



# FRIENDS OF THE CANBERRA INTERNATIONAL ARBORETUM AND GARDENS (CIAG) INC

DATE DECEMBER 2009 | VOLUME 7



Dear Friends

## Season Greetings to you all.

What successes we have achieved in 2009. Wonderful outcomes from our growing membership and the fantastic support from our members for the visionary project which is the Canberra International Arboretum and Gardens.

Our last event for the year, Wollemi Working bee, measuring trees and celebration lunch on 22 November 2009 was well attended and we really had fun whilst contributing data and landscaping what I am now calling Friendship Knoll within the Wollemi Forest. The weather was just right (for once). Thanks to the members of our very active Council, to the volunteers and supporters for making 2009 a memorable year.

We could not do everything we do without our wonderful sponsors: ACTEWAGL, Grapevine, Yarralumla Nursery, The Hellenic Club, Supabarn, Icelab, and the ACT Government. Our thanks to you for helping to achieve such success this year.

We held our first Festival of the Forests in 2009 and also obtained confirmation that the Festival can be an annual event into the future – we are already deeply into finalising the plans for the Festival on 14 March 2010. This is our biggest on-site promotional event for the Arboretum and we are pleased to be in partnership with Carers ACT, to whom we donate one third of the funds raised during this event. Again, we are grateful for the support of our sponsors. We will be calling for volunteer assistance in the new year and providing up-to-date training/information sessions.

We also provided guides for many bus tours – if you know a group that would like to organise

a tour of the site let me know. The Friends are happy to help organise tours and provide guides and often the Friends receive a very welcome donation for our guiding activities.

So many volunteers, including supporting the National Bonsai Collection and from FACTA and STEP, make such a difference in providing information to the community. We continually receive excellent feedback about all of our involvement.

The Calendar for 2010 is in this newsletter and also on our website at [www.canberraarboretum.org.au](http://www.canberraarboretum.org.au). Will you choose one or all of the meetings, working bees, data gathering, newsletter production, website management and bird identification? Do you yearn for a different activity? Let me know about it so we can make your dreams come true. We are aiming to hold on-site activities on other days as well as Sunday, however, pragmatically, we do need to fit with the construction activity as well.

Mark the events in your 2010 diary now so that you can be sure to take up the wonderful opportunities being offered. Additional activities are being developed and we will advise you of these together with the relevant training in the newsletters, and on the website.

Remember December is annual membership renewal time. Your contributions are important to our displays, activities and administration. Through your contribution you can show support, as well, of course, by being involved in our many activities. We look forward to seeing you all in 2010.

Have a safe and happy festive season and see you at the Arboretum!

Jocelyn Plovits  
Chair





## OBSERVING BIRDS

BY LINDA MULDOON

Following on from the Arboretum study the Canberra Ornithological Group did in September, Chris Davey, COG's President, offered to train Friends of CIAG in locating and identifying bird species.

Seven of us met with Chris on 1 November and we spent a little over two hours roaming the area between the main entrance and the cork oaks. We identified 23 bird species. Of these 19 were included in COG's list of 40 species (see Newsletter 6). The four species that were not in that list were:

- White-winged Chough
- King Parrot
- Noisy Friarbird
- Grey Teal

We spotted a chough's mud nest in the Himalayan cedars (see photo) and Chris pointed out fledgling choughs being nurtured high up in the branches a short distance away.

The strip of eucalypts between the cork oaks and the road (included in the Arboretum as Lots 31, 32, 33 and 34) provides a habitat for many birds and after taking a closer look we appreciated the rationale for retaining this area in its present form. One mature snow gum supported three visible nests (see Australian Raven's nest photo) and we watched a young adult Sulphur-crested Cockatoo checking out a hollow in the same tree. Also in this area the understorey supports many smaller birds and on this occasion it was atwitter with Superb Fairy Wrens.

This was a gratifying introduction to the current bird life at the Arboretum. I'm sure we

will all be watching out for the arrival of new bird species as our new plantings develop. Inevitably new foods will be on offer and new habitats will emerge.

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### ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Thanks to Jennie Widdowson for compiling a list of the birds we identified on 1 November.





## PROPOSED 2010 FOREST PLANTINGS

Forty-one (41) forests have been planted at the Arboretum between 2005 and 2009

Twenty-six (26) new forests are scheduled for planting during the Autumn, Winter and Spring of 2010.

### STAGE 3 FOREST PLANTINGS: 2010

*Arbutus canariensis* – Canary Madrona (Lot 28B)

*Eucalyptus parvula* – Small-leaved Gum (Lot 108/109)

*Eucalyptus scoparia* – Wallangarra White Gum (Lot 87)

*Brachychiton populneus* - Kurrajong / *Brachychiton rupestris* – Queensland Bottle Tree (Lot 67)

*Butia capitata* – Jelly Palm (Lot 55A)

*Platycladus orientalis* – Chinese Arborvitae (Lot 106)

*Schotia brachypetala* – Weeping Schotia (Lot 102)

*Sophora microphylla* – Kowhai (Lot 51, host)

*Betula nigra* – River Birch (Lot 103)

*Carya illinoensis* – Pecan (Lot 86, host)

*Catalpa bignonioides* – Southern Catalpa (Lot 90, host)

*Cercis canadensis* – Eastern Red Bud (Lot 61)

*Juglans regia* – Persian Walnut (Lot 84)

*Syphnolobium japonicum* (*Sophora japonicum*) – Japanese Pagoda Tree / *Sophora toromiro* - Toromiro (Lot 69)

*Styrax japonica* – Japanese Snowbell (Lot 65)

*Callitris oblonga* – South Esk Pine (Lot 30)

*Corymbia maculata* – Spotted Gum (Lot 92/93)

*Eucalyptus tricarpa* – Red Ironbark (Lot 92/93)

*Pinus brutia* – Lone Pine (Lot 54)

*Pinus radiata ssp cedrosensis* – Cedros Island Pine (Lot 48)

*Pinus radiata var binata* – Guadalupe Pine (Lot 82)

*Carpinus orientalis* – Oriental Hornbeam (Lot 68)

*Cedrus libani ssp libani* – Lebanese Cedar (Lot 8)

*Picea omorika* – Serbian Spruce (Lot 95)

*Quercus robur* – English Oak (Lot 80)

*Jubaea chilensis* – Chilean Wine Palm (Lot 12)

Source: [cmd.gov.au/arboretum](http://cmd.gov.au/arboretum) 2009

## FOREST TALK

Some new trees have attracted a variety of admirers –some want to taste/eat the trees: hares, rabbits, goats – so fences will be retained where needed.

Design has commenced for the Visitors Centre and Bonsai Pavilion – so expect construction work into 2011.

Snakes alive – we have had many reports about snakes on site so remember to be careful and wear sturdy shoes and long trousers. Talking and making noise can give the chance for the snakes to leave before you arrive.

*Early on Tuesday, 3 November, Victoria*

*Callioni saw a small flock of Australiasian*

*Grebes, about a dozen birds, conducting*

*their own mini Melbourne Cup as they*

*chased each other across the dam near the*

*entrance of the CIAG. She noted that it was*

*great to see the wildlife using the dam.*



## MEMBERSHIP IS DUE

*Have you remembered that membership fees are due on 1 December each year?*

*Please forward your payment as outlined on the application page.*

*Your fees are used to run the administration of the Friends (including matters such as insurance and contact with members) - all fees and donations are very welcome!*

## TREES IN FOCUS – HIMALAYAN CEDAR OR DEODAR

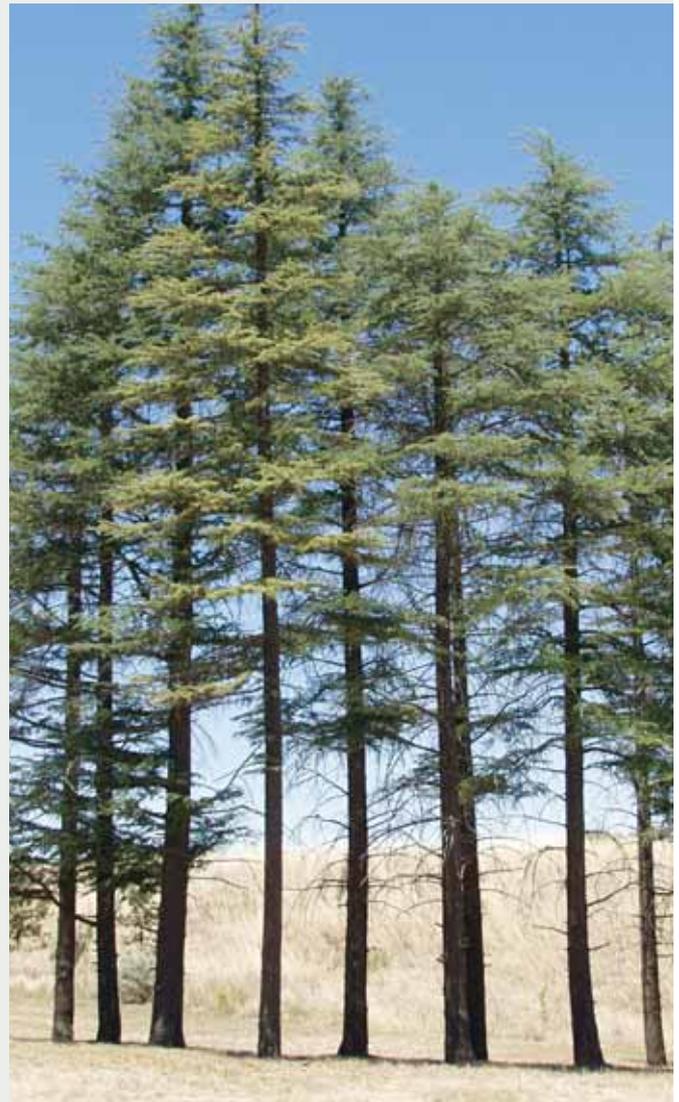
*Introduction by Jocelyn Plovits and report by  
Tony Fearnside*

### INTRODUCTION

The material for the design competition for the Canberra International Arboretum and Gardens included information about the two aged forests on site: the Himalayan cedars and the Cork Oaks. The border of this newsletter features the Himalayan cedar.

Almost 30,000 cedars were planted between 1917 and 1923 and of these only 1,000 survived. Further plantings were undertaken in 1928 and of the 10,000 trees it is estimated half survived the fires of 2003. This maturing forest of 5,000 trees serves as a living example of the growth that the Arboretum's new plantings may achieve over time.

The forest is a significant landmark with heritage values and it provides immediate amenity (particularly shade). Work is soon to start on the infrastructure within the Himalayan Cedars including paths, picnic facilities, viewing platform and an amenity block, making this a desirable visitor location.





This forest is the only one which does not fit within the rectangular pattern of the other forests and allees. This shape has been deliberately retained because of the historical planting as well as uneven the line where the fire ceased.

And our bird observations found the nest of a chough in one of the trees.

Examples of cedars are also in the National Bonsai and Penjing Collection of Australia (which is the first garden of the Arboretum and is temporarily housed at the Cottage in Commonwealth Park).

#### REPORT

One of my early encounters with the genus *Cedrus* was when I was a forestry student and told how to distinguish mature trees of the separate species at a distance. In those days the genus comprised three species but nowadays, I understand, DNA analyses suggest that there are only two. Anyway the Atlas Cedar (*C. atlantica*) which comes from the dry Atlas Mountains of North Africa has branches which turn upwards, the Cedar of Lebanon (*C. libani*) has more or less horizontal branches (as in the national flag of Lebanon) while the Himalayan Cedar or deodar (*C. deodara*) comes from a snowy part of the world, the Western Himalayas and has drooping branches and branchlets.



The national flag of Lebanon – the branches of *C libani* are less droopy than the deodar's branches.

Another encounter was in Kashmir when I was shown the traditional way of transporting deodar logs by floating them down the river Jhelum. I was invited to try my skills as a log roller and promptly got wet feet and legs! At the time, logs of deodar, in that poor country, cost more than radiata pine logs in prosperous Australia, which indicates their value.

When I came to Canberra in 1965 I was thrilled to see that Stromlo Forest had an area of these cedars that were planted in 1928 near the site of an arboretum that had been proposed originally by Walter Burley Griffin, but I was saddened because they had been neglected for many years. However they had survived, thanks partly to the wide spacing at which they were planted (12 ft by 12 ft) and partly due to their ability to withstand periodic droughts in their monsoonal homelands. They are now part of the Canberra International Arboretum and Gardens and were thinned and pruned quite recently.

All the cedars are famous for their timber – the Phoenician navy ships were built from Cedars of Lebanon, for instance. They have upright cones which disintegrate to shed the winged seeds, except that hereabouts the cockatoos get there early and feast on the seed so that there are very few self sown seedlings. Deodar is the national tree of Pakistan and Hindus regard it as a divine tree (its name comes from deva, goddess, and dāru, wood). The inner wood is aromatic and used to make incense and can be distilled to make an oil which has medicinal properties. Other parts of the tree are used in ayurvedic medicine.



## **FRIENDS of the CANBERRA INTERNATIONAL ARBORETUM and GARDENS Inc.**

### **Membership Application Form**

Yes, I/we wish to become a Friend(s) of the Canberra International Arboretum and Gardens Inc.

1. Title..... First Name..... Last Name .....

2. Title..... First Name..... Last Name .....

Address.....

.....Postcode .....

Tel (h) .....(w).....

e-mail.....

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Membership arrangements (please indicate)

Contributing Friend.....Single \$25

Household .....\$30

Contributing Concession .....\$10

Association or Club.....\$50

Corporate Friend .....\$2000

not registered for GST

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Payment details for contributing members:

Cash            Cheque

Cheques payable to the Friends of the Canberra International Arboretum and Gardens Inc.

\$.....

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For any enquiries contact

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