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### News from our Executive Committee

- **Update on removal of childcare centre**

It's getting close! Council is currently working on tree protection works and site establishment plus a lot of behind the scenes planning like the best way to gain vehicle access to avoid damage, organizing earthworks and a turf planting schedule. When we receive more information about how this will impact our Working Bees, we'll let you know.

- **We've been very popular with walking groups this March**

- *The Westleigh Probus Garden Group* contacted us to arrange a tour of the Botanic Garden. Whilst they are a gardening group, they were interested in all aspects of Ivanhoe Park, including important plants and its precolonial and recent history, importantly, they wanted to understand how the Botanic Garden came into being.





After a warm welcome and introduction to the history of Friends of Ivanhoe Park Botanic Garden by Lloyd, our president, our expert Garden Guides, Tony and Lois, accompanied by Friends' members Lynn (eager to become a Garden Guide herself) and Liz (photographer), split our visitors up into two groups.



The histories of Manly and Ivanhoe Park as well as the establishment of the Botanic Garden were highlighted as the group wandered around the Garden.

They were guided through the Sensory Garden (where one visitor spotted our Jane McGrath Rose); under the towering canopy of pines; along the old tramway that ran from the Spit through the Garden down to Manly; and past the World War II Memorial dedicated to all those who served.

Along the way, our rare and single species trees were pointed out and discussed. And at the conclusion of the tour, the Group's leader Margaret presented Tony and Lois with a jar of homemade kumquat jam.



This was a very special day for us as we share our oasis with a wonderful and interested group.



- *Gosford Walking for Pleasure*, a walking group with members from all over the Central Coast, selected Ivanhoe Park Botanic Garden for their self-guided tour. The group walks every Friday in a very large area from the northern end of the Central Coast to lots of areas around Sydney City, sometimes Blue Mountains.



Tony again met up with the group to assist in their exploration of the Botanic Garden and Valerie, the group's leader, told us after their walk: "Thank you, we had a lovely tour of the garden as well as meeting one of your Friends, who was very helpful . . . in hindsight I should have organised for a guided tour."

**If your group is interested in an historic and botanic guided tour of our heritage-listed Botanic Garden, please email us.**

### **Important Dates for 2024**

**Tuesday, April 16:** Our Get-together at The Manly Club on Gilbert Park from 7:00 p.m.

**Saturday, April 20:** The Saturday Working Bee – 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 a.m.

**Don't miss the April Get-together  
"Perfect Partners – tales of symbiosis and mutualism from the garden"**



Paul Nicholson, Manager Volunteer Programs, Royal Botanic Garden Sydney takes a deep dive into the complex web of relationships between micro and macro organisms that have allowed plants to colonise the planet. Get ready to be inspired, shocked and even occasionally appalled as the myriad of relationships between plants and other organisms are not only weirder than we imagine but perhaps even stranger than we can imagine.

**Join us at for this fascinating talk at our Get-together  
on Tuesday, April 16 at 7:00 p.m. at The Manly Club on Gilbert Park**



## The March Working Bees

### Saturday Working Bee:

We gathered after a couple of scorching hot days with no rain to discuss the days' tasks for our Autumn clean up.



- Our newly planted garden at our store room needed a good watering as well as some weeding of errant self-seeding weeds. Chris M set up an ingenious hose holder (aka fork) to ensure the entire bed was completely soaked.
- NBC's Scott took care of cutting, trimming and removing dead foliage as well as loading up the Council truck.





- The perennial garden bordering the Bowling Club was weeded and new plants went in the ground. Lynn took care of weeding, Tania took care of the planting and Ron followed along with a watering can and a helping hand to cart away the weed bags.



Today's plant selection: French Lavender; *Alternanthera dentata* "Little Ruby" (a compact richly-coloured ground cover); and Nandina Moon Bay (a robust evergreen perennial, narrow and cane like).

**Wednesday's Bee:**

A hot steamy day, threatening rain (which came later that day) and a great volunteer turnout today!





We were tasked with more Autumn cleanup over a large area alongside a popular pedestrian pathway.



There were sun damaged plants, out of control weeds, an overrun of spider plants to deal with. As well as our normal palm frond cleanup.



A massive effort by David, Lee, Toni, Gordon and Tony – as you can see.





## The Tree of the Month Project – Provides a feast for our native fauna



This visually striking and elegant evergreen palm provides a feast for our native fauna. Its fruit is eaten by many bird species, flying foxes, the musky rat-kangaroo and the bush rat. The nectar is favoured by Eungella honeyeaters while the flowers attract pollinators. This is the Alexandra Palm, our featured tree this month.

### **Alexandra Palm**

*Archontophoenix alexandrae*

The genus name is derived from the Ancient Greek *archontos*, meaning “chieftain” or “ruler”, combined with the palm genus *phoenix*, and refers to the regal stature of the trees. The species epithet is given in honour of Princess Alexandra of Denmark but is often erroneously referred to by the misnomer “Alexander Palm”, an entirely different palm.

Also known as: Alexandra, Alexander, King Palm, Northern Bangalow Palm



The palms have many uses from making spears to the fruit and leaf bases being eaten. The *Kuku Yalanji* people of FNQ ate the palm heart of this species.

Go to our webpage to find out more about our wonderful trees. This link will take you there: [Our Trees](#).



## Around the Garden





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## Other News

- **Australian Association of Friends of Botanic Gardens:** *The Challenge of Change* is the theme for the 2024 AAFBG biennial conference. To learn more about the conference and to register, click on the link: <https://friendsbotanicgardens.org/2024-conference>
  - **Garden Clubs of Australia:** Always interesting articles: <https://gardenclubs.org.au/>
  - **Bunnings Balgowlah:** Interesting speakers at the in-store Garden Corner the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of the month. <https://www.bunnings.com.au/diy-advice/garden?q=garden&sort=BoostOrder&page=1>
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