

Newsletter Winter 2026



FRIENDS OF SALE BOTANIC GARDENS

President Heather Harrington

Winter has certainly arrived, but despite the shorter days, lower temperatures and chilly mornings, there are still many things to love about winter. There's nothing better than rugging up and spending a few hours in the garden to warm the heart and soul and unwind from the stressors of our busy lives.

Camellias are beginning to bloom in the Sensory Garden and there's lots of colour in the Bill Cane Garden. My favourites include the *Persoonia procumbens* (Geebung) and the *Grevillea lanigera* (Mellow Yellow) spilling over the edges. Both are covered in stunning blooms! The evergreen foliage continues to offer structure and texture throughout the gardens—not to mention the fungi surprises found in the leaf litter and the lawn beneath their canopies. See if you can find the bright red fly agaric mushroom *Amanita muscaria* with its distinctive white spots (but beware it is poisonous) beneath the Brewer's Weeping Spruce *Picea breweriana* near the front entrance.

We were delighted to welcome local identity Michèle Adler to celebrate BGANZ (Botanic Gardens Australia & New Zealand) week as she



Camellia. Photo by Dianne Honey



L-R Heather & Michèle. Photo by Dianne Honey

shared her journey into the story of the Burnley Gardens with an engaging talk at Nakunbalook through her award winning book: ***Burnley Gardens: Their Design and the People who loved them.***

Michèle is an acclaimed horticultural lecturer, researcher and garden historian with more than thirty years at the University of Melbourne's Burnley campus and she delighted her audience exploring a fascinating period of horticulture in Victoria and the alignment between the development of the gardens at Burnley with our Sale Botanic Gardens-Gippsland's premier public garden. She also uncovered an exciting Gippsland connection: Burnley's director, Alex Jessep—later Director of the Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria—was a Maffra local educated here in Sale!

A well-known camellia enthusiast, Alex went on to establish the Australian Camellia Society and won many horticultural awards.

Special thanks to our friendly volunteer, Tim Rowe, for providing a most interesting talk and tour of our Sale Botanic Gardens to a very large audience on the following Saturday. His knowledge and passion for the gardens is incessantly apparent and always appreciated by our visitors.

What a great way to end the week!

Heather.

Curator

Tony King

What a wonderful end to Autumn we experienced here in the Sale Botanic Gardens with plenty of glorious cool, calm, dry days to lead us into winter. The garden has been buzzing with visitors making the most of the fine days we are experiencing including a rather raucous Corella population that honestly just seem to be playing within the garden space and doing their thing. Our deciduous trees are doing what they do and dropping masses of leaves as the season turns. Maples (*Acer*) went very quickly but drew in some visitors and the Manchurian pears followed by the Oaks (*Quercus*), Plane trees (*Platanus*), Ginkgo (*Ginkgo biloba*) with the Elms (*Ulmus*) bringing up the rear and providing great leaf colour and masses of raking and leaf blowing for us.

The garden is still being irrigated at a reduced water factor due to the low rainfall, but the beds still have some very nice focal points at present. The Climate Matched Garden and a lot of the native plant beds are providing splashes of colour as plants continue to flower or set their seeds. The Bill Cane Collection has plenty of interest at present and is worth a look at with some lovely Grevillea flowers on the standards as well as the Hakeas and several other flowering shrubs providing colour.

The Sale Botanical Garden Friends have and will continue to be busy with some weeding and cutting back over the winter season and they will be put to good use on their second Thursday of the month workshops!! A few new faces within the Friends which is awesome and a shout out to all of them for not only the physical work but the fantastic promotion of the garden into the community that they also do.

The staff and all the crews involved have been very busy preparing for some of the winter tasks which all gardeners will be doing such as cutting back deciduous plants, raking leaves (the best compost material) and mulching beds as required. We have cut back a few plants within the Native Walk and Summer Walk beds and will continue to cut back our grass beds as well as prepping for the deciduous trees and shrubs that will be completed during the winter. The pruning will continue throughout the winter season as plants drop their foliage and we can do some remedial jobs as we go-removing crossed branches and any damaged limbs or branches as required as well as some reduction pruning to manage sizes of some plants

Of course, winter will provide plenty of weeding practice for us all and can be a large job dependent on weather.

We are looking forward to the bulbs putting on their display and we have bolstered some beds with an Autumn top up planting of more bulbs and replacement plants for gap filling with some of our native plants providing their colour as we move into the colder wetter months.



Corellas. Photo by Dianne Honey

So, wear some appropriate warm clothing (include a beanie) and come down to visit the garden and experience the different highlights of the garden during the winter season. The trees will be looking very sculptural with their branches providing a great framework against a winter sky and there is always some form of colour or interesting shape within the gardens.

I look forward to saying hello if you do get down for a visit.

Stay warm and we can start to think about Spring already.

Tony



Maple leaves. Photo by Dianne Honey

Secretary's Report

Evelyn McAdam

My goodness, but winter has certainly arrived! I am enjoying walking amongst the trees with the leaves of the deciduous trees creating a blanket, protecting fallen seeds until they are ready for germination. I also enjoy the carpet of camellia petals in various colours. I can now see the birds who have been singing and calling to each other, previously hiding in amongst the leaves of the trees through the warmer months. I look forward to being able to identify them by sight as well as sound.

We continue to welcome newcomers to our volunteer group. They bring knowledge and experiences to share with us as we get to know each other whilst gardening together. We are always learning about our beautiful plants as we are guided by Tony, Tracey and Celeste to prune and put in new plants. I try to picture them in my garden somewhere. The salvias are still colourful and attracting pollinators until they receive their winter haircut.

It's a great time to propagate some plants and we are lucky to have Fred helping us with this. A very enjoyable task.

Gardening Days begin at 9.30am

July 9th

August 15th

September 10th

Become a Friend

Contact Heather 0413 919 537 or email friendsofsalebotanicgardens@gmail.com

Editor Dianne Honey.

Thanks to everyone for your contribution.



Amanita muscaria Photo by Dianne Honey.

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



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Upcoming Events

Garden Tours

Please meet at the main entrance for a free guided tour of the Sale Botanic Gardens led by one of our friendly members. Tours operate on the **second** Thursday of each month 10:00am-11:00am.

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 and is our parent body which 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



BGANZ Week Photo by Nikki Jennings.

Contact Us

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