AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF HORTICULTURE

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What's inside?

From The President

We have completed our awards ceremonies that were held over from 2020 with amazing ceremonies held in Victoria, Sydney and Noosa that showcased the AIH's vibrant community of horticultural professionals and enthusiasts. It was a real joy to celebrate excellence and the commitment to horticulture.

And now we turn towards our 2021 awards – nominations are open to recognise amazing horticultural and landscape projects in 2021. If you have a favourite person or project that deserves our recognition, I encourage you to nominate online at aih.org.au.

I hope you enjoy another fantastic edition of HortInsights.

With best wishes

Michael Casey MAIH RH
National President
Australian Institute of Horticulture

Spanish Moss - It's Not Spanish And It's Not A Moss But It Is A Biosecurity Concern..

By Gregory Lewis MAIH, Images/ © Gregory Lewis

Some plants attract attention because of their spectacular flowers or tasty fruit but in the case of Spanish moss we have a plant that attracts attention by literally 'hanging around'. Read on to find out why I am not a fan of Spanish moss (well not when it's hanging in the wrong place!).

Spanish moss (*Tillandsia usneoides* - also known as Old Man's Beard) is considered attractive and desirable by a lot of people, however, there is another side to this plant that is potentially unattractive and undesirable.

Tillandsia usneoides is native to South America but has become naturalised in other places like the southern states of the USA. It is a member of the *BROMELIACEAE* family and being an Epiphyte it derives its nutritional requirements primarily from the atmosphere whilst attaching itself to the host plant via minute scales on it leaves.

It is typically used in the landscape as a plant of interest and contrast and as part of Bromeliad and Tropical plant displays.

Being an old favourite of home gardeners you will often find the plant hanging off the side fence or other structure along the side of a house or attached to a piece of wood or bark. If ever there was a plant that requires minimal to no maintenance this is it!

So why am I not a fan?

Well, let's put that statement into context and that context relates purely to its impacts on trees – not how it grows in glasshouses, conservatories, shade houses or side passage ways – just on our beautiful and magnificent trees!

The ease with which Spanish moss can spread is a concern.

Strong winds can disseminate this plant in areas containing high numbers of mature trees that are in close proximity to one another with this type of vegetative dispersal accounting for the significant increase in its appearance amongst local tree populations.

Other dispersal agents include birds and small mammals with small nesting birds having discovered how abundant and convenient the leaf strands are for nest building.

Hummingbird nest made with Spanish moss.

The other concern is the potentially disastrous effects caused by its continual 'smothering and shading'.

It does this by the accumulation of its long leaf strands effectively 'overwhelming' the host plant and inhibiting the penetration of light upon the foliage of the tree.

This leads to a *major reduction* in photosynthesis thereby reducing the ability of the tree to convert light energy into sugars hence threatening the critical energy source needed for respiration.

Stressed trees are therefore more susceptible to attack by pathogens and pests leading to an observable (and measurable) decline in the overall health and vigour of the tree.

From personal experience trying to remove or control this plant is difficult, very difficult.

Unlike other 'garden escapees' and woody invasive plants that can be effectively removed or controlled 'at ground level' (with the appropriate control method) Spanish moss being an 'air-plant' does its thing way above our heads!

Some of the low hanging material can be removed (with time and patience) from the ground by way of a telescopic pruning pole with applicable attachment but the rest is left with no reasonable, sustainable or safe way to remove it whilst working at ground level.

Therein lies the major concern with the spread of this plant. Once it has escaped from gardens into urban bushland and reserves it is for the most part 'untouchable'.

A check of the NSW DPI Weed Wise website reveals that it is a listed weed where it gets a mention for being problematic on Lord Howe Island with an additional link to the National Herbarium of NSW (PlantNET).

A further check of the two LGAs that encompass where I live reveal neither Council has Spanish moss on their respective weed lists, but refer back to the NSW DPI Weed Wise for more complete information.

Both of these municipalities contain large areas of bushland and endangered ecological communities.

Spanish moss inhibiting light reaching the foliage of a Norway Spruce (*Picea abies*). Image/ © Gregory Lewis

Worst case scenario showing Spanish moss throughout the canopy of the same tree. Image/ © Gregory Lewis

Eliminating or minimising the biosecurity risk of this plant will be achieved through continued consultation and co-operation by the major stakeholders' at all managerial and operational levels.

Fortunately there are many experienced, dedicated and caring people who work within Bush Regeneration, Amenity Horticulture and Arboriculture. They have the necessary observational, practical and technical skills to reasonably reduce or eliminate this plant when it threatens parts of our urban landscapes and bushland environments by growing outside of its natural distribution.

They deserve our on-going support and encouragement.

Gregory Lewis MAIH is a Horticulturist with over 40 years 'hands-on' experience within the horticultural industry in general and horticultural maintenance in particular.

Spanish moss established on a mature Turpentine tree (Syncarpia glomulifera) near the entrance to the E2 Environmental Conservation Zone Wahroonga. Image/ © Gregory Lewis

References:

Greater Sydney Regional Weed Management Plan 2017 – 2022
NSW Biosecurity Act 2015

https://weeds.dpi.nsw.gov.au/Weeds/SpanishMoss

Two known plants of slender nerved acacia (Acacia leptoneura) remain, about 1 kilometre apart. Propagation attempts have been unsuccessful and the genetic diversity is probably very low. Image/ Joel Collins, Author provided.

The 50 Beautiful Australian Plants At Greatest Risk Of Extinction — And How To Save Them

By Jennifer Silcock, Jaana Dielenberg, Roderick John Fensham & Teghan Collingwood

As far as odds go, things don't look promising for the slender-nerved acacia (*Acacia leptoneura*), a spiky plant with classic yellow-ball wattle flowers.

With most of its habitat in Western Australia's wheat belt cleared for agriculture, it was considered extinct for more than 160 years.

Now, just two plants are known in the world, and they're not even in the same place. This species is among many Australian plants that have come perilously close to extinction.

To help prevent the loss of any native plant species, we've assembled a massive evidence base for more than 750 plants listed as critically endangered or endangered. Of these, we've identified the 50 at greatest risk of extinction.

The good news is for most of these imperilled plants, we already have the knowledge and techniques needed to conserve them. We've devised an action plan that's relatively easy to implement, but requires long-term funding and commitment.

What's driving the loss?

There are 1,384 plant species and subspecies listed as threatened at a national level. Twelve Australian plant species are considered probably extinct and a further 21 species possibly extinct, while 206 are officially listed as critically endangered.

Australian plants were used, managed and celebrated by Australia's First Nations people for at least 60,000 years, but since European colonisation, they've been beset by a range of threats.

Land clearing, the introduction of alien plants, animals, diseases, and interruptions to ecological processes such as fire patterns and flooding have taken a heavy toll on many species. This is particularly the case in the more densely populated eastern and southern parts of the continent.

Ironstone pixie mop (*Petrophile latericola*) occurs on a soil type that's been heavily cleared for agriculture, and is suspected to be susceptible to an introduced root-rot fungus. In 2020 fewer than 200 plants remained, in poor condition. Andrew Crawford, Author provided.

Things aren't improving. Scientists recently compiled long-term monitoring of more than 100 threatened plant species at 600 sites nationally. And they found populations had declined on average by 72% between 1995 and 2017.

This is a very steep rate of decline, much greater than for threatened mammal or bird populations.

On the brink

Many species listed as threatened aren't receiving targeted conservation action or even baseline monitoring, so an important first step in preventing extinctions was identifying the species at greatest risk.

To find the top 50, we looked at the evidence: all available published and unpublished information and expert surveys of over 120 botanists and land managers. They're targeted by our **Action Plan for Australia's Imperilled Plants**.

Thirty of the species in the plan have fewer than 50 mature individual plants remaining. And 33 are known only from a single location, such as the Grampians pincushion-lily (*Borya mirabilis*), which occurs on one rocky outcrop in Victoria.

This means the entire population could be destroyed by a single event, such as a major bushfire.

Fewer than 15 woods well spyridium (Spyridium fontis-woodii) shrubs remain on a single roadside in South Australia. Research into threats and germination requirements is urgently needed, plus translocation to conservation reserves. Daniel Duval/South Australian Seed Conservation Centre, Author provided.

About 2,000 Morrisby's gums were growing in the early 1990s, but by 2016 fewer than 50 remained. Climate change and damage from insects and animals threaten those left. Protecting trees with fencing has led to new seedlings. Magali Wright, Author provided.

Fewer than 10 lax leek-orchids (*Prasophyllum laxum*) remain. Declines are ongoing due to drought and wildfire, and the South Australian species only occurs on private property not managed for conservation. Proposed recovery actions include habitat protection and establishing the orchid and its mycorrhizal fungi in conservation reserves. Shane Graves, Author provided.

So how can we protect them?

Some of the common management actions we've proposed include:

- preventing further loss of species' habitat. This is the most important action required at a national scale.
- regularly monitoring populations to better understand how species respond to threats and management actions.
- safely trialling appropriate fire management regimes, such as burning in areas where fires have been suppressed.
- investing in disease research and management, to combat the threat of phytophthora (root-rot fungus) and myrtle rust, which damages leaves.
- propagating and moving species to establish plants at new sites, to boost the size of wild populations, or to increase genetic diversity.
- protecting plants from grazing and browsing animals, such as feral goats and rabbits, and sometimes from native animals such as kangaroos.

Another common issue is lack of recruitment, meaning there's no young plants coming up to replace the old ones when they die. Sometimes this is because the processes that triggered these plants to flower, release seed or germinate are no longer occurring. This can include things like fire of a particular intensity or the right season.

Unfortunately, for some plants we don't yet know what triggers are required, and further research is essential to establish this.

Now we need the political will

Our plan is for anyone involved in threatened flora management, including federal, state, territory and local government groups, First Nations, environment and community conservation groups, and anyone with one of these plants on their land.

Plants make Australian landscapes unique — over 90% of our plant species are found nowhere else in the world. They're also the backbone of our ecosystems, creating the rich and varied habitats for our iconic fauna to live in. Plants underpin and enrich our lives every day.

Now we have an effective plan to conserve the Australian plants at the greatest risk of extinction. What's needed is the political will and resourcing to act in time.

Once common, the dwarf spider-orchid (*Caladenia pumila*) wasn't seen for over 80 years until two individual plants were found. Despite intensive management, no natural recruitment has occurred. Propagation attempts have successfully produced 100 seedlings and 11 mature plants from seed. This photo shows botanist Marc Freestone hand-pollinating dwarf spider-orchids. Marc Freestone, Author provided.

Only 21 mature plants of Gillingarra grevillea (*Grevillea sp. Gillingarra*) remain on a disturbed, weedy rail reserve in southwestern WA. Half the population was destroyed in 2011 due to railway maintenance and flooding. Habitat protection and restoration, and translocations to conservation reserves are needed to ensure its survival. Andrew Crawford, Author provided.

The Border Ranges lined fern (*Antrophyum austroqueenslandicum*) and its habitat are exceedingly rare. It's threatened by drought and climate change, and fewer than 50 plants remain in NSW. If the threat of illegal collection can be controlled, the species would benefit from re-introduction to Queensland's Lamington National Park. Lui Weber, Author provided.

What is Silica Dust? – Crystalline Silica

By Anthony Jenkins MAIH

Crystalline silica is found in stone, rock, sand, gravel, and clay, products such as bricks, tiles, concrete, artificial stone benchtops and some plastic materials. When these materials are worked on, silica is released as fine dust. This dust is respirable crystalline silica (silica dust). See SafeWork NSW video

Silica Dust and Cancer

Uncontrolled cutting, grinding of materials containing crystalline silica presents a serious risk to health. Silica dust is harmful when breathed in, 100 times smaller than a grain of sand, you can breathe it without knowing leading to silicosis, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, kidney disease and lung cancer.

It's estimated each year 230 people develop lung cancer due to past exposure to silica dust at work. Not all exposed workers will develop cancer. Risk increases with long term or repeated high-level exposure.

As of 1 July 2020, all medical practitioners must notify NSW Health when they diagnose a case of silicosis in NSW. Silicosis is a scheduled medical condition under Part 4 of the NSW Public Health Act 2010.

In 2011 about 587,000 Australians were exposed to silica dust whilst working. Estimated that about 5700 of these workers will develop lung cancer over the course of their life.

Greatest risk are miners, construction workers, farmers, and engineers. You may be exposed to silica dust if your work involves:

- Breaking, crushing, grinding, milling silica-containing material.
- Sand blasting.
- Moving earth / soil, excavating, quarrying.
- Sand casting.
- Brick laying.
- Paving, concreting, re-surfacing, cement rendering.
- Road construction.
- Demolition.
- Stonemasonry.
- Manufacturing concrete pavers, tiles, castings.
- Drilling, cutting, honing, grinding, chiselling, sanding silica containing materials.
- Handling, mixing, shovelling dry silica – containing materials.

Effective Controls

All Australian workplaces must follow work health and safety laws, these vary slightly between states and territories, but the duty of care for employers and responsibilities of workers across Australia is similar.

- Employers are required to ensure the health and safety of their workers at their workplace.

- Within reason, workers must take care of their own health and safety, not negatively affect that of others and follow instruction and workplace health and safety policies.

Eliminate or reduce exposure to hazards by following the risk management process and using the hierarchy of control.

1. Eliminate (remove hazard completely).
2. Substitute.
3. Engineering controls (exhaust, suitably rated dust extraction vacuums in conjunction with adaptive shrouds on power tools\ water suppression – wet saws) Just wetting the material is NOT enough -select the correct equipment.
4. Administrative controls (signage, operator training, planning, health monitoring, Risk assessment / Air monitoring.
5. Personal protective equipment PPE. Fit tested Dust masks.

Workers must be involved in the process to correctly identify hazards, control measures that suit the workplace and task. If suitable control measures are not in place, anyone working around silica dust has an increased risk of developing lung cancer.

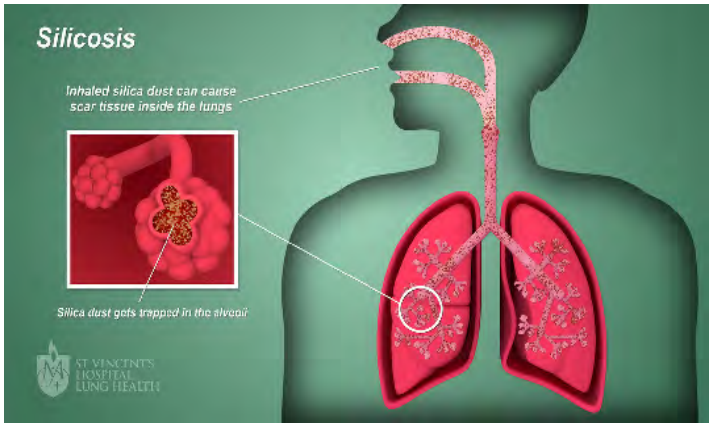
Workers MUST be given information on training and control measures and how to use them, information on the possible health effects of silica dust exposure and the health surveillance requirements of both employers and staff.

Air Monitoring

Mandatory limit for silica dust exposure in Australia is 0.05mg/m3 averaged over an eight (8) hour day (except Tasmania where it's 0.1mg/m3). 0.02mg/m3 is preferred, reduces the risk of lung cancer and silicosis. Currently there is no evidence to suggest a safe level of silica dust exposure.

Work Health and Safety (WHS) Regulation 50 states air monitoring (by occupational hygienist) must be conducted if there is any risk to health or there is potential of exceeding the exposure limit. Exposure levels in settings like construction sites are always changing, air sampling alone is not enough.

Breathing in this small amount of silica dust means you have exceeded the exposure limit of 0.05mg/m3



Silicosis. Inhaled silica dust can cause scar tissue inside the lungs. Silica dust gets trapped in the alveoli. Image/ https://www.svhlunghealth.com.au/conditions/silicosis

Health Surveillance

WHS Regulations state that health monitoring must be provided to workers who are continually working with silica dust and there is a significant risk to the worker's health. Safe Work Australia's crystalline silica health monitoring guide outlines how to monitor workers.

Health monitoring can help to detect loss in lung function before permanent damage. Surveillance should be undertaken before job placement, at least every three years (yearly for high-risk jobs).

For any concerns related to control measures at your workplace, or for more information on the control of air quality contact:

- Workplace supervisor or management (if you're an employee).
- Workplace health and safety representative or union representative.
- State and territory work health and safety regulators.
- Safe Work Australia.

Prevent silica dust exposure by keeping the dust out of the air. If you think you have been exposed to a cancer-causing agent it's important you speak with your doctor or to an experienced health professional on 13 11 20 or visit **www.cancer.org.au**

Anthony Jenkins MAIH is a Horticulturist, Licenced Landscaper, Landscape Designer, Teacher Landscape Design, Horticulture & Landscape Trades – PADSTOW TAFE NSW

Why Do We Need Pollinators?

By Neville Passmore FAIH RH

Most of the food crops you can think about need pollination to produce fruits or vegetables for our kitchens. The list of bee-pollinated crops is huge and if bees were not doing their job the consequences beggar the imagination.

Fruits we would not be able to enjoy include apple, citrus, plums, peach, papaya, persimmon, strawberry, avocado, chestnuts and almonds. On the vegetable front how would life be without tomatoes, celery, broccoli cabbage, onion, potato, cauliflower, zucchini and many types of beans?

Adding flavour to our cooking would be a problem without coriander, chilli, allspice, caraway, fennel and cardamom. And who could even start each day without a cup of coffee. All of this would be idle chatter if bees were not in so much strife worldwide.

Western Australia is recognised as a diversity hotspot across the globe's Mediterranean climate areas with over 13,000 species of plants, which call the state their home. In contrast the British Isles cannot pull 2000 native species together.

This local treasure chest of biodiversity is also under threat from a lack of pollinators. This enormous diversity has come about through aridity, low carbon soils and a lack of either glacial or volcanic activity to add mineral nutrients.

The relationships with pollinators include some of the most extreme and bizarre examples anywhere on the planet.

Here marsupials, birds, bees, beetles, wasps, moths and even emus have a role in this reproductive task.

Why is there a lack of pollinators for our wildflowers?

Perth has lost 70% of its green cover since settlement in 1829. By 2050 it is expected we will lose a further 3%. This is habitat destruction on a huge scale. There are currently 60 local plant species classified as endangered.

What can we as home gardeners do about this?

I can see two strategies here. One is to find alternative ways to control pests. The second is to attract more birds, bees and insects to our gardens by deliberately choosing pollinator friendly plants.

First up we need to fundamentally change the way we approach garden and household pests by foregoing biocides. What is a biocide - anything that kills life. This includes chemicals that are used to "control" insects, diseases, nematodes and weeds. Major consequences of this form of chemical warfare are many unexpected outcomes.

Neonicotinoid insecticides were developed in the 1990's because they appeared to be safer for birds and mammals than organophosphate and carbamate insecticides, which were in common usage at that time.

Neonics as they are often called, are today the most widely used insecticides in the world. Recent reports have raised concerns that these have contributed to honey bee colony collapse disorder (CCD) a major problem for bees across the globe.

Insecticides are generally indiscriminate and kill off the beneficials as well as the target insects. Bee health is affected by exposure to a wide range of agricultural pesticides.

How can we grow food and ornamental gardens without biocides?

A new approach is needed. Some alternative concepts include exclusion netting to keep pests such as cabbage moth, Mediterranean fruit fly, thrips and mites away from vegetables and fruit.

Some low-tech solutions I have seen include wood ash sprinkled over cabbage plants to deter cabbage moths, coffee grounds spread around the vegetable patch to deter snails and slugs from crossing the barrier and petroleum jelly spread around the trunk of citrus trees to stop ants from spreading scale insects.

The second strategy of planting pollinator friendly plants in our gardens is rich with exciting possibilities and can be approached at many levels.

I completed a revision and update of the **Waterwise Plant list** on behalf of the Nursery and Garden Industry of WA for the Water Corporation of WA. The online descriptions of 650 plants indicate which are attractive to birds, bees, insects, even small lizards and possums.

Beginning a pollinator friendly garden could simply consist of choosing appropriate plants from this list and planting these in your garden. Embracing this concept fully might see you developing a planting list that covers all four seasons of flowering. This is quite challenging for mid-summer and mid-winter when there are less plants in flower.

Also while it's fine to have plenty of tree canopy cover, if there is not an understorey and ground cover, many birds will be reluctant to enter, roost or nest because the garden lacks protection and places to hide.

Natives versus exotics

In my view there is no war here, just added opportunity. Grevilleas are superstars in the bird attracting business because they are nectar producers and many species have flowers across a number of seasons.

At home we have winter flowering red hot pokers and a selection of aloes that flower heavily during winter, a time when there is not much happening with local natives. Bees and nectar feeding birds constantly visit these flowers.

There is a very strong case for protecting existing native trees in urban areas.

A study of one old jarrah tree in Kings Park revealed a level of visitation that is almost incredible. This one mature jarrah tree supports 83 species of native animals, birds, reptiles and insects. Not a tree but a condominium.

By way of contrast wind pollinated European trees don't have to attract wildlife to achieve pollination.

There are lots of benefits to us as gardeners from a garden filled with birds, bees, insects and native animals. We can enjoy a new soundscape and gardens come alive with movement. It's also very comforting to know that we are helping the web of life to prosper in our suburbs.

Studies have revealed that our own sense of wellbeing and mental health are considerably enhanced by contact with nature; and what better place for this but our own garden.

Neville Passmore FAIH RH is a Fellow of the Institute and former National Councillor.

The Trials And Tribulations Of A Landscape Horticulturist - To Spray Or Not To Spray - That Is The Question!

By Mick O'Brien MAIH RH, Profound Horticultural

I remember over 20 years ago as a freshly qualified horticulturist - wide eyed and bushy tailed so to speak, I was eager, knowledgeable - and my god, I was motivated to get out there and carve out my mark.

Unfortunately, back in those days, the award wage for a landscape or nursery worker position was low paid, so while I was still bushy tailed and motivated, I still had to feed my family and the reality kicked in as I dearly loved my new career path, but how can I sustain myself, and make a career?

The magic word here is - sustaining - indeed, the more I worked in the field the more I realised there was more call for herbicide and insecticide applications in programmed maintenance than the so-called sustainable approach.

Back in the year 2000, I remember the teachings of the Integrated Pest Management Program strategies etched into my mind but unfortunately in the commercial landscape fields back then the solutions needed to be solved quickly and it is still a business model today in the paid contract environment.

Applying insecticides was not part of my aim and I certainly did not want a fulltime job spraying them as I was a nature lad who would always try and save any creatures and relocate them if they were in our way, but I do remember distinctly looking up at the sky while standing in the middle of a field wearing disposable overalls with a backpack spray unit loaded with chemicals on my back and spray wand in hand saying to myself - "Is this why I studied horticulture, to spray chemicals 8 hours a day?"

No chemicals needed here. Biocontrol happening in progress; ladybird beetle *Harmonia conformis*, feasting on Cowpea aphids on citrus! Image/ Mick O'Brien

Now here is a natural biocontrol agent, a spider web - totally enveloping and protecting this Cycas revoluta from the dreaded leaf destroying- Cycad blue moth- "*Theclinesthes onycha*". Image/ Mick O'Brien

Fast forward 20 years, my focus is on organic and sustainable solutions as much as possible, including correct plant choices, initial soil building, using mulch that protects the roots, but which also accepts all irrigation applied, choosing the right plant for long term that will grow well and have a better chance to survive the environmental extremes such as drought, wind, or floods.

I do not recommend troublesome plants (plants known to be continuously needing attention in the subtropics) to most clients who neither seem to have the time or inclination to look after them.

"I can hear you thinking", what is the difference between a sustainable horticulturist and a standard horticulturist?

Well in a nut shell, if one works for themselves in their own business they can offer advice and let their heart speak freely and make informed decisions based not only on the benefit of the plants health but take into consideration the importance of supporting our local endemic wildlife and offer long term solutions that may have a more subtle impact on the environment, and perhaps turn down the jobs that go against your natural sustaining environmental beliefs

- in comparison to my previous escapades 25 years ago, to do what you're told and use and recommend chemicals and fertilisers to "add on sell" for your employer as first priority to boost sales.

Back home in the patch on Bribie Island, we have mostly sandy soils which have trouble holding on to moisture and much work is needed to improve our soils to become fertile and thriving with microbial life.

"Interestingly a comparison could be made to the cells in humans as we consume food. It is broken down and assimilated into our system via the gut, therefore the healthier nutritious foods we eat, the better chance of absorbing the necessary vitamins and minerals for us to function optimally, this is also regulated by acidity and our internal chemistry just like the soil food web.

Soil micro-organisms are readily available because atmospheric conditions are ideal in compost and have been broken down and assimilated with bacteria and various strands of fungi, which thrive with just the right amount of moisture and oxygen to allow soil life to replicate and flourish.

When we add this "magic breath of life" compost, to our own impoverished soils the microorganisms further decompose the organic matter to create humus, the worms also oxygenate heavy soils and incubate new soil life while providing nutrient dense castings which can be utilised by the plant roots as they tap into natural plant available minerals in the pore spaces.

The sprout of thriving life! Image/ Mick O'Brien

This is the first step in re-creating a sustainable landscape, by utilising a holistic approach to nourishing your soil and in turn creating balance and harmony in your garden, but it does not stop there.

We need to continue a program of organic principles with the intention of attracting as many earth worms to your patch as possible. On the other side of the fence, the more chemical fertilisers and fungicides added to our soils can contribute to reduced earthworm activity and hence reduced fertility".

It pretty much hits the nail on the head for Sustainable gardening practices indeed!

Speaking of hitting the nail on the head! - I hereby name this new species: Yucca elephantipes- 'Thieving Barstidious'- indeed! **My hat was stolen!** Image/ Mick O'Brien

The Author: Mick O'Brien in his element! Image/ Mick O'Brien

The Garden Museum. Images/ Eva Nemeth, Matt Collins

The Garden Museum London

By David Thompson, Engagement Manager Australian Institute of Horticulture

In this edition of Destination: Horticulture we take a slightly different tack with a look at The Garden Museum in the heart of London.

A museum that celebrates horticultural history and the people behind our favourite plants – like John Tradescant whose name we know from the sometimes-lovely and sometimes-not Tradescantia species.

The Museum draws on Britain's love for horticulture and gardening, with a series of displays, events, garden installations and historic information about how we came to use plants the way we do.

The Sackler Garden at the centre of the Museum is a horticultural showcase of rare plants thriving in an enclosed microclimate, with a range of foliage and flowering plants drawn from around the world.

You'll even find the burial grounds of Captain William Bligh in these gardens.

Enjoy the tour!

Visit **gardenmuseum.org.uk** for more information.

Essential Facts About Professional Indemnity Insurance

Provided by Daniel Holmes, Fitzpatrick & Co Insurance Brokers

Professional indemnity insurance can provide cover for businesses and individuals who deliver professional services from the legal costs and claims for damages from an act, omission or breach of duty that occurs as a result of their actions.

This insurance may provide cover should:

- A web designer face legal proceedings after using an image for which it didn't have a licence.
- An architect gets sued for creating a flawed house design after the owners had to pay to fix a flawed extension.
- A marketing agency print a client's brochure with incorrect contact details, resulting in the client commencing legal action against the agency.

It's important to understand how this type of cover works because many people don't think it applies to them, when it can provide an important line of defence in many different circumstances.

1. Cover is available in many different industries

Don't assume you can only take out professional indemnity insurance if you are a member of one of the traditional 'professions'.

You don't have to be a doctor or a lawyer to take out this type of cover. In fact, anyone who is in a role in which they provide advice should consider whether professional indemnity insurance could provide protection from litigation.

A lot of people like plumbers and builders give advice, but don't buy professional indemnity insurance. But they may be exposed if a customer follows their advice to their detriment

Anyone who gives incorrect advice that results in a financial loss, including accountants, solicitors, mortgage brokers, engineers and project managers need professional indemnity insurance. You can also be held accountable for not giving advice you would be expected to have given.

"While it's important to appreciate risks for which you are not covered, it's equally important to understand which policy extensions are available."

2. You may be sued for not giving advice

Not only can someone face legal proceedings for giving incorrect advice that causes a loss, a professional may also be sued for not giving advice that is reasonably expected of someone working in their field.

For instance, doctors may be sued if they fail to diagnose you are suffering from an illness, decline to send you for a scan when they may reasonable have been expected to or neglect to provide you with a duty of care expected of a professional.

3. Professional indemnity insurance only provides cover when the policy is current

Professional indemnity insurance only covers policyholders while a policy is live. So if you take out a policy, then let it lapse, you won't be covered for claims that concern events that happened when the policy was active.

This means professionals should consider whether they need to maintain professional indemnity cover even when they retire. In some professions, for instance accounting, there is a requirement to maintain cover even when you retire or leave the profession.

4. Understand any exclusions

Professional indemnity insurance is a complex area and many insurers won't cover certain risks in policies. For instance, most insurers won't cover builders and other entities in the construction sector for any damages that relate to building cladding, given the problems many strata buildings have encountered with flammable materials.

This means it's essential to read the fine print in policies and develop a real understanding about which professional risks are covered and which are not.

5. Understand policy extensions

While it's important to appreciate risks for which you are not covered, it's equally important to understand which policy extensions are available.

For instance, many policies will include extensions for investigation costs in the event a claim is made against a policyholder and he or she needs to retain legal services.

"It's also essential to understand the policy's retroactive date". This is the date from which the insurer has agreed to provide cover. It is recommended to negotiate unlimited cover.

As this shows, professional indemnity insurance is complex and it pays to work with an experienced insurance broker to help you get the right cover for your circumstances. That's the best way to ensure the policy responds when it comes time to make a claim.

Important Note:

This information is to assist you in understanding some of the terms, implications and common considerations with professional indemnity insurance.

For more information or questions on Professional Indemnity insurance or your own policy, please contact Fitzpatrick & Co. Insurance Brokers on 03 8544 1636 or email: **insure@fitzpatrick.com.au** OR visit our website at **www.fitzpatrick.com.au**

Fitzpatrick & Co have specialised in the horticulture and arboriculture industry for over 30 years providing assistance and financial support to companies, associations and events.

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'PINK ELLE'Ⓟ

SPIRES OF PINK FLOWERS

A stunning small and compact evergreen shrub for a modest garden, low hedge or container. Spires of stunning flowers in tones of pink fading to white are held above the glossy green foliage. The peak period of flowering is throughout the summer months but spot flowering can also be seen well into autumn. An easy care, low maintenance and tough plant for many applications.

FEATURES

- Trouble-free and easy to grow
- Stunning summer displays of dense upright pink flowers fading to white
- Compact habit with glossy dark green leaves all year round

USES

- Fantastic low ornamental hedging
- Beautiful container displays
- Feature plant for small courtyard gardens

CARE

Low water requirements once established. Keep moist during extended dry periods and whilst flowering. Prune back to desired shape after flowering. Feed with a slow release fertiliser in spring for optimum results.

FULL SUN

PART SHADE

HEDGING

CONTAINERS

HEIGHT 2.5M
SPREAD 2M

ORIGIN: France // **SPECIES**: *laevis* // **PROTECTION STATUS:** PBR Protected

Write for AIH

We welcome contributions to HortInsights from professionals, members and students in the horticulture industries.

Writing for the Institute offers an excellent way to share your views, knowledge and expertise with a passionate audience and you can be attributed CPD points.

While we are unable to pay for content submissions, our editorial promise is that if your submission is accepted for publishing, we will endeavor to repurpose it widely, for our website, social media or other public media channels.

These Guidelines Will Help You Provide The Right Format To Be Published:

- Articles should be a maximum of 600-800 words. A more concise article with a definite aim and strong take-home messages will help our audience use your expert information well.
- Please provide sources and references if you cite or refer to others' information in your article.
- Please provide 1-2 quality images. Photographs must be large enough to be used in a range of publications with a file size of between 1 and 5 MB (megabytes).

We reserve the right to make editorial, grammatical and stylistic changes to text and images.

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