

AUTUMN 2010 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



As the cooler weather sets in, the garden begins to display the wonderful colours of autumn. At the top of the road leaving the car park is a clump of the hardy **Mexican Bush Sage, *Salvia leucantha* (1)**. The popularity of the spectacular *Salvias* is growing as they require little water and generally have long flowering periods. On the left as you walk down this road you will see the **Lily of the Valley Tree, *Clethra arborea* (2)** an evergreen tree with racemes of cream flowers resembling lily of the valley in spring and summer, but remaining attractively red-brown in autumn. On the right, a number of *Prunus* cultivars from Japan are colouring well. As you approach the left hand turn in the road, directly in front of you and to your right is the area known as "**Hardy Reserve (3)**", which was donated to the Garden by the Hardy family in 1974, to be retained as an area of natural bushland "for the birds". Immediately to your right is a grove of young **Japanese Maple, *Acer palmatum* (4a)** below the old **Stringybark, *Eucalyptus obliqua* (4b)** overstorey. The Stringybark is the dominant tree of this part of the Mt Lofty Ranges and you will see many more of them as you complete this walk.

Leave the bitumen at the turn and walk straight ahead. The hollies on your left show many leaf variations and different coloured berries. Look among them for **American Holly, *Ilex opaca* (5)**, which closely resembles the English Holly, but has adapted to the warmer climate of the more southerly US states. Also on your left as you step onto the lawn are ***Cephalotaxus fortuneii* (6a)** from China and ***Cephalotaxus harringtonia* (6b)** from Japan. The fleshy, plumlike fruits on *C. harringtonia* are a popular food in Japan, where plum yews are cultivated for that purpose. Plum yews are dioecious (separate male and female plants) and it is necessary to have at least one male plant for every five females to ensure a good crop.

Rounding the corner a magical collection of conifers, both dwarf and full size, is laid out before you. Many plants in the **Dwarf Conifer Collection (7)** were a gift to the gardens by the late Mr David Thompson, a well known Adelaide Hills identity and nurseryman. Wander among these whimsical trees, comparing the leaf forms, cones, and colours. Keep a look out for the resident bandicoots. A little grove of the distinctively cone-shaped ***Picea glauca* var. *albertiana* "Conica" (8)** can be seen at the lower end of this lawn.

Now walk uphill through the conifers to the Greg Johns 'Guardian Figure' sculpture, which is made from "Corten Weathering Steel". It is one of several Johns sculptures in the garden. Continue up and to the left of the **Purple Beech, *Fagus sylvatica* 'Purpurea' (9a)** whose bronze foliage is in stark contrast to the ***Cupressus lusitanica* (9b)** by the roadside. At your feet an unusual prostrate form of ***Cephalotaxus* (9c)** can be found.

Turn right along the bitumen road. On the left, a group of ***Viburnum dentatum* (10)** has prominent bunches of black berries among the autumn leaves and a group of ***Berberis x Smithii* 'Hancockii' (11)** is ablaze with colour. At the *Berberis*, turn left down the gravel path, passing between specimens of **Winged Spindle Tree, *Euonymus alatus* (12)**, the "wings" being found on the mature stems. In this season they should be showing their beautiful burgundy foliage and hot pink berries. Towering above the *Euonymus*, the **Wingnut Trees, *Pterocarya stenoptera* (13)** have many pendulous bunches of winged seeds.

At the bottom of the short flight of steps turn left along the wide, gravel path and enjoy the views to the lower part of the Garden through the Stringybark trunks. The water of the main dam sparkles in the sunlight with the Piccadilly Valley beyond. Down the slope the colour of a group of ***Acer palmatum* (14)** glows through the dark trunks of the eucalypts.

Near the seat at the next intersection, a striking ***Acer palmatum* var. *heptalobum* 'Osakazuki' (15)** has red winged seeds and displays its beautiful autumn foliage. To the right of the seat, the delicate mauve flowers of ***Vitex cannabifolia* (16)** from Eastern Asia are a surprise at this time of the year. Oil can be extracted from the leaves, but in Japan the plant has been declared a weed.

From the seat, take the path leading down between two large Stringybarks. On the left you find the **Katsura Tree, *Cercidiphyllum japonicum* (17)** from Japan. It glows yellow in autumn and you may smell its delicious burnt toffee aroma often found in spring and autumn after a frost. A little further and the **Pride of China, *Koelreuteria bipinnata* (18)** can be seen on the left. Look for its pink, papery seed capsules which look like little Chinese lanterns.

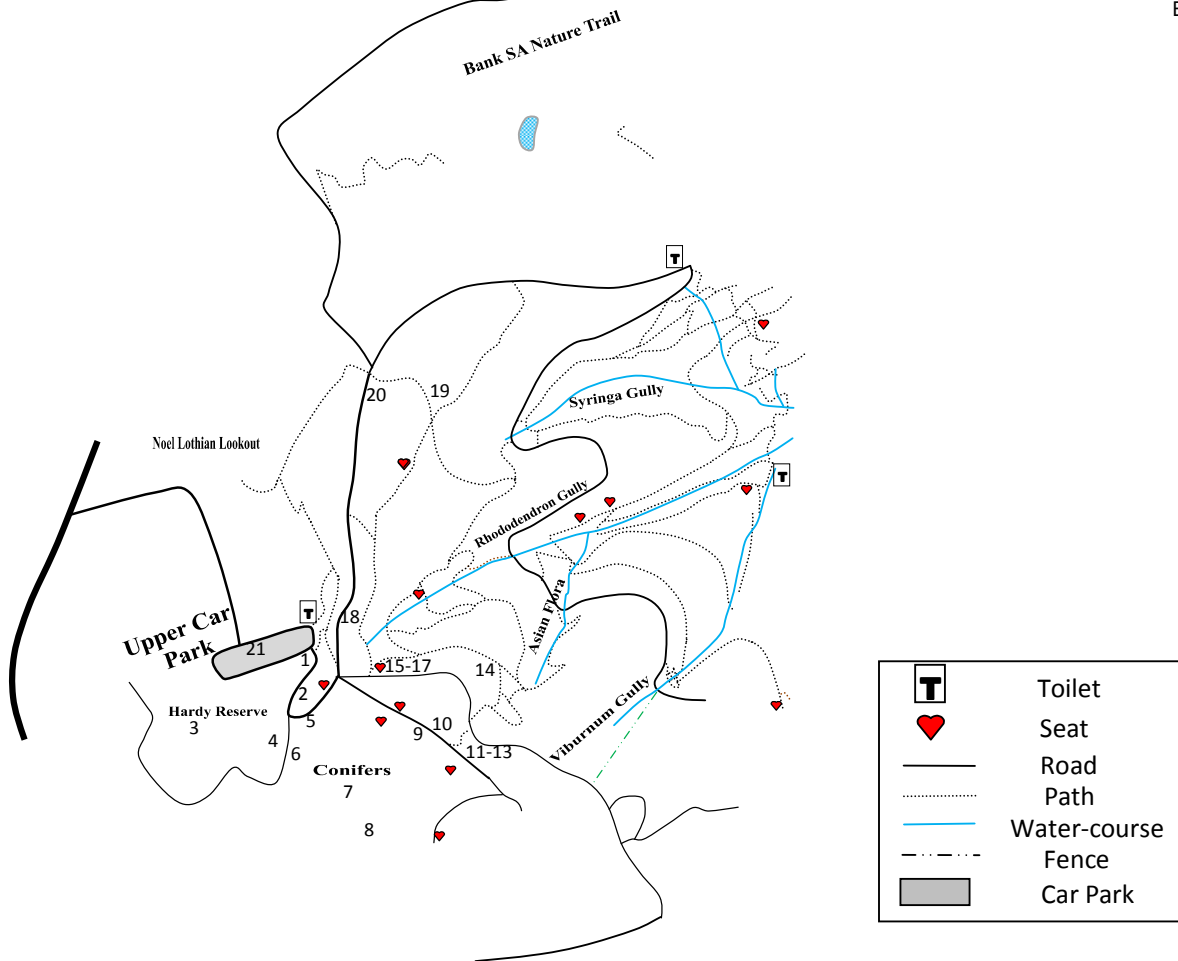
At the next intersection, another Greg Johns steel sculpture, "Between Earth and Sky", appears. Turn left here. On your right is a grove of ***Acer Rubescens* (19)**. The distinctive winged seeds identify this as a maple, but the leaves are only lightly lobed - most *Acer* species have deeply lobed leaves.

Continue up to the bitumen and turn left. At this corner, you will find the **Persimmon, *Diospyros kaki* (20)**, the most widely cultivated species of Persimmon. This beautiful, edible autumn plant is a native of China and it was introduced to Europe in the nineteenth century. Follow the bitumen. On the right are plantings of mature camellia trees – the Sasanqua camellias may be flowering late in autumn and the Japonicas will follow in the winter. On the left are more Viburnum.

At the big intersection, turn right along the narrow bitumen path to meander up through the Camellias to the car park. When you arrive, don't miss the central dividing row of **Northern Red Oak, *Quercus rubra* (21)**. These younger trees have already produced a good crop of acorns and their autumn foliage is a delight. If they inspire you, drive or walk down to the lower car park where you can see the deep red leaves of the Scarlet Oak, *Quercus coccinea*.



BD 2-10



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