

*We hope that  
you have enjoyed this  
stroll through the  
outer landscape of  
Parliament House.*



CRIMSON ROSELLA  
*Platycercus elegans*

If you would like more information  
or have any questions, please phone  
GARDENING SERVICES,  
JOINT HOUSE DEPARTMENT  
on (06) 277 5010.

Two other brochures which might  
also be of interest are available from the  
Information Desk in the  
Foyer of Parliament House.

They are:

PARLIAMENT HOUSE GARDENS  
PARLIAMENTARY PARKLANDS TRAIL

PARLIAMENT  
-  
HOUSE



LANDSCAPE  
AND  
GARDENS  
WALK

-  
DISTANCE: 1.4 kilometres  
-

WALKING TIME: approximately 1 hour

*Please note that the ground  
can be heavy after rain.*



BLACK WATTLE  
*Acacia decurrens*

The walk can begin from any of the 20 points shown on the map provided (inside back cover). If you are beginning the walk from the Ceremonial Pool and Aboriginal Mosaic at the front of the building, you should proceed towards Parliament Drive, turn left towards the Senate and cross the road towards the Security Attendant's Station (in the Northwest corner). There you will find a red pathway where point number 1 is located.



AUSTRALIAN MAGPIE  
*Gymnorhina tibicen*

## *Introduction*

The total area of the parliamentary precincts is 33 hectares of which 13 hectares are garden beds, 10 hectares are turf and 10 hectares are taken up by buildings, road space and the Forecourt. The native gardens through which this trail winds cover 9 hectares.

The peripheral area outside Parliament Drive is bordered by native trees and shrubs, many being indigenous to this area. Spaces or 'outdoor walls' between the shrub areas accommodate various recreational facilities. The native plantings link Parliament House with the surrounding landscape and symbolically with the country as a whole. Grassed 'sight' lines preserve radial corridors which are free of planting to ensure vistas towards and away from the building. There is a variety of microclimates on this site, with noticeably lush growth on the eastern side. This diversity of conditions permits the growth of several species of plants which the Australian States and the ACT have adopted as floral emblems, namely:

*Wahlenbergia gloriosa* - (Royal Bluebell) ACT.

*Telopea speciosissima* - (Waratah) NSW.

*Epacris impressa* - (Common Heath) VIC.

*Swainsona formosa* - (Sturt's Desert Pea) SA.

*Eucalyptus globulus* - (Blue Gum) TAS.

1 The chrome yellow roofs visible from this point are those of the Embassy of the People's Republic of China which was completed in 1990.

2 From this point several Canberra landmarks can be seen. Telstra Tower, located on Black Mountain, is visible in the distance, with Lake Burley Griffin below. In the immediate foreground is the Surveyor's Hut (with corrugated iron roof), which is all that remains of the original Federal Capital survey camp established around 1909. Charles Robert Scrivener, who surveyed the site of Canberra, used this hut to store his survey documents.

3 The two exercise sites at this point are part of an eight station exercise course which is available for use by Members, Senators, Parliamentary Staff and visitors.



CHARLES SCRIVENER  
*Callistemon ciliatus*

4 In the gully ahead, native grass and herbaceous species have been planted to aid soil stabilisation. You will also see a number of species of callistemon in the gully. These have large flowers which resemble a bottle brush, hence their common name. Many species of eucalyptus have also been planted in this area, several trees displaying the pink blossoms that inspired the colours used in the Senate Chamber.

5 This square section of turf is now a staff recreation area used for sports such as volleyball, soccer and touch football. The small building to the south of the field is a gardeners' store.

6 The small patch of grass ahead is used as a turf nursery. The turf used throughout the Parliament House gardens is a mixture of Kentucky blue grass and a dwarf form of tall fescue. These grasses were selected for three main reasons:

a they are wear tolerant, which is an important consideration when more than one million visitors walk on and over the grassed roof of the building each year;

b they are cool season grasses and therefore suit Canberra's climate; and

c the fescue is a high endophyte variety which is resistant to attack by the Argentine Stem Weevil which is a serious pest of cool season grasses.



MASKED LAPWING  
(MASKED PLOVER)  
*Vanellus miles*



BANKSIA (SWAMP BANKSIA)  
*Banksia robusta*

7 From this point, several species of banksia can be seen. Banksia, a genus of the Proteaceae family, is named after botanist Sir Joseph Banks who travelled on the Endeavour with Captain James Cook in 1770. The banksia nearby is *Banksia robusta*. This is native to the swampy regions of New South Wales and Queensland and can reach a height of 3 metres. The flowers are blue-green in bud and yellow-green when open. They flower in spring and attract honey-eating birds.

8 In the foreground to the left, surrounded by a white wall, is The Lodge which, since Parliament first sat in Canberra in 1927, has been the official residence of the Prime Minister. To the right, on a small hill, is the Embassy of the United States of America.



RIVER OAK  
*Allocasuarina cunninghamiana*

9 This area was the first section of landscape to be completed, so its size and density are well advanced in comparison with the rest of the gardens. There is a variety of plants in this area including she-oaks (*Casuarinas* and *Allocasuarina* species), wattles (*Acacia* species), grevilleas and callistemons. The cage structure is a golf practice net.

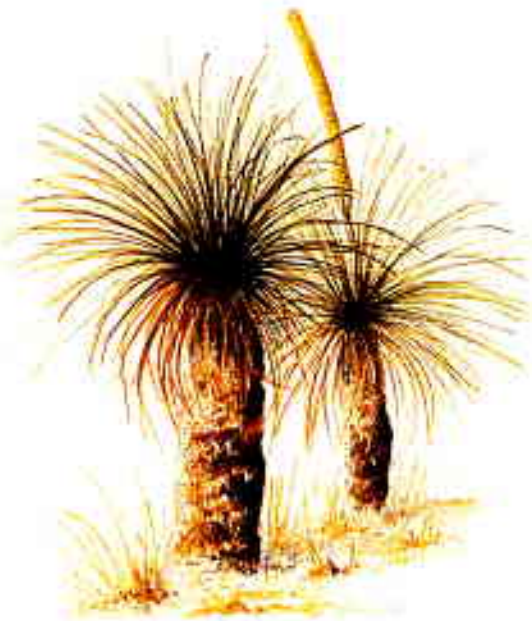
10 The steps to the left across the road lead to the Ministerial entrance. This is the entry point into the building for the Prime Minister and the Ministers of the Government. On the sloped banks at either side of the steps are plantings of golden hawthorn trees (*Crataegus stipulacea*), with English ivy (*Hedera helix*) forming a ground cover underneath. The small shrubs in mass plantings are *Hebe buxifolia*. They bear white flowers in spring.

11 This structure is the cooling tower for the building. There is *Kunzea* 'Badja Carpet' growing on the sloping walls. This species of *kunzea* is native to Big Badja Hill near Cooma, New South Wales. It has white flowers in spring and likes a well-drained soil. The large shrubs on either side of the next section of path are *Melaleuca ericifolia*, a good screen plant.

12 The church visible from this point is St Andrew's Presbyterian Church which was opened in 1934.

13 The red surfaced en-tout-cas tennis courts are used by Members, Senators and Parliamentary Staff. There are also 4 synthetic grass tennis courts located on the Senate side of the building. On the way to the next point is a grove of she-oaks (*Allocasuarina cunninghamiana*) with fine needle-like foliage and weeping habit.





GRASS TREES  
*Xanthorrhoea glauca*

14 At this point there is a clump of grass trees, (*Xanthorrhoea glauca*). They are slow growing and can take up to 10 years to flower. They can reach a height of 5 metres and their blackened trunks can branch once or twice forming compound heads. They are normally found in well drained soils throughout the eastern states of Australia.

15 These are the Formal Gardens, which are based on design concepts from both English and French formal gardens. There is an 'orchard' area running down either side of the gardens, one of which can be seen from this point. The trees, flowering cherries (*Prunus serrulata* 'Jamasakura'), were given to the Parliament by the Government of Japan.

In the centre of the gardens there is a traditional water feature designed to create movement and sound. The garden beds on either side of the water feature are planted with summer and winter flowering annuals.

The hedge surrounding the garden is *Thuja plicata* 'Zebrena' and the pergolas are covered with pink flowering wisteria. The yellow flowering 'Zonta' roses were a gift to the Parliament from Zonta International, a service club for professional and business women. Beneath the Formal Gardens is the loading dock. The path continues past the second orchard.



MAGPIELARK (PELWIT)  
*Grallina cyanoleuca*



EUCALYPTUS  
*Eucalyptus sp.*

16 The small low plants here are *Grevillea iaspicula*. This rare grevillea is found near Wee Jasper in New South Wales. These plants were propagated and planted by students from Red Hill Primary School.



SULPHUR-CRESTED COCKATOO  
*Cacatua galerita*

17 From this point, a large wooden fenced compound can be seen to the right. This is the Gardens Depot where the gardeners are based. There are 18 gardeners, 2 supervisors and 1 manager. Of the 18 gardeners, there are 11 horticulturalists and 7 turf specialists.

18 The large building in front, with the red tiled roofs, is the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. The circular road at the base of the grass slope is Capital Circle which marks the boundary of the Parliament House grounds.

19 Opposite the wall are clumps of wallaby grass, kangaroo grass and white flowering *Eriostemon myoporoides*. The walls are constructed of Camp Hill sandstone, a common stone from the Canberra Region.





Variegated Whick  
*Melospiza luteiventris*

**20** The pavement along the front of Parliament House, between point 20 and point 1 of the Landscape and Gardens Walk, gives excellent views of the northern grass ramps which reinforce the 'hill' nature of the design and allow public access over the building. The Forecourt, treeless and paved in stone and gravel, suggests in a simple sense the vastness of Australia's red desert interior and makes a symbolic link with the red gravel on Anzac Parade leading to the Australian War Memorial. Plantings of *Grevillea poorinda* 'Royal Mantle', chosen both for its low habit and leaf that closely resembles a eucalypt leaf, surround the central island Aboriginal Mosaic which forms part of the Ceremonial Pool. The compact ground cover plantings around the entrance of the Forecourt carpark are *Juniperus sabina*.

## Acknowledgments

### CONCEPTS AND IDEAS

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AUSPIC

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### COVER ILLUSTRATION

TEA TREE *Leptospermum scoparium*



- 1 Embassy of the Democratic People's Republic of China
- 2 Surveyor's Hut
- 3 Fitness Course
- 4 Native Grass and Herbaceous Species
- 5 Staff Recreation Area
- 6 Turf Nursery
- 7 Banksias
- 8 The Lodge Lookout
- 9 Early Landscaping at Parliament House
- 10 Ministerial Entrance
- 11 Cooling Tower
- 12 St. Andrew's Lookout
- 13 Tennis Courts
- 14 Grass Trees
- 15 House of Representatives Formal Gardens
- 16 Grevillea
- 17 Gardens Depot
- 18 Department of Foreign Affairs Lookout
- 19 Camp Hill Sandstone
- 20 Ceremonial Pool and Aboriginal Mosaic

