



Bright fuchsia ahead for our Sophie

WHILE a rose by any other name is still a rose, this fuchsia by another name is a Sophie Thomson.

Gardening writer for the *Sunday Mail's home* magazine and one of Australia's most respected gardening experts, Sophie has had this showy new variety of fuchsia named after her – and she's as tickled pink as its petals.

Weald View Gardens fuchsia nursery owner Don Scrase, 81, and son Roger, 54, discovered the unusual bloom growing naturally in the nursery about three years ago

and decided to propagate it. They have now named the flower after Sophie as a tribute to her gardening expertise as well as to her father, a keen fuchsia enthusiast.

"Seedlings germinate in our nursery, with the help of the birds and bees, by themselves quite often," Roger said.

"My father found and dug this one up . . . and after trialling it we decided it had great qualities. It produces lots of flowers and has beautiful colours. You could describe it as a very showy fuchsia, pretty to look at."

Don Scrase said: "Naming a fuchsia after Sophie is a fitting recognition of her involvement in plant growing and, through her, a tribute to her father."

Sophie said she was delighted to receive such an honour and loves her new fuchsia. "It's a bit like me, full and frilly – or even big and blousy," she said. The Sophie Thomson and other new releases can be seen at the ABC Gardening Australia Expo next Saturday to Monday, at the Wayville Showgrounds.

JOHN MERRIMAN



FULL BLOOM: Sophie Thomson admires "her" fuchsia at Weald View Gardens, Ashton. **Picture:** Dean Martir