and east of the Visitors Centre, hop-searching with cocked tail for insects and small seed amongst the blue bush and salt bush.

Rufous Fieldwrens maintain a territory most of the year and often the first indication of their presence is the sweet, repetitive song uttered mostly by the male from the top of a shrub.

There are about four (4) territories in the Garden, one being along the road to the Matthew Flinders Redcliff Lookout which is a good area to start listening for the bird's song. Then search the tops of the bushes for the bird.

The "rufous" refers to the rich, chestnut cap and lower back and tail of the species, especially good in the local birds.



Rufous Fieldwren, Peter Langdon.



Rufous Fieldwren, Peter Langdon.

Kudos for Garden

Congratulations and welcome to the AALBG for achieving Ecotourism Certification!

This announcement re the AALBG was featured on the local television news on 28 July. See full post at:

<https://www.ecotourism.org.au/news/date/2017/07>



Praise from France & Victoria

Chris Nayda and Jim Hayward, two of our valued tour guides, were delighted to be able to spend three hours with Dr Thomas Haevermanns, the Associate Professor, HDR Botanist, curator of Monocotyledones at The Museum of National History in Paris, his wife and their son, and their friends showing them around and helping with language, Pam, a Botanical Artist from Melbourne and her husband Graham.

After the event Chris received an email from Pam, which follows in part, subject line, **I'd heard how good the Garden was.**

We all enjoyed the afternoon very much - thanks to your intimate knowledge of the plants and their particular habitats. What a great resource both you and the Garden are!

Please pass on our thanks to Jim as well - our friends loved the way he extracted bits and pieces from his pockets to illustrate plants, points or otherwise. (Jim spent the first 40 mins with them.)

I do hope you find that old plan of the garden and are then able to pinpoint each plant's location within the garden. (GPS-ing plant locations was a topic of conversation for which Pam had suggestions and which will be followed up.)

This Garden is a wonderful resource for the region. Once all plants are identified and positions recorded, students and others interested in botany, horticulture, etc. will find it an irreplaceable treasure.

All the best with your work and thanks for a most memorable day on our trip to Darwin.



Chris Nayda, Dr Thomas Haevermanns & family,
Pam & Graham

Peter's Plants *by Peter Hall*

Eremophila miniata is one of the larger growing eremophilas growing to about 5 metres in height and about 3 metres in width. A native of Western Australia it grows mainly on claypans and near salt-lake country.

It has large colourful flowers ranging from red to pink, and orange and yellow. The name *miniata* means 'coloured with red'.

Several *Eremophila miniata* plants can be found growing in the new Eremophila Garden at the AALBG. These plants have been grafted. They seem to graft readily but are difficult to strike.



Eremophila miniata - Peter Hall

EREMOPHILA STUDY GROUP CONFERENCE

Friday 8 September to Sunday 10 September **INCLUSIVE**

To attend the conference you need to be an Australian Plant Society (APS or SGAP - check own state's website for cost) member, and also a member of the Eremophila Study Group (\$5). To attend the Dinner **ONLY** this is not required. There are limited places, however, for both dinner (\$50), & conference (\$145 incl dinner), so book immediately if you have not done so already.

Phone Chris for further contact details: 0434 717 382

Programme:

Friday 8 September - full day, meet 9am (Acacia Ridge Motor Inn), bring your own lunch and drinks; share cars if possible so we can all be in a 4WD for a field trip outside Port Augusta to see wild Eremophila populations. Friday evening, register at the Acacia Ridge Motel Function Centre from 7pm.

Saturday 9 September - full day; lectures and presentations in the morning then visit AALBG for tours and nursery sales in the afternoon. Evening, official dinner in Port Augusta at the Standpipe Motor Inn, Guest Speaker Ken Buirchall, co-author of *Eremophilas of WA*.

Sunday 10 September - up early and travel to Owen, meet in town and then drive to Ken Warnes' farm and Eremophila plantation. Here we will swap cuttings (so yes, you need to keep any you have brought fresh til then!), and will finish our conference with lunch catered by the locals. Leave at 2pm to return to Adelaide or other places of interest (e.g. Kadina).

Celebrate National Wattle Day on the 1st of September!
Wear a sprig of wattle or Australia's colours of green & gold.
Greet each other with 'Happy Wattle Day'.
Organise a picnic, lunch, morning/arvo tea, BBQ or dinner
for your family & friends.

Refer to <http://www.wattleday.asn.au> for information and resources.

Chris's Observations



1. Can you identify this moth found on a eucalypt at the AALBG (on 11th May 2017)?



2. One of the many kindergartens and schools who have come to the AALBG since the opening of our Arid Explorers Garden.



3. Male and female fruit of the *Gyrostemon ramulosus* (Corky Bark)



4. *Gyrostemon ramulosus*: This tree can be found at AALBG on the red sand hills in the courtyard. It is normally found on inland sand dunes especially in the Great Victoria Desert. I first saw it as I drove past the Olgas in NT.

Snippets

Inclusive kitchen - Bluebush Cafe: Bernie Reichstein has nominated the AALBG for the 2017 SA Tourism Awards; the AEG & the inclusive kitchen on top of all the other great attributes of the Garden will be part of the application. So that they are comfortable in visiting AALBG the group who visit with people with disabilities is having vitamised food for those who need it as an initiative of the kitchen.

Plant Sales have increased and grafted eremophila are for sale now. Perry Jones & Peter Hall work on these with a reasonably good strike rate as the AALBG Nursery has now been using small P1 tubes, square and sometimes round, which accommodate even thin-stemmed plants like boronia.

On the **BGANZ Open Day at the AALBG** on Saturday 28th May a free guided tour was conducted at 10.30am by Shirley Mundy and another at 1pm by Jim Hayward.

Participants appeared to enjoy their experiences immensely. In the foyer Julie Owen, Mandy Atkinson, Shirley Mundy, & Chris Nayda, greeted & welcomed visitors to the Visitor Centre, sold raffle tickets, signed up new members, and spoke to the cause; noticing a predominance of overseas & interstate visitors.

Reminder:

Are you financial? Renewals of Memberships for Friends (singles & families) were due by 30th June 2017, before the start of the new financial year. Discounts for the purchase of meals and gifts in the café and gift shop only apply to the Friends Membership card holder/s and cannot be transferred to family and friends who are not members.

Join or Renew Subscription & Contacts

TO JOIN OR RENEW SUBSCRIPTION

Request a form from Contacts or collect one from the Visitor Centre

Or fill in this form and send with remittance to:

Friends of the Australian Arid Lands Botanic Garden Port Augusta Inc.

PO Box 2040, Port Augusta SA 5700

www.australian-aridlands-botanic-garden.org

PLEASE TICK: ☐ New Membership ☐ Renewal of Membership

NAME: Dr / Mr / Mrs / Miss / Ms:

Address:

..... Date:

Email Address:

Any donation will be gratefully accepted. Donations of \$2.00 and over are tax deductible. Please make cheques payable to 'Friends of the Australian Arid Lands Botanic Garden Inc.' Receipts will be posted. A SAE would be appreciated but not obligatory.

Enclosed is my:

Subscription \$

Donation \$

TOTAL \$

DIRECT DEBIT BANKING DETAILS

BSB: 035-065

Account No.: 164 604

Account Name: FAALBG

Reference: 'name of person banking'

Please notify by email to friends@aalg.gov.au

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTION

Individual (1 adult) \$30

Due annually 1st July. Includes 1 membership card.

Family (2 adults & dependent children under 18) \$50

Due annually 1st July. Includes 2 membership cards.
(2 forms must be filled in).

Corporate \$250 Due annually 1st January.

(includes 1 membership card issued in one name
nominated by the business)



President: John Zwar **Mobile:** 0408 887 565 **Work:** (08) 8372 6876 **Email:** jzwar@bigpond.com

Vice President: Brian Reichelt **Mobile:** 0418 896 995 **Email:** breich@bigpond.net.au

Treasurer: Geraldine Davis **Phone:** (08) 8648 6399 **Mobile:** 0418 447 020 **Email:** glgadavis@bigpond.com

Secretary: Christine Nayda **Phone:** (08) 8642 4684 **Mobile:** 0434 717 382 **Email:** b.nayda@bigpond.com

Editor: Julie Owen **Mobile:** 0408 866 385 **Email:** jayowen@bigpond.com

PO Box 2040, Port Augusta, South Australia 5700 **Email:** friends@aalg.gov.au

Issued August 2017 by Friends of the Australian Arid Lands Botanic Garden, Port Augusta Inc. Designed, Produced and Supported by Multi Print SA Port Augusta ~ Telephone: (08) 8641 0900

www.australian-aridlands-botanic-garden.org