



eNewsletter No. 22 April 2024

Northern NSW Branch

**Newsletters are sent out monthly except for
December and January**

Larger images are available from the editor on request

Zelkova serrata (Japanese Elm) is a medium sized deciduous tree which is native to China, Japan, Korea and Taiwan. It is grown as an ornamental tree and is sometimes used as a bonsai specimen. It has a short trunk with many upright branches forming a vase shape with a rounded canopy. The simple ovate leaves have toothed margins and are noted for their vibrant autumn tones grading from yellows to orange and red. The small inconspicuous flowers are clustered at the ends of new growth. The tree requires moist well-drained soils. It is adaptable to heat and dry spells. In Korea the tree has special significance as a protector of villages and can be seen planted in the central parts of towns and villages. The oldest trees are believed to be over 1000 years old and are protected by law. Authorities are working on cloning these old trees so that their genetic material is not lost when the trees die. *Zelkova* was collected and introduced to the Netherlands in 1830 and has become reasonably popular because of its resistance to Dutch Elm disease.

Ref: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zelkova_serrata



Zelkova serrata
Image: <https://www.vdberk.com/trees/zelkova-serrata-green-vase-flekova/>

Join AGHS Northern NSW Branch
<https://www.gardenhistorysociety.org.au/membership/>

Send articles & photos to: Reports/Newsletter Editor Maria Hitchcock
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From the Chair:

Happy New England Autumn days to you. The trees are looking magnificent in their clothes of many colours after a few cool mornings.

I'm sure you will enjoy the photos of our fabulous weekend visit to Coffs Harbour. With so much rain predicted, we teetered between postponing the event or taking a leap of faith and continuing on with our plans. I'm so pleased we decided to stay with our original plans as we enjoyed the weekend very much. Our sincere thanks to our generous and talented garden owners Brian Thomas and Scott Carter, Graeme Brindley and Graeme Bassett, Neil Puddey in Woolgoolga, and Prue and Peter Young in Bonville. Thank you also to all who attended and provided such good company over the weekend. Helen Wilson magically produced rabbits out of hats to put together such a diverse range of wonderful gardens for us to visit. Thank you, Helen. You are a gem!

Our next Committee and general branch meeting will be held in Armidale on Sunday 19 May. I've been asked if our talk after the meeting could be on our Coffs Harbour weekend, for those members who were unable to attend in person. I'm sure we would all enjoy visiting or revisiting the gardens through our many amazing photos and recollections.

The Heritage Rose Garden is splendid in its Autumn colours at the moment and was lavishly praised by 55 members of the Perennial Poppies garden group from Queensland during their visit last week. It's certainly come a long way from the weedy state it was in only weeks ago. Thanks to our contract gardener, Alec, and many volunteer hours from our members, it's now back at its beautiful best. Cath, Dar and Lynne guided our visitors during their tour, and commented on how interested and knowledgeable they were. Thank you, ladies, for sharing your love of roses with our guests.

The National Trust has re-opened Saumarez Homestead on Sundays during April and May, so please take any visitors you may have during this time out to see the rose garden in its Autumn glory.

Kind regards,

Helen Oates
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National Secretary | Australian Garden History Society
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Note: Due to the large number of photos, this edition of the newsletter will feature only three of the Coffs Harbour gardens visited. The other three gardens will be included in the May newsletter. (Ed.)

Coffs Harbour Gardens

Text and images by Maria Hitchcock

Just over 30 of our members braved the seriously wet conditions to travel to Coffs Harbour on Friday 5th April. Kim Woods Rabbidge was flooded in so had to wait until Saturday to join us and it was raincoats and umbrellas all round as we braved the elements for our first garden visit to **Claudia Nevell's** show stopper garden.

Claudia's landscaping business 'Garden Expressions' has been operating since 1994. She undertakes a wide range of garden commissions from private properties to commercial developments. Claudia trained in Germany and England before coming to Australia and is the chief designer. The other designer is Kasper Klap from the Netherlands who joined the business five years ago.

The striking thing about this garden to my eye is a remarkable attention to detail with carefully selected ponds, clipped hedges and shrubs and water bowls all providing interest at every turn. Although set on a town block, the garden uses palms and other trees to screen it from surrounding suburbia thus creating a sub-tropical garden oasis. A repetition of species such as Ginger plants provide unity and occasional vibrancy when they flower. The pathways constructed of pebbles, rock or gravel meander through the garden making it an adventure to discover what lies around each corner.



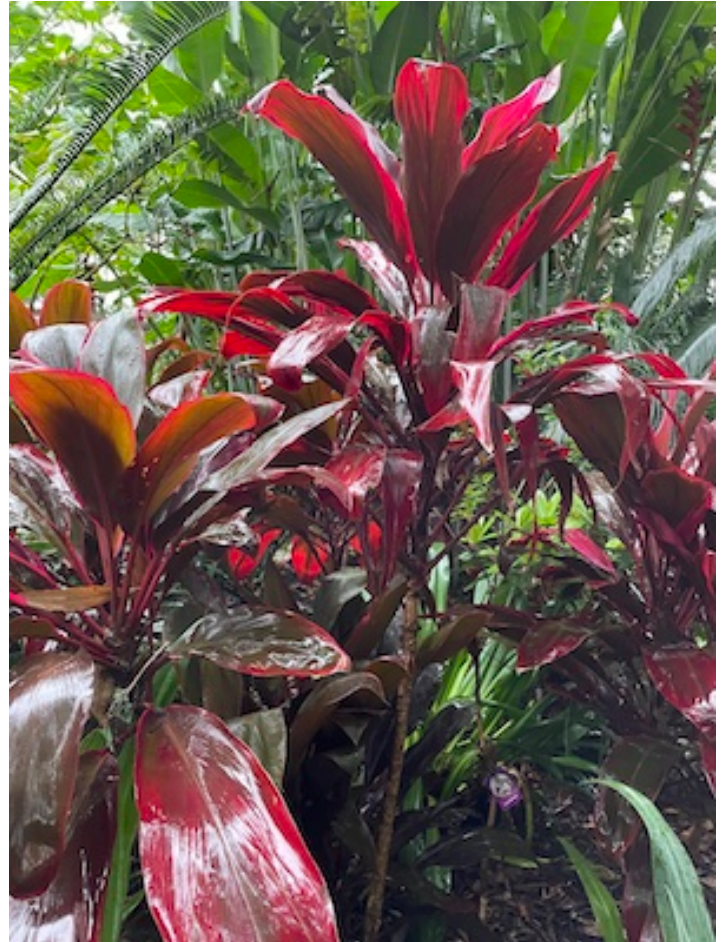
Canary Island Spurge stands out against a dramatically painted wall.



A view across the lawn from the house. The trees provide a magnificent screen and a sense of lushness to this wonderful sub-tropical garden. Note the straight trunks of palms that provide a vertical accent and the clipped shrubs adding formality. Changing textures add interest to the design.



Blue Ginger - *Dichorisandra thyrsiflora*



Cordyline fruticosa



Ponytail Palm *Beaucarnea recurvata*



Water bowl on a bed of pebbles

Brian Thomas and Scott Carter Garden

Text and images by Maria Hitchcock

Saturday morning we all met at Pacific Bay to car pool and make our way into the hills behind Coffs Harbour to visit Brian and Scott and their fairly new garden which is sited on a steep slope which has been quite a gardening challenge for both of them. No need to go to the gym with a garden like this. The house itself has a wonderful terrace with a distant view towards the coast and ocean. The property itself is backed by Eucalypt forest and rainforest.

The day began with drizzle but soon fined up and was even quite warm in the afternoon. Those of us with still functioning hips and knees braved the steps to explore the lower part of the garden. Brian and Scott have brought in loads of gravel, mulch and some rather large rocks to create the hard landscaping. There were some trees on the block when they bought it, but they have planted out hundreds of specimens and have a nice collection of potted treasures on the terrace.



The path leading down to the house is lined with this row of Juniper trees mulched with large gravel rocks.



The house terrace overlooks the lower part of the garden which has a small lawn area ringed with ornamental shrubs and small trees. In the distance is the coast and ocean. The land here was once mostly banana farms.



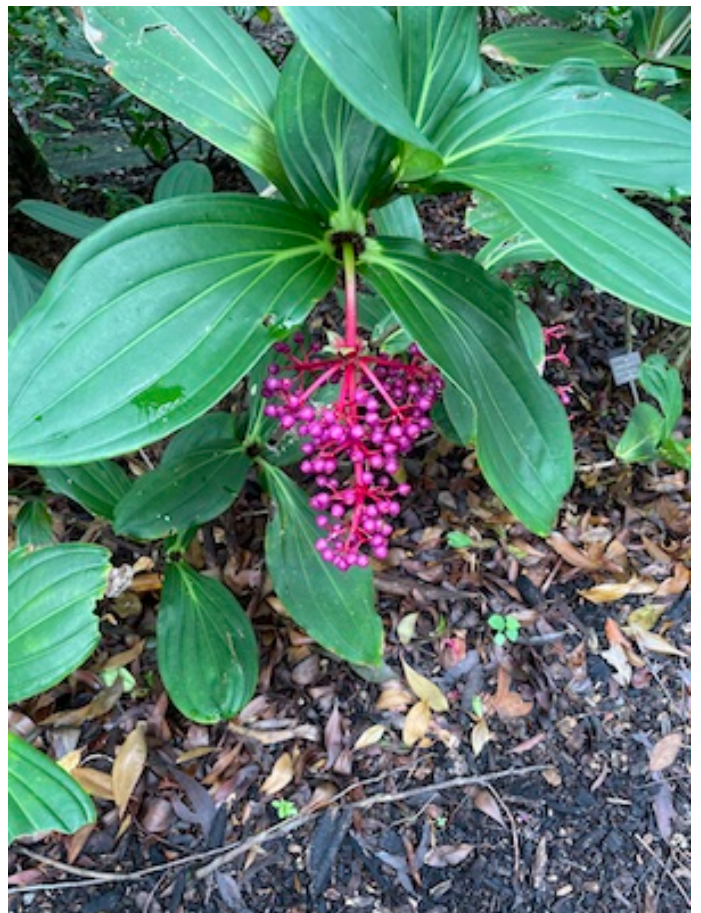
Silver Bismarck Palm



Agave attenuata



Two tone Rubber Plant on the terrace



Medinilla magnifica

Out and about in Scott and Brian's garden

Images: Kim Woods Rabbidge



John Miller, Claudia Nevell, Helen Nancarrow, Brian Thomas, Graeme Brindley on the steep path.



Caroline Fitzroy, Peter Lloyd



Above left: Robyn Bradford, Kimberley Buckingham, Kerrie White



Left: Bill Oates



Above right: Maria Hitchcock, Lynda Skipper



Michael Rabbidge, Owen Croft, Bryan Jackson



Robyn Jackson, Brian Thomas



John Miller, Graham Wilson, Peter Lloyd



Helen Wilson



Lynda Skipper and Fran Webb



Elton Squires



Brian Thomas, Helen Wilson, Marilyn Pidgeon and Helen Oates

Graeme Brindley and Graeme Bassett garden

Text and images by Maria Hitchcock

Once again we headed for the hills to visit another steeply sloping garden which had a few very quirky touches. The garden is navigated by a gently graded pathway which meanders down the slope via a series of hairpin bends and occasional steps. Each stage of the path features different assortments of plants, hedges, a parterre, and culminates in a vine covered pergola. One gets the impression that this is not a show garden but a personal interpretation of a garden that is enjoyed for the moment. It even features a doggie cemetery dedicated to some faithful friends, tucked away behind one of the hedges. Both Graemes love to experiment with plants creating some rather unique effects. We finished the day with champers and nibblies on the terrace that looks out over the steep slope towards the coast and the sea. We were treated to a maestro on the piano playing in the background - a perfect ending to a perfect day of garden visits.

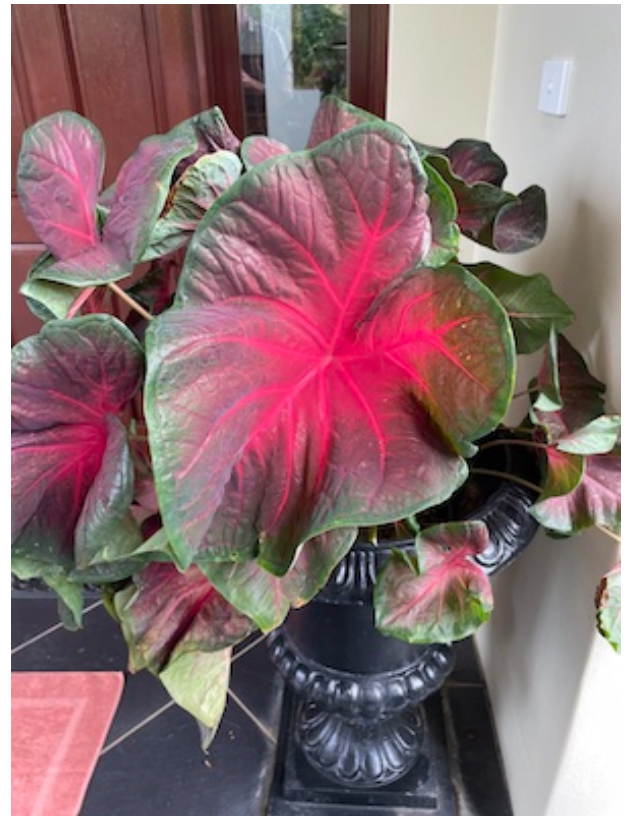


One of the many interesting shrubs.

The covered Arbor



Above: Wall of Bromeliads



Right: Caladium bicolor in a tub.



Cordilynes along a gravel path



This 'friend' wears a Vinca skirt - the latest fashion.



The parterre garden was photographed looking straight down from the house terrace. It was created using tiny leaved Chinese box and is beautifully clipped. It features the Fleur de Lis symbol on either end. Short pillars in the hedge are created with Orange Jessamine (below left). Tibouchina (below right) is a popular species for coastal gardens. it comes in a range of colours.



Out and About in the Two Graemes Garden

Images by Kim Woods Rabbidge



The outlook at the top of the garden.

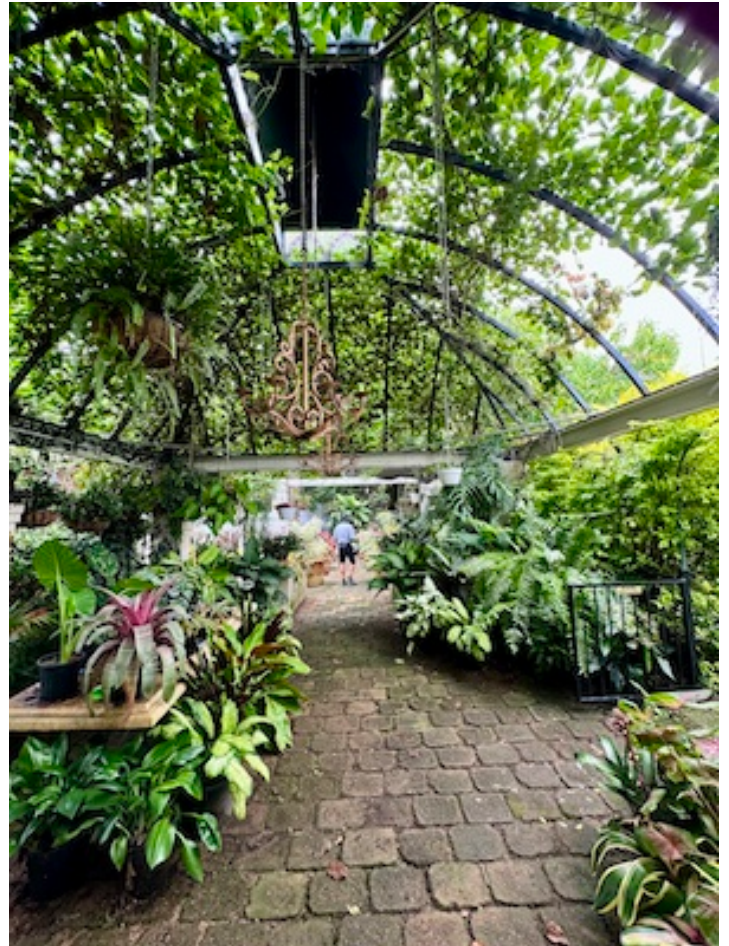


Above: Some of our group enjoying the visit
Below: Heading down a grassy pathway.



Lynda Skipper





Left: Liz Chappell and Graham Wilson
Below: Peter Lloyd, Liz Chappell and Moira Lloyd



Above: The new B&B garden



Right: Marilyn Pidgeon, Caroline Fitzroy,
Elton Squires and Bryan Jackson



John and Anne Maurer



Bill and Helen Oates



Above: On the terrace enjoying the champers
Below: Helen Oates, Helen Wilson, Claudia Nevell



Above: Brian Thomas, Will Todd, Lynda Skipper, John Miller
Below: Claudia Nevell, Graeme Brindley



Calendar of Events

Date	Event	Notes
May Saturday 4th 8.30 - 11.30am	Working Bee in the Heritage Rose Garden at Saumarez	Everyone welcome. Bring hat, gardening gloves and some morning tea. We have lots of tools but if you have a favourite set of secateurs bring those along as well.
May Sunday 19th 3.00/3.30	Committee Meeting followed by General Meeting	Venue tba
June Saturday 1st	Working Bee in the Heritage Rose Garden at Saumarez	Everyone welcome. Bring hat, gardening gloves and some morning tea. We have lots of tools but if you have a favourite set of secateurs bring those along as well.
August Sunday 25th	Committee Meeting AGM General Meeting	Venue tba
October 18,19,20 Registration opens Mon 8th April	AGHS National Conference Bunbury WA	Bunbury Regional Entertainment Centre Accommodation: Bunbury Hotel + other options Flights: Jetstar direct from Sydney to Busselton Make sure you register early as there will be a big demand for this conference and you could miss out.
November Sunday 24th	Christmas Function	Petersen's Winery
Date tba	Eugalbar Trip	Details to come