

September 2015

# Rhodo News

Newsletter 378



Official Newsletter of the  
*Emu Valley Rhododendron Garden Inc*

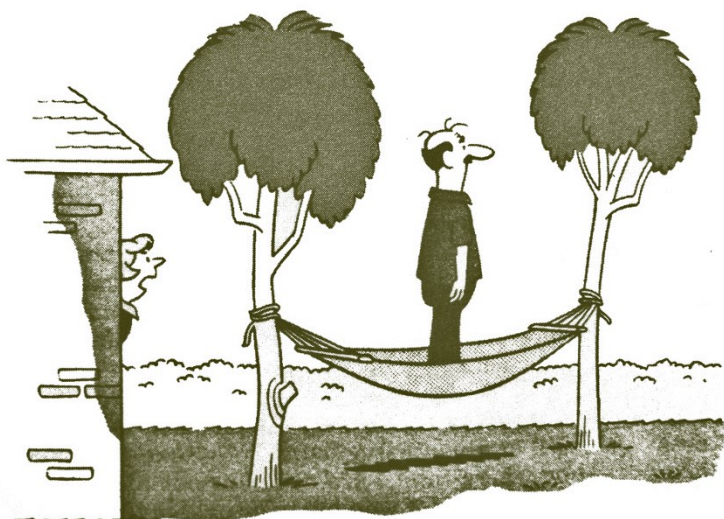
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Chairman: Geoff Wood Newsletter Editor: Nigel Burch

Patrons: (International) Kenneth Cox, (Tasmania) Her Excellency the Governor of Tasmania, Kate Warner

## AGM Deferred



*"Maurie, you must learn to relax in the Garden."*

*The Annual General Meeting has been deferred. It was to be held this month, but we are all rather busy at present, so it will now be held together with the November social meeting. Mr George McCrae will be our guest speaker at the September meeting. Note that we don't hold social meetings in October, due to the workload associated with the peak of the visitor season.*

See us at:  
[emuvalleyrhodo.com.au](http://emuvalleyrhodo.com.au)

### Calendar

**Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> September**  
Regular meeting  
at EVRG at 2pm

**Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> October**  
**Cherry Blossom Festival**  
10am to 4pm

**No meeting  
in October**  
(we are all too busy!)

**Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> November**  
AGM & regular meeting  
at EVRG at 2pm

## Chairman's Report

September at EVRG means the start of a fast ride!--- this is what one of our many long serving volunteers said to me some time back. Never a truer word.

The sun has been shining and the garden is looking a picture, and even before our official season opening on September 12 visitor numbers are on the way up. The tea room is up and running, we have our Cherry Blossom Celebration on 10<sup>th</sup> October, and Cruise Ship Season starts on 25<sup>th</sup> October! So please have a read of Jenny's call for assistance.

A big thank you to John Hudson for the many years he has represented EVRG on the Burnie Tourism Authority and a thank you to Margaret Starick and Doreen Stratford for taking on the role.

GlobalNet Academy horticultural students have commenced and it will not be long before you see them hands on around the garden. The numbers each Thursday will range between fifteen and twenty and if the first two weeks is a good indication they are a very enthusiastic group.

Cottage renovations are nearing completion and so too is the nursery upgrade. Thanks to Ivan Johnston we have secured a four wheel drive ute which is already proving a great asset. And last but not least for this month.....should you have a pre loved 6 x 4 box trailer, preferably registered, that you no longer require, please give Sue a ring so she can make you an offer too good to refuse! *Geoff Wood*

## Rhododendron barbatum

One of my favourite rhododendrons would have to be *R. barbatum* – I love the compact beauty of the clear bright crimson flowers and the distinctive bristles often found on the leaf petioles. The flower and growth buds are quite sticky which can trap tiny insects and wind blown debris. As the plant matures the stems and branches have reddish –brown peeling bark, which completes the delightful picture.



*R. barbatum* was found in Nepal by Wallich in 1829 and collected again in 1849 by J.D. Hooker in Sikkim with later discoveries in Bhutan growing in conifer and rhododendron forests. In its native home it can grow to 15-20 meters in height but in cultivation will only reach 5-6 meters and will be most spectacular when in flower.

At EVRG we grow two different collections: one in Nepal, which has the stiff bristles on the leaf stalks, and the other growing in Bhutan, which does not. A new collection from Sikkim growing on in the

nursery is now showing signs of bristly leaf stalks. Being an early flowering species the plants light up the late winter/early spring garden with its bright crimson cricket ball flowers glowing above the large dark green leaves - quite a Christmas in Winter effect.

N.B. Graham Smith from New Zealand kindly pointed out the fact that last month's cross mentioned would be more likely a cross using *R. grande* than *R. siderum*, as *R. siderum* is a much later flowering species. Thank you for noticing Graham. *Maurie Kupsch*



## Welcome

A warm rhodo garden welcome to new members Les Beale & Val Joliffe, Lola & Shelley Linger, Dax & Ginny McHarg, and Roy & Lorraine Bilbie.

## Around the Garden

Yup, you better believe it, my beloved tigers are in the top 8 and finals are just around the corner, but more importantly buds are starting to open, the days are getting longer and slightly warmer.... This must mean Spring is finally here!

The big leaf rhododendrons are looking spectacular and you will find the majority of these the top side of the main gazebo which have been out since the beginning of August. These gigantic flower trusses are a must see! The deciduous azaleas aren't too far away from starting to flower so now is the time to start spraying for petal blight to prevent this from happening.

Not only do we have rhododendrons flowering, but many varieties of spring bulbs to add a splash of colour in mass planting quantities which have been donated by many and planted by the volunteers so thank you to all involved.

The plant sales area is about to be repainted and restocked ready for our garden opening on the 12<sup>th</sup> of September. We have countless plants to sell, with rare species included that you will struggle to buy anywhere else, and not to mention only a few varieties of each, so come in and see us and grab something unique that you know will be the envy of your family and friends.

We are most grateful to John Dangerfield for the recent donation of three *Prunus Shogetsu* (flowering cherries) which have been planted along the wall of Lake Grebe. They are on such beautiful tall standards that any plantings underneath would not be affected by the canopy and will brighten up the main viewing area as seen from the building.

And we very much appreciate the recent donation from Richard Cutlan of 2 two medium sized *R. arboretum* "Stowport"!

Here are some of our Rhododendrons planted out in the last few years and flowering for the first time:



*R. principis- flowering in Tibet.*



*R. anthosphaerum flowering in Sichuan.*

Short and sweet this month, lots to do outside so happy gardening and see you on the 12<sup>th</sup> September at the official opening of our 2015/16 flowering season. *Neet*



**BRETT  
WHITELEY** MP  
Federal Member for Braddon

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*Emu Valley Rhododendron Garden*

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# INVITATION

On behalf of the Management Group of EVRG, Chairman Geoff Wood extends a very cordial invitation to all members to attend the

## "official opening of the 2015 flowering season"

by Brett Smith, Chief Executive Officer at Cradle Coast Authority  
on Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> of September at 11.30 a.m. at EVRG.

Join us for morning tea from 11.00am whilst you enjoy the vista of colour and ambience created in our garden by our volunteers.

**RSVP (for catering purposes please) by: Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> September**

to [enquiries@evrg.com.au](mailto:enquiries@evrg.com.au) or by phoning 6433 1805 (mobile: 0400 963 493)

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

*Refreshments & plant sales will be available.*

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

*The Emu Valley Rhododendron Garden is proudly sponsored by:*



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