

Newsletter

Summer 2025



FRIENDS OF SALE BOTANIC GARDENS

President Heather Harrington

How fortunate are we to have the luxury of the only Botanic Garden of Colonial times, east of Melbourne in Regional Victoria! This significant asset attracts regular visitors each year including worldwide tour groups who are always amazed at what they see and learn about the gardens, so much so that it has become a regular stop on their itinerary touring Victoria, to experience and enjoy.

Our Living Collections, include The Bill Cane Collection, Climate Matched Gardens, Garden For Life, Woody Meadow, Sensory Garden, Catalogue Collection, Summer Walk and Care for the Rare- all with such a diversity of plant material. Several of these gardens have been designed by distinguished horticultural/landscape architects and provide beautiful functional spaces with a strong connection to our local environment and the people who use them.

The Woody Meadow Collection is a partnership between University of Melbourne and Council to monitor the success of coppicing on the selected species and highlights the important role our Botanic Gardens play in research and maintenance. Take a closer look at this collection that has recently been coppiced, on your next visit



Photo by Dianne Honey



Photo by Dianne Honey

and see how this display regenerates over the summer months.

The Friends of Sale Botanic Gardens are passionate about assisting with the management of these collections that highlight their valuable horticultural and cultural resource and particularly grateful to our curator who works tirelessly to maintain such a high standard for us all to enjoy. The Sale Botanic Gardens is undoubtedly an educational, inviting, delightful and therapeutic space.

We are fortunate to have the full support of the Natural Environment & Parks team with whom we work collaboratively, to promote this botanically rich and engaging landscape-clearly providing a passionate and direct connection with our local community and look forward to that continued support as we move into the next iteration of the Sale Botanic Gardens Management Plan. Thank you Wellington Shire for the priority and respect you give to our beautiful Botanic Gardens.

Open Space Officer

Tracey Parker and Celeste Booth

With all the soaking rain, we feel the relief of what was a dry start to Spring. We are not watering at all and are in fact having to be careful where work vehicles are driving over our lawns so as not to sink and damage the lawn. This is a very promising start to Summer and the lawns and plants (and weeds) are rewarding us with all their lush and healthy new growth.

The Woody Meadows Garden bed has had its annual prune. With the help of the Horticulture Crew, we collected a full truck load of vegetation in our 'Big truck'. The plants now sit at a very flat 200mm high. On Thursday, the job was completed with a feed using an organic Native specific fertiliser (Bush Tucker) and a fresh top up with mulch. Unfortunately, we were a little late with our timing and the beautiful blue flowering Veronica perfoliate (Digger's Speedwell) was still in flower. It was a lesson to be learned for me, that the timing is critical in the pruning of our Woody Meadows Garden bed and it is noted that early October, before flowering commences, is the perfect time to prune it.



The Eastern entrance to Sale Botanic Gardens on Guthridge Parade had it's crazy paving completed this year by Liz Filmer and was then followed up with some gravel resurfacing on some of our paths. They are receiving much attention with contractors filling low spots and resurfacing one whole path from the front entrance down to the Sensory Garden Round Bed. This was weathered and had an uneven surface. Contractors have also been unblocking the drains along the Summer Walk as part of our path maintenance.

The Photinia hedge (*Photinia x fraseri 'Red Robin'*) which was pruned back to sticks is returning slowly but steadily. New shoots are continuing to appear. I am keeping a close eye on the Powdery Mildew which targets the soft new leaves. This is the greatest threat in setting back the recovery so far.

On Thursday, November 27th, in the quiet of the afternoon, under the shade of the Lemon Scented Gum, we had an unusual and most welcomed visitor. A happy and inquisitive Echidna. They were

minding their own business, nuzzling in the grass and mulched area, I suspect following a trail of ants. They strolled around the base of a few trees and very deliberately nudged the ground at the bases of the trunks. They were either unaware or unphased by my presence and as I positioned myself for the winning photo, Echidna came quite close and nuzzled under my kneeling knee. I stayed still as a statue so as not to alarm the little one and after they realised I was a very unusual tree with no ants to offer, they wandered off up the hill to the Conifer lawn on the south edge of the Botanic Gardens and down the embankment of Montgomery Street where they were happy foraging in the leaf litter under the towering Spotted Gums (*Corymbia maculata*).

We are very fortunate to have had the plentiful Spring and Summer rainfall this growing season and the gardens are rewarding us for all of our hard work. Thanks to you, our volunteers, along with contractors and many staff who all have a role in maintaining and presenting our Botanic Gardens to the high standard that it is. It is something we can all be very proud of!

Friends of the Sale Botanic Gardens are a very important part of the making of the gardens, volunteering their time every month, and happy to do whatever work tasks are set out for them. They showcase the gardens to the public that turn up for the monthly tours, showing their passion for the gardens, and highlighting how important the collections are throughout the gardens. These show how significant the Sale Botanic Gardens are throughout our region and how proud and passionate Friends of Sale Botanic Gardens are.



Photo by Celeste Booth

Open Space Officer

Tracey Parker and Celeste Booth

On behalf of Wellington Shire Council we would like to thank you for another outstanding year with your passion and dedication to the Sale Botanic Gardens.

Wishing you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy and Safe New Year, enjoy this special time with family and friends.

We look forward to seeing you back at the gardens in February 2026.

Celeste, Lucy, Tracey and Tony



Photo by Dianne Honey

The Friends Group on a tour of the Gardens led by the knowledgeable and passionate Tim Rowe at their Christmas breakup.



Friends of Sale Botanic Gardens member, Vicki with a group of students talking about sustainability in conjunction with Nakunbulook Education centre.



Above and below. Curator Tony with Friends of Sale Botanic Gardens and Councillors during BGANZ (Botanic Gardens of Australia & New Zealand) week showcasing the garden.



I Love Tasmania tour group

Secretary Evelyn McAdam

After a very cool, wet start to summer, it is great to experience some nice warm sunshine along with a gentle breeze. During my recent stroll through the Botanic Gardens, I really enjoyed seeing the critically endangered Craspedia canens (Grey Billy Buttons), bobbing their yellow flowers, many bursting with seeds, ready to spread out around the ground.

Raising Rarity has been such a successful program with Melbourne Botanic Gardens Victoria, led by a team with Dr Meg Hirst, Seed Ecologist, engaging Rosedale Primary School initially, and now with other local schools' as part of this program. These plants have every chance of continuing to propagate and flourish before our very eyes. Congratulations to all who have been so very fortunate to be part of this program.

The birds are busy nesting and the pollinators busy visiting the plants, heightening the senses this at time of year.

Enjoy a stroll through the gardens and see how your senses are enhanced.

Gardening Days commence at 9.30am on the second Thursday of each month. Meet in the Maple Pavilion

Thursday December 11th

No gardening session or Tours in January

Thursday February 12th

Become a Friend

Join like-minded people each month for gardening, friendship and learning in the beautiful Sale Botanic Gardens. No experience need! Contact Heather 0413 919 537.

Contact the Secretary or Editor via email friendsalesbotanicgardens@gmail.com

Editor Dianne Honey.

Thanks everyone for your reports and photos. I'm sorry I don't know who took some of the photos.

Council acknowledges the Gunaikurnai People as the Traditional Owners of the land that is now the Wellington Shire.

Upcoming Events

Garden Tours

Free guided tours of the Sale Botanic Gardens operate on the **second** Thursday of each month, February to December, 10:00am-11:00am and are led by one of our members from the Friends Group.

Please meet at the main entrance on Guthridge Parade, near the Children's Playground. Phone 5142 3237 or 0413919537 to book a private tour.

Pop into the Visitor Information Centre at the Port of Sale for a self-guided tree walk brochure.



Australian Association of Friends of Botanical Gardens

The Australian Association of Friends of Botanic Gardens (AAFBG) is a national network providing a forum for communication, information and promotion between its members, related botanic gardens groups and the community.

It's our parent body and supports the growth of Friends' groups interested in the well-being and public appreciation of botanic gardens through their conservation and development, scientific, educational, historical, cultural and recreational functions.

Members represent a range of botanic gardens and parks in regional and metropolitan areas throughout Australia. More information can be found on their website <https://friendsbotanicgardens.org>



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