

Garden Highlights May 2015

1. ***Ceiba speciosa*** is called the **Silk Floss Tree** because it produces cotton inside its seed pods. The cotton has been used for stuffing, although not considered to be as good as Kapok, from its close relative *Ceiba pentandra*. Because this tree comes from dry forests in Brazil and Argentina it stores water in its bottle-shaped trunks like the Australian Bottle Trees *Brachychiton rupestris* near the front gates.

2. Visit the **Camellia Walk** in the cooler month for the display of Camellia flowers. As Japanese gardeners began breeding *Camellia sasanqua* around 1700, there are now many cultivars, with flowers differing in colour, flowering time and whether they are single or double. The leaves of some species are used to make tea and the seeds have been used to make tea seed oil, for lighting, lubrication, cooking and cosmetic purposes. Camellia varieties may be available in the Friends' Nursery.

3. The gardens have a number of plants with distinctive autumn colours in May and June. The **Persian Ironwood *Parrotia persica*** is a representative of the rich flora of Iran. It is at the back of the garden bed between the 20th and 21st Century Gardens. Another striking tree is the **Red Osier Dogwood *Cornus sericea*** which may be available in the Friends' Nursery under its old name *Cornus stolonifera*.

4. **Wintersweet *Chimonanthus praecox*** has been cultivated in its native China for 1,000 years. It is valued for the sweet fragrance of its flowers. You can't miss the perfume on a calm cool day when the bush is in full bloom. In China, prunings are dried and kept to perfume linen cupboards. The IUCN lists this species as Vulnerable (to becoming extinct) in the wild.

What's on in May

Discovery Walk, '**Conflict and Compassion: The Wathaurong**'

Sunday 10 May 2.00 pm. Gold coin donation.

Discovery Table Sunday 17 May, 1:00 to 3:00 pm.

Talk: '**Gardening for Good Health**' with Lorna Martin

Monday 18 May 5:30 for 6:00 pm, Members \$5, others \$10.

Composting Workshop, at Arundel, Saturday 30 May

10:00 am to 12:00, or 1:30 to 3:30 pm, Members \$20, others \$25

Discovery Walk, '**Seedy Matters - A Capsule of Life**'

Sunday 31 May 2.00 pm. Gold coin donation.

Free **Guided Walks** other Sundays 2.00 pm, Wednesdays 11.00 am.

The **Friends' Nursery** is open on Wednesdays 9.30 am - 12.30 pm.

In the Curiosity Cabinet see the display: '**Soup**'.

The Tea House is open every day.



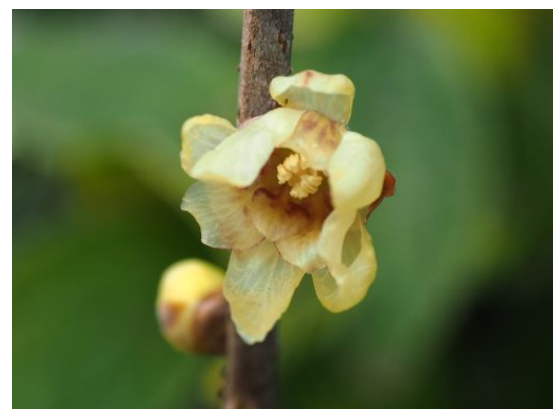
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2.



3.



4.

Over page: Map showing these plants

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Geelong Botanic Gardens Map



- 1. Silk Floss Tree *Ceiba speciosa*
- 2. Camellia Walk

- 3a. Persian ironwood *Parrotia persica*
- 3b. Red Osier Dogwood *Cornus sericea*
- 4. Wintersweet *Chimonanthus praecox*



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

www.friendsgbg.org.au
www.geelongaustralia.com.au/gbg/