

MEDIA RELEASE



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A blooming milestone: Geelong Botanic Gardens celebrates 175 years

Mark your calendars for a special community celebration as we honour 175 years of the Geelong Botanic Gardens.

The gardens will be at their springtime best for the 175 Years of Growing Together event on **Saturday 3 October** from **10:00 am to 3:00 pm**.

This free, family-friendly day will offer plant sales, guided walks, children's activities, heritage talks, cultural performances, exhibitions, food trucks and hands-on workshops.

Event highlights include Forest Therapy sessions, Wool Museum nature weaving, presentations from past curators, face painting, kids' entertainment by Jurassic Jack, and exhibitions from the Geelong Beekeepers Club, Gardens 4 Wildlife and the Geelong Field Naturalists Club.

Since opening in 1851, the Gardens have grown with our city, becoming a place where generations have connected with nature, learned about plants and enjoyed time with friends and family.

Many trees across the Gardens and Eastern Park are listed on the National Trust Register, reflecting decades of care from horticulturalists, arborists, volunteers and community members.

Today, the Gardens remain a lively community space, hosting weddings, outdoor concerts, weekly yoga sessions and even the recent Victorian Tree Climbing Championships Qualifying Event.

The Gardens' education team also partner with local primary schools and The Gordon to introduce young people to plant science, sustainability and biodiversity – inspiring the next generation of environmental stewards.

In 2024, a corpse flower bloom cast the Gardens into the international spotlight, attracting more than 20,000 visitors and over 350,000 livestream views worldwide.

Greater Geelong Mayor Stretch Kontelj OAM said the Gardens have left a significant legacy.

“Reaching 175 years is an incredible milestone for a place that means so much to our community,” Mayor Kontelj said.

“This celebration is to thank everyone who has played an important role in the Gardens’ history and to highlight its ongoing role in conservation and education.

“Whether you’re a regular visitor or you’re yet to walk through the iconic iron gates, I encourage everyone to come along with friends and family for a great day out to celebrate this significant anniversary.”

Friends of the Geelong Botanic Gardens volunteer coordinator Bruce McGuinness has been helping care for the Gardens for seven years.

“I think it’s a great event to celebrate the Gardens, the people that work in it and the community that are involved with the Gardens,” Mr McGuinness said.

“I’m hoping that the Gardens will continue to grow, and it would be nice to get more people involved, and maybe actively involved, too, as advocates for the Gardens for the future.

“The children running around now are the people that will be advocates for the Gardens in 50 years’ time.

“It’ll just be so important as the city grows to have a great space like this. This is a gem - this is a real asset to everyone in the community.”

For more information visit: <https://www.geelongcity.vic.gov.au/whats-happening/events/175th-anniversary-open-day>

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