



Friends of the Melton Botanic Garden, Inc.

Newsletter October 2014

Growing Plants Growing People

No. 29

FMBG Events

November

- 8th Saturday Djerriwarrh Festival - FMBG Stall
- 12th Wednesday 7.30pm **Meeting – Guest Speaker: Brian Bainbridge:**
Lounge Lizards & Butterfly Bars
- 16th Sunday Field Trip: Brisbane Ranges
- 23rd Sunday 10am-noon **Grow the Garden Day at the Melton Botanic Garden**

December

- 10th Wednesday 6.30pm **End of Year Celebration –**
Venue: Janet and Tony Dyke's

Regular Activity Groups

- Gumnuts:** 1st & 3rd Tuesday 9.30am-noon Eucalyptus Arboretum
- Lakers:** 2nd, 3rd & 4th Tuesday 10am-noon – Meet Depot/Lake
- Creekers:** Thursdays 9am-noon – Meet Depot/Ryans Creek



FMBG Patron
Jane Edmanson OAM



Winner 2011 Powercor Melton Business Excellence Awards



Winner 2012 Powercor Melton Business Excellence Awards



Category Winner
Keep Australia Beautiful Victoria
Sustainable Cities Awards 2013
sustainability.vic.gov.au/KABV

Executive Committee

The Executive Committee Meetings are held monthly on the 3rd Tuesday 7.30pm at the Bentley's house

FMBG Monthly Meeting Venue

Join us at our new meeting venue at **Arnolds Creek Community Centre 19 Claret Ash Blvd, Melton West Vic 3337**

Contact: Janet Dyke 9743 2733 / 0408 170 070

Monthly Meeting 8th October 2014

Report from Les Gordon

We held this meeting at Arnolds Creek Community Hall. The first time ever. Both rooms were opened to us as there were no other bookings made for the other room. To say the least it was very comfortable and the facilities were good.

October for us will be very busy. There are a number of guided tours. So far every tour has been well attended, with people coming from all over Melbourne. Since Costa's visit, we have been inundated with requests for visits. A very good sign that we are progressing in the right direction.

The Platypus Festival is coming up and again we will be well represented. November is the Djerriwarrh Festival. Another busy time. At the meeting we were told that our power bills are now fully covered by the solar panels. Good to see some expenses are covered. Also at the meeting, we propagated 750 plants for sale and the garden. Well done everyone. All we need now is to now use the water connections installed to the new pipe line so bucket brigade won't be necessary.

Elaine and Les

Advice from a tree

Stand up and be proud
Sink your roots into the earth
Be content with your natural beauty
Go out on a limb
Drink plenty of water
Remember your roots
Enjoy the view!

-Ilian Shamir

Some sad news

One of our long term members John Reed, husband of Verna Reed (a very active FMBG member) passed away from illness on the 26th August 2014. His funeral service was held at Charles Crawford & Sons Chapel in Melton on Tuesday 2nd September. We are thinking of Verna and her family at this time.

Photo below of John and Verna Reed (circled) at one of the Clean-Up Australia Days.



Association of Friends of Botanic Gardens Conference

The Association of Friends of Botanic Garden Conference was held at the Gold Coast 8-10 August 2014. Five FMBG members and one supporter attended. FMBG gave a presentation at the conference which was well received. Melton received a few mentions throughout the conference for the good things we are doing.

Grow the Garden Day - August

Scouts and Cubs from Caroline Springs did some bird watching, weeding and planting at the August Grow the Garden Day. Well done girls!



Collingwood Grant

We received a phone call from Paul Beasley at MCC with some great news- we have been successful in our Collingwood Grant for the Nursery work areas and work benches. The Presentation Night was at The Club at Caroline Springs on 18th September. Many thanks to Jill for the grant presentation and congratulations on a successful outcome.

Community Benefits Grant

FMBG have received funding through the Community Benefits Grant provided by Melton City Council and The Club at Caroline Springs. This funding will build a sunshade work area, a sheltered wash up area and some plant benches at the Depot

Visit by Ballarat U3A and Seniors

My congratulations to everyone who assisted with the visit on Thursday afternoon. It was a great success both financially and in spreading the word about the FMG and Friends.

Also complemented by fantastic weather!

We sold \$68 in plant sales, received \$63 in gold coin donations for the tour and sold 2 mugs (\$14)

Total received \$145.

We also had a number of questions regarding purchasing specific plants – many of which we did not have:

1. Myoporum parvifolium- green form
2. Eucalyptus filiformis
3. Some purple eremophilia they had seen in the garden.

John Bentley

AUGUST EVENTS

Monthly meeting 13th August 2014

Our guest speaker this month was no other than our own Anne Langmaid. She spoke on her trip to the Flinders Ranges.

Much interest was shown in the natural growth of various flowers, especially in the semi-arid regions of the Ranges. If one has been there, it would have brought back a few memories. The rest of us sat back and enjoyed her effort in obtaining the beautiful photos of the vegetation. Well done Anne.

During August, a few of us with the guidance of Dave Pye laid down irrigation pipes around the gardens. We hired a trench digger which dug the trench and refilled the trench after we laid the pipes. Dave inserted taps to be used for future watering. The water pressure was tested satisfactorily.

Margaret told us that the nursery made \$350 in sales of plants. A very good effort.

On a sadder note, this was our last meeting at D J Cunningham building. Our AGM will be held at the library. After that at Arnolds Creek Conference Hall.

Clean-Up Day was held on 10th August. Very little rubbish was collected. People are beginning to use rubbish tins and to respect our gardens. Thanks for everyone who helped on Sunday.

Creekers.

We have finished propagation and are now busily repairing guards, putting new stakes in weeding and planting new plants. A lot has to be done to catch up to make things presentable again. Also CVGT will be back at the end of August. A new program has been drawn up by the Council.

Elaine and Les.

Research Program in the Melton Botanic Garden

Luyang Duan, a PhD student at Charles Sturt University is undertaking a research program in Melton Botanic Garden.

Luyang approached FMBG stating:

"My research attempts to assess and discover bio-active chemical compounds with algicidal attributes from Australian native plants. I am distilling essential oils from eucalyptus leaves and applying the oils on a blue-green algae to determine their anti-algal abilities. I am trying to cover as many eucalyptus species as possible, so I was wondering if there is any possibility to collect leaf samples from Melton Botanic Garden

I am looking forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely, Luyang, Charles Sturt University"

Luyang said "Thanks for your prompt reply and kindness help.

To distil enough essential oils for her analysis 300 to 500 grams of leaves of each species are needed in the study. As for the species of Eucalyptus, the more diverse the better."

Luyang will acknowledge Melton Botanic Garden in any form of publications related to this study.

Luyang's thesis title is "Searching for Australian native plants for the development of natural algaecides."

Please say "hello" to Luyang if you see her in the garden and make her welcome. Luyang has joined as an FMBG member and helped at our October Clean-Up Day.



Luyang collecting leaves in the garden

Research into benefits of volunteering **Benefits of volunteering**

Bronwyn Akers is a third year Bachelor of Arts student at Victoria University completing a graduate degree for her degree. She is investigating and will write a report, and a small pamphlet on the benefits of volunteering for the volunteers

The pamphlet will have brief statements as to why people should volunteer with a list of organisations' names and contact details so people may go and volunteer if they wish

Subject under investigation:

What are the benefits to taking part in volunteering?

Method:

to survey people to see why they volunteer and if their reasons match the academic literature

Questions asked:

Why do you volunteer?

Why do you believe volunteers are needed?

How did you find out about this organisation?

What benefits do you receive from volunteering?

Would you recommend volunteering to others?

Volunteers were surveyed at the last Grow the Garden Day on Sunday 28th September

Results of this survey will be presented to FMBG



Bronwyn and Tom surveying FMBG volunteers

Presentation to the Voluntary Guides of the Royal Botanic Garden Melbourne

On Monday 13th October FMBG gave a presentation to the Voluntary Guides of the Royal Botanic Garden Melbourne, here is some feedback received by email: *"Thank you so much for your marvellous presentation today for the Voluntary Guides. It is admirable to see how volunteers can achieve a new a new botanic garden and make it a community effort so everybody benefits. It was very well received by all."*

All FMBG members and volunteers should be very proud of our achievements in building the Melton Botanic Garden.

The volunteer guides at RBGM also do a great job.

They already have 604 planned tours for 2015 which averages out around 10-15 walks per guide

Expert talk on endangered Lathams Snipe

On Wednesday 10th September Friends of Melton Botanic Garden with the Melton City Council hosted a talk by bird expert Dr Birgita Hansen on the Lathams Snipe, in conjunction with their AGM at Melton Library

Geraldine Kelly reported on this talk

On Wednesday 10 September Dr Birgita Hansen from Federation University Australia, replacing David Wilson who had accepted a job in Mongolia, gave a talk on the Latham's Snipe at the Melton library.

'Birgita is an environmental scientist committed to improving the management of waterways, wetlands and estuaries for the conservation of birds especially waders. She showed a short video of snipe at the Powling St Wetlands in Port Fairy where over 70 snipe have been recorded in their regular surveys

These numbers make our counts of up to 5 birds in and around Melton recently, mainly in the Botanic Gardens, seem insignificant but very common

These birds migrate between Australia and Japan each year, breeding in Japan during our winter and joining us for our summer. They feed on insects, earthworms and seeds mainly at night but can be seen feeding during the day in their preferred freshwater wetlands, roosting in long grass surrounding the wetlands. While here in Australia they feed constantly to double their weight so they have the strength for the long journey back to Hokkaido in Japan. They can be confused with the Sharp-tailed Sandpiper which have a shorter, thinner bill and the Australian painted snipe which have a shorter, slightly curved bill and a brown head.

'The snipe leave Australia late February using the East Asian - Australian Flyway. This is the route migratory birds use to fly from Australia to as far as the northern Arctic Circle, arriving in Japan early April to May, stopping off at staging points resting and feeding spots in northern Australia or New Guinea. Little is known of their route or staging points as they haven't put tracking devices on them or banded any recently. They breed in Hokkaido, up to 500 pairs, then begin their migration back to Australia in July to early August, arriving late July to October. They can be seen in Melton from September

'Latham's Snipe are considered near threatened in Japan and vulnerable here in Australia due to habitat destruction, urbanisation, land reclamation and domestic predators. According to the handbook of the Birds of the World they are considered to be of Least Concern.

The wetlands in Powlett St Port Fairy are protected but the grassland surrounding the area where the snipe roost is privately owned and up for development. There are already houses surrounding the area so there is a lot of human intervention, domestic cats and dog disturbance. At the staging points in the Yellow Sea area where there's a lot of tidal reclamation the mud flats where the birds feed are being built on. There is very little government support for the protection of habitat and if not for volunteer groups such as BirdLife fighting for the protection of habitat the situation would be much worse.'

Latham's Snipe at the Melton Botanic Garden

Lathams Snipe been recorded for about 10 years in the Melton Botanic Garden. These records have been collected by Melton City Council. It is protected by at least 15 Legislative Acts and international treaties!

http://www.environment.gov.au/cgi-bin/sprat/public/publicspecies.pl?taxon_id=863;

This high degree of protection should ensure a similar degree of protection to both the Botanic Garden, and hopefully its immediate surrounds.

Grow the Garden Day 28th September 2014



Planting at Melton Botanic Garden

On Sunday 28th September 28 people met to plant.

Despite the high winds it was heartening to see such a good turnout. Caroline Springs Guides.

The strong winds blew masses of polystyrene squares from one of the houses upwind. The rubbish was not ours but we endeavoured to chase and collect as many of these as possible, as they sailed through the air like un-neighbourly kites, landing in the Garden and sailing toward the lake and highway.

Plants of Melbourne's Western Plains 2nd Ed.

FMBG copies to sell of this excellent book which was released in August 2012.



This book is available to purchase from Margaret Peters on 5367 3328

\$15 members, \$20 non-members

It is an excellent resource for members and you might like to purchase it as a present for someone.

Baby Black Swans at Melton Botanic Gardens

Geraldine writes:

"We have five cygnets swimming around mum and dad in the big lake. They look about 4-5 days old. I hope they stay at the gardens."

Nora Peters has photographed the swan family



Unfortunately the cygnets have dwindled to one, no doubt fallen victims to cats, dogs or foxes!

FMBG Nursery Plant Sales

Tuesdays from 10.00am - 1.00pm, or other times by appointment

Melton Botanic Garden Nursery, 21 Williams Street, Melton

Native plants grown in the Melton Botanic Garden
A range of plants including Eremophila and Eucalyptus varieties

Plants suited to growing in Melton gardens
Some decorative succulents

Forestry tubes, 70 mm pots and 90 mm pots, for \$2, \$3 and \$5:

www.fmbg.org.au or friends@fmbg.org.au



END OF YEAR CELEBRATION

Wednesday 10th December at 6.30pm

At Janet and Tony's house in Strathtulloh.

36 Strathtulloh Circuit.

A \$1/ticket Raffle. Many prizes.

Dusky Woodswallows nesting in Botanic Garden



A pair of Dusky Woodswallows have set up home in the Melton Botanic Gardens. The flimsy nest is in the fork of a tree, about head high, beside the gravel track; and was spotted by the sharp eyes of Geraldine. It seems in plain view but in fact is quite well camouflaged. Its presence is only given away by the birds flying to and from the nest.

These migratory birds arrive here in late winter- early spring to breed in our region. They leave again in autumn. In late August about 20-40 Dusky Woodswallows were observed in Strathtulloh Woodland, milling around, actively feeding on the ground and in the air. A few days later Nora Peters observed a similar number at Melton Gilgai Woodland. Their more brightly coloured relatives, north the White-browed Woodswallows, should arrive here in November, only to leave again in February; again after breeding here.

This further illustrates the importance of MBG as a nesting site for migratory birds.

Southern Highlands Botanic Gardens

FMBG members were recently forwarded the newsletter of the Southern Highlands Botanic Gardens. The SHBG is similar to the Melton Botanic Garden in that both are being developed by the community through a Friends group.

As the Southern Highlands Botanic Gardens website states:

The Southern Highlands, with its four distinct seasons, has long been famous for its gardens. The region's horticultural heritage goes back to the 19th century when the nurseries of some of Australia's most famous seed producers were housed locally. Over the years, some of Australia's most famous landscape and garden designers have worked on local properties.

The new Southern Highlands Botanic Gardens will create a central location for horticulture to make its next innovation in the region, continuing the tradition of the Wingecarribee Shire as a home to some of Australia's most important gardens.

[http://shbg.com.au/;](http://shbg.com.au/)

Membership

Have you renewed your membership or encouraged others to join FMBG?

FMBG is local, regional and international. We have members in Switzerland, China, Hong Kong, New Zealand, UK, USA, and Saudi Arabia. Please encourage some new memberships from your contacts. We reached 148 members in 2009-2010, 141 members for 2010-2011. We had 206 members in 2011-2012. We had 218 members in 2013/14.

Please help to sign up a new member to keep up a strong membership base.

Single-\$10, Single concession or student-\$5, Household/Concession-\$20/\$10, Associate-\$20, Corporate-\$50

The Membership/Renewal form is available on the FMBG website.

You can also pay by direct bank transfer to FMBG.

Account Name: Friends of the Melton Botanic Garden Inc.

BSB: 033-121 **Account Number:** 20-8503

Please ensure that your name appears under the transaction details. In addition, also submit the form or email to friends@fmbg.org.au

New memberships are approved each month at the Executive meeting.

Please call Jill 9743 3819 for information or to drop in a payment. If you are housebound we can arrange to collect your payment and form.

For membership information please contact:
Jill Bentley 9743 3819 or see the website

2015 Calendar

We have confirmed nearly all the speakers for meetings and trips for 2015.
Suggestions for 2015? Please let us know.

AGM

FMBG's AGM was held on Wednesday 10th September.
The executive remains unchanged following the AGM

Your Executive Committee

President:	John Bentley (9743 3819)
Vice-President:	Alan Partridge (9743 5761)
Treasurer:	Margaret Peters (5367 3328)
Secretary:	Janet Dyke (9743 2733)
Assistant Secretary:	Alan Partridge (9743 5761)
Executive members:	Jill Bentley (9743 3819)
	Dave Peters
	Anne Langmaid
	Myles Bentley
Safety Officer:	John Bentley & Dave Peters
FMBG librarian:	Jean Partridge (9743 5761)

FMBG Corporate Members

Melton Home Timber and Hardware

45 Reserve Road, Melton, VIC 3337
Ph: (03) 9743 5033
Managers Brad & Scott Morten

Callea Pearce Lawyers

MELTON: 311 High Street, Melton. 9743 1333
Web: www.calleapearce.com.au

Lampe Family Lawyers

Level 4/326 William Street
MELBOURNE VIC 3000
Phone: (03) 9326 3811
Fax: (03) 9326 4344
Web: www.lampe.com.au
Email: enquiries@lampe.com.au

Melton Produce

38-42 Brooklyn Road, Melton South, Vic. 3338
Ph: (03) 9743 5201
Manager: Peter Earl

Melton Toyota

143-147 High Street, Melton, Vic, 3337
Ph: (03) 8746 0300

Platinum Accounting & Taxation

9 Sheepfold Court, Melton Vic 3337
Ph: (03) 9746 6479
Manager: Corinne Cole
Email: info@platinumaccounting.com.au

Satellite City Furniture & Bedding

358 High Street Melton, VIC, 3337
Ph: 03 9743 4749 or 9743 6205

SOV Consulting

Melton VIC 3337
Ph: (03) 9746 7558
Manager: Con Nikakis Email: nikakisc@gmail.com

Western Land Services

20 Collins Road, Melton, VIC 3337
Ph: (03) 9747 0855 Fax: (03) 9747 9593
<http://www.westernland.com.au>

FMBG can give presentations to groups as well as host guided tours of the garden



If you have stories or photographs from activities in the Melton Botanic Garden please send them to: editor@fmbg.org.au

Newsletter:

Editor: John Bentley (9743 3819) / Daryl Akers
Email: editor@fmbg.org.au

Facebook and Twitter Fans

If you use Facebook and/or Twitter you may want to keep up with information via the Friends of the Melton Botanic Garden Group. Type "Melton Botanic Garden" into the search box and you should be able to find the group.

