

CORREA



Friends of Eurobodalla Regional
Botanic Garden Newsletter

December 2024



President's report to Friends AGM 2024

Gail Stevens

Good afternoon and thank you for attending the Friends 2024 AGM.

Firstly I would like to thank the outgoing committee for their contributions and time this past year. Sue Cogger, Treasurer over the years has worked hard to ensure that our books balanced and all funds coming in were competently managed as well as participating on the shop's merchandising committee to ensure quality stock is sourced locally wherever possible. Next, Chris Bendle, our membership secretary whose eye for detail not only ensured pristine records but also enabled Friends to gain DGR Item 1 status a number of years ago – not a simple task. Sharon Winslade, who just recently resigned from the committee to take up a position as councillor and Steve Winslade for the time and effort he has put in to developing the strategic plan and proposed constitution along with new directions for Friends. And finally, Glynis Whitfield, Luke Sweedman and Ruth Webber, new to the committee this year, but contributing their views and experience from a range of backgrounds.

Friends of ERBG was established nearly 40 years ago to promote the Garden and support its three key pillars of Education, Conservation and Recreation. There have been hiccups along the way – bushfires, windstorms, rain bombs and COVID but we have provided our continued support to achieve the outcome we have today – a top regional botanic garden like no other in the world. I thank you for your contribution and trust you will continue to provide that support.

We have over the years helped transform a degraded 42 ha of Forestry land into the Garden we see today. A redeveloped Visitor Centre, a world class herbarium in a science precinct and many other elements that attract visitors with a wide variety of interests and reasons for coming to the Garden.

The committee spent a lot of time this past year discussing *where to from here?* We know the Wellness Walk, bird hide and water feature, to which Friends contributed, will be finished this year. Development of orchid and fern houses and nursery upgrade are future projects for which the Garden Manager will be looking to Friends for support. All of these projects are covered by funds currently in our account.

We also have a \$50 000 grant which will go towards the sensory garden.

The cost of outstanding plans until 2026 now totals just over \$126,000. As at close of business 30 September Friends have \$201,311 in the bank after all known liabilities (\$50k grant, GST etc.) have been subtracted with a further \$70k stock at value in the shop.

So much of Friends' capability to contribute to development of the Garden has come from our stalwart preserve makers, community stall representatives and fundraisers who organised trivia nights, sausage sizzles and other activities focussed on funding Garden development. We can't expect to continue to rely on members who have been doing this for years and so the committee began looking at other ways funds can be raised.

Some of the areas actioned or discussed have included:

- * reviewing and redrafting the strategic plan;
- * working through a budget for the coming year – prior to committing expenditure, activities must be supported by a plan and budget and put to the committee for approval;
- * improving communication with members – our regulator's governance standards require organisations to be accountable to members;
- * consolidating connections with Garden volunteers;
- * building a broader donations capability that reduces the reliance on member fees and fundraising as we have done in the past. An approach that casts a wider net – more than 1.2 mil people visit Eurobodalla and 84% are from Canberra, Sydney and regional NSW;

Front Page photo: Geoff McVeigh
Red Beard Orchid on the Hill Track at the ERBG

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- * undertaking marquee events, maybe a couple each year – potentially one for adults and one for families. It is a green field area for your committee but something worth consideration;
- * renegotiating our partnership agreement with Council and memorandum of understanding – including discussions about Friends' future involvement with the shop, our sinking fund, etc;
- * contract assistance and other expenditure to facilitate change.

You will be pleased to know Jenny Liney's legacy continues through the Friends' funded *Jenny Liney Scholarship*. For the 2024 scholarship three young people were assisted in their tertiary studies. This was possible due to the generosity of a donor adding to the amount we were able to fund.

Again my thanks to the Friends committee, to Editor of the Correa, Trish Richardson and to our ex officio members, Tricia Kaye as Curator of the Herbarium, and ERBG Manager, Michael Anlezark. I would also like to remind recipients of our newsletter, we welcome feedback. If there are articles you enjoy and want to see more of or subjects we haven't covered, please let us know.

That concludes my report, and I ask for questions from members once the remaining reports have been presented. I now move and ask for a seconder for the motion: That the annual report for 2023-2024 be accepted.

Treasurer's report 2023 – 2024 financial year

Sue Cogger

Friends remains a financially healthy organisation. The books have been audited and we comply with the requirements of reporting agencies. The auditor has made some recommendations which the incoming committee will need to review.

Friends Bank Accounts & Floats	\$	88,535.59	
Term Deposits total	\$	156,172.72	
Total			\$ 244,708.31
Stock at Valuation			\$ 70,664.07
TOTAL			\$ 315,372.38
Less Liabilities			
GST for the period	-\$	8,170.60	
Commonwealth post Bushfire Grant	-\$	50,000.00	
			-\$ 58,170.60
BALANCE			\$ 257,201.78
Sinking Fund			\$ 54,257.51
Public Fund			\$ 27,406.52
FRIENDS TOTAL ASSETS			\$ 338,865.81

Friends' total assets for the previous financial year were \$332,841.

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In the past financial year Friends have made the following contributions to the Garden:

- * Donated directly to the Garden \$90k as a result of our Partnership Agreement
- * Purchased the Grass Tree Sculpture near the entrance to the Visitor Centre
- * Contributed to date \$1,905 to the cost of the bird hide, sound panel and water feature which has a \$20k budget
- * Through a \$9k grant from the IMB we purchased the two new marquees
- * Contributed to date \$15,200 to the Wellness Walk, which has a \$40k budget with a grant of \$14,950 having been obtained
- * Bought weather blinds for the Pavilion
- * Purchased PA equipment for use at outdoor functions.

In total, Friends have contributed \$123,610 to the Garden directly or through purchases for Projects.

I personally think this is a pretty impressive figure and I would like to take this opportunity to thank the many Friends and Volunteers who have worked for this outcome. Gail is to be commended for seeking and successfully applying for grants, there are the "chopathon" workers producing the jams, chutneys etc. (\$4,500 after costs), the Friends who have done Art on the Path around Christmas each year and those Volunteers and Friends propagating plants (\$67,650 incl. GST sold through the shop). In short our financial position is thanks to the work of many.

I would also like to thank my banking buddy Narelle Lord who assists with this task and covers for me when I am on holidays. Narelle has been helping me since 2012.

PUBLIC FUND

The Government has changed requirements. Whilst we still maintain our DGR (Deductible Gift Recipient) Status we are no longer required to completely isolate the fund. As at 1 July 2024 we have absorbed the Public Fund into the Friends' accounts and renamed it Friends of Eurobodalla Regional Garden Gift Fund. The account will be handled separately to other Friends' accounts and donations over \$2 will be tax deductible.

Trustees are no longer required, and have been thanked for their oversight of the funds.
As at 30/6/2024 the balance in the account was \$27,406.

During the past financial year the Public Fund received a total of \$11,837.91 in donations.

Funds were used for the following:

- * Print run of the ever popular Bird Brochure
- * Purchase of a Digital Microscope for the Herbarium – this was a big ticket item costing \$7,449
- * Jenny Liney Scholarship – we were in the fortunate position again this year of having a \$5k donation that allowed us to grant additional scholarships
- * Tye Passlow was awarded a full scholarship of \$5,000, Mattea Kelly and Raine Atkinson both received a half scholarship of \$2,500 to continue their studies.

Before closing I would like to make special mention of the support and assistance that Michael and the Garden staff have given me over the years. Dawne and Lynne deserve a special mention as they not only do an excellent job dealing with visitors and managing the retail side of things, they have over the years contributed greatly to the increase in our membership numbers.

Sue Cogger
Treasurer

As always I am more than happy to forward a copy of the full accounts including the auditor's letters via email. My email address is cogger.sue@gmail.com



2024

Garden Manager's Report – Friends' AGM 2024

Michael Anlezark

Projects:

Accessibility –

Under the NSW Government *Stronger Country Communities Fund – Accessibility* grant funding that I applied for last year we have sealed over 500 metres of internal roads and now for the first time there is the best possible wheelchair and limited mobility access to the arboretum, playspace, display gardens and Visitor Centre.

Also for the first time there is vehicle access across Deep Creek to the southern portion of the site that includes the Hill Track. This important bridge means that we can properly maintain our entire site and provide quick response should there be an incident in this section.

The last items to be completed with this funding will be a set of handrails for the stairs below the rear of the café and an upgrade of a path section in track 1.

Wellness Walk –

With grant funding and financial assistance from the Friends we have been developing a Wellness Walk which will focus on the mental and physical health benefits of interacting with the natural environment. A series of relaxation and mindfulness exercises have been developed which will be incorporated into signage along a 600m track which is nearing completion. A talking post which incorporates Indigenous stories and other sensory elements to explore touch and smell are currently being developed. It is expected that this walk will be completed within the next few months.

Bird Hide –

The completion of the Bird Hide upgrade which Friends agreed to fund is slowly taking shape. I have designed a water feature to place in front of the hide in order to provide a permanent water source for birds. Local artist Paul Dimmer has now built this, only charging us for his time and not materials.

We hope to have this installed in the coming weeks.

WIRES –

The Garden and WIRES (Wildlife Rescue Service) have joined forces to help the recovery of injured wildlife. We have developed and signed an MoU with WIRES to build a large netted enclosure for the final stages of recovery of injured wildlife. The enclosure will house birds and possums including Sugar Gliders and possibly some marsupials. Some wildlife may be released on site after recovery but only after assessment of species compatibility and impact on existing fauna. We have selected and partially cleared the site and the enclosure which is being fully funded by WIRES is expected to be constructed by early next year.

Mountain bike trails –

Although this is not a Garden project it has a huge impact on the Garden so I will report on it.

In August the Mountain bike trails opened on Deep Creek Dam Rd opposite the Garden utilising our overflow carpark which we are now calling the shared carpark. There have been some minor issues around traffic flow from that carpark and the behaviour of cyclists in that area and within the Garden which we are working through.

We have installed signs asking riders to dismount before entering the Garden and a traffic management plan is underway to ensure long term solutions. We are installing a long bike rack in front of the café below the hedge plus security cameras and lights in the shared carpark to ensure greater security for the Garden as the highway gates will soon be relocated and the carpark will be accessible 24 hours a day. The bike trails will become a serious asset for our region with huge tourism potential and estimates of 50,000 riders each year. We will be looking for ways the project can benefit the Garden and how we can best mitigate any of the negative impacts.

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Events:

Our events committee has been working hard to provide a diverse range of events which have included -

School holiday discovery walks

Live performances for children by Eaton Gorge

Our 2 week *From the Forest* festival

High tea with Jackie French

A range of specialised guided walks including fungi, orchids, acacias and eucalypts

Book fair

And our year 4 school program

Not an events role but we are seeing a definite increase in Garden weddings

General -

Our **Garden Path** Newsletter was launched earlier this year and has proved very successful with just 4 editions already attracting about 800 subscribers with an 85% open rate.

Work experience –

Over the last year we have hosted several work experience students, two from Batemans Bay High and a young man with a disability from Moruya High.

Give Now:

We have embraced modern technology by installing an online donation facility. I investigated this early in the year when it started to become apparent cash donations were dropping purely because it is being used less and less. The new 'give now' online donation system means that visitors to the Garden can just scan a QR code to their phone and make a cashless donation there and then. This will become live in the next day or two and be added to our website and newsletter to make donating fast and easy.

Statistics:

Visitor numbers: over the last 12 months our visitor numbers reached just under 87,000 which is a 5% increase on the previous year.

Volunteer hours for the year reached almost 16,500 which is an 11% increase on the previous year. Our volunteer program is very successful and the envy of most organisations that are increasingly struggling to find volunteers. In fact we have now temporarily ceased recruiting for any volunteer positions as all work teams are full. We now provide hats with the Garden logo to all of our hands-on volunteers that work outdoors in any capacity.

The Partnership Agreement between Friends and council in the last financial year resulted in \$90k in shop profits being returned to the Garden budget which was just under a 3% increase on the previous year. This profit share arrangement is critical to our Visitor Centre operation and for those interested to know when we applied for the largest grant for the Visitor Centre redevelopment it was on condition of being able to provide a detailed business case that showed the redevelopment would result in employment and a degree of financial sustainability. In the business case I put forward for that grant we have undoubtedly proved it has been successful. So in effect, the profit is paying our visitor services staff to provide a broad range of services that go beyond just a retail venture.

End of report:

I would like to finish by saying that Friends continue to play an important role in the life of the Garden. I personally thank you for your support of me and the Garden and on behalf of Council I thank you for your commitment and continued support as partners.

I am optimistic that our partnership will continue to benefit the Garden and that the next 12 months will be exciting, and as usual, very busy.

If you have any questions that relate to this report or on any other Garden related matter I am always available to discuss these with you.

Wallace Herbarium Annual Report – October 2024

Tricia Kaye, Honorary Curator

The 2023-24 year has seen a continuation of our collection consolidation work, with focus gradually shifting from building the collection to management and review.

In September 2022 we worked with the Threatened Species Conservancy to develop a grant proposal to the NSW Environment Trust for the survey and collection of fire-affected rare and threatened plants on the South Coast. In September we learned that the proposal was successful – the major field work will be done by the Threatened Species Conservancy, with assistance from the Herbarium in species priorities and collection strategy, and the ERBG Nursery in cultivation of field collections for ex situ conservation.

Collection activity:

- Mostly focused on incorporation of Nicholas De Jong's Native Plants of the Ulladulla Region – this collection of ~1000 specimen was compiled in association with his book, and he continues to collect in the Ulladulla region.
- Other minor collections in the Eurobodalla region.

Collection management:

- Commenced biennial freezing cycle in January – controls insect pests, undertaken on a roughly two year cycle.
- First level of quality review completed – next part is to:
 - * finalise a list of excess collections (i.e. those of low/insufficient quality), and
 - * assess quality gaps for species - where remaining specimens of reasonable/high quality specimens are lacking/insufficient and new collections are needed.
 - * NSW Weed Botanist visited Herbarium and reviewed some of our weed collections (April 2024).
 - * Karen Wilson of NSW Herbarium delivered a master-class in sedges (September 2024).

Education:

- Development of self-guided eucalypt and acacia walks for the ERBG.
- Delivery of seminars/workshops:
- Threatened Species talk for 2023 Science Week seminar at ERBG.
- Eucalypt Discovery Workshop for National Eucalypt Day.
- Fungi workshop during "From the Forest".
- "Life in the ERBG" citizen science for FERBG seminar in June.

People: Fran Anderson, Karen Cockerill, Jane Elek, Tricia Kaye and Bruce Wilson continue the team effort!



Don't forget

The ERBG 2025 calendar
Is now available from the Garden shop

Just \$12

Bird observing at ERBG

Heather Haughton

On Sunday 20 October, Peter and I had great pleasure in joining the bird walk ably led by Nicola Clark. We saw or heard:



Noisy Friarbird

Rufous Whistler
 Grey Shrike-thrush
 Fan-tailed Cuckoo
 Kookaburra
 Common Bronzewing
 White-throated
 Treecreeper
 Eastern Yellow Robin
 King Parrot
 Noisy Friarbird

Yellow-faced Honeyeater
 Masked Lapwing
 Welcome Swallow
 Olive-backed Oriole
 Eastern Spinebill
 Purple Swamphen
 Dusky Moorhen
 Superb Fairy-wren
 New Holland Honeyeater



Yellow-faced honey eater

Grey Shrike-thrush



Welcome swallow

Photos: Nicola Clark

A couple of visitors were delighted to find and identify a Yellow Robin ... they also mentioned how good it was to learn how to listen.

Nearly all the birds mentioned are illustrated in the *Birds of ERBG* leaflet available at the Visitor Centre, where you may also ask staff to print a copy of the list of all birds noted at the Garden over the past 15 years.

How we created a beautiful native wildflower meadow in the heart of the city using threatened grassland species

'A city street may seem an unusual place to save species found in critically endangered grasslands'... 'but we can use plants from these ecosystems to create beautiful and biodiverse urban wildflower meadows. This means cities, too, can support nature repair.'

Creating a large native grassland in inner-city Royal Park'... is helping 'achieve this goal'. Adopting a technique used by wildflower meadow designers, a million seeds of more than two dozen endangered grassland species around Melbourne were sowed. All but one of these species established in the resulting native wildflower meadow.

This is a fascinating article exploring the reasons for, and the results of, 'creating a large native grassland in' (Melbourne) 'inner-city Royal Park' ...



The recreated native wildflower meadow is close to an inner-city road. Matthew Stanton.

Note: these excerpts are from *The Conversation* Published: October 4, 2024. Click here for the [full article](#)

Rain Gardens

Gail Stevens

Note: This article is an abridged version of one from [Groundwater Foundation](#), which Gail would like to share with readers.

A rain garden is a garden of native shrubs, perennials, and flowers planted in a small depression which is generally formed on a natural slope. It is designed to temporarily hold and soak in rainwater runoff that flows from rooftops, driveways, patios or lawns. Rain gardens are effective in removing up to 90% of added nutrients and chemicals and up to 80% of sediments from the rainwater runoff. Compared to a conventional lawn, rain gardens allow for 30% more water to soak into the ground.

A rain garden is not a water garden. Nor is it a pond or a wetland. Conversely, a rain garden is dry most of the time. It typically holds water only during and following a rainfall event. Because rain gardens will drain within 12-48 hours, they prevent the breeding of mosquitoes.



Rainwater Runoff Problems

Every time it rains, water runs off impermeable surfaces, such as rooftops or driveways, collecting pollutants such as particles of dust, fertiliser, chemicals, oil, and bacteria along the way. The pollutant-laden water enters storm drains untreated and flows directly to nearby streams and ponds.

Rain gardens collect rainwater runoff, allowing the water to be filtered by vegetation and percolate into the soil recharging groundwater aquifers. These processes filter out pollutants.

What Makes a Rain Garden Different from a Traditional Garden?

Typically 15 – 30 centimetres of soil is removed and altered with digging, compost and sand to increase water infiltration. The type of alteration to the soil depends on the current soil type.

Rain gardens are generally constructed on the downside of a slope on your property and collect rainwater runoff from the lawn, roof and/or the driveway. Once water collects in the rain garden, infiltration may take up to 48 hours after a major rainfall. Also, rain gardens incorporate native vegetation; therefore, no fertilizer is needed and after the first year, maintenance is usually minimal.

Benefits Rain Gardens Provide

- Improves water quality by filtering out pollutants
- Aesthetically pleasing
- Preserves native vegetation
- Provides localized stormwater and flood control
- Attracts beneficial birds, butterflies and insects

The Types of Plants that Thrive in a Rain Garden

As a rule, native vegetation should be incorporated into a rain garden. Native plants don't require fertiliser, have good root systems, and are better at utilizing the water and nutrients available in their native soils than non-native species. Perennials, shrubs, wildflowers, or a mixture of all three can be planted. Check with the Garden nursery for a list of rain garden plants suitable for your garden.



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Maintenance of a Rain Garden

When native plants are used, your rain garden will not require pesticides or fertilizer. If the rain garden is establishing during periods of little to no rainfall, occasional watering of the plants may be necessary. Once the plants in the rain garden have become established and grow larger, they will eventually out-compete any weeds. Creating a rain garden is good for the environment and is a way of introducing more native plants into your garden.

Sources and links:

How to build a raingarden from Melbourne Water with instructions to build your preferred raingarden [click here](#) or <https://www.melbournewater.com.au/water-and-environment/saving-water/raingardens>

See this link from Healthy Land and Water for a step by step guide to creating a raised bed rain garden [click here](#) or <https://www.hlw.org.au/resources/downloads/water-by-design/test/factsheets/261-healthy-land-water-building-a-raingarden-2023/file>

Groundwater foundation [click here](#)

And finally, I thought you might enjoy reading this article that demonstrates the effect of a raingarden in Asia **Bangkok turns to urban forests to beat worsening floods** [click here](#) or <https://news.mongabay.com/2024/09/bangkok-turns-to-urban-forests-to-beat-worsening-floods/>

Friends Committee 2024–25

President: Derek Anderson: dereka48@bigpond.com

Vice President: Sue Cogger: cogger.sue@gmail.com

Treasurer: Steve Winslade: friends.treasurer.erbg@gmail.com

Committee Secretary: Gail Stevens: gailstevens54@outlook.com

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Ex officio: Michael Anlezark: Garden Manager: 4474 1217 – michael.anlezark@esc.nsw.gov.au

Honorary Curator Tricia Kaye: Tricia_Kaye@hotmail.com

Newsletter Trish Richardson: pararr1@bigpond.com

Who was Mabel?

Tricia Kaye

Since the fire, a tall and slender wattle has graced the ERBG and surrounding Mogo State Forest. It is Mabel's Wattle – *Acacia mabellae* – which begs the question: *who was Mabel?*

Mabel was in fact Mabel Cambage, the daughter of Richard H. Cambage a well-known botanist and surveyor in the early twentieth century. Prolific NSW botanist Joseph Maiden named the plant after the daughter of his great friend Cambage – perhaps because he had already named a number of plants after Cambage himself. Or perhaps because she had a special interest in wattles

Cambage was in fact a local, born and bred near Milton and married his sweetheart, the daughter of the Ulladulla Public School head teacher. He showed an interest in natural history from an early age, and ultimately left the South Coast to study surveying in Sydney.

We don't know a whole lot about Mabel – but from a 1939 article in the Sydney Morning Herald we do know that she shared her father's interest in plants. She was one of the founders of the Wattle League and was its secretary for 20 years. She was a member of the National Council of Women and a foundation member of the Girls Secondary Schools' Club.



Acacia mabellae near the ERBG Visitors Centre



Acacia mabellae has slender long phyllodes and profuse cream flowers

MISS MABEL CAMBAGE.

Referring to the death of Miss Mabel Cambage, Dr. C. J. Prescott writes:—

Miss Cambage was one of those quiet, unobtrusive, public-spirited workers of whom the world knows little. She was the daughter of the late Mr. R. H. Cambage, C.B.E., an official in the Mines Department, who was also a keen scientific worker in botany and an authority upon our eucalypts, and she rendered him efficient help in preparing photographs and slides for the use of the Australian Association for the Advancement of Science and the Linnean Society. She accompanied her father to the Pan-Pacific Conference in Japan.

Miss Cambage was one of the founders of the Wattle League, and was its secretary for 20 years. She was a member of the National Council of Women, and a foundation member of the Girls' Secondary Schools' Club.

SMH 27 March 1939.
Retrieved from NLA Trove

So it seems very fitting that we can now remember Mabel with a wattle that is thriving around us.



ERBG is looking to recruit more **guides** to help conduct a range of guided walks around the Garden.

Interested?

Dawne Usher

Dawne.Usher@esc.nsw.gov.au

Please
contact

Lynne McInnes

Lynne.mcinnis@eurocoast.nsw.gov.au

New Study of Rare and Threatened South Coast Plants

Tricia Kaye

The Threatened Species Conservancy (TSC) recently received a grant from the NSW Environment Trust to survey fire-affected rare and threatened plants of the South Coast. The grant builds on a previous project completed by the TSC in 2022, which culminated in the “Surprises in the Regrowth” seminar at ERBG in August 2022. The aim is to gather more information about the survival of key species since the 2019/20 fire and collect material (seed and cuttings) for ex situ conservation.

TSC flora ecologist Stan Wawrzyczek will manage the project which is funded for three years, and will cover six–eight species. The ERBG is nominated as a partner in the project, initially providing the list of target species, and will also receive seed and cuttings for ongoing storage and cultivation.

In September Stan took a trip to the region to scope out potential sites – he covered a lot of rugged territory in 10 days including Mt Corang, the Castle, Mt Budawang, Little Forest Plateau and Tuross Falls. Stan found four of the target species, including *Eucalyptus stenostoma* at Tuross Falls – this plant is now listed as Endangered.

Interested in finding out more? Email herbarium@erbg.org.au



TSC ecologist Stan Wawrzyczek recently at Little Forest Plateau



Eucalyptus stenostoma (Jilliga Ash) on the edge at Tuross Falls. Stan Wawrzyczek

Wattle Day Walk

Lynne McVeigh

On September 1st, fourteen enthusiastic individuals gathered for a special Wattle Walk in celebration of Australia’s official Wattle Day. The sun was shining, and the wattles were truly radiant in their golden hues. Fran Anderson and I divided the group into two and embarked on a tour showcasing the incredible diversity of wattles in the ERBG.

Our first stop was Mabel’s Wattle (*Acacia mabellae*) near the Visitors Centre, a graceful tree with a tall, narrow form that can grow up to 20 meters. This species grows naturally in the ERBG and is common in the forests around Batemans Bay. From there, we headed to the Children’s Playground to admire a row of beautiful Sally Wattles (*Acacia floribunda*) in full bloom.



Wattle Day 2024 walk at the ERBG

In the Naturescape Display Gardens we viewed the Coastal Wattle (*Acacia longifolia* subsp. *sophorae*) also in full bloom - it is commonly seen along the beach and coastal headlands and has been used to stabilise dunes. We then explored the sandstone gardens, where we encountered several interesting smaller species. Afterwards, we made our way to the Arboretum to take in the stunning sight of the Coast Myall (*Acacia binervia*) near the Gazebo. Overall we saw 13 different species on the walk.

The walk concluded with a look at the rare Blue Wattle (*Acacia covenyi*), which is found only to Deua National Park near Bendethera. This hardy species features striking blue foliage and, when in bloom, produces round, bright yellow, fragrant flowers.



Coast Myall in full bloom next to the Gazebo

A poetical perspective on landscape

Luke Sweedman

As a Landscape poet I am primarily interested in my relationship with the wild, natural plant world and how it shapes my understanding of our place in it. As a plant collector in Western Australia (WA), I found poetry a concise tool to capture an essence of a place and take it with you.

I was lucky to be offered funding to write a series of mallee poems. This was clear to me; however, most people are unclear of the mallee and what this is. There are approximately 800 species of *Eucalyptus Corymbia* species in Australia. Roughly two thirds are found in WA alone. These vary from forest giants to low straggly shrub forms. The majority of species are considered to be mallees – a tree or shrub that has an underground root system called a lignotuber. This essentially means they can recover if the foliage is burnt or damaged. They shoot from the lignotuber. They are mostly multi-stemmed but not always. This means that they can live for a very long time and in fact the Meelup mallee, *Eucalyptus phylacis* which occupies a tiny carpark area near Busselton in WA and is a single clone, has been dated at 7000 years old.

Mallees dominate much of the central desert areas of Australia and reach their peak of biodiversity in the southeast of WA and especially along the southern coast.

My response to beginning a conversation amongst mallee:

In Mind's Eye

Mallee in my mind's eye is mostly a below ground affair
 What we see above is only a part of the overall mystery
 The multi stems above ground are part of the living heart
 That sends a maze of roots below to unknown depths
 To anchor, to gather moisture and to prosper forever

Like *Eucalyptus phylacis* anchored high above the bay
 A lighthouse, one old mallee, one last and single entity

Or *Eucalyptus sweedmaniana*, staring out in deference to the sea
 On the grand slopes of Mt Arid, a shrub or is it a tree?
 Sprawling and gnarled with long lived pliable leaves
 Like an ancient painting on a landscaped mosaic frieze

What inspires the mallees that never die
 Where death is feigned above then responded to
 With new life as concealed buds burst forth
 From a secret underground source

Mallees the size of children and some towering high
 From coastal cliffs with remnant species wild
 To the forests of Jarrah that create wood like iron
 Standing like beacons along the river's spine
 From the heat of the Great Western Woodlands
 In a kaleidoscope of flowers and complexity
 Gripping depauperate soils with temerity
 Down in the wild lands and the river valley
 Ubiquitous in forms, the indomitable mallee.



Eucalyptus sweedmaniana



Eucalyptus sweedmaniana flowers and leaves



Foliage with Middle Island in the distance

The ERBG shop showcases and offers local artist wares

Trish Richardson

The ERBG Visitors Centre and gift shop showcases a number of local artists such as Christine Sullivan.

Christine produces a unique style of hand thrown and individually designed and decorated porcelain pottery. She worked as a cake decorator for many years then one day decided to try pottery. Porcelain, being white and fine, felt like an easy transition to creating unique and lasting pieces of artwork. That was the beginning of a wonderful journey that is now into its 40th year.

A potter's wheel and clay were purchased – then came hours, days and months of practice. Luckily, clay that has not been fired can go into a bucket, dried out a bit, wedged and reused. Designs take a lot of thought to give pieces the best chance to endure and become antiques of the future.



Detail of beginning process

It quickly became clear she needed to make an expensive investment – a kiln. Without it there is simply no end result. It enabled her to take every step needed from raw clay to the finished product.

All pieces are checked again at each step by Christine to ensure her quality standard has been reached before a design is pencilled onto the raw surface and the outline piped on with porcelain as if it were icing. This creates a dam to collect the colours which are brushed on. The pieces are then bisque fired, more colour and glaze is added then fired a second time. Depending on the design, a single coffee mug for example can take anywhere between two to four hours to complete.

Before firing, the glazes are of little colour. They mature in high temperature. The kiln must also be filled to capacity to work well so everything is checked and monitored carefully to ensure good outcomes. They are then bisque fired to 1000°C, more colour and glaze is added then fired a second time to 1280°C.

Due to the high cost of producing pottery items it's important to be very mindful and attentive at all stages to ensure quality maintenance. There is any number of things that may go wrong – from an accidental knock or bump to a pot, a splash of the wrong glaze somewhere, not enough or too much glaze.

There are always surprises and disappointments in each firing. One pleasing result is that everything is microwave, dishwasher and oven safe.

All pieces are lovingly handmade to create life-long treasures you can use every day.

Loads of patience, inspiration, the challenge to improve and especially the love of creating adds up to the quality expected with a piece made by Christine.



Inside of kiln partly loaded

