Botanic Garden
Alice Springs

Entry and Guide Booklet:
$5 by donation

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Please Help Fund the Garden

The Olive Pink Botanic Garden is a not-for-profit community organisation. We rely on our friends and supporters to help fund the Garden. Please help by making a $5 donation or by becoming a Garden Sponsor - see page 31.

How to use this Guide

Listed on the front cover of this guide are three lovely Walks plus three Garden Beds to explore. Please feel free to wander along the many other paths and enjoy features and plants not described in this guide. There are signs about the plants, the Garden and Aboriginal culture to read as you go.

The Garden is dominated visually by Annie Meyers Hill (or Tharrarletneme), a very significant Arrernte cultural site associated with ‘caterpillar dreaming’ and registered under the NT Aboriginal Sacred Sites Act. Arrernte custodians for the site worked with Garden staff to develop the Hill Walk. A sign at the top of Tharrarletneme describes an Arrernte view of Alice Springs (Mparntwe) and surrounds. The hill provides superb views of Alice Springs, the Todd River and the MacDonnell Ranges.

As you walk around the Garden, you will find drinking water fountains and signs with more information.

Founding the Garden

The Australian Arid Regions Native Flora Reserve, now the Olive Pink Botanic Garden, was founded in 1956 after lobbying by Miss Olive Muriel Pink. An unconventional anthropologist, an outspoken advocate for Aboriginal rights, a botanical artist and a woman ahead of her time in promoting the cultivation of Australia's native plants, Miss Pink was the Garden's Honorary Curator from 1956 until her death in 1975, aged 91.
She lived in the Garden in a small tin hut, and worked with Warlpiri gardeners, including the celebrated Johnny Jampijinpa (below). Today we treasure a globally unique arid zone botanic garden and continue to work towards Miss Pink’s vision:

“…. forty-nine acres of ground on which to preserve and grow, native trees, shrubs and flowers – as a ‘soulfeeding’ antidote to the restless rush and materialism of what ‘modern living’ entails for so many in this isolated town.”

Opened to the public in 1985, the Garden has over 600 Central Australian plant species, including 33 that are rare or threatened. It provides important habitat for the Black-footed Rock Wallaby and many other native mammals, frogs and reptiles. More than 80 bird species can be observed here.

Miss Pink: an unforgettable woman

Miss Pink was one of Alice Springs’ most colourful characters and a woman who evoked contradictory opinions. As biographer Julie Marcus stated in her landmark work *The Indomitable Miss Pink:*

“she was a threatening figure in her lifetime because she pinpointed the most controversial issues of her day and highlighted them in ways that other anthropologists did not …. these issues continue to be important today.”

She championed the rights of Aboriginal people and would interrupt court proceedings if she considered that tribal law and custom were not being taken into account. She was once fined for contempt but refused to pay, demanding to be gaoled instead. Appalled that one of his chief tormentors was to be in his goal, the head gaoler paid the fine himself.
Her Early Life

Born in Hobart in 1884, Miss Pink travelled to Ooldea in South Australia in 1926 and 1927 to visit anthropologist Daisy Bates. From that time on, her heart and imagination were captured by desert landscapes and Aboriginal culture. She studied anthropology at the University of Sydney and travelled to and from Alice Springs throughout the 1930s to conduct fieldwork in remote and difficult conditions with the Warlpiri and Arrernte people.

Miss Pink relocated permanently to Central Australia in 1940, aged 56. A wiry, determined woman, she moved to the Tanami Desert in 1942, staying there until 1946 when drought and the relocation of the Warlpiri people forced her back to Alice Springs. Miss Pink then dedicated much of her time to advocacy on behalf of Aboriginal people, in particular, continuing her quest for a secular sanctuary in the Tanami Desert for the Warlpiri people.

Rebel and Recognition

Miss Pink is buried near the Aboriginal section of the Alice Springs Cemetery on Memorial Drive. All the headstones in the cemetery face east, except Miss Pink’s – hers faces west. Her faithful friend Reg Harris later said:

‘The old lady would appreciate the fact that she is a rebel still, even in death.’

Full recognition of Miss Pink’s extraordinary life and body of work has a long way to go. You can find out more about her in ‘The Indomitable Miss Pink’ by Julie Marcus.
Olive Pink Botanic Garden: a globally unique treasure

By Peter Latz, renowned Central Australian botanist and author

When our European ancestors first arrived here they found the climate and plants very different to those they left behind. So it is no wonder they chose to grow familiar European plants in their gardens and fields. Unfortunately we second Australians are still not in love with our native flora. It’s about time we changed this and started growing native plants in our gardens and fields. Olive Pink set the example almost 60 years ago.

To really get to know our native plants we need to grow them so we can understand how they react to cultivation as well as observe their life history. Over time what we learn will enable us to develop and use plants that will produce new foods and medicines, replace roses and other introduced plants in our gardens and provide refuge and a seed source for the desert’s rare plants. The Olive Pink Botanic Garden, with more than 600 Central Australian plant species, is vital to these endeavours.

Bushtucker and Medicinal Plants

The search for new routes for trade in spices was the main driving force for early exploration of our planet, eventually leading to the present global trade. In those days spices were extremely valuable and many lives were lost in search of them. In some ways things have not changed much. More and more throughout the world, new food flavours are highly sought after.

The desert grows few bushtucker plants that produce copious quantities of palatable foods, but it excels in plants that produce new spices, and hence exquisite new tastes. The Bush Orange (above) - Capparis mitchellii - is a prime example. Although it produces little edible food, just a smidgen of its pulp is needed to give a unique flavour to ice-cream.

There are also many useful medicinal plants growing in our deserts, and the First Australians used them with great effect. These medicinal plants are limited in one important respect – they weren’t developed to treat European diseases.
The First Australians had no contact with the diseases that plagued Europe, so it is no wonder that first contact led to the death of a great many of our continent’s first inhabitants. Even so, many of the desert’s plants produce potent medicines and it’s time we properly investigated their potential. The Olive Pink Botanic Garden has an extraordinary and unique collection of bush-tucker and medicinal plants of great value to such work.

Rare Plants

In the centre of Australia we are privileged to be surrounded by large areas of mostly unchanged vegetation. Nevertheless, some of our plants are in severe decline, mostly because of changed fire regimes. Several species are quite rare. Interestingly, we also harbour some curious plants, mostly ones found in small ‘oases’ in our damp sheltered gorges. Some of these plants, such as certain ferns, can be common in wetter parts of Australia, but are separated from their mother populations by vast areas of desert. Conserving these relict plants is critical, as they are almost certainly genetically different from their mother populations. The Olive Pink Botanic Garden, with 33 species of Central Australian plants that are rare or threatened, is an important refuge for such plants.

Water-wise Garden Plants

Our town has the unfortunate reputation of using more water per household than almost any other in Australia. We may well run out of this precious mined water in the not-too-distant future. For this reason it is essential we grow less-thirsty native plants in our gardens. Unfortunately, nearly half of our desert plants do not flourish under cultivation, mostly due to our highly mineralised water, which quickly increases soil pH and results in compaction. The Olive Pink Botanic Garden is conducting research on overcoming these problems. It is also developing display gardens to demonstrate how spectacular and hardy our Central Australian desert plants can be.

I’m sure you will enjoy the Garden and its walks as much as I do. Decades of dedicated work, by Olive Pink, Johnny Jampijinpa and countless others, have gone into producing this globally unique treasure-trove of biodiversity and store of potential foods and medical cures. Any help you can offer the Garden to continue this work is well-placed, much needed and very much appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

Peter Latz
Self-guided, 40 minutes return

Please make sure you take water with you, have appropriate footwear for the rocky path and supervise children. There is a sign at the top of the hill outlining the importance of this site to the Arrernte people. We ask visitors to keep to the path and respect this important cultural site.

The walk will introduce you to a number of the native plants that grow in the rocky hill habitat of the region. Many of these plants have evolved to tolerate drought. Some, known as ‘resurrection plants’ do so by dying back and regenerating from rootstock or tubers once rain falls again.

Buffel grass (*Cenchrus ciliaris*): the scourge of Central Australia

You will encounter this introduced weed on the hill walk. Despite our ongoing efforts over many years to control buffel grass in the planted low lying areas, we have yet to control it on the surrounding hills.

First thought to be introduced accidentally via Afghan camel saddle padding in the late 1800’s, buffel grass was widely sown to curb erosion during the severe drought of the 1960s. It is still sown today as a pasture for cattle. There are serious concerns about its ability to out-compete native plants and to carry very hot fires that kill many native plants. Now widespread in inland Australia, research continues into ways of controlling its spread from pastoral areas.
1. Whitewood
*Atalaya hemiglauca*
Arrernte name: Arlperre

**Attractive Garden Tree:** Whitewood grows to 7m, produces creamy flowers in the warmer months, and winged 'helicopter' seeds. An attractive garden tree, in cultivation it is susceptible to frosts when young, and often produces root suckers. Widespread across central and eastern inland regions, it occurs on a wide variety of non-spinifex habitats such as rocky hills and sand dunes. **Bushfood & Traditional Use:** Aboriginal people harvest edible witchetty grubs from the roots and the white sap is edible. Its soft white timber is used to make ornaments.

2. Dead Finish
*Acacia tetragonophylla*
Arrernte name: Arlketyerre

The drought-resistant nature of this spiky wattle is captured in its common name – Dead Finish: the last species to peg out in severe drought. Growing up to 3m high, it is found in a range of habitats across inland Australia. Very showy in flower, these dense shrubs create good habitat for nesting birds. **Bushfood & Medicinal:** The seeds, while not prolific, are an important bushfood. Arrernte people use the sharp spiky leaves to treat warts. The bark from its roots is steeped in water to make an antiseptic solution for treating sores.

3. Smoke Bush
*Ptilotus obovatus*
Arrernte name: Awerreke-alyeye-alyeye

This low rounded shrub grows up to 60cm high, flowers prolifically after rains and is very drought tolerant. Widely distributed throughout inland Australia. **Bushfood:** Aboriginal people sometimes harvest an edible grub from its roots.
4. Witchetty Bush
*Acacia kempeana*
**Arrernte name:** Atnyeme

This species is both drought and fire tolerant. It is widespread chiefly on stony or rocky hillsides, or stony alluvial soils in Central Australia. **Bushfood & Traditional Use:** Witchetty grubs (larvae of a moth) found in the roots of this wattle are a tasty and favoured traditional food. The seeds are also an important bushfood. The Arrernte people used the inner bark from the roots to make string to tie splints on broken limbs.

5. Dense Cassia
*Senna artemisioides subsp. sturtii*

**Attractive Garden Plant:** Common and widespread in a range of habitats across inland Australia, this species grows up to 2m and produces masses of sweetly-scented yellow flowers in the cooler months. Like Silver Cassia, it is somewhat short-lived, but is easy to propagate and keep in cultivation. The obvious difference between Silver Cassia and Dense Cassia is the leaves: Silver Cassia has silvery leaves with each leaflet being a tube with a groove running down it; Dense Cassia has less silvery leaves, with leaflets that are either flat, or in-rolled to form a U shape.

6. Silver Indigo
*Indigofera leucotricha*

This attractive silver-grey shrub produces purplish-pink pea flowers in early summer or after rain. Although very drought tolerant, it is not common in cultivation as it only grows well in free-draining, acidic soils. Many examples of this plant can also be seen on the left hand side of the Wattle Walk. It grows up to 1m on rocky country in the Alice Springs region, parts of northern SA, western Qld and the north-west of NSW.
7. Long-leaved Corkwood  
_Hakea lorea subsp. lorea_

The thick, corky bark gives rise to the common name for this species, and helps protect this shrub from fires. Growing up to 7m high, Long-leaved Corkwood occurs on rocky hills, spinifex sandplain and in woodland communities across a large part of inland Australia. **Bushfood:** Large nectar-rich, yellow-green flowers are produced in the cooler months. Aboriginal people harvest these for the honey.

8. Silver Cassia  
_Senna artemisioides subsp. artemisioides_

**Arrernte name:** Apwene

**Attractive Garden Plant:** Growing to 2m high in a wide range of habitats, Silver Cassia is very common and widespread across the drier parts of the rangelands of Australia. Along this path you will see other Cassia species, and you may also notice the distinctive “prayer” shaped structure of dead Cassias. Buttercup yellow flowers appear in August. **Bushfood & Medicinal:** Aboriginal people harvest edible grubs from the roots, and the leaves are used to make a medicine.

9. Crimson Turkey Bush  
_Eremophila latrobei_

**Arrernte name:** Atnerleng

**Attractive Garden Plant:** There are two leaf forms – one dark green and the other greyer – but both produce nectar-rich crimson flowers. It is usually the first to flower immediately after rain. It can die back in dry times and reshoot from ‘dead’ branches after good rains. It grows to 1.5m in a range of mulga-dominated habitats or on rocky hill slopes. It is widespread and common across inland Australia. **Medicinal:** Arrernte people use the juice from leaves as a rubbing medicine or in a solution to treat flu symptoms, headaches and infections. Fresh stems are also used to treat toothache, and the nectar from flowers is eaten to treat sore throats.
10. Striped Mint-bush
*Prostanthera striatiflora*
**Arrernte name:** Arrwatnurlke

**Attractive Garden Plant:** This showy prolifically flowering species grows to 2m, is cultivated in gardens and is relatively short-lived. In drought it looks almost dead on hill-slopes, but generally revives after good rains. Grows on rocky hill slopes and along rocky creek lines in Central Australia and the Central Ranges of WA, and in semi-arid parts of SA and NSW. **Medicinal:** The Arrernte people crush the fragrant leaves and either mix them with fat or oil to make a rubbing medicine to treat flu symptoms, or use the juice to dry out sores. The leaves can also be burnt to make an inhaling smoke.

11. Horse Mulla Mulla
*Ptilotus schwartzii*

This species grows up to 1m high on rocky hills or Spinifex-dominated plains. It produces mauve-pink flower spikes after rains and can die right back during drought, then regrow after rains. Many examples of Horse Mulla Mulla can also be seen on the Overlander walk on the south east side of the garden. Widespread but not very common across a fairly large area of inland Australia.

12. Mountain Wanderrie
*Eriachne mucronata*

A widespread perennial grass in arid Australia, Mountain Wanderrie grows mainly in rocky habitats throughout much of arid and semi-arid tropical Australia. This species grows in tufts that can be up to 40cm high and it is very drought tolerant. Euros (Hill Kangaroos) don't seem to graze this grass, even when few other plants are available.
13. Blunt-leaf Cassia  
*Senna artemisioides subsp. helmsii*

**Attractive Garden Plant:** Grows up to 2 m high, produces masses of yellow flowers in the cooler months and has distinctive silver-grey flat leaflets that are notched at the tip. It is a very drought tolerant plant that can re-shoot after mild fires. Common and widespread across inland Australia.

14. Rock Fuchsia Bush  
*Eremophila freelingii*

**Arrernte name:** Arrethe

Growing up to 1.5m, this species produces large lilac flowers after rains and sheds its lower leaves to conserve moisture during drought. Common on the ranges and hills around Alice Springs; it also extends to the northern Flinders Ranges in SA, western Qld and northwards to Tennant Creek. **Medicinal:** An important medicinal plant for Arrernte people. Its leaves are either burnt and the smoke inhaled, or steeped in water and drunk to treat skin ailments or headaches. A rubbing medicine is also made from the leaves to treat flu and chest infections.

Some of the other species you will see along this walk are:

1. Native grasses: Kangaroo Grass (*Themeda triandra*); and Flat-awned Three-awn (*Aristida nitidula*)
2. *Ptilotus macrocephalus* and *Ptilotus polystachyus*
3. Native Fig (*Ficus brachypoda*)
4. Caustic Vine (*Sarcostemma viminalis subsp. australis*) and
5. Resurrection ferns *Cheilanthes sieberi* and *Cheilanthes lasiophylla* as well as many ephemeral forbs that re-appear after rains.
Wattle Walk

This self-guided walk will introduce you to a number of wattles (*Acacia*) that grow in Central Australia. There are over 1000 different wattles in Australia and over 1300 worldwide.

The wattle has been regarded as our national flower since 1901; however it was not until 1988 that Golden Wattle (*Acacia pycnantha*) officially became our national emblem. Wattles have been used extensively by Aboriginal people and by European settlers for timber, firewood and food.

The seeds of several different species are an important food resource for Aboriginal people, and more recently wattle seed products have been developed for the growing bushfood market. Wattle is the predominant habitat type across Central Australia.
1. Red Mulga  
*Acacia cyperophylla*

**Attractive Garden Plant:** Its distinctive curls of reddish bark capture the evening light beautifully! It flowers after good rain and can grow up to 8m. Red Mulga or Minni Ritchi occurs in scattered populations along stony ephemeral watercourses across the Lake Eyre Basin.

2. Waddy Wood  
*Acacia peuce*  
**Status:** threatened  
**Arrernte name:** Arripar

This threatened species is only known from three different populations on the fringes of the Simpson Desert. Growing to 17m, the immature trees are much spikier and less elegant than mature specimens that have pendulous branches and large silvery seed pods. **Traditional Uses:** The timber was used traditionally for clubs, and by early European settlers for fences.

3. Myall Gidgee  
*Acacia calcicola*  
**Arrernte name:** Irrakwetye

Growing predominantly on limestone soils in scattered populations across Central Australia, this shrubby tree grows up to about 5m high. It is closely allied to *Acacia latzii* [#19] and Georgina Gidgee [# 21]. **Traditional Uses:** The timber is used to make artefacts and for firewood, while the ash from burnt leaves is mixed with pituri (*Nicotiana* species) for chewing.
4. Ironwood  
*Acacia estrophiolata*  
**Arrernte name:** Athenge

Mature trees are very graceful, with drooping foliage and rough-barked trunks, while immature plants have broader, spiny, short leaves. Ironwoods are fairly common throughout arid parts of the NT and SA and small parts of WA and Qld. Most of the specimens in the Garden are self-sown. Hot fires will kill mature trees, and the foliage is palatable to cattle and camels. **Bushfood, Medicinal & Traditional Uses:** The Arrernte people use the bark from roots to make a solution to treat sore eyes and other infections. The resinous gum and lerp honeydew found on the leaves are collected as snack food by Aboriginal people. The hard, red wood is used to make implements, fence posts and for firewood.

5. Witchetty Bush  
*Acacia kempeana*  
**See species 4 - Hill Walk, page 9**

In this specimen you can see clumps of parasitic Pale-leaf Mistletoe (*Amyema maidenii*). Note how similar the Mistletoe leaves are to the Witchetty Bush leaves. Mistletoe – spread by the Mistletoe Bird – usually doesn’t kill the host plant unless the host is very stressed by drought or disease.

6. Dead Finish  
*Acacia tetragonophylla*  
**Arrernte name:** Arlketyerre  
**See species 2 - Hill Walk, page 8**
7. Mt Conner Wattle
*Acacia ammobia*  *status: rare*

[Look to the right of the track]
Growing up to 4m, this rare wattle produces a flush of cylindrical yellow flowers in winter. It is only found on sand dunes and low gravelly hills within a 150 km radius of Uluru. **Bushfood:** The ripe seeds were traditionally harvested for food by the Pitjantjahara people.

8. *Acacia acradenia*

This short-lived species grows up to 3m high and is killed by hot fires. Its broad yellowish-green leaves are offset by large yellow cylindrical flowers produced in spring. It grows on rocky hill slopes and creek lines across the arid northern parts of Qld, the NT and WA.

9. Coonavittra Wattle
*Acacia jennerae*

**Attractive Garden Plant:** A fast-growing, slender shrub with bluish leaves, droopy foliage and bright red stems. It occurs only in scattered populations in spinifex country around salt lakes in northern SA and desert regions of the NT, WA and NSW. It is now commonly cultivated, and although short-lived, is an attractive feature in gardens around Alice Springs.

10. Turpentine Bush
*Acacia lysiphloia*

An attractive dense spreading shrub growing 2-4m wide and high with distinctive red curling (minni ritchi) bark. It occurs in the northern arid parts of the NT, WA, and Qld on a variety of soils. **Medicinal:** This plant has strong medicinal properties for Warlpiri and Alyawarre people.
11. Mulga
Acacia aneura
Arrernte name: Artetye

Like many other wattle species, Mulga is killed by hot summer wildfires. A common woodland plant community across inland Australia, Mulga often occurs on red earths in grove formations. These groves are separated by inter-grove areas where no Mulga grows, and they mirror the pattern of deposition of seed and debris as flood waters recede following heavy rain. Mulga is one of the most widespread of all wattles occurring throughout inland Australia. Bushfood,

Traditional Use: Mulga seed is an important bushfood throughout the region. Mulga apples (the gall formed around insect larvae) are also a favoured bushfood. Honey ants are also dug out of their deep nests under Artetye groves. The timber is used extensively as firewood and traditionally for making shields, woomeras and digging sticks. Mistletoe: There are two different species of Mistletoe in this plant: Pale-leaf Mistletoe (Amyema maidenii – grey leaves and green flowers); and Flat-leaf Mistletoe (Amyema spathulata – greenish-yellow leaves and red flowers).

12. Acacia neurocarpa
[Behind # 11]

This is a fast-growing, short-lived species that until recently was considered synonymous with Candelabra Wattle (Acacia holosericea). It occurs in scattered populations in the Tanami Desert and around the Davenport Ranges in the NT. The bulk of its distribution is in the Pilbara region in WA where it grows along watercourses or in floodout areas.
13. Horse Mulga  
*Acacia ramulosa subsp ramulosa*

After rain, this dense rounded shrub produces a flush of cylindrical yellow flowers. Horse Mulga is killed by hot summer wildfires. It grows across a range of habitats in inland Australia and is commonly found on sand plains in association with Mulga. **Bushfood:** The seeds are eaten.

14. Hill Mulga  
*Acacia macdonnelliensis*  
**Arrernte name:** Irrkwarteke

[To the left of the track, just past # 13] Hill Mulga differs from Mulga in being less bushy, having darker, more furrowed bark, and narrower seed pods. It grows up to 5m, occurring usually on steep slopes in rocky ranges of Central Australia. **Bushfood, Traditional Use:** The timber is favoured as firewood, and some people harvest the seed to eat.

15. Silver Witchetty  
*Acacia cuthbertsonii subsp. cuthbertsonii*

[To the right diagonally opposite # 14] Large, gnarly seed pods are produced after good rains. Occurs sporadically mostly on gravely hills or along watercourses throughout the northern arid parts of the NT and WA. **Bushfood, Traditional Use:** The green seeds are harvested and eaten. Warlpiri and Pintupi people used fibre from the inner bark as bandages or for making bark sandals.
16. Undoolya Wattle
*Acacia undoolyana*  *status: threatened*

**Attractive Garden Plant:** Listed nationally as threatened due to its limited distribution in the East MacDonnell Ranges and its vulnerability to hot summer wildfires. Grows up to 15m high on rocky hill slopes and produces a spectacular floral display around August. Now widely planted in Alice Springs, it is most easily seen in the wild at N’Dhala Gorge Reserve. Like other threatened arid zone wattles, this species does not set viable seed readily in the wild, so the specimens you see here are mostly derived from seed harvested from cultivated plants.

17. Des Nelson Wattle
*Acacia desmondii*  *status: threatened*

**Attractive Garden Plant:** The common name of this rare wattle honours local botanist Des Nelson, who first collected this species in 1964 from hill slopes in the Rodinga Range south of Alice Springs. Known from only a few locations in the area, this stunning wattle grows up to 5m on sandstone ridge habitat. It propagates readily from seed and seems to do well in cultivation in some Alice Springs gardens.

18. Latz’s Wattle
*Acacia latzii*  *status: threatened*

**Attractive Garden Plant:** This nationally-listed threatened species is only known from two range systems in the NT and northern SA. First collected in 1974 by Peter Latz, a prominent botanist in Central Australia and author of *Bushfires and Bushtucker*, this species grows on silcrete mesas, gravelly hill...
slopes and along creek lines. The Australian Plants Society Alice Springs has been monitoring populations of Latz’s Wattle in the Bacon Ranges for over a decade. Very slow-growing, this specimen was planted in 1988.

19. Mt Olga Wattle

*Acacia olgana*

Killed by hot wildfires, this species grows to around 6m high. It occurs mainly on granite hills and ranges and along creek lines in the Central Range system straddling the NT, SA and WA. **Bushfood:** Pitjantjatjara people are reputed to eat the seed.

**Georgina Gidgee**

*Acacia georginae*

**Arrernte name:** Urrenyenke

The flowers and foliage of this dense, small tree emit a strong sulphuric odour after rains. It is poisonous to stock due to fluoracetate (1080 poison) compounds in the seeds and seed pods. These negative qualities are more than compensated for by its attractive gnarled appearance, silvery foliage, and contrasting dark bark. It occurs in clusters on floodplains and creek lines around the Georgina Basin in western Qld and in eastern parts of the NT.

There are many other wattle species represented in the Garden. Further along this path you will find specimens of Umbrella Bush (*Acacia ligulata*), Dogwood (*Acacia sericophylla* syn *A. coriacea*), Black Gidgee (*Acacia pruinocarpa*), Maitland’s Wattle (*Acacia maitlandii*), Blue Wattle (*Acacia validinervia*), Salt Wattle (*Acacia maconochieana*), and Prickly Acacia (*Acacia victoriae*).
Mallee Walk

This self-guided walk will introduce you to a number of mallees that grow in Central Australia. Mallee is the name given to multi-stemmed trees which belong to the gum tree genera *Eucalyptus* and *Corymbia*.

There are around 1000 different eucalypts and bloodwoods worldwide, the majority only occurring in Australia. Mallee was a very common vegetation type across drier parts of southern Australia before extensive clearing for agriculture.

Mallees provide an important source of firewood, timber, gum, honey and *Eucalyptus* oil. Mallee habitat is critical for many native plants and animals. Unlike other parts of Australia, mallees and other gum trees are relatively rare in Central Australia, where wattles predominate.
1. Victoria Spring Mallee  
*Eucalyptus trivalvis*

**Attractive Garden Tree:** The pinkish-grey bark provides an attractive contrast to the glaucous leaves. Grows up to 6m high on sandy plains but also occurs on rocky hillsides and sand dunes. Occurs most commonly around the Pilbara and Great Victoria Desert regions in WA, but also grows in southern NT and northern SA.

2. Shiny-leaved Mallee  
*Eucalyptus lucens*  
*status: threatened*

**Attractive Garden Tree:** Growing up to 5m high, the distinguishing features of this small tree are its bright green shiny leaves and smooth bark. It is becoming more common in gardens around Alice Springs. Endemic to the MacDonnell Ranges bioregion of the NT with the exception of an outlying population on Mt Newman in the Pilbara of WA. It grows on sandstone and quartzite ridges.

3. Round-leaved Mallee  
*Eucalyptus minniritchi*

**Attractive Garden Tree:** This very attractive, hardy mallee is popular in cultivation because of it beautiful blue-grey, often heart shaped leaves, creamy-yellow flowers, and stunning dark red curling (minni ritchi) bark. Occurs in the higher altitude parts of the West MacDonnell Ranges and in range country in WA and northern SA.
4. Sturt Creek Mallee
*Eucalyptus odontocarpa*

Growing to 4m, this species has four tiny teeth on the rim of the fruit capsule and long, narrow leaves. It is a smooth-barked mallee occurring in a variety of habitats from the Pilbara in WA, across the arid regions of the NT to Mt Isa in Qld.

5. Limestone Mallee
*Eucalyptus socialis subsp. eucentrica*

**Attractive Garden Tree:** Red Mallee grows up to 8m and produces masses of creamy yellow flowers. It is a source of much of the honey produced in inland regions. One of the most common and widespread mallees growing in limestone soils in rangeland regions. **Bushfood:** Aboriginal people harvested water from its roots in very dry times. The Pitjantjatjara people are reputed to eat the seeds.

6. Finke River Mallee
*Eucalyptus sessilis*

This small, straggly, smooth-bark mallee has large leathery leaves, large reddish-brown buds, creamy yellow flowers that produce large quantities of nectar, and large barrel shaped capsules. It occurs in the ranges to the south and west of Alice Springs and in a small area of range country in WA. This species is very closely related to Red-bud Mallee [#10] and is very easily confused. The main difference is whether the fruits have obvious stalks or not.

7. Mann Range Mallee
*Eucalyptus mannensis*

This rough-barked mallee produces masses of small white flowers after rainfall events, and grows up to 10m. It occurs in scattered populations across sand plains and dune country around the ranges in Central Australia. It can be seen in the wild at Rainbow Valley (a Reserve south of Alice Springs).
8. Blue Mallee  
*Eucalyptus gamophylla*  
Arrernte name: Uleperre

**Attractive Garden Tree:** A distinctive blue-leaved mallee; the round leaves at the ends of branches are actually juvenile. Attractive creamy white appear flowers in summer. It grows up to 8m, mainly on rocky hills or red sand country mostly in association with spinifex. Widespread across arid Australia. **Bushfood & Traditional Uses:** Seeds are eaten. Water can be obtained from the roots and the wood is used by Aboriginal people for making implements.

9. Sharp-capped Mallee  
*Eucalyptus oxymitra*

**Attractive Garden Tree:** Grows up to 6m high, has smooth, reddish-brown bark, leathery grey-green leaves, and large yellow flowers that are produced in summer months. It occurs on sand plain and rocky hill habitat in arid parts of north-western SA, NT and adjacent parts of WA. **Bushfood:** Aboriginal people harvest an edible lerp scale from the leaves, and honey from the flowers.

10. Red-bud Mallee  
*Eucalyptus pachyphylla*  
Arrernte name: Ntyenye

**Attractive Garden Tree:** An attractive pink-barked mallee that grows to 6m. The red pointed caps of the flower buds are very ornamental, and are followed by clusters of yellow flowers mainly in spring. It occurs on spinifex sand plains and sand dunes from the Gibson Desert in WA to Urandangi in Qld. **Bushfood:** Pintubi people eat the large seed. The edible lerp found on the leaves is reported to be sweeter than that found on any other gum tree.
11. Mallee Red Gum  
*Eucalyptus gillenii*

The botanical name refers to Francis James Gillen. He was Telegraph Stationmaster in Alice Springs in 1892 and collaborator with the anthropologist and natural historian Professor Baldwin Spencer, who led the Horn Expedition to Central Australia in 1894. It grows to 5m and produces white flowers in summer and larger but similarly shaped capsules to the related River Red Gum. Common along the ridges of the MacDonnell Ranges and stony hills of Central Australia.

12. Snappy Gum  
*Eucalyptus leucophloia subsp euroa*

**Attractive Garden Tree:** Its distinctive smooth white bark and occasional waxy blue young stems and leaves make it an attractive garden specimen. Although often growing in tree form, this species sometimes occurs in a mallee form growing up to 7m high. It grows on gravelly soils or stony rises around Tennant Creek and eastwards toward the Mt Isa region of Qld. **Medicinal:** The inner bark is used by Aboriginal people to treat a range of ailments.

Two other Mallees to be found in Olive Pink Botanic Garden are members of the Bloodwood group: Bloodwood (*Corymbia opaca*); and, Mallee Bloodwood (*Corymbia eremaea*).
Other Rare and Threatened Plants in the Garden

The Olive Pink Botanic Garden has 33 species of Central Australian plants that are classified as rare or threatened either at the national scale or within the NT. Many are listed in the walks above. Others you can find in the Garden and are listed below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Botanic Name</th>
<th>Common Name</th>
<th>Conservation</th>
<th>Where in the Garden</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Livistona mariae ssp. mariae</td>
<td>Palm Valley Palm</td>
<td>Nationally Vulnerable</td>
<td>Waterhole</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melaleuca faucicola</td>
<td>Desert Bottlebrush</td>
<td>Nationally Rare</td>
<td>Hill side of Waterhole</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eucalyptus thozetiana</td>
<td>Thozets Box</td>
<td>NT rare species</td>
<td>Mallee Walk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xanthorrhoea thorntonii</td>
<td>Desert Grass Tree</td>
<td>NT rare species</td>
<td>Mallee Walk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eremophila polyclada</td>
<td>Lignum Fuchsia Bush</td>
<td>NT rare species</td>
<td>Café Garden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hakea grammatophylla</td>
<td>MacDonnell Ranges</td>
<td>Nationally Rare</td>
<td>rocky foot-slope near the Blakeman Shelter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Macrozamia macdonnellii</td>
<td>MacDonnell Ranges Cycad</td>
<td>Nationally Vulnerable</td>
<td>Waterhole</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Medicine, Bushfood and Home Garden Plants

More information can be found on the plants opposite – and many other plants not listed – in the Medicine, Café and Bird Attracting garden beds (see map), as well as on the walks throughout the Garden. *Eremophila*, meaning desert loving (*eremo-* = desert; *philos-* = loving), is a versatile genus well worth exploring. It has many powerful medicinal plants, and many more that are suitable for the home garden, that attract birds, look great and produce a spectacular floral display. Make sure you explore them and plant them in your garden!
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Botanic Name</th>
<th>Common Name</th>
<th>Arrernte Name</th>
<th>Key</th>
<th>Where</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eremophila alternifolia</td>
<td>Narrow-leaf Fuchsia Bush</td>
<td>Irmankga-irmankga</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Medicine Garden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eremophila duttonii</td>
<td>Red Poverty Bush</td>
<td>Aherre-intenhe</td>
<td>MG</td>
<td>Medicine Garden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eremophila dalyana</td>
<td>Gidgee Fuchsia Bush</td>
<td>Ilpengke</td>
<td>MG</td>
<td>Medicine Garden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cymbopogon ambiguus</td>
<td>Native Lemongrass</td>
<td>Aherre-aherre</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Medicine Garden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solanum lithophilum</td>
<td>Bush Tomato</td>
<td>Awele-awele or Alperrantye</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Medicine Garden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capparis spinosa var. nummularia</td>
<td>Bush Passionfruit</td>
<td>Arrutnenge</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Medicine Garden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enchylaena tomentosa</td>
<td>Ruby Saltbush</td>
<td>Ntyemenye</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Medicine Garden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marsdenia australis</td>
<td>Bush Banana</td>
<td>Atntenye</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Medicine Garden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acacia estrophiolata</td>
<td>Ironwood</td>
<td>Athenge or Atyarnpe</td>
<td>MB</td>
<td>Medicine Garden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eucalyptus camaldulensis</td>
<td>River Red Gum</td>
<td>Apere</td>
<td>MB</td>
<td>Medicine Garden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capparis mitchellii</td>
<td>Wild Orange</td>
<td>Atwakeye</td>
<td>MB</td>
<td>Medicine Garden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santalum acuminatum</td>
<td>Quandong</td>
<td>Pmerple</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Medicine Garden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carissa lanceolata</td>
<td>Conkleberry</td>
<td>Aperlape</td>
<td>MB</td>
<td>Medicine Garden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tinospora smilacina</td>
<td>Snake Vine</td>
<td>Arratherrke</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>Bird Attracting Garden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swainsona formosa</td>
<td>Sturt Desert Pea</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Café Garden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ptilotus exaltatus</td>
<td>Pink Mulla Mullia</td>
<td></td>
<td>G</td>
<td>Café Garden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stemodia viscosa</td>
<td>Sticky Blue-rod</td>
<td>Pintye-pintye</td>
<td>MG</td>
<td>Café Garden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frankenia cordata</td>
<td>Sea-heath</td>
<td></td>
<td>G</td>
<td>Café Garden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harniera kempeiana</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>G</td>
<td>Café Garden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corymbia aparrerinja</td>
<td>Ghost Gum</td>
<td>Ilwempe</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Café Garden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eremophila ovata</td>
<td>Krichauff Ranges Fuchsia</td>
<td></td>
<td>G</td>
<td>Café Garden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eremophila polyclada</td>
<td>Flowering Lignum</td>
<td>Utnerrenge</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Bird Attracting Garden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eremophila longifolia</td>
<td>Weeping Emu Bush</td>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Bird Attracting Garden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eremophila elderi</td>
<td>Desert Fuchsia</td>
<td>Kwenkart</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Bird Attracting Garden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eremophila neglecta</td>
<td></td>
<td>Aratja</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Bird Attracting Garden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eremophila Christophori</td>
<td>Dolomite Fuchsia Bush</td>
<td></td>
<td>G</td>
<td>Bird Attracting Garden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eremophila glabra ssp glabra</td>
<td>Tar Bush</td>
<td></td>
<td>G</td>
<td>Bird Attracting Garden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eremophila macdonnellii</td>
<td>MacDonnell’s Desert Fuchsia</td>
<td></td>
<td>G</td>
<td>Bird Attracting Garden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eremophila maculata</td>
<td>Spotted Emu Bush</td>
<td></td>
<td>G</td>
<td>Bird Attracting Garden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eremophila maculata var brevifolia</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>G</td>
<td>Bird Attracting Garden</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Friends of the Garden

Friends of the Garden is an vibrant and dedicated group of volunteers integral to the success and life of the Garden. Join Friends of the Garden and enjoy unique aspects of Alice Springs’ cultural and botanical heritage with other passionate people.

As a Friend, you receive a 10% discount at the Café, discounted tickets to selected Garden events and use of the Frances Smith Library. Meet new people and volunteer your time – whether planting, weeding or word-smithing, we need your help! Just tick the box at the bottom of the form opposite and return it to us, or call us on 08 8952 2154 today!

Please Help Fund the Garden

The Olive Pink Botanic Garden is a not-for-profit community organisation. We are heavily reliant on our friends and supporters to help fund the Garden. You can help today:

- make a tax-deductible donation using the form opposite
- become a Garden Sponsor – stay informed with the latest from the Garden and come along to our events. Just fill out the form opposite and tick the box for monthly donation
- sponsor a plant for a loved one – choose a stunning flower or a towering tree

Please call 08 8952 2154 or email curator@opbg.com.au

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☐ MY CHEQUE IS ATTACHED  ☐ PLEASE DEBIT MY CREDIT CARD BELOW

CREDIT CARD DETAILS

Card Type: ☐ Visa ☐ Mastercard  CCV: 
Name on Card: Exp: / /
Card No: 
Sign: Date: / / 

☐ Yes, I want to become a Friend of the Garden and volunteer

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Botanic Garden

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