

VOLUNTEER SNAPSHOTS



Volunteers enjoying their morning tea break



Heather Epps, Bobby White, Neil Paton, Joan Cross and Elwyn Paton—a happy bunch!

Eric Bailey, Peter Nortje and Alister Powell have done a great job on the board walk access ramp. Peter is our newest volunteer. *Welcome Peter!*



Peter Beckett, one of our "Council guys", moves the donated red soil to the service area.



Brian Davison, Eddie Fenton, Ian Buckberry and Peter Wilson raise the bog area with sleepers.



TAMBOVINE MOUNTAIN BOTANIC GARDENS NEWSLETTER

AUGUST 2009

Editor Chris Davison 07 5545 4926 chrisdavison98@hotmail.com
Curator Brian Davison 0488 033 239 briandavison@live.com.au



RHODODENDRON AREA OF OUR BOTANIC GARDENS

Plans for a large addition to the Rhododendron area of our Gardens had a boost this month thanks to the generosity of **Roy and Lorraine Bilbie** who have donated 20 Vireya cultivars (in 200mm pots and averaging one metre in height). Roy and Lorraine are Garden Club members and have a small nursery outlet attached to their gift shop at Balmoral. Roy is a keen collector and student of the Vireya species of Rhododendrons.



*Rhododendron vireya
Cv. "Sweet Wendy"*

For some time now, it has been our Curator's vision to revitalise the Rhododendron Garden and establish a botanic collection of some note. The project got underway last year when a new path was established through the overgrown Azaleas, which were then pruned and brought into order. Ten cold-climate Rhododendrons were purchased and planted at the top of the new path and TLC given to the remaining Vireyas that had been planted many years ago.

Roy is now very happy to join Brian in setting up a display of Vireya species and cultivars and this will enable us to have a scientific approach to these sub-tropical Rhododendrons, even though it will be small to start with. We will purchase others to build up the group and Roy will help to oversee the plantings. This area will form another valuable botanic feature of our Gardens.

The **Rhododendron Society of Australia**, whose members have previously been involved in our planning stage, will no doubt be watching with interest to see how this sub-tropical species succeeds on our Mountain.

Pictured at right are Brian Davison and Roy and Lorraine Bilbie. Thank you Roy and Lorraine, your generosity is greatly appreciated.



INTRODUCING EDDIE FENTON AS OUR NEW WORKS MANAGER

Eddie comes from a lifetime of jobs associated with agriculture both in England and Australia. His jobs in Australia have been in a managerial/advisory capacity to a variety of farmers and livestock producers throughout north eastern Australia. His background career has blessed him with good tractor handling skills, an ability to do maintenance on machinery and he has a good knowledge of the various tools. He is an enthusiastic volunteer at the Gardens giving time and thought to the various projects. He is a great guy and a valued member of our wonderful team of Volunteers.

.....and an early-morning riser which suits Brian!



OF INTEREST

Our Garden's mentor **Ross McKinnon AM**, the Curator-in-charge of the Brisbane Botanic Gardens, recently reached a personal milestone with a record tenure in the position of twenty-six years and fifteen days. *Congratulations Ross!*

The Gardens are now the proud owner of a Ute (already worth its weight in gold!). Thanks to **Mick and Maree Morris** for the bargain.

Sandy Silabon has actively taken on the role of Workplace Health and Safety Officer. **Geoff Ilett** is our First Aid Officer. *Thank you Sandy and Geoff!*

Thanks go to 30 students and 15 leaders from the **Lutheran College** who worked with Landcare removing lantana in the rainforest area of our Gardens. They are planning to return next year to work further on the site.

SCENIC RIM REGIONAL COUNCIL

have included the Tamborine Mountain Botanic Gardens in their **annual budget**. This is not only of huge and invaluable benefit to the running of the Gardens, but recognises the valuable tourist and community asset that our Gardens have become in their Shire, due to the work of our Volunteers.

THEATRE IN THE GARDENS

21st– 27th September

Supported by the Garden Club and the Scenic Rim Regional Council, **Goat Track Theatre Company** will present the school holiday season of "**Wind in the Willows**".

Our Gardens will provide the perfect backdrop for the play, a promenade piece that will see the audience led through the gardens by the actors—the Wild Woods, Toad Hall and the Riverbank are actual settings in the gardens, even to the willows hanging above.

More information: www.goattracktheatreco.com

FROM THE CURATOR - GUM GRUMBLES

All plants have their good and not so good features. One of the outstanding attractions of our Botanic Gardens is the extensive distribution of the magnificent Flooded gums / Rose gums (*Eucalyptus grandis*). This vivid white, straight-trunked tree is one of two Eucalypt species that are found naturally in the rainforests of Tamborine Mountain. The other is Tallowwood (*Eucalyptus microcorys*).

Unfortunately what they give in beauty, they take away in their effect on the soil and the plants under them. Eucalypts have waxy leaves that are difficult to decompose, contain a lot of tannin and a substance called polyphenol, giving them an 'allelopathic (poisonous) component' which makes them detrimental to anything growing under them. Their roots are shallow, extensive and hungry so they take the lion's share of water and nutrients from the soil. We have so many of these beauties, it is difficult to plant new species without them being affected by their towering neighbours. Unfortunately, we can't use the gum's litter as mulch, either. *A challenge but worth it!*

Brian Davison (Honorary Curator)

THE WORD IN SPREADING

Over a recent 2 day period (a Friday and Saturday), I couldn't help but notice the large and diverse amount of people visiting the Gardens. At times it was difficult to find a parking space. There were vehicles from NSW, Victoria and SA, a small coach load of overseas visitors up from the Gold Coast, and another bus unloaded a group of disabled school children. There were tourists from the Middle East and Asia and the usual smattering of locals and Queenslanders.

Several individuals were there. Some walked slowly around, taking in all the beauty before them. Others sat and read, enjoying the ambience and quietness. There was a photography group, two large family groups that formed seated circles on the lawn, a small wedding, a toddler's play group and many couples young and old. Because I was working in one of the gardens, most people who passed me said 'hello' and several made comments that praised the Gardens and the work of the Volunteers. One foreign tourist spotted me coming up the path and walked 50 metres along the car park to say in broken English— "It is beautiful place, we thank you very so much."

What more could we Volunteers ask for? B.D.



SPRINGTIME ON THE MOUNTAIN 2009 — Open Gardens Trail
Friday 2nd, Saturday 3rd & Sunday 4th October 9am - 4pm

The major fundraiser to maintain the Tamborine Mountain Botanic Gardens
Honorary Convenor Caroline Tolmie - spring05@bigpond.net.au