

# Newsletter of the ARSV

PO Box 296 Olinda Vic 3788

## Many thanks to the Beggs

After many years producing the society's newsletter Simon and Marcia Begg have handed over the reins to Francis Crome. Their efforts over these years have been phenomenal. This does not mean Simon will be relaxing. He has taken over as president of the National Council, maintains his passionate interest in Vireyas, and is deeply engaged in all the society's affairs. We extend our deep gratitude to Simon and Marcia.

## Coming Up

Following the intense activity for the National Convention we have been focussing our efforts at the gardens. We plan to organise a range of talks, garden visits and get togethers later in the year. Announcements will be in the newsletter or special mail outs.

## Renewal of Subscriptions for 2015/16

Renewal notices will be posted and emailed out in July.

## Spectacular



This fabulous *R. konori* had been delighting visitors to the Vireya house at Olinda for several weeks in May and it won first prize at the Ferny Creek show. This is a New Guinea species that occurs as several varieties; this form was selected from seed grown in 1986. It is a spectacular plant, the species being named after a Papuan deity. It can be raised from seed. If you think you'd like to try to get one to grow contact committee members Andrew Rouse or Simon Begg whose contact details are set out below.

## A Sunday volunteer group?

We know that it can be hard for some to make it on a Tuesday so we are canvassing with members whether they would be interested in a Sunday morning group. If there are enough takers we will approach Parks Victoria with the request. Any help with gardening, propagating, sorting and labelling is much needed.

**Please contact Andrew Rouse or John O'Hara.**

## New Newsletter Format

After discussions with Simon, the society is trying a new newsletter strategy and format. The larger articles that used to appear in the newsletter will be published in the Rhododendron where we can do more justice to them in terms of printing and layout. We are trying out a smaller newsletter put out every two months which we hope will be an easy way for members to keep abreast of what the society is doing and to post articles on local issues, events, cultivation, plants in flower etc. It will be this simple one pager maybe two, printed both sides. It will be emailed as well as posted to members.

## Wanted – Librarian

With the sad passing of Val Marshall the society no longer has a librarian and is calling for volunteers to take on this rewarding and interesting activity. We have a small, specialised library of botanical and horticultural books and journals kept in bookcases in our workroom at the Olinda gardens. The collection is available to members to borrow but we need it catalogued first and a borrowing system developed. **Can you help? Contact the secretary.**



## Come along to the Tuesday group

A strong, active and energetic group meets at the Olinda gardens every Tuesday for hands on and extremely enjoyable activities. Volunteers work in the gardens identifying and mapping plants, gardening at various levels of intensity depending on their fitness and love of the soil, propagating, labelling, identifying and generally having fun and learning lots about plants. All are welcome and we would love to have more hands with us if you can make that day. Just make your way to the sheds near the Vireya house with your lunch. Coffee and tea and a log fire are available all day. **Contact any of the committee listed below.**

Committee							
John O'Hara	President	johnohara@optusnet.com.au	0448 853 878	Simon Begg		simonwbegg@gmail.com	03 9728 4466
Graham Price	Vice-President	lithic01@bigpond.net.au	03 9639 4493	Francis Crome	Newsletter editor	francis.crome@fcpl.net.au	0417 730 291
Michael Hare	Secretary	burrow@netspace.net.au	0405 403 607	Dan Macleod		dan.macleod@parks.vic.gov.au	0400 594 319
Prue Crome	Treasurer	prue.crome@fcpl.net.au	0419 659 741	Alex Pottage		niceplants53@gmail.com	03 5786 1595
				Andrew Rouse		awrouse@bigpond.com	0424 750 406

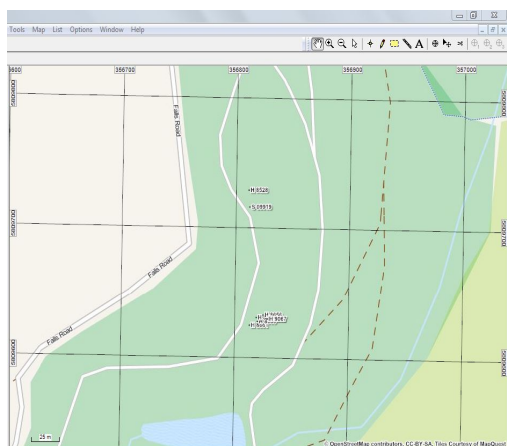


## The Mapping and databasing project at Olinda

The Society has a database of Rhododendrons planted in the Olinda gardens that it puts a big effort into keeping up to date. Plants die, new ones have been planted and maybe not recorded, and labels get lost or misplaced. The situation is managed with a mapping, databasing and labelling project run by Tom Noonan, pictured on the right on the job poring over his databases. Tom is using a Garmin 60sc GPS and is getting positional accuracies of 3 m. The plants are labelled with a durable tag laser cut on a special printer purchased jointly with Parks Victoria. Every plant is carefully checked for identity and the old database usually allows us to determine the plant's origin. Tom then revises the database as necessary and is able to map the plants with software he has just got.

**Future developments:** Parks Victoria are building a GIS for the gardens and eventually we may be able to carry around a tablet with a high resolution satellite image of the gardens and just tap a location on the tablet to record a plant.

If you think you might like to help Tom and the team in this project they are on the case most Tuesdays. If you can make it, give our president or secretary a call or email. Alternatively you can contact Tom on 9752 2211 (noonatom@hotmail.com).

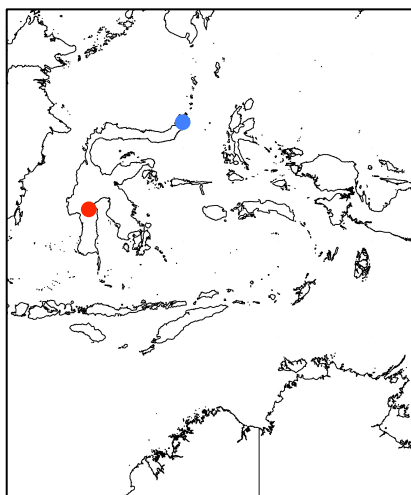


Presently Tom is plotting locations using Expert GPS. Eventually he may be able to plot directly onto an image in the field

## Rhododendron in focus



Not many species flower in winter here in Melbourne but species of Vireya are an exception. The plant at left is *R. celebicum* collected by Society member Lyn Craven in 2002 and photographed in the Vireya house this May. It is a robust Vireya known only from one mountain top, maybe two, in central Sulawesi between 1800 and 2600 m – Mt. Rantemario (red dot on map) and possibly Mt. Klabat (blue dot). It is classified by IUCN as a Vulnerable species because of its restricted natural distribution. It was in cultivation in the 1850s but was lost before 1900, being reintroduced in the early 1990s. There are



two colour forms, this beautiful lilac pink and a deep red one.

It is easy to grow. Members of the society may be able to get one once our propagating systems are running as we would like them.