

comes from Portugal and Spain and is very well-suited to the local climate, as are the evergreen Holm Oaks (*Quercus ilex*) growing beside the gardener's shed. This species also comes from Mediterranean Europe. The old weatherboard shed probably dates from the late 19th century.

From the foot of the steps, walk across towards the cream brick laundry block of the caravan park. You will pass very good specimens of Maidenhair Tree (*Ginkgo biloba* RST) from China, Bunya Pine (*Araucaria bidwillii* RST) from Southern Queensland and Caucasian Fir (*Abies nordmanniana* RST) from South-Eastern Europe. Around the laundry block are a number of very large pine trees. These are mostly the Californian Monterey Pine (*Pinus radiata*) but there are several Western Yellow Pines (*Pinus ponderosa*), distinguishable by the intricate jigsaw patterning on the bark. Walk down to the roadway below the laundry and turn right. These two species are planted throughout the gardens. The other common pine species in the gardens is the Himalayan Wite Pine (*Pinus wallichiana*). The best of these are found inside the lower Mollison St. gate. From the laundry block, walk downhill to the roadway and turn right. On the right in a clump of

pinus is a California Live Oak (*Quercus agrifolia* RST). This tree has grown very successfully here and raises the question as to why it has not been more widely planted in Victoria. There are only about a dozen of this species in the state.

Walk back up the slope, keeping the laundry block on your right. If you walk up towards the old drinking fountain there is a large cypress (*Cupressus lusitanica* RST) on your right. This tree comes from Mexico and the Kyneton example is thought to be one of the best specimens in Victoria. If you walk back towards the front gate you will see the weeping foliage of the Chinese Funerary Cypress (*Cupressus funebris* RST). Just behind this tree is an unusual evergreen oak from the Himalayas (*Quercus leucotrichophora* RST). Like the California Live Oak, this is one of just a few examples of this species in Victoria.

The text for this walk was written by Dr Peter May, Horticulturalist and Kyneton resident, in March 2007 and edited by Roger Cousens.

A Walk Around Kyneton Botanic Gardens

Kyneton is 84 km north-west of Melbourne, just off the Calder Highway towards Bendigo. The ten hectares of gardens, dating back to 1858, are one of the finest of Victoria's regional botanic gardens. Bounded on the south side by the Campaspe River, they contain a large number of fine specimen trees, several of which are on the State Register of Significant Trees (RST).

This walk identifies just some of the trees that are of special interest or that have some role in the history of the gardens. At the time that these, and other regional botanic gardens were being established, little was known about the way exotic trees and shrubs would be suited to Victoria's various climate and soil zones. In Kyneton's case, the cold, wet winters and dry summers pose particular selection issues for local gardeners and the trees in the gardens tell us a great deal about the usefulness of a wide

range of species. Of particular interest is the good collection of oaks and conifers in the gardens.

Enter the gardens at the main gate at the corner of Mollison and Clowes Sts. In the central bed inside the gate is a fine specimen of the Chilean Wine Palm (*Jubaea chilensis* RST). This species is now rare in its original habitat through harvesting to make the fermented drink that its name alludes to. On the fence to

the right of the gate is a group of five Blue Atlas Cedars (*Cedrus atlantica* 'Glaucua' RST) from the mountains of North Africa. These trees are well suited to Kyneton's climate and tolerate the dry summers well. To the left of the gate are several Redwoods (*Sequoiadendron giganteum*) from California. In the early days of the gardens, this species grew well, but the dry period from the late 1990s has left these trees, and other examples of this species in the gardens,

badly stressed. In the bed to the left of the Wine Palm is a small Chinese Fan Palm (*Trachycarpus fortunei*). This species is amongst the most cold-tolerant of the palms and is found in a number of public and private gardens in Central Victoria.

Follow the path past the Fan Palm. There are several large deciduous trees growing in the lawns on either side of the path. These include a Pin Oak (*Quercus palustris*), a Horse Chestnut (*Aesculus hippocastaneum*), and English Oak (*Quercus robur*) and a Claret Ash (*Fraxinus* 'Raywood'). A little further along on the left is a large *Acer cappadocium* from the Balkans.

Follow the path that branches off to the right. It passes a bed with two palms, a Canary Island Date Palm (*Phoenix canariensis*) and a Jelly Palm (*Butia capitata*) from Brazil.

Along the path on the left side are several very large North American conifers. These include a Douglas Fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*), a Giant redwood and a Californian Redwood (*Sequoia sempervirens* RST). Across the lawn to the right and close to the fence is a group of two very good Cork Oaks (*Quercus suber* RST). This tree

