

February 2017

Rhodo News

Newsletter 393



Official Newsletter of the
Emu Valley Rhododendron Garden Inc

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Free Hearing Test!!
Free Admission!!

On Tuesday 14th February, Emu Valley has joined up with Australian Hearing to offer free hearing checks. Non members who avail themselves of the offer will be able to tour the garden with their *entry fee paid for* by Australian Hearing!! Members will be given a *free* Devonshire Tea!!

This is not only an opportunity for Emu Valley to raise some much needed funds, but gives us all the chance to have a hearing check, which many of us should have but never get around to. The flyer advertising February 14 has been placed onto our Facebook page. If you have access please pass it on. A copy is also attached for those who might like to print some off to distribute. Tell your friends!!

Calendar

Tuesday 14th February
Hearing Bus
At EVRG 10am to 4pm

Sunday 19th February
Social Meeting
At EVRG 2pm

See us at:
emuvalleyrhodo.com.au

Chairman's Report

Has not 2017 started off with full steam ahead for Emu Valley? Cruise ships, functions and daily visitors are keeping everyone busy. It is great to hear from members making suggestions as to what might be of benefit to Emu Valley. In an effort to listen and consider these and to give all members an opportunity to be heard, we are going to start holding monthly sessions. They will hopefully give members a way of generating ideas and to discuss the pros and cons in a non judgemental atmosphere.

The sessions will be held every third Thursday of the month, commencing at 3 pm and run for an hour with the first scheduled for February 16. Please try and come along and even if you do not have any suggestions your thoughts on what is tabled will be much appreciated.



If you cannot make it just send me an email and I will ensure your idea(s) are tabled.

Geoff geoffreywood@me.com 0427722060

Social Meeting Report for 11th December

Our end of year social meeting began a little later than usual, due to a preceding function. However, once underway we had a very brief time of updates on the garden. Maurie drew our attention to the vigorous growth of both the desirable and less desirable vegetation within our garden. It has been said that a weed is simply a plant growing in the wrong place, but with the likes of wild turnip, onion twitch, thistles, etc, one is left wondering just where would be the right place for them to grow.

Blooms from "Sunset Gold" gave the Tavners yet another win, with Ivan Johnston following on their heels. In the cut flower section a rose from the Medwin garden, "Karnival" just headed off a Jacobean lily (sprekelia) of Doreen Stratford's. Audrey Weeks held the raffle ticket, and then a multiple draw raffle was well supported and much fun. These activities raised a very impressive \$219.80.

Sharing a meal together gave all an opportunity to mingle and enjoy relaxed interaction. If the laughter and smiles were any indication, I would judge the evening was a success and enjoyed by all. Thank you to those who provided the delicious food and helped make it a most enjoyable function.

I hope you are all slowly settling back into whatever your normality is after the excitement and perhaps stresses of the past few weeks. There isn't a Social meeting in January due to the extra work load with cruise ship visits and other functions, however, it seems an ideal opportunity to express appreciation to those who assist to make each of our meetings what they are, a real social event. This would be a struggle without the room being set up appropriately, sound system operational, overhead projection when required, contributions of flowers to be voted on, and of course those who vote, support of the raffle, trade table, and so on. Then we must not forget those who provide tempting morsels for the afternoon tea when we really relax and interact with each other. Thank you to each and every one. We look forward to enjoying our meetings again during the coming months.

Finding guest speakers is always a challenge and once again I request that anyone who knows of someone willing to address our group on a (preferably) garden related topic, **please** make their contact details known to me. Here's your chance to be imaginative! Years ago I saw a display of a thematic stamp collection, where the enthusiast only collected floral stamps, irrespective of country of origin. An overhead presentation of something like, with some narration, would surely be different, and of interest? Put your thinking caps on and dare to be adventurous. Could we consider thinking of "bring a friend" when we come to our social meetings?

All the best for the year as it unfolds ahead of us. May your troubles be light and your garden bloom better than the neighbour's. *Pete*

Around the Garden

Welcome back to what has been a fairly mild summer....so far! We have started irrigating but nowhere near the amount that we normally would at this time of the year, but this is a good sort of complaint to have if you ask me!

Our annual bale carting outing started last week consisting of 2 trips out and back and we're only half way there with the same amount of bales needed again (plus a few more). Luckily the volunteers that are involved in this project are fit and fun loving and are always willing to give so much of their time and energy into the days that are needed to get the bales back to the garden for mulching around new plantings and on the banks. Thank you to all involved yet again!

We have undertaken a new weed management strategy this last 6 months and whilst the process may seem a little time consuming to some, the outcome and benefits speak for themselves! We will now complete the mulching of these weed free areas to restrict the weed growth and to focus on new surroundings which will have the same outcome. The time and research invested in this approach has been so very beneficial and has not gone unnoticed. We started at the top of the garden up at the water tanks in Europe and will work our way along Nepal, Tibet, Sichuan and so on, eventually down into the centre of the garden if weather and funds allows us to.



Photo 1 – spraying in progress.



Photo 2- result of spraying and mulching.

On our 'to do' list here around the garden at the moment are:

- Weeding around all four of the gazebos as we have quite a few weddings to come in the next 6 weeks and also a large number of cruise ship visitors.
- Mulch weed free areas and new plantings.
- Seats and information interpretation panels to have a good clean.
- Irrigation upstands to be repositioned where possible – more often than not, the upstands have simply fallen over and need staking or the plants have overgrown the sprinklers and are now not watering the full area.

Like I always say in each newsletter, if you have any free time and love to be outdoors then we can always do with new volunteers, even if it's only once a month! Your help would be greatly appreciated!

Enjoy the summer days everyone, *Neet*

Welcome

A big warm Rhodo Garden welcome to new members Kim Johnson & Joyce Fairbrother, Daniel & Michael Emmerton, Allan & Marg Leeson, and Patricia Ellison & Geoffrey Smart.



Rhododendron diaprepes

Most of the late flowering species growing at Emu Valley belong to Subsection fortunea, *R. diaprepes* being one of these.

R. diaprepes was discovered and introduced by Forrest in June, 1913 in the Shweli-Salwin Divide, western Yunnan and then later he discovered it growing in mid-western Yunnan as well as north eastern Upper Burma. It is to be found in mixed deciduous forest and the edges of conifer stands where it grows to 8 metres covering itself with fragrant white flowers with or without pale green base.

Poor old *R. diaprepes* is now deemed to be a subspecies of *R. decorum*!

Here at Emu Valley we have many examples in excess of 3 metres – two of these plants become semi-deciduous before flowering and flower well into late January. One interesting clone ‘Gargantua’ is a triploid ($2n=39$) with very large highly perfumed white flowers; the petals are very thick and leathery. It is growing not far from *R. magnificum* in Burma with others dotted around in Yunnan but don’t get it confused with one of its hybrids *R. ‘Polar Bear’* or another beautiful white species *R. serotinum*. *Maurie*

The Emu Valley Rhododendron Garden is proudly sponsored by:



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