

RORAIMA NURSERY

Newsletter No. 1

20 Swan Street Lara Vic 3212

Spring 2011

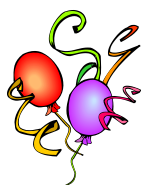
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Introducing Our First Newsletter

Welcome to the first of our quarterly newsletters, keeping our customers up to date with what's happening and what's new at the Nursery. In this edition you'll find features on plants, gardening tips for Spring, and information about our up-and-coming birthday sale including a fabulous competition to be won!



HAPPY 10TH BIRTHDAY



Roraima Nursery is turning 10 years old! Come and help us celebrate with

25% OFF ALL PLANTS*

For seven big days from

Friday 2nd September till Thursday 8th September

*Excludes advanced *Brachycton rupestris*



UP THE GARDEN PATH!!

As part of our 10th Birthday celebrations we, together with 93.9 BayFM, are offering one lucky customer the chance to win a free garden consult and design, plus \$500 worth of plants! Just go to www.bayfm.com.au for conditions and entry. The winner will be announced on BayFM on Monday morning the 5th of September. Good luck!

RORAIMA PLANT PROFILE



Botanical Name

Puya alpestris

Common Name: Sapphire Tower

This architectural plant is a member of the Bromeliaceae family. There are over 100 different species of Puya, most of which are native to South America. Only a few species are readily available in nurseries.

Puya alpestris, as pictured on the left, is native to Southern Chile. It has serrated spiny leaves that are glossy green on the top and silvery-white underneath. It is usually said to prefer full sun. Once established, it is drought tolerant. It is an evergreen frost hardy plant that likes free draining soil. It can reach 1m in height with a further 1.2m of flower spike appearing in Spring. The spectacular long-lasting flower spike, known to last up to 8 weeks, is made up of a mass of deep blue-green to almost black-blue colored flowers. The coloring of the flower stem looks as though it has come from an artificial flower store. When you see it in person, you will be amazed. Puya alpestris is a monocarpic plant, meaning that after flowering, it dies. It can take up to 6 years before flowering. The Puya should have produced pups prior to flowering.

Ballarat resident Cliff Broome has found that Puya alpestris can withstand more extreme conditions than generally indicated. He has grown one in full shade through snow and frost. It even flowered and yet not died after flowering. Cliff removed the flower stem after 6 weeks of flowering as he wanted to show it to the Ballarat Cactus & Succulent Society. The adult Puya currently has two decent sized pups attached to it with no sign of death. The above photographs are Cliff's flowering Puya alpestris in Ballarat.



Roraima's mature Puya alpestris, as pictured on the left, is 50cm in height and 70cm in diameter. It is 5 years old. A care free plant that will have an outstanding flower stem, Puya alpestris in a 10cm pot is only \$7.95, as pictured on the right.



SPRING GARDENING

Spring is the time for weeding, feeding and planting. As the cold weather moves away, the ground will begin to warm up, encouraging new growth to the garden.

For natives such as Banksias/Grevilleas/Hakeas,(being part of the Proteaceae family),we suggest using only a native fertilizer on these. Other natives like Eucalypts, Acacias etc. are more tolerant to the level of nitrogen that they can handle, and other fertilisers may be used so long as you follow directions for correct application. If you have a mixture of natives in your garden being made up of both the Proteaceae family and other native families (Myrtaceae, Mimosaceae etc.) it is best to stick to just the native fertiliser to ensure that no damage is caused to any of your Proteaceae plants.

Spring is also a good time for mulching around your plants. Place mulch around the plants leaving a gap of about 15cm away from the central stem to allow the rain and hand watering easy access to the soil. Over past years where only small amounts of rain have fallen, it has not penetrated through the mulch, hence the plant has suffered. Then apply mulch thickly to the surrounding area (approximately 10cm thick), to retain moisture in the soil and also reduce the amount of weeds.

A lot of the Aloes have or will be completing their flower cycle. The flower stem now becomes a woody skeleton stem which can be seen as an architectural feature in your garden. Try leaving the bare stems on the Aloes for a few weeks just to alter the look of your garden.



Pictured is the stunning architectural Aloe arborescens x ferox in flower in Roraima's display gardens that are currently under development

NEW ARRIVALS



Stapelia leendertziae - Named after Transvaal Museum botanist, Reino Leendertz, this Stapelia has pale green or reddish quadrangular stems. It is a clump forming succulent reaching 200mm in height with dark maroon/red star-shaped flowers up to 80mm in diameter.

Flowering time is November – February. It can withstand mild frost, and should receive only minimal watering during winter. Plant in a full sun/part shade position. At Roraima Nursery they are available in 10cm pots for \$7.95, as pictured on the right.



Images of the flowering Stapelia courtesy Pieter Strydom, Kiepersol - Dave's Garden website.



Alluaudia humbertii, native to Madagascar, is part of the Didiereaceae family of which there are only 11 species. All Alluaudias begin as shrubs and eventually mature to resemble trees. If grown in a pot it forms a mass of branches that entangle with nearby plants, and therefore should be cut back to maintain a neater plant. Alluaudia humbertii reaches 5-6m in Madagascar. It has both greenish male and white female flowers on the one plant.

Place in a full sun to part shade position, preferably protected from wind and out of direct rainfall. Keep dry in winter and water moderately in summer.

As seen in the photograph on the left, this Alluaudia has only reached 1.2m over 10 years in a pot at Roraima Nursery. It is suggested it will only reach 2-3m+ due to the difference in Madagascan/Victorian climate.



Alluaudia humbertii is available at the Nursery for \$9.95 in 10cm pots as pictured on the right.

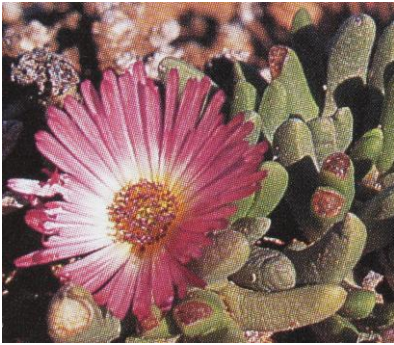


Dyckia marnier lapostellei, native to Brazil, is a silvery rosette of leaves, lined with minute teeth. The plant can reach 22cm diameter after 10-15years growth, as pictured on the left.

Frost tender, and best grown in full sun, this textured plant resembles several silver starfish



spiraled on top of each other. It has an orange flower similar to other Dyckias with orange flowers. It is available for \$25 in 20cm terracotta pots, as pictured on the right.



Cephalophyllum spissum is one of 33 known species of the genus. Native to Vanrhynsdorp, South Africa, Cephalophyllum spissum brightens up your garden with its Winter flowering, purple/pink flower petals with white at the base, yellow stamens, and dark green foliage. Foliage can reach 45-60mm length. A slow growing ground cover plant ideal for small areas, it can spread easily by

suckers. It is only \$5.95 in a 10cm pot as pictured on the right.



Crassula 'Springtime' is a beautiful light star-shaped pink flowered cultivar that flowers in Winter/Spring. Reaching 15cm height, it is not an invasive plant and can be a very useful ground cover in the garden. It requires

regular watering during the growing season. It is drought tolerant once established and makes an attractive, low maintenance plant. Crassula 'Springtime' is available in the Nursery for \$5.95 in 10cm pots as pictured on the lower right.



The two flowering images above are courtesy of Geoff Stein, palmbob – Dave's garden website.

CARING FOR CACTI

Dynamic Lifter – used carefully around your garden, this is a beneficial fertiliser for Cacti and Succulents. Making sure that you follow package directions for the distribution rate, and not applying too close to the plant, this fertiliser works well in slowly placing nutrients into the ground. For potted cacti, a slow release fertiliser can be applied following directions for application rate. Liquid fertiliser (worm/seaweed/fish) can alternatively or also be applied at regular intervals making sure not to over-fertilise if using both forms of fertiliser.

In late Spring a lot of the cacti will begin to brighten up your garden with their beautiful brightly coloured flowers. Taking regular photographs of your plants in flower is a way of keeping records of when they flowered and how many flowers and to what quality of flowers they were.

NURSERY NEWS



We are very pleased to welcome a new member of staff, Kylie, to the Nursery. She brings more than fifteen years of horticultural experience to our retail team.

In August Roraima Nursery was one of 18 small retail businesses throughout Victoria to feature in the “Small Business Heroes – the Retailers” exhibition sponsored by the Victorian State Government. This exhibition showcased small businesses that are innovative in the products they sold or the way they presented or marketed their businesses. The exhibition ran for 10 days in Federation Square before moving to Ballarat. We are proud to have been selected to be a part of the exhibition.

We hope you enjoy your Spring gardening and should you have any queries, do not hesitate to contact us at Roraima Nursery. Be it in person, online or by phone, we will do our very best to look after you and your gardening needs.

Happy gardening,
From all at Roraima Nursery