

AUGUST 2010 WALK FROM THE LOWER 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



Before leaving the car park this month your sense of smell can be satisfied by visiting the *Daphne odora* (1a) under the bare *Quercus robur* near the lookout. The bed is mostly *Daphne odora* 'Star White' with a few of the more familiar pink flowered varieties in between. Heading towards the upright (fastigiate) line of *Cephalotaxus harringtonia* the pink flowers and sweet perfume of *Luculia pinceana* (1b) on the right are worth examining. Once down on the dam wall take a moment to look at the upper level of the garden where the remnant bushland of predominantly *Eucalyptus obliqua* fills the skyline. To the right is the Arboretum and to the left, past Greg Johns' sculpture, **Guardian Figures** (2a), there are still a few species holding their autumn colour, while the golden first year twigs of *Salix* (2b) along the dam wall glow in the sunshine.

Our lone swan lords it over the other residents on the dam – dusky moorhen with a red beak, Eurasian coots with a white nose and interesting webbed feet, and the teal ducks and wood ducks.

After crossing the dam wall, continue uphill taking the central path up to the bitumen, then go right, passing three weeping standard *Ulmus glabra* 'Pendula' (3a) whose stout trunks can be seen through the bare branches, and a little further on the left a standard willow leaved pear, *Pyrus salicifolia* (3b). On the right a collection of **Apple**, *Malus* species have many lichens on their branches and are starting to show some blossom.

At the car park take the road to the left up to **The Tarn** (4) where the *Narcissus* species, planted in beds representing the rising sun, will be coming into bloom gradually over August. Returning to the path below The Tarn, keep to the hard path, but where it forks onto a grassy area glance uphill where the pendant tassels on catkin bush, *Garrya elliptica* (5) are at their best.

Passing the **Rock Garden** (6) on your right, the prickly mound of *Dianthus erinaceus* from Turkey is notable. Along the left of the path a collection of grafted *Acer palmatum* 'Dissectum' will be spectacular from spring through to autumn and it is worth pausing for the view over the Duck Pond. After stepping carefully over the rocky crossing, look into the bare *Acer palmatum* 'Dissectum' (7a) on the left to see how the branches cling to the large rock near its base, an interesting feature easily missed when the tree is in full leaf. On the bank the apple green flowers of **Corsican hellebore**, *Helleborus argutifolius* (7b) are bright at this time of the year. In the wild *H. argutifolius* is confined to two Mediterranean islands, Corsica and Sardinia. On the bank below it is interesting to compare *Hellebore foetidus* (7c), which has smaller green flowers held on fleshy stems and leaves which are more finely divided than *H. argutifolius*. Both are a valuable addition to the gardens of flower arrangers.

Taking the path down to the Bog Garden, on the right hand side *Ranunculus ficaria* 'Alba' (8a) has creamy flowers. The name *Ranunculus* is "Late Latin" for "little frog", probably referring to many species being found near water. "Late Latin" is the scholarly name for the written Latin of late Antiquity, dating from the 3rd to 6th centuries AD.

Just before crossing the stones, on the right **river birch**, *Betula nigra* (8b), has beautiful flaky bark on the upper branches. The Catawba Indians of North America boiled the buds of this tree until they were thick and pasty, added sulphur and used the salve to treat skin sores and ringworm. As you climb the concrete path look through the bare branches and examine the new buds as they fatten before bursting into leaf.

Emerging from the bridge walk a little way uphill and see the furry buds on the *Magnolia* trees, and on the bank behind a magnificent pink *Rhododendron* is in full flower. The huge leaves droop down to allow the snow to fall off in their native Himalaya Mountains. Returning to the bridge on the right hand side, *Osmanthus delavayi* (9) is covered in cream flowers and has a delicate perfume. On the slope behind this shrub, there is heavy moss.

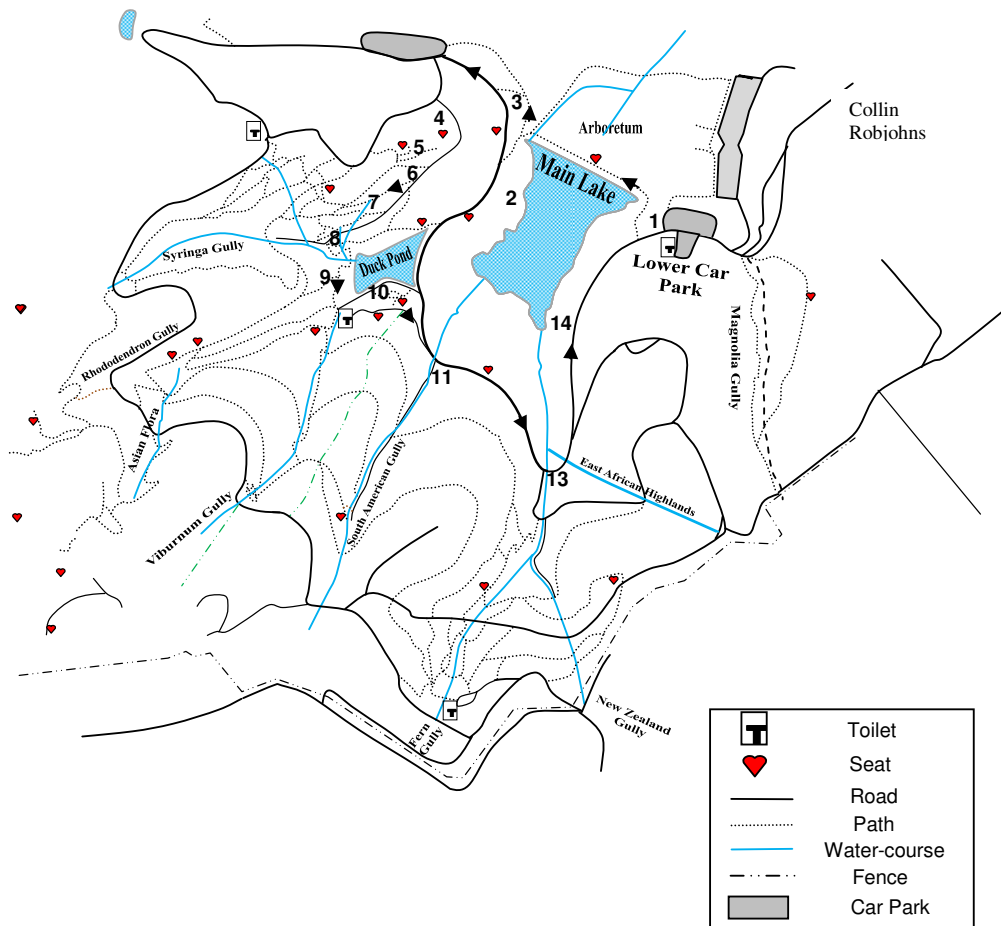
Walk down towards the Duck Pond, past the *Cryptomeria japonica* (10) on the left, and looking through the tunnel of trees the bright red blooms of *Camellia japonica* look like coloured lights in the branches. Take the small concrete path on the right just before the Pat Fisher Gazebo where you will be rewarded by many *Camellia* in full flower. It is worth wandering a short way uphill to enjoy their varied blooms at this time of the year. There are several *Betula* sp. in this area with beautiful white trunks. The genus *Betula* dates from the Upper Cretaceous period, still in dinosaur times, and was most diverse in the Eocene period, around 45 million years ago.

Returning to the main path, proceed along to the road where the path emerges by the entrance to South American Gully. Beside the road the bright red and yellow flowers of *Justicia rizzini* (11a), the electric blue flowers of *Salvia corrugata* (11b) stand out and the bright orange fruits of *Solanum diflorum* (11c) complete this display.

Walking along the bitumen road, the native bushland on the right hand side is showing promise with the bright red flowers of common heath, *Epacris impressa* (12) starting the spring display. A little further on *Acacia myrtifolia* is glowing with red buds which will soon burst into bloom, while at the base of the bank many *Drosera* are covered in golden droplets of nectar, and at the corner where the road goes up to Fern Gully maiden hair fern, *Adiantum aethiopicum* and a native geranium cover the banks. Near to the small pond a specimen of turpentine tree, *Syncarpia glomulifera* (13) has an interesting rough trunk. Because of the turpentine in the timber this wood was used for building ocean-going boats, and has been used for the walkways in the Bi-Centennial Conservatory in the Adelaide Botanic Garden.

As you return to the car park along the bitumen road, on the left hand side the first spring blossom is emerging on Formosan cherry, *Prunus campanulata* (14) which will soon be covered in pink, while the grey or speckled alder, *Alnus incana* directly behind has red catkins to complete the picture.

CP, DS, HK, MD, DG, HM. July 2010



For a different experience in the Mt Lofty Botanic Garden, the volunteer Guides are offering a new FREE walk from the Upper Car Park on the first Wednesday of each month, starting at 1:00 pm. This is in addition to our FREE regular weekly Thursday morning walk which starts from the Lower Car Park at 10:30 am. And don't forget the regular monthly Plant Sale in the Lower Car Park on the 4th Sunday of each month until November.

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