

# Garden Highlights, December 2015



1. **Pelargoniums** are in flower in the Pele House and in the nearby beds. A *Pelargonium* is distinguished from its relative, a *Geranium*, by only being symmetrical about a single (usually vertical) line. The *Geraniums* are symmetrical about the centre line of each of the 5 petals. Pelargoniums and other plants listed here may be available in the Friends Nursery.

2. The **NZ Christmas tree** or Pohutukawa *Metrosideros excelsa* usually has red flowers. However, two unusual trees were found in the Bay of Plenty in the 1940s. A descendant of those trees, called *Metrosideros excelsa* 'Aurea', referring to their greenish-yellow flowers, is growing in these gardens. (Photo: Jon Sullivan, Flickr)

3. In the Camellia beds there are several *Hydrangea* and *Dichroa* plants, both in the *Hydrangea* family. Flower colour in some species is determined by the soil pH (acid or alkaline) and minerals in the soil. Flowers can be white, blue, red, pink, light purple, or dark purple. The soils in these gardens are alkaline.

4. The **Spice Lily** *Manfreda maculosa* produces flowers that change colour as they mature and age. Despite its name, this plant is not a lily, but is in the Agave family (Photo: Bluestem, Wikipedia)

## What's On in December

**Exhibition of Stylised Botanical Art using Gold leaf**, resulting from the Friends' School of Botanical Art, Saturday 5 and Sunday 6 December 10:00 am to 4:00 pm, GBG meeting room.  
Art work and merchandise for sale.

See '**Alice and Peter Pan in Never Neverland**' at the gardens on Saturday 2 January 2016. Bookings essential:  
[www.shakespeareaustralia.com.au](http://www.shakespeareaustralia.com.au)

**Discovery Table**, Sunday 20 December 1:00 to 3:00 pm.

**Free Guided Walks**, Each Sunday 2:00 pm, Wednesday 11:00 am.

The **Friends' Nursery** is open on Wednesdays 9:30 am to 12:30 pm.

The **Tea House** is open every day.



Over page: Map showing these plants



# Geelong Botanic Gardens Map



- 1a. Pelargonium House
- 1b. Pelargonium bed
- 2a. NZ Christmas tree or Pohutukawa  
*Metrosideros excelsa* 'Aurea' with lemon flowers

- 2b. NZ Christmas tree or Pohutukawa  
*Metrosideros excelsa* with red flowers
- 3. *Hydrangea* and *Dichroa*
- 4. Spice Lily *Manfreda maculosa*



This information was developed by the Volunteer Guides  
Friends of Geelong Botanic Gardens

[www.friendsgbg.org.au](http://www.friendsgbg.org.au)  
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