

May 2023

# Rhodo News

Newsletter 459



**Sustainable  
Tourism**  
Accredited  
Business

Official Newsletter of the

*Emu Valley Rhododendron Garden Inc*

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Patrons: (International) Kenneth Cox, (Tasmania) Her Excellency the Governor of Tasmania, Barbara Baker AC



*On Autumn  
Spectacular  
Saturday, we had  
the pleasure of  
being entertained by  
these two gorgeous  
wandering Autumn  
fairies.*

*They are part of  
the crew from  
'Ethereal  
Ensemble'.*

## Calendar

**Sunday 14th May**  
Mother's Day Luncheon  
At EVRG—book now

**Friday 13-15th October**  
ARS Conference

**Saturday 21st October**  
Spring Festival  
(a week after the conference)

See us at: [emuvalleyrhodo.com](http://emuvalleyrhodo.com)

## *From the Board*



### **Geoff Wood**

After 9 years in the seat as General Manager, Geoff has finally left us to fend for ourselves. Geoff's contribution to the garden is immeasurable. He has been a guiding hand, an astute leader, an excellent people person, and an organiser of note. He has contributed to and improved every aspect of the garden. We owe him more than a mere "thank you."

Geoff's involvement with the garden is now limited for the next few weeks to assisting Chris organise the rosters. He will also remain involved in the organisation of the ARS Conference later in the year. From the middle of May, then, Geoff's involvement as GM of the Garden will cease. Please could anyone wanting to deal with the General Manager, please contact me instead on [antdry@bigpond.com](mailto:antdry@bigpond.com)

### **Rosters**

From the middle of May rosters will be organised by Meredith Nettleton, and anyone wanting to contact her should do so on [volunteers@evrg.com.au](mailto:volunteers@evrg.com.au). Thanks to Meredith for taking on this role.

### **Event and fundraising person**

We are looking for a new employee to add some more skills to our staff, someone who is interested in looking after events and fundraising. Anyone interested please contact me.

### **Australian Rhododendron Society (ARS) Annual Conference**

This conference is to be held at the Garden from Friday 13<sup>th</sup> October though Sunday 15<sup>th</sup>. Keynote speaker will be Seamus O'Brien from the Kilmacurragh National Botanic Garden of Ireland. There will be speakers from New Zealand as well. We anticipate visitors from across the world. This is a prestigious event, and the invitation to host it should be seen as a compliment to the Garden and testament to the years of hard work put in by all our volunteers. Thanks to Geoff Wood and Nicole Maxwell for co-ordinating this in conjunction with the ARS. For anyone interested in attending, see our website [www.emuvalleyrhodo.com](http://www.emuvalleyrhodo.com)

### **Spring Festival**

This will be on 21<sup>st</sup> October, the week after the Conference. My apologies for any confusion that may have been caused by any change of date.

### **Cruise ship season**

This finished a few weeks ago, and feedback (via the Cruise ship personnel) from all our visitors was exceptional. They were all very impressed with the Garden, and with the friendliness of our volunteers and the warmth of their welcome. Planning for the new season has commenced, and once again, the biggest requirements will be for additional volunteers. Cruise ship visits are always great fun, and anyone wanting to be involved is encouraged to contact Meredith on [volunteers@evrg.com.au](mailto:volunteers@evrg.com.au)

### **Closure in June**

In recognition of the efforts put in this year by our volunteers, we have decided to close the tearoom for the month of June. Everyone needs a break. We shall be open again in July.

### **Renovations**

The renovations are on track, as this goes to press, are expected to begin on 21<sup>st</sup> August. This date is dependent on subcontractors being available and on cabinetry being complete, so we hope it is set in stone.....

### **Autumn Spectacular**

This has come and gone once again, and it was a good day for everyone. Thanks to everyone who was there to make it so.

*ANT DRY Chairperson*

## *Around the Garden with Neet*

Let me start by saying thank you to all of our loyal members and volunteers along with our garden visitors and stall holders who came and made Autumn Spectacular a great success. The garden is full of life and showing a fantastic display of Autumn tones these last few weeks and I have enjoyed watching the changes. I encourage our volunteers to leave the fallen leaves along our pathways (where it is safe to do so of course) as it would be a shame for our visitors to not see them in all of their beauty and laying so naturally, creating fantastic photo opportunities and not to mention the chance to play in the Autumn leaves, no matter your age.

Emu Valley is the place to be! Great volunteers working along side you in the most relaxed setting imaginable. Always plenty going on and a list as long as your arm, but that's half of the fun. And there's not many people out there that can say that their work is fun, but I can and its extremely rewarding too!

We have had a dead blackwood standing on the side of lake Grebe for as long as I can remember and it often received a lot of attention, people suggesting we drop it as its ugly and unsafe, not to mention the amount of lovely dry wood that our volunteers could potentially get their hands on, and why not? So I can now report that the ugly dead tree has been dropped safely and no humans, ducks, tadpoles or platypus were harmed in the process. Well done team!

Our mulch piles are slowly but surely shrinking! They have been a massive blessing in disguise despite taking up a bit of room in the car park. I think it has been highly beneficial to the garden and in more ways than one. A shout out must go to the guys from 'The tree doctors' for the truck loads of mulch and ongoing local support.

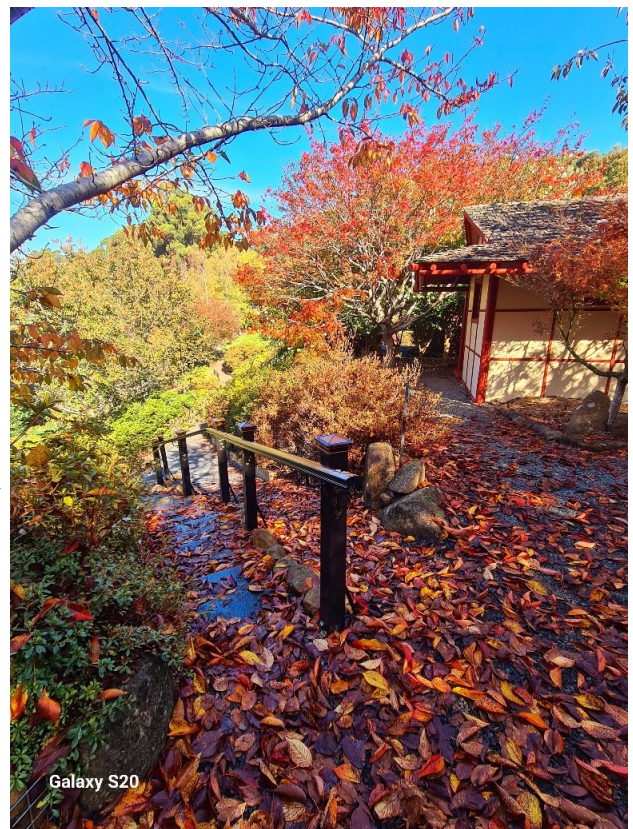
And it wouldn't be an Autumn edition if I didn't remind you all that now is the ideal time to get those plants in the ground. The soil is still warm and the watering should be left to the weather gods which is one less thing to have to worry about. Just a bit of planning as far as the ideal location for your plants, the right fertiliser and a light scattering of mulch and your plants should be happy in their new forever home.

Now is the time to:

- ◆ Plant bulbs ready for spring flowering.
- ◆ Prune back hedges, lavender etc to stimulate new growth. Just be mindful to not give a short back and sides to things that have already set flower buds like the wisteria.
- ◆ Dig up and divide large clumps of perennials such as dahalias, day lillies, hostas etc. Re-plant into well-conditioned soil/pot.
- ◆ Take care of the lawns and give them a feed. The grass may have slowed down due to the cooler nights, but the roots are still growing. Use a slow release fertiliser to help develop a strong root system.

While there is still plenty of colour about, make a day to come and explore.

Happy Gardening, Neet 😊





## Rhododendron prunifolium

Rhododendron prunifolium is a late flowering deciduous azalea native to southwestern Georgia and eastern Alabama states in North America. It was first collected by R. M. Harper in Georgia in 1903, first described by Small in 1913 as Azalea prunifolia and first introduced by Professor Sargent in 1918.

The leaves are oblong-obovate oblong or elliptic, upper surface dark green and glabrous, under surface pale green. The tubular-funnel shaped flowers can be crimson, vermilion, scarlet, red, reddish-orange or orange with or without an orange blotch. The stamens can be up to three times longer than the corolla tube. The flowers are not fragrant whereas with its close relative R. arborescens the flowers are either white or pink and very fragrant.

It grows on shady river banks and is usually isolated from its near relatives needing more summer heat. R. prunifolium can form a large shrub up to 4.5m high, less than that in our garden. At Emu

Valley we grow R. prunifolium on the bank above the north side of the lawn in the American section. *Maurie*

*The Emu Valley Rhododendron Garden is proudly sponsored by:*



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