Contrasting against suburban Blackwood, the 13 hectare Wittunga Botanic Garden is a hidden oasis.

Discover the extensive collection of water wise plants from Australia and South Africa, brilliant displays of Ericas and Proteas in spring and an extensive collection of plants from Kangaroo Island and the Fleurieu Peninsula.

Visit the enticing Butterfly Garden. Try to spot the huge variety of native bird and animal life that are attracted to the indigenous flora. Listen to the songs of the birds instantly drown out the noises of suburbia.

Explore for knowledge; explore for pleasure, just explore.

botanicgardens.sa.gov.au

Wittunga Botanic Garden

Getting here

Entrance: Shepherds Hill Road or Sherbourne Road.

Parking: Parking is free and can be accessed from Shepherds Hill Road.

Bus & Train: Check Adelaide Metro for bus services to Blackwood and train services to Coromandel Station. Visit adelaidemetro.com.au

Walk: 5-10 minute walk from Blackwood.

Want to see more?

Wittunga Botanic Garden is one of three sites that together comprise the Botanic Gardens of South Australia. For more information about Gardens at Adelaide and Mount Lofty visit botanicgardens.sa.gov.au

Free admission!

Want to donate to the Gardens?

We need and appreciate your ongoing financial support, because together as keepers and temporary custodians of the Gardens, it is our responsibility for ensuring that future generations enjoy the beauty, peace, and tranquillity we take for granted. You can donate, make a bequest or major gift through the Adelaide Botanic Gardens Foundation. You can also support the Gardens through the Garden Bench Tribute Program. The Foundation has has deductible gift recipient status for taxation purposes. For more information visit our website or call 08 8222 9311.

Find us online

botanicgardens.sa.gov.au
As you enter Wittunga Botanic Garden, you will be welcomed by an assortment of fairy golden wattle and banksias, and the distinctive scent of Banksia flowers. Explore the Australian Health Garden, an original collection developed by Keith Ashby, which includes hardy South African and fynbos plants. The Heaths and Ericas, cultivars of Ericas or ‘heaths’, have hybridised, including the unique growing conditions found today at Wittunga. Many remnants of the Ashby Terrace Beds still exist and were later added, including a large lawn area, plenty of shade and plenty to see.

The uniquely Australian shrub, South African Proteaceae, can be found in flower in September and October. Look for the Hakea genus, including the pale yellow Hakea, and impressive King Protea and African Proeaceae. The Ericas flower in July and August, with its pearly mauve flowers. The Ericas flower in July and August, with its pearly mauve flowers. The Ericas, were introduced from the region stretching to Kangaroo Island, the Cauliflower Hakea (Banksia ericifolia), which flowers from July to September, and the grey bottlebrush (Callistemon), the cauliflower Hakea (Banksia ericifolia), which flowers from July to September, and the grey bottlebrush (Callistemon), the cauliflower Hakea (Banksia ericifolia), which flowers from July to September, and the grey bottlebrush (Callistemon).

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How botanic gardens changed the world ...

Plants are fundamental to life. They bring life to our soils and provide our food, clothing, shelter, medicines and energy. Botanic gardens have collected and displayed plants for scientific research, conservation and education since the 1500s. As we have come to learn more about their unique qualities, plants have been the catalyst for world change and have shaped civilizations.

Our collections provide a window into how plants have changed the world from the 16th century through to today.

16th Century

The first physic gardens in Pisa and Padua harnessed plants for medicinal use. This significant step in the use of botany for healing has been reflected in the Garden of Health.

17th and 18th Centuries

Scientific institutions began to study, classify and understand plants and natural science. The classification of plants can be seen in the Classrooms from the earliest monocots and grasses at the western end to complex flowering plants at the eastern end.

19th Century

Plants and their products began to be viewed as commodities that could be harvested for wealth and economic development. The great European empires shifted crops between colonies as a means of achieving wealth. A tribute to economic botany is paid in the Santos Museum of Economic Botany and the Amazon Waterlily Pavilion in Adelaide Botanic Garden.

Today

Botanic gardens address contemporary challenges in plant conservation, environmental reconciliation and food, water and energy security through program and collection development. With persistent threat from our change in climate and environmental degradation, the need to preserve the role of botanic gardens is essential to a sustainable future.

Wittunga: A Family Home

Wittunga, meaning ‘beside water’, was established as a private home by Edwin Ashby in 1902 and was based on a formal English design. The property originally had extensive apple and pear orchards along with cattle, sheep and pigs.

Edwin Ashby was passionate about raising public awareness of the beauty and importance of Australian flora. He regularly wrote and spoke publicly on the topic.

In the 1930s, Edwin developed the Ashby System of watering. This system involves deep soaking plants every three-to-four weeks instead of the usual light surface watering. His experiments, south of the Maluka Beds, showed impressive results. The method has gone on to influence how current horticulturists at Wittunga and around Australia care for our native vegetation and was a forerunner to today’s sustainable watering practices.

Ashby was an avid collector of birds, butterflies and other insects, shells and plants. He published over 80 papers on birds, and named or discovered several new species. The Bird Garden and Butterfly Garden are great tributes to this passion.

Wittunga was bequeathed to the Botanic Gardens of South Australia by Edwin’s son Keith Ashby in 1965 and was opened to the public as a botanic garden in 1975. Since taking ownership, the Botanic Gardens of South Australia has significantly extended Wittunga to the beautiful botanic garden we see today.

Water Wise

Edwin Ashby was fascinated by the close relationship between the water-wise Australian and South African flora. In the dry South Australian climate, it is important to choose resilient plants that can survive with little water. Wittunga shows that water-wise gardens can be just as diverse and colourful as their water-dependent counterparts.

Exploring our Garden

Tours and Trails

The Friends of the Botanic Gardens of Adelaide Garden Guides conduct free walks departing every Tuesday from 10:30am from the car park off Shepherds Hill Road. Booked walks can be arranged at a cost by calling 08 8226 8803.

The Wittunga Naming Walk is a self-guided walk that demonstrates how plants are named scientifically and the origins of their names - whether from a person or characteristic of the plant. 24 signs are installed throughout the Garden, stationed alongside the relevant plant.

Alternatively, use the map on the back and explore the Garden at your own pace!

Visitor Facilities

Wittunga Botanic Garden is conveniently located close to Blackwood centre, with cafes and shops only a short walk away.

Toilets are located adjacent to the car park and by the Sherbourne Road gate.

Wheelchair and pram friendly paths, picnic tables and rotundas are available.

Wedding enquiries

For wedding enquiries, please contact Blanco Catering: botanic@blancofood.com.au or 08 8223 3526
**A Haven for Wildlife**

The Billabong features Australian wetland plants, including Forest Oak (Allocasuarina torulosa). The Billabong is the perfect place for families to visit, with a large lawn area, plenty of shade and plenty to see. Watch the purple swamp hen, wood duck and black duck splashing and diving in the water and try to spot the honeyeaters, rosellas, lorikeets and other parrots that nest in the nearby eucalyptus collection.

**Woodland animals**

The Grey Box Woodland is the main, naturally-found ecosystem in this part of the Adelaide Hills and now occupies less than 3% of the area it once did before European settlement due to urban development. The Grey Box Woodland provides important natural habitat for native animals and if you are lucky, you might spot a koala or two.

**Fluttering butterflies**

The Butterfly Garden is a beautiful demonstration of the two types of plants required to attract butterflies – sweet nectar plants that provide butterflies with the energy they need to fly and food plants that provide a place where the female butterfly will lay her eggs and provide food for caterpillars. In return, butterflies act as important pollinators.

**Chorus of birds**

As you enter Wittunga Botanic Garden, you will instantly notice the calls of the amazing birds that call Wittunga home. Spend time spotting native birds which are attracted by the sweet nectar and fruit produced by native Australian plants found in the Bird Garden.

Eastern spinebills, New Holland honeyeaters and wattlebirds can be seen collecting nectar. In doing so they pollinate Australian Banksias, Hakeas and Grevilleas, as well as some South African Proteas.

**Fynbos (L16)**

Fynbos is the South African name for the diverse heathlands in the Cape region of South Africa. The fynbos (or “fine bush” in Afrikaans) display includes approximately 50 species and cultivars of Ericas or ‘heaths’. Some of the plants in the fynbos collection, especially the Ericas, were introduced to the Garden by Edwin Ashby. Ericas are wind, bird and insect pollinated and several species at Wittunga have hybridised, including the Erica ‘Wittunga Satin’, with its pearly mauve flowers. The Ericas flower in September and October.

**South African Proteaceae (E10)**

There are almost 400 species of South African Proteaceae, including the pale yellow Conebush (Leucadendron eucalyptiformis), the spiky-looking Pincushion (Leucospermum cordifolium) and impressive King Protea (Protea cynaroides). These and many other South African Proteaceae can be found in the Terrace Beds.

**M11**

Australian Native Cultivars

**D17**

Fleurieu Peninsula Flora

**L12**

Butterfly Garden

**G22**

Billabong

**E18**

Australian Health Garden

**E13**

Kangaroo Island Flora

**K12**

Duck Landing

**L18**

Grey Box Woodland

**G16**

L16

Fynbos (South African Heathland)

**D17**

Fleurieu Peninsula Flora

**L12**

Butterfly Garden

**G22**

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