

February 2019

Rhodo News

Newsletter 415



Official Newsletter of the
Emu Valley Rhododendron Garden Inc

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

An Unusual Donation



Kay Shadbolt and Leah Ling fishing through Huon Aquaculture's delicious donation. The packs naturally sold easily and the proceeds have gone to our volunteer/employee tea room project.

Calendar

Tuesday 5th February
HEARING BUS
At EVRG 10-2pm

Sunday 17th February
Social Meeting
At EVRG 2pm

Saturday 16th March
HARP CONCERT
Details very soon!

See us at: emuvallorhodo.com.au

General Manager's Report



Neet Wood, Maurie Kupsch, Cement Australia's Christine Casey, Steve Locke & Pete Stratford

CEMENT AUSTRALIA

Emu Valley was successful with a grant application with Cement Australia towards upgrading our first aid equipment. This is one of the many 'hidden' costs involved in managing our garden and I am sure our Health, Safety & Environment Officer Steve Locke will have a number of suggestions at our next management committee meeting. A big thank you to Cement Australia for assisting us through their Community Grants Program and the many other organisations throughout Tasmania.

HUON AQUACULTURE

For a long time now there has been nowhere our employees or volunteers can call home when it comes to taking a break. Emu Valley's Tea Room is very often full and over flows into the function area. It is not right that we shunt our team off to the underneath of the building to sit virtually in the open to eat their lunch. There are a lot of ideas but (dare I say it) everything costs. Having said this, through yet another Community Grants Application, Huon Aquaculture made an in kind donation of their delicious products. The final tally of what we raised has yet to be completed but it will be set aside for this important need. THANK YOU HUON AQUACULTURE

AUSTRALIAN RHODODENDRON CONFERENCE (ARS)

It is exciting to be able to confirm that 5 & 6 November 2020 has been set aside for Emu Valley to host the ARS Conference. It may seem a long way off but there is so much that needs to be organised — sponsors/catering arrangements/accommodation/tours of the region — the list is only in its infancy! We are so fortunate that members Sandra Grogan and Alwyn Friedersdorff have put up their hands to help organise the conference but they cannot do everything on their own. Over the coming few months Alwyn and Sandra will be looking for assistance. Already one guest speaker has been locked in. This being David Millais whose nursery in Surrey has recently been granted a royal appointment to HRH Prince of Wales.

Cruise Ships

There are another 13 ships due for the season. If you would like to see what we do on these days please either contact me or just come to the garden on one of these days. With 40 ships due next season we are going to have to seriously re-think what we offer our visitors. As with our Catering/Hospitality Team and our volunteers in all other areas, as Emu Valley's reputation continues to grow as a must place to visit all year round and a first class venue for functions and weddings etc. we cannot expect people to put in more time than they already are.

Thoughts & Suggestions Committee

This is the biggest committee Emu Valley Garden has. It compromises all of our members and volunteers. There is no chairperson, no meetings and everything said is taken seriously. Please, if you have any thoughts about what is happening or what you think should happen contact me. For example a call from a member suggesting we be interviewed on the ABC Drive Program was followed up. The publicity and great feedback would not have happened had it not been for that member.

Try and make it to our February social meeting and hear about and see the exciting things taking place at Emu Valley Rhododendron Garden. Geoff — geoffreywood@me.com 0427 722 060

Welcome

The warmest rhodo garden welcome to new members Brad & Lisa Palmer, Maureen Bryan, Richard Mack & Rosalie Young, Ian & Ann Hughes, Stewart & Cherie Proudfoot, Dene English and Ann Bailey. And congratulations to long-standing supporter and member Dr Peter Holm on being awarded an OAM in the latest honours list!

Around the Garden

I might be pointing out the obvious here, but hasn't it been a warm and true form summer so far! Our lakes are a tad on the low side as we use these for irrigation but if the plants aren't watered, then what's the point of our beautiful garden! Don't let this alarm you as the we still have water for all animal life as well as maintaining a healthy garden (but a bit of rain would be nice).



Some of our regular volunteer lads have been busy for months now widening the entrance to the Chinese pavilion area and it looks amazing! All of the planning and that has gone into this has definitely been well worth it. All of the rocks that filled these gabion cages have been collected either from around the garden here and also a paddock in Natone where they were kindly donated and our volunteers drove to get the ute loads that were required. Looks great and finishes off the area nicely. Another job well done! Look at the picture to see what I mean! (there are a few volunteers who helped on this project missing from the photo).

I will try and keep the rest of my section short so here it is in point form:

- The hot bed has only enough space left on it for around 50 punnets of cuttings at the most so it has been a very warm job up in the nursery but one I thoroughly enjoy.
- Bale carting has commenced and we are at the tail end of that so thank you to all for your generous hours of and hard work- the plants and I thank you for it.
- The wisteria at the beginning of the Japanese section has had a haircut – short back and sides and was long overdue. It now lets the sun into the azaleas below along with the pieris japonica that line the bamboo fence.
- One of our woodworking gurus have been busy from home, making timber signs for around the garden but are yet to be placed. Will make further mention of these again next month.
- There are many beautiful colours that are amongst our small hydrangea section and we hope to expand on this over time as it gives us a lot of colour during summer. Easy to strike, very little maintenance is needed and very showy!

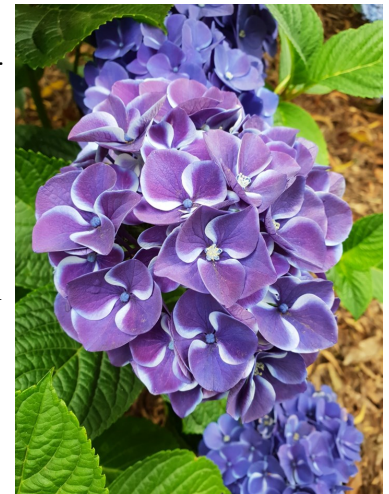
These are only a few things that we are currently working on but I better get back outside! Happy gardening. Neet 😊

Social Meeting December 9th

At our end of year meeting we had minimal formalities, but did have the pleasure of welcoming two new members; Murray Jones & John Biggs. Maurie showed sprigs of a variety of Cornus bushes that were then in bloom, and described their characteristics, origins, etc, as only he is able to. Although mostly deciduous there were some evergreens, and mostly white blooms.

There was no flower judging or the usual activities but instead we enjoyed a hearty array of refreshments including fare from the BBQ. Thanks to all those who provided, cooked, cleaned up, and all of those duties that “someone” has to attend to. Your skills and efforts are appreciated.

We had no meeting in January due to the increased pressure on our volunteers from cruise ship visitors etc. The rather dramatically reduced attendances at meetings over recent months is causing us to consider reducing the number of social meetings per year. If you would like input into discussion on this matter, please contact either Geoff Wood or me with your thoughts and suggestions. *Pete.* email pdstrat@bigpond.com or phone 0428 103 520





Rhododendron thayerianum

Back in 1910 plant hunter E H Wilson was lucky enough to discover this plant at Moupin, western Sichuan and introduce it to the west. Goodness knows what happened to it from there because it was not until 1991 that it was reintroduced and we were able to secure seed. Growth has been slow, but this interesting, worthwhile plant was worth the wait, don't you agree? We now have a number of flowering size plants living happily in EVRG's version of Sichuan.

R. thayerianum grows into a rounded shrub with thick stiff leathery lanceolate leaves with margins recurved. The underside is covered with fawn indumentum. However the new growth, as you can see, is covered in silvery hairs.

Because the leaves can be held on the plant for a number of years it makes a nice dense shrub.

The campanulate shaped flowers can be white, white tinged pink or white flushed pink on the outside of the lobes, there are no blotches, nectar pouches and very few spots inside the corolla.

If you wish to locate this interesting rhododendron in the garden, take the path marked Sichuan off Noel Sullivan walk, continue along this path until you meet yet another path and look left. Enjoy tracking it down! *Maurie*

The Emu Valley Rhododendron Garden is proudly sponsored by:



Emu Valley Rhododendron Garden Inc.
PO Box U33 Upper Burnie, Tasmania 7320