



GARDEN DESIGN STUDY GROUP

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Newsletter Theme: 'Planning for Garden Colour'

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Should flowers be considered a bonus embellishing the landscape of a garden, as they provide colour in random ways and at various times during the year?

ANPSA Garden Design Study Group Newsletter

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Receiving the Newsletter – are your contact details current?

Membership of GDSG covers a period of twelve months from July 1 to June 30

Please advise me if you wish to change your contact details, or how you wish to receive the Newsletter or to discontinue membership. Remember that membership for emailed Newsletters is **FREE!** However, **if you prefer a copy posted** there is an annual fee of \$20 to cover printing and postage.

Newsletter timing & Themes

These are the 2019/20 Newsletter dates and themes:

Issue	date	Theme
112	August	FIRE risk and Garden design!
113	November	Perfume & Aroma in the garden

Issue	date	Theme
114	February	Time as a Design Constraint
115	May	'What's up Down Under?'

Please ensure that your submissions reach the editor at least two weeks before the publication month.

The Editor Comments

Hello everyone!

Well I thought my opening editor's comments were disturbing enough in the February edition #110 but who could have imagined that the world we once knew would so rapidly collapse under the massive disruption of the Corona Virus pandemic! Everything about our lives has changed almost overnight; we wonder if our previously simple and fulfilling lifestyle will ever be the same again? Thank goodness for our gardens!!!

Visit to Melbourne and the Grampians

The APS Groups at Maroondah and the Grampians invited me to be guest speaker at their February meetings. As expected the members were very welcoming and it was wonderful to later visit a number of their gardens. In the Grampians, John King my host, organised an excellent introduction to this wonderful region and I promised to come back in a future spring to see them at their best. Nicky Zanen my host in Melbourne made sure that not a minute was wasted as we travelled over three days to nine members' gardens, and to Maranoa Gardens, Kuranga Nursery and Kawarra Gardens. I spent some private time with our grandson at Monash and together we enjoyed walking the gardens and landscapes at the university, then introduced him to Royal Botanic Gardens Cranbourne.

While the wonderful design and planting content of the various gardens visited was still fresh in my mind, I prepared a record of my impressions to share with them. This I always do for the gardens visited by our local Brisbane GDSG. Congratulations and hearty thanks to each of the gardeners! It has been a privilege to visit and to learn from your expertise. Everyone please accept my thanks for your time escorting me through your gardens which all demonstrate the immense potential our native plants have for use in amenity landscape.



Garden Design Book still undecided

Bev Fox also hosted a meeting of local GDSG members in her garden and although there was not a big roll up, we considered aspects of the role of the Study Group and some of the ways we could make it more relevant to members. The main topic of conversation followed earlier discussions about whether to use the available funds in writing and publishing a new garden design book, or alternatively preparing a series of illustrated fact sheets covering aspects of garden design. The consensus was that within the GDSG personnel resources, fact sheets may be more feasible, but it would still need a major effort to plan, coordinate writers, edit the work, prepare graphic design and make the sheets available - possibly

through the ANPSA website. So the discussions continue.

Those present agreed that they would like to recommence the regular group meetings as organised initially by Diana Snape, as each of the garden hosts for this visit said they valued the opportunity to discuss garden planning and design issues with me. Hopefully Melbourne members are successful in re-establishing their group activities as Brisbane members find their bimonthly get-togethers so useful.



Garden design to minimise fire risk is the theme for the August Newsletter; given the recent bushfire season I'm sure many members will want to share their ideas with us all.

I would strongly recommend that anywhere where there are sufficient GDSG members within close proximity to one another that organising these regular group visits to member's gardens will be very beneficial.

Later on in this edition you will be able to read my impressions of some of the gardens visited in Melbourne and the Grampians and compare these with two inner city gardens in Brisbane. Temperate v's Subtropical

Extracts from Past Newsletters (Issues 37 to 40)

The GDSG Newsletter index on the ANPSA website is a great way to search out specific ideas and recommendations offered by members in relation to garden design over the years since the first Newsletter in May 1993. There are many gems of inspiration similar to the following excerpts below that are worth repeating as they are still as relevant today as they were when first published.

Make sure you read the full article of these references as well as other articles on the GDSG Newsletter archives section of the ANPSA website. <http://anpsa.org.au/design/des-news.html>

Newsletter #37 – February, 2002

'A Small Unit Garden'

Pat & John Webb, Vic

Some of you may recall John's article in NL 35 (August 2001), about our small unit garden in Berwick. Here's an update, overview and evaluation. It is now nearly nine months since we moved into our new home; some warmer weather and some spring rrain (not enough really), and the garden is developing, albeit too slowly for me!

'Gnomes – Design Ideas!'

Nicky Rose & Diana Snape Vic

Gnomes inhabit the kind of cheerful plots that the great majority of people create around their houses, contentedly smoking their pipes or dangling their fishing rods among borders awash with bright roses, dahlias, begonias and busy lizzies. They have no place in the designer gardens

Report of NE Vic meeting at Mary Ward's

Barbara Buchanan Vic

We were able to enjoy a picnic lunch, then spent time looking around the garden. This is a very interesting synopsis of a member's discussion meeting which could be a useful as a guide for others to get the most out of sharing knowledge about garden design issues.

Newsletter #38 – May, 2002

Australia Day Speech

Dr Tim Flannery

Our history and our ecology reveal just how superficial those roots (in this continent) are, for they reveal that most of us still live as people from somewhere else, who just happen to inhabit - sometimes unsustainably, ignorantly and destructively - this marvellous continent " "For most of the past two centuries we have believed that we could remake the continent

'Messy Ecosystems, Orderly Frames'

Dr Joan Iverson Nassaeur

"We know how to see ecological quality only through our cultural lenses and, through those lenses, it may or may not look like nature. When the public is highly receptive to doing the right thing for the environment, scientific answers about what is ecologically correct should be sufficient. But in fact social conventions keep the same people who dress in green slogans dressing their homes and cities in homogenous plant communities where enormous species diversity once existed"

'Garden Design - Metropolitan Style'

Pat Webb Vic

John & I recently had the opportunity of visiting two public gardens in Queensland where good design has created ideal environments for the enjoyment of Australian plants. The first was the Kershaw Gardens in Rockhampton, the second was the Roma Street Parkland in Brisbane.

Newsletter #39 – August, 2002

'WWW - Factors in Garden Design'

Geoff Simmons Qld

Most people are aware of those three words - the 'world wide web' of this computer age - even someone who doesn't use this web, such as myself. However there are factors that I must take into account when I think about my garden and these factors can also be summarised in WWW. They are weeds, water and wallabies.

'Shirley and Graham Fisher's garden'

The use of WA coastal native plants and a garden designed with a good bone structure were the keys to the work carried out by Shirley and Graham Fisher in making a garden at their newly acquired house in the city of Bunbury on the coast of WA.

'An Integrated Garden'

Jan Simpson ACT

Jan refers to two methods of integrating exotics into an Australian native garden. The more obvious is the separation method, keeping them in separate sections of the garden - i.e. not really integrated at all. The more challenging is the blending method and Jan analyses aspects of this.

Newsletter #40 – November, 2002

'Introducing my gardener identity'

Glenys Eskdale Vic

I enjoyed reading the two latest issues of the Garden Design Group, which you sent when I joined several months ago. I thought it would be a good idea to introduce myself, so here is my gardener identity. When I filled out the form to register as a member of the Garden Design Study Group I was dismally unable to enter any qualifications into the boxes provided as I am a very new gardener.

'Sense and Sensuality'

Colleen Keena Qjd

Colleen subscribes to 'About Gardening' and the information below about a Symposium on 'Sense and Sensuality' comes from their recent Newsletter. Colleen says "I found the concepts very interesting as I started to think about lush, tasty Davidson's Plums (visual/taste), hymenosporem (perfume), the whisper of the wind in casuarinas, and the feel of Hibiscus splendens (furry leaf). Interesting possibilities?? There are secret pleasures waiting in the garden. It's a symphony of sensory stimulation!

'The late inclusion of trees in the garden design'

Chris Larkin Vic

. A few trees were planted in the first stage of the garden's development; at each subsequent stage of development a few more were added but not nearly as many as I now think are necessary. So why did I delay in planting so many of the key structural elements in the plant design of the garden?

Newsletter #10 – August, 1995

'An Australian Wildflower Garden'?

Diana Snape Vic

ED: This article by Diana caught my attention as I was searching the Newsletters on the GDSG webpage and thought it was appropriate for this issues as we delve into colour in the garden.

Garden Types: Apart from the 'bush garden', there have been to date only a few recognised types of Australian (in GDSG sense) garden. These include gardens described by the group of plants they contain, eg fern or rainforest gardens, or those belonging to a certain geographical location, such as coastal or alpine gardens. I think it would be helpful to encourage recognition of many different types of Australian garden which could be created. Raised awareness, both inside and outside SGAP, of different design possibilities will help promote a diversity of approaches which could then lead to a wider variety of well-designed and fascinating gardens.



Wildflower: I'd like to consider a style which (until I find a better name) I'll call an 'Australian wildflower garden'. It is certainly not intended to be a direct replacement for a 'cottage garden', a much over-worked and often disliked term. This term means different things to different people but usually implies 'flowers' - that is, flowers' from countries other than ours, belonging to herbaceous plants rather than 'woody' shrubs. A minority of small Australian plants have this 'un-Australian', 'cottagey' look, with soft flowers and/or foliage which suggest mild climates. For example there are many daisies, lilies and other small tufted plants, scaevolias, dampieras, goodenias, violas, *Lythrum saicaria* (Purple Loosestrife), *Plectranthus* species, *Dementia (Parahebe) arenaria*, some creepers, and lots of other plants with which I am not familiar. A small 'wildflower garden' composed entirely of such plants could be delightful and quite 'cottagey'. It would probably not be naturalistic, though a natural

combination of some of these plants might be found in a moist area of the high country, so the naturalistic category of alpine garden might be appropriate.



Heath Tapestry: Among the Australian flora is a diverse and fascinating range of small 'woody' shrubs, often with interesting and significant foliage, usually sclerophyll rather than soft. Such low shrubs may be used in a garden for their foliage alone, which can produce an attractive 'tapestry' effect. Their individual flowers may be large or small but generally become conspicuous when massed, either on one plant or groups of plants. I picture a garden consisting largely of such shrubs when I hear the term 'heath garden', though heathlands of course have other types of plant too. A heath or heathland garden would be one category of garden in a naturalistic style, which (depending on choice of plants) could also be linked to the theme of a wildflower garden.



Naturalistic: 'Wildflower' probably invokes a different image for each of us. I remember the term from when I was a child and to me it suggests small, dainty flowers. It often meant herbaceous daisies or lilies, found among grasses; it generally didn't mean large, showy flowers (like some Western Australian beauties). Again a naturalistic category here would be a grassland garden, with grasses, lilies, daisies and other small herbaceous plants. Recently when I visited Canberra I saw some delightful gardens in this style, designed by Leon Horsnell, and this type of garden is also described in Phil Watson's article (page 8 in this volume). These grassland gardens could be called wildflower gardens too.



Inspiration: So the Australian wildflower garden I picture now could be a naturalistic one, but is equally (or more) likely not to be. Natural inspiration could come from coastal heathlands, alpine meadows, grasslands, or wonderful Western Australian sand gardens. It could have a marvellous combination of any number of these types of small plant - herbaceous, 'woody' shrubs (including prostrate or low forms of larger ones), tufted plants, groundcovers, creepers; there could be annuals or perennials, small flowers or large. The plants would generally be a metre or less in height and rarely much more, growing quite close together. (They could be lower again, mostly 0.5 metre or less in height.) I think height is a key factor in my mental image, but "taw garden" or "knee-high garden" don't really have much appeal as names.



Colour, Texture, Aroma: An individual garden would have its own proportions of variety and repetition, its own mix of colours, foliage and perfume. The colour scheme of flowers could be carefully planned for each season of the year, or quite serendipitous. Some plants might be long flowering, others inconspicuous for much of the year until they burst into bloom. The garden can be mulched and look after itself quite well in terms of watering and weeding, or receive attention as frequently as the gardener wants to give it. If plants self-seed (more likely in sand or gravel) the design is likely to become more random as time passes, in a small block, the wildflower (low) garden could occupy most of the space.



Definition: Its area could be clearly defined by formal (or informal) hedges, pathways or walls. It could equally well blend in with the larger garden by a gradation of sizes in plantings around its edges. Fence screens, clumps or borders of larger shrubs and trees are important to attract a variety of birds and insects, as well as for structure in the garden. A pond could be included, or sculpture. Each wildflower garden could have its own emphasis and unique Australian character.

Newsletter #111 theme: 'Planning for Garden Colour'

Colour as a Design Tool

In thinking back through some of my more significant garden designs over the years, it became apparent that using flower colour as a design tool did not seem to be a major factor in my planning process. Maybe this applies to us all? Perhaps we subconsciously apply the 'colour rules' that we know from past experience, work well to provide attractive, distinctive and memorable garden landscapes? Although it seems to me that gardens of native plants inherently seem to exhibit a strong sense of the complimentary colours that reflect the Australian environment in which they are created. Our vast continent has so many differing bioregions each with its own colour palette, so much so that there can never be just one characteristic or 'typical Australian garden'. One thing is certain wherever you go in the world the colours of Australian plants you find, stand out uniquely among all other species. That is the magic of our flora!

Not surprisingly, today in this contemporary urban world, garden design is changing in response to so many factors and native plants are being used in ways that are new and unique. Many of these recent initiatives, and perhaps some of the old, are using colour in more abstract, structured and innovative ways. While we may not rely on the 'laws of colour' to any extent when we design a garden, perhaps it is relevant to review some of the theory and see if it could offer ideas and suggest ways to maximise displaying the beauty of our flora in the garden.



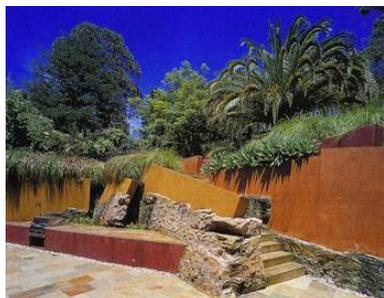
Colour Sources and Effects

It is generally acknowledged that flowers should be considered a bonus in the landscape of a garden, as they provide colour in random ways and at various times during the year; they enhance, compliment and contrast with the varied hues and textures provided by the dominantly green foliage, so visually pervading at all garden levels from tree tops to ground covers.

Of course it is not only the flowers that give this apparently random colour impact, new foliage can be equally vibrant, fruits can punctuate the foliage with interesting shapes of intense colour, peeling bark and interesting textures add more visual variety at understory levels.



The colours of flowers may not be the primary plant characteristic considered when planning, designing and then selecting species for a garden! Far more important are the design parameters that dictate plant selection – the physical attributes and requirements of size, habit, form, soil preference, microclimate, aesthetic qualities and importantly the specific functional purposes.



In addition, and most importantly any integrated built structures such as walls, gates, fences, pergola, paved areas, bridges and the like, can be innovatively used to augment the plant palette by adding colour, texture, movement and visual interest. Artworks particularly, with all their varied forms and materials can create that extra, unique, and even your personal dimension to any garden.

Natural Highlights

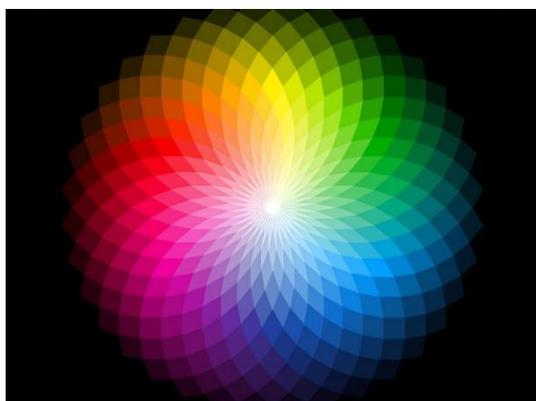
All of the elements of a garden landscape are enhanced and highlighted by natural processes: by sunshine, which plays like so many spotlights, through the foliage to give luminescence and colour contrast that bring the shadows to life; don't overlook water, which paints new pictures in the forms of mist, fog, showers, rain, puddles, ponds, lakes and reflections, each providing different visual and colour experiences; air movement also gets into the act, when gentle breezes wave and excite the foliage and flowers, and even winds contribute a random but dramatic

moving spectacle of interacting plant forms that offer colour and visual interest in the garden; of course it is the overriding impact of seasonal change, revolving annually in the garden and each quarter 'painting' new pictures in a palette of appropriate colours that respond to the current climatic conditions.

The Colour Spectrum

Obviously when planning a garden, we should not overlook the importance of colour in all its forms - it must rank with all of the other design and plant selection parameters considered as the garden design evolves. It is likely that most people are aware of the importance of colour matching in clothing or house colours, and of the difference it can make to give an aesthetically pleasing result. Colour in the garden is no different, and basically the same mixing rules could be followed, although their application in a garden is probably far more forgiving than it is for fashion.

The colour wheel was invented in 1666 by Isaac Newton as a practical combination of art and science used to define how colours work together; a basic knowledge can be helpful in planning suitable colour combinations for the garden



The colour spectrum transitions around like a colour wheel, moving from the deep rich tones of violet and magenta, through the warm hues of red and orange, becoming cooler in yellow and cream, progressing to lemon and green, before the cold tones of blue and indigo merge into purple. White stands alone at the centre of the wheel variously tinted in rotation within its brilliance, by all the other colours. In the same way individual colours are progressively toned down toward black.

In a garden each of the hue groups of the colour spectrum exhibit differing physical, visual and emotional attributes, not only in plant material, but also in the constructed elements that collectively comprise a landscape. Confining flower colour selection to one segment of the colour spectrum will provide a simple restful and aesthetically pleasing garden. Whereas combining colours from several spectrum segments can produce a vital, dynamic and equally pleasing garden that may be more exciting.

These are some general colour observations:

- Green: Many shades of green provide the foliage background colour for every garden
- Yellow & Orange: Vivid luminescent colours that demand visual attention among all other colours
- Red & Mauve: Colours provide visual warmth to a garden in contrast with green foliage
- Blue & Violet: Intense rich dark colours merge into green foliage but contrast against grey foliage
- White & Pastel: Light glowing colours reflect the sun and contrast strongly against darker green foliage
- Multi-colour: Mix and match many colours as nature does for a diverse and joyful native garden

The colour wheel can assist in selecting a combination of colours to achieve a specific effect to enhance the garden landscape.

Complementary: Two primary colours on opposite sides of the colour wheel - provide high contrast and high impact colour combination, viewed close together one colour will appear brighter and more prominent. For example, red and green; orange and blue; yellow and purple.

Adjacent: Three primary colours side by side on the colour wheel - a good way to create garden colour harmony, which although simple can be uninteresting, unless one colour dominates and the others are tones used as accents. For example - mix together tones of green, yellow and red with one used as a dominant primary colour.

Triad: Three primary colours equally spaced around the colour wheel - provide a contrasting colour scheme, that may be difficult to satisfy, but that can make an impact in terms of distinctive colour and visual interest. For example - orange, blue, and mauve.

Monochrome: Several shades, tones and tints of one base colour - provide a subtle and conservative colour combination that is versatile, easy to apply and offers visual harmony. Such a garden will have visual impact, by providing aesthetic variety using plants with flowers of the same colour and tones, but with differing foliage shape and texture. For example - various shades of red, pink and mauve.



Bright colours: like warm tones of red, orange and yellow contrast with a darker foliage background, bring vibrancy and attracting attention to areas you would like to highlight and make them seem closer.

Contemporary gardens today tend to introduce bright dramatic colours, not necessarily only through the plant specimens, but by applied finishes to structures, walls and artefacts. Never be afraid of bright colours, a wider range than you might think will work together.



Dark colours: like purple, indigo and blue tend to make areas look larger than they are, and importantly appear cool in even the worst heat; they also create a visually low-key, passive and soothing atmosphere.

Luminescence: The various tints of white, function as a neutral colour in the garden, but also serve another important purpose. White glows intensely against the background of dark green foliage whenever a garden is viewed. Including white flowers and silver grey foliage in the plant palette is distinctive and attractive after dark. A bonus is that wildlife of many types is also attracted into the garden by this nightly show of luminescence to further enhance the visual experience.



Multicolour: It can be difficult to know which primary colours successfully mix together, the colour wheel helps to see the basic relationships between the intended colours. Generally combinations of colours closely adjacent to each other tend to blend together well. But look to nature for inspiration where a whole palette of colours mixed together provide nothing less than spectacle!

CONCLUSION

Gardens are really all about colour. That colour can come from flowers, foliage, bark, pottery, furniture, structures and artwork, but in the end it is all about hues, tones, contrasts, harmonies, discords and light. We create our gardens to enhance our lives and to provide a setting for our homes that we proudly share with others. Colour selection can be soothing or exciting, it can be a riot or a sanctuary, it can be front and centre or something much more subtle, but whatever our vision, colour is an important design component.

Almost any colour scheme can work, it's your garden - so if you're happy, who cares what anyone else thinks? However, understanding the basic principles of using colour in design may assist to make that picture in your head an even more wonderful chromatic reality.

ED: Could I encourage members to share some insights into the colours of native gardens you know. We commonly enthuse about native gardens that we visit - the new design ideas, the colour combinations, the special plant selections and much more – there is always room in every Newsletter to include your observations.

Gardens in the Grampians and Melbourne

Lawrie Smith, Brisbane

**John & Jocelyn King, Pomonal**

The inspiration of the natural environment should always be considered as a major influence in the design of a garden. It would be difficult to find a location to rival the proposed new home site on their extensive property adjoining the Grampians National Park. This site offers unique 360 degree views, including: the influence of the ever-changing patterns of light on the mountain escarpment a dramatic backdrop; the patterned carpet of sweeping ochre grassland (in summer), dissected by the flowing shapes of the mattress of dark green bracken define the immediate surrounds; expansive views beyond to the northern horizon are framed by distant groves of sculptural trees.

**Neil & Wendy Marriott – Black Range**

High on the ridge line of Black Range peppered with sculptural granite boulders Neil's garden has taken advantage of the microclimates provided by the varied topography, to research and display flora selected from so many Australian bioregions, each specimen thriving in a location that suits its natural requirements. Although ravaged by bushfire some years ago this devastating impact has not diminished the splendour or diversity of this amazing garden. For me the outstanding memory is the use of Eucalyptus macrocarpa upright form, carefully placed as a focus to attract attention to specific areas and encourage 'walkabout' exploration throughout the garden.

**Nicky Zanen, Boronia**

What a credit this townhouse garden is to Nicky, so capably demonstrating her love of plants and wildlife. It is a triumph of how to create a small residential garden in a gated community where wildlife abounds in the trees, shrubs, covers and tufts now so well established. Nicky has created an Australian garden oasis in suburbia on three sides of her home where the few days I enjoyed here were filled with observing and feeding the cockatoos, parrots, magpies, butcher birds, doves, and many others enjoying the small but inviting garden. Thankyou Nicky for your hospitality and for days of driving to all of the gardens – you are the consummate host!

**Helen & Max Kennedy, Wheelers Hill**

When we arrived in this garden it was late morning and raining gently. The sombre greys and greens provided a soft and gentle aesthetic that suited the overall garden character and the integrated architecture of the home. I am sure judging by the interesting plant collection throughout, that on a sunny day in spring the garden would be alive with colour, texture and wildlife. The visitor is enticed to 'walkabout' this attractive garden to discover area by area the excellent combinations of plants and landscape materials that visually and physically integrate the overall garden design so successfully.



Chris Larkin, Lysterfield

Integrating house and garden into a steep slope successfully takes much thought and knowledge to understand the physical and functional site attributes that guide the designer in the planning and design process. Chris has incorporated many special elements into her garden that collectively create a very diverse and interesting garden that attracts the observer to explore widely. Varied views and vistas have been integral to the success of the planning, some close, some distant, but all add that extra dimension to the experience of the garden. Chris explained that she has added an extra 'V' word to her design vocabulary that is 'void'. I agree with her observation that you cannot have a view or a vista

without looking through a void or open space – a simple premise, but easily overlooked, particularly as plants grow and obscure view lines. This garden leads you through many differing but carefully integrated environments, some unexpected but always with a sense of drama.



Pam Yarra, Heathmont

This garden is an excellent bushland landscape created principally as habitat for many species of birds and wildlife generally. The garden is basically self-maintaining - the larger trees and shrubs provide a rich protective canopy for the understory shrubs which in turn offer a dense mesh of suitable nesting spaces well used by the wildlife. As the garden is traversed random glimpses between trunks, branches and foliage attract the eye to many interesting plant species as the garden is searched for evidence of wildlife enjoying this lush habitat.



Bev Fox, The Basin

This is a small residential garden but it feels so expansive right from the first impression as you traverse the skilfully formed and planted gravel pathway extending from the planted verge to the front door. An amazing collection of smaller growing natives greet the visitor and slows the traverse to the house. The back garden similarly entices exploration from the veranda along several interconnected pathways which meander through the collection, carefully planned to reveal and even conceal plants which adds surprise and discovery to your walk.



Bev & John Hanson, Warrandyte

This is a garden that shows the touch of a master, derived from Bev's experience in landscape design inspired by Ellis Stones, Gordon Ford and Edna Walling. Gold was mined under the property in the 1800's, some heritage elements still remain as a bushfire shelter. The dry ridge site has been transformed by imported sensitively placed undulating soil and rock placement looking as though it has been there a million years. Carefully selected plants are massed together in interesting combinations all integrated within the skilfully constructed landscape.



Bill Aitchison & Sue Guymer, Templestowe

Imagine a steep clayey hillside ramping directly down from a dry ridge to a creek with scattered tree cover. The challenge is to reform the slope by innovative and functional landform to provide a sweeping driveway down to a central platform for the house, and a lower terrace containing a series of pools and waterways (big enough for a summer dip) to harvest the surface water and ensure sustainability. This habitat garden has a wealth of bioregional species and some special favourites which collectively provide a restful and natural setting for both people and wildlife.



Marilyn Bull, Montrose

Winding through and separating the many beds of varied trees and shrubs in this garden is an extensive meadow of native grasses without a sign of a weed where Marilyn spends countless hours removing invasive weed species. The meadow effectively provides a pleasant irregularly meandering surface to 'walkabout' the garden inviting inspection of the range of species grouped to each side. Importantly the gardens along the side boundary are planned to be viewed from the footpath in the adjacent reserve to introduce local native plants to those who pass by. All this has been accomplished so successfully despite Marilyn being the curator of the Kawarra Botanic Gardens for many years.



Maureen Schaumann, Mulgrave

This garden not only shows that small is beautiful but that to achieve this quality the gardener needs: dedication and love of Australian plants; meticulous pruning skills to manage height and spread; careful association of colours and textures; detail attention to water flows and harvesting in soaks; and offering a sense of place to the locality. Obviously a labour of love and intense understanding of native plants, particularly the small ones which collectively create the carpet of colour and texture under and around the few distinctive specimen trees. The inviting view from the street must interest and entice those who walk past to appreciate the unique character and the value of Australia's flora.

Gardens in inner Brisbane

Lawrie Smith, Brisbane

Paul Taylor's Garden – New Farm

Paul is fortunate to live in one of the many renovated heritage Queenslanders that give this suburb its true local character and appeal. The streets are lined by huge trees of both native and exotic origin that ensure the suburb is well shaded. Tall residential tower blocks line the Brisbane River just one block away and overlook many of the homes. On this small block about 400 sq metres Paul has established a rainforest of purposely selected species to provide privacy as well as a cool shaded environment.

When he moved in twelve years ago the site was neglected, a decaying concrete swimming pool took up the whole backyard and there was no vegetation worth saving elsewhere in the surrounds. First the pool was removed and then backfilled with clay soil. Below it for many metres was the rich dark brown alluvial soil built up by the Brisbane River floods over millennia – ideal soil to support his vision of a rainforest. With his botanic bible 'Mangroves to Mountains' Paul carefully selected tall, medium and low rainforest species to plant along the rear



The back garden rainforest screen



The side garden rainforest screen

boundary graduating down in height toward the house. He planned a tall perimeter screen to block the views of the nearby apartment tower occupants; medium species to provide a screen between the trunks of the background specimens; and smaller specimens to mass plant in front and under to provide colour and texture in flowers and fruits. The result is a small cross section of a subtropical rainforest which answers Paul's requirements perfectly.

We spent quite a while identifying the specimens, finding many well-known species and many others, that due to their attractive foliage we simply had to identify

from Mangroves to Mountains. Along the narrow space between the two adjoining cottages was a very successful fence line of upright growing rainforest specimens of various species that shaded and screened the 'corridor' with interesting foliage, flowers and fruits to observe from the veranda.



The front garden rainforest screen

Similarly the front fence was lined with a continuation of the narrow screen hedge but here species are used in a more open arrangement to allow visual interaction across the narrow front garden with local people passing by along the footpath. It was very difficult to imagine you were in the middle of a high density housing area and not within a subtropical rainforest.

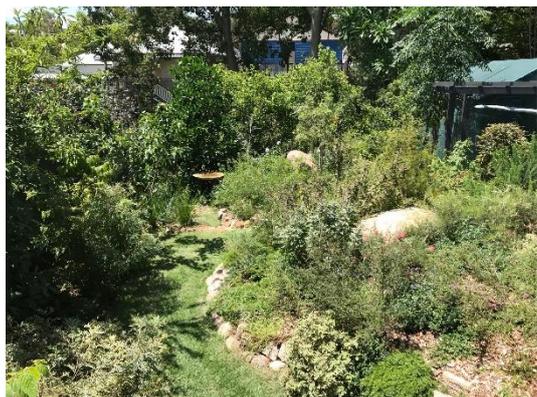
We all agreed that Paul was a master of rainforest species selection! So did a friend around the corner who some years later asked Paul to repeat his success around his home unit complex. Again we found that this was another triumph of native plants use in the inner city. Lawrie actually forgot to formally thank Paul at the end of the day for hosting us and to compliment him on his

unique and very successful garden – so this must do as our formal thanks! Well done Paul.

Trevor & Janet Bacon's Garden – Paddington

Trevor and Janet first invited GDSG to come to their new house for us to help him with the garden design. That was two years ago and now the garden is well established! It has a number of interesting attributes that shows that Trevor did not really need our help. The site is 400 square metres in area and the house occupies probably more than half of the area. The side boundary distance is about one metre which makes access for anything other than a human impossible. Not even a wheelbarrow can be taken to the rear garden. Consequently, the first major garden feature we observed caused us to wonder how were the several very large sculptural granite boulders placed so carefully into the back garden. Were they craned over the house?

In fact Trevor and Janet had carefully selected these rocks from the nearby Settlement Road Quarry well before building construction commenced. The site earthworks necessary for the house was extended to include the landform of the back garden and the original gentle slope was transformed into the interesting garden contours, then the boulders were carefully placed into their predetermined location in the garden. The landform was trimmed and moulded complete with a curving access pathway around and between the rocks to form the basis of the garden circulation.



The back garden from the Verandah



Meandering in the garden and shade house

As we entered the house from the street we were not aware of the most interesting landscape component - a planted roof garden. This interesting innovation forms part of the garage roof providing a raised garden at upper floor level so the plants function as a foreground in the view from the veranda to the mountains beyond. The interesting selection of plants were thriving well and will frame the view and modify the exposure to the western sun in due course.

This contemporary house is simply designed with walls of glass and sliding glazed doors to provide views from the house, across the deck into the rear garden, strongly inviting visitors to 'come inside the outside'. The garden has a number of mature trees on adjoining properties, Moreton Bay Fig, Eucalyptus torrelliana and others, which provide an ideal backdrop to the garden – a true borrowed landscape! Trevor has chosen an interesting palette of species for this garden to provide screening to side and rear boundaries, to give focus and surprise by special flowering species such as a flowering gum and two standard Grevilleas. Medium species and small shrubs and covers complete the picture by providing a rich tapestry of textures and colours offered by the mixed foliage, flowers and fruits. The focal point sculptural granite boulders stand out dramatically within this colourful living carpet which swirls around the contours and slopes down to the meandering lawn pathway. Formative pruning will ensure that the planned visual relationship between plants and rocks is maintained and enhanced.

What's Up Down Under?

Lawrie Smith, Brisbane

This anecdote does not apply directly to garden design but it really can have a major influence when all your hours and hours of garden design and development seems to come to a sudden halt!! While preparing a PowerPoint presentation for an upcoming lecture on soils and fertilizer etc, I was prodded to apply some of the suggestions about achieving and keeping soils healthy to our own garden. Little did I imagine the problems I would find which culminated in spending all day in the garden dousing all of the beds with Iron Sulphate!!! Why? I hear you ask – well as you may have heard me say before, the soil at our new North Lakes home is 'good enough to eat' Well that is true, but only if you are an olive tree, grape vine or an oleander!!!

It seems that the previous owner had regularly flooded the property (gardens and lawns) with lime and other chemicals which caused the soils to be alkaline. I know that because he left a 'warehouse size' collection of part used garden chemicals in the garden shed – that should have made me suspicious at the time! That is why after almost three years living here, all of the new plants I have been planting, recently started to look an unhealthy yellow green and with some strange leaf forms etc. I suspected that they may have exhausted the nutrients sourced from the soil mix and the fertilizer I added at planting, and that their roots had now grown out in the 'natural garden soil'. So I did a detail analysis of the whole site taking almost twenty pH samples everywhere and found that my soils were all quite alkaline, most with a pH of 7.5 - 8.0 (caused no doubt by the inappropriate chemical additives). Not surprisingly the pH of the soils over the fence, in the adjacent parkland was just on the acid side of neutral 5.5 – 6.5 ideal for natives and why the various *grevillea*, *syzygium*, *melaleuca* etc established there are all very healthy and thriving!!!

Fortunately I have a very friendly soils agronomist who recommended from my pH results, that the remedy is to spread Iron Sulphate at the rate of 100 grams / square metre immediately (this was March), and then in October

apply sulphur at the rate of 50 grams / sq m. By then I should have good pH values throughout the garden and also good healthy growth. Once the pH is lowered the natural soil nutrients will become available to the plants. It is important to keep checking the pH periodically to ensure that the level drops to and stays about the 5.5 – 6.5 range. It is unlikely that the Iron Sulphate will need to be applied again unless the already absorbed lime and chemicals remain persistent.

SOLUTION: Target optimum pH for soils for native gardens is 6 – 6.5

Iron Sulphate is a soluble powder, and will reduce pH and provide nitrogen as well as iron to help green the foliage. Dissolve 100 grams in a watering can and apply progressively over each square metre.

IMMEDIATELY: March apply Iron Sulphate 100 grams / sq m – there are several forms, cheapest is heptahydrate; will take a couple of months to see improvement but if necessary use iron chelate to green things up quickly.

ANNUALLY: October / November apply sulphur @ 50 grams / sq m – check the pH before applying it may not be needed. There is a pelleted form of sulphur available, easier to use but slower reaction; also a soluble or wettable form.

AVAILABILITY: Iron Sulphate is available from hardware stores in small packs 1.5kg @ \$15. We have 200 sq metres of garden plus a similar area of lawn so bulk bags would be more economic as about 40 kg is needed for each application. Agricultural Suppliers offer 25 kg bags @ \$18.

It is now almost six weeks after the application of the Iron Sulphate and there is noticeable positive change in most garden areas, particularly the species that were struggling. Most improvement is exhibited by a grove of Proteaceae - *Banksia integrifolia*, *B. serrata*, *B. robur*, *B. oblongifolia* and a *Grevillea superba*. Their new growth is robust and a very healthy green. In an adjoining area *Hymenosporum flavum* and *Hernandia bivalvis* have also developed excellent new growth. However a grove of *Leptospermum luehmannii* (also received Iron Sulphate) are healthy enough but foliage colour is silvery instead of deep green and the leaf size is becoming smaller than it should be – so I'm now on the track of this problem.

Pine Rivers SGAP - Safari Tours 1982 - 1992

ED: I know the following texts are not strictly concerning 'garden design' but these Safari's gave participants a great opportunity to observe so many differing ecosystems and plant communities that changed our attitude forever as we observed to how we should 'design with nature' in using Australia's flora in our own gardens, established in appropriately created, characteristic landscape settings.

Almost 40 years ago the SGAP Pine Rivers Branch set out to organise one coach tour from Brisbane to the Kimberley's which was so successful that we had to run six more in following years. We had planned to host a special meeting in May to remember these Safari tours through an extravaganza of memories and images of the many remote and botanically significant regions visited across Australia in the ten years from 1982 to 1992. However as that meeting had to be cancelled due to the pandemic, we thought that it would be appropriate to share some of the memories that were first published in the Pine River's Newsletter at the time.

It could never have happened without the knowledge and dedication of our three 'in house' travel managers Verna Cornford, Eileen Prescott and Chris MacDonald, who spent countless hours working out each detail itinerary, making sure that the most interesting plant communities, geological formations and cultural places were included for each Safari. They were called Safari's because that's what they were - wonderful weeks away with old and new friends, all 'mucking' in with bush camping, erecting tents, cooking, collecting and recording specimens, spinning yarns around the campfire, and with everyone having a darn good Aussie time! Memories that those who travelled on Safari will never forget!

Planning the Safari's

Verna Cornford, Bracken Ridge Q

Back in the 1980's after a successful safari trip to Longreach to attend the second Qld Regional Conference to be held outside of Brisbane I, along with two other Pine Rivers SGAP members namely Eileen Prescott and Chris MacDonald decided we would organise a safari trip!! Where would we like to go?? We decided on the Kimberley

Region of WA. We then proceeded to work out mileages and possible camp sites (town or bush). We researched points of interest with the possibility of chartered flights and cruises etc. Eventually we approached Coach Tour Companies for quotes. Daddow Charter Company of Ipswich we chose to take us to this remote part of Australia.



The response from members was overwhelming resulting in a waiting list. We kept in close contact with our intending passengers. We sent out the itinerary, list of overnight stops, suggested clothing list, acceptable size of duffel bags etc. Payment also had to be collected. Eventually in 1982 a bus load of very excited members left on their trip to the Kimberley. To keep our costs down our travellers had duties to perform eg erect and dismantle their own tents, kitchen duties for all, cleaning the bus for women and bus packing and unloading for men which were all carried out happily. This entailed rosters to be prepared by us (a daunting task!!).

We had our plant experts on board who, on the most part, identified specimens brought on board for us all to study. As we entered western Qld and beyond we began to see plants in their natural habitat we had never seen growing before. We collected a huge number of specimens and without the GPS's of today we recorded mileages from towns etc to register positions found. This alone became a mammoth task for those concerned as the newspaper had to be changed each night (we worked well past bedtime). On return unidentified specimens were sent to the Qld Herbarium of which a large number were kept by them to add to their collection.



Knowledgeable people gave us commentaries on all aspects (geographical, historical and farming to mention some). Gazing on the beautiful scenery as we travelled and to be amongst our diverse flora was amazing. Our gatherings around the campfires were all highlights. A wonderful time was had by all on board the bus (we were corrected many times, coach!!)

On return and being on a high and as we had a waiting list Eileen, Chris and I decided to organise the second trip to the Kimberley Region in 1983. From there followed, at two yearly intervals, five more Safari Trips - making seven in total.

1982 - Kimberley and Broome.

1983 - Kimberley and Broome.

1984 - Darwin/Uluru.

1986 - Perth/ Kalbarri.

1988 - Tasmania.

1990 - The Gunbarrel Highway. On this trip we also travelled the Plenty H'way and the Tanami Track. We were privileged to have Len Beadell join us for a few days. What a wonderful Australian!! As you can imagine he kept us well entertained telling us about all his exploits.

1992 - The Gibb River Road 'Frontier Country'.

All were hugely successful. They gave our members a chance to travel to places they possibly would never have been able to get to. I have been told many times by members how grateful they were to be given the opportunity to travel to the areas we visited. The fact that we organised all details and travellers carried out all allotted duties given to them made these trips affordable. I would like to thank everyone for their contributions, big and small like our poets who wrote about ALL!! Our kazoo band who kept us entertained around the campfires. They were all highlights. We were a talented lot with many individual attributes.

To all of our travellers who are still with us (sadly, many are not) I send you my love. If you are like me, you live with wonderful memories of our time spent together as we travelled the length and breadth of our magnificent country in search of our unique flora.

Kimberley Safari 1982

Joyce Hill, Rockhampton

Thorough and painstaking planning by the Excursions Committee and Daddow's Bus Company ensured a successful and enjoyable tour to the Kimberley Region for 38 passengers, 2 drivers and a cook who left Brisbane on June 19 and returned on July 11.



Accommodation was in two man tents with each person supplying their own eating utensils air bed and bedding. (Also manpower to blow up the air beds.) Three meals were provided daily and three people assisted with cook house duties at each meal. Thus each passenger was rostered for help for only two days of the entire trip.

Each day the "spotters" occupied the front seat of the bus and spotted so efficiently that 422 plant specimens were taken on board listed and passed around for all to see. Graham Nosworthy then sat on them all to flatten them so that they could be brought

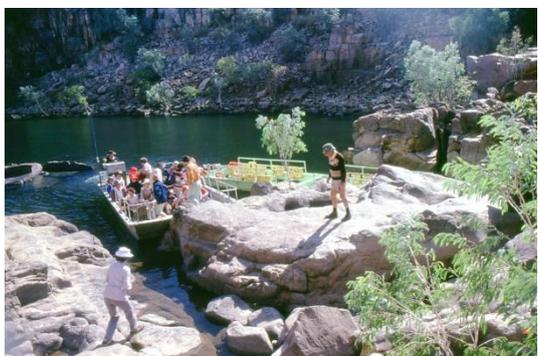
back for positive identification and a full list will be available later.

Flora highlights were the colourful mauve *Calytrix exstipulata* which was seen almost everywhere throughout N.T. and W.A., (An occasional bush of *Calytrix arborescens* was also seen), large areas of red *Grevillea wickhamii*, recurring expanses of numerous *Acacia* species, large stands of the *Grevillea pteridifolia*, *G. agrifolia*, and *G. juncifolia* and masses of woolly heads of many species of *Ptilotus*.



Windjana Gorge – fossicking for semi-precious gems

What S.G.A.P. member would fail to appreciate the delight experienced when the tents were pitched at Katherine Gorge amongst orange flowering *Eucalyptus phoenicea* to which many nectar feeding birds such as honey eaters and red collared lorikeets were attracted, or to waken at Windjana Gorge to find that the tents, which had been erected in the dark, were only a few metres from *Eucalyptus perfoliatus*, or at Wyndham, to camp at the base of what surely must have been the largest *Adansonia gregorii* (Boab to the locals) in the Kimberleys. Despite all this the overall impression of the Kimberleys was one of rugged grandeur, red soil and rock and spinifex.



Exploring the upper reaches of Katherine Gorge

An interesting list of bird sightings was compiled. It showed that 32 seen at Windjana Gorge was the highest number of species identified at one place. On several occasions the great bower bird and his bower were seen. At Argyle Homestead we were able to sit close by and watch the bower being built.

Fresh water Johnstone River Crocodiles were seen sunbathing on the banks at Lake Argyle, Katherine, Windjana and Geike Gorges. Some of the passengers decided to join the Crocs on many occasions led by guess who!!!! Generally wildlife was scarce, except in Queensland where numbers of kangaroos, brolgas, emus and bustards were often seen. A wide range of weather

temperatures was experienced from below zero at Charleville (but artesian water kept the toilet seats warm!!!) to 32 degrees or more at Broome, Derby and Halls Creek. No rain fell and it was only at Halls Creek that a few clouds were sighted.

Time was available for sightseeing and we were able to enjoy cruises on Katherine Gorge, Geike Gorge and Lake Argyle, to climb inside the prison Boab Tree at Derby, visit the China Wall at Halls Creek, walk through Tunnel Creek, a large cave eroded through a prehistoric coral barrier reef, watch colourful sunsets at Derby and Broome and experience a Corroboree at Katherine to name a few. Some of the party became avid rock collectors, and you could see this by looking at the bus springs, and no doubt topaz - jewellery will soon be in vogue.



To those trying to decide if they will go on next year's tour I say, "Yes go. You'll thoroughly enjoy it."

Although there were long hours of travel they weren't boring. Plant specimen stops (with the good natured cooperation of drivers John and Kevin and cook Ann who was honorary spotter, who else could find a white *Grevillea dryandri*), and singalongs took care of that. Never again will I hear Slim Dusty sing "I want to have a beer with Duncan" without being reminded of Pine Rivers S.G.A.P's. wonderful Kimberley Safari 1982.

Kimberley Safari 1982 - Useless Statistics

Compiled by Tour Leader Lawrie Smith

The following useless statistics were compiled as a guide to future Safari passengers!!!!

- Approximate distance 10,500 km
- Number of day's travel 23
- Number of plant stops 83
- Number of specimens 422

This means that an average of 5.1 specimens were collected at every stop and that we stopped on average 3.6 times every day. On this basis the distance between each plant stop was 126.5 km. No allowance has been made for "comfort" stops which would markedly inflate the above figures.

One of the duties of the rear seat passengers is to check the chuck wagon after every bump to ensure that it has not sheared off. It was calculated therefore that Cherrell Jerks looked out the rear window a total of 5,726 times. During the trip, we inflated a total of 902 airbeds using a volume of 150 cubic metres of air. In order to erect the tents each night we bashed in a total of 5 280 tent pegs of which we bent 4,000 and two thirds of these were bent at Halls Creek.

Allowing for an average of five operations of the zip per person per night a conservative number of 'the tent' zips were zipped a total of 4,510 and that is to say nothing of the sleeping bag zips. It was quite a unique orchestra of sound if you happened to have insomnia!!!

Due to the fact that the coach air vents tended to leak jets of cold air when the bumps dislodged the control mechanism, we estimate that the bus cleaners will find five boxes of multicolour Kleenex tissues stuffed up the air vents.

Finally it is conservatively estimated that enough seed was collected to entirely revegetate the Pine Rivers Valley and that if this does not happen, it won't be for want of trying.



Royal Botanic Gardens, Cranbourne



Cranbourne is justifiably considered to rank among the top echelon of world Botanic Gardens, principally through the innovative and distinctive 'hard' landscape elements that interpret in a contemporary fashion, the natural physical environments of the related plant specimens and collections of the Australian flora in the display gardens.

There are so many dramatic 'rooms' in this garden each strongly suggest the landscape of the various regions of the continent. The 'Red Sand Garden' (desert!) is the central focus, glimpsed as you first approach the visitor centre then exposed in all of its drama as you walk down the steps to the edge.

The rusting steel forms of the sculptural 'Escarpment Wall' certainly visually suggests the Great Dividing Range and this is reinforced by the 'Rockpool Waterway' simulation of an Australian river that emerges from a mountain spring, bubbling over geometric rocks, changing its character progressively as it flows down into the expansive 'River Bend' or coastal estuary. There are so many iconic Australian environments depicted in juxtaposition of landscape and plants bringing to the observer a detail awareness of the diversity and usefulness of the Australian flora in garden culture.

Monash University, Clayton



This campus is inspiring in its use of Australian species to create a dramatic landscape unifying and linking the spaces between the contemporary architectural forms. It illustrates how the subtle greens of Eucalyptus, or the varied textures of Melaleuca, or the carpets of small shrubs and covers can provide a very strong urban landscape that could be nowhere else.

Obviously the students utilise the shaded and sunny spaces to great advantage as they provide beneficial alternative environments to lecture theatres and laboratories, and for some probably the first experience of the great Australian outdoors!

Kuranga Nursery, Mt Evelyn



Having visited Kuranga it is now not surprising to see why APS member's gardens in Melbourne are so rich in diverse native plants, particularly the wide range of smaller shrubs and covers. The nursery layout, the coordinated displays and detail signed species information, ensures that customers can make informed selections. The bushland setting is appropriate and attractive; the walkway meandering through the display gardens of mature plants around the perimeter of the nursery appropriately compliments the plants on the display benches and in the containers.

No one could possibly leave Kuranga without a cup of coffee and a number of plant purchases to take home, unfortunately I had

no option but to contain myself!

Maranoa Gardens, Balwyn



As for many of the gardens seen this week in Melbourne I was interested to note how many well-known specimens from the more tropical regions were well established in this temperate climate. Often it was the same plants but more frequently it was the same genus but another species. Many parts of this site have the strong character of a south east Queensland garden or landscape where tall canopy species provide protection for more delicate understory plants. It is certainly a contrast to many other gardens and parks observed here. *Brachychiton acerifolius*, *Lophostemon confertus*, *Rhododendron lochiaie*, *Eupomatia laurina* and *Doryanthes palmeri* were a few of the more familiar species observed here among the myriad of temperate flora.

Karwarra Australian Plant Garden, Kalorama



This small but impressive botanic garden and nursery sets the standard to follow in other regions. The plant collection is displayed and identified in appropriate relationships along a network of meandering gravel pathways enabling ease of selection.

Gardens located variously in full sun or full shade surround the visitor centre offering micro environments ideally suited to every plant in the collection. Tall feature tree or shrub specimens seemingly irregularly located, provide dramatic focal points to define specific areas and attract the observer to progressively explore the diversity of the garden.

Comment

Visiting these five gardens completes my week long expedition to Victoria hosted by APS Maroondah and APS Grampians. To see all of these private and public gardens in such a short space of time really highlights for me the unique qualities of Australia's temperate flora and their suitability in creating such appropriate and characteristic landscapes which have such a strong 'sense of place'. When visiting the southern regions of the continent, as I've mentioned before in our Newsletter, I never cease to be amazed at the diversity of available small plants and the apparent ease with which they establish and mature in residential gardens, creating attractive landscapes that are so in scale with and suitable for their intended physical and aesthetic functions.

Each climatic region of the continent obviously has its own palette of plants, specific environmental conditions and a resultant individual garden character that is dictated by these physical influences. This is what gives us as members of APS & GDSG, such a wealth of interest and knowledge about Australian Garden Design. Each of us in our various geographic locations, strive to achieve this concept and to share it with others so they can catch the same vision to appreciate and plant our native flora.

One note of caution – that is to ensure that species selections we make are dictated by local conditions, rather than unsuccessfully 'trying' plants from other climatically different Australian bioregions. It can be argued that this is no different to planting exotic species from a foreign climatic zone – unfortunately this is what the majority of Australian's seem to do in their gardens! We know better . . . we Design with Nature, don't we?



PLANTS IN DESIGN

Two plants that work well in my garden

Bev Fox, Melbourne



Some of my favourite garden plants are the ones used for edging a garden to stop the Black Birds throwing mulch on my paths. I have attached a copy of two I use a lot of *Acacia lasiocarpa* prostrate and various *Scaevola* species.

Acacia lasiocarpa is a very decorative prostrate low spreading ground-cover with dense small fresh lime green foliage and masses of golden flowers in winter and spring. A versatile plant for full sun to part shade but will flower more profusely in the sun. Will grow happily in coastal dune environments, as this is one of its native habitats in Western Australia.



There are various cultivars of Fan Flowers in cultivation, derived from *Scaevola aemula* and other species. They all provide a very hardy and useful ground cover for the garden with massed spring and summer displays of decorative flowers in hues from white to blue and purple. Most specimens require good drainage and full sun to promote maximum display. They also do well in pots, hanging baskets and are easily propagated from cuttings, useful to establish garden edging.

Maximising the borrowed view

Judy Baghurst, Port Elliott SA



The challenge in our hilltop garden above Port Elliott was to design interesting planting that would maintain the view of the sea from the house, while blending naturally into the revegetation on the slopes below. The top photo - shows shrubs of varying foliage textures, flower colours and heights have now merged together to defeat the wind and fulfil the above aims. *Hakea lissocarpha*, a snow-white beacon when in flower, maintains a naturally rounded shape with no pruning (a good thing, as it is very prickly) and is one of the few shrubs that requires no additional water (another good thing as we have only tank water, and an average annual rainfall of about 450 mm.) In front is the lower, contrasting red *Grevillea thelemanniana*, with darker, finer foliage. To the left, further away, another stalwart, *Hakea* 'Burrendong Beauty', is covered in strong pink and cream flowers in autumn, and the distinctive pattern of its larger, darker leaves makes this drought-resistant shrub appealing all year round – a very reliable favourite. Above left, a yellow-flowering dwarf *Calothamnus quadrifidus* spreads widely to maintain perspective and provide a soft, feathery foil. Smaller strappy *Orthrosanthus multiflorus* adds blue in spring. We have found this to be a most satisfying combination, along with ground covers *Kunzea pomifera* and *Carpobrotus rossii*.



Chrysocephalum/Grevillea lanigera border

It is interesting that the *Chrysocephalum apiculatum* has seeded and grown better in the brick paving than in the actual garden,

thus softening the edges in a carefree sort of way. It mixes well with *Grevillea lanigera* (Mt Tamboritha form) as an edging, and copes through summer with only a little water. As for the rest of the garden, it has had its ups and downs (allied to yearly rainfall) over the last few years, but some things have grown well, and I am really enjoying filling in the gaps right now with new plants.

Three trees anchor a simple design



Words Ros Walcott, Photos Ben Walcott, Canberra

Four years ago we converted a problematic overflow parking area, (10m wide by 30m long), into a garden and are very pleased with the result. The parking area had plastic mesh embedded in it, supposedly to encourage the lawn growth (not!), and consisted of clay filler soil that hardened and refused to accept water in the hot summer period. The lawn would not grow properly and looked patchy and the parking area as such was mostly unused. We hired a landscaper operating a Dingo Digger to churn up all the plastic mesh and break up the hardened clay. We added light topsoil of the sort used for establishing a lawn and mixed it with the broken up clay. We added new irrigation as well, which we have had to raise as plants have grown taller than we estimated would occur. The area was divided into three with arched mulched paths and gravel mulch for the beds.

We used three trees to anchor the garden, *Banksia seminuda* or River Banksia, *Acacia subulata* or Awl Wattle, and *Melia azedarach* 'Caroline'. Three distinct flower colours, red, yellow and mauve, tree shapes and foliages were planned for maximum impact. All three trees have grown very well in full sun, and both the *Melia* and *Acacia* have bloomed extravagantly. As yet, the *Banksia seminuda*, has not bloomed but has grown to five metres high with very attractive dark green foliage which shows silver backs in the wind. *Melia* 'Caroline' has soft green pinnate foliage and lilac flowers in spring and is expected to grow to 10m high and 6m wide. In the Canberra climate it may be smaller than this and so far is 5m high and 4m wide.

At this moment, April 2020, *Acacia subulata* is a knockout and has grown to 3m high and 5m wide. This tree, which can bloom as often as three times a year, has never bloomed so well before, (must have been the extreme heat!), and is covered with trusses of yellow balls with a sweet powdery scent. We are very satisfied with our choices which have allowed microclimates to develop so that we can grow a variety of other plants under and around these trees, adenanthos, correas, grevilleas, eremophilas, westringias, leptospermums, melaleucas and small acacias.

A bit of formality, a bit of fun!



shapes. They were never going to grow very big. If I sharpened up their rounded shapes a little with hedge

Chris Larkin, Lysterfield, east of Melbourne

I'd been gardening for a long time before I started to play with the idea of topiary. It started with clipping small plants of *Westringia* "Milky Way" which are interspersed with repeats of *Lasiopetalum floribunda* which are under-planted with *Correa nummularifolia*. This westringia, a selection of *W. rigida*, can grow big if it is in a favourable position, i.e. the plant gets plenty of sun and water. I have removed all of these big plants from the garden because as a generalisation I don't like a big round blob in the garden. However the ones I clipped into loosely rounded shapes were planted in extremely difficult positions on top of rocks on steeply sloping ground. *W. 'Milky Way'* has very small grey foliage, ideal for topiary, and grows quite naturally into rounded



clippers the differences would be accentuated between the foliage colour and shape of the westringias with the loose, arching soft foliage of *L. floribunda* in particular. I am happy with this outcome and continue to maintain the look over what must now be at least fifteen years.

After this success I then started to go a bit crazy with using this plant but determined to always keep it small. That means starting early with clipping. My intention is to ideally keep a plant around 30-50cm in diameter. So far I have found it is no big deal to do this because they are not really fast growing. I tidy them up once or twice a year and this would take less than a minute per plant. I don't strive for a really hard edged look just something approximating a tidy roundish shape.

I have used this plant a bit the way you might use a strappy plant for contrast. I never use them singly but repeat, repeat, repeat. For instance I have used several along the start of a path where there are a series of smallish rocks. Further back in this garden bed and across the driveway I have planted more of these westringias interspersed with other plants. The idea is to

establish a visual connection within and across garden beds so there is a pleasing cohesion brought about by design. I could go on but hopefully you get the picture. By the way, they have white flowers but really it is all about the foliage colour and shape.

Finally I must stress the plant you might use to bring little bits of formal difference in amongst the informality of your garden doesn't have to be this plant. The plant you use depends on where you live. It is the idea that is important. I am currently working on repeats across a large part of the garden of one of the variegated westringias. I will save that story for another day when there is more to see as they are still in their infancy.

Granite Penda a rare potted specimen for a 'garden room'

Carol Guard, Brisbane



When, in order to meet regulations for their swimming pool construction, my next door neighbours built a paling fence on the boundary, I saw the possibility of developing a garden room. My garden is very shady as I have chosen trees on a long narrow block, however the small narrow area in from the fence received the northerly sun much of the day. A potted *Xanthostemon graniticus* had grown well in a shaded area elsewhere in the garden but was due for re potting. I decided to place it as a central feature in the area to be developed as the garden room. I made this decision after reading in the ASAP Rainforest Study Group Newsletter No 62 (7) June 2006 that this plant is easy to grow within a sunny site and as native of the Cape York area it is very hardy through dry seasons. The plant is in bud and I look forward to observing close up the creamy white flowers as they open.

Research indicates that this fast growing attractive tree grows in windswept tropical rainforest to 800m within possibly the most remote part of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area. It has proved to be an easy species to cultivate in gardens and cold doesn't seem a worry. Generally multi-stemmed, leaves are the

most attractive feature, with deeply channelled by the venation and a rusty-orange new growth.

My garden has gone yellow!!

Lawrie Smith, Queensland

Perhaps it's because of the subject for this month's Newsletter? I did not set out to 'colour plan' my garden, but instead carefully chose the plants that adhered to the specific design parameter that I had determined for that location in the garden. Now everywhere I look there are yellow flowers in vivid display. As the theme article in this Newsletter states that yellow is the most prominent and vibrant of colours, contrasting against all others and reflecting the sun's energy sometimes like a searchlight! These are a few of my yellow plants – at this time of the year now that summer is ebbing slowly away they are very welcome.



Coronidum rupicola



Acacia conferta



Hibiscus cv Golden Yellow



Apowollastonia spilanthoides

Terra Australis - update

Ben & Ros Walcott, Canberra



Hi Lawrie, We were at the Terra Australis TA garden in the Arboretum the other day to put in a new *Senna barronfieldii* and took some pictures.

The garden looks remarkably well considering the horrible summer we have had. The ephemeral wetland has become quite a deep hole which is promised to be filled a bit but nothing has happened.

The *Scaevola's* are spectacular and a real

feature among the sandstone rocks. We have put pots of *Lythrum* in the stream and the bottom pond which look quite good. They are finished flowering now but still have green on them. I think we will leave them there and see what happens.

The *Macrozamia* looks terrible but it too still has some green so there is hope. In comparison, the ones at the ANBG also look terrible. Many of the other plants have done really well so there is hope.

Cheers and thanks for all your help and support.

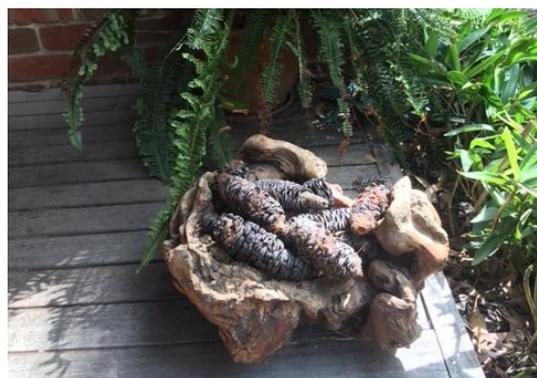
Notes from Members

Nice to put a face to a name!

Pam Yarra, Melbourne



Good morning Lawrie, It was good to meet up with you recently & put a face to a name & discuss garden design. I have pondered over garden design, a topic that often evokes such passion/ emotion & considered how much it has changed since white settlement in Australia & continues to change. While there are basic design principles, so many factors influence the design of a garden.



Have you read or seen Anne Latreille's book, "Garden Voices". It contains wonderful stories & such a variety of gardens with invaluable information & ideas. It has to be one of my favourites & reinforces my thoughts that, gardens are about people & their lives.

I have sent you two photos of the entrance to my house. The burl was from my daughter's property & worked into its shape by my late husband. It contains cones from a now deceased Banksia spinulosa. The timber "saying" at the entrance was made for me by a friend of my daughter. Humour is very important.
Best wishes, Pam Yarra

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

Coming 'Garden' Events – check out the ANPSA Website for specific details and other garden activities
Please send any information for 'Garden events' in your region to promote in the next Newsletter

Welcome to new members – we look forward to your active participation in the study group

Wendy Lahey, Gladstone Q; Peter Clarke, Adelaide; John & Jocelyn King, Grampians Vic; Merele Webb, Melbourne; Tanya Marlin, Melbourne; Catherine Kirby, Melbourne; Loretta Taylor, Pimpama, Q;

Current Membership: 176 - including 9 posted Newsletters & 164 email Newsletters

Treasurer's Report – March 31, 2020

General account: \$ 4,467.10

Expenses: Newsletter 110 costs; Indexing; Kurunga Nursery voucher to Bev Fox for hosting the GDSG meeting February;
TOTAL \$ 497.88

Term Deposit: \$ 27,949.21 (incl interest of \$628.38 - reinvested for 12 months to January 25, 2021)

TOTAL: \$ 32,416.31

Membership year	July 1 – June 30	<i>Membership dues payable annually as follows:</i>
Email Newsletter	FREE	Posted Paper Newsletter \$20.00 per annum

Payment by cheque or EFT to: ANPSA Garden Design Study Group BSB 032-729, Account 285 385

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