GEELONG SCHOOL OF BOTANICAL ART

managed by Friends of Geelong Botanic Gardens

Friends of the Geelong Botanic Gardens

Terms 3 and 4, 2026

Botanical Art in Watercolour for Beginners

Instructor's Name: Amanda Ahmed

Class Description

This beginner-level watercolour course focuses on painting from observation, using a range of techniques, along with some graphite drawing, to support and deepen your learning. Students will learn to paint realistic, botanically accurate subjects while developing skills such as tonal variation, mark-making techniques, and the ability to recognise and translate geometric shapes found in nature. The course also covers basic colour theory and various watercolour applications. This workshop is perfect for beginners with little to no experience in botanical art and is presented in a friendly and supportive environment.

Outcomes

At the end of this course you will have more confidence in painting from life and developed a basic understand watercolour techniques and how to apply them in botanical art.

Class structure

This class will be presented each week in a similar format, however occasionally variances will occur. The following will be covered:

1. Commencing a work with a series of drawings and drawing exercises
2. Learning the transfer process
3. Learning how to use masking fluid
4. Learning different watercolour applications and techniques, such as:
   - wet on wet applications
   - wet on dry applications
   - dry brush techniques
4. Exploring tone, form and light with watercolour
5. Learning basic colour theory

Time will be set aside to review work, provide feedback, discuss progress, and answer questions.

Term 3 dates
24 July
7, 21 August
4, 18 September

Class time 10am – 3.30pm

Term 4 dates
9, 23 October
6, 20 November
4 December

Class time 10am – 3.30pm

Materials List

Watercolour:

Winsor & Newton 5ml tubes	**Schminke 5ml tubes**
• Quinacridone Red	• Vanadium Yellow
• Ultramarine (Green Shade) 667	• Indian Yellow
• Permanent Rose	• Cerulean Blue Hue 481
• Quinacridone Gold **(optional)**	• Ruby Red 351
• Perylene Green **(optional)**	

***note: must be this colour not French Ultramarine or Ultramarine (Red Shade)**

If unable to purchase all the colours list, the tutor will be able to share small amounts of watercolour with students.

Brushes:

Good quality synthetic watercolour brushes, for example NEEF 970 Taklon Round or Roymac Achiever Round are suitable. Check when buying that the brushes have a good point and protective cover.

Recommended sizes: 5, 3, 1, 0, 00 and 000

Size 4 NEEF 600 Imitation Smooshing Brush **OR** a size 2 Art Basics Blending Brush. If you have other brushes at home you think might be useful bring those in.

Paper:

- A3 cartridge paper drawing pad – must be smooth surface and don't spend too much money on it. Try Officeworks.
- A4 pad of tracing paper – nothing expensive. **If you are able to purchase individual sheets of tracing paper that would be more cost effective.**
- 1 x sheet Arches 300gms smooth hot pressed watercolour paper which will need to be cut into 4 x sheets. **(Note: if possible, please keep flat and not rolled so it does not dint. Once cut, store in a plastic sleeve to protect it. Please do not substitute with Arches watercolour pad.)**

Pencils:

- 4H, 2H, H, HB, B, 2B, 4B (Staedtler Mars – Lumograph – this is the preferred brand but if you already have graphite pencils bring those in).

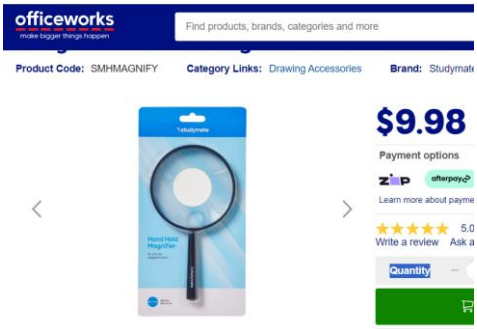
Rubbers:

- Kneadable rubber.
- Good quality white rubber – e.g., Faber Castell Dust Free, Sakura Foam Rubber (purchase online)
- Tombow – mono Zero Eraser – fine tipped pen style eraser.

Other:

- Palette: white china plate or similar. **If bringing paint palette make sure paint wells are not too small.**

- Winsor and Newton Masking Fluid **must be slightly pigmented!**
- Calligrapher's nib: Globe 513 EF (Speedball) Calligrapher's nib - this is for the masking fluid **(will be available for purchase from tutor)**
- Nib holder (**will be available for purchase from tutor)**
- Water jar
- Medium sized handheld magnifying glass – **must have! Available at art suppliers, Officeworks, newsagents, Australia Post shops, online. Note: small magnifying glasses are not practical. See example below:**



- Clear plastic ruler 15-20cm long is sufficient
- Small pencil sharpener – good brands are Kum, Staedtler, Faber Castell, Prismacolor. **Don't spend over $10!**

Recommended art suppliers: Cavalier Art Supplies, Geelong; https://theartshop.com.au (quick turnaround, online and store in Bayswater, **has Schminke paints**); Senior Art Supplies (**has Schminke paints**); https://parkersartsupplies.com (**has Schminke paints**); Officeworks will have stationery; Eckersley's; Melbourne Artist Supplies (**has Schminke paints**).

NOTE: you might not be able to get everything from the one store, for example, Schminke suppliers noted above.

Any questions about materials please email Amanda at amanda.sidahmed@iinet.net.au.