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Must See

September 2025



Stachyurus praecox – Spiketail- Spring Walk

Recent rain has slowed the start of spring but flowers are now ready to burst their buds.

Join a guided walk

Scan the QR code to join a daily guided walk.



**BOTANIC
GARDENS
OF SYDNEY**

1 *Echium candicans* 'Heronswood Blue'
Pride of Madeira



This glorious plant bearing candle-like spikes of electric blue flowers is a magnet for bees and butterflies. It is a sun-loving, drought tolerant perennial that originated as a chance seedling of *Echium candicans* at Heronswood Victoria. This species is endemic to rocky cliffs of Madeira. The genus name derives from Greek '*echis*' (viper) alluding to how the fruit resembles a viper's head.
Family: Boraginaceae

2 *Paulownia tomentosa*
Princess Tree



This deciduous tree, native to China and South Korea is cloaked with fragrant panicles of violet blossoms each spring. Afterwards, large heart-shaped leaves emerge, covered in hairs, hence the species epithet '*tomentosa*.' The genus is named after a Russian Princess Anna Pavlovna. One of the world's fastest growing hardwood trees, it yields a useful lightweight, easily-worked timber.
Family: Paulowniaceae

3 *Bartlettina sordida*
Blue Mist Flower



Visit our Spring Walk and revel in the lilac and honey scent of this magnificent shade-loving, evergreen shrub endemic to cloud forests of Mexico. Huge clusters of misty blue flowers lure bees and butterflies. This large shrub (reaching 3 metres in height and width), is cloaked in felt green leaves, which like its stems, are covered in reddish hairs, oddly giving rise to its species epithet '*sordida*' (Latin for dirty).
Family: Asteraceae

4 *Rhododendron veitchianum*



Smell the delicate fragrance wafting from masses of snowy, trumpet-like flowers on this exquisite rhododendron in our Spring Walk. It's native to mountain forests of Myanmar, Thailand and Laos, where it grows into a small shrub of 2 metres. Happily, it grows well in coastal Sydney in well-drained soil. The leaves have scales on their undersides, discouraging sap-sucking insects such as lace bugs.
Family: Ericaceae

5 *Macadamia tetraphylla*
Rough-shelled Macadamia



Gaze into the canopy of this macadamia tree and marvel at its fragrant, pendulous creamy-pink flowers. This rainforest tree is one of just four species in the genus. All are endemic to eastern Australia and threatened in the wild. Only two species, *M. tetraphylla* and *M. integrifolia* produce edible nuts, and are grown to harvest Macadamia nuts commercially. Native stingless bees are vital pollinators of macadamias.
Family: Proteaceae



6 *Xanthorrhoea* spp.
Gulgadya (Gadigal), Grass Tree



This extraordinary plant with its skirt of grass-like leaves is endemic to Australia. It's especially important to the Gadigal, traditional owners and custodians of this site, who call the plant Gulgadya. The 'trunk' (caudex), which exudes a valuable yellow resin is made from old leaf bases which protect the plant's growing tip from fire. In spring, the flower spike (scape) is covered with nectar-rich flowers attracting birds, insects and mammals.
Family: Asphodelaceae

7 *Vireya* Rhododendrons



Our Garden has a wonderful collection of Vireyas flourishing in shady, sheltered niches. There are 300 species of these tropical Rhododendrons, native to cloud forests of the Malesian archipelago, New Guinea, and southeast Asia. Two red-flowered species are native to Australia - *R. lochiaie* and *R. viriosum*, from montane cloud forests of north Queensland. Pictured is *Rhododendron* 'Uluru' bred in Australia.
Family: Ericaceae

Plant of the Month

8 *Alloxyylon flammeum*
Tree Waratah

A spectacular flowering tree, endemic to north Queensland's rainforests, where it grows to heights of over 30 metres in a restricted region of the Atherton Tablelands. Vulnerable in the wild, this popular garden tree is grown for its brilliant vermillion flowers, comprised of pairs of tubular flowers fused together, resembling the Waratah, New South Wales' floral emblem. The species epithet '*flammeum*' is Latin for flaming, referring to the fiery flower colour. Fruit are woody, boat-shaped pods, containing winged seeds, dispersed by wind.
Family: Proteaceae