

## WINTER 2020 WALK FROM THE UPPER CAR PARK



The map on the reverse is an enlarged section of the general map of the garden inside the brochure and shows the location of this month's plants

Welcome back to self-guided walks for the Mount Lofty Botanic Gardens. To help keep visitors COVID19 safe we have decided that, rather than supply a paper copy of the walk, there is a downloadable version from our website (<https://www.friendsbgadelaide.com/guided-walks>) or a copy that may be photographed to take with you.

Our walk begins by taking the path beside the toilet block which you may notice as part of the Heysen Trail. The bed on the left is planted with highly perfumed plants, *Daphne odora* and *Luculia spp*, both of which will flower throughout winter. *Cyclamen hederifolium* flourish around the base. The common name for these dainty plants, "sow-bread", is based on Mediaeval Latin 'panis porcinus' as the tuberous roots are eaten by swine, though it was also used as an ingredient in love potions. On the right of the path, there are many cultivars of *Camellia japonica* which will also flower throughout winter. *Camellia reticulata* 'Purple Gem' has very large fruit, commonly called 'apples', which split into three segments exposing a hard, woody capsule which also splits into three to release the seeds.

On the right of the path are several tall specimens of **Weymouth pine or white pine, *Pinus strobus***. This is the second largest of the American pines. The wood was of such quality that British naval men earmarked the best trees – up to 70 metres and 1.8 metres thick – for their exclusive use as ship masts. The scales of the long, slender cones are often tipped by lichen giving the appearance of snow.

Walk through the avenue of fastigiata **Japanese plum yew, *Cephalotaxus harringtonia***. Unfortunately, the Noel Lothian platform is closed for restoration, but the front of the platform is clothes by *Clematis cirrhosa* bearing delicate yellow bell flowers. Although not quite as showy as some clematis, the abundance of the flowers which last for many months makes this a worthwhile garden plant. On the left of the path is an unusual **holly, *Ilex sp.*** with small, serrated leaves and bright red berries. Continue underneath the oaks and look up to the left for a view of Mt Lofty House, built by wealthy industrialist Arthur Hardy in 1855. Originally it was a 4-room slab cottage, which grew to a 14-room mansion completed in 1858. The quarry to be found at the lower section of the Mt Lofty Garden below the Dwarf Conifer Collection was once owned by Mr Hardy and was probably the source of the stone for his mansion. An unusual feature of the building, which was destroyed in the Ash Wednesday bushfire of 1983, was the damp course made of slabs of glass.

On the left is a fine specimen of **incense cedar, *Calocedrus decurrens*** which has deeply furrowed bark. These trees are native to the dry conifer forests in the mountains of California and Oregon. The wood has a strong spicy resinous fragrance and was the primary material for making pencils because it is soft and sharpens easily without splinters. Because the wood is resistant to decay and weathering in outdoor use it was popular for shingles and fence posts.

Under many of the deciduous trees, the fruiting bodies of the poisonous **fly agaric or fly amanita, *Amanita muscaria*** fungus can be seen. Native throughout the temperate and boreal regions of the Northern Hemisphere, *Amanita muscaria* has been unintentionally introduced to many countries in the southern hemisphere, generally as a symbiont with pine plantations, and is now a true cosmopolitan species. It associates with various deciduous and coniferous trees. The name of the mushroom in many European languages is thought to be derived from its use as an insecticide when sprinkled in milk. This practice has been recorded from Germanic- and Slavic-speaking parts of Europe, as well as the Vosges region and pockets elsewhere in France and Romania.

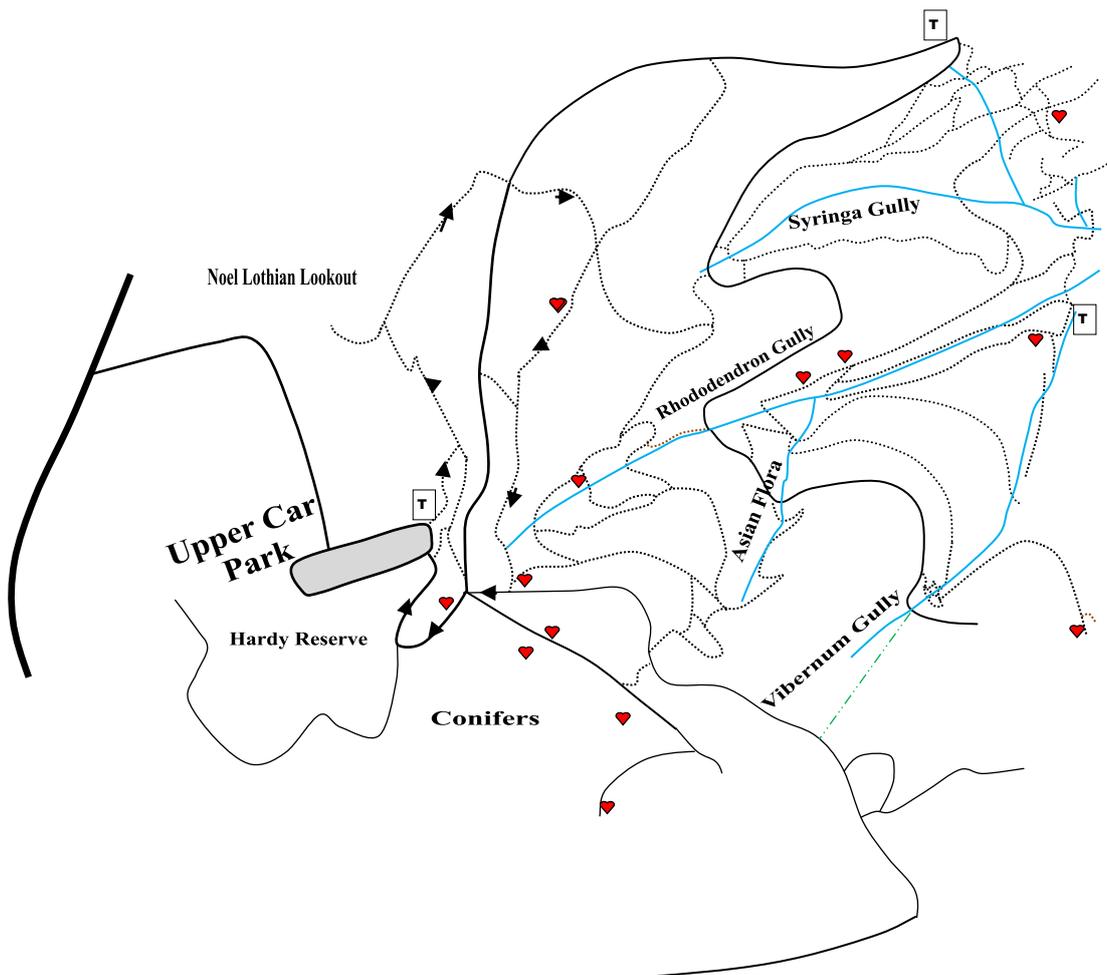
Cross the road to the gravel path downhill passing underneath pinoak, ***Quercus palustris*** now bare, minding your head as you duck under the overhanging branches. On the left the dominant tree of Mt Lofty Ranges native bushland is the tall ***Eucalyptus obliqua***. This was the first eucalypt named by George Caley who was one of Joseph Banks's plant collectors and became the "type specimen" for all eucalypts. Take the first path uphill on the right-hand side, where on the left an evergreen oak, **ubame oak, *Quercus phillyreoides*** has deep green leaves. In its native Japan, ubame oak is used to produce white charcoal, the traditional charcoal of Japan, whose production dates to the Edo period.

Further uphill there are several interesting trees on the left-hand side. ***Zanthoxylum armatum*** from Tropical Asia has sharp thorns on the trunk. Several of the species have yellow heartwood, and they are members of the citrus or rue family, Rutaceae. The fruit of several species is used to make Sichuan pepper. "Armatum", of course, means with spikes, thorns or spines, so why does the next tree, *Kalopanax septemlobus* also not bear this specific epithet when it has equally vicious thorns on all its stems?

*Quercus brachyphylla* from **Greece** and Crete is known as the Aegean oak and has the more familiar lobed leaves we associate with oak trees, though the ubame oak we saw earlier reminds us that there are many exceptions to the rules. Yet another member of Araliaceae, *Aralia decaisneana* is another spiky plant, though these are prickles rather than thorns, that is arising from the bark not the woody part of the tree. This one from Taiwan has soft creamy flowers.

The bright red berries of a *Viburnum* sp. will feed the birds throughout the winter. On the right, snakebark maple, *Acer rubescens* colours brilliantly through autumn and winter. Noted for its attractive bark, and red leaf petioles, the flowers hang in catkins but form the familiar double samara fruits common to all *Acer* species. Continue along the path below the Greg Johns' sculpture "Between Earth and Sky", looking down into Rhododendron Gully where the big, fat buds will soon burst into bloom. A tall tree fern among the rhododendron trees is a reminder that this area is one of the early plantings in this garden. Among the eucalypts, *Acacia melanoxylon*, black wattle, stands out with dark trunks and leaves.

At the seat return to the bitumen road and turn left to enjoy the variety in the collection of *Ilex* species planted along the road. On the right azaleas will be blooming well into spring. Uphill on the left is a bright bed of *Salvia* spp. keeping the birds happy over winter.



This leaflet has been prepared by the Garden Guides and funded by the Friends of the Botanic Gardens of Adelaide Inc.  
For information about the Friends and/or guided walks, please telephone 8222 9367