



FRIENDS OF VICTORIA GARDENS

Newsletter September 2019

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Dear Member,

Finally, some sunny and warmer weather after a few months of cold and occasionally wet weather. The August rainfall was near average at 51.4mm and temperatures ranged from 10.1°C to 19.4°C, which is almost 5°C above average. The main concern is the low rainfall in 2019 and temperatures that are already reaching mid to low 20°C. The forecast is not promising and there are predications of drought conditions earlier than normal. Gippsland and the Otways have been identified as high-risk areas for bushfires.



4/9/2019

The warmer weather and longer days have resulted in new plant growth and increased flowering of many plants and of those in the garden beds. The Iceland Poppy and Polyanthus in the garden bed inside the High Street entrance and *Fuchsia arborescens*, *Viburnum x burkwoodii*, *Ribes sanguineum*, *Heliotropium arborescens* shrubs are a feature in the Gardens. The lawn in the sunken oval was re-sown in the central area has started to grow. The white cloth, "grow-mat" is used to protect lawn seed and maintain moisture and humidity to aid seed germination. Further lawn works will include top-dressing, levelling, re-seeding, fertilizing, and temporary fencing prior to Spring into Gardening. Council is also consulting with a turf specialist to identify long term lawn management requirements.



12/8/2019



4/9/2019

The east shrubbery and High Street garden bed is undergoing extensive rejuvenation to remove weeds, prune Plectranthus and Canna beds, which will also be thinned out. The beds are being mulched and new plants introduced to fill gaps and add variety and colour.

Amenity Survey:

During August a survey into the amenity of the Gardens was conducted to gauge what members most enjoyed and any concerns they had. Thank-you all who have responded to the survey and for the thoughtful and valuable comments you have provided. The compilation of responses will be emailed to members in time for the next general meeting.

The responses will be discussed at this meeting on Tuesday 10 September, and form the basis for discussions with Council with a view to improving the amenity for all who visit Victoria Gardens.

Spring into Gardening:

Sunday 13 October 11.00am to 3.00pm

Stonnington's gardening and sustainability festival, Spring into Gardening, is back for 2019. Whether you have a tiny balcony garden, a sprawling backyard jungle, or you dig all things green, Spring into Gardening is the perfect event for getting inspiration and tips on gardening and sustainable living. Over 30 market stalls will be offering specialist gardening products and plants. Stonnington Council will again be giving away punnets of herbs, flowers and succulents to local residents. Check out teams from local community gardens, and green stalls from Cool Cactus, Town and Country Gardens, and Wormlovers. The festival will be hosted by the greenest thumb in Australia: Costa Georgiadis from ABC's *Gardening Australia*.

If you would like to help with the Friends stall contact John Hawker on 0438 510 522

Garden Volunteers:

The Victoria Gardens Volunteer gardening programme will resume on **Saturday 19 October, 8.30 am -11.30 am**, followed by a light lunch. Prospective volunteers are reminded that they need to be members of the Friends of Victoria Gardens (can join on the day). Please advise potential attendance by email to info.fovg@gmail.com subject: VGV or reply to the reminder that will be sent to current members by the VGV Coordinator. We thank Simon Holloway (Stonnington Council) for undertaking to see the volunteer program documented and formally signed off by Council (and FoVG Inc.) by the end of September 2019.

Plant News:

The Daphne is probably the most popular of all winter flowering shrubs. ***Daphne odora* (Winter Daphne)** is a species native to China, later spreading to Japan and Korea. It is an evergreen shrub to about 1m in size, grown for its very fragrant, fleshy, pale-pink, tubular flowers, and for its glossy foliage. All parts of the plant are poisonous to humans and a range of domestic animal and some people experience dermatitis from contact with the sap. Plants are not long lived, senescing within 8 to 10 years. *D. odora* is also susceptible to virus infection, which causes leaf mottling.

In the south east bed is a plant of *Daphne odora* 'White Star', which is resistant to wilt diseases and is now covered in flowers and filling the air with its distinctive perfume.



Next Meeting:

Tuesday 10 September 2019 at 7.45pm at 64 Bendigo Street, Prahran, opposite the Flying Duck Hotel.