

November 2013

Rhodo News

Newsletter 358



Official Newsletter of the

Emu Valley Rhododendron Garden Inc

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Calendar

**Sunday 17th
November**
Regular
meeting at
EVRG. Guest
Speakers:
Maurie
Kupsch and
Andrew
Lockett on
Steve
Hootman's
visit.

On Cradle Mountain

Steve Hootman from the Rhododendron Species Foundation in Seattle, Washington visited us in October. Ian Chalk, Andrew Lockett, Dick Burns (a noted author and authority on Cradle Mountain plants) accompanied Steve as he achieved one of his long-held wishes—to see the botany of Cradle Mountain.
Sincere thanks to Dick and Andrew.

See us at:
emuvalleyrhodo.com.au

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EVRG MEMBERSHIP REACHES 500 OUR NEXT GOAL 1000

What an incredible period of activity and achievement it has been at Emu Valley during the past ultra colourful month. Our volunteers have excelled again, at times under considerable pressure, to attend to our increasing number of garden visitors. We had a very successful Cherry Blossom Day (12/10) and Cruise Ship Day (22/10), with 48 passengers availing themselves of our free shuttle bus from the CBD to the Garden. Well done to all!



What a pleasure to accompany Curator Maurie and Pam to the Australian Rhododendron Convention in Adelaide. Our visit to the Adelaide Zoo was an opportunity for Maurie to see the Pandas wandering amongst plants from China, including 3 or 4 surviving rhododendrons EVRG supplied to the Zoo for the Panda enclosure.

The following week we were to welcome 4 horticulturalists from the Royal Botanical Gardens of Adelaide to volunteer at EVRG. (See Juanita's article in this issue). Our sincerest thanks to you all for your contribution and for forging such important links to assist in the continuing development of Emu Valley.

To cap the month off we welcomed international Plant Hunter and Curator of the Rhododendron Species Foundation Steve Hootman. Steve's time in the garden and Tasmania was a rare privilege for us. Valuable links have been developed and we look forward to a much closer working partnership with Steve and the Seattle based garden in the future.

Steve's comments to the media (see back page) that one half of the species in the wild are under survival pressures confirms the critical role of EVRG's collection to assist in the protection of international biodiversity.

Steve's time in the garden coincided with a visit from EVRG member and National President of the Australian Rhododendron Society, Rob Hatcher and his wife Jacki. Again both from Adelaide and here to help Maurie and Juanita in the garden. How lucky can we be? It was exciting for Jenny and I to be with Steve, Rob and Jackie as Steve discovered *Prionotes cerinthoides* (creeping heath) - one of his "Holy Grail" plants - in the wild at the back of Wynyard.



Finally we hosted a Burnie Shines Event - the book launch of *Gorgeous Gardens of Tasmania*. Congratulations to author Liz Francis (pictured here with Kevin Young, owner of Not Just Books in Burnie; Jenny Cox, Manager of Tourism, Marketing and Events with Burnie City Council and Steve Hootman) and her kind words written about the development and success of EVRG in a great production. A copy is available to view at the Garden and also for sale from Not Just Books in Burnie. EVRG presented a copy to Steve Hootman to show the folks back in Seattle.

Thanks again to all of our volunteers for another month of great achievement.

Ian Chalk

AROUND THE GARDEN

Well what a busy month it has been! We've had bus loads of people through for guided and self-guided tours, the plant sales area is constantly being restocked as much as possible, the seedlings in the nursery have all taken off and they don't look like stopping any time soon, and we have also had four horticulturalists here spending a week with us from South Australia. Not to mention the rhododendrons are looking magnificent and are putting on a brilliant show for us once again!



Happy Horticulturalists

The four horticulturalists (Yvette, Tony, Cam and Christine) from the Royal Botanical Gardens, Adelaide, were all so energetic and eager to learn about how we run the garden on a daily basis. They continued with our ongoing gabion walls which look amazing—we were very impressed! We then made a start on dead-heading our big leaf rhododendrons, which is a massive task and is to be done yearly after flowering, and they also spent some time in the nursery pricking out and potting up our latest seed collection. These five days went so quickly and could have easily spent weeks working with this team! You are all welcome back here at any time and thank you for all of the help that you have given us during your week here at EVRG, we really appreciated it.

The garden sure is a stunning sight and always has something to offer to everyone. There are always friendly faces that are welcoming at all times, not to mention tasty treats to enjoy whilst out on the balcony appreciating the serenity of the garden. Now is a great time to come for a visit and see what we're all smiling about.

Juanita

WELCOME

A warm welcome to heaps of new members again this month: Brett & Sue Whiteley, Jackie Lambie, Mavis Rowlands, Hazel Shepherd, Graham & Christine Brown, Michael & Kristine Borgartz, Clifton Hunt & Mary Forehead, Barbara Archer, Marie Stanton, Louise Muddle & Paul Potter, Belinda Neilson, Anne, Simone & Vera Masciantoni, Sean & Andrea Blake, Mike & Joy Peach, Mandy & Ricky Courtney, Kevin Jowett, Vonda & John Scott, Jane & Ron Rudd, Mary & Ron Fulford-Payne, Sylvia & Tony Burridge, Michael & Karin Cuff, Rebecca Wells & Janita Lusted, Dr & Mrs Douglas Dow, Alan & Margaret Jones, Dale & Lee Padman, Veronica Hearn, Cameron Peoples, Christine Butcher, Yvette Nicholls, Tony Murray, Damon & Linda Szekley, Mark & Jane Lang, Marty Anderson, Claire & Margaret Type, Peter Gray & Mary McConnell, Doug & Joan Shephard, Robin & Lyn Donaghue, Clive Sayers & Scott Peters, Susan Hartley, Charles Sapsford, Ian & Bronwyn Bathgate, Betty Smith, Betty Woodhouse, Audrey Dowling, Tim & Sue Hayman, Dr Peter & Rosalind Davies, Owen & Marg Anderson, Noel Atkins, and Deborah Crotty. Wow!



Steve Hootman enjoyed the opportunity to walk amongst our native forests and their understory plants. He is seen here collecting a cutting from a fern which he considered rare, which was growing on a Blackwood tree .

Species conservation is a growing priority

The heading above was also the heading of an article in the Advocate dated 28th October 2013, written by journalist Aryelle Sargent. Quoting from the article:

Executive director of the Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden in Seattle and plant hunter, Steve Hootman, is passionate about conserving and protecting rhododendron species, which is why he jumped at an opportunity to visit Emu Valley Rhododendron Garden.

“For my organisation, which is based on conservation, this is a vital repository for endangered species, as more than half of the rhododendron species are coming under pressure in the wild”, Mr Hootman said. Mr Hootman hopes to be able to send endangered species seeds to the Emu Valley Rhododendron Garden managing committee to plant and look after here in Burnie as an attempt to continue the species. “This is one of the best locations on the planet to grow the genus species,” Mr Hootman said. The climate here is much more conducive to the successful cultivation of a wider range of species outside.”

In Seattle, Mr Hootman has more than 200 more types of rhododendrons than the Emu Valley Rhododendron Garden, but he said EVRG was the largest outdoor garden. “It’s a unique situation where they can preserve a wide range of species without building expensive green houses,” Mr Hootman said. And as a garden owned and maintained by volunteers, the Tasmanian climate works in the garden’s favour. “As a worldwide renowned garden, I have always wanted to see the Emu Valley Rhododendron Garden and Tasmania,” Mr Hootman said. “So when the opportunity presented itself, I couldn’t pass it up.”

The Emu Valley Rhododendron Garden is proudly sponsored by:



Emu Valley Rhododendron Garden Inc.

PO Box 39 Burnie, Tasmania 7320
