

AUSTRALIAN RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

SOUTHERN TASMANIA BRANCH INC.

PO Box 80 BATTERY POINT TAS 7004

COMING EVENTS

April 27th

Committee meeting - Ken and Lesley's
1 Willowbend Road, Kingston 6229 2351
6:30 BYO dinner

May 14th

General meeting

There will be a short meeting, Blooms Competition, auction and raffle.

Time: 2:00 pm

Venue: Still being finalised - you will have full details next newsletter.

We would like to organise a bus trip later in the year possibly late October/early November. Some feed back on specific places you would be interested in visiting would be appreciated. Whilst we may not be able to accommodate every ones wish list your suggestions would certainly help with the planning.

We would also like to know how many would be interested in a mid-year luncheon. Venue options too, if interested.

These are a couple of questions we will be asking at our meeting - hopefully this will give you some time to prepare your answers.



IN MY GARDEN by Lesley Gillanders

We enjoyed perfect weather in the last few weeks and although March is accepted as autumn, so far, there is no change to the overall colour of our garden. In this south east corner of Tasmania where we live, we have experienced a lack of good rain and Ken has been watering the plants showing signs of distress. Unfortunately, we are still losing the odd plant which appear to be attacked by fungi in the soil.



Our *Fremontodendron californicum* which had looked spectacular at 2m high with its golden yellow flowers was blown over in a strong wind. Ken staked it up but over a few months of trying to survive it finally gave up and finished up on the heap to be put through the mulcher. Also we lost a *Leucodendron* and in the top garden at the back of the house a small plant of *Rhododendron yakushimanum* succumbed, probably from heat and not enough shade or water.

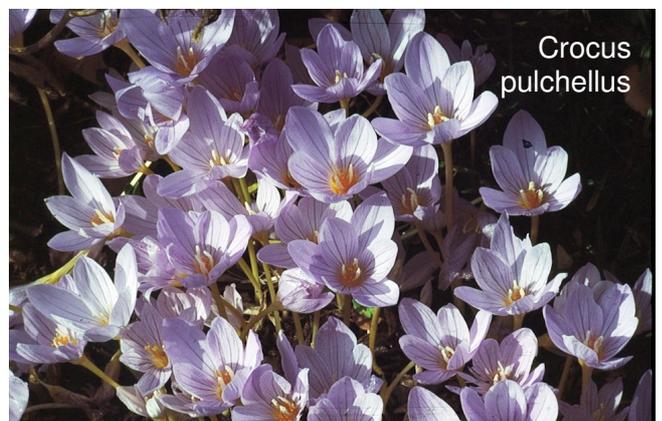
On the bright side a nice little clump of *Sternbergia lutea* have opened their golden goblet

shaped flowers in the bulb bed. *Colchicum agrippinum* flowered earlier with still more flowers opening. They have made quite a large clump and need to be divided and spread around other areas of the garden. *C.autumnale* in both pink and white forms have brightened the corner near the bulb bed.

At Last we have are having success with the garden under the *Prunus 'Mt Fuji'* . After two years the bird netting has been removed as it was difficult to weed the patch without damaging the plants. Ken spread a deep mulch over it and it only took one day for the black-birds to start churning it up and digging out some *Cyclamen hederifolium* corms in their search for worms or grubs. A small strip of netting was returned to cover one section where the *Cyclamen* had not come up. Rat traps were set with a bright red glace cherry on them. After several days we tallied up that seventeen black-birds had been despatched, so the netting was removed and our artificial owl hung from a branch of one of the cherries. They may not be quite the thing in a garden but the addition of several old computer discs hanging from various branches of the cherries has definitely made a difference with them flashing various colours and constantly moving in a breeze.

The result is a fine planting of *Cyclamen hederifolium* in shades of pinks and white. Ken raised a batch of seedlings from a deep red form and they are giving us a very colourful display also.

Crocus pulchellus can be relied upon to produce our first flowers of the genus at this time of year. The soft lavender flowers have a purple pencilling on the exterior of the petals and have a yellow throat. *Nerine fothergillii major* with glistening salmon-red flowers is presenting a fine display of colour on 40cm stems. Nearby a hybrid we have had for over 40 years is *N.'Adelaide'*. It is virtually the same vibrant colour with large flower heads but only on 30cm stems.





1. *Salvia patens*
2. *Zauschneria californica*
3. *Metasequoia Gold rush*
4. *Cyclamen hederifolium*
very dark
5. *Robinia Frisea*

Salvia patens is a perennial with intense deep blue flowers which open successively up the stems. We generally gather the black seeds as they ripen but many drop to the ground where they germinate the next season and grow into more plants.

We recently went to our grand daughters wedding in Canberra and for a gift to present to Lauren and Matt, I painted a picture of *Wahlenbergia gloriosa* which is the National Emblem for Canberra and the A.C.T. The common name is Royal Blue Bell. This is a prostrate little plant with rosettes of deep green notched leaves and bright blue flowers on 20cm stems. We have two plants growing well in our garden here, thanks to some friends who had several to spare after we lost ours.

An interesting plant is *Zauschneria californica* which comes from California in the U.S.A. This has numerous bright orange-red tubular flowers and soft grey foliage. It reaches approximately 60cm and can withstand hot dry conditions.

Three trees we have in the gardens stand out with their lovely golden colour.

The first one as you come into our front drive is *Robinia pseudoacacia* 'Frisia' with bright golden fan-like leaves.

The second one is *Gleditsia triacanthos* 'Sunburst'. There is a fine planting of these trees at the roundabout in Hobart around the fountain near the ABC buildings. The ferny frond-like golden foliage of these trees lose some of their gold colour through the summer then turn again to bright gold before falling in autumn.

The third one is *Metasequoia glyptostroboides* 'Gold Rush'. Known as Dawn Redwood with fine fern-like foliage which colours a rich tawny-pink in autumn. This beautiful and remarkable tree was only discovered in 1941 in China and prior to this was only known in fossil form. The typical green of the species and a more recent golden form are now available world wide.

REMINDER
Other garden events
April 9th

Channel Gardens - Flyer for this has been sent out a couple of times and some Members have committed.

Woodbank Open Garden (with Blooming Tasmania)

Open to the public 10am - 4pm and is Sunday only. Please pass this information onto friends. Also if there are any Members willing to give Kerry a hand on the day please call her on 0448 007 525.

YOUR EXECUTIVE



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