



Australian Government

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MEDIA RELEASE

Volunteers help Gardens grow

The Australian National Botanic Gardens will hold a special function to thank its many volunteers on International Volunteers Day, Tuesday 5 December.

Senator Gary Humphries, Senator for the ACT, and Peter Cochrane, Director of National Parks, will present long-serving volunteers with certificates of appreciation for their valuable contributions.

“We have more than 160 volunteers who help out in every aspect of our work, and help make the Gardens one of Canberra’s great attractions” Mr Cochrane said.

“Some volunteers are the public face of the Gardens, running our hugely popular guided tours. Others work behind the scenes, helping maintain our plant records, or in the seedbank or the herbarium, mounting and cataloguing specimens.”

Volunteers have been an integral part of the Gardens since its establishment in 1949, when many local Canberrans gave their time on an informal basis. It was not until 1985 that the first official volunteer task began - the production of the weekly information sheet *In Flower This Week*. In 1990, the Friends of the Australian National Botanic Gardens was formed and with it came opportunities for community involvement in a wide variety of volunteer roles. The Friends also play an important role in fund-raising for Gardens’ projects.

The development of the Volunteer Guide Service in 1992 was an immediate success, with some 4000 visitors enjoying the free guided walks every year. Seven training courses for new members have been offered in fourteen years.

In addition to the Guides Service, volunteers also give their time and skills to Growing Friends which is devoted specifically to propagating and raising native plants.

The function will be held on the Brittle Gum Lawn at 10.30am.

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