

# Garden Highlights February 2015

The **Fernery** is a good place to cool off, when the weather is hot. The ferns and palms enjoy the cool moist atmosphere. To keep the area cool, it is sprayed with mains water on hot days. Elsewhere in the gardens storm-water keeps the plants healthy. Ferns need moist areas to reproduce and yet **tree-ferns** *Dicksonia* and *Cyathea*, burned in fires, put up new growth in the following autumn and winter.



The **Vegetable Garden** nearby loves warm sunny days. The pumpkins and melons are developing. Gourds, related to pumpkins and cucumbers, are among the earliest cultivated plants, being domesticated in Asia and the Americas about 10,000 years ago.

**Food and drink plants** are growing in the Central Bed. The roots of blue-flowered **Chicory** *Cichorium intybus* are used as a coffee substitute (eg. in 'Caro') or additive, green leaves grilled or roasted (Radicchio) and white leaves eaten in salad (Witlof). The leaves, swollen base of the stem and the seeds of **Fennel** *Foeniculum vulgare* (shown in the photo) are used in cooking. Its smell is similar to a related plant, Aniseed *Pimpinella anisum*.



The flowers in the **Perennial Border** (bottom right) are spectacular in February and March. Enjoy the riot of colour. Butterflies and bees often fly from flower to flower.



## What's on in February

- **Open Garden @GBG**, Saturday 28 February, 8:00 am to 2:00 pm. Engage with people passionate about plants! 'Sprout' with Costa will inspire budding sustainable gardeners. If you'd like to grow nourishing food participate in 'Sprout' with your family. Learn how to grow plants from seed for your vegie patch. If creating a beautiful garden to balance a hectic lifestyle appeals, come and chat to specialist growers with years of experience who'd love to share their secrets. We welcome budding gardeners and experienced 'green thumbs' alike. Have a coffee or meal at the gardens Teahouse. See the website for more details: <http://www.geelongaustralia.com.au/gbg>  
The Friends' Nursery will be open from 8:00 am.
- The **Friends' Nursery** is also open on Wednesdays 9.30 am – 12.30 pm.
- **Discovery Walk – 'Capturing storm-water'**  
Sunday 8 February 2.00 pm. Gold coin donation.
- **Discovery Table** Sunday 15 February, 1.00 pm.
- **Guided Walks**, other Sundays 2.00 pm, Wednesdays 11.00 am. Gold coin donation.
- In the Curiosity Cabinet see the **Mad Hatter's Tea Party**.



# Geelong Botanic Gardens Map



1. Fernery

2. Vegetable Garden

3a. Chicory *Cichorium intybus*

3b. Fennel *Foeniculum vulgare*

4. Perennial Border



This information was developed by the Volunteer Guides  
Friends of Geelong Botanic Gardens

[www.friendsgbg.org.au](http://www.friendsgbg.org.au)  
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