

# Garden Highlights June 2015

1. **False Banana** *Ensete ventricosum* is a tall evergreen herb with a giant inflorescence hanging from its centre. Hanging at the bottom are small flowers surrounded by large red leaves, called bracts. At the top there are maturing insipid-tasting bananas. When flowering finishes, the immense plant dies, but new stems grow from the roots. A False Banana may be available in the Friends' Nursery.

2. Despite its name, **Japanese Mahonia** *Mahonia japonica* is not native to Japan though it has been extensively cultivated there for centuries. Numerous small scented yellow flowers are borne from autumn through winter into spring. This plant was given the Royal Horticultural Society's Award of Garden Merit.

3. Over the eons, the **Ginkgo or Maiden Hair tree** *Ginkgo biloba* has been a great survivor. Fossils show that Ginkgoes existed 200 Million years ago, before the Atlantic Ocean appeared and when Africa, South America, Antarctica and Australia were joined as one southern continent, Gondwana. Today, there are no wild Ginkgoes, but the people of Asia have preserved them by cultivation. This tree, planted nearly 160 years ago, may be the first to grow in Australia for 40 million years. A Ginkgo may be available in the Friends' Nursery.

4. Don't only admire the flowers of the **Corsican Hellebore** *Helleborus argutifolius*. Look, also, at the two outer leaflets that have been described as 'pouched on their lower side like a pelican's bill'. On Corsica this plant grows on the shore, on roadsides, in woodland, on exposed mountain-tops and in maquis scrub, where it can reach 1.8 m high. This plant was also given the Royal Horticultural Society's Award of Garden Merit.

## What's on in June

Discovery Walk, 'Trees for Timber' Sunday 14 June, 2:00 pm.

Gold coin donation.

Discovery Table Sunday 21 June, 1:00 to 3:00 pm.

Free Guided Walks other Sundays 2:00 pm, Wednesdays 11:00 am.

Winter Solstice Luncheon, Monday 22 June, 12 noon, Jack Rabbit Restaurant, Drysdale. Speaker: Janet O'Hehir, Landscape Designer and Horticulturist. Booking: Friends 5222 6053

School Holiday Program, Tuesdays 30 June and 7 July, Thursdays 2 and 9 July, 10:00 am to 12 noon. Booking essential

[www.geelongaustralia.com.au/gbg/](http://www.geelongaustralia.com.au/gbg/)

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

The Curiosity Cabinet is featuring 'Pumpkin Soup'.

The Tea House is open every day.



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Over page: Map showing these plants

# Geelong Botanic Gardens Map



1. False Banana *Ensete ventricosum*
2. Japanese Mahonia *Mahonia japonica*

3. Ginkgo or Maiden Hair tree *Ginkgo biloba*
4. Corsican Hellebore *Helleborus argutifolius*.



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

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