

BGANZ

NEWSLETTER

June
2019



BOTANIC GARDENS
AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND INC

Issue 22

 PG. 2

Travel around NZ with updates from the Botanic Gardens

 PG. 4

Check out what Dylan learnt while visiting Tasmania!

 PG. 6

Exciting developments in the plant records world

 PG. 8

Get up to speed with all the important events this year



Registrations for
the BGANZ
conference in
October are now
open!



WANT TO JOIN BGANZ?

For enquiries about membership of BGANZ – New Zealand please contact Alan Matchett

Phone (03) 477 4000 | Email Alan.matchett@dcc.govt.nz | PO Box 5045, Central City Dunedin

What's new?



UPDATES FROM GARDENS AROUND THE COUNTRY

Auckland Botanic Gardens update from Jack Hobbs

After more than a decade of planning, securing funding and construction it will be time to celebrate the opening of our new Pacific Pathway. The history of the pathway goes back to our Botanic Gardens Master Plan that was adopted in 2010.

We are now embroiled in the fun part of the project, the planting. The planting has been designed to reinforce the "distinctive South Pacific character" of the pathway. Pohutukawa and the Chatham Island nikau will be planted at regular intervals, the same two signature trees that feature around our visitor centre Huakaiwaka. The Pacific Pathway widens at regular intervals into nodes which feature rocks, seating and themed plantings where visitors can pause and decide where to go next. The intention is that visitors only enter our plant collections from the nodes rather than by randomly stepping off the path that connects them. To achieve this the pathways are being densely planted on both sides, mostly with native plants that will provide dramatic contrast of texture and form.

The visitor services team are working on signage that will further assist visitors with their decision making and way finding.

Hamilton Gardens update from Peter Sergel

Last summer the new Mansfield Garden was opened and the Gardens maintenance yard extended. The new Picturesque Garden opens in early November and the Surrealist Garden should be opened next February. Work recently started on the Ancient Egyptian Garden, Pacifica Garden, Medieval Garden and Baroque Garden along with another toilet and a small events pavilion. The rate of ongoing development will be dependent on securing external funding.

Planning is currently under way to make the Hamilton Gardens operation carbon neutral within a few years. The next step is an external audit of the existing carbon footprint.

Over the past six years visitor numbers to the central gardens have increased by 75% and the adjacent Cobham Drive is likely to become busier when it becomes part of the completed city ring road. So the parking and traffic congestion issues at peak times are likely to keep getting worse. In response a new Reserves Act Management Plan for Hamilton Gardens is currently under review that should address most of these issues as well as creating space for the development of more specialty gardens alongside the river.

The eastern end of Hamilton Gardens is being lost to a roading which will provide access to a bridge over the river to the massive new Peacock growth cell. These road works and the new bridge will be completed by 2023.

Wellington Botanic Garden update from David Sole

We are half way through celebrating the 150th year of Wellington Botanic Garden. So far we have held very successful heritage and family quarters with 'Step back in Time: A Victorian Picnic', a 'Secrets of the Garden Bioblitz' and Botanic Gardens Day. Coming up in the 'Science' quarter of the celebrations is Science Sunday where the results of the Bioblitz will be announced and an opportunities for families to engage with scientists and staff in hands on activities promoting the importance of science in our understanding of the natural world.

On August 30 we host a staff reunion and compete a planting marking the official end of the celebration year ...but it doesn't stop there. Spring Festival will feature whanau day and Bloom 2019 – a light and sound collaboration with Victoria University in the Begonia House.

There has been a great contribution by staff and volunteer interest groups in successfully getting these events across the line – not the least of which has been from the Scientists who assisted with the Bioblitz and some of them returning for Science Sunday.

It has been and will continue to be a great way of connecting with our public and the giant birthday cakes have been a constant reminder to our visitors of the celebration of one of Wellington's most loved treasures.



Photo Credit: 'Happy 150yrs' Borowicz Guenole



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Temporary Roles at Gardens

If you're looking to fill temporary positions don't forget there might be opportunities for seconding staff from other gardens around the country. The BGANZ network is a good place to send these jobs vacancies to. Often career development opportunities are limited within gardens but perhaps across the network there are suitable prospects.

Staff Exchanges/Temporary Placements

Quite a few gardeners have enjoyed staff exchanges or temporary placements within the national network that BGANZ provides. We are always interested to see if these can work. The experience a staff member gets in another garden enhances understanding of how other gardens work and enables them to consider new ways of working to bring back. Scott Denham, Auckland Botanic Gardens, has written up his trip to Pukekura Park in the Auckland in this issue. BGANZ has some money that can be put towards these exchanges/secondments. Ask your Gardens BGANZ rep for more info on how to apply.



NETWORKING WITH AUSTRALIAN COLLEAGUES

In October 2018 I was lucky enough to travel to Tasmania partly funded by the David Tannock Scholarship set up by The Friends of Dunedin Botanic Garden to help staff further their professional development and the Botanic garden. This trip was to explore and be immersed in some of the ecosystems as well as enhance ties with the Royal Tasmanian Botanic Garden.

While in Tasmania at the Royal Tasmanian Botanic Garden a discussion was held with Mark Fountain, Deputy Director and David Reid, Manager Garden Operations, and it was concluded that the possibility of future staff exchanges between the two gardens would be immensely beneficial for staff and the gardens. Travelling between gardens would increase the exchange of knowledge and skills. While on this trip the Community garden was explored with staff and discussed in depth, with possible future developments at Dunedin Botanic Garden in mind.

It was also a great opportunity to discuss Myrtle Rust, its impacts and measures that Dunedin Botanic Garden could put in place to reduce its impact on a region marginal for Myrtle Rust development. The information gained will better help the Botanic Garden as the disease slowly progresses down New Zealand.

Dylan Norfield, Collections Supervisor,
Dunedin Botanic Garden





“provided
outstanding
educational
programs since
1957”

The Longwood Fellows Program

Barbara Wheeler, Collections Supervisor at the Dundee Botanic Garden, is spending the next 13 months at Longwood Gardens. Longwood has been training students since 1957 and in 2017 a significant review of the program altered the focus on building leadership in public horticulture.

Barbara is one of six professionals selected for the program. The program includes leadership and communication, mentoring and a cohort project based at Longwood. They also have a two month field placement in the US or abroad to learning about a different organisation.

We look forward to hearing about Barbara’s travels and the wealth of knowledge she will bring back.

If you are interested in this program, check out the Longwood Gardens website.





“pursuing personal development”

For two weeks from 29 October – 9 November I completed a short internship at Pukekura Park in New Plymouth. This was planned to coincide with the Taranaki Garden Festival and Fringe Festival from 26 October – 4 November. The New Zealand division of BGANZ granted me \$500 for the trip: this is an annual grant open to anyone in the horticultural industry pursuing personal and further development.

I had a really valuable time down in New Plymouth, it was great to see how popular the Garden Festival was, and how many home gardens are kept up to an incredibly high standard. I loved working with the various staff and sharing stories and ideas. The main message I brought home with me was how lucky and proud I am to work at Auckland Botanic Gardens and the direction we are going in. We have a great team and a really interesting place to work, and I’m looking forward to the last year of my apprenticeship (while working as a new amenity gardener). Thanks very much to BGANZ for funding me on this Internship and for the support of Jack Hobbs, Bec Stanley and my team leader Shaun Rice.

If you are interested in Scott’s full article about his experience at Pukekura Park then get in touch by email (scott.denham@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz)

Scott Denham, Amenity Gardener, Auckland Botanic Gardens



I am excited to share with you all that Auckland Botanic Gardens has a new plant database, IrisBG.

Our new database was up and running very quickly. All staff have learnt the basics and the curators are back to updating their own records. I think it is safe to say all staff have found IrisBG incredibly simple and user friendly. Information about each plant is displayed in one easy to navigate window with a tab for images, references and parentage information. Conducting searches is straightforward and then database can be interrogated with complex queries with ease.

Probably the most exciting capability is the mapping feature. Previously we had had drawn maps and anything that has GPS points had to be stored in separate spreadsheets. Every garden bed has now been given a GPS location. When staff are looking at records they can see where roughly a plant is located. This is even more valuable for the Visitors Centre team to direct visitors to a specific species they are interested in viewing. Mapping

plants before IrisBG was a long and involved process where I had to take the GPS to mark the trees outside, download the information on the computer and add some field and send the data to another team for a visual map to be created. Although I would end up with a map, there was no simple way of updating it when changes occurred, and the original information had to be stored in a spreadsheet. Now I can take my phone with IrisBG on it, find the record, drop a marker where the tree is and with the click of a button send the information back to the computer. It's an incredibly efficient way of working (this morning I marked the locations of 30 trees in half an hour and could see them on a map straight away).

The database is accessible on two mobile devices for updating of records. We are trialing how these work for us on a phone and tablet. Often while out in the Gardens we get queries that require checking on the database so being able to respond straight away gives real time information that previously would not have been possible without a phone call or logging into a computer. Staff and visitors are able to view our collections on Garden Explorer (<https://aucklandbg.gardenexplorer.org/>) while wandering around the garden or in the comfort of their own home. For me the mobile app has significantly reduced the amount of data handling I have to do, enabled quick detailed responses to staff and visitor queries, and locating of plants in the field made more accurate with the map.

The customer service from the team at IrisBG has been fantastic. They've answered emails promptly and provided skype meetings to answer my questions. There is a range of online resources from video tutorials, user manuals, discussion forums and FAQs to support our learning of the new system. We've even had an update of the system since installation. Updates for the database are driven by what the users like me require to best manage our plant collections so the responsiveness is going to be very valuable.

Emma Bodley, Botanical Records and Conservation Specialist, Auckland Botanic Gardens



BGANZ CONFERENCE



The BGANZ Congress team has now confirmed all the speakers and workshops. A big thank you to everyone who submitted abstracts. We have a great range of keynote and rapid fire session speakers all of whom will embrace the importance of plants and the role of Botanic Gardens.

We have three field trips scheduled to look at some of the Wellington Region's most evocative native and exotic plant places. Congresses are always a great opportunity to catch up with your peers, to have your thinking challenged and opportunities to learn through the experiences of others.

As always sponsorship is the key to the success of a Congress. If you would like to take up a session sponsorship opportunity contact Kerry South at bganz2019@confer.co.nz to view a package to suit your organisation.

Registration for the 9th BGANZ Congress is open and we encourage you to register as soon as you can to take advantage of the early bird fees. You can view the Congress details here www.confer.nz/bganz2019/

If you have any questions please contact Conference and Events at bganz2019@confer.co.nz

Look forward to seeing you there!



YOUNG HORTICULTURIST OF THE YEAR 2019



This years competition will be held from 13-14 November 2019 with the practical day at Pukekohe and the grand final day at the Pullman Hotel.

The Amenity competition was held earlier in the year, 8-9 April, at Dunedin Botanic Gardens.

For those interested and want to know more about the competition, the Amenity Horticulture contact is Karl Nesbitt (karl@nzrecreation.org.nz)



UPCOMING EVENTS

[Plants from the past: plants from the future - BGANZ 2019 Conference](#)

When: 20-23 October 2019

Where: Wellington, New Zealand (held at Te Papa)

Registrations are now open to attend the BGANZ conference. The full detailed programme has been released with some exciting field trips and excellent speakers.

For more informaiton, visit the conference website <https://www.confer.nz/bganz2019/>

We hope to see as many of you there as possible for what will no doubt be a great conference.

Royal New Zealand Institute of Horticulture Symposium 2019

When: 10am 24 October 2019

Where: Wellington, New Zealand (held at Te Papa, Rangimarie room 1)

Keep an eye on the RNZIH facebook page for details. Gold coin entry.

This symposium runs the day after the BGANZ conference ends.

Expanding Horizons - 40th Australian Garden History conference

When: 25-27 October 2019

Where: Wellington, New Zealand (held at Te Papa)

This conference runs straight after the BGANZ conference and RNZIH symposium and registrations are now open.

You can find out more information at <https://www.gardenhistorysociety.org.au/register/>

Taxonomy for Plant Conservation 2019 – New Zealand Network for Plant Conservation and Australasian Systematic Botany Society joint conference

When: 24-28 November 2019

Where: Wellington, New Zealand (held at Te Papa)

This conference provides an excellent opportunity to connect with people who are passionate about plants and science from Australia and NZ.

For more details, visit the conference website <https://systematics.ourplants.org/>



CONTENT FOR NEXT NEWSLETTER

We welcome articles for all Botanic Gardens staff on a range of topics. For the next newsletter we are interested in hearing about field trips you have been on, learnings from garden renovations, garden best practices, successful education project and apprentice experiences working in horticulture. Articles do not need to be long. This is a great way for all staff to be more connected with each other and will help link us together.

This newsletter has been produced by the New Zealand Branch of BGANZ. Opinions expressed are those of the authors and not necessarily those of BGANZ or the New Zealand executive. NZ Branch Newsletters are distributed twice a year. If you have not been emailed this newsletter but would like to receive one at no charge please send your email address to the editor at hamilton.gardens@hcc.govt.nz