

Pirianda Garden



Visitor Guide

Pirianda Garden is a beautiful woodland garden containing a unique collection of plants including many trees which are botanically significant and considered rare in cultivation in Australia. Unusual trees and shrubs blend harmoniously with ferns and the impressive Blackwoods and Mountain Ash provide shady over storey as you walk through the garden to the terraces and peaceful fern gully below.

Location and access

Pirianda Garden is located on Hacketts Road, Olinda (off Olinda-Monbulk Rd). Melways reference 122 A12.

Things to see and do

As you enter the garden, you will pass through a grassy area containing many northern hemisphere trees rarely cultivated in Australia. Below this top terrace the bog garden leads past finely terraced walls built from local stone during the Ansell's time. At the base of the garden, the natural fern gully is dominated by Blackwoods and Soft and Rough Tree Ferns, providing a shady haven during summer.

History

At the turn of the century the original forest at Pirianda was selected for settlement, with the exception of tree ferns and Blackwood in the fern gully. In 1911 the property was purchased by Mr Thomas Crook who planted several exotic trees including hybrid rhododendrons and seven Copper Beech situated on the slope below the present house site. Later the land was sub-divided and leased for carrot and potato production.

Harvey and Gillian Ansell bought Pirianda in 1959. By this time the property consisted of 23 acres. A further 5 acres were added some years later. The Ansell family gradually removed bracken and blackberries so that work could begin on the garden. With a great deal of imagination and hard work, the aim of a perfect balance between exotic plantings and beautiful native rainforest species, became a reality.

On their annual overseas holidays the Ansell's always sought out new and unusual plants which they imported and displayed at Pirianda.

The Aboriginal word Pirianda is believed to mean "sufficient" or "enough".

This garden treasure was generously donated to the State Government of Victoria in 1977. Parks Victoria commenced management of Pirianda Garden in 1995.

Collections

Pirianda Garden features such delights as 28 different types of maples and 13 birch varieties. Collections of magnolias, eucryphias, rhododendrons, clethra, styrax, pieris, viburnums and many conifers can also be seen. Three specimens of the unusual and haunting Chinese Handkerchief Tree (*Davidia involucrate*) are located here. They flower annually in early November. The large bracts are up to 12cm long, pure white and conspicuous when waving in the wind. The sight of these trees in flower is reason enough to visit Pirianda Garden.

Other unusual plants include members of the aceae plant family, *Franklinia spp* and *Stewartia spp* which are both attractive and rarely seen specimen plants. Both species have delicate and beautiful flowers and are related to the better known camellias. Pirianda Garden features beautiful spring displays but is renowned for its unsurpassed autumn colours and its fine tree collection.

Seasonal highlights

Spring: rhododendrons, azaleas, magnolias, camellias, dogwoods, Dove Tree and spring bulbs.

Summer: Mock Orange, Eucryphia, Clethra, Hydrangeas and NSW Christmas bush.

Autumn: Spectacular autumn foliage colours of a wide variety of exotic trees and shrubs, including the unusual sight of *Franklinia alatamaha* which flowers on leafless branches.

Winter: Luculia, Witch Hazel, camellias and early rhododendrons.

For further information

Parks Victoria
Information Centre

Call 13 1963

or visit the

Parks Victoria website

www.parkweb.vic.gov.au

Caring for the garden

Help us look after your garden
by following these guidelines:

Please take rubbish away with
you for recycling & disposal

Do not collect plant material –
leave them for others to enjoy

Dogs must be controlled
on a leash at all times.

Please clean up after your
dog

Weddings

The garden can be booked for wedding ceremonies
and photography.

Community Involvement

The preservation of the garden is assisted by the
voluntary group called Friends of Pirianda Garden.
If you are interested in joining the Friends group,
please contact Parks Victoria on 13 1963.

Other attractions in the area:

- National Rhododendron Gardens
- William Ricketts Sanctuary
- Alfred Nicholas Gardens
- Dandenong Ranges National Park

Please return this garden
note to the information
shelter after use so it can
be used by others.
Thank you.

