

August 2024

Rhodo News

Newsletter 472



**Sustainable
Tourism**
Accredited
Business

Official Newsletter of the

Emu Valley Rhododendron Garden Inc

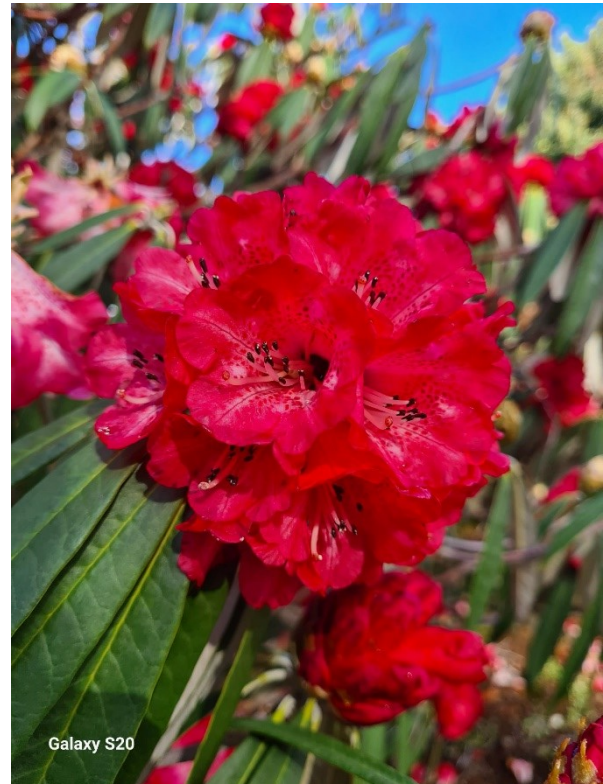
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Patrons: (International) Kenneth Cox, (Tasmania) Her Excellency the Governor of Tasmania, Barbara Baker AC

Arboreums in Full flower



As Neet's pics attest, the arboreum rhododendrons are in full bloom already, heralding spring!

Calendar

July/August

Wednesday Winter Warmers

31st August

Trivia Night!

12th October

Spring Festival

See us at: emuvalleyrhodo.com

Chairperson's Report

HOLIDAY

I have just returned from a two month stay in Queensland. The weather was perfect, the days were warm, and the sun shone happily. Most days, I wore a tee shirt and shorts (not necessarily a pretty sight). The kids and grandkids were wonderful and happy.

I watched the weather back home in horror, and for the first time ever, was glad I wasn't in Tassie! Now I'm home. It's August and the weather had improved, but it's still cold. The Garden is looking magnificent and seems to have benefited from the dryer days – we have some early blooms, and everything is lush and green.

NEW MERCHANDISE – CALICO BAGS

We are selling new EVRG calico bags. These have been created in collaboration with the Burnie Coastal Art Group, with artworks being provided by members of the group. They look magnificent and are a welcome addition to our collection of merchandise.

MEMBERSHIPS

A reminder that it's that time of year to renew memberships. Official reminders have been delayed due to the dreaded lurgy that had been doing the rounds and attacking our staff. These reminders, with the relevant rates, will be circulated later this month.

UPCOMING DATES

- ⇒ Throughout August – Wednesday Winter Warmers will continue
- ⇒ 31 August – Trivia Night
- ⇒ 12 October – Spring Festival



Our events team is working on other prospective events, some of them with external groups. More on this when we have these events set in concrete.

Do yourself a favour.....come and visit us – there is always something to do and see at the Emu Valley Rhododendron Garden.

ANT DRY

Chairperson & Acting General Manager
0400 841 011 antdry@bigpond.com

On the left we see our Burnie Chameleon in full display—one of the big leaf rhodos that came out unusually early this year.

Around the Garden

Welcome to the last month of Winter (supposedly), and fishing season has commenced as of the first weekend of August for the rivers that we like to visit anyway, yippee! Completely not garden related, but there's a useless fact about me so now you know. 😊

A continuation of cold starts but reasonably sunny days have been pretty handy when we have so much to achieve before the Spring rush is upon us. The plant hut has kept us busy the last few months which has been fantastic. New indoor stock arriving all the time and we hope to have a Spring collection of plants arriving next month so make sure you come and check us out.

Flowering has started early again this year, so it appears. A few of the big leaf rhododendrons that are more protected around the garden started flowering at the beginning of July which is roughly 4 to 6 weeks earlier than normal for this variety here at EVRG. The biggest concern for these massive beauties is for the flower truss to be ruined by frosts and therefore they become spoilt looking and the petals turn brown which ruins the overall look. I guess we can't help what the weather throws at us.

In our Nepalese section, which is up behind the nursery, you can see mass planting of rhododendron arboreum 'Stowport' which is also flowering now and is usually one of the earlier rhodos to flower. The original plan back in May 2015, was for this bank to be covered in red flowers which could be seen from the cafe by all of our visitors and guess what, they have finally got a bit of height and are all happily flowering all together now. This area will be quite the sight in years to come. It is already adding colour now, but just imagine looking up there and seeing a sea of red covering the bank, just perfection!

Some of our hard-working volunteers have been working on giving the old raspberry cage a bit of a makeover, and when I say makeover, I mean basically stripped back and started again from scratch! New netting over the whole thing, a new door so the black birds can go and find someone else's raspberries to pinch, and 100 new raspberry canes with fresh mulch and seaweed! These will produce enough fruit for us to make homemade raspberry jam for our Devonshire tea in the café as long as I can stay out of there ☺. How good does that sound!

A lot of pruning and thinning of tree canopy's have also taken place, unblocking waterways and drains are a constant chore. The upkeep of tools and machinery are also a high priority and I am very thankful for those who undertake these jobs. It's not always about weeding, pruning and general garden tasks. Keeping the tools sharp, clean and safe are just as important so thank you outdoor crew.

The upgrade of pathways are next on the list before we hit peak flowering time. We will also need to be looking at the first application of macozeb for the prevention of petal blight as soon as we have a dry and sunny day.

I better leave it there. Enjoy the last month of Winter and bring on Spring and remember that we are much more than just a rhododendron garden 😊.

Neet (Horticultural Manager)





LARIX Griffithii

As the garden became established, the need for autumn colour became evident. Deciduous plants were the obvious choice.

The areas of North America and Japan were relatively easy to satisfy, but Nepal, Bhutan, Sikkim and Tibet not so. Plants of *Betula utilis* var. *jacquemontii* were acquired and planted, their white bark and golden leaves are very beautiful. We also have *Acer sikkimense*, which set a lot of seed, giving us plenty of young plants to plant out. These have large leaves that colour beautifully in autumn, as does the delightful *Tetracentron sinense*, with its large heart-shaped leaves that are red tinted when young. But we had no deciduous conifers until recently, when we acquired seed of *Larix griffithii* and its close relative *Larix kongboense* – both native to Tibet.

We now have plants of *griffithii* growing well in East Nepal, Bhutan and Sikkim, and *kongboense* in Tibet. Their needles turn a golden rust colour in autumn. All of these plants are growing well, and some of the larch have even set cones up to 10cm long and 35mm in diameter, being purplish on the outside with long flat-topped light brown bracts with pointed ends (see picture). They all grow well from cuttings, which is a bonus. *Larix griffithii* was discovered by Dr Griffith in Sikkim and Bhutan, and Sir Joseph Hooker sent seed home in 1848 from East Nepal. *Maurie*

The Emu Valley Rhododendron Garden is proudly sponsored by:



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