



# Friends of The Australian Arid Lands Botanic Garden,

Port Augusta Incorporated | ABN 72 979 332 415

## Newsletter

May 2018

### President's Report *by John Zwar OAM*

**#1 REGIONAL  
BOTANIC  
GARDEN IN  
AUSTRALIA**  
AUSTRALIAN  
GEOGRAPHIC

*Eucalyptus rosacea* & Skink - Brian Reichelt



John Zwar

I write this report in Benalla, Victoria where the Australian Association of Friends of Botanic Gardens biennial conference which I have been attending has just ended. I represented our Friends group and it was a wonderful opportunity to meet friends of botanic gardens from many parts of Australia, to hear their stories and share ideas and experiences. The mayor of Benalla in his welcome speech emphasised the value of friends groups in botanic gardens. Dr. Lucy Sutherland, Director of the Botanic Gardens of SA, gave an interesting opening presentation on the role of volunteers in helping paid staff in collecting and

preserving seed of rare and endangered plants in SA. There were interesting presentations on work at Cranbourne BG in Victoria, and a new development, the "Garden of the Future", which was opened in Bendigo today. We had a guided tour of the Benalla Botanical Gardens with many rare exotic trees planted in the 1800s.

They have just completed an upgraded children's play area. Other presentations covered issues relating to maintaining heritage gardens and new developments in them. Representatives from 12 friends groups gave short talks on developments and innovations in their gardens and I gave an update on progress at the AALBG in recent years which was well received.

The next conference will be in Brisbane in 2020. Many present spoke fondly of the conference we hosted at Port Augusta in 2012.

I drove to Victoria and visited 20 botanic gardens on the way and plan to see 10 more on the return trip.

I look forward to catching up at our next meeting if you can make it.

Cheers,

John Zwar - President.



Stuart Paul

#### NEXT MEETING

**Venue:** WMC Meeting Room, AALBG

**Date & Time:** Saturday 2nd June 2018, 1.00pm

**Topic:** Natural Resource Management in Northern SA

**Guest Speaker:** Stuart Paul

Regional Director South Australian Arid Lands,  
Department for Environment and Water.

Stuart is an experienced executive with a background in conservation, natural resource and protected area management. In his current role as a Regional Director with the Department for Environment and Water, Stuart currently leads a diverse team with functions that support the effective management of national parks, natural resources, pastoral lands and high profile conservation programs across a region spanning 50% of South Australia, from the rugged Flinders Ranges to the iconic outback bordering the NT, QLD and NSW.

Stuart has a demonstrated capacity to shape, develop and lead management teams, and provides executive level guidance and support for numerous statutory Boards including the South Australian Arid Lands Natural Resource Management Board, the Pastoral Board of South Australia and numerous National Park (Co-management) Boards. Key industry and community partners include peak primary production groups, the mining and resource sector, the tourism industry and numerous Native Title body corporates. Prior to joining the South Australian Department for Environment and Water in 2013, Stuart worked across both the State and Commonwealth public sector, in wide ranging leadership roles spanning workforce planning and development, operational management and conservation program delivery, most notably across the World Heritage listed and jointly managed Kakadu and Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Parks. Stuart holds a Bachelor of Science from the University of Adelaide, post graduate qualifications in Public Sector Leadership and is a member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors. He currently resides in Port Augusta, South Australia with his wife Natasha and two children, Samuel and Zoe.

#### DIARY DATES

##### First Saturday Club Free Friends Walk

Saturday 5th May - 10.00am

##### Bonsai Interest Group (BIG) - Saturday 26th May

10.30am - 11.30am, for beginners  
12.30pm - 2.30pm, for beginners +  
Education Shelter in Arid Explorers Garden

##### Botanic Gardens Day Activities at the AALBG

Sunday 27th May

##### FAALBG Meeting

Saturday 2nd June - 1.00pm  
WMC Meeting Room AALBG

##### First Saturday Club Free Friends Walk

Saturday 2nd June - 4.00pm

##### Bonsai Interest Group (BIG) Workshop with Neville Hatcher

Sunday 10th June, Bookings and pre-payment essential  
at the Giftshop 8641 9116. Numbers limited to first 10.

##### First Saturday Club Free Friends Walk

Saturday 7th July - 10.00am

##### FAALBG Meeting and AGM

Saturday 8th September, Guest speaker Jane Edmanson,  
Gardening Australia's presenter in Victoria.  
(N.B. Change of date - previously 1st September -  
please amend your diary).

##### Bird Watching Field Trips of the Birdlife Australia & Birds SA Clubs, Port Augusta Group:

Sunday 20th May - Gum Glen Station  
Meet at Quorn swimming pool, 8.30am

Sunday 22nd July - Yudnapinna to Carrierewloo  
roads loop. Meet at start of Stuart Highway, 8.00am

Sunday 19th August - Dutchmans Stern Cons. Park  
Meet at Quorn swimming pool, 8.30am

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

#### For further info contact:

Peter 8642 5723 / 0457 708 859;

Bernie 0419 863 834 / b.haase@telstra.com



# Volunteers at Work *by Brian Reichelt*

Since our last newsletter our Volunteer propagators along with Nursery Staff have continued to propagate plants, pot on, and weed tubes and the like. Friends have also been involved in Plant Sales off-site: Laura Folk Fair where plants to the value of approximately \$5,500 were sold at the two day event; the Port Augusta Gateway Market approximately \$200 worth of plants sold; Kadina Rotary Markets and the Australian Native Plant Society two day sale in Adelaide (figures are not in for these sales as they are happening at the time of writing this report). A big thank you goes out to all of the Volunteers who prepare the plants for sales, attend the sales, and then return plants to the nursery; it is a big job and greatly appreciated by the Garden Staff.

The outside work Volunteers started off slowly this year due to outside temperatures being quite high, up to 48 Celsius. However, as the weather commenced cooling, Garden work recommenced. The Reflection Garden has received an upgrade with mulching and also a large Plant Urn installed in the centre of the Garden. The cost of this Planter was donated by The Friends.



Planter Urn and mulching in the Reflection Garden - Brian Reichelt.

A new garden bed has been created with Friends assisting Garden Staff in laying irrigation pipe, planting and mulching of the garden. This area is on the path to the Arid Smart Gardens.



Irrigation for the new garden bed - Brian Reichelt.



New garden bed completed - Brian Reichelt.

Buffel Grass control has continued with nine large tandem wheel trailer loads being removed from the Garden, and as the weather cools a concerted effort will be made to remove as much as possible. It has been found that digging the plants up and burying as per guidelines appears to be the best method to control this pest weed.



Trailer load of Buffel Grass - Brian Reichelt.

Even though we have had very little rain for the last three months weeds continue to grow in the Garden and are removed on a weekly basis.



Attacking the ever-present weeds - Brian Reichelt.

Over the last few weeks a concerted effort has been placed on replanting, and upgrading irrigation systems in the "Old Eremophila Garden".



Upgrades in Old Eremophila Garden - Brian Reichelt.



Upgrades in Old Eremophila Garden - Brian Reichelt.

Garden Staff have constructed two large garden settings and wall seating in the large shelter of the "Arid Explorers Garden". These have been funded by The Friends.



Seating in the Arid Explorers Garden Education Shelter - Brian Reichelt.

Work has continued on the construction of the new heat beds and it is anticipated that they will be all up and running by the end of April.

A big thank you to all of our Garden and Nursery Volunteers and Garden Staff for the amount of projects completed considering the weather was not always on our side.

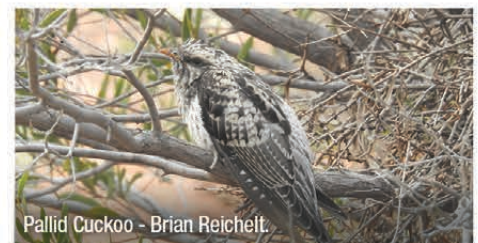
## Bird Talk From the Garden *by Peter Langdon*

### Pallid Cuckoo *Cacomantis pallidus*

On Saturday 30th September 2017, near the Courtyard, a fledgling Pallid Cuckoo was seen being fed by a pair of Red Wattle Birds (*Anthochaera carunculata*). Pallid Cuckoos usually parasitise some of the smaller Honeyeaters, like the White-plumed (*Ptilotula penicillata*) and the Singing (*Gavicalus virens*), but this time they chose as foster parents the Red Wattle Birds which are much larger than the other Honeyeaters.



Red Wattle Bird feeding Pallid Cuckoo - Brian Reichelt.



Pallid Cuckoo - Brian Reichelt.

## Vale - Peter Marmasch 11.5.1927 - 25.2.2018

Peter Marmasch was born in Zaporizhzhia, Ukraine, but in 1941, at 14, it was time to escape invading German forces. A 9 year journey of hardship from east to west was not only character forming but 8 different languages were learned. Peter arrived in Australia in 1950 looking for a new and safer life, and found it in Port Augusta. Retiring at 65 Peter became very involved as a Volunteer with the Friends of the Australian Arid Lands Botanic Garden (FAALBG). Anyone who spent time with Peter would have been regaled with conversations about eremophilas and he was very proud to be involved in their on-going propagation. As well as serving on the committee of the FAALBG for several years, he was also a Tour Guide and did this well into his 80's, his fluency in 8 languages making him invaluable. Even when Peter was in his late 80s, feeling the effects of ill-health and using a walking stick, he would lead a shorter tour with those having difficulty completing a longer tour - still demonstrating his resilience and wanting to share his love of the AALBG. Peter will be sadly missed. Rest in peace Peter, and thank you for a job well done at the AALBG.





# Peter's Plants *by Peter Hall*

*Newcastlia* is a genus of plants that I have seen many times while travelling in outback South Australia, Western Australia, and Northern Territory, and wished that I could get to grow for our garden and the AALBG, but have never been able to do so, despite trying numerous times.

*Newcastlia* has about nine plants in the genus ranging from small shrubs to specimens of about two metres in height. Most have grey leaves and stand out when in amongst other bushes. The plant shown here in the photograph is, I think, *Newcastlia spodiotricha*, meaning ash-grey hairs.

*Newcastlia* is named after Henry Clinton, 5th Duke of Newcastle, Secretary of State for the Colonies, 1852 - 1854.



*Newcastlia spodiotricha* - Peter Hall



*Newcastlia spodiotricha* - Peter Hall

## Chris's Observations *By Chris Nayda*

### EMU BUSH

This is the common name for *Eremophila* plants especially *Eremophila maculata*.

Many people ask, "Why?"

Apparently the emus eat the seeds (which are quite large) from the ground. The foliage of *Eremophila maculata* is poisonous as it has a carcinogenic compound in it, the plants' survival mode. Do the emus know this?

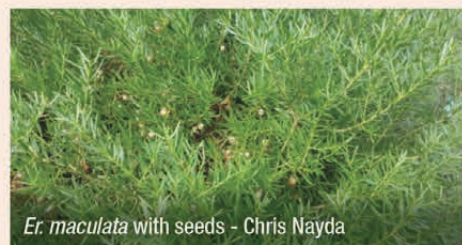
There have been quite a few emus at the AALBG over the past couple of months and you can see from the "scat" that this is what has been happening. There are also a couple of quandong seeds in the scat. I am sure the silly birds can't tell the difference.

After it has passed through the bird it has been said that the seed will grow.

This has never been proven.

*Eremophilas* are very difficult to grow from seed but they are easily grown by taking cuttings and propagating them as we do at the Arid Smart Nursery at AALBG.

I took a tourist from California last week around the AALBG and he was fascinated when he saw the scat and the seeds and took a 'Holiday picture'.



*Er. maculata* with seeds - Chris Nayda



Emu scat with seeds - Chris Nayda

## BIG FRIENDS

Friends of the AALBG hosted our first Bonsai Interest Group (BIG) on Saturday 24th March with 17 in attendance. Some beautiful bonsai to view and much enthusiasm. We are all learning.

Next gathering is scheduled for Saturday 26th May in the Explorers Garden;

- 10.30am - a one hour session for Beginners
- 12.30pm - a two hour session for those who want to learn more

On June 10th Robert Hatcher, senior horticulturalist at the Mt Lofty Botanic Garden, is visiting us. Rob offers Australian Native Bonsai Masterclasses in Adelaide and will share a practical hands on workshop with us.

Check with the AALBG for more details.



**BIG Friends**

## First Saturday Club

**Free Friends Tours of the AALBG, hosted by our tour guides.**

In April we walked from the Reflective Garden to the Rare Plants Section.

**May 5th**

10.00am we walk from the Leopardwood Tree to the Eyre Region.

**June 2nd**

4.00pm we go to the Boardwalk and beyond.

**July 7th**

10.00am we go through the Carpark to the Great Victoria Desert Region.

All welcome.



# 2018 Corporate Members

## 2018 CORPORATE MEMBERS OF FRIENDS OF THE AUSTRALIAN ARID LANDS BOTANIC GARDEN

**We welcome these additional corporate members and encourage Friends to patronise their business.**

Don't forget to mention that you are a Friend of the AALBG and that we appreciate their business participating as a corporate member of the Friends.



Gulf & Ranges Optometrists



the  
hotel flinders



absolutely engaging

## Snippets

### BIRD'S NEST FUNGUS by Brian Reichelt

Recently the Garden received a phone call from a lady about a fungus that had taken over one of her garden beds and appeared to be killing off the native plants within the garden bed. The fungi are in fact Bird's Nest Fungus and its name comes from the way it looks (as per photo). These fungi are not dangerous to plants and help to break down organic matter and turn it into rich soil.

The person who had made the phone call had indeed added compost and fine mulch to the soil and this had caused the fungi to grow as the compost and mulch had not completed the breaking down process.

With regard to the plants dying it was discovered that the plants were receiving only a light watering at least four times per week. Advice given to this person was to not water lightly as the water was not going deep enough to find the roots of the plants. A deep watering once per week of around 8 litres delivered by dripper would be much more desirable.



Bird's Nest Fungi - Brian Reichelt

## Reminder

Are you financial? Renewals for Corporate Memberships for the 2018 year were due 1st January, 2018. **Renewals of Memberships for Friends (singles & families) are due on 1st July 2018, at 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.



AALBG in the Courtyard - Brian Reichelt

## 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](http://www.australian-aridlands-botanic-garden.org)

Enclosed is my:

Subscription \$ .....

Donation \$ .....

TOTAL \$ .....

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.

### 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@aalbg.sa.gov.au](mailto:friends@aalbg.sa.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)



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