

**Newsletter - December 2005**

**Natives Bring Colour to Any Garden**

The most common comment from visitors to Inverawe is "I didn't know you could get so much colour with native plants! A real eye-opener is Native Hibiscus, below. A relative of the true Hibiscus, its prolific flowers last only a day but there are so many of them it just doesn't matter. It revels in extremely dry conditions, growing to a metre and a half in height. It requires heavy pruning in Spring.



*Native Hibiscus*

**Short Stay Visitor Numbers Increase**

With cheap air fares the norm, increasing numbers of visitors drop in to Tasmania for a four day visit. Keith and Victoria, pictured below, run a popular Sydney fitness studio and just can't afford the time for an extended break. They flew into Hobart Friday and were back at work late Monday morning. Aside from visiting Inverawe (just 15 minutes south of Hobart's CBD) they found time to try sea-kayaking off Tinderbox and took Keith's Great Aunt Lilian to afternoon tea.



*Soaking up some early Spring sunshine*

**Potted Pines**

The Celery Top Pine is a native of Tasmania's wet forests. At Inverawe we have a couple in pots and one or two in the ground in our rainforest area. Like all pines they do not have true flowers so we think the picture below is a snap of a Celery Top not flowering. Any experts out there to clarify this?



*A Celery Top Pine, pictured in early Spring*

**Winds of Change**

A violent windstorm in early November brought down a number of trees at Inverawe and uprooted several larger shrubs. We had the 'Great Outdoors' TV crew coming three days later, so spent a busy few days repairing the damage.

We have taken the opportunity to redesign a wind devastated area north of the main entrance as a 'Bush Meander'. The Meander will draw visitors' attention to those things that give Australian plant gardens their character – the waxy or spiky leaves to reduce water loss, nectar rich flowers, the fugitive aromas of essential oils, the 'zizz' of insects and the chatter of birds.

**Mentioned in Dispatches**

Inverawe received a two page spread in the September edition of the up-market Tasmanian magazine, *Forty Degrees South*. Inverawe was also mentioned in the November edition of *Gardening Australia*.

**Blooming Tasmania**

The latest edition of *Blooming Tasmania* is now available from Visitor Information Centres and participating gardens. It lists all gardens in Tasmania that regularly welcome visitors.

### You say Hay-kea, I say Hah-kea\*

Hakeas, however you pronounce them, are a purely Australian genus of over 100 species. The best looking of them are from the West.

Below is a *Hakea francisiana*, a West Australian and South Australian native not often grown in Tassie. This one has been in the Inverawe collection for two years and has produced just this one bloom. We're hoping for a veritable flush of blooms next year but as *francisiana* is from the arid country, we're not taking odds on how long it might survive.



*Hakea francisiana*

Hakeas are related to Grevilleas, Banksias and Waratahs. As a family they mostly prefer well drained, even slightly dry soils and please, go easy on the fertiliser. Most specimens survive very nicely for years with no added fertiliser.

*\* Hay-kea or Hah-kea? A short "a". Hack-ee, perhaps? The genus was named for a German botanist (von Hake), so take your pick.*

### What's in Bloom?

With Summer upon us, many native shrubs stop flowering and settle down to survive the heat. Grevilleas and some Bottlebrushes will have another flush of blooms at the first hint of Autumn. Westringes and some other shrubs flower right through the year.

There are plenty of plants to carry the colour. At Inverawe we'll have ground covers such as *Scaveola*, magnificent Kangaroo Paws and several species of native daisy. These include Everlastings, Yellow Buttons, *Brachyscome* and in the bushier areas, *Straggly Daisy* (*Olearea*). *Straggly Daisy*, despite its name, can be pruned to maintain a compact shape. All natives should be at least tip-pruned after flowering.

### Visitors Impressed by Bottlebrushes

Visitors on a group tour were brought up short by the sight of the Bottlebrush screen at the foot of the winding stairs.



*A screen of Callistemon endeavour, foreground*

This group were migrants attending a Saturday English language school. We've also had photographers, artists, birder watchers, native plant enthusiasts, school children as well as various groups of 'partners' tours run as adjuncts to some conferences. Inverawe staff can supply briefings for most specialist groups.

### Seventy One and Counting

The seventy first bird species to be spotted at Inverawe was the Golden Whistler, an inconspicuous bird of the tree canopy who is heard more often than seen. The call is an often repeated series of whistles terminating in a whip crack.

Two recent German visitors said they saw a Brown Quail. Species seventy-two?

### Finally...

We wish all our readers and their friends all the best for the festive season. Come and visit soon. Bring a picnic lunch, lie back and listen to the birds. We will be closed Christmas Day.

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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

