

## SPECIAL PLANTS OF THE MONTH

November 2019

This month's walk includes many native plants that will continue to thrive as Spring moves into Summer. You will also discover several introduced species that do well in our climate, as well as some of the work done by the South Australian Seed Conservation Centre.



The numbers refer to locations on the map on the reverse of this sheet

- \*1 *Gymnostoma australianum*** Daintree pine NE Queensland  
 A vulnerable species in the wild, this small tree grows in nutrient-poor soils in a very limited area of the Daintree rainforest. Despite the common name it is not a pine, but a member of the Casuarina family. This female tree bears terminal cone-like structures with small, but prominent valves which will open to release the dark, winged fruits contained within. It is the only member of its genus native to Australia.
- \*2 *Grevillea* 'Peaches and Cream'** Cultivar  
 Developed from a naturally-occurring hybrid between *G. banksii* and *G. pinnatifida* this grevillea displays large clusters of beautiful pale pink and cream flowers. Once established it will flower for long periods and attract birds, bees and butterflies to your garden.
- 3 National Rose Trial Garden** An industry trial site to assess new roses in Australian conditions  
 On the left of the path leading to the NRTG look for the apricot-coloured rose 'Lady of Shallot'. A David Austen rose it was named by the Tennyson Society, which promotes the works of Alfred Lord Tennyson. The long beds of the Trial Garden beyond the trellis are at their best around April each year when you can lodge your vote for the people's choice of best new introduction. Meanwhile, enjoy the roses in the established beds to the east. Adelaide's climate is ideal for these northern hemisphere species.
- \*4 *Hymenosporum flavum*** Native frangipani Qld, NSW New Guinea  
 This rainforest tree has glossy leaves and delicate, fragrant white flowers, ageing to yellow, with a scent and colour similar to the unrelated *Plumeria* (frangipani) species. The sprawling shrub at its feet, from drier climates, is one of the velvet bushes, *Lasiopetalum discolor*, named for its velvety calyx (from the Greek 'lasios' meaning hairy). Velvet bushes were among the first Australian plants grown in England from 1791.
- \*5 *Baumea rubiginosa*** Soft twig rush SE Asia, PNG, Australia and NZ  
 Growing in the display tanks along the viewing platform overlooking the wetland are some endangered species collected from the wild by Botanic Gardens staff. Soft twig rush, at the eastern end, grows in ephemeral swamps or along the margins of shallow watercourses. It is uncommon to rare and vulnerable in SA, but can form dense swards, providing shelter for nesting birds and habitat for insects.
- \*6 *Acacia stenophylla*** Shoestring wattle, river cooba All mainland states  
 A prominent species along inland watercourses, this graceful acacia often grows under river red gums. The long pods (legumes) are woody and do not split at maturity like most acacias, but break at constrictions between the seeds. The buoyant segments are then dispersed by floodwaters.
- 7 *Vitis vinifera*** Common grapevine Mediterranean, Central Europe, SW Asia  
 This small vineyard was planted in 2001 when the National Wine Centre was built. Since 2016 several limited edition wines have been produced, including a Field Blend of Dry Rosé and Dry White. The earliest evidence of grape cultivation, from Georgia, dates to around 6000 BCE. Evidence for wine making has been found in Armenia and southern Mesopotamia as far back as 3500 BCE.
- 8 *Phlomis purpurea*** Pink Jerusalem sage Spain, Portugal  
 Look for the light purple-pink flowers beside the paved path leading to the Sunken Garden. The generic name is derived from the Greek for flame, and may refer to the use of the leaves for lamp wicks in ancient times. An excellent silver-foliage plant for sunny positions. Around the end of that bed are a couple of yellow-flowered species of *Phlomis*.
- 9 *Salvia broussonetii*** Canary Island sage Canary Islands  
 One of more than 900 species in this northern hemisphere genus of the mint family, this sage, with its grey leaves and small, white flowers, grows on ocean cliffs of Tenerife as a compact, drought-tolerant shrub.
- \*10 Seed orchard** South Australian Seed Conservation Centre  
 Inside the small enclosure are several threatened species from South Australia, grown from seed or cuttings collected from the wild by staff of the Botanic Gardens. Images of six of the species can be found on the sign fixed to the bird netting. Some samples of seeds harvested from these plants will be stored in the seed bank, and others will be used for research on seed propagation and seed biology.
- \*11 *Acacia cyperophylla*** Red mulga, creekline minni-ritchi Arid zone: Qld, NSW and SA  
 The attractive red bark of *A. cyperophylla* splits and curls back, giving the appearance of hair (minni-ritchi). Like most Australian acacias its foliage consists of modified leaf stalks (phyllodes) with reduced water loss. The long, narrow, elegant phyllodes of red mulga contrast with the short, straight, sharp phyllodes of the slightly resinous, smooth-barked *Acacia rupicola* from SA and Victoria growing underneath

\*An Australian native