



# The Friends of The Australian Arid Lands Botanic Garden *Port Augusta Incorporated* Newsletter

July 2010

## AGM of Friends of Australian Arid Lands Botanic Garden

Will be held on Saturday the 31st July 2010 at AALBG Conference room at 1pm.

The guest speaker will be Mr Tim Johnson talking on Street Trees of South Eastern Australia.

Tim Johnson has over twenty years experience as a horticulturist in South Australian local government and in the private sector landscaping industry. He has served on numerous related management committees and boards including the Urban Forest Biodiversity Program, Treenet, and the National Trust Significant Tree Steering Committee. In his current employment as arborist with the City of Mitcham his focus is to ensure the survival, enhancement and sustainability of Mitcham's urban forest. Urban consolidation, climatic

extremes and civil infrastructure both challenge this role and provide opportunities for improvements, as they have focused attention on the need for change in the ways trees are utilised in our cities. Tim is currently undertaking research towards a PhD in civil engineering at the University of South Australia's School of Natural and Built Environments. The focus of this research is the interrelationships between trees, stormwater, soil and civil infrastructure. The goal of the research is to identify synergies between the natural and built

environment which can be harnessed to support the development of sustainable, healthy and attractive cities. The presentation will summarise the function of trees in cities, current works to trial additional tree species to determine their suitability for use in streets and current engineering measures under investigation to provide passive street tree irrigation and stormwater management benefits.

Tim Johnson



### VALE: Ida Jackson, Ivan Holliday and Ian Bond

As well as the sad loss of Friends Foundation Member Brian Powell AM in April, South Australia has recently lost three other well known native plant enthusiasts. Ida Jackson was a highly regarded expert on the flora of Kangaroo Island. Ivan Holliday was a well known authority on native plants and their cultivation and author of several books on native plants and long term member of the Australian Plants Society.

Ian Bond was a former Director of the Loxton Research Centre where many dryland native plants were grown, and in retirement a native plant enthusiast in the Victor Harbor region. Each of these people contributed greatly to the knowledge of native plants and their cultivation in South Australia and beyond and will be sadly missed.

John Zwar

### Weapons & Wart Cures

at The Australian Arid Lands Botanic Garden

Come and join us for a fascinating wander through the extensive collections of acacias at the Australian Arid Lands Botanic Garden. You will discover some amazing things about our national floral emblem. After the tour join us for a delicious afternoon tea of bush tucker delights.

**Tour times** - 1.00pm every Sunday in August  
**Cost** - \$13 PP (includes tour and afternoon tea)

**Contact** - AALBG Visitor Centre  
**Ph** - (08) 8641 1049 (Bookings essential)



Come and do the wattle walk with us.

### Dates to Remember

#### WATTLE WALK

Every Sunday in August at 1pm Australian Arid Lands Botanic Garden. \$13 per person including delicious bush tucker afternoon tea. 'There are about 70 Acacia species in the AALBG and our trained Garden Guides will give you a wonderful insight into this amazing species.'

#### BUS TRIP TO WITTUNGA

2nd and 3rd October 2010 (long weekend)  
Enquiries: 0434 717 382

#### ARID A SCULPTURAL EVENT 4

Sculptures show-cased at Australian Arid Lands Botanic Garden. Open 18th September 2010.

#### GUIDED TOURS

Every weekday at 10am  
at Australian Arid Lands Botanic Garden.

# Out and About in the Garden

After the lovely rains we have had over the last 2 months you can't help but notice how healthy and green the garden looks when driving in. The first thing you see is the new plantings of arid tree species known as the ARID ARBORETUM near the Flinder's Lookout corner. I hope I am able to see them grow to maturity.

Walking up the entrance path the brilliant red pea flowers on the *Bossiaea walkeri* (Cactus Pea) show up against the unusual grey leafless flattened stems of this shrub. It is found in the western areas of Eyre Peninsula between Ceduna and Tarcoola, further west into Western Australia and other arid areas of Victoria and NSW.

Throughout the Eremophila garden both the white and pink flowered *Eremophila christophorii* are ablaze with colour. This Eremophila grows to about 2m and is found only in the southern area of the Northern Territory. Throughout the garden, almost all the spring flowering plants are covered with new growth and buds can be seen in the photo of the *Eremophila lachnocalyx*. In a month or so the garden will be full of colour.

The *Xanthorrhoea quadrangulata* is starting to show new flower stalks and can be seen in the western section of the garden. At present, the native birds are having a wonderful time in the *Eremophila stenophylla* near the cafe. This broom like tree or large shrub grows to about 6m with its branches, leaves, pedicels and sepals clothed in a silvery-grey lepidote indumentum (covering of hairs and scales). This plant is native to the south western corner of Queensland and is on the endangered list of Australian natives. refer R Chinnock. "*Eremophila and allied genera*".

On reaching the car park a *Eucalyptus kruseana* is now displaying its beautiful yellow flowers and buds, a very showy specimen to admire in the home garden. The garden is a prime place for the bird watchers at the moment with the wattle birds, mulga parrots and honey eaters flitting throughout the garden keeping very busy doing what birds do.

**Guide:** Chris Nayda

**Photos:** C Nayda AALBG 30/6/10



1. *Bossiaea walkeri*
2. *Eremophila christophorii*
3. *Eremophila lachnocalyx*
4. *Eucalyptus kruseana*

1. *Bossiaea walkeri*
2. *Xanthorrhoea quadrangulata*
3. *Eremophila stenophylla* with Spiny-cheeked honey-eater

## November 1985 Newsletter

### GOVERNMENT GRANTS \$226,000!

It seems that the AUSTRALIAN ARID LANDS BOTANIC GARDEN is to become a reality and will be established at Pt. Augusta. On 2 October 1985, Mr. Gavin Keneally, Member for Stuart, met John Zwar and other members of the 'Friends' committee at the site. At that meeting, Mr. Keneally formally announced on behalf of the Minister for Agriculture, Mr. Frank Blevins, a grant of \$50,000 from the Rural Adjustment Development Fund. Fencing, tree planting, development of paths and tracks, and

the establishment of a lookout will be under-taken. It is expected that 12 people will be employed for 28 weeks. This money will allow a comprehensive feasibility study to be done and a master plan to be drafted. Work has begun already. A further announcement was made on 30 October 1985 by Mr. Keneally, on behalf of the Federal and State Ministers, Messrs. Ralph Willis and Frank Blevins, who jointly administer the Community Employment Programme. A further grant of \$176,645 has been made and will enable site construction to commence.

# SPRING NOTES from KEW 16 April 2010

As the old song goes 'spring has come a little late this year'. After more snow than London has seen for a decade, the new shoots of spring took their time to appear.

We were helped through February by the annual Kew Orchid Festival with thousands of brightly coloured orchids flown in to blow away the winter blues and now, in early April, suddenly everything is making a mad dash to show itself.

In front of the Palm House there is the very bright formal Victorian type bedding in front of the lake - pale and deep pink hyacinths, masses of yellow tulips, rust, red, mauve and yellow primulas - perhaps the Victorian colour sense rather more flamboyant than ours today.

Walking around Kew Gardens this week some of the trees in the grove of magnolias were almost past their best, others still in tight bud. Nearby a low swathe of gorgeous *Fritillaria*. Another grove of pink and white Prunus with daffodils and narcissus below beckoned and elsewhere a grove of bright white Prunus 'Shirotae' (also called Mt Fuji) and others - single and double blooms.

The woodland garden was full of low-growing spring delights - *Epimedium versicolour*, trilliums, *Erythronium californica*. In the refurbished rock garden I saw various pulsatillas (P. Vulgaris, the pale mauve Pasque Flower) and a first for me, a rusty red pulsatilla and the wonderful cobalt blue *Tecophilea cyanoctocus* (Chilean Blue Crocus).

Nearby in the 2006 fan-shaped Alpine House (Architects Wilkinson Eyre) tiny species tulips (*Tulipa humilis*), tiny tulipa scarlet linifolia, small deep mauve Iris from the Caucasus next to *Primula palinuri* from SW Italy and bright yellow Linacea from Crete.

A great place to enjoy a spring day (and today the unique joy of not having planes flying over as all are grounded due to the plume of ash high above us from an Icelandic volcano - despite the chaos and the loss of air revenue, a small part of me rejoices in the absolute supremacy of nature).

**FROM HELEN AUTY**  
**A 'FRIEND' OF BOTH AALBG AND KEW GARDENS**  
**PHOTOS HELEN AUTY**

*Prunusshirotae* or Mt. Fuji



Kew Pond



Sunny Palm House

# When is a Pine not a Pine?

The Australian 'Native Pine' is not actually a pine. It seems to have received its common name based on the appearance of the leaves which appeared to be somewhat similar to the leaves of the 'true' pines of the Northern Hemisphere. Native Pines are members of the family Cupressaceae, the Cypress family and the foliage and rounded cones look quite similar to many Cypress species from other parts of the world. In the eastern states the common name Cypress Pine is more widely used than Native Pine which is widely used in South Australia. The new white settlers of Australia, from the northern hemisphere, were naturally familiar with the plants of that hemisphere; hence Australian *Callitris* trees being called 'Native Pine' or 'Cypress Pine'.

Some plant enthusiasts may mistakenly think that the 'true pines' such as the commonly grown Radiata Pine, *Pinus radiata* which is grown in plantations for woodchip and paper are native to Australia. *Pinus radiata* is native to California; it creates a dense shade, depletes the soil of nutrients and water, and changes the soil chemistry thus excluding native plants. The Radiata pine has a large pine cone as compared to our 'Native Pine' which has a hard woody smaller rounded cone which opens to a small upside down 'crown' to let the seeds disperse.

To add further sentiment to Australians, at the Battle of Lone Pine at Gallipoli in Turkey during WW I, the 'lone pine' was an 'Aleppo Pine', *Pinus halepensis*. The Aleppo is well known and revered by those interested in the history of the WW I. *Pinus halepensis* is native to the Mediterranean and Middle East, and its seed was brought back from Gallipoli by soldiers on their return to Australia at the end of WW I, often as a memento of the friends who had died during the Battle of Lone Pine. Unfortunately, in some areas of South Australia the 'Aleppo Pine' now has become a bush invader at the expense of native vegetation and is considered a woody weed.

As Mr Don Caldecott from the Northern and Yorke Regional Development Board states, "the 'Aleppo Pine' is a fast grower, reaches 20 metres in height, and grows almost anywhere". He emphasizes that it is important to note that a "seedling Aleppo will take five years to mature, and once mature the trees may produce about 100,000 seeds each year and so quickly swamp out native vegetation, leaving the ground bare except for cones and needles. The Aleppo lives for about 50 years, has minimal benefit to birds, and becomes a significant fire hazard. This has led to many roadside projects to remove large infestations of Aleppo to be replaced by local native trees".

Our Australian 'Native Pines' or *Callitris* species occur in many parts of the country and range from small trees to quite sizeable trees cut for commercial timber production. *Callitris glaucophylla* occurs naturally in the Australian Arid Lands Botanic Garden, the Flinders Ranges and many other areas. *Callitris verucosa* and *Callitris gracilis* are other Native Pines which are widespread in parts of South Australia. The male cone of a *Callitris* is small and located at the tips of twigs. Female cones start out in a similar way and take 18-20 months to mature to 1-3 cm long and wide. The cone of *Callitris* may remain closed on the trees for many years sometimes only opening after being scorched by fire. The wood was well used by early settlers for fencing and building and is resistant to termites. *Callitris glaucophylla*, Northern or White Cypress Pine is still harvested commercially in NSW and has a beautiful grain and a very pleasant cypress smell when being worked and can be used for many purposes.

Geraldine Davis



*Callitris glaucophylla* at AALBG - photo Shirley Mundy

Left: Naturally growing *Callitris glaucophylla* kept around houses in Roxby Downs - photo by John Zwar

## Bird Watching Programme

**Sunday 25th July** - Buckaringa Gorge - Meet at Quorn swimming pool 8 am

**Sunday 15th August** - Telowie Gorge - Meet at car park 8 am

**18th - 19th September** - Camp at Cooyerdoo Shearers' quarters - Bring swags and tucker  
Meet at tanks near Iron Knob turn-off 9 am Saturday

**Sunday 17th October** - Whyalla Conservation Park / Point Lowly - Meet at turn-off to park Whyalla Road 7 am

**Sunday 7th November** - Blanche Harbour - Meet at shacks turn-off 7.30 am

Phone: Peter 8642 5723 Greg 8648 6882 Shirley 8642 4013

## Contacts

**President:** John Zwar Phone Home: (08) 8364 4256 Work: (08) 8372 6876 Email: jzwar@bigpond.com

**Treasurer:** Geraldine Davis Phone: (08) 8648 6399 Mobile: 0418 447 020 Email: glgadavis@bigpond.com

**Secretary:** Christine Nayda Phone: (08) 8642 4684 Mobile: 0434 717 382 Email: b.nayda@bigpond.com

PO Box 2040, Port Augusta, South Australia 5700

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