

# Garden Highlights, December 2021

One of the **Agave** plants is flowering. These plants, from arid areas, have thick succulent leaves full of moisture. A thirsty, hungry animal might be tempted to eat them. If they tried they would be in for a shock. The sap can cause irritation of the skin and, worse still, the plant contains needle-sharp oxalate crystals that will injure the mouth and the digestive tract.

These plants can take 10 to 30 years to flower. But when they do, the stem is spectacularly tall. The developing flower stem looks like a giant version of an asparagus head. This is because it is in the same family as that familiar vegetable.

The flowers are pollinated by bats that enjoy the nectar that is available at night. After the seeds have formed, the plant dies. However, the old plant is succeeded by young suckers that have been sprouting from the large plant as it has been reaching maturity.

In Mexico, *Agave americana* plants are harvested for their juice which is fermented to make the drink, Mezcal. This drink is also distilled to make Tequila. The popularity of these drinks is endangering several bat species because wild plants are harvested for their juice.



## What's On in December 2021

**Discovery Table:** Sunday 19 December 1:00 - 3:00 pm.

**Free Guided Walks:** Wednesdays 11:00 am, Sundays 2:00 pm (except 26 December.)

**Friends Nursery open:** Wednesdays 9:30 am - 12:30 pm.

**Gardeners' Calendar 2022,** \$18 non-members, \$12 members. Delivery extra.

An **online virtual walk through the Gardens:** Friends home page. Youtube also has several videos of these gardens.

The **Conservatory** is open 10 am - 4 pm every day.

The **Tea House** is open every day (Bookings for groups, etc. phone 0413 706 535).

(For What's On details: Friends website or phone.)



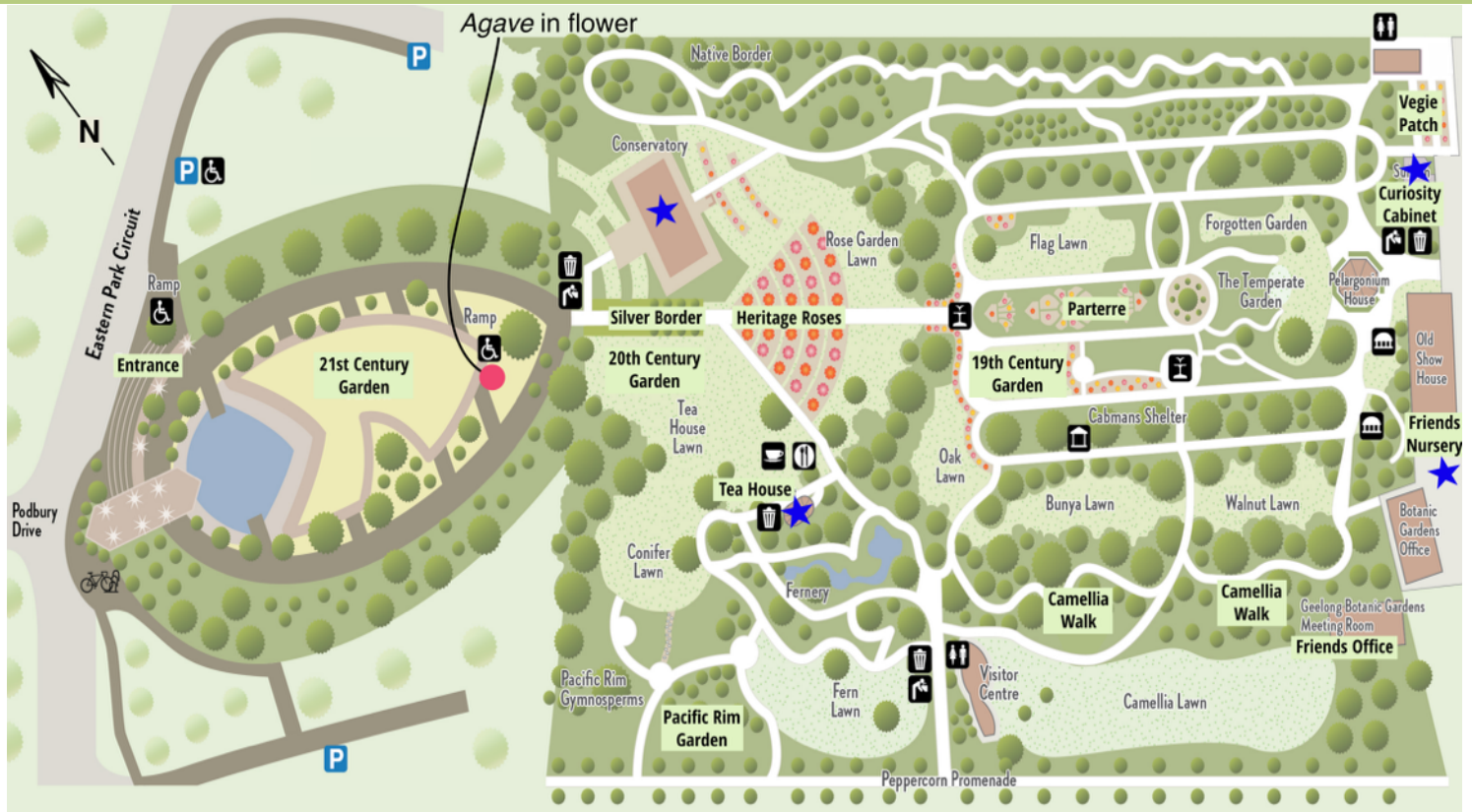
Bookings: [www.friendsgbg.org.au](http://www.friendsgbg.org.au)

Phone: 5222 6053

[www.geelongaustralia.com.au/gbg/](http://www.geelongaustralia.com.au/gbg/)

Over page: Map showing plant locations

# Geelong Botanic Gardens map



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

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

