

March 2016

Rhodo News

Newsletter 383



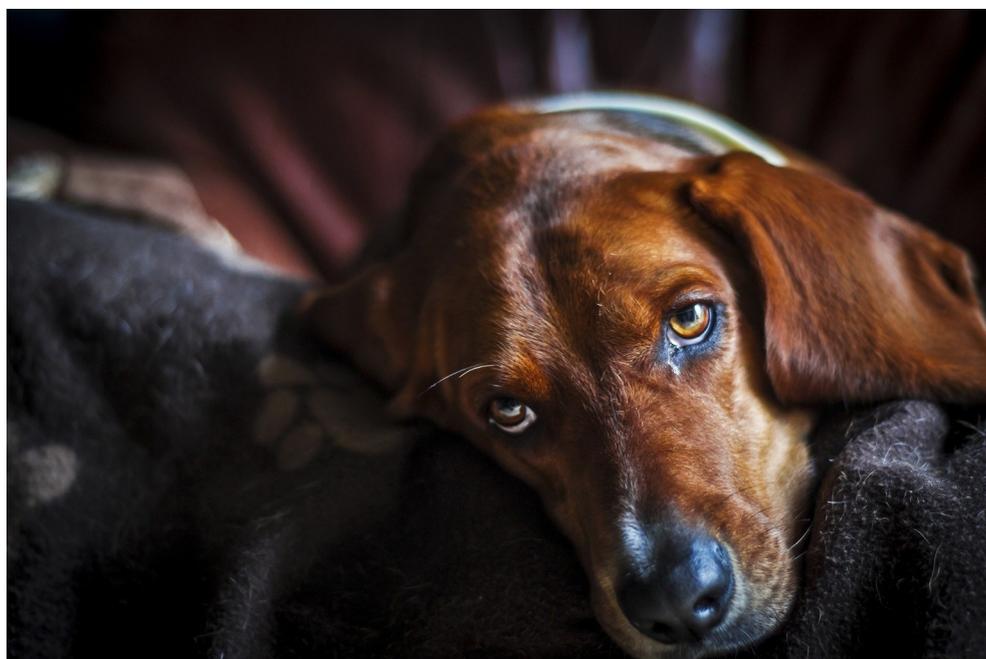
Official Newsletter of the
Emu Valley Rhododendron Garden Inc

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Patrons: (International) Kenneth Cox, (Tasmania) Her Excellency the Governor of Tasmania, Kate Warner



“When will Neet be back?”

Our horticulturalist Juanita (“Neet”) Wood has been unwell lately, but will be back shortly, we understand. We all wish her well and miss her.

Calendar

Sunday 20th March

Social Meeting
At EVRG 2pm

Sunday 17th April

Social Meeting
At EVRG 2pm

Sunday 8th May

Mothers’ Day Lunch
EVRG at 12.30pm—\$28
BOOK EARLY!

See us at:

emuvallayrhodo.com.au

Social Meeting Report—February 21st

Our first social meeting for 2016 kicked off with a garden report from Maurie. Continuing dry conditions have meant that he is seeing a lot of the moonlight hours as he attempts to keep up with the irrigation. Despite his best efforts there are a few of our plants succumbing to the lack of water. As Neet pleaded in the previous Newsletter; “if you know of a good rain dance, now is the time....”

Instead of a guest speaker today, there was general discussion and information sharing on a number of matters currently relevant to the garden.

Plenty of colour graced the competition table, with vireyas and some lovely hibiscus blooms too. Top honours in the Rhodo’ section went to Kay Shadbolt with her vireya blooms: *R Zoelleri* and *R “Sunset Gold”* claiming first and second placing. Maureen Gale wore the winner’s smile when her hibiscus gained top voting in the cut flower section, and Warren Caple pipped second spot with a striking dahlia entry. Well done to all who contributed to the display.

Warren added to his reasons to smile (thus showing off his new teeth!) when he won the raffle. Lady Luck is smiling back at you Woz! Taking home the door prize had Stuart McKerrow looking rather pleased with himself as well.

Flower voting, raffle and Trade Table added \$101.95 to our funds. A big “Thank you” to you, our loyal members for the continuing support of your garden. *Pete*

Meet the St Evenses

As most of you will know we have a residence on-site (next to the front gate), and our guest speakers on March 20th will be our new tenant family Philip and Cathy St Evens. They will introduce themselves and briefly talk about the work Philip does and seminars we are going to be hosting here. A flyer accompanies this newsletter that may be of interest to you, and below is a message from them:

Hello friends, members, and volunteers

As some of you are probably already aware, we are the new tenants of the gatekeeper’s cottage at the Garden, and we would like to take this opportunity to introduce ourselves and tell you a bit about us and what we do. My husband Philip is recently retired from teaching at Monash Medical School in Melbourne as an Academic Advisor and is a consultant Neurophysiologist specialising in sleep and stress disorders. He is now focusing more on private consults as well as running meditation and relaxation seminars, retreats and programs. Although he knows nothing about rhododendrons, he is an extremely keen gardener and is already underway setting up a greenhouse and vegetable garden here at the cottage, replenishing the orchard with more fruit trees, and experimenting with grafting and various organic gardening systems.

My name is Cat. I’m an artist, originally from England and also passionate about nature and natural living. I’m currently studying my Master of Teaching with the University of Tasmania so I can become a qualified primary school teacher in Burnie. While Philip is brilliant at growing the vegetables I’m enthusiastic about cooking them, and can think of little finer than rustling up nutritious homemade (vegetarian) dishes from around the world using fresh local produce, and seasoned with love.

Moving to Tasmania meant that we could not bring any of our beloved trees, plants and herbs with us. If anybody has any cuttings, seedlings, herbs and other plants, chicken wire and/or chickens or maybe even some greenhouse materials that they would like to donate to help us regenerate the garden here, we would be exceptionally grateful!

We’re looking forward to meeting you all while we enjoy life in this stunning location, and learning from your collective expertise. *Cat St Evens*



**BRETT
WHITELEY** MP
Federal Member for Braddon

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Around the Garden

Early autumn is fruiting time in the garden. The sorbus are flushed with success – *Cornus kousa* DID have lovely strawberry-like fruits standing up on stalks until the birds FOUND THEM A TASTY MORSEL. The native Chinese quince has produced its large egg shaped yellow fruits and if we can keep the possums away we may even make some quince jelly – yum!

This year many of the abies are putting up cones – *Abies densa* is putting on its usual display of large smoky blue cones whilst down in Japan *Abies firma* yellowish green cones oozing resin are sure to impress whilst in China *Abies chinensis* is also pushing its greenish yellow cones out. Over in America the Colorado White Fir is flaunting its pale green purplish bloomed cones – always things of great beauty to be found in the garden if you take the time to look about.

Down in Japan the brilliant red fruits of *Viburnum dilatatum* and in China *V. setigerum* display large orange almost translucent clusters of fruit that the birds don't seem to find tasty – YET! Our usual brilliant display of autumn leaves has started with heaps more to come over the next three months or so.



Abies firma

On the work front the horticulture students are busy learning skills with their supervisor and our marvelous volunteers just keep on getting down and dirty working at their own pace battling our native clematis and the ever present blackberries. Also the slate crazy paving alongside the Sea of Japan is progressing well.

Up in the nursery stage one is now complete with the installation of the latest tank to supposedly catch rainwater! We are very pleased with how the rolling benches, automatic watering system and the bulk bin system for potting mixture are working. *Maurie – filling in for Neet.*



Bringing in the rainwater tank for the nursery. As expected, many hands made for light work.



Rhododendron moupinense

Subsection Moupinensia comprises two or perhaps three species: *R. moupinense*, *R. dendrocharis* and *R. petrocharis*. They grow into compact or sometimes straggly shrubs to one meter in height depending on growing conditions.

The corolla of *R. moupinense* can be white, white tinged pink to deep rose-red with or without spots. The deep pink flowered form is particularly beautiful, locally known as *R. moupinense* 'Rubrum'. After the flowers have fallen the reddish-bronzy new growth appears, adding a new dimension to an easy to grow rhododendron.

At EVRG *R. moupinense* 'Rubrum' flowers late September and has been used extensively in hybridizing, adding a

rosy glow to many new plants. Plants can be viewed on the Rockery, in Guizhou and in Sichuan areas of the garden.

First described by Franchet in 1886 from Western Sichuan but not introduced until Wilson did so in 1909. At least three different forms are grown from this introduction and no doubt other forms will emerge from more recent introductions. *Maurie*

The Emu Valley Rhododendron Garden is proudly sponsored by:



Emu Valley Rhododendron Garden Inc.
PO Box 39 Burnie, Tasmania 7320
