

Welcome to the 2006-7 Season!

We're back! Inverawe re-opened for the new season on 1 September. We'll be open six days a week through to the end of May (we're closed Mondays).



Ready and waiting for our third season

Approaching from the north (Hobart), visitors will see our big pink sign on the northern boundary and this new entrance as they come off the Channel Highway to park in the adjacent laneway.

Other Changes

We've done less planting this winter than we intended, no more than a few hundred plants, thanks to a very dry season. We have acquired a few sculptures to give the garden a more rounded feel. We've got two pieces from sculptor and blacksmith Bruce Pringle, a very fine sandstone statue and a wrought iron, fairly vertical item that suggests life and growth. From ceramicist Lesley Perkins we have two sets of hands (impossible to describe, you've got to come and see them) as well as a set of ceramic pumpkins. From Andrew Murphy we have a set of three "ephemeral" creations, entitled "Endangered Species".

Seasonal Chores

Native plants are low maintenance, not no maintenance. In autumn we cut back the Kangaroo Paws and now in early spring, we've dosed them with soluble fertiliser, fish food mixed with seaweed concentrate. This coming autumn they will need lifted and divided. A couple of the *Banksia serratas* are looking a little pale, due to an iron deficiency in our soils. They'll cop a corrective dose of iron chelates. Most of the *Grevilleas* are coming into flower but those that are feeling a bit "off" thanks to a hard winter will receive a half strength dose of fish food, well watered in. That will either kill them or cure them. There's no place for plants that want to stand around, palely loitering. Apart from that, it's mulch, mulch, mulch to retain moisture and weed, weed, weed, because the weeds know it's Spring, too.

Birds at Inverawe

The birds also reckon that the spring has sprung. Yellow Wattle Birds are back in the garden, with their raucous call. The White Faced Heron is feeling frisky enough to regularly perch on our back railing and Plovers and Native Hen are nesting in the grasslands. New Holland Honeyeaters have taken possession of the *Grevilleas*, now coming into bloom, and we have spotted our eightieth species – Cattle Egrets. Egrets have been in the area for several months but until recently stubbornly refused to land at Inverawe. Mr Pardalote is singing his two note love song and will soon be drilling his nest tunnel in the soft embankment below the main entrance.

The Blue Wrens are coming into their bright blue breeding plumage and we expect the imminent arrival of the Swamp Harriers, fresh from their winter holidays in Victoria.



Two recent visitors watch as New Holland Honeyeaters chase each other through the under story

We saw two raptors (Eagles or Falcons) dancing in the sky the other day. They rose on the thermals then plunged earthwards, twisting and spiralling around each other, before soaring on another thermal. Romance or serious aggravation? They were too far away to identify so we aren't sure.

Nature Poetry

The Inverawe Nature Poetry Competition will again be offered in April, 2007. Entries will close some time in March. Entry forms will be available (on our webpage) early in the new year. The competition is for nature poems of up to 28 lines. Prize money will be enhanced and a parallel competition for Tasmanian school students will also be offered. This year's competition attracted scores of entries and was won by an emerging poet from the South Coast of NSW.

Kingborough Council are assisting with the prizes for the student competition.

Gardening Australia Expo, Sydney

The annual Gardening Australia Magazine Expo at Olympic Park, Sydney attracts tens of thousands of visitors. One hundred and twenty stallholders display everything that is gardening, and some things that aren't. This year it ran for three days at the end of August and we were there.



Well known gardening identity, Angus Stewart, talks native plants at the Sydney Gardening Australia Expo.

Speakers used four separate stages to talk gardening to enthusiastic audiences. We listened to Angus Stewart's three talks on native plants. He showed many brightly coloured natives and spoke about propagating them. The mostly Sydney audience were interested in natives' ability to withstand dry conditions. Draconian water restrictions are part of the way of life in Sydney. Natives are popular: Angus' talks were packed.

Amongst suggestions was the virtue of keeping native plants in pots if you really want to grow something that isn't suited to your soil or climate. Angus' speciality is Kangaroo Paws, and he has developed cultivars to die for. Some of the more colourful are best grown in pots.

The latest Grevillea was "Lady O", a cultivar of *Grevillea rhyolitica*. A number of *rhyolitica* have been planted at Inverawe. They carry their profuse, bright red flowers in sun or shade for nine months of the year, growing to around a metre in height. Like all Grevilleas they can be cut back after flowering to promote a compact shape. The Species, *rhyolitica*, should be available from some native nurseries. We haven't seen the cultivar, Lady O, in Tassie as yet.

Blooming Tasmania Booklet Available

The 2006 – 2007 edition of the Blooming Tasmania Booklet is now available. You can get your copy from the nearest Visitor Information Centre, or in the September edition of Gardening Australia Magazine.

The booklet lists all the gardens in Tasmania that are open to visitors. Times, entry charges and garden locations are all detailed.

Tree Ferns Arrive at Inverawe

We have acquired three mature tree ferns, *Dicksonia antarctica*, from a friend who was remodelling his garden. They are two metres tall and were moved with a large intact root ball. The holes we dug for them were 60 cm diameter and 60 cm deep. We cut off all the fronds and watered the ferns well in. We are pleased to report that they have started growing, gradually developing fiddleheads that will unfold into fronds. You can see them on the rainforest slope.

Fern species emerged in the fossil record about 400 million years ago. Ferns are difficult to propagate from spore, requiring patience, time and clinical standards of cleanliness. Some species (not tree ferns) can be propagated by division but our experience is that failure rates are fairly high.



Fiddleheads gradually unroll to form fern fronds

Various species of tree ferns are found in many parts of the world, always in wet, cooler environments. New Zealand is pretty much tree fern headquarters, with several species that are closely related to Australian examples. The fiddleheads of one Canadian species are considered a delicacy but don't try this at home, folks.

Inverawe Native Gardens

1565 Channel Highway

MARGATE TAS 7054

Ph: (03) 6267 2020

www.inverawe.com.au
gardens@inverawe.com.au

Open Tuesdays through Sundays, inclusive
1 September to end May,
from 9.30 am, last entry 5.30 pm.
Closed Christmas Day
Open Holiday Mondays.

Other times by arrangement.

Entry fee: \$8.00