

May 2019

Rhodo News

Newsletter 418



Official Newsletter of the

Emu Valley Rhododendron Garden Inc

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If you weren't at our Autumn Spectacular on Easter Saturday, you missed the Easter Bunny (aka our horticulturalist Neet). The younger visitors seemed to have no difficulties in locating her! It was a great day and our wonderful volunteers raised \$5,000 for Garden improvement and maintenance! More fun than weeding, eh Neet??

Calendar

Sunday 12th May
Mothers' Day Luncheon
EVRG 12noon for 12.30pm

Wednesday 15th May
Workshop/Discussion
EVRG 10-12 & 12.30-2.30pm

Sunday 19th May
Social Meeting
EVRG 2pm

See us at: emuvalleyrhodo.com

General Manager's Report

What a great family day! The hamburgers were delicious! Great value for money!

I am not exaggerating. These were just some of the many positive feedback comments received from visitors to our Autumn Spectacular Day. To everyone who helped out leading up to and on the day it is a credit to you.

The importance Emu Valley plays in attracting people to our region was highlighted by the number who came from all parts of the state, and visitors to Tasmania who also saw our advertising whilst on their travels.

As we approach the last quarter of the financial year, the Management Team and our Board of Directors are working on the 2019/20 budget. One area that always concerns me is the lack of revenue during the winter months (especially June and July). Should you have suggestions as to how we might remedy this let me know.

Workshops to discuss how we manage the next Cruise Ship Season and the ever increasing Tea Room and Function Business have been planned. Financially these play a huge role in our viability but at the same time are a big ask for our volunteers.

- Do we stop offering guided walking tours of the garden, or start charging for them?
- Tea Room Hours – do they need changing?
- When there are 'small' ships in do we simply not offer anything?
- Tea Room and Function Rosters -What can be done to ease the pressure?

These are some of the issues we need to discuss. We do not want a 'talk fest' so I am suggesting to get things started that we allow two hours each and as a number of members/volunteers will come to both workshops that we hold them on the same day:

- ◇ Wednesday 15 May – 10 to 12 — Managing Tea Room & Function Area
- ◇ Wednesday 15 May —12.30 to 2.30 — 2019/2020 Cruise Ship Season

Well, I reckon that's enough from me this month. Cheers, Geoff geoffreywood@me.com 0427 722060

Social Meeting April 28th

Our social meeting was one week later than usual, due to Easter weekend commitments, and was instead an outing to visit Kaydale Lodge garden at Nietta. On our arrival we were greeted by Amarlie in her effervescent manner, before being fortified for the garden tour with a very tasty lunch prepared for us by Kay. Then outside to be guided around the amazing garden which they have created on the gentle undulations around their home. There are far too many highlights to write about here, so just take this as a strong recommendation to "go and see for yourself" what can be achieved with imagination, dedication, and a lot of hard work. It could well be the only place anywhere, where you can walk around accompanied, all of the way, by two rag doll cats!

Thank you to Kay, Amarlie and Lesley for their generosity and very informative tour. I believe I speak for our entire group when saying that it was a very enjoyable visit to your stunning garden (pictures below). Our next social meeting will have Australian Hearing representative Rheanna Lee as a guest speaker. Rheanna will not only tell us about the importance of good hearing but explain how she has a connection to Emu Valley. She loves our garden! *Pete.*





Around the Garden

COLOUR! COLOUR! COLOUR! How lucky are we to have such an amazing State, let alone a garden such as this right on your backdoor step bursting with amazing Autumn colours! We had a fantastic turn out for our Autumn Spectacular weekend both including the garden showing off in true form but also many visitors, some of whom had never been before, which was just fantastic to see. Plant sales area was full and included a few different garden-worthy varieties to sell just to be a little different to what we've done in the past.

We have recently had a horticulture meeting where we explored the garden together with Maurie (Garden Curator) and there were a lot of things pointed out and discussed that give us a lot to focus on over the Winter months. The need for weeding in and under plants where it is just not safe to spray is always ongoing, so if there are people out there reading this that may be able to spare a couple of hours every blue moon, then we want and need you. On our lovely wander around, I spotted a nest amongst one of the ginkgo biloba's... 'a nest with a view!' what a spot!



Signs have been placed around the garden made by one of our handy volunteers at home in his workshop. We have had a lot of comments from people visiting the garden all with a similar statement: "the garden is such a beautiful place to explore but how do we get to the Chinese Pavilion from here?" These signs have been made and positioned for more of a 'guide' rather than the use of arrows and the likes. We have discussed adding more interpretation panels throughout the garden, plus hope to add a large map somewhere near the plant sales area.

Jobs we have started or finished since last months newsletter:

- * Lake Pearl in our North American section has been completed ahead of schedule, including the re-sowing of the grassed area and is all ready for rain to refill the lake. If you get a chance, please check it out as the volunteers have done a tremendous job here!
- * Middle road/landslip area repair is underway with another team of volunteers pouring their time and skills into sorting out this area to make it safe to drive around as an access road for workers at the garden. By doing this it will also prevent the plants from slipping off the bank and keep all soil, fertiliser and mulch where it is meant to be.
- * Maurie and Trevor have started planting out for the season, most being rhododendron species. Now we just need to fertilise and mulch around these, keeping in mind a thin almost fluffy collar around the base of the plant because if it's too

thick it will cause root rot and a lot of other fungal diseases which we can kindly do without.

- * Weeding, weeding and weeding (I must sound like a broken record 😊)
- * Pruning back off tracks along with a few tree removals
- * Cleaning out the reflecting pool – sloppy job, but any takers ?

Anyway I'm heading out to start some of this pruning before the rain arrives. Happy Gardening everyone and enjoy the last month of Autumn! *Neet*

Welcome

A warm colourful autumnal welcome to new members Tanya Smith & Nigel Crack, Jan Collins & Ian Rout, Susan Hanslow, Esme Hodgson & Anthony Nelson, John & Vonda Scott, Gary & Teresa Poke, Susan McKinlay, Andrea Downing, Russell Withers & Mark Stephensen, and Andrew & Janet McKinney.



Rhododendron facetum

Kingdon-Ward found *Rhododendron facetum* in June 1914 at Fengshui-ling Camp, east Upper Burma, growing in conifer and deciduous forests and open scrub. Later he and other collectors found it in mid-west and west Yunnan. Forrest first introduced this species to western gardeners as seed in July 1917 where it flowered for the first time in late 1926.

Two distinct forms are in general cultivation; one is a medium-sized plant to 1.5m, the other a taller shrub to 3m. with larger leaves and corolla.

The tubular-campanulate flowers, which can be crimson, deep-crimson, scarlet, crimson-rose or deep-rose have 5 deep purple nectar pouches at the base. These are displayed in flat top trusses with 12-18 flowers per truss produced freely as the plant matures.

At Emu Valley we grow this species in Yunnan and also Upper Burma. *R. facetum* is a late flowering rhodo, usually mid-December. The plants in Upper Burma are quite easy to find as they are the only red flowers out at this time, but up in Yunnan they can be confused with a close relative *Rhododendron kyawii* that is also a late flowering red.
Maurie

The Emu Valley Rhododendron Garden is proudly sponsored by:



Emu Valley Rhododendron Garden Inc.
PO Box U33 Upper Burnie, Tasmania 7320