

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](http://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](http://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](http://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 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](http://botanicgardens.sa.gov.au)

# Wittunga BOTANIC Garden

Plants. People. Culture.



# Wittunga Botanic Garden

## Opening hours

Admission is free,  
365 days a year

*Week days*  
8.30am - 4.00pm

*Weekends and public holidays*  
10.00am - 5.00pm (6.00pm during daylight savings)

Wittunga Botanic Garden is closed on days that the fire danger rating is catastrophic.

For more information:  
[botanicgardens.sa.gov.au](http://botanicgardens.sa.gov.au)

## Regulations

- No bicycle or scooter riding
- Do not damage or remove plants
- Do not enter garden beds
- No vehicles
- No pets
- No alcohol
- No skateboarding or rollerblading
- No BBQ's
- No ball or throwing games
- No sound equipment



- Information
- Guided walks meeting point
- Toilets
- Parking
- Bus stop
- No public access
- Fire evacuation assembly site
- Wedding site
- Picnic table

In the event of a fire emergency, immediately assemble at one of the marked fire assembly areas

- |     |                                   |     |                                   |
|-----|-----------------------------------|-----|-----------------------------------|
| H8  | Administration (no public access) | L18 | Grey Box Woodland                 |
| E18 | Australian Health Garden          | M21 | Hakeas and Banksias               |
| M11 | Australian Native Cultivars       | E13 | Kangaroo Island Flora             |
| G22 | Billabong                         | I13 | Lake                              |
| G18 | Bird Garden                       | C11 | Maluka Beds                       |
| L12 | Butterfly Garden                  | E21 | Myrtaceae (Australian Myrtles)    |
| K12 | Duck Landing                      | E10 | Terrace Beds                      |
| D17 | Fleurieu Peninsula Flora          | C9  | Wittunga House (no public access) |
| L16 | Fynbos (South African Heathland)  |     |                                   |

## Garden highlights

- |                       |                        |
|-----------------------|------------------------|
| <b>A</b> Leucadendron | <b>E</b> Banksia       |
| <b>B</b> Protea       | <b>F</b> Hakea         |
| <b>C</b> Leucospermum | <b>G</b> Red Hot Poker |
| <b>D</b> Kangaroo Paw | <b>H</b> Erica         |

# 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 civilisations.

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 Classgrounds 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 horticulturalists 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 cafés and shops only a short walk away.

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

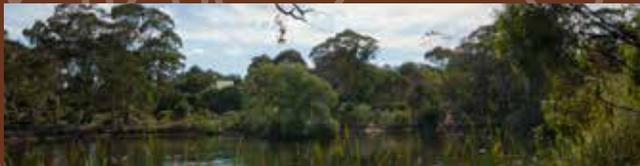
Large and intimate lawn areas are available for small family and friend gatherings.

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

### Wedding enquiries

For wedding enquiries, please contact Blanco Catering: [botanic@blancofood.com.au](mailto:botanic@blancofood.com.au) or 08 8223 3526

## A Living Museum



Many remnants of the Ashby family's history can still be found today at Wittunga.

### Wittunga House (C9)

The original Ashby family residence can be seen overlooking the terrace beds. It was built in 1902 and then rebuilt in 1934 after it was unfortunately gutted by a bushfire. It is easy to imagine Edwin Ashby standing on his porch, overlooking the garden and planning his next project. The house and grounds are not open to the public.

### Terrace Beds (E10)

Originally developed by Keith Ashby, this is a collection of hardy South African and Australian shrubs, including the Garden's principal collection of Proteaceae. The only remaining old fruit trees in this area are two Japanese Persimmon (*Diospyros kaki*), a favourite food source for local wildlife and a Cherry Plum Tree (*Prunus cerasifera*).

### Maluka Beds (C11)

Built in the early 1920s, Edwin Ashby developed the raised sandy garden beds to promote drainage and replicate growing conditions he had seen in Western Australia. While the Maluka Beds were initially developed to support Australian natives, other species that also benefited from these unique growing conditions were later added, including succulents and cacti. The original beds still exist and are of significant historical value.

### 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.

## Things to Discover



### Hakeas and Banksias (M21)

The uniquely Australian Hakeas and Banksias can be found throughout Wittunga. There are over 140 species in the Hakea genus, including the cauliflower Hakea (*Hakea corymbosa*) located along the western boundary and the unique blue-flowered Hakea (*Hakea lehmanniana*), which flowers from July to September. Look for the vibrant yellow and red Heath Banksia (*Banksia ericifolia*), Golden Stalk Banksia (*Banksia media*), and the pale Dryandra-leafed Banksia (*Banksia dryandroides*) in the southern section, especially in June until October when they are in flower.

### Fleurieu Peninsula Flora (D17)

With a focus on local flora, native plants are featured from the region stretching between the southern Mount Lofty Ranges and Cape Jervis. The SA Blue Gum (*Eucalyptus leucoxylon*) and the grey barked eucalypts (*Eucalyptus microcarpa*) are naturally occurring in the Blackwood area and some in the Garden are remnants of the original flora before Wittunga was established.

### Kangaroo Island Flora (E13)

Full of plants from the rugged Kangaroo Island, this collection includes the endangered Daisy Bush (*Olearia microdisca*), with leaves that give off a distinct curry aroma and is endemic to Kangaroo Island.

### Myrtaceae (Australian Myrtles) (E21)

The family Myrtaceae is Australia's largest plant family. Related genera grown at Wittunga include the grand Agonis, bright red Bottlebrush (*Callistemon*), Kunzea, the drooping Netbush (*Calothamnus*), Tea tree (*Leptospermum*) and Paperbark (*Melaleuca*), which flowers in September and October.

### South African Proteaceae (E10)

There are almost 400 species of South African Proteaceae, including the pale yellow Conebush (*Leucadendron eucalyptifolium*), 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.

## A Haven for Wildlife



### 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.

### 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.

### Down by the Billabong

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 swamphen, 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.