

The Inverawe News

Volume 1 – issue 2 – May 2005 – www.inverawe.com.au

***Inverawe Native Gardens closes 25 May
for winter, and re-opens 1 September***



Autumn tints on North West Bay. Looking down the bay toward North Bruny

Autumn at Inverawe

The days are getting shorter and the nights cooler. We got our first dew in mid February and our first frost in mid March. The winter rains are still a month off, so the days are usually fine and mild, with temperatures in the high teens to early twenties. The swamp harriers have headed north for the season and the robins are making their seasonal appearance in the garden.

What's in Bloom?

Right now we have kangaroo paws, paper daisies, brachyscome, yellow buttons, myoporium and scaveola, just for starters. Many shrubs have an autumn flush, including grevilleas, bottle brush and westringes. The wild wattles are always in bloom.



Paper daisies, Australian endemics, are widely grown overseas. Although they come in many bright colours, these white ones light up the garden.

Australian Natives?

UK visitors instantly recognise our paper daisies (*Bractea species*). They are widely grown in Britain and used in dried flower arrangements. The best kangaroo paws in the world? Try Israel, or some of the sunnier parts of Europe, where they are grown for the cut flower trade. Our national symbol, the wattle? Improved cultivars, developed in Europe, are grown in France, also for cut flowers. The French have concentrated on developing long truss length, bright colour and long vase life.

South African and New Zealand visitors report that Australian natives are fairly common in their gardens. Indeed, *Hakea sericea* is reported as something of a weed in South Africa.

A visitor from the UK said that some of our Tasmanian plants – beech myrtle, for example – do better in Ireland's peaty soils than they do at home in Tassie. That can't be true.



Banksia ericifolia, a native of NSW.

Horses for Courses

East coast Banksias do well at Inverawe, on our sandy clay soils. West coast Banksias, which include most of the really showy ones, prefer sandy soils with some moisture through summer. The same is true for Hakeas, which, like Banksias, are members of the Protea family.



A group of year 5 students hard at work. .

Endemics for all

Year 5 students from Margate Primary School visited Inverawe recently. Under the leadership of teachers Ann Briggs and Libby Brown, the students have developed a strong interest in the region's native flora and fauna. The school has an 'Adopt a Patch' native plantation at nearby Dru Point, and the students called in to Inverawe for some background knowledge on natives.

The students were given a guided tour and completed a worksheet compiled by Inverawe. Subsequently we've designed a 'Tree Detective' game that will help students recognise some of our native plants.



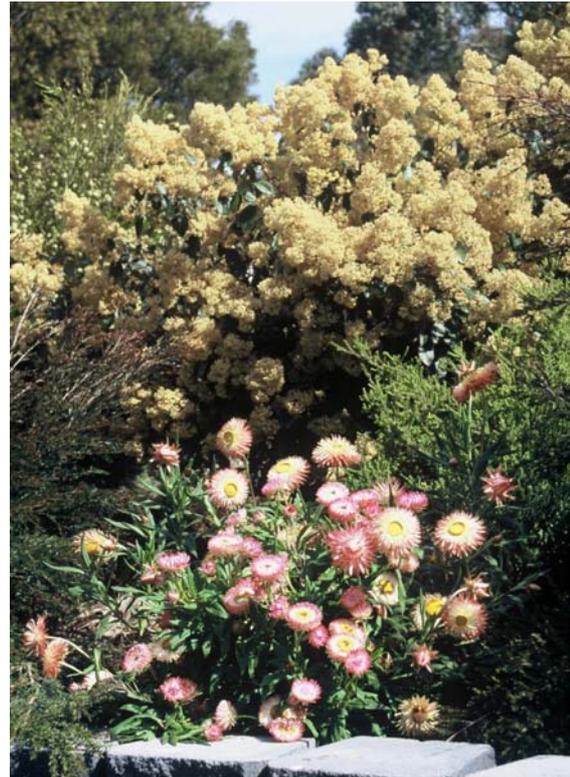
A yellow tailed black cockatoo plots some fresh mischief.

A Bird in the Bush is Worth...

The black cockies (above) enjoy peeling the bark off wattles and casuarinas, searching for some of their favourite food, fat white grubs. 70 species of birds, including all 12 endemics have been spotted at Inverawe

Wedding Bells

We've had a number of enquiries recently along the lines of 'do we do weddings?' We expect to have our first bride and groom, shortly.



Pink paper daisy (Bractia species) backed by Yellow Dogwood (Pomaderris elliptica), photo taken last October.

Plant Propagation

Both the species shown above are being propagated at Inverawe. Paper Daisies seed prolifically and seedlings can be lifted and potted on. They also strike easily from tip cuttings in spring and autumn.

Dogwood (Pomaderris) grows from seed harvested in late summer. Fresh seed yields high germination rates. The young seedlings seem very resistant to the fungal diseases that carry off many small seedlings. (but we're still keeping our fingers crossed!)

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Open 1 September to 25 May, 9.30 am to 6.00 pm. The best \$6.00 you'll ever spend!

Your hosts Margaret and Bill Chestnut hope to see you here soon