

11 March 2008

MEDIA RELEASE



A tribute to the eucalypt at the Australian Garden

The Australian Garden at RBG Cranbourne is holding a Eucalypt Festival during the autumn school holidays.

A bumper program of events, walks and family fun has been organised to celebrate the diversity and beauty of Australia's most iconic tree.

From Friday 21 March to Sunday 6 April, visitors to The Australian Garden will have the chance to learn more about the eucalypt in many different ways.

The highlight of the Festival will be over the weekend of 29 and 30 March with a diverse range of activities suitable for everyone. These include:

Saturday 29 March:

Exhibition: The Eucalypts – a passionate quest.

In 1945 Stan Kelly (1911-2001) an engine driver from Ararat, Victoria, set out on a life long quest to produce a watercolour painting of each species of Eucalypt. Stan's paintings illustrate the beauty and diversity of this iconic Australian tree. A free exhibition at the Visitor Centre Gallery.

Gum leaf bookmarks

11.30am–12.30pm

Come and paint your own Gum leaf bookmark to take home.

This activity takes 15 minutes and is suitable for 5 to 13 year olds. It costs \$2 per child.

Didgeridoo workshops

12 noon–2pm

Ever wanted to learn how to play a didgeridoo? Join in a 20-minute interactive workshop and find out more about 'didges' and some neat playing tips. The workshops are suitable for all ages. It costs \$2 per child.

Find a fossil

1pm–2pm

Come to the Desert Discovery Camp and find out about the evolution of flowering plants. Find a fossil to take home. This activity takes 15 minutes and is suitable for 5 to 13 year olds. It costs \$2 per child.

The fragrance of Australia – Eucalypt oils

2.15pm–3pm

Joseph Bosisto, a pharmacist from England, pioneered the commercial production of Eucalyptus oil in 1852, commencing operations at a small distillery near Dandenong Creek in Victoria. Since that time Eucalyptus oil has become and remains an iconic Australian fragrance.

Join Bosisto's Tegan Abbott and learn more about the fascinating history of Eucalyptus oil production and the interesting household uses of this product. A chance to talk to a real Eucalyptus oil connoisseur and test the surprising variety of scents produced from Gum Trees. The cost is \$4.50 adult; \$3.50 children/concession.

Sunday 30 March:

Champion Gum Leaf Blower

Join an expert Gum Leaf Blower, who will demonstrate Gum Leaf blowing at the Rockpool Pavilion throughout the day. Free.

Native trees and shrubs of south-eastern Australia: Walk and book signing

11.30am–12.30pm

Join Leon Costermans on a tour of the Eucalypt Walk in the Australian Garden. Leon will end his tour in the Gardens Shop and would be happy to sign copies of his classic work *Native Trees and Shrubs of South-Eastern Australia* (1981). The cost is \$6.50 adults; \$5.50 children/concession

Gum leaf bookmarks

11.30am–12.30pm

Come and paint your own Gum leaf bookmark to take home.

This activity takes 15 minutes and is suitable for 5 to 13 year olds. The cost is \$2 per child who must be accompanied by an adult.

Small Eucalypts for your backyard

12pm and 12.30pm

Home gardeners have the chance to join the Volunteer Master Gardens in a voyage of discovery of what small eucalypts are best to plant in the home garden. The tour is also on every Sunday during autumn. Free tour.

Find a fossil

1pm–2pm.

Come to the Desert Discovery Camp and find out about the evolution of flowering plants. Find a fossil to take home. This activity takes 15 minutes and is suitable for 5 to 13 year olds. The cost is \$2 per child who must be accompanied by an adult.

The fragrance of Australia – Eucalypt oils

12.45pm–1.30pm

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Trees and climate change

1.45pm–2.30pm

Trees are amazing creatures providing a myriad of environmental services to the planet. With an important role in both the cycle of water and carbon through the ecosystem trees are critical to our long-term survival on the planet. Join Burnley's Dr

Greg Moore, always an enlivening and provoking speaker and discovery another side of the Eucalypts. The cost is \$6.50 adults; \$5.50 children/concession.

Temuku Trio

From 1pm

Performing music from the Australian Song Book.

The Flute Trio will be performing at various times through out the day from 1pm at the Rockpool Pavilion. Free.

Other Festival highlights:

Outside the special weekend, there is plenty to do and enjoy during the Festival's two week program, including:

Grubby the Garden Grubs: Sunday 23 March, 1.30–2.30pm when children can join Ranger Andrew and explore the Australian Garden with Grubby the Garden Grubs map of the Australian Garden. It costs \$2 per child who must be accompanied by an adult.

Katie Koala's bush birthday: Tuesday 25 March, Tuesday 1 April Wednesday 26 March Wednesday 2 April

11.30am–12.30pm

Join Katie Koala as she prepares to celebrate her birthday. As you stroll through the beautiful bush, help deliver invitations to the homes of various native animals, find their favourite food, play games, make bush decorations and bush pot pourri party bags. It costs \$4.50 per child who must be accompanied by an adult.

Build a hortasaurus Tuesday 25 March, Tuesday 1 April, Wednesday 26 March, and Wednesday 2 April

1.00pm–2.30pm

Here is your chance to find out what a Hortasaurus is. Drop in on at the activity station and build a Hortasaurus from amazing Gum Nuts of all shapes and sizes. This activity takes 15 minutes and is suitable for 5 to 13 year olds. It costs \$2 per child who must be accompanied by an adult.

Night prowler, Wednesday 26 March and Wednesday 2 April

7–9pm Explore the bush land of the Royal Botanic Gardens Cranbourne by torchlight with our experienced guides. Bring along a torch and dress for the weather on the day. The cost is \$15.50 adults, \$11.00 concession. An adult must accompany children.

Walk and talk, Eucalyptus: Thursday 27 March, Thursday 3 April

11am–12pm

Have you ever wondered which Gum Tree is which and how botanists decide who is who in the plant world? Join RBG Plant Scientist Dr Frank Udovicic on a tour of discovery in the Australian Garden. The quest to classify Australia's iconic trees is an amazing story of obsession, passion and discovery. The cost is \$6.50 adults and \$5.50 children/concession.

Please note: The following entry fees apply for the Australian Garden: \$9.25 adults, \$6.90 concession, and children under 16 free. Where events have a charge attached, this is in addition to the entry fees.

Bookings are required for each paid for event: 03 5990 2247

Media inquiries: John Myers on (03) 9818 6339.