



## Australian Institute of Horticulture Inc.

*'Promoting Horticulture - the Profession of the 21st Century'*

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### Green Thumbs & Rooted Cuttings AIH NSW e-Newsletter, April 2009

Welcome to the Newsletter's 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. State Council has been busy this past month preparing for the National Council Meeting to be held at Ryde TAFE and the dinner at Ryde Bowling Club. We are hoping to have as productive a meeting as the last National Council Meeting in Brisbane. We will be taking stock of the AIH's role and hoping to set new directions for the Institute.

Don't forget the Collectors' Plant Fair on Saturday 18 April ( 9am to 4pm ) & Sunday 19 April ( 9am to 3pm ) at Woodgreen, 27 Powells Road , Bilpin [www.collectorsplantfair.com](http://www.collectorsplantfair.com)

*Richard May,  
NSW*

*State*

*President*

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#### **HORTICULTURAL LESSONS FROM THE BIG Paddock**

**Bruce Ward of the Farm Business Gym spoke to AIH state representatives at the National Council dinner held at Ryde Bowling Club on Saturday 21 March.**



Bruce is a Certified Educator in the processes of Holistic Management(tm) which was developed by Allan Savory and Jody Butterfield and is now implemented around the world. Bruce works throughout Australia and New Zealand to regenerate damaged land and increase productivity.

Bruce spoke about the concept of 'brittleness'. Savory's Scale of Brittleness is a measure of the seasonal distribution of humidity and classifies the environment on a scale of 1 to 10 where 1 represents a rainforest (humid all year round) and 10 a desert (dry all year round). Only about 5% of Australia could be classified as non-brittle, i.e. in the 1 to 5 range: 95% is brittle or quite seasonal in spread of atmospheric humidity. Bruce stressed the importance

for horticulturists to assess locations with respect to the brittleness scale, not just rainfall. Maintaining or increasing biological diversity is critical in a brittle environment and this in turn is dependent on managing the water cycle, mineral cycle, solar energy flow and biological succession....if these are all functioning well, then carbon will also be cycling well – and carbon is the major building block of all living things

The carbon cycle is vital. Everything needs to be done to recycle carbon by managing the groundcover and topsoil – by creating soil surfaces that allow water to penetrate quickly and for litter to build up, and by management of grazing pressure. We need 100% soil cover, 100% of the time!

To find out more, visit Bruce's website: <http://www.the-farm-business-gym.com/farm-business.html>

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**LOYALTY CERTIFICATES** were presented by AIH National President Kim Morris at the National Council dinner to members with over 15 years membership. Included were NSW members Ros Andrews, Tony Curry, Andrew Price and Richard May. A special Certificate of Appreciation was awarded to past NSW President, Jonathan Garner. Congratulations to all!

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## PLANT OF THE MONTH

### THE GOLDEN CAMELLIA

***Camellia nitidissima* (syn. *C. chrysantha*)**

**This story comes from AIH NSW Councillor, Tony Curry**

For about two centuries stories emanating from China about a yellow flowered *Camellia* that originated from somewhere in the mountain forests of southern China have captivated plant collectors, botanists and horticulturists. In fact, in 1843, at the start of Robert Fortune's first plant collection trip to 'the Orient' he was given instructions from the Royal Horticultural Society to collect 'hardy plants' and advised to keep a lookout for amongst other things: 'the peaches of Pekin, the plants that yield tea, double yellow roses, peonies with blue flowers, the fingered citron, the *Nepenthes*, the true Mandarin, the orange called Cum-quat, the Lilies of Fokien, *Oxalis sensitiva*, the Canes of Commerce, the varieties of Bamboo and number ten on his list was camellias with yellow flowers if such exist.'

During Fortune's second trip to China in 1848 he successfully collected tea plants from Hwuy-Chow district, Chekiang Province, the Ning-po District, Chusan and Wuyi Mountains. His collections of about 17,000 seedlings and almost 24,000 young plants were used to establish tea plantations in Assam and Sikkim in northern India. On the same trip near Shanghai he collected

what is now known as 'Fortune's Gold' or 'Fortune's Yellow', *Camellia oleifera* 'Jaune'. This cultivar of the Oil Camellia (*Camellia oleifera*) has creamy white petals with a boss of yellow, petaloid stamens, and is not really a yellow flowered camellia at all.



**Editor's note:** Dr George Orel, Research Associate at the Botanic Gardens, has in recent years undertaken collection trips to Vietnam and China as part of 'Project Camellia'. He and his team have discovered previously undescribed species of Camellias including a truly yellow Camellia, as yet un-named. George will give an illustrated presentation to the Friends of The Gardens on Wednesday 22 July, 10.30am to 12 noon at the Botanic Gardens. He will show rare and endangered Camellia species in their native habitats and species never seen before and discuss current scientific work. Tel 9231 8182 or [friends@rbgsyd.nsw.gov.au](mailto:friends@rbgsyd.nsw.gov.au)

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## MEMBER PROFILE

### ROSLYN ANDREWS

**There would not be too many AIH members who have not come across Ros Andrews in person, or at least be familiar with her enormous contribution to Australian Horticulture.**

With an impressive string of qualifications – FAIH, BA., DIP ED, ASSOC. DIP. HORT ., HORT CERT ., DIP. BOTANICAL MEDICINE, ADV . DIP. WESTERN HERBAL MEDICINE, DEEP LYMPHATIC THERAPY – Ros has served on the committees of numerous horticultural organisations and has been a member of AIH since 1989, including time as NSW President.

In her early life, Ros had her own Interior Plantscaping Business - *Accent on Plants*, taught evening classes in Plant Identification, Materials and Culture and Home Gardening at Ryde School of Horticulture, was employed as designer, client liaison and salesperson for Bonds Nursery Prestige Plant Hire as well as being employed as on-site trainer and coordinator of vocational training schemes for long-term unemployed (LEAP scheme).

Ros has created her own one acre garden at Bayview, employing mostly native plants and rescuing it from the ravages of Lantana. The garden has been opened as part of Australia 's Open Garden Scheme.

She was the first President of the Australian Horticulture and Landscape Council (NSW) and was a member of the Landscape Open Space Expert Advisory Panel for the Olympic Coordination Authority as the AIH representative. She was appointed as Director to the Board of Primary Industries Training Advisory Body and was a Trustee of the Royal Botanic Gardens.



In recent years, Ros has undertaken study for the Diploma of Botanical Medicine and is a practising Herbalist and Deep Lymphatic Therapist. She has set up her clinic **Accent on Healing** in her quiet and tranquil Bayview garden.

After many years experience in growing and working with medicinal herbs she now uses them as an integral part of her wholistic healing treatments. Specialising in digestive disorders, such as Heartburn, Bloating, Sinusitis and IBS, Ros has just launched a new website [www.gutmatters.com](http://www.gutmatters.com) to provide easy and online natural digestive health solutions.

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### DID YOU KNOW.....

- That over the last 150 years up to 80% of the carbon once contained in our soils has been lost to the atmosphere due to improper land management practices. Dr Christine Jones identified that in healthy condition, soils contain around twice as much carbon as the atmosphere and almost three times as much carbon as in the vegetation  
<http://soilcarboncredits.blogspot.com/>
  - That the combined weight of all the ants on the planet is equal to the world's entire population of humans, and that 'the bulldog ants of Australia can grow to 5cm with a lethal sting for victims' – so claims Alok Jha writing in The Guardian Weekly 20.03.09 in a piece entitled *The most efficient life form on earth*. Just where are these killer ants to be found in Australia ?
  - That illegal removal of bushrock for use in gardens, rockeries and retaining walls has been listed as a Key Threatening Process to the ongoing survival of the threatened Broad-headed Snake in the Blue Mountains (National Parks Journal, February-March 2009)
  - That a study carried out by the Alternative Technology Association and associates shows that use of hard soap as opposed to bodywash produces high pH greywater which could damage plants and soil. A full copy of the report can be downloaded from [www.ata.org.au](http://www.ata.org.au)
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## BOOK REVIEW



### ***Tea Roses – Old Roses for Warm Gardens***

by Lynne Chapman, Noelene Drage, Di Durston, Jenny Jones, Hillary Merrifield and Billy West.

Rosenberg Publishing Pty Ltd, 2008

### **Reviewed by Peta Trahar MAIH, MAILDM, Convenor of Collectors' Plant Fair**

A new book recommended by expert rosarian Klaus Ekhardt from Green E Plants, Galston caught my eye. My library is full of rose books from way back. Is another necessary? Most definitely. After reading this Australian publication memories of Roy and Heather Rumsey flooded back. Their nursery at Dural was the holy grail for so many gardeners.

This book is the '...first to be devoted solely to Tea roses for over 100 years'. The authors, from the Perth Region of Heritage Roses of Australia, examine the history and cultivation of Tea roses in interesting detail and in Part 2, have provided an extensive A-Z of the many varieties in Australia I most enjoyed this section, so useful as a reference. Delightful images enhance the book.

A section at the back devoted to nurseries, growers and open gardens featuring these hardy plants so suited to warm humid areas would have completed the story.

**Sydney's favourite garden bookstore, FLORILEGIUM is on the move in April.** Its new premises are at

65 Derwent Street, Glebe – Tel 9571 8222. View the catalogue at [www.florilegium.com.au](http://www.florilegium.com.au)

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## NET-WORK

**Some excellent sites exist to help reduce the use of pesticides by employing environmentally friendly biological control methods:**

The Pests and Diseases Image Library, PaDIL is a Commonwealth Government initiative providing images and information to aid identification [www.padil.gov.au](http://www.padil.gov.au)



Companies which provide predators for mites, thrips, scale, mealybugs, caterpillars, etc...include:

- Buy a punnet of ladybirds, and many more useful insects from [www.bugsforbugs.com.au](http://www.bugsforbugs.com.au)
- The Beneficial Bug Company operates out of the Hawkesbury campus of UWS [www.beneficialbugs.com.au](http://www.beneficialbugs.com.au)
- [www.biologicalservices.com.au](http://www.biologicalservices.com.au) supplies a range of insects to control pests in greenhouses and perennial outdoor plantings
- If you want to thrip the light fantastic then check out [www.entomology.umn.edu/cues/inter/inmine/Thripa.html](http://www.entomology.umn.edu/cues/inter/inmine/Thripa.html)

Another worthy site is [www.naturalresources.nsw.gov.au/care/soil/ssu/quals1.htm](http://www.naturalresources.nsw.gov.au/care/soil/ssu/quals1.htm)

Dr Linda Chalker-Scott from Washington State University carries out scientific investigations to debunk some commonly accepted horticultural 'facts' in her horticultural myths webpage: are super-absorbent water crystals really 'super'? Is it really safe and effective to add Epsom salts to gardens? Find out more at [www.puyallup.wsu.edu/~Linda%20Chalker-Scott/Horticultural%20Myths\\_files/index.html](http://www.puyallup.wsu.edu/~Linda%20Chalker-Scott/Horticultural%20Myths_files/index.html)

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## PLACES TO BE, THINGS TO DO....



**Sustainable, Productive and Attractive - Arthur Lathouris**, MAILDM, will give an illustrated talk to the *Friends of the Gardens* showing the inspired gardens he has designed. Wednesday 1 April, 10.30am to 12 noon, Maiden Theatre, Royal Botanic Gardens. \$18, Friends \$12, includes morning tea at 10.30am.

Bookings essential: 9231 8182 [friends@rbgsyd.nsw.gov.au](mailto:friends@rbgsyd.nsw.gov.au)

**Mount Annan Botanic Gardens: Growing Friends Plant Sale** – Sunday 5 April, 10am to 3pm . Find bargains and rare treasures among a great range of native plants for sale. Free after Garden entry.



**Botanica 2009: From the Desert to the Sea** – Friday 17 to Sunday 26 April, 10am to 4pm. Lion Gate Lodge, Royal Botanic Gardens. Botanical illustrations by more than 40 leading artists. The theme reflects the great diversity of plants and habitats in Australia with a focus on plants for a dry climate. Entry is free and all works are for sale. Proceeds support the work of the Friends of The Gardens

*Agave americana* var. *striata* by Rita Parkinson



**Collectors' Plant Fair**, Saturday 18 April ( 9am to 4pm ) and Sunday 19 April ( 9am to 3pm ) at Woodgreen, 27 Powells Road , Bilpin. Speakers are plantsmen Ken Gillanders of Woodbank Gardens Tasmania and David Glenn from Lambley Nursery in Victoria . Details on [www.collectorsplantfair.com](http://www.collectorsplantfair.com) or 4567 2026

*The Dry Garden at Lambley*

**Fruitful 42' South** A joint meeting of the Australian and New Zealand Chapters of the International Plant Propagators Society is being held in Hobart 14<sup>th</sup> to 17 May. Enquiries [tvanders@bigpond.com](mailto:tvanders@bigpond.com)

**Green Square Market Style Garden Expo** June long weekend 6-7-8 , 9am to 4pm.  
[www.greensquareexhibitioncentre.com.au](http://www.greensquareexhibitioncentre.com.au)

**Landscape Australia Expo** AIH NSW will once again be represented at the Expo from 22 to 24 July at the Sydney Showgrounds - stalls 24 & 42 [www.landscapeexpo.com.au](http://www.landscapeexpo.com.au)

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**If you would like to contribute to your newsletter with comments, articles, places-to-be, suggestions – or if you would like to be removed from our mailing list - then please contact the editor:**

**Beth Stokes** [beth.stokes@bigpond.com](mailto:beth.stokes@bigpond.com) **The deadline for the May issue is 17 April**