



GARDEN DESIGN STUDY GROUP

ISSN 1039 – 9062

ABN 82 428 110 028

Newsletter

November 2014

88

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Leader's Comments:

A number of you have seen the article by Neil Marriott in a previous *Newsletter* (# 86) on his design ideas for the development of the site of the new Wildlife Art Museum of Australia in Stawell. Some of you have visited the site with Neil and have seen for yourselves the tremendous potential for the creation of a significant Australian garden. The site has a variety of microclimates from wetlands to meadows. The first physical activity is to erect a vermin proof fence around the whole site and to remove all the existing rabbits on site. Materials for this project have been donated by local businesses and the labour to do the work has been organized so it should start soon. It is a very exciting project being done in collaboration with Royal Botanic Garden Cranbournes. On the recommendation of some of our members, we have decided to donate \$250 of Garden Design Study Group funds toward the project to help them in the initial stage and to show our support. We urge you to look at their website (www.wama.net.au) and consider contributing to this project.

As you know, we encourage you to send in photographs of gardens and plants that will be of interest to all of us. For the images to look good in the document, they need to be between 500 kb and 1.0 mb. Our email system doesn't enjoy files over 10 mb so putting 3 images each of 6 mb in one message tends to come back to you saying our mailbox is full. Therefore if you all could make your pictures on the order of 1 mb they will come out well and be easy for you to send and for us to receive. Thank you.

Correspondence

Welcome comments from members renewing their membership:

Annette Houseman: "Great Newsletters. Would you be interested in photos of plants. "what goes with what best?" (ie in a private garden) why not have a competition for members only?"

We certainly are interested in photos from our members of plants and their arrangement Ed.

Bev and John Hanson: "Newsletter with coloured photos does make a difference"

Judy and Alan Lovelock: "We are enjoying the colour photos and design concepts. Very inspirational but we feel we have quite a way to go with our own garden"

Tamara and Ian Cox: "I love the photos! Keep them coming"

Christine Cullen: "A wonderful improvement – an informative and inspirational newsletter"

Rosemary Verbeeten: "Great! Great! Only wish I could get to the mainland for some of the events/meetings"

Ron Gornall: Please keep up your good work on both the *Newsletter* and leadership of the Group. I would like to hear more about what is happening in Sydney.

Janice Hall: The colour pictures are great! It is a great read and love to discuss items of interest with others. The NL inspires us. Would like to contribute but lacking ideas. Would love to try a red centre garden as depicted in Acacia Study Group NL.

Diana Snape:

Hi Ros,

Congratulations on a particularly interesting, well illustrated newsletter (#87). I haven't looked at the pictures on your blog yet - a treat in store. We saw Gordon (Rowland) and Marie's garden in the very early stages and it is wonderful to read about it now and see the beautiful pictures. Congratulations to them both on an inspiring story and I'm sure their Open Garden will be a great success.

I enjoyed your article on vines and climbers and different ways of using them. I really loved the photo with the wisteria. One climber not listed anywhere was *Marianthus (ex-Billardiera) erubescens* - Red Billardiera - we found it hardier than *B. ringens*. The pictures with Bev Hanson's article on Japanese gardens reminded me again of the elegant simplicity they achieve. You can do so much with so little! Our gardens are usually much busier.

Cheers,

Diana

Ron Gornall

Dear Ben

I have been a member of the Group for many years in Sydney going back to the early years when Jo Hambrett was the group leader. During that time I have enjoyed reading the excellent newsletters although I have been relatively inactive due to my many other environmental commitments locally. I have noticed from the last couple of newsletters that there does not appear to be much group activity here in Sydney. Please advise me if there is still a Sydney group operating and if so who the leader is and what their contact details are.

Unfortunately I am currently not in a position to offer to lead a group here due to my other heavy commitments.

I am very interested in reading about your wonderful gardens in Canberra and Victoria especially the ease with which you are able to grow so many of the Western Australian plants which cannot tolerate the excessive humidity which affects much of Sydney between November and May each year.

Thank you for your excellent work as Group leader and thanks to Ros for the great newsletters. I will look forward to visiting your beautiful garden on my next visit to Canberra if it is convenient for you.

I look forward to hearing from you. Ron

Walcott Garden stamp!**Diana Snape Vic**

I'm sure most readers will have heard the exciting news by now - Ros and Ben's garden will be featured on a stamp. (This will actually happen later this month, before the next newsletter comes out.) I know I will be speaking on behalf of all GDSG members when I say congratulations to them both - and very well deserved!

"In September, Australia Post is issuing a new stamp series, five in all, to celebrate 25 years of Open Gardens Australia. One will feature the Walcott garden in an image of rocks, winding path and shrubs, taken by Dr Ben Walcott who is a fine photographer." (Susan Parsons, *Canberra Times*). I hope it is possible for Ben to include this image in the newsletter, otherwise another one (or several). We have not visited the garden recently and Ros and Ben are too modest to write much on their own garden, so following is an article written recently by Susan Parsons for the *Canberra Times*. (I've omitted the sub-headings.)

"In 2001 Rosalind and Benjamin Walcott purchased a property in Red Hill that was first developed in 1926. Through their architect Wal Kostyrko and landscape architect Helen Cohen, both Canberrans, the design of the new house was integrated with the garden. From July to December 2003 the initial planting of 2500 plants, mostly native to Australia, was completed. Since then they have welcomed many visitors to the garden, having been open to the public more than 40 times including seven occasions for Open Gardens Australia.

David and Ian Elvin constructed the wonderful rock walls behind the waterfalls and around the large ponds using rock quarried at Newline near Queanbeyan.



Water tumbling over large stones in the garden creek creates sound and movement. Pea-flowered pendulous native dogwood (*Jacksonia scoparia*) fringes the water with mat rush (*Lomandra longifolia*) and massed swamp foxtail, its feathery plumes captivating our photographer, Jamila Toderas. The sweet wattle (*Acacia suaveolens*) lent its fragrance to the air and the Albany woolly bush (*Adenanthos sericeus*) provided a soft touch.

On the day the *Canberra Times* visited the Walcotts' garden there were 180 plants in flower. Dr Ros Walcott tracks everything that is in bloom in the garden each week for her records and to check the plants' health and quotes an old Chinese proverb: "The footsteps of the gardener are the best fertiliser".

Among her winter favourites are banksias because the cones last so long and are bold with their Fibonacci spirals. *Banksia robur* starts off metallic green and progresses through gold to rusty brown. *B. brownii* has silver-backed feathery leaves that change colour in the wind. The best small banksia is *B. 'Bulli Baby'* which displays bright bronzed Aussie cones when lit by the sun.

Ros notes which birds are in the garden and, in the first crisp week of August, 22 species visited. They included wood duck, eastern spinebill, nesting crimson rosellas and galahs, satin bowerbird and a new bird for the garden, New Holland honeyeater. A pavilion, which makes the perfect spot for outdoor entertaining, is sited beside a reflecting pool filled with water lilies. The ducks sun themselves close by on a curving cedar boardwalk.

On the front porch and beside the warmth of walls and windows on the back terrace, potted native plants provide specific points of interest. Nothing is more spectacular than electric blue flowers on *Lechenaultia biloba* planted in a sky blue ceramic pot, but for those who like subtle combinations, the heathland desert banksia (*B. ornata*) has grey and cream cones in bud that age to bronze and it attracts honey-eating birds.

This is a garden with sweeps of plants, contrasting foliage shapes and winding gravel pathways that lead to secret corners and secluded nooks. Visitors love to sit and linger and watch the play of light and shade over the whole garden. Foliage of a specimen *Acacia cognata* 'Burgundy Cascade' shimmers in the breeze. *Acacia pendula* and *Acacia spectabilis* frame a wooden seat beside a pond and eucalypts shade benches where privacy is provided by a hedge of willowy *Callistemon salignus*, chosen for its flush of new pink foliage."

Extracted from Susan Parsons, *Canberra Times Relax*, Sunday August 24, 2014, pp.12-13.



Photo of Walcott garden for Australia Post international postcard

Barfield Garden

Diana Snape, Vic

In addition to the two photos of the Barfield garden you included in the last Newsletter # 87, I sent you two of the entrance taken in two different seasons. They make an interesting contrast and I thought the entrance was very nicely designed.



Entrance in autumn

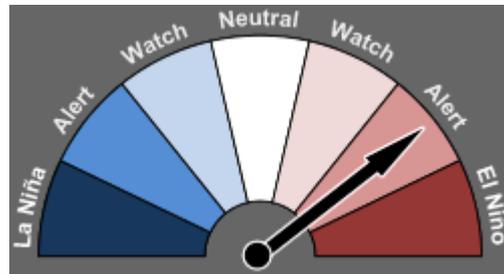


Entrance in early winter

Can south-east Australia expect drought soon?

Todd Layt, [GardenDrum](#), July 25, 2014

The warning for El Niño is currently rather high. In Australia we all remember water restrictions of the past and their devastating effect on gardens and turf. Well it looks like it's probable again. We've had a pretty good run without water problems for a few years now, but we know that will end one day.



Bureau of Meteorology El Niño alert

Climate models surveyed by the Australian Bureau of Meteorology continue to indicate that El Niño is likely to develop by spring 2014. The Bureau's ENSO Tracker remains at El Niño ALERT, indicating at least a 70% chance of El Niño developing in 2014. For Australia, El Niño is often associated with below-average rainfall over southern and eastern inland areas and above-average daytime temperatures over southern parts of the continent. Some dams around Australia are down significantly in storage levels compared to last year, and if El Niño does strike, levels could drop more. Overall the main Australian dam capacity has dropped from 69.1 % to 64.2%. June saw very dry times in many parts of Australia, and July has started dry as well.

So what can we do to protect our gardens before El Niño strikes again? This could be as soon as this summer, but in all likelihood it's not far off. We all need to take care of some housekeeping soon. It is much harder to do this in summer compared to late winter or early spring. Gardening in 40 degree heat is never fun, and relying on the rainfall we have had in recent years could be risky practice.

Things to do:

In late winter or early spring, incorporate organic matter into your garden. Once the drought is here it may be too late. Organic matter acts like a sponge in the soil, helping it retain water. You can either dig the organic matter in when you're preparing a new garden area (which also aerates the soil), or spread it on the surface and let worms and other soil biota mix it in for you.

Cut back older plants in spring to get new growth. Reinvigorated plants will have a better chance of surviving the next drought.

Rejuvenate the lawn, and avoid using drought susceptible types, unless you want to re-turf again once the next drought hits major population centres. e.g. avoid cool season grasses such as fescue and rye in the southern states. Aeration can really help with water infiltration later in summer. Use organic matter as part of any topdressing mix used on your lawn.

Space plants so they do not have too much competition. If planting this spring, the new plants will need more water than the older plants for the first summer or two. So remember which ones were planted this year and give them a little more water this summer than the well-established plants.

Water deeply. You can train your lawn or plants to be drought tolerant. If you water a number of times per week, you are not encouraging your plants to find water deeper in the soil. One deep water each week will encourage plants and turf to grow deeper roots, and chase the water down. In times of drought this keeps green life far healthier.

Mulch using chunky mulch. Mulch that has very few fine particles in it, and mainly larger chunks lets water through when irrigated or when it rains. Light rain often will not penetrate mulch with lots of fines, as the mulch becomes hydrophobic, and besides, chunky mulch is far better at outcompeting weeds and stopping weed seed germination. Mulch with lots of fines actually helps weed seeds germinate, as it acts like a potting mix. Weeds will compete with plants for water in drought, so keeping weeds out of the garden is another drought damage avoidance strategy. Mulch reduces evaporation of water from the soil, and also helps keep the soil cooler on hot summer days.

If you still have a water tank, use it to reduce your water bill. Although water restrictions are unlikely this summer, in some places it is possible if El Niño really kicks in, and who knows what could happen the year after.

Do not lose all memory of previous droughts and water restrictions. Always irrigate and garden with water conservation in mind, as this preparation will help when severe drought returns.

Plant drought tolerant species in new gardens or if replanting parts of old gardens. Over the last decade lots of great new plants have been developed for drought tolerant gardening, both native and exotic. Some of our old drought-hardy shrub favourites like the humble azalea have even more drought tolerant examples, such as the new Encore Azaleas like Autumn Royalty and Autumn Twist and, as a bonus, they are also lace bug resistant.

Then of course we have our tough beautiful natives such

as *Lomandra*, *Dianella*, *Westringia*, *Callistemon*, *Hardenbergia*, types of long-lived kangaroo paw (*Anigozanthos*) and many more.

Severe drought is by no means certain, but there is a 70% chance of El Niño this year, and if that happens and you live in south-eastern Australia, it pays to be prepared. Getting prepared for drought has general garden benefits and displays good horticultural practice.

About Todd Layt

Todd was the author of *Drought Tolerant Gardening Guide*, 2009, ISBN; 978-0-646-50860-3. He has written for the *Landscape Contractor* and the *Landscape Manager* magazines for 10 years. For many years he ran turf farms and a large production nursery. Now he is director and owner of **Ozbreed Pty Ltd**, breeding many native and exotic plants, as well as turf varieties including Sapphire Buffalo, and Nara Native turf.

In love with groundcovers – words and photos* by Chris Larkin, Vic

First published in *Growing Australian*, APS Victoria, Vol 58.2 No. 229 September 2014, pp. 10-13

Is Australia over-endowed with ground-covering plants, or does it just seem that way to me? There does seem to be a wealth of choice in these plants. Some are groundcovers that hug the ground closely, but then there are others that are prostrate forms of shrubs, usually described as ‘decumbent’.

* The pictures show how I have used various plants in my north-facing hillside garden, with clay soil and around 900 mm or rainfall.



Apart from their use in garden design, there are practical reasons for using ground covering plants.

- No matter what I have to say about the size, toughness, ease or difficulty of growing a particular plant, there will be some people who will disagree with me because no two growing conditions – or indeed plants – are the same.
- I have a large garden and you may have a small one, so the plants you chose to use should be appropriate to the scale of your garden.
- There are no shortcuts to gardening. You need to know which groundcover to plant where. People who love gardening, love this aspect of gardening. What you can know, or need to know, knows no end. Gardening is as intellectual as it is physical! Enjoy the journey, as the destination is as elusive as it is illusionary.
- Visiting other gardens is one the most powerful ways of learning about plants – their growth habit and dimension in particular.
- There is only so much you can learn from someone else’s garden. Becoming intimate with your own garden throughout the year is extremely important. You need to know your soil, wet and dry areas, sunny and shady ones. Let your garden talk to you. It will tell you which plants are happy, and you can build on this with the same plants, or ones that like similar growing conditions. Repetition is good.
- Weed suppression. Make sure you have cleared the area of weeds first, because it can be very difficult, if not impossible, to control weeds growing through a groundcover.

- Moisture retention. Groundcovers shade the ground, and in the process their own root systems, from the drying affects of sun and wind. For this reason groundcovers are likely to help with the health of soils.
- Erosion control. Groundcovers will slow the flow of water, and help with stabilising slopes.

They allow more light and air movement throughout the garden, which assists with the health of the garden.

- Moisture retention. Groundcovers shade the ground, and in the process their own root systems, from the



But I value groundcovers mainly because of the role they play in good garden design. This is what really interests me. There are a lot to choose from, but which plants you use is a matter of your personal taste and growing conditions. What you need to consider when choosing where to place ground covering plants in your garden is how they can provide some of the following.

- A balance of mass (shrubs etc.) and void/open space. Use of groundcovers allows a greater feeling of open space. Placed beside paths or roads, groundcovers will expand their feeling of width. The opposite is being 'shrubbed in', which in its extreme form is a high hedged maze or tunnel! Used more generally, they will allow you to see more of your garden from any vantage point. You can see into garden beds to the detail of plants, and maybe even further to more distant views.
- A balance of light and shade. Groundcovers allows more light and air into an area, so that you can appreciate different light effects in the garden, and increase the health of plants.



- Appropriateness to the site. You need to consider the scale of the plants in relation to your garden. On sloping sites, you can use plants to mound and cascade down slopes, or simply cover the slope in a simple sheet of foliage. Think of how plants might drape themselves over rocks and sleeper walls, adding to the drama, the lushness and the interest.
- Use complementary and contrasting foliage and growth habits for harmony on the one hand, and interest and variety on the other.
- Think of growing plants up through groundcovers. Simple groundcovers like *Grevillea obtusifolia*, which doesn't flower well in my experience, makes a wonderful lush groundcover with trunks growing through it.

Here are some of my favourite groundcovers

Kunzea ambigua prostrate. I have about 10 – mounding and cascading. Grows in tough conditions with respect to dry, but will take wet, and low light. Masses of white flowers in spring.

Grevillea obtusifolia. I have at least half a dozen. Not great for flowers, but lush foliage with slightly broadleaf grass appearance. Enough uplift to catch the light. One plant goes a long way. Great down embankments, and with plants growing through it.

Pultenaea pedunculata. I have several large patches. A local variant is now available at KES but common around the Bendigo area. Fine foliaged, layering habit, massed with small pea flowers in spring. Fabulous down slopes and draped over rocks. Establishment time seems to be important – give a long lead into summer.

Hibbertia pedunculata. I must have 20 or more of these plants – one growing at the base of a tree! How far will they layer and go? Who knows. Fine foliaged, can lightly mound, massed with large yellow flowers over a long period in spring. More likely to flower with a decent amount of sun. I use this one as a grass replacement in smaller spaces.

Myoporum parvifolium. Different forms that are flat to the ground, and a coarser plant that is called ‘upright’ that rears up and gives the opportunity for a great play of light. I grow plants through the various forms, really treating it as a living mulch. I have good success with some Hovea plants in dappled shade through the upright form.

Goodenia ovata prostrate. Fat, round, serrated, slightly fleshy leaf, small yellow flowers. Tough plant that will repair sun damage. I just love the difference of the shiny leaf. There is a low growing form sold by KES that has foliage like the upright local form but its growth habit is decumbent – it arches up in quite a lovely way and hence catches the light. It also shows less die-back than the taller version, and is extremely tolerant of dry conditions.

Ziera prostrata. If this plant seeded as well in the ground as it does in pots, I would be worried. Good hanging down a big pot or in the ground. Mounded to ½ meter, it is tolerant to dry, but more so if it gets shade. Nice dark green leaf, massed with small white/pink flowers in Spring.

Dodonaea procumbens. Nice bright dark green leaf, making it a healthy lush-looking shrub. Covers a wide area taking dry and sun. I have not succeeded with this in shade.

Persoonia chamaepitys (soft needle fine leaf), **P. mollis**(broader leaf), **P. oxycoccoides** (small roundish leaf), **P. nutans x oxycoccoides**. I love the difference here in leaf and growth habit. Grow more for the foliage than flowers, which are small and yellow.

Lasiopetalum macrophyllum. Big furry grey leaf but the Tasmanian form is smaller. Both have showy new growth. **L. micranthum** is compact and grows in a fair bit of shade. All can flower well, but the flowers are hidden underneath the plant. Again, I’m interested in what these plants have to offer that is different.



Correas – prostrate **alba** has large greyish round leaves and open white flowers, whereas **C. alba** ssp **pannosa** – eg ‘Western Star Pink’ – has a small leaf and white flowers with pink centres. Both are excellent. **C. reflexa** forms like **nummularifolia** are also good. Correas have suffered in recent years if exposed to too much sun on extreme days, and they can also die in wet times. They like dry semi-shade.

Lysiosepalum involucratum. Not sold as a groundcover, but it acts like one for me! Long flowering period and sporadic at other times. Grey leafed, pink flowers. I use it sporadically as a key plant either side of one of my paths, so it helps to tie the area together. All those pretty herbaceous plants.

Brachyscomes, Helichrysums, Scaevolas. They are often set back in summer, but have a great ability to ‘come again’ when the rains do. The rewards are in the wonderful show of colour they provide, so who can do without them! They are ‘cottage’ and delightful, and we must learn to

admire their ability to regenerate, and forgive them their time of stress induced retreat! And so much more. There are a few banksias, like **B. blechnifolia**, **B. petiolaris**, **B. repens**, lots of different grevilleas – too many to name, different acacias, and ground-matting plants like **Dichondra repens** and **Pratia** forms.

Go forth and explore!

The Gothenburg Botanical Garden

Pam Yarra, Vic.

On recent travels from our arctic holiday, Jim and I spent a week in Norway and Sweden with our Swedish friends. While in Gothenburg, we visited their beautiful botanical garden. It is one of Europe's largest and most beautiful gardens and it differs a lot from most traditional gardens in Europe. The total area is 175 hectares (about 432 acres), of which the largest part constitutes a nature reserve, including an arboretum. The garden proper is about 40 hectares and divided into many sections linked by lawns with fine trees and shrubs. The famous rock garden, received a three star rating in the Michelin Guide, and as well as a waterfall, features about 5,000 plants. The garden is constantly changing – at nature's speed. While there, we spoke with gardeners, who were planting bulbs in a sloping bank; these were not just for flowering in next spring, but during the coming winter months also. It is hard for us to imagine what this pleasing sight must be in Sweden's dark cold winter.

The herb garden with its curved beds demonstrated the informality seen throughout the entire garden and the Japanese glade was a restful place for reflection and relaxation. The Japanese influence is also seen near the entrance, with garden beds and an antique Japanese lantern, enhancing the presence of Japan. It was given to the garden, as a gift by the Japanese embassy in the 1950s.

As well as many different garden beds, there are three large greenhouses, containing plants from all parts of the world. It was strange to see Australian plants, such as the large *Banksia serrata* growing indoors.



Ever since the time of Carl von Linnæus, Sweden has had a special interest in the plant world of Japan. Carl Peter Thunberg, a famous pupil of Linnæus, arrived in Japan in 1775. He was employed as a physician by the Dutch East India Company. He was permitted to collect both plants and animals from the country and published the first scientific flora for Japan in 1784, *Flora Japonica*.

The interest for Japanese plants in Gothenburg botanical garden started during the construction of the gardens in the 1920s with seed exchange with Sapporo botanic garden (Hokaido Daigaku Shokubutsuen) During the 1950s a more substantial exchange of both scientists and plants started. In 1952 there was a seed collecting expedition to Japan with following expeditions during the 50s, through to the 70s.

The Japanese glade was founded in 1952 to house all the plants and the following year the arboretum was founded. A substantial number of Japanese tree were planted in the Asiatic part of this extensive tree collection.



The development of the Japanese Glade has continued with the aim to offer visitors a picture and feel of the Japanese plant world, not to just create a Japanese garden, but hopefully to give a glimpse and idea of the rich nature and culture of Japan.

This "cross cultural fertilisation" between Sweden and Japan was of specific interest to me, as my own interest in Japan goes back to high school days, when I started writing to a Japanese pen friend. I later discovered an artistic botanical link between Australia and Japan, when I studied Norman Sparnon's book, *The Beauty of Australia's Wildflowers. Creative Ideas for Japanese flower arrangement*.

For anyone planning a visit to the Gothenburg botanical garden, you like me would find one day is not enough time to appreciate its diversity. So my plan is to return, maybe in a different season.



Who leaves \$100 million to a *garden* library?

GardenDrum August 4, 2014

Rachel 'Bunny' Mellon, who died recently at the age of 103, was a philanthropist, self-taught botanist, friend to Jacqueline Onassis and heir to the Listerine fortune. During her lifetime she redesigned the White House Rose Garden but also put together a significant collection of rare books, manuscripts and works of art on the subjects of landscape design, horticulture and natural history, now housed in the Oak Spring Garden Library in Upperville, Virginia USA.

Her estate, including jewellery, furniture and decorative items is soon to be auctioned, with the proceeds going to the Gerard B. Lambert Fund which supports the Oak Spring Garden Library. With her late husband Paul, Rachel Mellon also donated hundreds of artworks to museums and galleries.

*As a long time member of the **Council on Botanic and Horticultural Libraries** I cannot help but applaud this marvellous gift – Ed.*

Quotes of the Season

Sylvia Crowe 'A selection of choice plants does not a garden make any more than a selection of choice words a poem'. This quote was cited by Bernard Trainor in Anne Latreille's Garden Voices p. 211 but I haven't been able to track down the original source. Does anyone know?

Old Chinese proverb 'The footsteps of the gardener are the best fertilizer'

A vertical garden in Melbourne

Diana Snape, Vic

We recently visited a garden in a Melbourne suburb, open in the Australian Open Garden Scheme, with a very beautiful vertical garden. I think it is the first such garden I have seen designed solely with Australian plants!

It was designed by Philip Johnson, the designer of the highly successful garden that has just won prestigious awards in England - Gold Medal and Best in Show at the Hampton Court Flower Show. The owners commissioned the vertical garden for the tall white wall of a neighbour's place that backs on to their small courtyard. It faces west and measures 4 metres high by 3 m wide. Other than in winter, it is shaded by a wisteria vine growing on a trellis.



The owners had a slide show running that showed the installation of the garden. The design started as a wavy pattern drawn on the wall. The curved segments of this design were then planted out with a range of carefully selected plants including baueras, baeckeas, low correas, *Acacia cognata* 'Dazzler', *Rhododendron lochiaie*, ferns, beautifully weeping *Lomandra* 'Tanika' and brachyscomes, scaevolae and violets.

The plant list also included some surprisingly large plants such as *Leptospermum* 'Pink Cascade', *Acacia acinacea* and even *Grevillea endlicheriana*. Over time, of course, some species grew better than others and there has been a gradual replacement of some species. Now some plants are even self-sowing in the vertical garden and maidenhair ferns have arrived too. The photos show how beautiful the effect is and also the setting, with the neighbours' decorative fence (as well as their high walls).

The vertical garden might have been quite expensive to install initially but the owners said they enjoy maintaining it, helped by a 2-monthly visit from the designers. The owners have underground water tanks for storage of rainwater to be recycled through the system into a deep trough/reservoir at its base. Philip Johnson insisted that the vertical garden should use no off-site water.

I must admit I love the idea of vertical gardens. For a site with restricted space, it could be a very appealing option.



'The Millennium Garden'

Pensthorpe Nature Reserve, Fakenham, Norfolk, England

Ros Walcott, Canberra

I wanted to visit this garden when we were last in England, but we could not fit it into our itinerary. It is Piet Oudolf's second British commission and has become a very successful and popular garden.

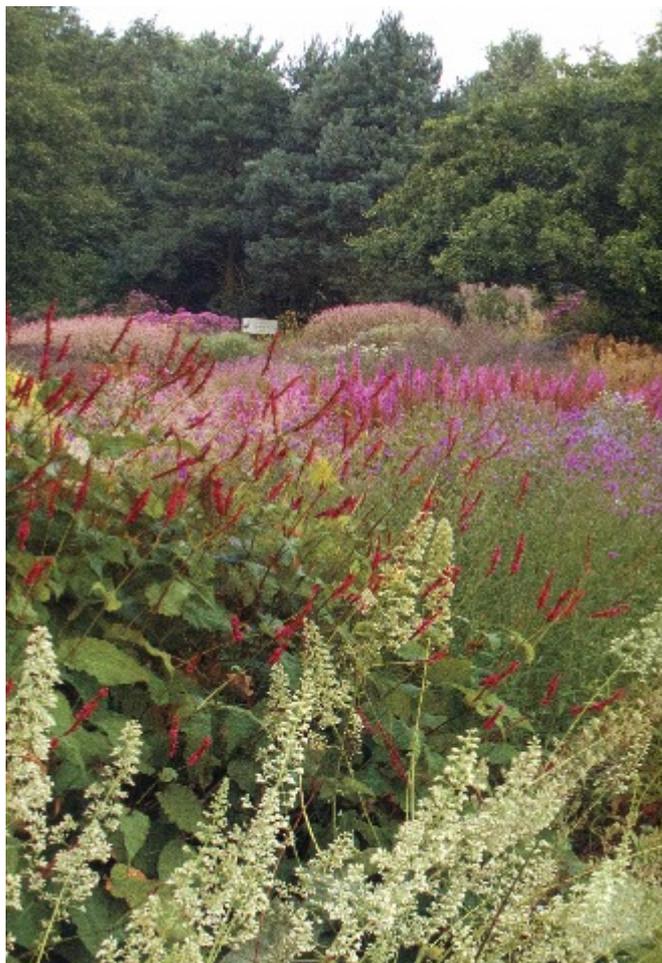
It is a 4,500 square metre garden set in the flat Norfolk landscape where the soil is sandy and there are some quite wet areas. There is no architecture to surround or shape the garden – it is quite informal.

'Paths are broad to accommodate visitor numbers.. For many who come, this is the first time they have seen perennials used on this scale, and the effect can be overwhelming, especially since the familiar markers of gardens – hedges, lawns, statuary, archways – are lacking. Visitors describe feeling like children in a meadow, their surroundings make them feel diminutive but full of wonder.' p.102.

The garden focusses on spring flowering bulbs and shrubs, followed by summer flowering perennials and grasses, then in autumn and winter the grass seedheads come into their own.

Piet Oudolf, Landscapes in Landscapes, Thames and Hudson, 2013, p. 102-119.

Photos pp. 108-9



Australian landscape design awards 2014

Garden Drum August 17, 2014

Catherine Stewart

AILDM, the Australian Institute of Landscape Designers and Managers, has announced its annual awards for residential and commercial landscape design, plantscape and landscape management.

Landscape Management Amenity Horticulture – Adrian Swain and Andrew Morrison , ecodesign



AILDM Awards 2014 Category 8 Landscape Management Amenity Horticulture, ecodesign, Macquarie University

I went to Macquarie University back in the in the late 1970s and, even then, the grid-like planting of 115 lemon-scented gums within this confined and heavily used space that is the Central Courtyard was a maintenance nightmare. Fast forward to 2014 and the trees survive despite major development within their root zone but, understandably, the University has major concerns about the safety and structural integrity of the trees.

This landscape management report contains a careful and thorough assessment of every tree combined with tree work proposals. It also has a practical and easy-to-understand plan for University staff by which they can monitor the trees' condition in the future, especially as they move beyond maturity to senescence, so they know what and when action might be needed.

Three Exceptional Garden Benches

Ros Walcott, Canberra



Rustic mulga seat at the base of Uluru



Banksia bench at Kings Park Perth



Generous 30 seat bench at Horse Island in memory of Christina Kennedy's mother

Report of Melbourne garden visit and meeting on Sunday August 10, 2014 Diana Snape, Vic

Garden visit

We visited the garden of Barbara and Roger Rooks in Montrose at the foot of the Dandenongs, which make a wonderful backdrop. Their block is on a corner and has an unusual shape. It also has a drop of 30 feet (about 10 metres) which creates a very challenging slope, down to the north-west. The garden slopes down to the street for its whole length.

The Rooks began their garden in 1972 so many areas are now well established, with different levels created with skilful use of rocks and a wide variety of shrubs. (A vertical drop is disguised in part by the use of cascading, ground-covering shrubs.) We noticed particularly a selection of correas and grevilleas, plus many other genera. A number of plants were in bud or full flower especially, of course, the wattles. Eucalypts both indigenous and planted gave height to the garden. Pot plants included greenhood orchids in full flower.

The main entrance is via a sloping, curved drive with a nice vista up through the garden towards the house. There are also pedestrian entrances by steps and sloping paths. Vistas have been created in the garden and also from inside the house, which is well placed on the block. Recent changes include the creation of tiered levels in two garden areas to replace sloping beds, where erosion of soil or mulch could readily take place. Barbara has found the level areas much more user and plant friendly.

One area where Barbara and Roger welcomed suggestions was the only lawn area, at the lowest, slightly sloping level (still well above street level). Roger recently built a pool here, with the upper side at ground level and the lower side built up with rocks. Barbara planted some *Orthrosanthus multiflorus* beside the pool as a temporary measure but wondered how best to treat the lower level to disguise the drop. We all thought the pool needed to be more enclosed.



Photos by Diana Snape

After checking with Roger whether he was prepared and happy to do more work, Bev Hanson used chalk to mark on the grass her recommended outline for an extended garden bed area, with the pool nestling into one side. The bed would have a Y-shaped informal path through it, with one arm leading into another informal path and the other arm back to the lawn. Roger was very happy with this as he likes the idea of vistas and 'surprises and delights' in the garden. Bev took some 'before' photos for later comparison. (The following day, Barbara told me that Roger had already started digging near the pond.)

Meeting

The weather for our visit was wintry but became spring-like whenever the sun appeared. We returned to the comfort of a sunny room for a short meeting. Bev Hanson reported that she had been to a meeting at the University of Melbourne with the senior lecturer in Landscape Architecture, Andrew Seniga, and others. She has been invited to give lectures to students about Ellis Stones and his legacy, and also advise on the redesign of the memorial garden by Andrew's honours students. We still don't know how quickly this will all be implemented but Bev will keep us informed about developments.

Nicky Zanen has kindly prepared and run off a copy of the Australian plant gardens that will be opening in the coming Open Garden Scheme and could be of interest to Victorian members. This will be be circulated among Melbourne GDSG members. Thanks for that, Nicky. It's always a great chance to visit other peoples' gardens and see the implementation of their ideas for garden design.

We thanked Barbara and Roger for their hospitality and willingness to share their garden with us - and also those who had brought a delicious afternoon tea.

Report of Melbourne garden visits, Monday October 6, in the Grampians area Diana Snape, Vic

What a day! We really needed several more hours, so we could spend more time at each of our three venues. There were 21 of us, including several visitors, plus Neil Marriott who was our enthusiastic and intrepid leader for the whole day.



Grassy woodland at WAMA site with Neil Marriott showing the group around

Site of WAMA (Wildlife Art Museum of Australia)

We met at 9.30am at the WAMA site, situated between Halls Gap and Pomonal. (The Grampians region is a central area for wildlife artists.) This property of approximately 170 hectares was gifted to WAMA by Greg and Glenda Lewin. It has a Trust for Nature covenant covering about 6 hectares for protection in perpetuity. Neil Marriott is in charge of site development. WAMA will be beneficial for the economics and employment of the region; it will promote art, botany and natural history with an emphasis on interpretation and education.



Wetland area at WAMA with view across to the Grampians Photo by Ben Walcott

Work has already commenced on the site. Rabbits were eradicated last year, leading to the appearance of many orchids and a variety of seedlings. A feral-proof fence for the whole site has now been gifted (a costly gift). When this is in place, southern brown bandicoots will be re-introduced. Part of the area was burnt in the 2006 bushfire, leaving a number of dead trees - unsightly to some people but important for roosting birds. With dead shrubs too, a balance has to be struck between safety, aesthetic values and usefulness as shelter and refuge for wildlife. The first Ecological Vegetation Class (EVC) we walked through was grassy woodland, with a very diverse range of species, including about 8 species of eucalypts and 10 of acacias. Plants of local provenance, supplied by Phil Williams, have been planted in the covenanted area, including about 50 grass-trees and many *Kennedia prostrata* (now in flower). Only about one plant in 130 was lost. Other plants in flower included *Pimelea humilis*, goodenias, *Dillwynia sericea*, *Hibbertia fasciculata*, *Thysanotus patersonii*, a very pale pink *Leptospermum myrsinoides* and several orchids. Old *Grevillea aquifolium* plants are dying but new seedlings are now appearing. Land disturbed by rabbits has been good for seedlings to establish. The second EVC is riparian scrub, suffering from recent lack of rain and from fire that killed some sedges and *Gahnia radula* along the creek (frog habitat). Just a few plants in full flower were tiny *Lomandra nana*, *Stypandra glauca*, *Lepidosperma carthoides* and a mistletoe where a Diamond Fire-tail nested. A beautiful *Acacia provincialis* resembled *A. retinodes* in appearance but wept right to the ground. Remote areas cameras have recorded the wildlife, both native and feral. There are lots of echidnas.

The third EVC is the extensive wetland area, previously modified in a way that did not retain water on the block. The larger area will be 'waterscaped' with islands and different depths of water to cater for different water-birds and other wildlife. European carp will be removed and native fish returned, with tortoises, and a bird-hide will be built. Delightful birds we saw (or heard) included Scissors-grinders, White-wing Trillers and Eastern Shrike-tits. White-browed Babbler's nest in a *Callitis rhomboidea*.

Neil showed us some of the inspiring plans that have been prepared by students for the buildings and their landscaping. These will be closely co-ordinated but, as yet, planning is in its early stages. Sadly, lack of time meant we really were unable to spend time studying these plans and discussing options, as we had no official 'meeting'.

Studying this natural area with Neil as guide reminded us of the inter-connectedness of nature, something we can only try to emulate in a created garden.

Greg and Glenda Lewin's garden

Sadly Greg and Glenda Lewin were away overseas but Neil and their gardener, Andrew, were excellent guides. The garden is about 15 years old and was originally designed by Barbara Redding. Andrew has worked there for about 7 years. Some of the initial planting remains, including hakeas with impressive rows of two forms of *H. petiolaris*, different in both form and foliage.



Photos by Diana Snape

The garden around the modern house is well developed with many beautiful plants and some formal aspects to the design, including sculpture and an oriental courtyard. There is also an attractive small pond. Stunning plants of grafted *Eremophila nivea* are combined with lovely stonework. In many cases, plants from Western Australia have coped with the changing, drier conditions better than local plants. Plants unable to cope have been removed including, in a key location, a group of *Melaleuca armillaris* 'Green Globe' that had formed a curved, low hedge. Among plants of *Melaleuca* 'Limelight', several have become a little 'sunburnt'. A low form of *Acacia cognata* is another soft but sculptural plant used.

Large clear areas around the house and its gardens are covered with gravels and stones of different sizes. The soil can be difficult, with both clay and stones. Andrew plans to use gypsum and organic material to improve the structure. Inorganic mulch, including in one area crushed offcuts from headstones, is used to shade roots and reduce evaporation.



In addition to hardy shrubs like westringias, there are many special plants including a very pale pink form of *Kunzea baxteri*, *Petrophile ericifolia*, unusual grevilleas and eremophilas. Special eucalypts include *E. tetraptera*, the Murchison River Ghost Gum and a striking row of *E. rhodanthe*. On a dry, north-facing slope, lomandras have been very successful but all except one of the deep pink boronias planted among them have failed. Two suggestions for replacements were to use colourful succulents such as Rounded Noon-flower (*Disphyma crassifolium*), or Grass-trees as a contrast in textures. In another area, *Lomandra* 'Seascape' plants complement a sculpture.

With concerns about the threat of fire, steps from a paved area close to the house lead down to an underground fire shelter that also doubles as a cellar. Not far away there is a large dam, in which the water is currently discoloured by suspended clay but Andrew is planning to correct that. We enjoyed our lunch indoors beside an enclosed lap pool, observing the showers that had been threatening all morning and listening to their sound on the iron roof. The showers finished as we finished our lunch, ready to continue exploring the garden.

Neil and Wendy Marriott's garden

This visit was a bonus, generously agreed to by Neil although he and Wendy were leaving for Western Australia the next day. I'm not going to attempt anything like a full description of the garden after our brief and hurried visit, as this garden deserves to be recorded properly, in a detailed way. During the visit, our group began to shrink, as members had to leave to depart for Melbourne, so only a few even glimpsed the whole garden. We certainly did not have time to see it at all thoroughly, though we moved more quickly as the day gradually became greyer.



Magnificent outcropping granite boulders give the whole garden a wonderful setting with lovely views, especially of the Grampians. Neil told us that the garden is situated on a granite intrusion that predates the Grampians by millions of years. The land was purchased in 1990 and rabbits were eliminated before a feral-proof fence was erected around a substantial area. The house was built in 1994. Between the road and house, a variety of local species of trees and shrubs were planted to revegetate this area, which now looks very natural. Near the house, a large number of fruit trees are under netting for protection.

Around the house, to the south, a selection of lovely small shrubs produces a colourful cottage garden effect, with height provided by beautiful *Eucalyptus caesia*. A list of species in the whole garden would cover a very extensive range and in spring it seemed to have flowers of every possible colour. The bright yellow of *Acacia restiacea* contrasted with the intense blues and purples of lechenaultias and dampieras and I think there must be every shade of pink and mauve. The garden continues right around the house.

On the slope below the house, a cluster of beds have more recently been designed and created together. Here there are so many very special plants, collected by Neil, that he is the only person who could name them all. (This is the sort of record we need to have.) Notable are many verticordias, including *V. ovalifolia* grafted on to a Geraldton Wax, outstanding eremophilas like *E. flaccida*, the

aptly named *Grevillea magnifica* and many, many others. There is more garden further afield, both uphill and downhill.



We looked from a distance at some of the older areas north-east of the house, including the extensive vegetable garden, the nursery area and more beds with established plants. In the very large area where the Grevillea Collection (in the Ornamental Plants Collection) was burnt some years ago, survivors and new seedlings - with many possible hybrids - have created a new, different grevillea garden.

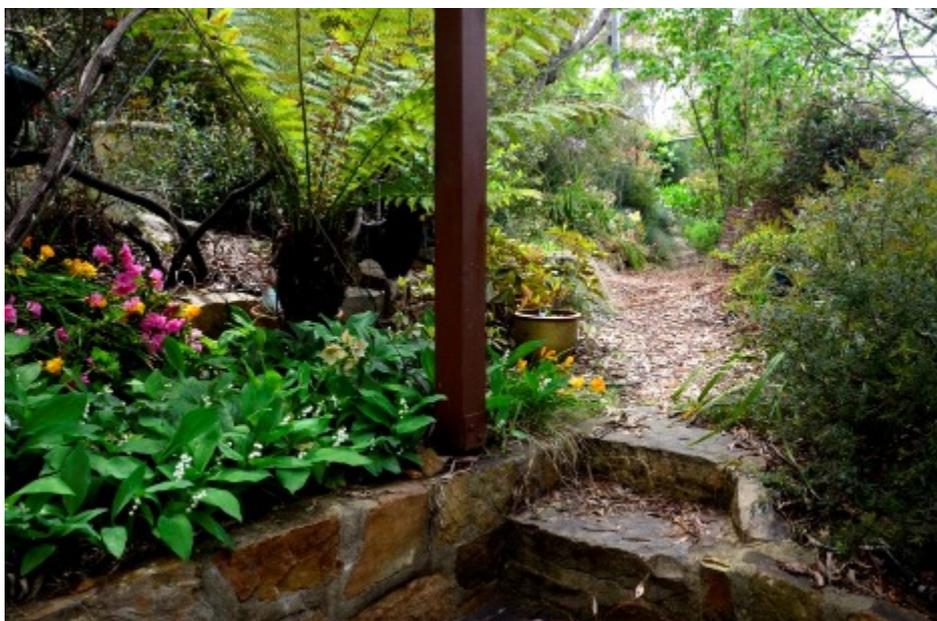


Sadly we ran out of time, as the Marriotts' garden needs at least a day to visit, preferably longer, but a short visit was infinitely better than none! On behalf of the group, I thanked Neil (and also Wendy) for their sacrifice of a whole day for us when they were both so busy, having spent the last three days helping set up and run the APS flower show at Pomonal. Neil's enthusiasm is inspirational, as is his knowledge!

About a dozen members of our Society's Daytime Activity Group (some of them members of the Garden Design Study Group) visited my garden on a steep south east facing block in early spring



The garden is a whimsical/random collection of native and exotic plants which has evolved over nearly forty five years since we moved in in 1969. There are tall trees at street level and in the back garden, replacing the eight which were here originally but which have had to be removed for one reason or another over the years. Those which have been planted include *Casuarina cunninghamiana*, *C. glauca*, *Grevillea robusta*, *Hakea macreana* (spectacular on the day of the visit) and *Eucalyptus sideroxylon* and a couple of other eucalypts. Their canopies provide a lovely outlook from the front windows of the house. The large back garden trees are naturally occurring 'seedlings' of *Eucalyptus mannifera* and *E. macrorhyncha*, with an understorey of smaller things such as callistemons, acacias, *Kunzea ambigua*, large and small camellias, some self-sown hawthorns, loquats, a cumquat, correas, croweas, alyogyne, azaleas, prostantheras, roses, daphne and rhododendrons amongst others.



Children down the years have enjoyed the paths and steps which meander through this wilderness up to the top of the backyard, where we had a level strip cut, originally hoping for a vegie patch, but possums, shortage of sunshine and difficulty of watering defeated this enterprise and there are now correas, camellias, prostantheras, azaleas, philotheca and daisies instead. There are level areas at the back and front of the house with a small area of lawn, but much less than in earlier years – some has been converted to garden with correas, calytrix, geraniums, azaleas, fuchsias, camellias, salvias etc. at the front and treeferns, correas, croweas, daisies, hellebores, lily of the valley, azaleas etc at the back. Hiding in odd corners are cyclamen, *Veronica perfoliata*, scaevolias, bulbines, epacris and young crepe myrtles. The steeper areas support hakeas, a lovely NSW Christmas Bush which withstands our winter and quite severe pruning, *Baeckea virgata*, *Kunzea ambigua*, callistemon, leptospermum, grevillea, phebalium, prostanthera, crowea, micromyrtus, small acacias, fuchsias, some roses, azaleas, *Correa alba*, *C. bauerlenii* and a very few naturally occurring local species such as *Dianella revoluta*, *Lomandra filiformis*, cassinia and hardenbergia. Fences and arches support clematis, *Pandorea pandorana*, *P. jasminoides*, yellow jasmine and banksia roses, and there is wisteria along the front verandah and over a pergola at the back.

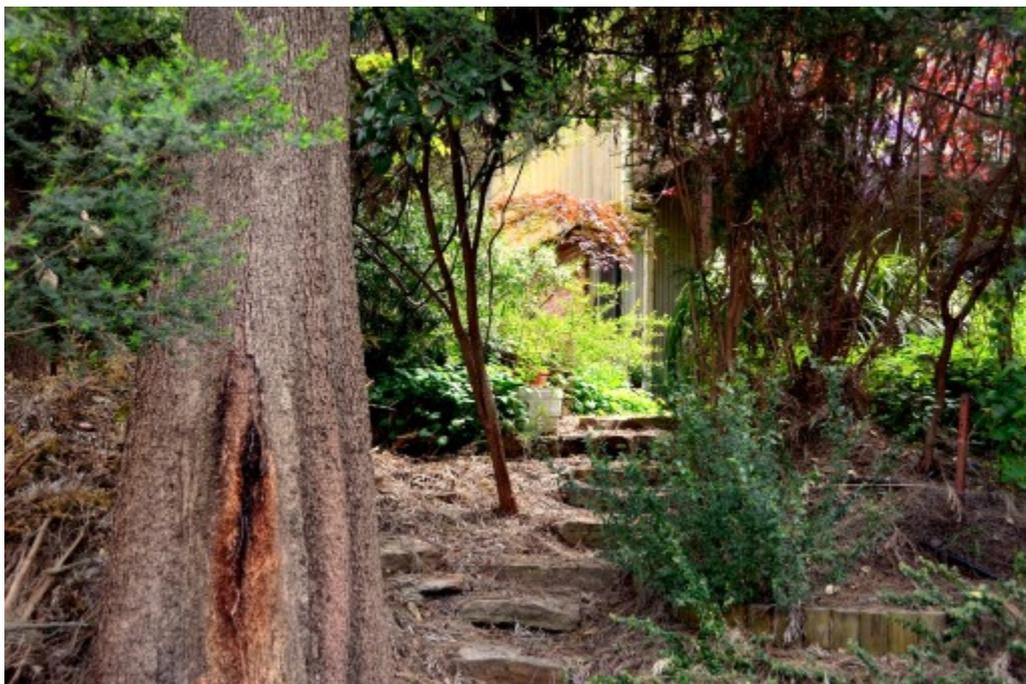


Our original plan for the garden was sketchy to say the least. We wanted trees. We wanted somewhere for prospective children to play, so level areas for lawn near the house at the back (a cut into the hillside) and at the front (excavation spoil from the house foundations) and another for a vegie patch (another cut into the hillside at the top of the back garden) were created. The lawns were difficult to maintain but served their purpose and are now much reduced in size to provide just a little space round the house. The vegie patch was never a success due to shade, lack of reasonable soil and possums and has been taken over by a loquat and a variety of shrubs and my nursery pots. The other parts of the 'plan' were to provide summer shade for the house, a green environment, colour, and a 'bush' feel to fit in with the nearby bushland. All this has been more or less achieved, albeit with rather greater water use than we would have liked. The native birds seem to approve – I think they are what I will miss most if/when I have to leave here.

There are very few survivors of our original 'ten trees and forty shrubs'. (*Kath refers to a long term agreement in Canberra where all new blocks received free ten trees and forty shrubs from the government nursery at Yarralumla.*) We tried to select natives because we thought they

would be most likely to succeed, but the choice was pretty limited. My memory is vague and my records scant but some which come to mind are *Acacia baileyana* (2, one of which made an excellent shade house in the back garden for several years), *Callistemon citrinus* (2 red and 2 yellow – three still alive), *Eucalyptus viminalis* (removed), *E. nicholii* (snapped off at the base when about 6 m tall), *Grevillea* (2 *rosmarinifolia*, 1 'Canberra Gem', 2 *juniperina*, of which 1 *juniperina* remains, having been cut back hard several times), *Eriostemon* (*Philotheca*) *myoporoides* (still alive after cutting back hard many times), *Hakea saligna*, *Acacia floribunda*, *Correa alba*, *Westringia fruticosa* and *Banksia ericifolia* (died after pruning to avoid the power line).

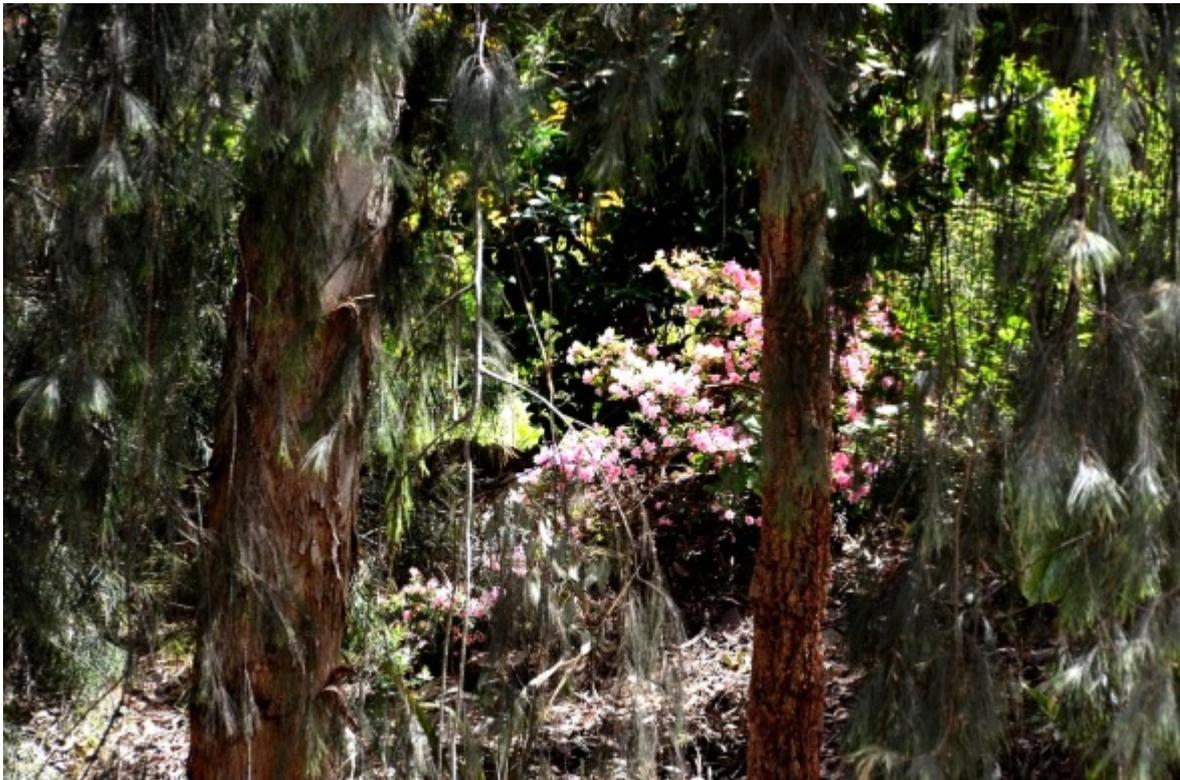
Many things have been tried over the years and have not survived. Acacias have been relatively short lived apart from a large *melanoxylon* which however succumbed to borers though suckers survive. A NSW Christmas Bush (originally sheltered by the aforementioned *A. melanoxylon*) is still doing extremely well. Grevilleas seem to last about twenty years at most. Banksias have not been long lasting. callistemons have done relatively well. Some old correas have lasted very well, though some of the newer hybrids have been disappointing. The *Correa alba* is one of the oldest plants in the garden, as is the *C. bauerlenii* which I was led to believe might be difficult – it grew to cover about ten square metres before I hacked into it to create a path and some extra space, but is now rapidly approaching the same size again. It spreads by layering, and the birds love it. Prostantheras other than *lasianthos* tend to be relatively short lived. *Leptospermum laevigatum* on the other hand does very well – an old one grew too large and had to be removed and a young one is doing very well.



I have been a little disappointed at how few local species have appeared, given our proximity to Aranda Bushland. *Dianella revoluta* appeared fairly early, as did a *Poa* and *Lomandra filiformis* and *L. multiflora*. *Eucalyptus mannifera* and *E. macrorhyncha* have already been mentioned and *Cassinia (arcuata ?)* made a rather late appearance. *Hardenbergia violacea* pops up all over the place. A number of the introduced natives have naturalised: *Clematis microphylla* and *C. aristata*, *Pandorea pandorana* and *P. jasminoides*, *Kunzea ambigua*, *Baeckea virgata*, *Hakea salicifolia*, *H. macreana*, and *H. sericea*. *Acacia baileyana* has produced several generations though only one or two at a time. *Isotoma axillaris* appears in odd corners, a tiny *Wahlenbergia* is very prolific, a *Grevillea robusta* seedling is now a large tree and a seedling *Prostanthera lasianthos* is thriving. Casuarina seedlings grew prolifically in a new garden bed and have done well when transplanted to other locations.

All of this regeneration has increased as the mulch has accumulated over the years and improved the soil. Almost all of the mulch has resulted from leaf fall and cut up prunings. Anything which grows here stays here except for firewood. Nothing goes to the tip. In addition a number of things have been allowed to naturalise as green mulch, particularly watercress and oregano, but geraniums and correas work well also. All help to suppress the weeds although a few difficult ones have made their appearance recently. Perfume and suitability for floral arrangements have been passports for some things into the garden. Freesias arrived by this route, and are tending to become rather too dense and untidy, as are violets – weeds perhaps.

Some of the changes which have taken place over the years were made necessary because it took me a long time to learn that most plants benefit from fairly hard pruning and quickly become old and untidy without it. Some were because the plants just died or were no longer attractive. The garden was expected to survive without a lot of attention for long periods, and on the whole managed pretty well, but has needed a lot of changes over the last ten years or so.



The plan for a comfortable, green and shady space has to a large extent been achieved amongst the trees I came to realise I so desperately needed. The Canberra I grew up in was sadly lacking in large trees. Many had been planted in the early years but were still relatively sparse and slow to reach maturity and I didn't realise how much I needed them until the possibility of moving in amongst them in Aranda arose. Perhaps I have created problems for the future by allowing so many to grow so large in this relatively small space, but for now I am enjoying them.

Treasurer's Report

Cash on hand:

Account 285385 \$ 8,902.02

Account 181703 \$ 473.17

Term Deposit:

Due 19 July 2014 \$ 23,811.05 (will accrue interest of \$ 463.30)

Total Value of all deposits: \$ 33,186.24

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ANPSA Garden Design Study Group Newsletter is published four times per year in February, May, August and November. Copy is due by the first of the these months although earlier submissions will be welcomed by the Editor.

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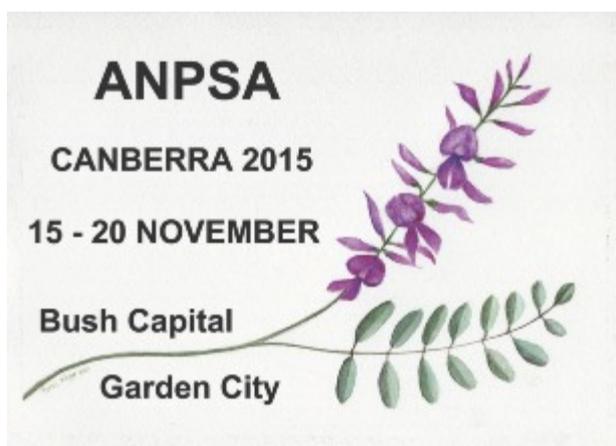
Membership dues 2014-2015: per year

Email Newsletter: \$ 6.00

Paper Newsletter \$ 15.00

Concession paper \$ 10.00

(For pensioners and full-time students only)



Australian Native Plants Society (Australia)

Biennial Conference 2015

AIS Canberra, Bruce ACT

Keynote speakers

Angus Stewart—Swaby Lecture

Ian Fraser—Conference Dinner

David Heaton

Penny Olsen

David Lindenmayer

Field trips

NSW South Coast—pre-conference

Sub-alpine areas in Perisher Valley,

*Kosciusko National Park—post
conference*

Brindabella Range—optional extra

Australian National Botanic Gardens

National Arboretum

Local nature parks

Private gardens

Program

Saturday, 14 November

Excursion to Brindabella Range—optional

Sunday, 15 November

ANPSA Delegates meeting

Free bus service to National Museum, National Portrait Gallery, National Gallery, War Memorial

Monday, 16 November

Morning presentations; afternoon excursions

Tuesday, 17 November

Morning presentations; afternoon excursions

Wednesday, 18 November

Morning presentations; afternoon excursions 7.30

pm Awards and Swaby Lecture

Thursday, 19 November

Morning presentations; afternoon excursions 7.00

pm Conference dinner

Friday, 20 November

Morning excursions; afternoon presentation

Saturday, 21 November

Excursion to Brindabella Range—optional

*For more information and expressions of
interest:*

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Website: <http://conference2015.anspa.org.au>

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Deakin West, ACT 2600