

July 2018

Rhodo News

Newsletter 409



Official Newsletter of the

Emu Valley Rhododendron Garden Inc

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Winter in our Garden



Maurie took some winter photos last week while working around the Garden. He and Pam liked this one, showing the latest colourful addition to the walking tracks from the distant view and including our fisherman, the covered bridge and the Chinese pavilion. The Japanese tea room has finally disappeared behind the shrubs and trees on the far side of the Sea of Japan!

Sunday 15th July

Social Meeting
EVRG 2pm

Monday 6th August

Tea Room Re-opens
EVRG 9.30-4pm

Saturday 11th August

Food Handling Course
EVRG 10am

See us at: emuvallerrhodo.com.au

General Manager's Report

By the time you read this newsletter we will have reached the half way mark in winter. It is difficult to believe as we have had so many 'non winter' days in June. The beginning of July also means that we are only one month out from the re-opening of the Tea Room. From early in August our big leaf Rhodos start to shine and Monday 6 August will mark this with a gold coin entry day. Look out for advertising for the day.

On Sunday 23 June Somerset Rotary donated \$1000 to offset the cost of our much needed computer equipment upgrade. Emu Valley is a long way from being flush with funds and help such as Somerset Rotary has given certainly is very much appreciated.

Whilst on thankyou's I very much appreciate everyone who has attended meetings or given feedback on matters over the past few months. Hopefully now we can pull back on so many meetings and workshops.

New Ventures

The Management Committee and Board of Directors have signed off on the 2018/2019 Budget. It is exciting to be able to advise that part of this includes being able to employ a Horticulture Apprentice. Government funding helps us and all going well we might see an appointment being made by October. When the half yearly budget review takes place we will see how we are tracking for the possibility of a second placement.

Another initiative is that Emu Valley is now part of the Children's University Program in Tasmania. It is an Australian wide program which aims to raise aspirations about the value of learning and further education with students aged 7 – 14 years.

Congratulations Juanita!

Our very own Horticultural Manager Juanita has been selected into the prestigious I-Lead program. It stands for 'Industry Leadership Enterprise and Development Program.' Juanita was required to meet a number of selection criteria and was not only successful but also received a scholarship from the Regional Tourism Organisations.

Administration News

It is pleasing to be able to announce the first "Business of the Month" Emu Valley members' discount.

***** XEDOX Hair & Beauty: 20% discount *****

35 Cattley Street, Burnie

The offer is available to all members who present their membership card during the month of July. Hopefully from time to time members will support businesses who support us. *Keep an eye on the newsletter for future offers.*

Thank you to all those who have forwarded their membership renewals. Our membership officer, Jill, is working hard to get the new membership cards in the mail over the next month. When forwarding your payment please ensure to use your surname & invoice number when direct depositing to our account. Your membership entitles you to free entry to the Garden during opening times including all big event days, our monthly newsletter and 10% discount on plants.

AGM Our Annual General Meeting will be held on Saturday, September 1st at the EVRG at 1pm.

Thanks, *Geoff* — geoffreywood@me.com // 0427 722 060

A somewhat delayed, but no less sincere, **thank you** to members and volunteers for the best wishes, cards and gifts bestowed upon my retirement as Business Manager. I very much appreciated the company of those that attended my farewell afternoon tea and those that provided and served it. *Sue Johnson*

Social Meeting of June 17th

Once again Maurie held our interest with his presentation about the small leafed camellias that are in our garden, adding to that by presenting a new addition, originally from Taiwan. Bearing the name *Camellia transnokoensis*, was not a good start, but perhaps it can be forgiven due to the white flowers it bears, which are also scented. Another attractive plant is *C. Chrysantha (nitidissima)* from China, which has bright yellow blooms.

Representing the Friends of Fern Glade group, Vivienne Briggs, aided by two other members operating the O.H.P. added to our knowledge about platypus. While the life cycle of these unusual and fascinating creatures is known, there is still more to be discovered about their activities due to their rather shy nature and aquatic life style. We are very fortunate to have Fern Glade so close to the city, where these, and other endangered animals can quite easily be observed in the wild.

Although no rhododendrons were available, the cut flower section was quite well contested with Anne Holloway gaining most votes, and Doreen Stratford second place. With flower voting, along with the Trade Table and raffle, our funds were supported to the tune of \$53.20. Thank you to our generous supporters. *Pete.*

In the Garden

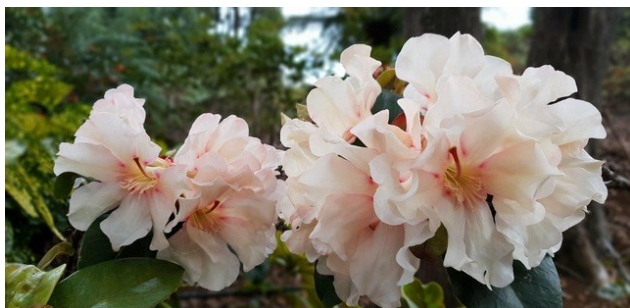


Winter time here at EVRG is still buzzing with both visitors and volunteers plus plenty of colour to see. I went to do one particular job in the garden last week and found I was distracted very quickly with taking photos of different aspects around the path ways early in the morning along with the magical colours of the blooms in different pockets of the garden. See what I mean:



Having said that, there are many rhododendrons that are flowering already and shouldn't be, like the photo below that I took in our 'Don Dosser' section. Are your Rhodos doing a similar thing? Any ideas why? Well basically this happens in late autumn /early Winter when the climate condi-

tions trick the plants into thinking it is springtime. A dry summer followed by a reasonably warm Autumn with just enough rain to keep plants happy without any extra watering, and mild winter days will do this and there is obviously no way of preventing it as we can't control the seasons. However you can give them a handful of potash because this will stimulate the process of hardening off therefore will reduce the amount of flowers flowering out of season and will focus on producing a spectacular display come Spring. Just remember to dead head the spent flowers and hope the rhododendron settles into a normal routine the following season.



So as you can see there's heaps to look at and the 'to do list' doesn't seem to be getting any shorter.....lucky I love my job and everything here at EVRG . Always weeding and mulching, plant tag labels are slowly finding their place in the garden. The new board walk is having the final touched applied and a bit of a 'thinning out working bee ' below the Sea of Japan is in progress so until next month, rug up and get out amongst it! *Neet*





Rhododendron laxiflorum

Rhododendron laxiflorum and Rhododendron annae both belong in Subsection Irrorata and when more material becomes available R.laxiflorum **could become** a Ssp. of R. annae! Whatever the outcome is, R. laxiflorum is well worth growing, as it flowers as a young plant with most branches crowned with lax trusses of white flushed rose flowers with red spotting.

Forrest discovered R. laxiflorum in 1919 on the western side of the Shweli-Salwin Divide in western Yunnan growing in open pine and rhododendron forests at elevations of around 2400 to 3300 meters.

Forrest was also credited with introducing it to western gardens in 1924 and 1925 where it grew to about half the height seen in the wild, but was found to be rather tender in exposed gardens. Not so at Emu Valley where our plants are growing well and flower beautifully in early October.

To meet these interesting plants they can be seen on the western edge of the Yunnan section above the middle road, and if you are interested in comparing R. annae with R. laxiflorum, R. annae can be viewed not far from Magnolia delavayi where it has grown to a bush nearly 3 metres high. *Maurie*

The Emu Valley Rhododendron Garden is proudly sponsored by:



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