



Wednesday 5 December 2012

Dedication and commitment – the Gardens thank their volunteers

Today the Australian National Botanic Gardens paid tribute to its more than 150 volunteers – some of whom have served the Gardens for up to 25 years.

Executive Director of the Australian National Botanic Gardens, Dr Judy West, along with Senator the Hon. Kate Lundy, thanked the Gardens' many volunteers at a special ceremony on *International Volunteer Day*.

"The Gardens wouldn't be the beautiful place it is without its volunteers. This recognition ceremony is extra special as we celebrate a Gardens' volunteer who is the first to reach 25 years of continuous service," Dr West said.

"Barbara Daly has been the *In Flower this Week* coordinator since 1987 - a wonderful achievement.

"I'd like to thank Barbara and all of our volunteers for the thousands of hours put into the successful running of many programs including the Gardens' guided walks, lunchtime talks, public events, plant sales and seed collection. Their contribution is amazing and very much valued."

Today's ceremony recognised those who have dedicated 10, 15, 20 and 25 years of service to the Gardens.

The first official volunteer task at the Australian National Botanic Gardens commenced in 1985 - the production of the weekly information sheet *In Flower This Week*. Largely thanks to Barbara, it's still going strong today.

The Friends of the Australian National Botanic Gardens kicked off in 1990, providing a wide range of opportunities for volunteers in the Gardens. In 1992 the Gardens formed the Volunteer Guide service and every year, some 2,000 visitors enjoy the free guided walks provided by volunteers.

During the past year, volunteer activities in the Gardens have included the formation of the Seedy Volunteers - involved in the field collection of seed for the Gardens' Seed Bank. There's also the driver guides of the *Flora Explorer* – the Gardens new electric vehicle offering one hour guided tours.

The Friends of the Australian National Botanic Gardens aim to increase community awareness of the scientific, educational, recreational and conservation functions of the Gardens and to continue to provide activities for the benefit and pleasure of their members.

The Australian National Botanic Gardens is the most diverse collection of Australian plants in the world, growing around one third of all known Australian species and half of Australia's eucalypts.