

October 2024

Rhodo News

Newsletter 474



**Sustainable
Tourism**
Accredited
Business

Official Newsletter of the

Emu Valley Rhododendron Garden Inc

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Chairperson: Ant Dry Newsletter Editor: Nigel Burch

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

R 'Florence Mann'



A beautiful spring rhodo, superbly captured by our horticultural manager Neet while on her rounds. R 'Florence Mann' is small, growing to around 1.5m, but is quite stunning and can be seen now next to the driveway, near the tea room.

Calendar

19th October
Spring Festival

9th November
Birthday Bash
Family fun—details TBA

Late November
AGM
Date TBA next newsletter

6th December
Cruise ships begin

See us at: emuvalleyrhodo.com

Chairperson's Report

OCTOBER BLOOMS

We shall be running a series of fund-raising events in October which we are calling "October Blooms." Most prominent will be our annual Spring Festival to be held on Saturday 19th October. We are advertising widely this year through every medium available to us and we hope to bring in bigger crowds than ever before. Come along and enjoy the day. Better still, come along and volunteer – any assistance will be much appreciated.

In addition to this we are launching a number of "go-fund-me" pages to raise cash for some specific projects, some more exciting than others. Some of these projects are:-

- ◆ "Preserving the Precious," with donations to elevate the profile of our unique plant collection and to ensure that the plants remain part of the global ecosystem.
- ◆ "Protecting our platypus," to help make sure we can continue to care for the lakes the platypus are using as their homebase.
- ◆ "Flushing with success" is a project specifically to raise cash to fix our woeful plumbing situation by connecting the two sewerage systems (I did say some of the projects are less exciting!!) We need to raise around \$15,000 for this alone. Donations will "help make sure we can flush with confidence."

NEW BALUSTRADES

Our new glass balustrade is to be fitted to the balcony this month, replacing the wire balustrade we have had in place since the building was first erected.

As previously stated, these glass balustrades are very safe (children will not be able to use the wire to climb over the balustrade). They will vastly improve the view of the garden (we won't be seeing it through a cage) and therefore everybody's experience of our wonderful garden.

Funding for the balustrade is from another generous grant from the Burnie City Council. Thanks to the Mayor and Councillors.

COMPOSTING AREA & VISIT FROM HANNAH MOLONEY (Gardening Australia)

We have an impressive new structure almost completed in the Wisteria carpark. It could be mistaken for a stage for rock concerts, but it is in fact a composting area. At the back of the platform are some huge composting boxes and, in the front, we will be placing display plants and some seating. It will be magnificent when finished. Thanks to Baz and Tess, once again for their efforts. They really are champions - a very creative pair.

Funding for this construction is via another generous grant from the Burnie City Council. Thanks to the Mayor and Councillors.

To open this area, we have invited Hannah Moloney (Gardening Australia) to our new summer fundraiser to be held on Saturday 1st March.

MEMBERSHIPS

Thanks for all members who have already renewed your memberships, the support is really appreciated. For those who have yet to re-new, please feel free to do so now. Membership rates are:- \$35 single, \$60 double, \$70 host. Our bank details are BSB 633 000 Account number 186 234 688.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting will be held in late November. Documentation in respect of this meeting will be sent to members in early November.

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

Around the Garden

Spring has definitely kicked off in all the right ways. A bit of rain, followed by sun, which means the lawn mowers are starting to get a good work out due to the lawns growing like crazy. Or just get yourself a wallaby or ten! 😊

With rhodos, azaleas, spring bulbs, flowering cherries and new growth on the trees, all putting on a spectacular display in the early part of September, there is still plenty of blooms to come so don't panic. Just make sure you schedule in a visit sooner rather than later.

We have had a year 10 student from Leighland Christian School join us for a week of work experience during September. Phillip was eager to experience all things horticulture but his passion is to become an arborist. He was able to team up with one of our volunteers who is in the trade, and within a few short days of working with ropes, learning techniques on how to use as well as sharpen chainsaws, and had a go at



operating our chipper, he is keen to sink his teeth into this profession even more now. He had a great attitude and was a pleasure to have as part of the team for the week. We wish Phillip all the best. 😊

Now is a great time to sow seed from flowers that you may have kept from last years stock.

Seeds from sunflowers, asters, marigolds, portulaca etc will thrive if sown now. If herbs are more your thing, then start planting herb seeds now. Warm soil and reasonably sunny days with fresh and mild nights gives us the opportunity to plant vegetable seedlings as long as Mr Jack Frost has left the area.

Be prepared to keep a look out for the dreaded thrip and lace bug as the weather starts to warm up. The silver look of leaves is a sure sign that you have these pesky critters on your rhodos and azaleas. Best to hit them from underneath the leaves, as they are sap sucking blighters and you may need more than one application when dealing with them. We use a product called confidor. Pests usually attack sick and vulnerable plants so to avoid having these at your place, keep your plants fertilised, mulched and watered well.

Our Spring Festival is coming up and we will have plenty of plants available for sale along with giftware, plant health, garden tools and goodies for one day only - on our special day. We have all been extremely busy planning for this so come and show your support and enjoy a fun day out. 😊

Happy gardening everyone,

Neet (Horticultural Manager)



Rhododendron calophytum

We have waited quite a while for R calophytum to flower. However the wait is over and we now have six plants with flowers, all the same colour, but beautiful.

R calophytum is a native of western Sichuan, where it can grow to 15m. Hopefully less than half that here, but still quite spectacular. It was described by Franchet in 1886 from plants collected at Moupin, where it was found growing in woods and forests. Other collectors noted that it was common in the forests of western Sichuan. It was introduced by Wilson in 1904 and many times since by others.

R calophytum has large leathery oblanceolate leaves up to 30cm. Long, upper surface glabrous, under surface covered with scattered hairs. The flower truss is also large, having up to 30 widely campanulate flowers, which can be white, white tinged pink, pink or purple with a dark blotch at the base. The plants growing at Emu

Valley are to be found in the Sichuan section in the NE corner of the garden. All have white flowers with a red blotch at the base. There are still more plants to flower, maybe a different colour. *Maurie*

The Emu Valley Rhododendron Garden is proudly sponsored by:



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