

February 2021

Rhodo News

Newsletter 437



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

Kids love our new play area...



The new children's play area has proved a hit—and not just with the younger brigade. Just ask Lynette Neasey, organiser extraordinaire!

Calendar

Saturday 20th February
University students
volunteering

Wednesday 24th February
Morning Tea to thank Lions
At EVRG All welcome! 10am

Sunday 28th February
Social Get Together
EVRG 2pm

See us at: emuvallryhodo.com

General Manager's Report

FORTY YEARS! THAT'S RIGHT

2021 — Emu Valley Rhododendron Garden — Is turning 40!!!!

When I am at the garden I often ponder as to how it all started and listen to long-serving members reflecting on the past. If it had not been for them EVRG would not be here today. I also often think about how vitally important our present members, volunteers and employees are to ensure the future.

As we head into our 40th year there are a lot of exciting opportunities and also a lot of challenges facing us. The painting of our building, renovations of the Tea Room and drilling for bore water are real positives. Other than much needed revenue the biggest challenge is the maintaining of the garden. Our Horticulture Team does a magnificent job but lacks volunteers. We continually are exploring ways to attract more volunteers.

Team Meetings

The structure for managing the garden I believe is very strong. All sub committees meet on a regular basis with meetings planned 3 & 4 months in advance. These teams are the heart and soul of the organisation —

- ⇒ Horticulture
- ⇒ Hospitality & Catering
- ⇒ Infrastructure
- ⇒ Events/Social

A representative of the Infrastructure and Horticulture Teams attend each other's meetings as there is a lot of cross-over in tasks. The Management Team meets at least six times per year with all committees having representation. As General Manager I try to attend all meetings and report to the Board of Directors. Administration Officer Sophie attends the Board and Management Team meetings but it would be too time consuming for her to take part in other meetings. Members are very welcome to query, make suggestions or give feedback to any of the Teams.

Wetting the Appetite

The very keen Events/Social Team are in the process of planning all sorts of things. Get your diaries out —

- ◆ Saturday 3 April = Autumn Spectacular

Having had to cancel last year's event this year will have additional attractions and like 2019, a day for all the family

- ◆ Sunday 7 November — 40th Birthday Celebration for members and volunteers — Costs and time will be sorted soon. For those wanting to come and needing accommodation — *No promises but some billeting might be able to be arranged.*
- ◆ Saturday 13 November — Family Day celebrating all that is EVRG
- ◆ On the Drawing Board — Art and Sculpture Exhibitions
- ◆ Saturday 16 & Sunday 17 October — Spring Festival
- ◆ Saturday 20 February — Up to 40 university students volunteering in the garden!!!
- ◆ Possibly an EVRG calendar — limited edition

Watch this space in next months newsletter as there are things on the boil.

Cruise Ships & COVID19

You do not have to be Einstein to work out how COVID19 and the loss of cruise ships along with other visitors has affected us. We have taken a positive approach and will continue looking at ways to get those important dollars coming in. As I write this it is only a few days previous that a Cruise Ship Management company contacted us about a cruise ship coming into Burnie on Christmas Day. How wonderful it was to be able to reply that we have enough volunteers to welcome visitors (early indications being a minimum of three bus loads). Not unexpectedly I have been asked if I really think the ship will come. I have no idea but if it does we will be open.

Sunday Social Meetings

At the meeting on 27 February we will discuss the future of these get togethers. Do we want them to continue, if so the format and time etc? Numbers have dwindled significantly and it is one of those things that need discussion.

Any ideas or suggestions regarding attracting more visitors? Or fundraising ventures? — just let me know. Or how about what you might like to see in the newsletter? Geoff — geoffreywood@me.com /// 0427 722060

Around the Garden

While the summer rain has been kind to us this year, the lakes have now stopped flowing into each other. (This is normal for summer here at EVRG so please don't panic when reading this). This does however highlight the importance of the need of a continual water source, be it more tanks to store extra water during the wet winter months or drilling to add a bore pump. These are all ideas we must take into consideration now. With the exciting news of cameras soon to be placed into lake Grebe to live-stream our very special platypus, I feel that maintaining a healthy water level all year round is now paramount along with obviously keeping our plants alive and well without the added stress of water levels or the lack of. If anyone has any thoughts or suggestions on extra water and/or storage, then please feel free to contact us, would love to hear from you 😊.

Irrigation – a lot of time has been spent on the irrigation system of late. Every day that I am in, I spend a few hours on different sections making sure drippers are working and sprinkler heads are spinning and no blow outs etc. The nursery area is all on timers and the plants are thriving. There has been a lot of adjusting as plants have now obviously grown since the original upstands went in. It's just a matter of getting around everything to maintain the clearance that the irrigation requires. It will all take time and many hands make light work, which is why a few of the loyal volunteers have stepped in to upgrade the lower section of the garden as well as still having the ongoing support from our main man at Nutrien Water—thanks Geoff. It is important that if anyone (volunteers, members, locals, anyone visiting the garden) sees an issue at any time as far as the irrigation is concerned, please take a photo of the problem along with some background image so that I can better locate the issue. This will be by far the most useful way to report an issue. My number is 0400 963 493.

We have been and collected our barley straw for the year, a small amount compared to other years. A total of 562 bales. We have started laying them out already and you will see this on the banks of Japan, North America and the far end of the Vireyas. Next will be in selected areas above the middle road and also on top of the black weed mat along the Noel Sullivan walk, just amongst the Hilary O'Rourke area. Some bales will be kept up at the nursery for areas after people have weeded and to use as they need. To all who have helped yet again with carting and spreading of these, your time, strong muscles and sore backs does not go unnoticed, it is greatly appreciated so THANK YOU

Plenty more to write about like:

- * new maps for walking tracks, it has finally happened!
- * cuttings on the hotbed are almost full, mixture of rhodo species and hybrids, vireyas and other worthy plants
- * continual formative pruning and then chipping back onto the garden in and around the tracks with much more to go but have made a start
- * spraying for weeds as well as pests, I could talk all day but you get the picture.



Happy Gardening, Neet



Shinrin Yoku North West Forest Therapy

I am now offering guided Forest Therapy Walks in the gardens. The Garden is well suited to these walks, with many different views, paths and plants to explore. We have had four walks so far and they have all been very well received. One attendee recently commented: "I have been to the Garden many times but I never realised how peaceful it is."

What is Forest Therapy?

Shinrin Yoku literally means forest bathing and was developed in Japan in the 1980s. It is a public health practice to help people reduce stress, benefit physical and mental health and improve immune function. Stress is a major factor in modern lifestyle diseases and many scientific studies are now revealing the benefits of Forest Therapy as a preventative health practice. Basically it's very relaxing!



What can you expect for a guided walk?

A Forest Therapy guide helps you to slow down, become present in your body and the environment. Walks typically include activities to enhance the health benefits of being in nature such as stretching, breathing exercises, extending your sensory awareness, mindfulness and information about how nature can benefit health. All walks conclude with a simple tea ceremony.

How to book tickets?

The next walks are evening sessions, with gardens open just for attendees on the 14th February and 13th March. Walks are \$15 for members and \$25 for the general public. Public walks are listed by searching [Eventbrite](#) and [Facebook](#) for Shinrin Yoku North West, or follow the links.

Private walks of 2 or more can also be arranged, as can gift vouchers.

Call or email me for further information PH: 0438 440942 shinrin.yoku.nw@gmail.com

If you are on reception why not suggest a Forest Therapy walk to people new to the gardens?

I, Elspeth Brock am a certified forest therapy guide with the International Nature and Forest Therapy Alliance (INFTA) and have worked in community-based horticulture for many years.

<https://www.facebook.com/Shinrin-Yoku-North-West-100835248168627/>

<https://www.eventbrite.com.au/o/shinrin-yoku-north-west-30722778498>

Membership Fees- The Lifeline

For those who have missed paying their 2020/2021 membership Fees these can be paid by direct deposit, cheque or at the Tea Room. If paying by direct deposit please reference this by putting your first initial, surname and the word 'membership'.

Bank Details are -

BSB: 067-400

ACC: [28047242](#)

Single \$30 // Double \$50 and Family \$100



From the Board of Directors

There are a number of exciting projects that the Board will be introducing this year.

1. Painting of the building. This has started already and will continue until the job is complete.
2. Renovations to the tearoom. We are planning to add a small storeroom to the rear of the area, to move the door and to refurbish the interior. We shall be working with an internal decorator to ensure we have an upmarket and attractive tearoom. Before this project can start, we have to have the plans approved by the city Council, finalise lay outs, get the cabinets built and wait our turn with the builder. We envisage this project getting underway in June or July.
3. With the new tearoom, will come the long-awaited coffee machine!
4. Also with the new tearoom will come new flooring and blinds for the windows.
5. We shall be installing a new cash register, one that will make the lives of the volunteers a lot easier.
6. Platypus Project: We are working with Business North West (the old Chamber of Commerce) on a project to install cameras in our lakes to record the activities of our resident platypus. The idea is that this will then be broadcast on the internet (i.e. worldwide) and will result in more visitors to the garden.
7. Storage shed – We have ordered a storage shed for the larger pieces of equipment. This will free up storage space and allow us to operate more efficiently, and to have more space for building projects.
8. Storage for furniture – The draftsman is looking at plans for a room behind the office to be used as a library and a storage space for our chairs and tables. This will free up more space in the main function room. This may be too costly at this stage, but is a project for the future.

These projects are over and above the exciting plans that Maurie and Neet have for the garden too. The children's playground and the new moon gate are two projects that come to mind immediately.

We have survived the COVID period well so far. Our revenues may be down, but Government support has resulted in our making no cash losses over the period, and with visitor numbers increasing, we will continue to weather the storm.

We have received a number of donations and bequests in the past and recently, and it is these that are funding the capital expenditure outlined above.

We look forward to a bright future.
ANT DRY - CHAIRMAN

Volunteering Tasmania (VT) - So Important

EVRG has gained not just new members through VT but great assistance and advice. Nominations for the 2021 Tasmanian Volunteering Awards are now open. For more detail go to <http://www.volunteeringtas.org.au/tasmanian-volunteering-awards-2021>.

Contact Geoff Wood for further information.

Fellowship Coffee Morning

Have you missed talking to your mates in the Tea Room, function room and around the garden?

Come to a free catch up in the function room on the 15th Feb 2021, at 10am. Not a meeting, purely a social get together for current and ex members, and volunteers.

For more information, please feel free to contact Marilyn van Druten on 0423 784 431.





R. leptothrium

For a number of years I have watched with eager anticipation our plants of R. leptothrium. No flowers, but plenty of delightful bronze red new growth. Last year was different, flower buds began to appear and at the beginning of November pale rose flowers burst from these buds giving an indication of what to expect in future years. Flowering seems to last for a long period and even as the flowers drop the calyx left behind is also attractive.

R. leptothrium is closely related to R. ovatum. Both plants have rotate shaped flowers with a short tube and spreading lobes in pale rose to purplish rose, but leptothrium has narrow elliptic to lanceolate leaves, which are

shiny reddish-bronze when young. It grows in Upper Burma, Yunnan Sichuan and Tibet.

R.leptothrium was discovered by Forrest in June 1912 near Tengyueh, western Yunnan and introduced by him in the same year. Fellow growers in the Northern Hemisphere find some forms to be tender and prone to frost damage - no such problem here at Emu Valley.

We grow these plants in the Upper Burma area at present but as time goes by will be planted in Yunnan, Sichuan and Tibet. *Maurie*

The Emu Valley Rhododendron Garden is proudly sponsored by:



Emu Valley Rhododendron Garden Inc.
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