



NEWSLETTER

Vol 35 No 2 Winter 2026

MYALL PARK BOTANIC GARDEN

Learning More About Reptiles and Frogs

Spring Day this year is not to be missed as there is a big program. The fun runs will be held as last year but will start at **8am**. Steve Wilson will be our guest speaker and he will introduce the new publication 'Reptiles and Frogs of Myall Park Botanic Garden'. He will tell us about the very rare reptiles, a few local iconic species and those that share our homes! His talk is titled '**Reptiles and Frogs of Myall Park Botanic Garden and Surrounds: The Icons**'

There will also be several live reptiles for you to 'meet and greet' and a reminder from the local ambulance officer about how to treat a bite from these reptiles.

The younger visitors will be kept busy with a scavenger hunt and some art activities.

Kieth Murray and Wendy Grocott will both have art exhibitions in the Gallery. Chris Nikolic and Martin Page will include grafted plants at their stall which will complement the MPBG stall run by Peter Kerr. Pete will include a range of Gordon Grevilleas for sale, including the Garden's PBR listed *Grevillea* 'Dorothy Gordon'. Julie Wakefield will showcase and sell her handmade pottery and other surprises.

Morning Tea and lunch will be available, of course, and we encourage everyone to take time to explore the botanic garden and the retail shop as well as taking the time to catch up with old friends and new.

Spring Day Sunday 30th August

DATES for your DIARY: -

Working Bee for Spring Day Monday 24th August—Monday 31st August

Spring Day Sunday 30th August

Thanks to the Dalby office of Ann Leahy, MP, Member for Warrego, for her support for our newsletter.



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CONTENTS

Diary Dates.....1	Hats off to two volunteers.....4	Come wandering with me.....9
Learn about Reptiles and Frogs..1	Gecko Skin.....4	Newsletter information.....10
Caretakers Corner.....2	Members Working Bee.....5	A New Publication.....10
New Bank details.....2	Plant Profile.....6 & 7	Have you seen an Echidna?.....11
MPBG Seed Collection.....3	Captured on film.....8	Accommodation Information12

Caretakers Corner

Hello Everyone

Well the cooler times have finally come after a long, hot and dry summer. The time for birders arrived with 15 members of Birds Qld here at the start of April. As usual they were seldom idle, always on the lookout for any and all birds, some not seen here for some time. 112 species were spotted and I was fortunate to receive the prize for estimating how many species had been spotted.

Rainfall was non existent so both birders and birds gathered at the bird hide.

Visitor attendance remained strong during April, despite the fuel situation. May though, saw a different colour. Travellers were not so abundant with numbers down across the region.

A very quiet month.

In June, the Toowoomba Caravan Club graced the gardens with their attendance. 22 vans and 44 people made for a very full and active time here. The mill shed became the centre of everything for the vanners, meetings, meals and organising activities for the group. Brad Barrett again showed how to feed a large group of people and have them leaving very satisfied. Marvellous job again Brad.

Bob Simpson led two groups of young people, here for a CoExist working camp during their visits in May and June with the planting of 60 Chinchilla White Gum seedlings along the entrance road to the gardens. This was especially challenging for Bob as we still had received very little rain and the ground was very hard. The demolition hammer was in constant use for most of the hole digging and Bob introduced a soil mix that hopefully will lead to the survival and prospering of most of the seedlings.

Please note that we have moved the Garden bank accounts to Bendigo Bank.

Anyone wishing to make a donation to our Gift Fund can use the following details:

**Myall Park Botanic Garden
Gift Fund**

Bendigo Bank

BSB 633 000

Account 240 650 051

And to pay membership

Myall Park Botanic Garden

Bendigo Bank

BSB 633 000

Account 240 650 044

The weather has been very mild and pleasant for everyone. Just starting to get that winter chill right at the end of June. We had 86 mm of rain over the last 7 weeks, all slow soaking rain, boosting the soil moisture levels. This should bode well for a solid flower showing during August and September.

Until next time, keep smiling
Jeff the Caretaker

Rainfall

Year to date 224 mm.

The year began very hot and dry and no rain at all in April but May and June saw slow soaking rain of 86.5 mm so the plants are happy but there has been very little water run into the water storage.

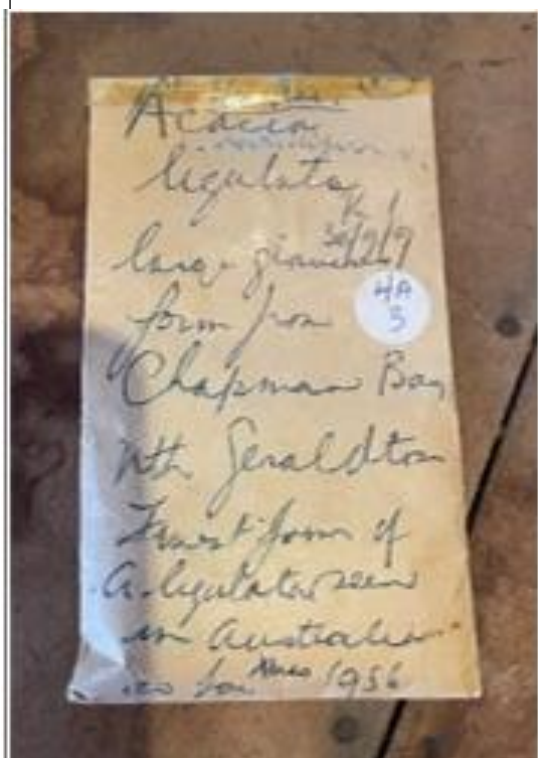
Myall Park Botanic Garden Seed Collection

Seeds are at the heart of operations in a living plant collection. Here at Myall Park Botanic Garden there is a huge seed collection in the seed room, safely stored inside those lovely silky oak drawers.

The seeds are in paper packets. The packets come in all sizes from 76mm by 38mm through to large paper bags. Some packets are envelopes, new or recycled, and some from other botanical institutions may be corporate-labelled envelopes e.g. 'Brookvale Park' or 'Vaughans'. The information on the packet is handwritten, often with a fountain pen, and the species name is most often spelt very clearly,

Each packet is labelled with the plant's name and location of collection if known. Other characteristic information may also be included, such as the type of plant (tree, shrub, etc.), or flower colour. The author of one very small packet even managed to fit a drawing of a leaf with characteristic venation onto the packet. All the information on a packet has been recorded in a register.

Someone with considerable foresight must have spent a long time developing a detailed plan for recording and storing the seed. Seeds come in many shapes and sizes and textures. Paper seed packets are fragile. It is no mean feat to store the seed packets in such a way that inserting new seed packets is easy. The seeds must be accessible for sowing whilst maintaining their integrity. Here at MPBG the packets are stored in alphabetic order by genus and species. Continuous alphabetic order would require constant shuffling of all the packets when new seed arrives. Each drawer's contents have been limited to a predefined section of the alphabet to allow for future expansion without overcrowding. A detailed map of the drawers and their defined contents was produced and is still being followed.



[Note there was no AI or Google to assist in working out what those predefined breaks should be!]

After 70-odd years, the older seed packets are deteriorating so a project has started, to enclose each of the seed packets in a new packet so they will last another few decades.

There must be over 12,000 seed packets now in the store. I wonder if the people who designed the storage system ever imagined there would be so many!

Wendy Johnson

Hats off to two volunteers

Allow us to introduce two of our long standing volunteers.

Noel and Mike have been coming to the Garden to help out for well over fifteen years. They come because they enjoy the company of other like - minded people. They realise that attention to detail on repair and general maintenance results in a much longer life for the item or building in question and they realise that it is difficult and costly for the Garden to find qualified tradespeople to come to do these basic repairs. They find it very satisfying to see a neatly finished project, as all of our volunteers do.

They can repair almost anything, they paint, build, clean, cook, tidy, take rubbish to the dump and I think they enjoy the variety of tasks that await them on every visit.

These two were also part of the dedicated team to restore the Glass House back in 2022.



This gecko skin was found near the eco tent early this year. It was probably shed by an **Elegant Velvet Gecko** as they are often seen in and near buildings.

It is easy to imagine how a snake sheds a skin but it must be much more difficult for a gecko. I asked Steve (our guest speaker for Spring Day) and he explained that they pull the skin from their extremities by holding the old skin in their mouth, just as we remove a tight fitting glove.

Hard to imagine really!

Members Working Bee April-May 2026

Fifteen members signed up for the working bee and there were forty six suggested tasks listed on the sheets to be found in the accommodations. Almost all of those tasks were completed.

Dick Harding and Peter Kerr had plants that they had grown at home and were now ready to be planted out. This was done and Peter then planted lots of daisy seeds (*Rhodanthe chlorocephala* subsp *rosea*) and set up special watering systems for them. In the past Peter has planted these same seeds in Janine's garden and they are always a riot of colour and beauty on Spring Day. This year we will have other spots also alive with these daisies so don't forget to check them out.

A safety rail has been established along The Quarters verandah and two stumps that held up this floor were replaced as the floor was beginning to sag uncomfortably. Picnic tables were sanded and freshly painted.

A new seat replaced the old uncomfortable one in the disabled shower behind the Gallery and clear café blinds were installed on one corner of the Camp Shelter to create a more comfortable space when the cold westerlies are blowing. All of the walks are clearly marked with logs and the boxes holding the walk notes are now marked with an 'I'. The walks have all been walked and checked to be sure that they are clearly marked. They are all different and Jeff often convinces our visitors to stay another day because of these walks.

Wendy continued her work of checking that all seeds in the Seed Room are double-bagged so there is no chance of them spilling. (see page 3)

The green house where we store fertilisers, buckets, lime and other such items now has a smart roof and is a much more useable space. The garden behind Avochie is now much smarter with the fallen down fence removed and new plants along the edge.

With all of these tasks, and others, being completed it is not hard to understand why no-one had time to take any photos.

A very big thank you to all of these volunteers who actually enjoy working with other like minded people towards a common goal. Our organization could not continue without such people and new volunteers would be welcome to join in the fun. Come for a day or two and see how you like it!



Plant profile

The Ptilotus family of plants has caught Peter Kerr's attention and he has grown many varieties of these plants from seed and planted them in the Garden over the last few years. Some are quite tiny plants and others are tall and eye-catching. The flowers are soft, most are pink in colour and on a recent visit Peter was amazed by the attention these perfumed flowers were receiving from a host of butterflies.



Top left photo is of *P. schwartzii*, top right is of *P. calostachyus* and below is *P. spathulatus* and the very small plant with a name tag is *P. axillaris*





This low growing, spreading variety above is *P. exaltatus* and below there is a close up photo of the flower of *P. calostachyus* as on the previous page but much more open. On the right below is *P. obovatus*, not in flower at the time of the photo. Thank you Peter for all of these plants and the photos too.



Captured on film

When Linda Oliver visited the Garden she hoped to capture several special birds on film and so she walked to the bird hide and set her camera to take a rapid succession of photos, just in case the bird was moving quickly or doing something unusual.

The camera was set and Linda was ready when a movement in the corner of her eye drew her glance (and her camera) to the side. She was able to take five shots in very quick succession and captured a rare sight. She generously shared the shots with us.



The Sand Goanna managed to hold his foot on the head of a Yellow-faced Whip Snake and then grab the snake in the middle and whip it to kill it.

Here are just two of the photos that Linda allowed us to share. Thank you so much Linda, what an amazing scene to capture.



Come wandering with me

The Bed and Breakfast Trail takes us through natural vegetation. There is no irrigation here and the plants survive or thrive depending on their resilience to the dry periods and the wet.

One can begin the walk just beyond the rhino tank and pump house or you can begin much further along the Garden Circuit at the parking area for the Gumnut Walk (look out for this sign at either end).

There are fallen logs and broken branches all along this walk, surely creating perfect homes for reptiles, echidnas, quails and other ground dwelling birds. In wetter periods coral or lace lichen (*Cladia retipora*) and chelanthes can be found as well as other green ground-cover plants, lomandras and dianella species.



The tall trees in the area are scattered through-out and their shapes and colours add interest and potential home sites.

Around the fallen logs there are 'nose-pokes' from echidnas and many torn apart logs which is another sign that echidnas may be visiting.



To the left a large hollow log, a perfect home for many and above a 'nose-poke' made by an echidna. Top left a coral lichen which is seen only after rain when it absorbs water and turns a bright green.

Your articles, photographs, advertisements etc are welcome for inclusion in this newsletter.

Contact

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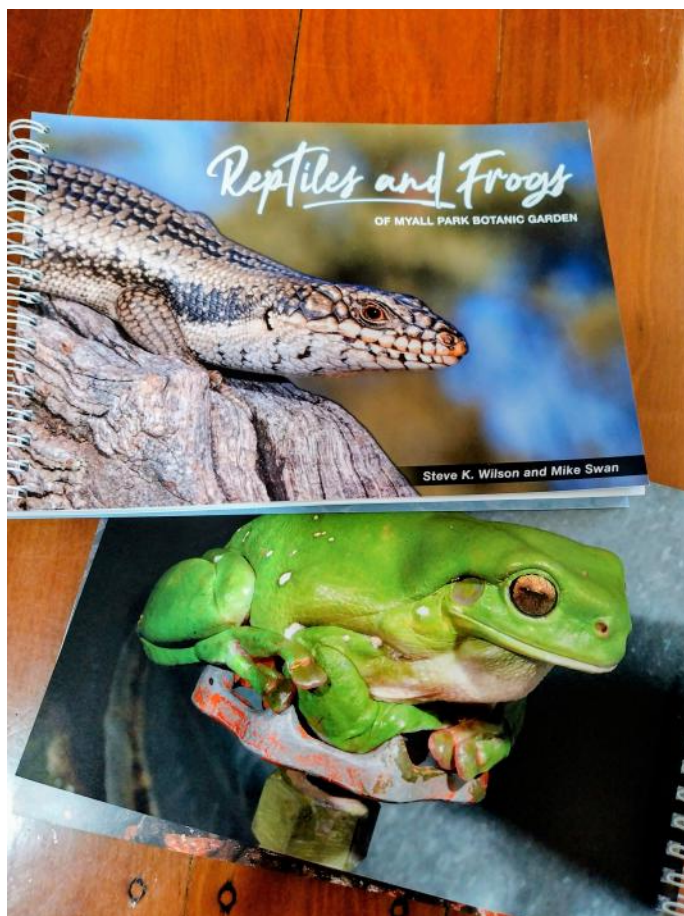


If you opt to receive it by email as a pdf file, then that's what awaits you. As well, you will be helping to cut the amount of paper we use and transport all over the country plus the time taken by our volunteers to fold, staple and post each one.

Please send Jane (see page 11) your email address which we will use in confidence only for this purpose.

Alternatively, newsletters may be downloaded directly from our website **www.myallparkbotanicgarden.com**

Did you know that we have a new publication for sale?



Steve Wilson and Mike Swan have visited the Garden many times searching for the elusive reptiles and frogs that many of us do not see when we are at the Garden, and they have found and photographed a huge number.

Early this year they were asked if we might use their photographs and knowledge to produce a book and the result is now available in the Gallery or by emailing the Caretaker and requesting a copy be posted.

Come and learn more about these characters on Spring Day.

It is a beautiful book and only \$20, available from the Caretaker

DONATIONS

All donations of money and goods with a value of \$2 and over are tax-deductible.

Cheques payable to Myall Park Botanic Garden Gift Fund or direct deposit Bendigo Bank
BSB 633 000 Acct 240 650 051

Post to: Mrs Jane Seddon, 48 Raffles St, Mt Gravatt East Q 4122

**We really appreciate your
Membership.**

**If you need to renew, please check the
website**

Current Directors

Myall Park Botanic Garden Ltd

DIRECTORS

Chairman

Jane Seddon

Other Directors

Sue Akeroyd

Peter Kerr

Kieth Murray

Cassie Robinson

Kurt Jones

Tom Groat

Company correspondence to:

The Secretary,

48 Raffles Street, Mt Gravatt Q 4122

Have you seen an echidna recently???

Echidnas live in every state of Australia but very little was known about them until seven years ago when a UQ student, Kate, began studying them for a PhD. She discovered a great deal,

- The reproductive organs are internal so it is impossible to tell a male from a female unless the female is pregnant
- They only breed every 2—6 years because of the high energy levels required of the females
- They are active in Queensland between April and August as they cannot tolerate high temperatures.
- In summer the echidnas burrow underground, reduce their internal temperature to 5 degrees and hibernate
- They sometimes rest in old termite mounds
- 16—18 days after mating the egg is laid and the female pushes the egg into her newly formed pouch where it remains until spikes begin to grow
- The 'puggle' is then left in a maternal tunnel and the female feeds it for six months.
- When the puggle emerges, it receives no further care from the mother.



If you observe an echidna at MPBG or see a scat on the ground, please email the Garden or check out 'Echidna Detectives' on the web and become a Citizen Scientist as there is a lot more to learn about these intriguing creatures.

INFORMATION PAGE

Garden closed for maintenance 20 Dec—20 Jan each year
VISITORS WELCOME AT ALL OTHER TIMES

MYALL PARK BOTANIC GARDEN FEES 2022

GARDEN ENTRANCE FEES

Garden and Gallery \$5.00 per person
FRIENDS and under 14 **FREE**
School children under 14 on excursion \$2
Official Guide \$50 plus Garden entry fees
Coach tours \$5.00 pp, driver and tour operator free
Organised working parties—Free (by prior arrangement only)

ACCOMMODATION (Garden entry included)

For bookings, contact **Caretakers Ph 0497 215 226**
(May—October, advance bookings advisable)

Tour organisers Free
Children under 6 free.
Linen (if required) \$5 per person (bed linen, towels)

Avochie Cottage:

1 night - 2 people \$120 - each extra person \$20/ night
For above packages, a cleaning fee of \$20 will be added if necessary

The Quarters: Rooms 1—4

(guests share kitchen and bathroom facilities)

per room: 1 night \$40

Room 5 : 1 or 2 persons \$100 per night

*Cleaning NOT included in The Quarters packages,
\$20 fee added if necessary.*

ECO-TENT: \$120 per night minimum 2 nights

TENTS and VANS (Garden entry included)

All powered sites: \$30 per site for 2 people. Extra person \$10/day
Unpowered site \$20 per site for 2 people. Extra person \$10/ day

CATERING

Meals available Bottle Tree Inn, Glenmorgan ph 07 4665 6727
And End of the Line Café 0458 984 254

GALLERY HIRE

Includes use of furniture, urn, power-points for equipment, fridge and Garden entry. Tea and coffee not provided.

\$100 first day, \$25 each extra day (includes cleaning)

\$20 per day for local non-profit community groups—please leave clean or pay \$20 cleaning fee.

Please discuss all arrangements when you book tours or accommodation. On arrival, please check in with the on-site caretakers 0497 215 226 and see Information in log box in the covered area near the carpark.

Diesel and unleaded fuel are available at **Surat** and Meandarra

ABOUT OUR ACCOMMODATION:

(Linen is not included. Please always use linen on our beds, ask about our linen service when you book.)

Avochie Cottage - (Right)

Renovated 3 bedroom cottage with 1 double and 2 twin rooms. Bath/shower and toilet. Electric hot water system. Open fireplace in sitting room. Electric stove, microwave oven, crockery, cutlery, electric jug, fridge, frypan and toaster. Washing up and cleaning utensils supplied. Fans, air cooler, heater, basic furnishings.



The Quarters: (Right)

Renovated inside and out. Two verandahs, 5 small bedrooms (6 single beds) 1 large bedroom (1 double bed + 1 single with A/C). 2 bathrooms each with bath or shower, 2 toilets. Electric hot water. Electric stove, microwave oven, crockery and cutlery, fridge, electric jug, frypan and toaster. Washing up and cleaning utensils supplied. Fans, heater, basic furnishings. Open fireplace in living area.



Caravans/Tents: Connect to the power on-site and use toilet / shower facilities at the Gallery complex. Unpowered sites available.



Fire pit available but wood must be brought in or purchased from caretaker.

For all bookings, phone caretakers on 0497 215 226 or email.

We ask you to leave the accommodation clean when you

CONTACTS

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Myall Park Botanic Garden

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Botanic Garden**