



Australian Government
Australian National Botanic Gardens

MEDIA RELEASE

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Volunteers celebrated at morning tea in the Gardens

ABC TV weather presenter and gardening identity Mark Carmody will thank long-serving volunteers at the Australian National Botanic Gardens in a special morning tea today as part of International Volunteers Day.

Today's function will honour volunteers who have contributed 10 and 15 years service.

"We have more than 200 volunteers who help out in many aspects of our work, and help make the Gardens one of Canberra's great attractions" said Executive Director Judy West.

"Many volunteers are the public face of the Gardens, running our popular daily guided tours. Others provide vital assistance behind the scenes, helping maintain our plant records and mounting and cataloguing herbarium specimens."

Volunteers also give their time and skills to the Growing Friends group, which propagates native plants for sale to the public in autumn and spring each year.

Volunteers have been an integral part of the Gardens since its establishment in 1949, when many local Canberrans gave their time on an informal basis. The first official volunteer task commenced in 1985, with the production of the weekly information sheet *In Flower This Week*.

Opportunities for community involvement in a wide variety of volunteer roles came with the establishment of the Friends of the Australian National Botanic Gardens in 1990. The Volunteer Guide Service was formed in 1992 and about 4000 visitors enjoy the free guided walks every year.

The Friends also play an important role in fund-raising for Gardens' projects.

The function will be held on the Brittle Gum Lawn at 11.00am.

International Volunteers Day is celebrated each year on 5 December.

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