

ASSOCIATION OF SOCIETIES FOR GROWING AUSTRALIAN PLANTS  
**GARDEN DESIGN STUDY GROUP**

NEWSLETTER No. 32  
 November 2000

Study Group Leader/Editor: Diana Snape

Treasurer/Membership: Peter Garnham



Dear Members,

I mentioned in the last Newsletter that **Peter Garnham** wished to retire soon, after doing an excellent job for the Garden Design Study Group for six years. I am very pleased to announce that we have a successor to Peter. From the beginning of 2001, **Bryan Loft**, another Melbourne member, will be the new Treasurer and Membership Officer of the Study Group. Any correspondence (or cheques) during the remainder of this year will still go to Peter. From January 1 next year they will go to Bryan.

Thank you Peter for all your efforts over the years, and welcome to the team Bryan.

It is great to have in this issue an article by **Paul Thompson**, one of our most experienced professional members. Paul has always designed with Australian plants, not an easy road to follow professionally even now but especially in the past. He has won numerous awards for his designs and has recently undertaken some very large public projects, so it is well worth reading what he has to say to us. His article is based on both experience and serious thinking about design. There is another one to look forward to in the next NL.

I can now tell you more details about The Book. It will be published (all going well) in October next year by Gil Teague of Florilegium in Sydney. We have to finish all text and photographs by February, which is getting alarmingly close. So if you have photos of good garden design - broad views or details of a garden - please send them to me as soon as possible (certainly by the end of this month for the competition). We are anxious to have a range of beautiful and interesting photos to choose from. The 'first final draft' of the text is close to finished but it all has to be condensed together now to eliminate overlap, which is difficult to avoid with an editorial team. I think it's going to be a very good book - but maybe I'm prejudiced.

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### **NEXT MEETINGS**

*Please see details of these meetings in text (pages 18 & 19)*

**SYDNEY: Sunday November 19 - please contact Jo Hambrett**

**MELBOURNE: Sunday December 3 at Trevor & Beryl Blake's**

**NE VIC: Sunday March 18 at Martin Rigg & Diana Leggat's**

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### CORRESPONDENCE extracts

*"Hello fellow designers! Starting a new project at Yackandandah on 16 acres with some basic farm plan laid out on the ground. Details and ideas are open to suggestion so this Study Group is a good idea for our project. Three major dams and swamp feature through centre of property. Mostly grassland, some remnant trees - forest on east and west sides.*

*Have recently visited Mt Tomah, Mt Annan and National Botanic Gardens for fresh inspirations. May your gardens be inspiring." Martin Rigg & Diana Legatt NSW*

I think we should adopt the last as the GDSG motto or greeting.

A 'mud map' (first draft) for an area of 320m by 240m was included with Martin and Diana's letter. After the next draft, with a few more details, we can include the plan in a NL and have a go at helping. DS

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"At last I have achieved a lifelong goal - to live in the country. My life has been chaotic for four months. We have made our holiday house our new home, having lived in our house at Sandringham for 22 years. Linton is such an interesting area and we are making new friends and enjoying the more laid-back lifestyle. This means I can be very selective if I take any more design projects. Now I can contribute to your design requests.

Frequent plants that occur on my plant schedules are ~~Hymenocentrum flavum~~ (Native Frangipani), ~~Acacia leucosa~~ (Cinnamon Wattle), ~~A. dealbata~~ (Silver Wattle), ~~A. itoachville~~ (Flinders Range Wattle), ~~Melia azedarach~~ (White Cedar), ~~eristemon~~, ~~crowea~~, ~~leucophyta~~ (the common ones), ~~correas~~, ~~Lomandra lonifolia~~ (Spiny-headed Mat-rush)), ~~Patersonia occidentalis~~ (Purple Flags), ~~Austromyrtus dulcis~~ (Midgen Berry) (shade), ~~Brachyscome multifida~~, ~~Callistemon 'Mauve Mist'~~, Q. 'Little John', Q. *viminalis* and *westringias* - ajf.

Of course I also design with exotic plants but there is a special pleasure when there is a request from client or council to use local plants. Unfortunately I do not often see the designs through to the planting stage and so put all my efforts into a detailed landscape plan. "Rosemary Manion Vic

Best wishes, Rosemary, for your country life. "May your garden there be inspiring." DS

"Hope you are well and looking forward to spring in the garden. Many plants in our garden are flowering early and I hope there are some left for spring. We have a few aspects that could make a good picture for the book but alas these views have all had some changes made to their background recently and that is a shame. Maybe next book?" Norman & Maureen Webb NSW (See Norm's article p13)

I am really well again now and spring in our garden (as in many I think) seemed exceptionally brilliant this year with both early and prolonged flowering. DS

7 was at the mine last week and it was quite warm up there - 32 degrees. Am in the process of re-planting areas where there used to be lawns, as they don't want the cost of mowing to be so high. So it is taking a while to get plants established and change reticulation accordingly.

The rabbits are very abundant so I have to put temporary fences around new plantings. There are emus and kangaroos coming into the village at night so it's got quite dry in the bush." Lynne Boladeras W.A.

Lynne is working (very successfully) under challenging conditions in the mining village. DS

"We have been enduring the worst drought in 50 years and the bushfires have been worse than anything I have ever known. Fortunately we had almost an inch of rain the week before last and the temperatures have been somewhat cooler so things are a bit better." Colleen Keena Old

Again challenging conditions, on the other side of the continent. DS

"The Newsletter contents give considerable emphasis to layout and plants used but not much said about the philosophy behind choices. Perhaps it is there but I am not getting the message. Or alternatively members do not place much relevance on why they select plants or garden decorations." Geoff Simmons Qld (See Geoff's article p12)

Possibly there was more philosophy in Newsletters in the early years of the Study Group. Does this emphasis need to be revived? What do members think? DS

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*Time has almost run out! This is your last chance! Send in those fabulous photos (or just those ordinary looking ones) by the end of this month. We have some wonderful entries but of course they're not in your State so there's still hope for you. And we do still need some more photos.....*

.....for our book to illustrate the beauty of our Australian plant gardens.

The **photo competition** is for the best photo (slide or print) from each region (State), showing **good garden design using Australian plants**. Preference will be given to photos showing gardens with regional character, though this is not essential. We do *not* want photos of individual plants or flowers. Entries will be judged by the editorial committee of the book.

The **closing date** to receive entries for the competition is **November 30th 2000**. Entries are to be sent to Diana Snape,

The **winner** in each State will receive a **certificate** and, if the photo is of publication standard, a copy of the **book** (expected to be published by December 2001). All photos submitted (or their copies) will become the property of the GDSG slide/print library.

## DESIGN

### Growing designs

Paul Thompson Vic

We are blessed with a rich floral choice for our designs. What drives the choice of plants? Do you allow the plants to influence the design, do you let the design choose the plants or do you think of both approaches at once? Does one let favourites have a place in every garden? Selection of plants is best when they all suit the purpose of the brief and the understanding of those responsible for the care of the planting.

Briefs are often just that, brief. They are at their best when developed by the user in consultation with a consultant as with large projects or with the designer of smaller works. When a project commences without a clear purpose it can be like the boat with a broken rudder. Designer imposed briefs may also founder unless clearly embraced by all. It is so very easy when designing plantings to wander off on a personal indulgence. This is fine at home and indeed good fun, most pleasurable. When working for someone else it is not a sound path unless clearly part of the client's requirements, objectives and understanding.

When plants are known to be adapted to the particular site conditions they are reliable and the design has a chance of maturing. A failsafe basic plant structure has the best chance of being reliable. What priority does one place on reliability? One can have a personal agenda with plant selection such as the use of untried species, or favourite species or indigenous species. These sorts of notions can add personal interest, give direction or present themes. They also distract from the most successful selection. It is useful to go back to first principles by working first from long lists of plants, gradually checking information and your

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understanding of each. One then whittles them down to a shorter working list. This is a way to find new directions and expand your knowledge. The more familiar I become with an increasing number of plants the more lists I make, the more sources I consult and the more places I look. The plants that come into your mind first may not be right. Should favourite plants be thought of as basic to every design? They can be a popular and useful topic amongst enthusiasts. The sharing of performance knowledge of favourites is always instructive. Analytical feedback on performance, especially in the broad landscape, is important for us to move forward and be increasingly effective in reinforcing a local identity. The diversity of favourites and opinions of growth shows the range of different influences we come under and questions the purpose or meaning of favourites. My definition of a favourite is the plant that serves the design purpose with some predictability.

There are many gorgeous plants that are favourites, cultivated forever yet are unpredictable with reliability. I suppose many people look at natural distribution data to gauge the merits of many plants. The heaths and the peas are such plants that enjoy a wide distribution in often harsh areas yet are not only tricky to propagate but impossible to rely upon. *Epacris impressa* is one of the best examples I know of an anomalous species where tough natural occurrences do not give a lead for success in the built landscape. We have seen them in abundance, thriving where plants ought not grow, yet in the garden they are hit and miss. In a public landscape, are plants like that a waste of public funds, especially when it costs the same to plant a tree as it does the likes of heath? Should the strategy be reliable trees first and unreliable low flora when we have established enough broad mass? There are an increasing number of prominent plantings in public places with species that perpetuate the scrappy image of the sixties bush garden. I wonder how appropriate this is and whether we have advanced at all? The city is an ordered place where a structured landscape is more appropriate. Order in the garden has broad appeal. Soft looking gardens can be ordered and formal gardens can look chaotic, scrappy. Rigorous plant selection and informed aftercare is critical for maximum control of the design character.

The ephemeral in the public landscape can be defended for its quick effect and for providing an immediate image of a successful landscape. One must always include long term species as an integral part of the scheme placed so that they will look marvellous when the *Goodenia*, *Cassinia*, *Poa*, *Indigophora* and *Leucophyta* have degenerated into mulch or been carted away as untidy waste. Instead of considering a garden as one design I would recommend that each design be planned and thought of as several designs that mature at different times. Each of these ideas merge into one another and if defined and documented can inform the follow up care. The public landscape has to sell itself tacitly by affecting the way people feel about being in a space. It takes at least ten years for the mature design to begin to be so influential. I suggest that one can experiment in the home and use the public landscape for the durable, the long term, the self replicating, the plants that will build a theme, reinforce and extend a local character, and be silent advocates for the flora. This should especially be so in prominent places.

We still have a landscape culture that suggests it is all easy and anyone can do it. This is passing. I believe as the indigenous movement learns from itself and the Australian plant horticultural movement realizes that not everything in the lolly shop is always sweet yet bullets, jaffas, minties, allsorts and the like will always give satisfaction.

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### Puzzling Landscape

Paul Fox

*I have taken the following extracts from a much longer paper by Paul Fox provided by Paul Thompson via. This paper was delivered at the Society of Architectural Historians of Australia and New Zealand July 1997 Conference. Although this paper describes perceptions of landscape, I think parts are also relevant to perceptions of Australian gardens today It is rather dense reading but I found the effort worthwhile, so I hope you do too. DS*

This paper examines how the colonial landscape was perceived as a set of puzzles. It examines the sources of these, and suggests that in colonial circumstances multiple visions of the landscape resulted.....

Colonial settlers arrived with minds already formed, so when they saw colonial landscapes they reconfigured them into learnt European views. Consequently the colonial landscapes which were given meaning were those which best fitted pre-existing associations. Landscapes where there were no associations were represented as devoid of meaning. They remain puzzles or points of disjunction which have the capacity to unmask the limits of the European imagination in this country.

One of the consequences of association was that Australia was constructed as a simile. It was likened to somewhere else. This might be English parkland scenery, Indian plains or hill stations, American prairies, or sublime European alpine scenery..... Colonial landscapes were also created by the artist drawing upon the European vocabulary of the picturesque and sublime. The space which fell outside this discourse remained outside representation.....

The language of colonial exploration in the 1860s reconfigured the picturesque by suggesting it was not readily apparent and needed to be associated with the act of exploration..... In the colonies, landscape became two sites: the explored and known; and the unexplored and unknown which hid, both literally and metaphorically, the landscape of association. In colonial Victoria, painterly representation of landscape existed within a larger but blank canvas devoid of association; the picturesque being seen to be distinct from the surrounding landscape.....

In the early 1860s Edward Wilson, editor of the Melbourne *Argus* and member of the Victorian Acclimatisation Society perceived the landscape in terms of the indigenous and the scientific language of Darwin's 1859 work. Explaining the physical changes to the landscape, he opined that "anyone who watched the progress of settlement will have noticed that the soil becomes firmer as it was trampled down by cattle and sheep etc. and the crust of the soil acquired a hardness not known before the country was occupied by European animals". Such empirical observation of colonial settlement moved beyond copying learnt European observations. Here scientific theory was used imaginatively to read the particularity of the colonial situation.....

The Victorian Acclimatisation Society used science to create a language of association which was very different to the one created by the marrying of colonial memory and science. ... In the 20th century, acclimatisation is often dismissed; written of in terms of eccentrics introducing the bizarre in the oddest of places and of the environmental havoc these enthusiasms created. Yet at the time it led to the re-imagining of the landscape in significant ways which continue to influence contemporary perceptions. ... It informed the Victorian botanist, and director of the Melbourne Botanic Gardens until 1873, Ferdinand von Mueller's understanding of "the frostless sylvan dales of east Gippsland ... gradually ascending climatic zones ... to alpine regions too cold for any woody vegetation in their highest elevations", and his suggestion that these landscapes might be enriched by "extra-Victorian vegetation"....

Colonial botanic gardens were simultaneously cultural and scientific landscapes. ... In 1881 the grounds of the Victorian Acclimatisation Society in Royal Park, Melbourne were described as being

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transformed from a "a howling wilderness into a most attractive garden". The landscape is imagined simultaneously as both garden and wilderness....

In the 1870s the poetic imagination as defined by the poet William Wordsworth was the subject of a lengthy discourse. ... Wordsworth's view of nature was "active, positive, vital, formative and beautiful, in a word, living".... This understanding of poetic imagination, as being different from empirical perception, also informed the work of William Guilfoyle, who became director of the Melbourne Botanic Gardens in 1873.... For Guilfoyle, wilderness was not a space devoid of association but a place of poetic imagination where nature was alive. Consequently his exploration of wilderness shifts between detailed botanical and aesthetic description of the landscape.... The association is not drawn from the European copy but the tropical world he experienced in the South Seas and northern NSW.

If Mueller attempted to garden the landscape through acclimatisation, Guilfoyle came to the Melbourne gardens already having achieved this. What is more he arrived in Melbourne having created through his poetic imagination an image of wilderness. In his explorations he discovered a landscape where words were inadequate in describing what he saw; where landscape was not a reflection of past memory but a way of capturing the vividness of first sight.... If he cultivated the garden in terms of the beautiful (one has only to think of his smoothly graded lawns) and evoked memory through association, he also brought the notion of nature as wilderness into the cultivated space by recreating, in the gardens, the forest edge of the Tweed and the volcano he had seen on the Pacific island of Tana. ... Guilfoyle's act of creation was a very different solution to the puzzle of landscape, to those who banished Australia by means of learnt associations.

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## GARDENS

### Spring gardens

Diana SnapeVic

My excursion north last month was very successful in terms of seeing wonderful gardens, meeting nice people (as all gardeners are!) and taking some pleasing garden photographs. It started in Bendigo with the APS Victoria weekend there and among fascinating gardens was the relatively new one created by **Geoff Sitch**, a master of making artificial rocks. Melbourne members will remember the demonstration he gave in **Nicole** Lenffer's garden in 1996. Geoff's new garden is already truly remarkable with extensive rockwork and, when all the 'rock' has weathered and the newest plantings have established, will be quite outstanding. Geoff has kindly given me permission to include his 'rock recipe' in our book.

On the way up we made a brief stop in Wagga Wagga where I met member **Penny Munro** and visited an APS member's lovely young garden (in the Open Garden Scheme and mentioned by Penny in a recent letter). Next we visited the Fern Garden in the National Gallery in Canberra - a must if you haven't seen it yet and are visiting the ACT. I know GDSG member **Ingrid Adler** is worried about the use of mature tree-ferns but I have been told that they were taken from an area that was to be destroyed and surely that must be true for them to be used in so prominent a place. However I agree with Ingrid that provenance of ferns, especially tree-ferns, is always a concern.

Two of the lovely gardens I visited in Sydney visit in early October belonged to GDSG members who have recently been starring (or will star) in the media. **Ian and Tamara** Cox's beautiful fern garden featured in Burke's Backyard on Friday November 3 and Tamara gave an excellent presentation, though Ian said that (of course) the long interview had been severely cut. **Jeff Howes** has been contacted by both Burke's Backyard and Foxtel's lifestyle channel, who are interested in looking at his garden as an example of

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suburban gardens featuring Australian plants. Jeff's garden includes a most attractive courtyard in the front.

Jeff's garden was in the Open Garden Scheme this year, as was **Jo Hambrett's** large garden, always a delight to visit and always being refined with Jo's developing ideas. (Jo and I together visited Gil Teague to talk about the book.) Two other gardens I saw in Sydney belonging to GDSG members were those of **Gordon Rowland** and **Michael Bates**, both tiny inner suburban gardens but completely different in style and feel. Gordon's is a lush rainforest garden in shades of green, with a naturalistic pool and tall palms to 'scale down' a high wall. Michael's is a modern courtyard garden with striking colours and hard landscape complemented by a water feature and planting. (There are photos of both these gardens in Paul Urquhart's "The New Native Garden".) The other Sydney gardens visited were mainly those listed as featuring Australian plants in the Open Garden Scheme book for this year.

On the way home we saw **Norm and Maureen Webb's** lovely garden, described in a recent NL. Unfortunately Norm and Maureen were away (in Melbourne!) - we couldn't manage to get our dates right! A brief visit to Eurobodalla Botanic Gardens at Bateman's Bay, where GDSG member **John Knight** is the hard-working curator. Our final and exciting last garden visit for the trip was to the garden of a new member, **Christina Kennedy**. Her large, very formal garden has been in the Open Garden Scheme in recent years and is both stunning and elegant, exploring completely new areas of design with Australian plants.

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### Butterfly gardening

Who is not attracted by butterflies? **Bev Hanson** Vic attended a seminar recently and has given me a paper on butterfly gardening for the interest of members of the SG. Although the talk was directed to Melbourne gardeners, many points were of more general interest and use. The main ones were:

- Include in your garden a selection of the following:

Hqst plants for eaas (and caterpillars, which are small for most Australian species) such as: Paper Daisies

(*Helichrysum* spp), *Acacia* spp, Kangaroo Grass (*Themeda triandra*), Mountain Pepper (*Tasmannia lanceolata*), Mistletoes (*Amyena* and *Muellerina* spp), Mat Rush (*Lomandra longifolia*), Sword Grasses (*Ghania* spp), Tussock Grasses (*Poa* spp).

Flowering plants for butterflies such as: Everlasting Daisy (*Bracteantha bracteata*), Cut Leaf Daisy

(*Brachyscome multifida*), Sweet Bursaria (*B. spinosa*), Thryptomene (*T. saxicola*), Rice Flowers (*Pimelea* spp), and Daisy Bushes (*Olearia* spp).

- Don't use pesticides (an obvious one!)
- Provide a variety of plants - ones that: will flower throughout the year; produce lots of flowers; are brightly coloured, shallow-throated, open in design; are in both shaded and (less vital) unshaded areas; of different heights.
- Provide undisturbed areas; areas sheltered from wind; flat rocks for sunning; mud puddles or water baths.

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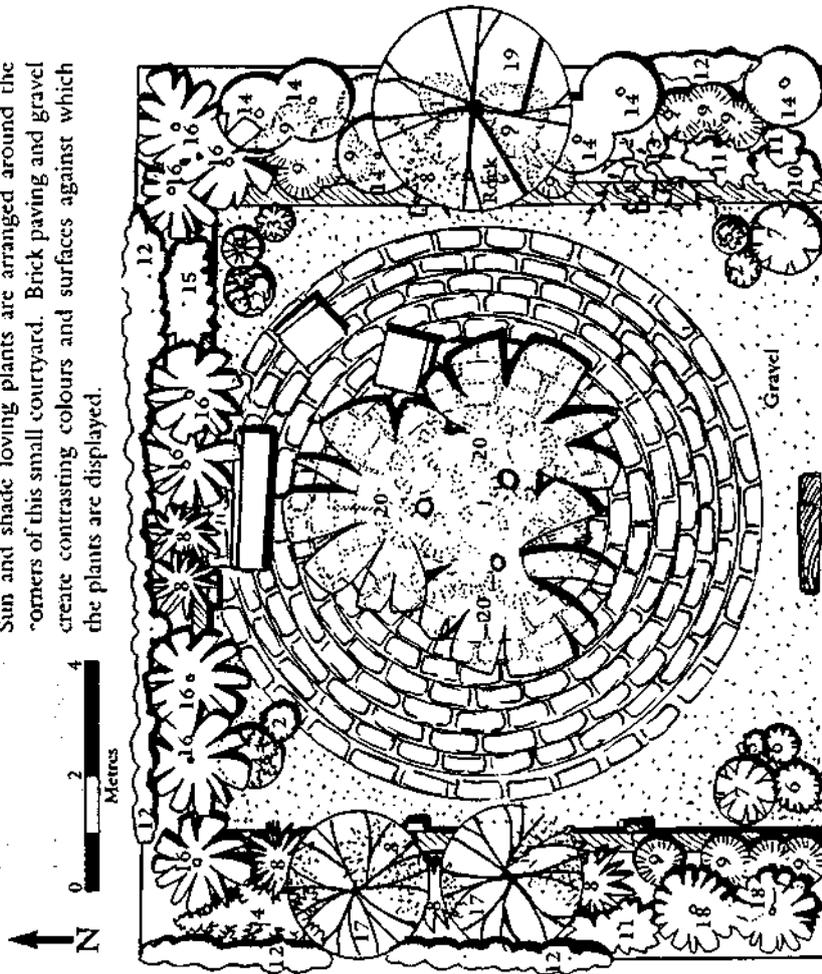
### Garden designs, City of Moreland, Victoria

**Nicky Rose** Vic has sent me sections from an excellent production by a local council in Victoria. Thank you, Nicky. This booklet produced by the City of Moreland (on the western basalt plains of Victoria) gives very good advice about establishing and maintaining a garden on their heavy clay soils, using local (indigenous) plants. It also provides four suggested plans using the local plants. These plans are reproduced on the following two pages - first the 'formal' and 'courtyard' gardens, then the less formal 'cottage' and 'bush' gardens. (The plants are listed by common name but not scientific name.)

It's great to see this very promising initiative happening in at least one area, including the suggested lawn of Wallaby Grass and Weeping Grass. Please let me know what you think of the actual plans.

**COURTYARD GARDEN**

Sun and shade loving plants are arranged around the corners of this small courtyard. Brick paving and gravel create contrasting colours and surfaces against which the plants are displayed.

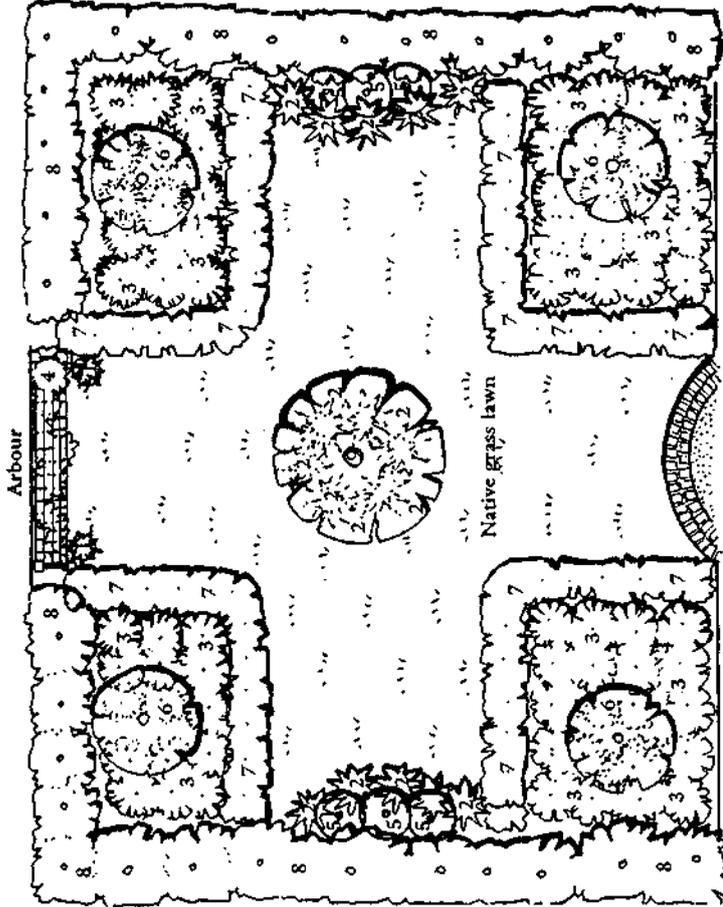


**In pots**

<b>Grasses and other tussock plants</b>	<b>PAGE</b>
1. Pale Flax Lily	8
<b>Small Plants</b>	
2. Cut Leaf Daisy	13
3. Clustered Everlasting	14
4. Common Rasp Fern	16
<b>Small and medium shrubs</b>	
5. Small-leaved Eutaxia	21
6. Turkey Bush	24
<b>Small and medium trees</b>	
7. Silver Banksia	28
<b>In ground</b>	
<b>Grasses and other tussock plants</b>	
8. Spiny-headed Mat-rush	8
9. Silky Tussock Grass	10
<b>Small Plants</b>	
10. Common Everlasting	14
11. Tufted Bluebell	11
<b>Climbers</b>	
12. Small-leaved Clematis	19
13. Purple Coral Pea	19
<b>Small and medium shrubs</b>	
14. Large-leaf Bush-pea	20
15. Rock Correa	20
16. Austral Indigo	23
17. Tree Violet	23
18. Gold-dust Wattle	24
<b>Large shrubs</b>	
19. Sweet Bursaria	25
<b>Small and medium trees</b>	
20. Lightwood	30

**FORMAL GARDEN**

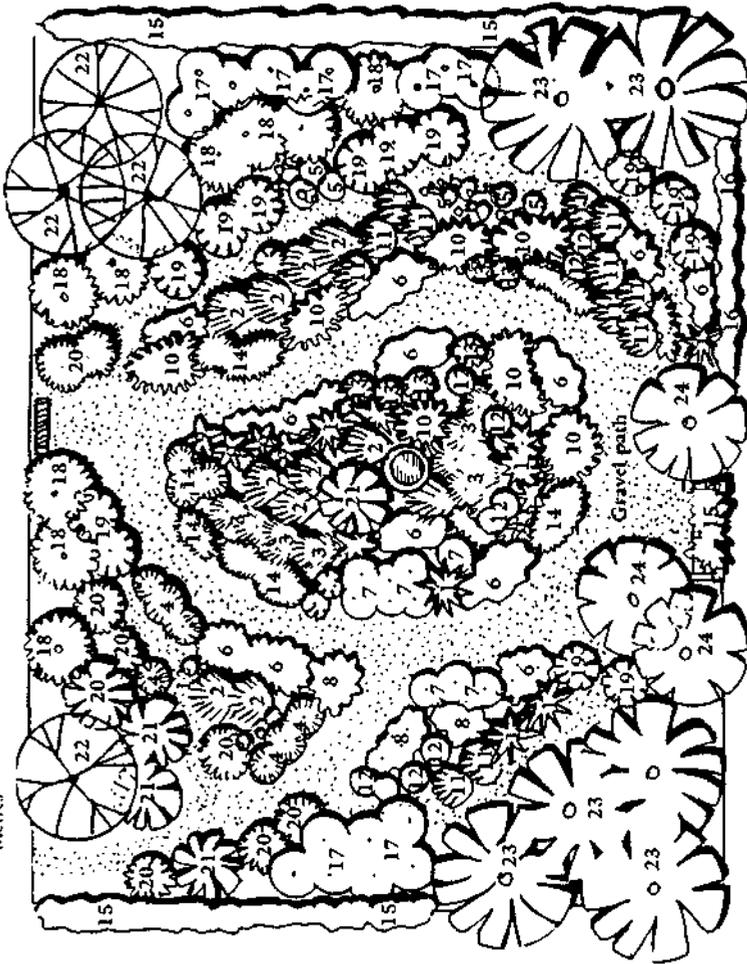
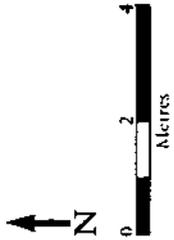
This design utilises strong lines and shapes, clipped shrubs and constructed corner planting beds or bays. The silver-blue leaves of the Common Everlasting contrasts with the green and yellow of the Koök Correa in the bays. An arbour is constructed at the end of the garden, draped with Small-leaved Clematis, to provide a pleasant, shady place to sit, and to create a focal view point from the paved entrance. A fine lawn of Weeping Grass and Wallaby Grass between the bays is maintained by regular mowing. Regular pruning is required for this dramatic garden.



<b>Grasses and other tussock plants</b>	<b>PAGE</b>
1. Pale Flax Lily	8
2. Spiny-headed Mat-rush	8
<b>Small plants</b>	
3. Common Everlasting	14
<b>Climbers</b>	
4. Small-leaved Clematis	19
<b>Small and medium shrubs</b>	
5. Large-leaf Bush-pea	20
6. Rock Correa	20
7. Rosemary Grevillea	22
<b>Large shrubs</b>	
8. Wedge-leaf Hop Bush	26
<b>Small and medium trees</b>	
9. Silver Banksia	28

**COTTAGE GARDEN**

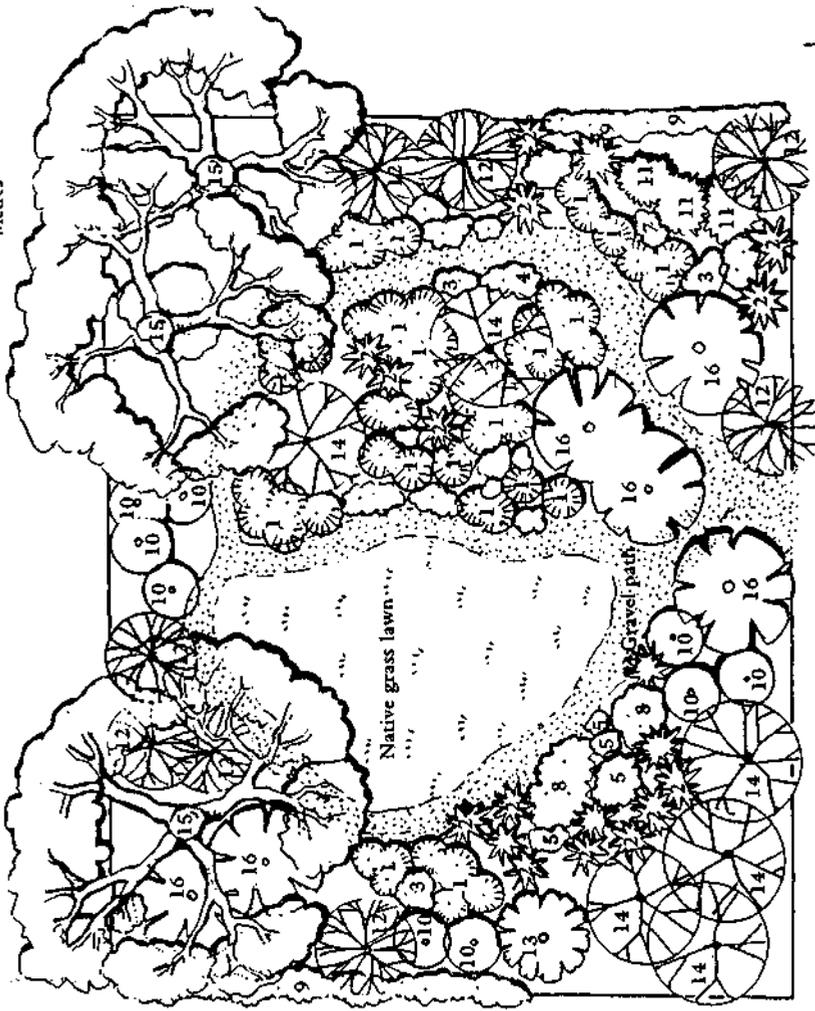
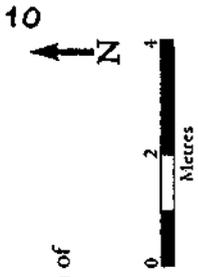
A birdbath provides a focal point for this flowering garden, created using dense plantings of small wildflowers and grasses. Informal gravel paths weave through the garden. Clumped small trees provide height contrasts with the wildflowers. Regular watering and pruning will maintain vigorous growth and flowering.



Grasses and other tussock plants	PAGE	Groundcovers	PAGE
1. Pale Flax Lily	8	14. Ruby Saltbush	18
2. Feather Spear Grass	9	Climbers	
3. Slender Spear Grass	10	15. Small-leaved Clematis	19
4. Silky Tussock Grass	10	16. Purple Coral Pea	19
<b>Small Plants</b>		<b>Small and medium shrubs</b>	
5. Common Billy Burtons	11	17. Large-leaf Bush-pea	20
6. Tufted Bluebell	11	18. Rock Correa	20
7. Tufted Burr Daisy	12	19. Twiggly Daisy-bush	21
8. Basalt Daisy	12	20. Hop Goodenia	22
9. Clustered Everlasting	14	21. Austral Indigo	23
10. Common Everlasting	14	<b>Large shrubs</b>	
11. Sticky Everlasting	15	22. Sweet Bursaria	25
12. Native Flax	15	<b>Small and medium trees</b>	
13. Austral Storks Bill	16	23. Lightwood	30
		24. Golden Wattle	31

**BUSH GARDEN**

This bush garden contains a more "natural" mixture of grasses, groundcovers, shrubs and trees. The trees and native grass lawn of Wallaby Grass and Weeping Grass (occasionally mown) provide peaceful areas to sit and enjoy the bush in your own garden.



Grasses and other tussock plants	PAGE	Climbers	PAGE
1. Kangaroo Grass	9	9. Small-leaved Clematis	19
2. Spiny-headed Mat-rush	8	<b>Small and medium shrubs</b>	
<b>Small Plants</b>		10. Large-leaf Bush-pea	20
3. Tufted Bluebell	11	11. Rosemary Grevillea	22
4. Cut Leaf Daisy	13	12. Tree Violet	23
5. Basalt Daisy	12	<b>Large shrubs</b>	
6. Clustered Everlasting	14	13. River Bottlebrush	25
7. Sticky Everlasting	15	14. Sweet Bursaria	25
<b>Groundcovers</b>		<b>Small and medium trees</b>	
8. Milky Beauty Heads	17	15. Yellow Box	29
		16. Golden Wattle	31

Again this year I have looked with interest at the number of gardens in the Open Garden Scheme, in each State or Territory, advertised as featuring Australian plants. Newcomer Northern Territory achieves the highest percentage with a handsome 22% - that is, 2 out of 9 - both in Alice Springs, with none open in Darwin. South Australia does well with 10% (7 out of 70) and the lowest result is in W.A., with less than 2% (1 out of 75). Victoria, Tasmania, NSW and Queensland all lie in between 10% and 2%.

Congratulations to all GDSG members who have had their gardens open. It is a lot of work but visitors do value it and this makes the effort worthwhile. There is also the knowledge that it helps widen the appreciation of our Australian plants and the beautiful gardens that can be created with them. This is one important goal of the Garden Design Study Group.

## BOOKS, MAGAZINES & THE INTERNET

***Garden Design* by Sylvia Crowe** (1st ed. 1958, 3rd ed. 1994) Garden Art Press

Reviewed by **Barbara Buchanan** Vic

Although written for a European-American readership using exotic plants, this classic book has much to say to Australian plant and any other gardener. The first section deals with the historical aspects because, despite the constant demand for something different, be it plants or style or whatever to keep ahead of fashion, there is really nothing new under the sun. The basic design principles underly all successful gardens. No garden springs spontaneously into life without any roots in predecessors. Each style evolves in response to social and other conditions prevailing. Former styles - the refreshing oasis, the magnificent French, the idealised English landscape - were each designed for one particular way of life. Today more people from more social levels are making gardens for a greater diversity of needs. Hence a single modern style is unlikely and "should not be encouraged for it would contradict one of the bases of a true garden, in that it could not genuinely represent the character of the owner."

Dame Sylvia distinguishes phases in the development of European gardens and the role of plants in them. The original cloister and oasis gardens were solely for the purpose of growing plants. Over centuries the form of the total garden grew in importance until, in the classic gardens of Italy, all forms of architectural devices - paving, terraces, fountains, etc. - became more important than the flowers. In the great open air rooms of le Notre, plants were used as green walls to set off the peacock clothing of the courtiers. Even in the landscapes of Capability Brown in England, plants played a subdued role. When a great influx of new plants started arriving from Asia, the Americas and even Australia, gardens again became places to display flowers and also to demonstrate one's skills in raising novelties, albeit now mostly with an eye on overall design. Successful gardens combined firm 'bones' with lush planting that spilled over and softened the straight lines.

A rough analogy can be drawn with the development of Australian plant gardens with some greatly shortened similar stages. We have had, and still have, collectors' gardens where the emphasis is on the plants, the aim to grow as wide a range as possible. Without our dedicated collectors and their successes we would not have been able to contemplate proceeding to the next stage - arranging these plants with style to produce gardens whose appeal is universal. The plants are still important but so is line, form, balance and harmony; the garden as a whole is coming to be of prime importance.

The following section, quite short, is devoted to design principles: unity, scale, time, space division, light and shade, texture, tone and colour. What she has to say is as relevant today as in 1958 when it was written, or 1858 or 2058. The differences in the ultimate products depend on the social and physical setting,

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the plant material used and the aims and desires of the gardener.

The third section on 'Materials of design' includes the land form, plants as hedges, for seclusion, shelter, shade, etc., as well as water, boundary markers and other hard landscaping. There are still many universal ideas to be gained despite the exotic plants used as illustrations. This also applies to the final section on specialized gardens, parks and National Trust houses.

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### On the Internet

Colleen Keena Qld

The following site is not of course about native plants, but I enjoy seeing the repetition of plants, colours, etc. and it was good re-reading the article on balance.

<http://gardening.about.com/homegarden/gardening/gi/dynamic/offsite.htm?site=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.GardenGateMagazine.com%2Fdesign%2F25border.html>

Some articles that I found of interest.

<http://www.aardenersworld.beeb.com/content/desian/>

<http://aardenina.about.com/homeaarden/gardenina/library/weeklv/aa012498.htm>

<http://aardenina.about.com/homegarden/aardenina/library/weeklv/aa012998.htm>

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## DESIGN IDEAS

### Ask yourself!

Geoff Simmons Qld

Many books, articles on gardening and journals give detailed instructions on the practicalities of designing gardens such as physical layout, paths and plants. However a more important factor may be the type of questions to be posed at the beginning or during the development of a garden, i.e. the philosophical concept. This may be particularly pertinent to Australian garden design because the Australian plants chosen may differ considerably in form and habit from exotic species.

Consider the following - will the garden be:

1. A kaleidoscope of colours or a few colours? Will they reflect the green and gold of the dominant Australian scene?
2. Are single plants preferred to multiples of the same species?
3. Are specimen plants to be included?
4. To what extent will open spaces be provided?
5. Should there be an attempt to mimic a natural type of vegetation (rainforest etc)?
6. What colour, size or shape of foliage is desired?
7. Should the plants encourage native animals and insects?
8. Should the scents of the Australian bush be included in the plan?
9. To what extent should Australianism be expressed?
10. Will the plantings be local native plants or species from anywhere in Australia or a combination?

As gardening is a dynamic process the answers may change with time - ideas alter, new varieties are seen and different moods are expressed. The juggling of the answers in formulating the whole or parts of the garden is one of the interesting features of design. In my case a visitor will not see any grevilleas in my garden, not because I dislike grevilleas but because I am more interested in other genera to fill the space. Also no annuals are included as they mean more work and time that could be devoted to long-lived species.

Ask the question - where are you going with your garden?

*A good question - and so are Geoff's other questions. A lot of these are often vaguely in the back of our minds but it might help us to really focus on them. DS*

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## When to bite the bullet

Norm Webb NSW

Over the ten years Maureen and I have been involved with Australian native gardens my enthusiasm has remained constant but my ideas have changed somewhat. It is plain to see the need for good garden design if we are to convince others to turn to native gardens. Since having the GDSG (NSW branch) visit our garden recently, I have been troubled by my ill-judged decision made some two years previously to plant four diosmas in a prominent position in our otherwise Australian garden. Why had I done so? These plants were well advanced and ready to flower. They Had to Go! How should I tell Maureen?

She knows this is not the first time I have turned on some innocent plant after realising it did not fit in with my ideas for the garden. Let's say the original planting was a mistake but do we have to live with mistakes? A few years ago we gave our front garden a makeover as we were not happy with the look and are now very satisfied. The main problem in doing a makeover job on one section of the garden is that the section is often spoilt for at least a two years while plants grow.

Pondering on ways to make as little impact as possible on the garden my thoughts were drawn to advanced plants. What would be more appropriate than a continuation of the main theme of the overall garden i.e. Grass-trees as the focus surrounded by Australian grasses and small, colourful groundcovers? I had seen a small, double headed Grass-tree at our local nursery and it was a reasonable price.

I had my facts and approached Maureen with my ideas. Maureen has become accustomed to changes in our garden so she gave in easily. The diosmas are now gone and in their place a slightly mounded garden. The Grass-tree has been placed at the highest point and euchi-mulch enhances the surrounding area and plants. Plants added to give a natural open garden look are *Poa australis*, *Brachyscome* species, *Chrysocephalum apiculatum*, *Lomandra confertifolia*, *Scaevola aemula* (our local), *Dampiera strbta* and finally *Actinotus helianthi* (local again). Most groundcovers have been home propagated and are small but should be a show before the end of spring.

We now believe we can give our garden a name that cannot be challenged: "Native Habitat Garden".

*I can vouch for the success of Norm's new garden area. His article reminds us of the importance of time in our designing and our tendency towards wanting instant results, which are usually not possible. (Many of you will remember Barbara Buchanan's good advice to plant easy-to-propagate, fast-growing daisies as temporary 'infill' plants in new garden beds.) DS*

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## PLANTS in DESIGN

### Successful plant combinations

#### Plant combinations

Penny Munro NSW

Large shrubs: *Hakea elliptica* (Oval-leaved Hakea) and *H. petiolaris* (Sea Urchin Hakea), *Leptospermum* 'Copper Glow'.

Groundcovers: *Scaevola albida* (Small-fruit Fan-flower) white, pink, blue forms. I planted a sky blue *Scaevola albida* which has subsequently self seeded, in all the right spots, and is a very bright, dark purple colour. Scaevolae flower in the Coolamon area nine months of the year - hardy, pretty and self seeding. Dampieras too are wonderful groundcovers, also the yellow goodenias. The blues, mauves, yellows look so well together.

*I agree about those lovely summer colours. I'll be boking out for that blue Scaevola albida. DS*

### **A prostanthera bank**

**Ros St Clair Vic**

I recently planted several prostantheas in a garden that is shaded except in hot summer afternoons. I put *Prostanthera lasianthos* (Victorian Christmas Bush) 'Kallista Pink' and *P. melissifolia* (Balm Mint-bush), pink and mauve forms, at the back to screen the fence; *P. ovalifolia* (Mint-bush) for mid height (I hope) in the middle, and *P. cuneata* (Alpine Mint-bush) and *P. violacea* as foreground plants. While the intention was to vary the flowering and extend the flowering season, the plants look as though I have hit on a good combination. The variation in size, colour and shape of the leaves is working well. I chose a variegated *P. ovalifolia* and, with its central position, it is 'lifting' the whole combination. I am looking forward to seeing how it progresses.

*With such a wonderfully fragrant combination, I think I know where Ros might be spending some time after it rains, or even on her hot summer afternoons. DS*

### **Plants for an arid area**

**Lynne Boladeras W.A.**

My suggestion for a favourite combination of plants for an arid area is;

*Eremophila nivea* - silvery foliage and mauve flowers (*superb in the east too, usually grafted DS*)

*Alyogyne hakeifolia* (Red-centred Hibiscus) - bright dark green foliage and mauve flowers, with

*Dianella revoluta* (Spreading Flax-lily) or strappy Kangaroo Paws in clumps and

*Eremophila glabra* 'Prostrate Form' (grey foliage, yellow flowers) in front as a ground cover.

These four on red sand look great.

*All these great plants are available in Melbourne nurseries too - their versality is amazing. DS*

### **On the South Coast**

**Michele Pymble NSW**

I have established a garden area combining, purely by accident, prostrate banksias, mainly *B. paludosa* (Marsh Banksia) and *B. spinulosa* (Hairpin Banksia) with *Correa decumbens*, *C. 'Dusky Bells'* and *C. baeuerlenii* (Chef's Cap Correa). The stiff, sculptural beauty of the banksias looks great against the softer correas, growing among large granite rocks.

I also have an 'Isopogon garden' including *I. anethifolius* (Narrow-leaf Drumsticks), *I. formosus* (Rose Cone-flower) and *I. buxifolius* all growing happily, again amongst granite rocks and yellow Rock Orchids (*Dendrobium speciosum*).

*They both sound lovely combinations, the second particularly unusual. I wonder if the first was pure 'accident', or intuition? DS*

**Cherree Densley Vic** not only sent in a few of her own ideas for plant combinations but, at the South-East Melbourne Quarterly Meeting, co-opted participants to contribute their ideas. Cherree has also contributed on this theme in past NLs. (I'm giving up with common names for these.)

First Cherree's latest ideas:

- My hot pink corner combo is (in June): *Crowea exalata* 'Whipstick' fine leaves, bright pink flowers; *Hakea* "Burrendong Beauty"; *Hakea orthorhyncha* and above, *Eucalyptus lansdowneana*; will be followed by a large shrub of *Isopogon latifolius* covered in large buds in between two dense rounded small shrubs of *Melaleuca spathulata* which will carry the hot pink colour through for a further two months.
- Superlative duo: *Xanthorrhoea australis* and *Correa reftexa* red form (winter)
- *Rhododendron lochae* and Maidenhair Fern looks superb.
- Greenhood Orchids and spagnum moss is hard to beat.

A small selection from the other suggestions (I'll save some others for future NLs):

- "a practical suggestion of a rather utilitarian bent" - *Thryptomene saxicola* (pink or white) underplanted with

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mauve brachyscomes - **Joan Barrett**

- *Grevillea drummondii*, *Hardenbergia comptoniana* and *H. violacea* bushy white; and *Hovea elliptica* with *Thryptomene* pink -**Shirley Cam**
- *Crowea exalata* (large) & *Brachyscome multifida* (rampant pink) - Helen Appleby
- group of casuarinas underplanted with *Acacia cognata* then *Melaleuca pulchella* - Trix Chamberlin
- *Helichrysum (Chrysocephalum) apiculatum*, *Themeda australis*, *Hibbertia* groundcover (fine-leaved but not *prostrata*) - Ruth Marriott
- *Hardenbergia comptoniana* and *H. violacea* were mentioned several times, scrambling through wattles such as *Acacia flexuosa* or *A. acinacea*, or *Phebalium squamulosum*, or combined with *Hibbertia dentata* • John Facey and others (anonymous)
- *Acacia pravissima* Tricolour' & *Persoonia pinifolia*; and *Acacia acinacea* & *Alyogyne huegelii* (deep mauve)
- *Austrostipa (Stipa) elegantissima* with *Linum marginale* growing through it ("purely accidental as both self sown")

### Fern combination

**Mark James Vic**

Favourite is not a word I'd usually apply to plants, but this week I saw an *Asplenium bulbiferum* and *A. australasicum* (Birds Nest Fern) I planted a few months ago that had already crossed their fronds to produce an interesting effect. Despite the different foliage I had to take a second look to see where one started and the other finished. The effect may be improved if it was at the base of a *Dicksonia antarctica* (Soft Tree-fern).

*Lovely foliage combinations like this are much more permanent than floral effects too. DS*

### A silvery trio

**Ann Fenton NSW**

I like this silvery trio which I've grown in my garden (but not actually near each other) - *Grevillea* 'Sandra Gordon', *Banksia integrifolia* (Coast Banksia) with silvery undersides to the leaves, and *Acacia baileyana* (Cootamundra Wattle) - a good variety of form, foliage and flower manifestation.

*There's something about silver! DS*

### Attractive foliage

**Pat Webb Vic**

*Goodia iotifolia* (Golden Tip) is a plant we enjoy for its greyish form of foliage. It does spread and needs space but makes a delightful informal hedge.

*Thomasia rhynchocarpa* and *Thomasia pauciflora* are two hardy shrubs in our garden; their rough textured foliage and the deep pinkish tips of the former shrub are particularly attractive.

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### My favourite groundcover

I see 'favourites' of the home gardener as being plants they regard as being tried and true in their own garden design. (Anyone else should do some research before rushing to use them.)

A groundcover can be interpreted and defined in different ways. For me, it is a spreading plant, from completely prostrate to say a maximum of half a metre in height, which does a reasonable job of covering the ground. It must be many times wider than it is high and ideally it will prevent or at least noticeably restrict the growth of weeds. What is your definition? DS

### Groundcover (or lawn substitute)

**Jennie Lawrence Tas**

One plant which forms a close mat and survived the dry weather practically without extra watering is *Baeckea ramosissima* (Rosy Heath-myrtle), the very low form not more than 10cm high, which I collected years ago just east of Devonport.

Beautiful in spring covered in white blossom, it looks attractive all through the year. I love the shade of yellow-green like Buttongrass which has a warm glow to it. I did not see it mentioned in the list of Cherree Densley's groundcovers. I intend to take a lot of cuttings and plant them where there is now a woolly thyme

lawn, which has many ugly bare patches after the drought.

*It sounds lovely, Jennie. I hope you have great success with your cuttings. DS*

**Acacia cardiophylla (Viyalong Wattle) 'Gold Lace'**

**Ros St Clair** Vic

I was growing this cascading over a retaining wall at Ballarat. The leaf was lovely most of the year but it never flowered and looked tatty in spring because it did not cope with the frost, despite being labelled frost-resistant. Not so sure how it would go as a groundcover over flat ground.

*'Frost-resistant' is applied to a wide range of tolerance I think. DS*

**Mazus pumilio and Goodenia humilis**

**Pat Webb** Vic

I have various groundcovers in different areas and enjoy them all - they save work! In an area around our pond I like the *Mazus pumilio* (Swamp Mazus) and *Goodenia humilis* (Swamp Goodenia) - a blue and yellow carpet through late spring and summer.

**Grevillea 'Poorinda Royal Mantle'**

**Michele Pymble** NSW

I do like this grevillea as a rampant groundcover. Tough enough to be accidentally stepped on and I love the flowers.

**Hibbertia empetrifolia** (Scrambling Guinea Flower)

**Mark James** NSW

This is a good scrambler on steep slopes and seems to thrive in heavy clays. It's not particularly attractive and can even cover neighboring plants, but it's functional for what might otherwise be difficult sites. *(I think it's beautiful in full flower and its small leaves provide interesting texture. DS)*

At the **July Melbourne meeting** the following groundcovers were recommended:

- *Brachyscome angustifolia* and *B. angustifolia* Tea Gardens' with pink flowers
- *Brachysema latifolium* - oval leaves and orange-red pea-flowers
- *Brachysema praemorsum* Bronze Butterfly' - foliage ranging from green to wine
- *Chrysocephalum apiculatum* especially ssp. *ramosissimum* and 'Golden Buttons' - clumps of the latter interspersed among larger areas of the former look particularly good
- *Correa alba x reflexa* form interspersed with *Scaevola* 'Mauve Clusters' as an appealing GC combination
- Dampieras such as *D. linearis* (thought sparse for a GC by some members)
- *Grevillea humifusum* (formerly *G. thelemanniana* grey leaf form)
- *Grevillea obtusifolia* for its lush foliage
- *Hibbertia grossulariifolia* and *H. serpyllifolia*
- *Kennedia prostrata* (Running Postman) - attractive, not always long lived
- *Pratia pedunculata* (Pratia) for attracting butterflies
- *Pultenaea capitellata* and *P. pedunculata*
- *Pultenaea subternata* with attractive leaf shape and beautiful foliage cascading over rocks

**Mistletoes in garden design?**

**Diana Snape** Vic

I remember writing a brief note on this topic in a GDSG Newsletter a long while ago (NL 13, May 1996), when Jane Calder's husband Malcolm was giving a lecture (or series of lectures) on the topic of mistletoes. I have often wondered about introducing (or retaining) mistletoes in gardens for their sometimes very beautiful appearance and their value for birds. They are characteristic of so much of the wooded landscape of Australia. I don't know if studies have been done on the deterioration of a tree's health under the impact of mistletoe. It seems to me that they do not appear to seriously impair the life of a tree until their total foliage mass approaches something like half the foliage mass of the tree itself.

The following extracts are from articles in 'Gumnuts' initiated by Peter Vaughan NSW. We don't normally give advice about propagating plants but I've often wondered about propagating mistletoes, so maybe some other members have too.

#### Mistletoes as parts of the biota

Mistletoe is a key species for Australian bird diversity so maybe we should be growing more of it in our gardens. These fascinating plants have long been overlooked, not just horticulturally but in floral surveys and being recognized as important parts of a diverse biota. In a garden they attract a range of birds - mistletoe birds are very important vectors but numerous other birds can distribute seed. They especially attract butterflies, some of which are mistletoe specialists.

Mistletoes in SE Australia can be a serious forest 'weed' in certain environments such as disturbed ecosystems. Where vegetation has to put up with poor soils, dry summer conditions and Cinnamon Fungus, trees are constantly under stress. If their root zone is damaged they can barely survive. Most damage is done by horses, cattle and sheep. Their sharp hooves destroy the fine roots that live just below the surface and collect water after those fine showers Australia has, when we think the water did not penetrate. Eucalypts subject to this damage are likely to suffer mistletoe attack. Introduced fungi are a problem, and there now appears to be an introduced bacteria doing even more damage.

If massive mistletoe growths are cut away from a tree, it will survive. The health of the tree is important. If the conditions in the root zone improve, trees can tolerate and even survive mistletoe attack. In healthy bush you will often find dead mistletoes in trees, so mistletoes do not have it all their way.

#### Cultivating mistletoes

Advice on growing mistletoes from seed.

- Find ripe seed. The fruit normally goes yellow near the end to indicate it is ripe. Gently squeeze the fruit - if it is soft and the end starts to burst, stop squeezing it so the seed stays moist inside the skin. They germinate soon after the skin of the fruit is split.
- Squeeze the ripe fruit so the sticky seed bursts out the end and press it onto new growth where the mistletoe can establish more easily. There will be a long sticky line attached to the skin. If you run this around the branch a few times, it ties the seed to the branch. The seed must be well cemented to the host branch with the viscid layer surrounding the seed.
- Always stick the seed on the underside of the stem - this allows a drop of dew to form on the new plant each night and so keeps up the moisture level. They are vulnerable to dehydration during this stage.
- Generally use the same host as the one from which seed was collected - wattle mistletoes should go on wattles, eucalypt mistletoes onto eucs, etc. Eucalypt mistletoes are fussy but will use melaleuca and oleander as hosts. Oleander will take all mistletoes.
- Some species are more generalists, and some trees never have mistletoes on them. For example blue gums will never have mistletoes, nor do pittosporum. If seed is germinated on pittosporum it goes crazy as there is something in the bark that appears to repel mistletoe shoots.
- Eucalypt mistletoes are short lived, less than 10 years, and when they die the supporting branch usually goes with them. Rainforest mistletoes live as long as the hosts and are not fussy about their hosts.

Mistletoes grow best in a sunny spot. The seedlings are exceptionally vulnerable -- they have to make contact with the host branch, split the outer wood and make their way down to tap into the xylem before they can begin to take up water. Within a week the seed will germinate - the germination rate is high but the establishment rate low. The seedling may live for a month or so, then die. The most tolerant species seem to be from the genus *Muellerina*. They form runners that run along the branch and often grow on *Prunus* as well as eucalypts.

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### Bouquets for the Olympics

Jeff Howes NSW

The plants comprising the bouquets for the Olympics were:

- *Eucalyptus* 'Joey Whistle' (for foliage)
- *Eucalyptus* 'Skippy Whistle' (for foliage)
- *Eucalyptus forrestiana* (for the red elongated flower buds)
- *Grevillea baileyana* (for the leaves to wrap around the base)
- Two types of hybrid Kangaroo Paws, one yellow and the other green and red
- NSW Waratah (*Telopea speciosissima*)
- *Chamelaucium* 'Mega White'
- Two types of the Queensland hybrid grevilleas, one yellow and the other pink (G. 'Sylvia')
- Billy Buttons (*Pycnosorus globosus*)

A media kit on the bouquets is presented as a website on <[www.austflower.com.au/olympics](http://www.austflower.com.au/olympics)>.

*It has long troubled me that, after concerts and similar events, any bouquets presented were not of Australian plants. Recently after a concert in Melbourne the soloist was presented with an arrangement of waratahs - at last!! Thank heavens for the Olympics! (I hope it wasn't just left over' waratahs.) DS*

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### Bandicoots (from "Gumnuts")

A reader from the Flinders University S.A, wrote:

"Referring to the Bandicoots topic in Gumnuts No. 26 , I have just finished studying a biology topic on Fungi and Lower Eukaryotes. The Lecturer made reference to the fact that bandicoots and bettongs feed on native fungi. He also said that potoroos were said to feed almost exclusively on fungi (native truffles growing under eucalypts and the like.)"

*Brian Walters commented that maybe the Tasmania truffle farmers could employ trained bandicoots. DS*

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## MEETINGS

### Melbourne meetings

#### **Report of meeting on Sunday September 3 at Chris Larkin's**

The focus of the meeting was Chris's garden. The weather was fine and definitely an improvement on that of our last visit. As a designer, Chris is a perfectionist and brings to mind the late Kath Deery in her striving to make sure every single plant is well placed and fulfills its role in the overall design. The large block is quite steep and manipulation of levels is one successful aspect of the newer garden sloping down from the house. Chris uses all types of plants, from trees through a large range of shrubs to tufted plants and prostrate groundcovers, with significant repetition of selected species. The garden is beautiful now and continues to develop its great potential.

#### **Next meeting: Sunday December 3 - end of year meeting at Trevor & Beryl Blake's**

Bring a picnic lunch and a chair and come at 12 noon or, if you can't make it then, for the meeting at 2 pm. The Blakes' garden includes a beautiful lake, a *Microlaena* (Weeping Grass) lawn, restored indigenous areas and a rainforest.

**First meeting next year: Sunday February 4** - suggested venue Botanic Garden South Yarra for a guided twilight walk. Please Phone Diana Snape to indicate whether you can come to the December meeting and also to indicate interest in the February one, because we will need to know numbers before organizing a guide.

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### Sydney branch

#### **Next Sydney meeting: Sunday November 19**

This meeting will be held at Fernbrook Garden and Art Gallery at Kurrajong Heights. Jo Hambrett says that the woodland and rainforest gardens are supposed to be very beautiful. They were created by horticulturist Les Musgrave and the art gallery is the working studio of botanic artist Elaine Musgrave. The garden entry fee of \$5.50 per person includes tea, coffee and biscuits.

Please phone Jo Hambrett to indicate whether you can come.

*All photographers - don't forget to take your camera to capture those great garden photos for the GDSG competition, which closes at the end of this month. (They could be developed just in time.) DS*

### NE Vic Branch

#### **Report of meeting on Sunday June 18 at Barbara Buchanan's**

We began with a 10 minute video of the Wirraminna landscape at Burrumbuttock NSW which gives an idea of what an energetic group of residents of a small town can achieve for their children. We then looked at the Buchanan garden at the end of a wet winter, with a few sharp frosts. Some plants were flowering early after warm patches in July, while others were showing frost damage but not real destruction.

We saw changes due to removal of outgrown, misplaced or damaged plants, including a splendid but misplaced *Grevillea lewisii* and a local form of *Micromyrtus ciliata* (Fringed Heath-myrtle) which had layered far beyond its allotted space. A wonderful seating area has now opened up under the *Casuarina torulosa* (Rose She-oak). Floral interest centred on the phebaliums, from tall forest shrubs to low 0.5m ones in shades from white and cream to bright gold. *Acacia curranii* drew the eye with short, yellow-green rods at the base of long, slender blue-green phyllodes and the minerichie bark exposing deep red-brown underlayers.

Over lunch the NL discussion got underway and included the following items:

- What is this *Breyenia* sp. from Iron Range which is deciduous? More deciduous trees, if they would grow down south, would be welcomed with open planting holes.
- Concerning snakes - they will avoid people if given half a chance and there are possible dangers everywhere. Still, young children need to be aware and learn from sensible behaviour by adults.
- Discussion moved to the instant garden makeover programs shown on TV - we would like to see someone with APS standing issue a challenge to program-makers to do a decent job with an all Australian garden.

**Next meeting: Sunday November 12** - I'm sorry this NL will be too late to be useful as a reminder.

**First meeting next year: Sunday March 18 at Martin Rigg & Diana Leggat's,**

Please phone Barbara to indicate whether you can come.

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### **TREASURER'S REPORT**

**Peter Garnham Vic**

#### **FINANCIAL STATEMENT - Quarter ending 30/9/00**

<u>Receipts</u>		<u>Expenses</u>	
Subscriptions	465.00	Postage	166.89
		Photocopying	272.70
		Bank fees	<u>1.02</u>
	<u>\$465.00</u>		<u>\$440.61</u>
<u>Balance in bank</u> (23/8/00)		\$3713.26	
Cheques/cash in hand (30/9/00)		<u>355.00</u>	
Total funds (30/9/00)		<u>\$4068.26</u>	

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### MEMBERSHIP

173 subscriptions for the 2000/2001 financial year paid as at 10/11/00 - approximately 209 members.

#### New members

*A warm welcome to the following new members of the Study Group. We hope you enjoy your membership.*

Ruth Crosson

Ann Dewar

Christina Kennedy

Jan Fleming

Martin Rigg & Diana Leggat

Christine Wadey

#### Membership renewals

*Thank you to all these members who renewed promptly - it is much appreciated. Apologies to any members who had renewed but whose names weren't included in the last NL. Please let me know if your name doesn't appear in the next NL after you've paid.*

Margie & Geoff Barnett, Ted Belcher, Elizabeth Brett, Mark Burns, Jane Calder, Tony Chipperfield, Sandra & Kim Davey, Joyce & Tom Edgerton, Linda Floyd, Margaret Garrett, Greg Ingerson, John Knight, Nadia Lalak, Margarete Lee, Kate Malfroy, Rosemary Manion, Doug & Margaret McIver, Helen Morrow, Shirley Pipitone, Gordon Rowland, Philip & Margaret Tow.

APS NSW, APS Armidale and District, APS Maroondah Inc., Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne.

#### Changes of address

Mark Burns

Margarete Lee

Kate Malfroy

Rosemary Manion

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In my plan of our 'nature strip' garden in the last NL (p13), I did not mention that the *Grevillea robusta* (Silky Oak) shown in the plan is a street tree which has been there for over 30 years. A member questioned our choice of tree. If we had a choice, I think it might be the local *Eucalyptus leucoxylon* (Yellow Gum), linking to those in our front garden. Following Geoff Simmon's article in this NL (p 12) let me know if there are any of his questions you would like to comment on or raise for discussion. In earlier years I can remember some members saying there was too much philosophy and wanting more in the way of practical topics. I'm sure any one NL can't cover the full range of types of article but I hope it does average out over time.

Matt Pearson, a former Study Group leader (Australian Grass & Sedge and Native Plant Regeneration) is carrying out a survey of all ASGAP Study Group members. He has requested that a survey form be sent to all members of all Study Groups. I would be very grateful if all members of APS or SGAP would complete the brief survey form accompanying this Newsletter and send it to Matt. (If you do not belong to APS or SGAP but are a Newsletter subscriber, there is no need to fill in the form.)

We have broken the record in 2000 with this, our fifth Newsletter for this year. Congratulations to all contributors - but (at this stage) I don't think I'd attempt it again. I have been somewhat overwhelmed by suggestions of plants in the different categories we have been considering. If yours don't appear in this NL, don't worry - they are still likely to be used somewhere in The Book. I hope you'll send in articles for the next NL I'll be aiming for our usual February one although the end of February is the deadline for The Book, so I'll see how we go.

Best wishes from

