

February 2025

Rhodo News

Newsletter 477



**Sustainable
Tourism**
Accredited
Business

Official Newsletter of the

Emu Valley Rhododendron Garden Inc

Postal Address: PO Box U33 Upper Burnie Tasmania 7320 Phone: 6433 1805

enquiries@evrg.com.au Office Hours: Mon-Fri 10am-2pm

Chairperson: Ant Dry Newsletter Editor: Nigel Burch

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

ARS visitors came with gifts



John O'Hara, Prue Crome and Andrew Rouse of the Australian Rhododendron Society are pictured above with our Mary McConnell (centre) and Neet Lowry (right). The ARS members came with cuttings, which was much appreciated!

Calendar

Friday 14th February

Café on Valentines Day

A special lunch available at the Garden

Saturday 1st March

The Garden Party

A new annual event for families

See us at: emuvalleyrhodo.com

Report from Chairperson / Acting General Manager

Happy New Year to All

Happy new year to all members—may 2025 be your best year ever.

I do feel that 2025 will be a momentous year for the Garden. We have the promise of funding to secure our long-term future. We have many new events planned for the year, all of which will raise our profile and bring more visitors to the Garden. Our staff (paid and volunteer) are settled and happy and working well together. All is good at the EVRG.

GIN AND JAZZ

We held our inaugural “Gin & Jazz in January” event on 11 January and it was a great success. The weather forgot to come to the party, but everyone else did. The event was centred around the Main Gazebo, and we had live music thanks to Sync and Swing and Green Onion Jam, wines and gin to taste, iced cream, and house-made stone-fired pizzas.

Everyone had a wonderful time and the feedback was excellent. We look forward to doing it all again next January.

MOON GATE

The Advocate arrived at the garden during the month to report on the official opening of the Moon Gate. The building of this wonderful structure was made possible through a legacy from David Cherry, a long serving member and a previous editor of the Advocate.

Once again, our thanks go to David for his very generous legacy and to Baz and Tess Morrell who created a memorable feature in our Garden.

VISIT FROM MAINLAND RHODO ENTHUSIASTS

In December we were delighted to host three visitors from the mainland (see front page) on their annual plant exchange; Andrew Rouse, John O’Hara and Prue Crome, all members of the Australian Rhododendron Society who arrived with eskies full of cuttings from their gardens. They enjoyed their two-day stay rummaging through our garden, with the help of our Mary McConnell and Neet Lowry, for cuttings to take home with them. Mary kindly hosted them, and by all accounts they had a great time. Thanks, Mary for your efforts on our behalf.

Their visit shows the excellent cooperation that has been developed and maintained between rhododendron gardens throughout Australia.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Take the opportunity to have a romantic rendezvous at our Café on Valentines Day – February 14th. A specialty lunch with bubbles will be available.

On 1 March, we have a “The Garden Party”, another inaugural event. This is a garden focused, family event, with activities for both children and adults, sweet treats, delicious food for sale, live music and much more. We have three special guests, all of whom will be making presentations:-

- ◆ Hannah Moloney from the ABC’s “Gardening Australia” will officially open our new composting area in the wisteria carpark and will give a talk on composting.
- ◆ James Macgregor is our local expert on platypus. He will be running a study of our platypus over the next few months and on 1 March will give a talk on these unique animals.
- ◆ Reece Campbell is a master (sorry, mistress) of culinary creativity with native foods, and she will be giving a demonstration of her skills.

During winter we shall be reviving our very popular “Winter Warmer” lunches as part of Tourism Tasmania’s OFF Season. These will run every Wednesday, and the start date will be announced soon.

Other events that have been discussed and proposed are events such as a Teddy Bears Picnic, A Long Table dinner, a Wedding Fair, and a “Winter Solstice Festival.” Stay tuned!

Ant Dry

Chairperson & Acting General Manager

0400 841 011 antdry@bigpond.com



Neet has been busy with her phone camera, recording what she sees around the Garden. Above is one of our hybrid hydrangeas.

Around the Garden



Above is another hybrid hydrangea, with a beautiful Clerodendrum bungei below.



We have welcomed a day of showers, resulting in only 14mm for myself at home in Ulverstone, 48mm for my dad in Railton, 50mm for two of our volunteers, Tess and Baz in Spreyton and around 22mm for us here at the garden. It's hard to believe that we're about 45 mins apart, yet the rainfall is so different. We'll take whatever we are given though as we head into the last month of summer.

Plenty of jobs in need of getting to here for the outdoor crew. With warmer days brings the pesky thrip and lace bug into top gear so we must put some time aside to spray for them. For those who are new to our newsletters and might need some helpful gardening tips, we use confidor and spray up underneath the leaves. That's where the sap sucking pests live and do the damage.

Brush cutting as far as the eye can see! Unfortunately we don't have as many people jumping up and down wanting to do this job, however there's plenty of it and we sure could do with more help. Having said that, Josh is covering a heap of ground and I can see where he's been and it's looking great, Perseverance and determination = satisfying achievement Well done! 😊

Irrigation is ongoing and could be a full time job on it's own! Pruning, again another full time job really, along with the need to take thousands of cuttings. I hope to really get stuck into this starting next week. This is where I love to spend most of my time. Walking around the hill side, taking cuttings of all sorts of different plant varieties and species that we are lucky enough to have growing in the garden. In the early stages, once on the hotbed for several months as they grow a healthy root system, we then pot them up to the next stage and out they go to harden off onto the roller beds. Extremely rewarding to watch them grow on where they can get to the stage of being available to for sale for someone else to then enjoy, or add to our plant collection in the garden to help make sure we have a healthy number of rare and unique plant survival.

From the time I take the cuttings through to the stage that the plant is ready to find it's new forever home here in the garden or at someone else's garden, its anywhere from 3 to 5 years, and big leaf varieties are even longer! (I am referring to rhododendron cuttings for this example). Taking cuttings are easy, it's the waiting game that's the hardest part. 😊

Going to cut it short here and add a few pics to finish off. Enjoy what's left of Summer, and happy gardening. *Neet*



The delicate leaves of Acer "Dissectum Atropurpureum" in the foreground, with our Japanese Teahouse at the back.



Rhododendron hemsleyanum

Rhododendron hemsleyanum grows into an upright shrub to 8m in the wild, but less in cultivation, forming an open upright shrub to 3-4m. The leaves are oblong-ovate, oval or broadly oblong with the base auricled—in other words the base of the leaves near the stem are rounded and stand away from the stem. Flowers are widely funnel-campanulate 60cm long, fragrant, white or white-tinged pink, with or without a yellowish-green flush towards the base.

R. hemsleyanum was discovered by E.H.Wilson in June 1904 on Mt. Omei, western Sichuan. It was later found by other collectors in the same region growing in evergreen and deciduous woods on Mt Omei at Hung-chun-ping at an elevation of 1,200m. It was introduced by Hu in 1963.

At the Emu Valley Rhododendron Garden, Rhododendron hemsleyanum is on the endangered list as we only have two specimens growing in the Sichuan area. They can be found on the right-hand side of the middle of the road. *Maurie*

The Emu Valley Rhododendron Garden is proudly sponsored by:



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

