



OPEN GARDENS CANBERRA NEWSLETTER NOVEMBER 2016

President's report

We've been very fortunate with such a wet spring to be seeing so many Canberra gardens with their most lush foliage in years. It's been a slow start to the warm season but a productive start everywhere. One of the best things about Open Gardens Canberra is always meeting so many like-minded gardeners, and sharing the stories of our successes and challenges in our gardens. This year, we have enjoyed a variety of garden styles and learned from such a range of horticulture practices, filling the season with pleasant surprises. So congratulations and thank you to all the hosts who have opened their gardens so far this season.

Welcome also to all our new members. Your support is important financially for the future of Open Gardens Canberra. You might by now have experienced the sense of community we are building between garden enthusiasts and we hope you might consider opening your garden at some time in the future.

Open Gardens Canberra would not be here without the great effort of our volunteers and Committee so I want to thank everyone for the way we have worked together and shared the workload. The committee has recently grown with the addition of Chris Lord as our new Vice President; Jane Vincent taking on Publicity, and Sally Stephens who is organising our volunteers. Thank you everyone for the generous spirit of collaboration that makes it all roll along.

We will be announcing a new initiative soon where Open Gardens Canberra will offer a scholarship to a horticulture student at Canberra Institute of Technology. We are still working out the details, but the intention is to identify a committed second year student who needs financial support to complete their studies. This will be part of our broader community focus, where we might offer support or get involved with Communities at Work, and look for other ways to engage with the community.

The Committee has recently agreed to a major policy change, starting this season, where gate takings will be shared between the garden owner and Open Gardens Canberra. This is consistent with practices of other open garden organisations and may serve as an effective way of encouraging new members and local gardeners to hold open garden days with Open Gardens Canberra. The garden selector team of Deirdre Kiorgaard and Tom Baker can provide full details if you are interested.

We have an idea floating for a Buy, Swap and Sell meet for garden tools, plants and materials. We'd love to hear your feedback on how you think this might work best – do we have a set day, or do we have a noticeboard on the website? Another great idea being floated is about incorporating music into the Open Garden experience – perhaps with buskers or even recorded music. We will be in touch on this initiative in the new year.

Open Gardens Walks - Turallo Nature Reserve Saturday 26 and Sunday 27 November 2016

On Saturday 26 and Sunday 27 November, Open Gardens Canberra Inc will join with Friends of Grasslands and NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service to present 'Open Gardens Walks' at Turallo Nature Reserve at Bungendore. Grasslands expert Rainer Rehwinkel will be the main walk leader around a defined walk through the reserve.

There will be two walks of an hour's duration conducted on both days. The first walk will be at 11.00-12.00 noon and the second will be at 1.30-2.30 pm. The walk will be free for members of Open Garden Canberra and a donation from non members. The proceeds will support the Friends of Grasslands. Walkers are strongly encouraged to bring a hat and sunscreen and wear suitable boots or covered shoes. Walkers should also be alert to the possible presence of snakes.

The 25 hectare Turallo Nature Reserve is one of the region's finest examples of natural temperate grassland, an ecosystem now regarded as one of the most threatened in the country. It is amongst the first nature reserves in south-east NSW established to conserve the critically endangered Natural Temperate Grassland.

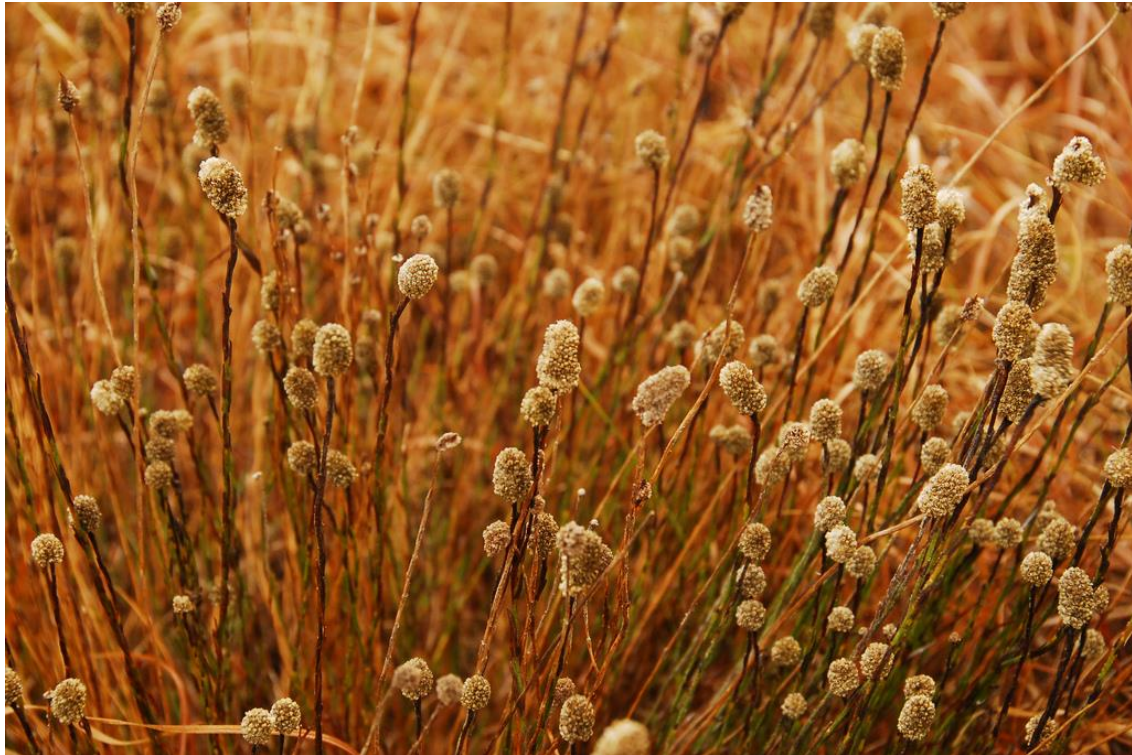


The reserve is dominated by swathes of kangaroo and snow grass along with a myriad array of wildflowers, including rare daisies, peas, lilies, orchids and many others growing amongst the grass tussocks. In addition, ancient Candlebark trees are scattered throughout the reserve.



Boring? Not at all.

Look more closely and you may see:



The reserve is not just home to flora species, but also many species of birds and reptiles can be seen. Turallo has been subject to research on grassland management, including experimental ecological burns.

Open Gardens Canberra includes sustainability among its objectives. We are forming links with NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, Friends of Grasslands and other managers of natural areas with a view to possible future guided walks if members show support.

Directions: from main street (King's Highway) travel south on Ellendon Street which becomes Hoskingstown Road two km out of town on west side of road. There will be a large sign and parked cars on the roadside and parking is available.

For more information about Turallo Nature Reserve, please see:

<http://www.opengardenscanberra.org.au>

<http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/parkmanagement/TuralloNR.htm>

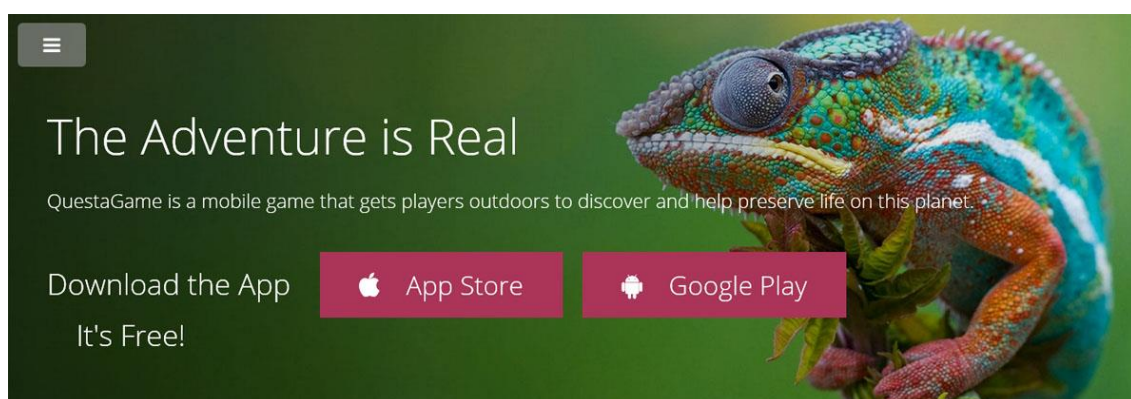
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/nswnationalparks/sets/72157618572663846/>

New game beats Pokemon hands down!

Turallo Nature Reserve is the perfect place for your children or grandchildren to bring their smart phones and learn to play Questagame.

Win gold points for spotting **real** living things!

<http://portal.questagame.com/>



**Cancellation of Open Garden for 26 and 27 November –
Piccolo**

Unfortunately, the advertised open garden, Piccolo, in Bungendore on 26 and 27 November 2016 has been cancelled due to factors beyond the control of Open Gardens Canberra Inc. We apologise for any inconvenience.

From new committee members - In their own words

Chris Lord, Vice President and Ann Lord, Committee Member

Ann and I have had a long interest in gardening and the old Open Gardens Scheme and often travelled to other regions to look at advertised gardens. When early last year we saw some publicity regarding Open Gardens Canberra we joined and volunteered to man the entrances to the various gardens which we did for the majority of Open Gardens during the previous 12 months.

On attending a meeting last year, whilst not joining the Committee, we agreed to assist former President Shirley Pipitone by coordinating the distribution of pamphlets to the various outlets around Canberra and Queanbeyan. On attending the recent AGM we agreed to now join the committee and take a slightly more official role, and expect to continue with the pamphlet distribution.

Sally Stephens, Coordinator of the Volunteers Roster

I come from a rural background including seven years as a child on large sheep and cattle stations in SA. Since 1964, my family has been on the land near Jerangle, east of Bredbo. Both my parents were keen gardeners but it has crept up on me.

I studied zoology at ANU and have always worked in the biological sciences. Until retirement in 2009, I worked for the Australian Network for Plant Conservation (ANPC), located at the Australian National Botanic Gardens. I feel my need to 'garden' comes from a long involvement in fighting the decline in native species and ecosystems. Large suburban blocks contribute to the loss of wild places, so I try to compensate by growing native plants for habitat and food plants for me.

Three Black Australorp chooks, Rise, Ann, Shine, joined my backyard 'farm' about a year ago. I used materials from my recent renovation to build their house and I keep varying their ranging area to cater to their endless curiosity and need to scratch and fossick.

I enjoy seeing other peoples' gardens as I admire and respect the enormous knowledge, experience and work they require, and there is much to learn. My garden is always a work in progress. More work than progress, I often feel.

Jane Vincent, Publicity/Media Coordinator

I grew up on a farm so started early helping my mother in her large garden. My professional and recreational life has always overlapped as I studied agricultural science which gave me a great background in Botany (even if initially it was mostly weeds!). For some years, I ran workshops for farmers, mainly on sustainability issues, so am well versed in publicising events and am now handling much of the publicity for OGC. Now near Sutton, we practise sustainability and I have again a large farm garden, including orchards, a veggie garden and an organically-based farm.

Notes from our Open Garden Selectors – Deirdre and Tom

Open Gardens Canberra is an organisation set up in 2015 to sponsor and promote open gardens for the public to enjoy. A new Committee was elected in early spring this year and is now actively seeking interested garden owners to open their gardens in 2017.

Selecting gardens is not a 'one size fits all' activity. We aim to select a wide variety of gardens – some with broad appeal and some which appeal to particular audiences (e.g. families, older people) or specialised interests (e.g. productive gardens, native gardens, cottage gardens). Selected gardens will vary in size from small courtyard gardens to large country ones. Gardens are selected using a set of criteria which include their design, style, plant material, sustainability, historical interest or apt handling of a difficult site.

If you might be interested in opening your garden, please contact Deirdre on 0417 937 513 or Tom on 0415 839 017. We'll talk you through what is involved in opening your garden, and arrange a time to visit. If your garden is selected, an OGC committee member will guide you throughout the process.

Our Autumn open gardens calendar is currently being prepared. There are some real delights in store including a huge Hawker garden which will impress with its wide variety of native plants on a difficult site, some lovely country gardens, and

a garden in Theodore sure to appeal to the little ones.

Membership News

Membership of Open Gardens Canberra has increased by around 80 so far since 1 September 2016. This is excellent as it shows you, the members, are supporting the Open Gardens Canberra organisation and also the owners who open their gardens for the enjoyment of all.

We have around 170 members from last year who have not yet renewed so we encourage you to visit the gardens being opened and renew while you are there. No need to complete a form, just pay our volunteers your membership fee and receive from them a receipt and a coloured dot to validate your membership card.

Our membership database is only as good as the information you supply to us so if you change your postal address, phone number or email address please let us know promptly either via info@opengardenscanberra.org.au or complete a Change of Details Form at an open garden.

Information about Open Gardens Canberra Activities in 2017

Watch our website: www.opengardenscanberra.org.au

Pick up the free newspaper *CityNews* at your local shopping centre or look at the Open Gardens section on their [website](#). *CityNews* send a photographer out to upcoming gardens, so it's always worth looking at the latest issue.

Listen to ABC 666 Saturday mornings gardening show for interviews with the Open Garden owners. Saturdays 8.30-10 am.

Listen to the Garden Gurus on 2CC (1206) for interviews with the Open Garden owners. Weekends 7-9 am.

Like the Open Gardens Canberra Facebook page to keep up with the latest news.

Recipe for November – Choc-Caramel Slice from Lindsell

The recipe below is provided by Sarah Doyle, owner of Lindsell in Latham, which opened recently in November. This is one of the many treats served during the

day to over 300 garden enthusiasts who visited Sarah's garden.

Sarah has provided two versions of this yummy slice:

Version 1

1 packet of home brand Gingernuts (Arnotts are a bit too hard to put through the food processor); 125g butter (melted); 1 can of condensed milk; Choc chips; Shredded coconut

Method:

Crumb biscuits in food processor.

Add melted butter to biscuit crumbs & press into a slice tin, lined with greaseproof paper.

Pour condensed milk over biscuit base.

Sprinkle with choc chips.

Top with a sprinkle of coconut.

Bake in moderate oven for approx. 15-20 mins or until golden brown. Slice when cool.

Version 2

1 packet of home brand Gingernuts; 125g butter (melted); 1 can of condensed milk; ½ cup Choc chips and ¼ cup Fruit & nut mix

Method:

Crumb Gingernuts in food processor & mix with butter & can of condensed milk.

Add choc chips, fruit & nuts and combine. Press into a greased, slice tin lined with greaseproof paper.

Bake in moderate oven for 15-20 mins or until golden brown & slice when cool.

Tom's Tips

Open Gardens Canberra criteria for selecting gardens includes sustainability in its many forms. Someone once said that "landcare starts at home". Gardeners in our district can do lots to improve their commitment to landcare, in garden design and management.

There are the usual actions such as minimising pesticides and artificial fertilizers. Also we can conserve water with tanks, by reducing lawns and using garden mulching. Retaining rain water on our urban blocks serves multiple purposes. Allowing rain to seep through pavers and run into garden beds and ground-sinks recharge the groundwater. Also, stormwater containing nutrients and pollutants do not then go into our water bodies such as streams and recreational lakes. Development of zones of clustered vegetation provide great refuge and habitat for small birds and become a delight to the residents as well

as privacy and shelter.

Member Contributions to your Newsletter

We welcome contributions from members on garden-related activities, tips and recipes. For these and all enquiries, please send your email to secretary@opengardenscanberra.org

Garden entry: Non-members \$8 for one garden.

Children under 18 free if with an adult.

Membership: Join Open Gardens Canberra for only \$25 and all gardens are free for a year.

For more gardens: www.opengardenscanberra.org.au