

Rhodo News

Newsletter 366



Official Newsletter of the

Emu Valley Rhododendron Garden Inc

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Chairman: Ian Chalk Newsletter Editor: Nigel Burch

Patrons: (International) Kenneth Cox, (Tasmania) Mrs Frances Underwood

Calendar

**Sunday 17th
August**

Regular meeting at Emu Valley Rhodo Garden at 2pm.

**Saturday
23rd August**

Christmas in Winter at 6pm for 6.30pm.

**Wednesday
13th Sept**

Official Opening of season at 10.am.



emu valley
rhododendron garden .nc

YOU ARE INVITED TO

CHRISTMAS IN WINTER

at

EMU VALLEY RHODODENDRON GARDEN

on

Saturday, August 23rd

at 6pm for 6.30pm

Charge: \$30pp or \$25pp for members

RSVP: 18th August
6433 1805 or 6442 3001

BYO Drinks

ALL WELCOME



created, owned and maintained by volunteers

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See us at:
emuvalleyrhodo.com.au



CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

I have for some time believed that one of the most under-valued botanical assets at Emu Valley is our display of vireya rhododendrons. We are one of a handful of gardens around the world that can grow them outdoors and also have them flowering throughout the year. Of the visitors to EVRG, I would estimate that 90 % have never heard of the vireyas.

I would hope that in the future we can access funding to provide signage to better highlight this delightful section of the garden. Little is also known of our two endemic vireyas - *R. lochiaie* and *R. viriosum*, which grow in North Queensland on inland peaks

between Innisfail and Cooktown. Our ability to grow the Vireyas outdoors (rather than in glass houses) in a frost free section of the garden, means that we now have the largest collection of species rhododendron growing outdoors in the world.

The Victorian branch of the Australian Rhododendron Society are hosting a national convention at Olinda on the weekend of October 25/26. The emphasis will be on vireyas, with noted international speakers including George Argent of Scotland, and a visit to highlight gardens in the Mt Macedon area. I highly commend this convention for those able to attend. Further details are available from Sue Johnson and myself.

Following recent visits and discussions with the Australian Arid Lands Botanical Garden at Port Augusta, we are to exchange memberships with them. I have asked their Chairman John Zwar to prepare some notes for a future EVRG newsletter highlighting their creation - a very worthwhile visit should you happen to be that way.

I am delighted to report that ABC TV gardening personality Tino Carnevale will officially open our Spring Flowering Season at EVRG on Saturday Sept. 13. Please pop that date into your diaries, as we would welcome your attendance on that big day.

Heaps of early colour appearing at EVRG.

Ian Chalk

INVITATION

We extend a very cordial invitation to you & your partner to attend the
"official opening of the 2014 flowering season"

by **Tino Carnevale**, gardening guru and ABC Gardening Presenter
 on Saturday 13th of September at 11.00 a.m. at EVRG.

Join us for morning tea from 10.30am whilst you enjoy the vista of colour and ambience created in our garden by our volunteers.

RSVP: by Wednesday 10th September please, to enquiries@evrg.com.au
 or on mobile: 0400 963 493

Admission will be by presentation of this invitation.

There will be a discounted admission charge of \$6 for all other visitors.

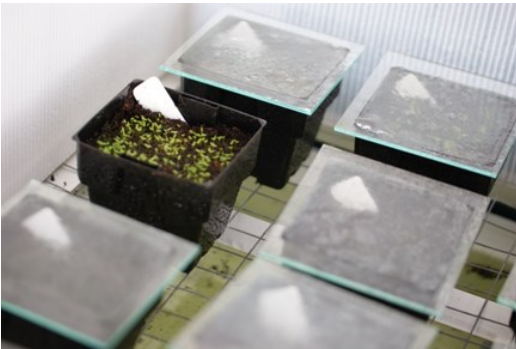
Refreshments & plant sales available.

Special auction of rare plants at noon, after the official opening.

AROUND THE GARDEN

Welcome to a wet and wild month of crazy, yet typical winter weather. As I am writing this, I am looking out the window to see the black ducks on Lake Grebe struggling to swim towards the Olympus bridge because of the strong wind, but plappy (the platypus) is loving the overcast conditions and is popping up to the surface regularly. I believe that seeing plappy so often as I do is one of the highlights of starting work so early.

On Thursday 24th of July, it was decided that this was the date that all available people would kindly come in to help load up and spread out the bales that were in the lower car park and distribute them to the areas around the garden where they were most needed. As you stand on the balcony of the main building and look left towards our wood chip pile, you will see where a large percentage of the bales have been used. Also in Nepal, Japan and heading into China were other countries that were covered. A huge thank you for all involved as many hands make light work! Plus it was great to have everyone here on the same day working but having a laugh at the same time. Thank you again.



This year we have 57 punnets of rhododendron seed now in our 'Kupsch's Cubbies', and out of all of them, only 7 are still either a bit slow off the starting line or have no go in them at all. Many of these will be new species to the garden to add to our collection. A very exciting few weeks ahead to see how the small seedlings will go.

Just a note for those of you who may be wondering when is the best time to fertilize your rhododendrons..... that time is now. We have put our order in and will be a week or two away yet but we hope to give the garden a good feed this year. We will be using a brand by Neutrog called *Kaboona*—ideal for Camellias, Gardenias, Azaleas, Rhododendrons and other acid loving plants.

So if the wild wind sticks around, stay warm, dry and preferably with your feet on the ground and we hope to see you out and about here walking our newly refurbished pathways.



Juanita
Horticulturalist

LAST MEETING

Over thirty of our members gathered to hear updates on what's happening in and around the garden. Although we are in mid-winter, there are still plenty of colourful and fragrant spots to be found, and Maurie drew our attention to some of them.

Comparisons with the previous year show that the garden income this past year has taken a very encouraging upwards curve. Various factors have influenced this, but a major contribution has been brought about by the efforts of our volunteers. Well done indeed and thank you everyone.

Major improvements to the walkways around the garden, and the new steps accessing the lower car park area, will be appreciated very soon when the visitors begin flowing through again. Our guest speaker was our very own horticulturalist, Juanita, with an interesting personal profile telling us of her career path prior to, and now within the garden. Thank you, "Neet".

Exhibits for flower voting were wonderfully colourful and varied, with R. Mike Dixon, from Maurie's garden claiming top honours while an un-named cross bred vireya gave second placing to the Tavner team. Frank Medwin's camellia topped the cut flower section, followed by a selection of helibore from the same garden. Ken Lowry took out the door prize, and Melvie Moore had the lucky raffle ticket. Proceeds from these events: flower voting \$21.75, raffle \$46.60, trade table \$36.00.

A big Thank You to all the supporters.

Pete Stratford



Rhododendron ericoides

This delightful small vireya is endemic to Mount Kinabalu, in Sabah (Borneo). It grows near the summit in mossy drifts among granite boulders, where it is exposed to a wild mountain climate. Due to this habitat its foliage is small and similar to that of Erica and produces small bright red tubular flowers. In the wild it grows to around 1½m.

Here at EVRG our plants are growing well and flower mainly in winter, and periodically throughout the year. It strikes readily from cuttings and grows into a bush around ½m high.

Maurie Kupsch

The Emu Valley Rhododendron Garden is proudly sponsored by:



Emu Valley Rhododendron Garden Inc.
PO Box 39 Burnie, Tasmania 7320