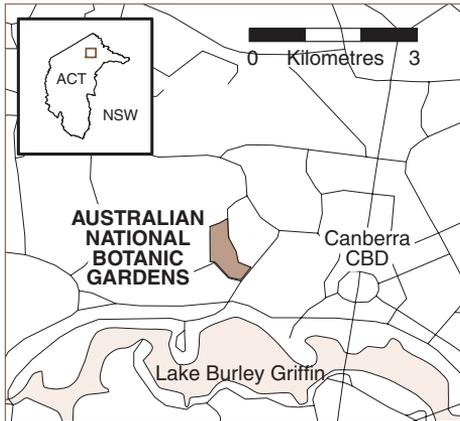


## Australian National Botanic Gardens

<http://www.anbg.gov.au>



### Special features

The Australian National Botanic Gardens (ANBG) is a major scientific, educational and recreational resource. It was one of the first botanic gardens in the world to adopt the study and display of indigenous species as a principal goal. One-third of the known flowering plant species that occur in Australia, and about half the known eucalypt species, are represented in its living collection.

The ANBG contributes to meeting Australia's obligations under various international environment conventions to which Australia is a signatory. In particular, the Convention on Biological Diversity recognises the importance of botanic gardens in ex situ and in situ conservation, research, training, plant identification and monitoring, raising public awareness, providing access to genetic resources, and global cooperation in relation to sustainable use of plant biodiversity.

Location	Latitude 35°16' South, Longitude 149°06' East
Area	90 hectares
Proclamation date	17 September 1991
IUCN category	Category IV
Biogeographic context	Houses plants from a vast range of biogeographic regions—alpine to tropical, coastal to central desert
Management plan	Second plan in effect, expires 9 January 2009

Other significant management documents	<p>Management plan implementation schedule; risk assessment and management schedule; ANBG Masterplan (National Capital Authority); Capital Works and Maintenance Plan 2002–05; ANBG Fire Procedures 2004–05; kangaroo and wallaby management plans; ANBG Education Service Policy; ANBG Photograph Collection Policy; Agreement for the Establishment and Operation of the Centre for Plant Biodiversity Research (CPBR) between the Director of National Parks and the CSIRO</p> <p>The ANBG is listed on the Commonwealth Heritage List</p>	
Financial	Operating	\$9.644 million
	Capital	\$0.392 million
	Revenue	\$0.384 million
Visitors	439,600 (est)	
Permits	Permits issued for 4 commercial activities; licences issued for 59 weddings or wedding photography; licences issued to publish 1,225 photographs from the collection	

#### International conventions and agreements

World Heritage Convention	Supports Australia's World Heritage sites through research, plant collections, plant identification, and horticultural and educational programmes
Wetlands (Ramsar) Convention	Supports Australia's obligations under the Ramsar Convention through access to plant identification services and data on aquatic plants in the Australian National Herbarium
Other agreements	<p>Collaborates with international organisations including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• International Association of Botanic Gardens</li> <li>• International Association of Plant Taxonomists</li> <li>• International Plant Propagators Society</li> <li>• International Union of Biological Sciences Taxonomic Databases Working Group</li> <li>• International Plant Name Index (Kew Botanic Gardens and Harvard University)</li> <li>• Global Biodiversity Information Facility</li> <li>• International Organisation for Plant Information World Vascular Plant Checklist Project</li> </ul>

## Centre for Plant Biodiversity Research

The Centre for Plant Biodiversity Research is a joint venture by the ANBG and CSIRO Plant Industry. It was formed under a seven-year agreement between the then Director of National Parks and Wildlife and CSIRO in 1993 and renewed for a further 10 years in 2000.

The Australian National Herbarium is part of this facility, housing voucher specimens for plants in the ANBG with data supporting the living, herbarium, and photograph collections. The herbarium is a major contributor to Australia's Virtual Herbarium, a national project involving all states and territories, and the Consensus Census project to produce an accepted list of scientific names for Australian plants.

## Major monitoring efforts

The ANBG's scientific planting is documented through voucher specimens in the Australian National Herbarium. A team of botanists, including national and international collaborators, ensure that the correct botanical names are always applied. New collection accessions help document the occurrence and distribution of plants in Australia.

A specialised and sophisticated database system maintains essential links between specimens in the herbarium, contemporary scientific literature, and the plants in the gardens.

A team of ANBG staff continually assesses the ANBG's living plant specimens.

## Future challenges

Water resource management continues to be a major challenge for the ANBG. This is due to both the continuing drought and sharp increases in unit water costs to major users in Canberra. Some work has been done to identify non-potable water supplies and recirculation opportunities. This work will continue.

Maintaining the ANBG's growing role as a tourist attraction will remain a key focus. Continuing to offer interesting visitor attractions, like the Friends of the ANBG's summer concerts and guided tours, will be important.

The Friends have established a tax deductible public fund to assist with projects in the ANBG. Expanding this fund continues to be a challenge.

Work on Australia's Virtual Herbarium will continue into 2005–06, including redeveloping the internet application and interface, and increasing data entry rates.

Late in 2004–05 work commenced on the Consensus Census project to produce a list

of flowering plant names for the whole of Australia that is endorsed by the Australian Government and the state and territory herbaria. The project coordinator is located at the ANBG and the project is due for completion in 2007.

The ANBG's database applications are being redeveloped, involving tighter integration of plant name, living collections, herbarium and plant image data. The new applications are due to be implemented late in 2005.

The ANBG is embarking on a new phase of plant records and facilities management using geographic information systems (GIS) to record and visualise the location and condition of plants, amenities and services.

The global transition to digital photography has led the ANBG to move to digital plant imaging resulting in significant changes to database management.

## Report on performance by key result areas

### **KRA1: Natural heritage management**

#### *Major issues*

- Water management infrastructure

#### *Actions*

- Increase water use efficiency

#### *Performance results 2004–05*

- Met Australian Capital Territory water use reduction targets for first three-quarters of the year (Stage 2, 25 per cent saving and Stage 3, 40 per cent ). Due to the very dry autumn, target (Stage 2, 25 per cent saving) was not met in that quarter but an overall reduction of 25 per cent was achieved for the whole year
- Evaluated the recommendations of an ANBG-funded consultancy on water management, to be followed up in 2005–06

### **KRA2: Cultural heritage management**

#### *Major issues*

- Interpretation
- Education

#### *Actions*

- Provide interpretation and education programmes for all sectors of the community

*Performance results 2004–05*

- Hosted three major Visitor Centre exhibitions—'The Plant Underworld: Cryptogams' produced in-house; 'Setbacks–Shattered Dreams' from the Morley Grainger Studio; and 'Tall Eucalypt Forests' with photographs by Esther Beaton
- Installed interpretive signs in the Sydney region flora section to explain the ecology and cultural significance of this environment (see case study on page 52)
- Initiated the ANBG's first 'Artist in Residence' project with funding from the Australian Network for Art and Technology. The project is the Synapse Art and Science Residency Programme, and the artist will work with the ANBG's cryptogam scientist
- Initiated a series of evening spotlighting tours of the ANBG, the 'Twilight Forest Adventures' for school and community groups

**KRA4: Visitor management and park use**

*Major issues*

- Visitor management in emergencies
- Ecotourism Award
- Visitor Centre

*Actions*

- Implement visitor safety plan
- Compete for national tourism awards
- Upgrade facilities for the Visitor Centre, exhibition space and bookshop

*Performance results 2004–05*

- Refined the visitor safety plan for the annual summer concert series, covering issues such as parking, visitor access and safety, and fire safety
- Reported safety incidents dropped from 17 in 2003–04 to five in 2004–05 and financial/security incidents dropped from 10 to one
- Won the Ecotourism Award for the Canberra region for the third successive year
- Began a major re-fit of the Visitor Centre in June 2005, to be completed early in 2005–06

**KRA5: Stakeholders and partnerships**

*Major issues*

- Friends of the ANBG

- Greening Australia
- Birrigai Outdoor School

#### *Actions*

- Strengthen the partnership between the ANBG and the Friends of the ANBG
- Host the Greening Australia Community Seedbank on the ANBG site
- Continue the successful partnership with the Australian Capital Territory Government's Birrigai Outdoor School

#### *Performance results 2004–05*

- The Friends of the ANBG ran the annual students' photographic competition and the autumn and spring plant sales; published quarterly newsletters; provided volunteer guided walks each day; committed \$20,000 to projects including plantings at the front entrance and a web site on cryptogams; participated in the ANBG's annual summer concerts in January 2005
- Signed an agreement between the Director of National Parks and Greening Australia ACT to share ANBG facilities for native seed processing and storage for community revegetation projects
- Continued the relationship with Birrigai, initiated after the 2003 Canberra fires, with programmes for young children such as 'Teddy Bear's Picnic' and associated trails

### **KRA6: Business management**

#### *Major issues*

- Disaster management

#### *Actions*

- Improve planning for disaster response

#### *Performance results 2004–05*

- Developed a Disaster Management Plan for the ANBG, particularly for the Australian National Herbarium and its collection of specimens. The plan underpins the ANBG's active participation in DisACT, the loose confederation of national collecting institutions in the Australian Capital Territory assisting each other in the event of a disaster affecting their collections
- Revenues up 2 per cent from budget, expenses up 14 per cent (due to asset write-downs)

## **KRA7: Biodiversity knowledge management**

### *Major issues*

- Australian National Herbarium
- Plant names
- Taxonomic botanical research
- Change from film to digital imaging
- ANBG–Centre for Plant Biodiversity Research web site

### *Actions*

- Make botanical data, information and expertise available to the national and international botanic community
- Develop a Consensus Census to list all the flowering plants in Australia
- Publish and disseminate research findings
- Smooth the transition from the use of film to the use of digital images
- Promote and provide information about Australian native plants via the internet

### *Performance results 2004–05*

- Databased 63,879 specimens and added them to Australia's Virtual Herbarium
- Began the Consensus Census project to produce a single list of scientific names for flowering plants for the whole of Australia. The project is funded through the Natural Heritage Trust and endorsed by Australian Government, state and territory herbaria
- Researchers completed 68 scientific papers or publications resulting from research undertaken at the Australian National Herbarium
- Installed new equipment, technology and storage facilities for the Australian Plant Image Index and photographing herbarium specimens, to accommodate the change from film to digital photography
- Recorded about 27,000 hits on the ANBG–CPBR web site each day

## Education and tourism—a winning combination



*Parliamentary Secretary the Hon Greg Hunt MP inspects some of the new interpretive signage with Paul Janssens, Curator of Living Collections.*

The Sydney region flora section at the ANBG has been decades in development. New signs raise interpretation of the section to a new level, and set a model for the interpretation of other displays at the ANBG.

The new signage orients visitors to the geography, geology and flora of the Sydney region and provides an experience of the types of ecological communities found there and their value to generations of Indigenous Australians. It is eye-catching and informative, and takes a storytelling

approach to the living exhibit, inviting visitors to touch, smell and explore.

The Sydney region section shows species that grow in the sandstone plateaus and gorges of the area. It includes outlying areas with different geology, such as the Rylstone district and the Cumberland Plain. Plantings include wet rainforest, *Allocasuarina* heath, Budawang Ranges flora and woodlands.

The interpretation introduces visitors to how generations of Indigenous Australians have used plants in the Sydney region. It also shows some of the fossil history of Australian plants. Fossils are common in the sandstone and shale of the region.

Launching the new Sydney region signage on 23 May 2005, the Hon Greg Hunt MP, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for the Environment and Heritage, noted that the ANBG had won the Canberra Region Tourism Award for Ecotourism in 2004. This is the third consecutive year the Gardens has received the award and firmly positions the ANBG as one of the Canberra region's significant tourist attractions.