



#64
October 2024

FRIENDS

FRIENDS OF THE NATIONAL ARBORETUM CANBERRA NEWSLETTER



FRIENDS of the
National Arboretum Canberra

Chairs Note - Spring 2024

Greetings Friends.

Spring is well underway, delighting us with the fresh green foliage on the Arboretum’s deciduous trees, and with some species, flowers. I’m looking forward to the increased canopy cover as more trees reach the stage that their branches touch their neighbours’ outstretched limbs.

Our quite mild and dry July saw an excellent Warm Trees (WT) event, allowing visitors to get about and explore the various outdoor installations. The Embassy of Chile team provided a very informative Visitors Centre display highlighting their country’s natural beauty and the conservation programs in place to preserve it. Thanks Jan and all the Friends and volunteers that helped make WT 2024 a great success and to the Chilean and Arboretum teams for being such willing partners. If you missed the event, or would like a re-cap, the Friends website has a [gallery of images](#) taken around the Arboretum and the Arboretum website has a ‘Top Story’ with [images of the official opening](#).

We have already begun the planning for WT 2025 which Jan has agreed to lead again. The Embassy of the Republic of Korea has enthusiastically accepted our invitation to partner with us – and we’ve decided to extend the duration of the 2025 WT event until mid-August.

Also, during July, as flagged at the April General Meeting, we hosted public viewings of the Arboretum Twenty-year Story in the Bugang Room. Over three Sundays, between 10 and 2,177 visitors came and watched all or part of the documentary – Barry tells me that some watched it twice! Thanks Nicole and Barry for planning and promoting the sessions and Barry for running all three of them with assistance of the guides.

Earlier this year, the Friends Council agreed that the Harvest Group’s (HG) contribution to the Arboretum and Friends should be recognised outside the Arboretum context. To this end, we nominated the HG for a Handbury Award which is bestowed by the Australian Association of Friends of Botanic Gardens (AAFBG) – of which the Friends is a member. The HG were successful in receiving the award. We were very pleased that Dr Judy West AO, patron of the AAFBG and Linda Beveridge, the outgoing president attended our Spring General Meeting to present the award in person.



continued...

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Chairs Note - continued...

Our General Meeting on 9 September featured Robert de Castella AO who spoke about motivation, the 'why' that can lead us to achieve significant goals in life. Rob's Indigenous Marathon Foundation (IMF) is based on this philosophy and continues to guide indigenous youth through a program that leads to them running the New York Marathon. The results of the program extend beyond building resilience in the successful participants as it creates role models to inspire others in their local communities.

Over the last five or so months, I have enjoyed a very productive relationship with Stuart Jeffress who has been the acting Executive Branch Manager (EBM) and I am very pleased that he has recently been successful in securing the permanent role of EBM. Jayne Simon has also recently joined the Arboretum team as Senior Director, Events and Community Engagement. I'm really looking forward to the ongoing development of the Arboretum through the combination of new leadership and the experience and enthusiasm of the current team.

See you at the Arboretum!

Mike

The **2025 Arboretum calendar is now available** from the [Shop](#) on our website or from The Curatoreum gift shop in the Visitors Centre.

And don't forget to share the benefits of being a Friend with your family and friends and help us support the ongoing development of the Arboretum.

Order here



Key Diary Dates for Friends



14 September to 13 October
Flowering Forest Walks

27 September to 26 October
Canberra Art Biennial

Saturday 12 October
Pots to Plots Curtin Shops

Saturday 16 November 2pm
Canberra Festival of Nature:
Stroll through Southern
Tablelands Flora at STEP

Sunday 1 December
Harvest Christmas Stall

Wednesday 11 December 6-8pm
Arboretum End of Year Event
Thank You to Volunteers

Harvest Group - Update

At the September Friends General Meeting, the Harvest Group was presented with the Handbury Award Category 2, Contribution by an Organisation, “for major contribution to community engagement, horticultural endeavour, and fundraising through volunteer effort”. Following a short presentation by the Patron of the AAFBG, Dr West, who outlined the purpose and some of the activities of the organisation, the award was presented by former President, Linda Beveridge, who explained that the award is named in honour of the late Geoff Handbury AO, a major benefactor of the AAFBG.

Congratulations to all the indefatigable Friends Harvest Group volunteers for their unwavering commitment over the years. This group, established by Colette Mackay OAM in 2016, is still going strong!

Speaking of community engagement and fundraising efforts, another successful Harvest Group Market Stall was held on 22 September with takings of \$1,984. There is a limited quantity of fig preserves remaining here’s hoping that the next fig season produces another bumper crop. Fresh figs will again be for sale at the Arboretum in autumn.

The final market stall for 2024 will be on Sunday 1 December so note your diaries as it will be a great opportunity to purchase locally made items thus supporting the Friends and the Arboretum. There will also be a stall by STEP volunteers selling native plants, beautiful cards, and other quirky items suitable for giving as Christmas presents.



| Market Stall Dates - 2024 | Takings |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------|
| 17 February (fig pop-up stall) | \$842 |
| 24 February (fig pop-up stall) | \$928 |
| 1 March (fig pop-up stall) | \$631 |
| 24 March | \$2,341 |
| 5 May (includes sale of 14 Wollemi) | \$2,620 |
| 14 July | \$2,164 |
| 22 September | \$1,984 |
| Total | \$11,510 |

▲ Photo: Maggie clowning around at the Market Stall with a wreath halo!
Photo: Cynthia, Lorraine and Rosie at the Market Stall of 22 September ▲

Discovery Kitchen Garden - Update

The unseasonably warm late winter weather heralded the arrival of an early spring as all the trees, shrubs and flowers began blooming early, much to the consternation of the Floriade horticulturalists who were kept busy trying to keep the garden beds cool to delay flowers blooming!

Then during early September, there were disastrously strong winds and sub-zero overnight temperatures just to let gardeners know that nature always has the upper hand! The first few tomatoes planted out in the hope that the warm weather would give them a longer growing time instead suffered frost damage even undercover of the overhead metal umbrellas! Tomatoes are usually planted out after Melbourne Cup Day in early November so planting any earlier in Canberra is risky unless plants are well protected. Nevertheless, the broad beans laden with flowers survived the winds and produced lovely pods as did the sugar snap peas. In fact, the garden is looking incredibly lush and abundant for this time of year.

In the warmer months of October/November tomatoes, eggplants, chillies, and mini pumpkins will be planted as well as herbs such as basil and parsley. French marigolds will also go in as companion plants for tomatoes.

Happy gardening! **Ange**

▼ Photo: Tralie admiring the ornamental kale.



Currently growing in the Discovery Kitchen Garden:

| Flowers |
|---------------|
| Alyssum |
| Calendula |
| Cornflower |
| Nasturtium |
| Pansy |
| Sweet Pea |
| Sweet William |

| Herbs |
|---------------|
| Borage |
| Chives |
| Fennel |
| Garlic Chives |
| French Sorrel |
| Strawberry |

| Vegetables |
|---------------------------|
| Broccoli Italian Bunching |
| Cauliflower |
| Globe Artichoke |
| Sugar snap Peas |
| Tomato |
| Rhubarb |
| Scarlet Runner Beans |
| Silverbeet |
| Warrigal Greens |

Central Valley Garden 4 Launch - Dr Agnes Walker | 28 August 2024

It was one of those blue-skied but very windy days we've known this spring. And an enthusiastic crowd gathered to watch Dr Agnes Walker unveil the plaque to her Central Valley Garden (aka Zigzag Garden) No 4.

The plot is planted with Camellias (*Camellia sasanqua* 'Yuletide') and when flowering, will provide a blaze of pink and red colour for all to admire.

Agnes has been a valued guide and volunteer for over 10 years. She explained that she had received an unexpected windfall which she decided to share with the Arboretum – hence her generosity in sponsoring this Garden. This will be a long-lasting showpiece to a colourful Arboretum!

The Friends thank Agnes for her continuing support for our group, as a guide, and her generosity towards the Arboretum – for which we all have a passion!

Del



▲ Photo: Dr Walker (centre) with daughter Helen Walker (second from left), Stuart Jeffress (Acting Executive Branch Manager) to Agnes's right, and Indigenous Tourism Officer Richard Allan, far right, who also made the Welcome to Country; Friends were represented by many of the Friends Council, including Chair, Mike Woolley (third from right)

News from STEP - Southern Tablelands Ecosystems Park Forest 20

Hello all

Despite the current windy and dry conditions, the gardens down at STEP are still putting on a colourful spring show. Of particular note this year are the *Grevillea* species, *Hardenbergia* and *Acacias*. Our main tasks at the weekly working bees have swung from weeding to mulching and watering! We are fortunate to have a good supply of mulch, thanks to the Arboretum horticulture team, by working alongside their enthusiastic staff, our STEPPers have been able to wheelbarrow many cubic metres of wood chip.

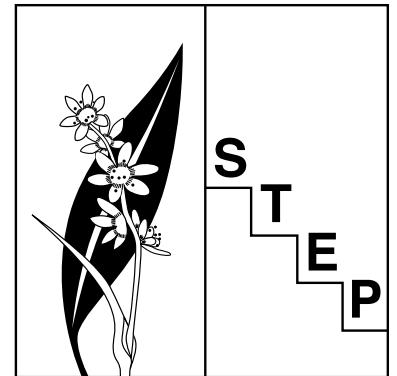
The Wattle Walks held on Saturday 31 August and Sunday 1 September were fully booked up, and Judy and I took a total of 30 visitors around the gardens. It was lovely to introduce participants to the world of Acacias and several people were interested in becoming STEP volunteers. There are still many wattles yet to flower, so it's worth a walk down to Forest 20 to take in the golden hues.

Another community activity took place between 6-8 September at the Jamison Centre in Belconnen. This was the annual combined ACT *Parkcare* Display, and it was a pleasure to see all our posters and information fliers on display in this busy shopping centre. We handed out many brochures and there was a lot of interest in the photos of birds, native plants and insects.

Spring is always a busy time for those who like the outdoors. The Canberra *Festival of Nature* (managed by Landcare ACT) has dozens of events listed, and we will have some down in Forest 20. This includes a *Stroll through Southern Tablelands Flora* on Saturday 16 November at 2pm. To find out more about the festival go to landcareact.org.au.

Enjoy the springtime!

Regards **Jane Cottee**, President STEP



◀ Wattle walkers at STEP for National Wattle Day
Photo: Jane Cottee

At STEP (Forest 20) Jane Cottee and Judy Smith took turns leading one-hour walks. Both walks were booked out. Jane said that most of the 30 enthusiastic walkers were local but a couple had just moved to the area and were very impressed by the range of wattles and STEP and the arboretum in general! What wonderful feedback!

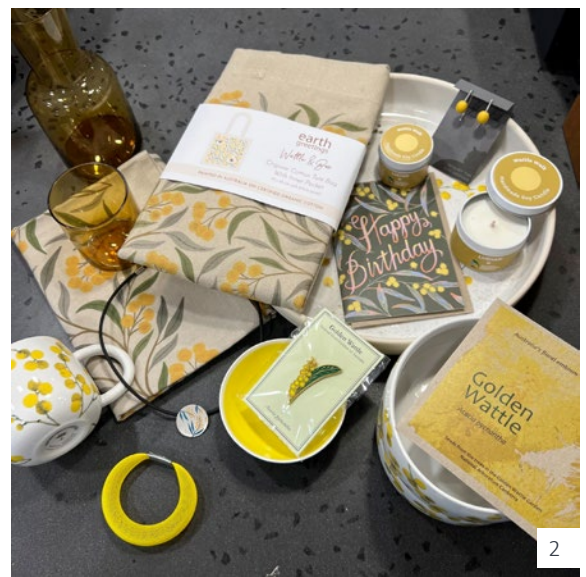
Dr Suzette Searle, President Wattle Day Association Inc.

▼ More wattle news

National Wattle Day 2024 at the Arboretum - Dr Suzette Searle

National Wattle Day was celebrated for the 10th year, at the National Arboretum Canberra on the weekend of 31 Aug - 1 Sept 2024. The Wattle Day Association (WDA) set up its annual 'Wattle Corner' with Golden Wattle (*Acacia pycnantha*) seedlings for sale, and a display of turned wattle wood 'mushrooms' and fiddleback Blackwood (*Acacia melanoxylon*) boxes. The association's message this year was the benefits of planting wattles for low-allergy gardens, animal habitat and soil improvement.

Dr Suzette Searle, President of the Wattle Day Association Inc.



▲ 1. Wattle Corner with *Acacia pycnantha* seedlings, information flyers and turned wattle wood 'mushrooms' at the Village Centre 31 Aug 2024
Photo: Suzette Searle

▲ 2. Wattle-themed gifts at The Curatoreum

▲ 4. Wattle Corner with a display of special fiddleback Blackwood (*Acacia melanoxylon*) boxes made by Anton Gerner.
Photo: Suzette Searle

▲ 3. The colourful, scented 'Selfie Spot' created by WDA volunteers attracted visitors during their visit to the Village Centre and proved the perfect location for the presentation of the Golden Wattle Award 2024 to conservationist Mikla Lewis OAM. The award honoured Mikla's outstanding and inspirational work over more than forty years that has instilled her love of nature into a commitment to environmental conservation, and benefitted so many.

President of the Wattle Day Association, Dr Suzette Searle presenting the Golden Wattle Award 2024 certificate to Ms Mikla Lewis OAM.
Photo: Mark Tunningley

▲ 5. *Acacia paradoxa* (Kangaroo Thorn) at STEP. Photo: Teah Searle

Growing a Wollemi - Want to learn more?

Many of the Friends are now proud owners of their own Wollemi pines as a result of the Wollemi Propagation Project - you can find an outline of our Project on the Friends website, by clicking on the Wollemi link at the bottom of each of our webpages.

The Botanic Gardens of Sydney have some excellent information to help with growing wollemis, click below.

[Growing Wollemi](#)



NBPCA Artist in Residence (AIR) - August 2024

Ballarat-based, Joe Morgan-Payler, spent several days up at the Arboretum, 14 – 16 August, to exchange bonsai ideas and techniques with Bonsai Curators Leigh and Sam, to style a National Bonsai & Penjing Collection stock tree, and to share his knowledge and experiences gained in his approximately 30 years of practising the art of bonsai. Joe styled and potted a large trident maple that was acquired by the NBPCA for these occasions.

The AIR program provides volunteers in the NBPCA access to free workshops led by the visiting artist and to a presentation and demonstration of bonsai techniques.

In Joe's case, 12 NBPCA volunteers were provided advice and guidance in the development of one or more trees that they had brought along to one of the two 3-hour Thursday workshops – six attendees in each.

On the following day, Joe gave a talk to a group of volunteers on the refinement of more advanced deciduous trees, discussing the techniques used to create and maintain the perimeter of fine foliage and at the same time, keeping the tree the same size. This was followed after a break for lunch at the Arboretum Café (with 10% discount if you are a Friend!) by a demonstration creating jins and a shari as a part of styling an advanced juniper procumbens.

You can see some of Joe's bonsai currently on display at the NBPCA.

While chatting with Joe after the demonstration on the Friday I learned that he had been involved in the design of some aspects of the Arboretum – some forest patterns. Joe is a qualified landscape architect and was working at the time of the design of the Arboretum with the firm (Taylor Cullity Lethlean) who were awarded the Arboretum landscape design contract.

Mike

Joe Morgan-Payler ▼



What's new - The Curatoreum

Spring coincides with a burst of activity in the publishing world. Over the next few months, you'll find us joyously unpacking boxes and sorely tempted to take one of everything home.

This edition I've struggled to narrow down my highlights to only a few, but I encourage you to pop into the store to see all the marvellous books and goodies arriving daily. **Mel**



A Flower Garden for Pollinators by Rachel de Thame \$49.99

Pollinators are essential to life on Earth. Yet bees, butterflies and other beneficial insects are struggling due to climate change and habitat loss. Fortunately, what we choose to plant in our gardens can help them to thrive. In this heartfelt guide, horticulturalist and UK Gardener's World presenter Rachel de Thame highlights plants we can grow that are rich in nectar and pollen, ensuring the garden is filled with beautiful flowers for us all to enjoy year-round.



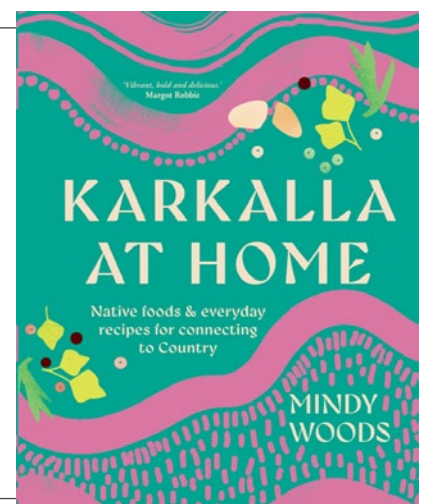
Comfort by Yotam Ottolenghi and Helen Goh \$65

Although technically a UK book, I think we can claim this as a bit of an Australian cookbook. Heavily influenced by his trips to Australia, Ottolenghi has developed these recipes with Helen Goh, another fabulous chef to call Australia home for much of her career. In true Ottolenghi style, despite the inventiveness of his recipes, they are relatively easy to follow, using pantry staples to create dishes that are so very delicious. I particularly recommend the Hawajj roasted cauliflower with gribiche sauce!

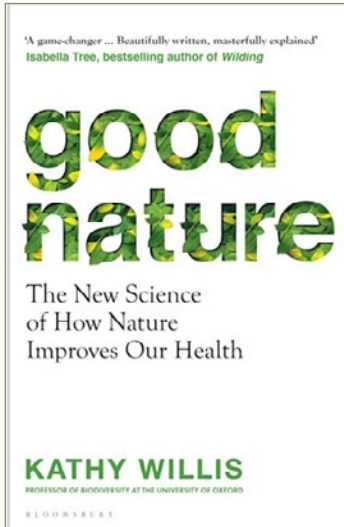
Karkalla at Home by Mindy Woods \$49.99

Ever wanted to incorporate our native bush foods into your cooking, but were unsure where to start? Welcome to Karkalla at Home, a please-use-me cookbook that brings Australia's incredible bounty of native foods into your kitchen. Chef, author and proud Bundjalung woman Mindy Woods features stories and profiles on more than 40 of the continent's most readily available native ingredients, including the iconic macadamia, citrus, berries, plums, myrtles and seeds, coastal greens and succulents, and a host of exceptional native seafood.

Connect to Country with more than 110 easy and inspiring recipes, including everything from breakfasts and weeknight mains to special occasion centrepieces, along with a vibrant array of drinks and desserts.



What's new - The Curatoreum



Good Nature by Kathy Willis \$34.99

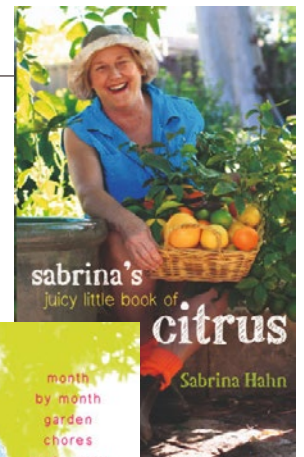
A revolutionary, science-based look at the ways nature can help make us healthier.

Fifteen years ago, University of Oxford Professor Kathy Willis read a study that radically changed her view of our relationship to the natural world. The study revealed that hospital patients recovering from surgery improved three times faster when they looked out of their windows at trees rather than seeing walls. Since then, she has dedicated her research to proving this link between the amount of green space in our lives and our better health, mood and longevity. For the first time ever, Good Nature brings together these recent scientific findings and shares the simple changes we can all make in our lives.

Sabrina's Juicy Little Book of Citrus & Sabrina's Dirty Deeds by Sabrina Hahn \$19.99 ea

These pocket-sized gardening books are packed with tips on how to grow happy healthy plants in our harsh climate. The Citrus book addresses all the problems experienced by frustrated growers of lemons, limes, grapefruits, kumquats, oranges and more. You'll love this quick, practical and environmentally friendly guide to common problems.

And if you're unsure of what to do when in the garden, Sabrina's Dirty Deeds gives you a month-by-month list of chores to keep you busy all year round and get ahead in the garden.



And lastly, **Christmas has arrived at The Curatoreum**. Every year we stock a fabulously whimsical range of decorations from our friends at La La Land in Sydney. This year we have bearded koala Santas, slices of fairy bread and Red Utes with Chrissy trees on the back to name a few. We also have a selection of gorgeous, boxed decorations, perfect to send to loved ones overseas or interstate. Our Charity Christmas cards have also arrived, so be sure to get in fast for the most choice!

Friends Council Members - (elected) May 2024

| | |
|------------------------------|------------------|
| Chair: | Mike Woolley |
| Deputy Chair: | Fran Hinton |
| Treasurer: | Lynley Rees |
| Secretary: | Del Da Costa |
| Publications Officer: | Nicole Pietrucha |
| STEP representative: | Hugh Milloy |
| NBPCA representative: | Sandra Corrigan |

| | |
|-----------------|----------------|
| Members: | Marelle Rawson |
| | Ian Chambers |
| | Maggie Hawes |
| | Barry Langshaw |
| | Mark Lodder |

Donations and Sponsorship Manager:
Trish Keller OAM (not a Council position)



We ask all Friends to check your membership card for your renewal/expiry date!

And if you haven't joined already, then the time is right to become a Friend!

[Renew or join now](#)

Thank you to all our Sponsors and Contributors

If you have ideas for articles, or items that might be of interest to the Friends such as stories or photos from the Arboretum or further afield, please contact me Nicole Pietrucha on: pietruchanac1@gmail.com

Many thanks to the people who have contributed articles and photos for this and previous issues of the Newsletter, and given generously of your time to write, read and proofread. I could not do it without your help.

