

GARDEN NOTES

WANAWONG

High in the soft damp mists that envelop the Otway Ranges we have developed a beautiful garden of one hectare over close to 50 years. Rainfall averages about 1000mm and frosts are rare. We have adequate dam water to supplement over summer. Soils are medium to heavy loams over clay, so improving drainage has been important, with both underground drains and lots of compost needed. Because of the climate and terrain, we have year-round interest. As a result of extensive travel, garden visits and reading we have felt competent to design the garden ourselves. It has provided perfect areas for entertaining friends and family with cubby house the latest addition for the grandchildren.

The garden is best described as a rambling country garden with spectacular views of the Otway Ranges. The protection from the prevailing winds by the forest on the western boundary is a great asset.

The lawn tennis court has changed its use in recent years and now has wide perennial borders with clematis climbing the fences at each end. Significant trees in this area are Chinese elm "Frosty", magnolias, michelias and liquidambar.

But the main drama of the garden is not revealed until you walk to the front to admire the view. Just below the balcony is a wide bed of shade loving plants which opens the way to a series of terraces of massed rhododendrons, magnolias, maples, azaleas, flowering cherries underplanted with bluebells, epimediums, ajugas, symphytum, etc. A winding path, soft underfoot, guides the visitor down the hillside to an enchanting glade of tree ferns and a small pond with water loving plants featuring a magnificent gunnera tinctoria. A towering dawn redwood, along with nothofagus, davidia, cornus, ginko and rimu add to the atmosphere.

Other important areas are the productive gardens with permanent bird protection. The raspberries, brambleberries and blueberries give huge crops, as do the espaliered fruit trees, especially the Jonagold and Kidd's Orange Red apples. The vegie garden benefits from the copious amounts of compost David makes, keeping us in vegetables year round.

A selection of garden worthy plants have been potted up for sale.

Wanawong is located on the lands of the Eastern Maar people. Open Gardens Victoria wishes to acknowledge the Traditional custodians and we pay respect to their Elders, past, present and emerging.

**These notes can be downloaded from the Open Gardens Victoria website:
www.opengardensvictoria.org.au**