

Newsletter

Autumn
2026



FRIENDS OF SALE BOTANIC GARDENS

President

Heather Harrington

Autumn is here in all its glory and with the changing seasons it is a great time to visit the gardens as summer fades away. Escape our busy lives and relax in this special place. Walk on the grass, smell the flowers, hug the trees, listen to the birds and picnic on the lawns. Contemplate. Explore. Enjoy.

Observe the subtle changes in the Living Collections – the single, most vital aspect of any Botanic Garden. This is where you can see what grows well in our local environment and perhaps try something similar in your home garden.

The Care for the Rare Garden is beginning to take shape after some initial setbacks as we endeavour to manage a range of species identified as rare or threatened in our local environment. We all enjoyed our gardening day recently tidying up and replanting sections of this collection. The enthusiasm and pride of our volunteers at work is infectious.



The Sensory Garden Collection continues to be a focal point for visitors and remains a favourite amongst the Friends as it was designed in the year 2000 when the Friends group was established. Take the time to appreciate the simply sublime beauty provided by the exotic deciduous trees as they engulf the senses throughout the season.

Parks Week was a highlight for the community and an opportunity to showcase our beautiful part of the world. A big thank you to Tim Rowe for leading a tour of the gardens and another at Flooding Creek which we all appreciated. Tim's knowledge is extensive having been involved with these projects from the beginning.

Thank you Tim.

I was fortunate to be able to lead a floral art workshop where participants created a 100% sustainable design. The contemporary table centrepiece provided a few challenges but was enjoyed by all participants.

Thank you to Tracey Parker for all your support and efforts especially during this event.

Photo on the left is of FSBG volunteers assisting Tony in the weeding, trimming and replanting of the Care For the Rare Garden bed.
Photo by Dianne Honey

Curator Tony King

Welcome to the Curators column for Autumn 2026 and am I glad to be writing this!!

After a little bingle on my pushbike and a sore shoulder, six months have gone past since I was in the gardens full time.

A massive thank you to all the Parks crew who went above and beyond to keep the Gardens looking well maintained and presentable. A special shout out to Celeste Booth and Lucy Brilman for the excellent work they did during my absence.

There have been a few events during the end of February and during March to keep us on our toes in the Gardens this year. Shakespeare in the gardens, the Wellington Sustainability Festival this weekend and the Sale Music Festival at the end of the month which all means more people enjoying the gardens which we love but the work required means we are kept quite busy.

Autumn is my favourite time of year by far with the cooler afternoons before the onset of the Winter cold interspersed with some glorious days and generally milder conditions. Perfect for working in the garden.

Some nice rain events have the water content within the garden beds consistent, lending itself to good growth across the gardens and most of the beds are looking good.

There's been very limited numbers of the Grey headed flying foxes this year who set up camp closer to Lake Guyatt, which meant no impact at all within the gardens. Corellas, Sulphur-crested cockatoos and Currajongs are plentiful within the garden this season and have been doing a lot of feeding within the grounds, especially enjoying the Bunya Pine seeds.

Visitation is high with locals, tour groups and people from all over Australia dropping in to spend some time within the garden who talk to staff and Friends of the Sale Botanic Gardens volunteers.

The garden is slowly starting to show the effects of the shorter daylight hours with the trees beginning to store their energy and produce the magical Autumn colours. The Maples are already on the turn and the Elm Forest looks amazing as they shed leaves and cover the paths in that area of the garden.

Grasses ranging from Native *Poa's* to the *Miscanthus* are all displaying lovely seed heads at this time. They are impressive but will start to get cutback shortly to allow light and air onto the next plant display in beds.



Feather Reed Grass. Photo by Dianne Honey

Plenty to do maintenance wise within the garden with deadheading and cutting back an ongoing process from now till mid-Winter when we will finish of our deciduous pruning.

The Friends have been busy over the first two working days of the year with the Bill Cane Garden, the Sensory Garden and the Care for the Rare Garden receiving a well needed prune and weeding with a few replacement plantings to keep the beds looking full.

As usual the work they do is of the highest quality and the promotion of the Gardens benefits. What they do is fantastic! A few new faces as well which is also very encouraging and a huge thank you goes out to all of them.



FSBG volunteers with Tony in the Sensory Garden. Photo by Dianne Honey.

Secretary's Report

Evelyn McAdam

The recent rain has been wonderful for our gardens. It has refreshed the plants, rinsing off the dust, soaking up the moisture. It's time to assess what plants need to be pruned or replaced, depending on how they have fared during the dry period that we experienced over summer.

Our regular gardening days during the autumn season is a time to glean some tips for our own gardens, as we are guided by Tony and Tracey.

I am personally looking forward to getting back to our regular tasks, as I have certainly missed attending whilst recovering from surgery. Being with like-minded people, in the green spaces of the Botanic Garden, is the best medicine!

New volunteers are always welcome. Come and join us on the 2nd Thursday of each month at 9:30am.

Gardening Days begin at 9.30am

April 9th

May 14th

June 11th

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 or email friendsofsalebotanicgardens@gmail.com

Editor Dianne Honey.

Thanks everyone for your contribution.



Parks Week floral arrangement. Photo by Heather Harrington.

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



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Upcoming Events

Garden Tours

Attend a free guided tour of the Sale Botanic Gardens led by one of our friendly members. Tours operate the **second** Thursday of each month 10:00am-11:00am.

Please meet at the main entrance on Guthridge Parade.

Private tours are also available by appointment or pop into the Visitor Information Centre at the Port of Sale for a self-guided tree walk brochure.

Phone 5142 3237 or 0413919537 to book a private tour.



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 is 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 info@friendsbotanicgardens.org



Signs of Autumn. Photo by Helen Farley.

Contact Us

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