



# Australian Plants Society

## South East NSW Group

Newsletter 175  
September 2021

*Corymbia maculata* Spotted Gum and  
*Macrozamia communis* Burrawang

### Contacts:

President,  
Secretary,

Di Clark,  
Paul Hattersley,  
John Knight,

Group contact

[diClark293@outlook.com](mailto:diClark293@outlook.com)  
[paul.hattersley26@outlook.com](mailto:paul.hattersley26@outlook.com)  
[johnonvista49@gmail.com](mailto:johnonvista49@gmail.com)  
[southeast@austplants.com.au](mailto:southeast@austplants.com.au)

## Next Meeting

**Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2021,**

**Again !, at home, in your garden or nearby local bush area**

Hello Everyone,

The past month has seen us restricted by the current COVID -19 situation but hopefully everyone is managing to get out on a walk and appreciate this wonderful spring. I am afraid that this situation will continue into the next month. We would like you all to keep contributing to the newsletter and keep on getting out there and growing native plants.



I have been following the advice of Shane from the APS visit to my place. This involves renovating the pergola and painting it a dark colour to make it less obvious. Still a work in progress, with much to do, but I am getting there.

Like many members, I have spent time also wandering locally, and have also been amazed by the colour in the local bush. Broad expanses of *Hardenbergia violacea* and *Kennedia rubicunda* are covering the bare earth and many shrubby peas are helping to rejuvenate the burnt soil. You don't have to go far to be surrounded by beauty. I found a native passionfruit *Passiflora herbertiana*, (shown at right) one of two native species which occur locally. (See Margaret Lynch's story for more information)

As you can appreciate the committee is sometimes finding it difficult to determine what we do when, in this ever changing scenario, so I would like to thank you for your patience. As part of the broader Australian Plants Society family, we need to abide by any decisions of APS NSW Region, as how we conduct our gatherings are governed by Regional directives.

**At this stage the committee is holding off on outlining any future activities. We will wait and see if the regions remain in lockdown and then assess the situation.**

We know the membership has a passion for native plants and a desire to learn so please let us know what you have been discovering and what has inspired you and share the enthusiasm.

**Currently, NSW Region is updating their strategy for the next 5 years**, and President Heather Miles has asked all groups to advise members of their plans. Below is Heather's information about the process. **A key focus is membership growth, engagement and retention.** We have several parallel streams of work underway - the first is the work of a team of postgraduate students from UTS, and the second is the work that Merle Thompson, our membership officer, and I are doing on improving membership data and processes.

### **1. Future sustainability of APS NSW - with the team from University of Technology Sydney**

We were fortunate to have the opportunity to work with a team of postgraduate students from UTS who are undertaking a master's degree in business administration and management. The team, called Team Assurgent (note assurgent is botanical term meaning rising upwards!) selected us to work with. The overarching question being addressed by the team is **'How do we ensure the future sustainability of APS NSW?'** This includes clarifying a distinctive vision for the future as well as assisting us in designing the member journey. The students have divided the work into three sections:

1. Why does APS NSW exist?
2. How can we improve member retention?
3. How can we attract more members?

**A) Workshop to brainstorm 'Why do we exist'**, was discussed via a Zoom meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> September

#### **B) Surveys of members who have left and newish members - for information**

Over the next few weeks, we will also be developing short anonymous surveys to gather information:

- From past members - why you left the society?
- From newish members (the last two years or so) - how are you finding your membership with APS NSW so far?

This will help us improve our offerings and work out what to do differently.

### **2. Improving membership data and processes**

Simultaneously, Merle Thompson and I have been working on current membership processes. We are updating the emails that new members receive automatically from the Wild Apricot system to make them more personalised, welcoming and engaging and reviewing initial contact processes.

We also want to improve the information we provide to you. To design better processes and outputs, we need your assistance. We need to know:

- How do you use the information now and
- What is working or not working.

To do this, we invite you to join a Zoom meeting on **Tuesday evening, 5 October 7pm - 8pm.**

We will share the changes we are making, get an initial view of what is working and not working from your end, and then schedule additional meetings as required with each group to understand individually what's needed. Please let me know who from your group will attend.

I look forward to hearing from you. If you have any questions, please contact me ([president@austplants.com.au](mailto:president@austplants.com.au)) or [hmiles1672@gmail.com](mailto:hmiles1672@gmail.com)

Until next time, **Di Clark**

## Members Musings

### The Joy of Spring, and Wattle, Endures

Margaret Lynch

While I sit writing this birds are happily foraging in the garden oblivious to the woes of humans. Lockdown extended but what do they care, plenty of nectar-laden flowers and insects abound. Their chatter and squabbling brings me joy even though I know bower birds are up to mischief in the grapefruit tree. Black cockatoos signal more rain is on the way and life goes on despite the raging virus.

It is now spring but kangaroo paws have been flowering since mid-August so missed their annual haircut, (as many of us also miss our regular trim!). There is a wonderful display of flowers in my garden this spring and lots to do so it's where I spend most of my outdoor hours. Always enjoyable and always something to admire whether it is the showy wattles and banksias or the delicate flowers of the epacris.. Yes, a bandicoot has been making a mess digging overnight, a possum is nibbling new shoots and a visiting lyrebird is intent on dispersing mulch regardless of garden borders.

Another visitor surprised and delighted me, a diamond python. Possibly woken from its winter slumber by an RFS burn in nearby bushland, I admired its beautiful pattern as it moved through the garden. However during a morning coffee break I was joined by my guest, but sensing I was not impressed it retreated to perform an amazing acrobatic display.

Weeding has become the major task as *oxalis* (*Oxalis* sp.) missed in the previous rounds of weeding is ready to fling more seed the moment I touch it, and now I have creeping beard grass (*Oplismenus aemulus*), sometimes called 'hopeless menace', a play on the genus name. This grass and some of the oxalis are natives; so should I tolerate their presence and simply control their spread?

On a brighter note, the mild and wet summer and autumn this year many welcome seedlings have popped up as well as the weeds. These include a variety of grevillea, correa, leptospermum, lomandra and a pelargonium rapidly spreading from garden to path. All ready to be dug up, transplanted or shared with friends. No need for propagation!

I've also been walking and finding flowers a plenty to admire in patches of local bush. With easy access to bushland wherever you are in the Eurobodalla as we discovered in Dalmeny at the last meeting, there are many places that surprise and delight with their diversity of plants.

And none brightens the bush more at this time of year than the cheerful masses of wattle blooms. Wattle is part of our psyche and has been acknowledged through the founding of clubs and leagues and differing dates for a specific day since the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Our national colours of green and gold are taken from the wattle and so it was fitting that in the bicentennial year a wattle, *Acacia pycnantha*, was declared the national floral emblem and a national wattle day proclaimed to be the first of September. After all there is a wattle flowering somewhere in Australia in any month of the year so how to choose a date to suit the flowering in every state and territory? Everyone should have at least one wattle in the garden be it a small tree or sprawling groundcover (refer to APS journal Australian Plants Vol. 22, No.180 to see examples). Here in the Eurobodalla we have at least two



*Anigozanthos flavidus* "Landscape Lilac"



The lovely weeping *Acacia cognata* is a local plant definitely worth a place in our garden.

endemics found nowhere else. One, *A. covenyi*, a small tree found west of Moruya, is an excellent garden plant while the other, *A. blayana*, from the wild Wadbilliga wilderness is a much larger, though equally beautiful tree.

A plant which caught my eye was one of the local passionfruit, *Passiflora cinnabarina*. The common name for this plant is Red Passionfruit, in reference to the bright vermillion red flowers. We can sometimes be confused by passionfruit vines, as the other local plant *P. herbertiana* has flowers initially creamy white, but age to pink or red, so I thought it might be useful to point to a couple of features which will help identify the species. Both species have usually 3 lobed leaves which are held on long stalks. At the top of the stalk (petiole), *P. herbertiana* has 2 distinct raised glands where the stalk joins the leaf. *P. cinnabarina* lacks this feature. Also the young growth of *P. herbertiana* is finely hairy, but *P. cinnabarina* is glabrous.



*Passiflora cinnabarina*

We sometimes encounter weedy, non-native species, **Banana passionfruit**, *P. mollissima*, and **Common Passionfruit** *P. edulis*, both of which can be readily recognised as they have leaf margins which are toothed, whereas our native plants have entire leaf margins.

So gardens and bush bring many joys especially in spring as flowers bloom and wildlife revel in the warm and longer days. A time that lifts the spirit whatever may be happening in our crazy world.

## Why People Garden

## Geoff Gosling

I read a recent online article about a couple who sold their house and, knowing that the house was to be demolished and the block bulldozed for a McMansion, they invited the neighbours to help themselves to any plants they fancied. Some neighbours accepted; plants were dug up and taken into new ownership. The garden lives on in a different location.

This is not an unusual story or even the start of a new trend. I am sure many people have done this. For instance, one set of our neighbours moved down from Canberra about the same time as us and brought pretty much all their garden plants with them and planted them in the new location.

The story does illustrate though that the garden can provide continuity in people's lives and allow memories of all sorts to live on. We have done this in our garden through creating a hedge of *Acacia vestita*, a beautiful grey



Attractive weeping habit, and foliage of *A. vestita*. Apologies for the bedraggled flowers, looking worse for wear after recent heavy rain

foliated shrub with a weeping habit.

So, where do the memories come in?

*A. vestita* is one of the plants in the Sculpture Garden of the National Gallery that I was taken with when visiting there 20 or so years ago. It was a good bushy specimen with triangular leaves (the literature says the leaves are elliptic or ovate and not even leaves but phyllodes. I say they are triangular leaves.). Whatever, they are an attractive distinguishing feature.

That specimen had plenty of seeds and so I gathered some to propagate. I managed to get a few plants and put them in our garden at Wamboin. Then we moved to the coast where one of our first trips with APS was to the home of Jenny and Peter John at Punkalla where there were great specimens of *A. vestita*. So, I repeated the exercise and have managed to get five specimens to grow into a hedge that is currently about 2 metres tall and will increase to 3 or 4 metres or maybe more. I did have a longer hedge but the wallabies and the weather carried off about half the plants. I managed to find an online nursery recently that had some *Acacia vestita* and so I have planted a few more to complete the hedge. The older, original shrubs flowered prolifically this year and I hope to get many more seeds to produce more plants.

## Bega Valley APS Garden

## Jan and Rob Robilliard

In 2012 the Australian Plants Society South East applied to the Bega Shire Council for an Environmental grant and was successful in gaining \$3,500 to replace environmental weeds such as Crepe Myrtle, with Australian natives in the Bega Park garden near the swimming pool.

APS members from the Bega Valley helped plant many tube stock and constructed a mowing edge along the topside of the garden.

Since then a small number of people have weeded and maintained this garden, replacing plants which suffered during subsequent drought years, and propagating seedlings.

The garden is now well established and is still maintained by a small number of APS members with occasional help from Council.

It provides a pleasant environment for both gardeners and the broader community during these lockdown times



A colourful section of the APS garden at Bega Park

## You should grow one of those

## Mark Noake

Phil Trickett was referring to a specimen of *Grevillea bemboka* thriving in the garden so lovingly curated by himself and Catriona near Milton. Little did we know that before long this plant would be blown out of the ground by strong winds, and that a wildfire would ravage the inaccessible hills above Bemboka where the species originates.

As luck would have it, ten of the cuttings taken in response to an offer from Phil, put on roots. Soon, however, the ten became six and things were looking dire. Three went back to Phil and three remained in Moruya. Six became one. Then the black Summer Bushfires hit. Latest reports have one *G. bemboka* growing in the Milton garden, with some cuttings on the way.



This image shows Grevillea Study Group Leader, Peter Olde's trusty 4WD parked in a precarious position below an unstable cliff on the Araluen Road west of Moruya. We were visiting a population of *G. arenaria* growing in some places from cracks in the rock. The 4WD survived that trip and the grevilleas continued to grow for several months.

A subsequent visit showed all of the plants dead. The small area escaped the main fury of the fires, and healthy growth of other plants adjacent suggested that the area had not been sprayed with herbicide. Perhaps the relentless drought took its toll.

Revisiting the site, Carolyn spotted a host of emerging seedlings. But then the cliff collapsed, permanently blocking the road and presumably wiping out the grevilleas. An alternate route through winding fire trails was suggested to stranded residents along Araluen Road until the shire council has finished clear felling a new swathe through the adjacent forest to redirect the road. At the same time the state government has given permission for logging to recommence in the area so devastated by the Black Summer fires.

To add insult to injury, bushfire recovery funds have now been allocated to a large scale mountain bike facility to the west of Mogo, right through populations of *G. arenaria*. Tracks are being cleared and remodeled with an aim to draw thousands of tourists to the facility each year.

Fortuitously we have a few forms of *Grevillea arenaria* thriving in our garden. I hope that these anecdotes support the call (last newsletter) for members to grow species wherever possible in the hope of preserving grevilleas.

## Uplifting plants at Little Forest

Phil Trickett

It's been a great year for flowering, perhaps reflecting our long period of good rain since March 2020. Many species are flowering more than they have ever done before. Despite a couple of rampaging wombats doing their best to destroy our garden, the range of plants coming into flower, many for the first time, has been a source of great excitement.



Among the banksias, our grafted *Banksia lanata* is a personal highlight. This is its first flowering. It was grafted onto *Banksia integrifolia* about four years ago.

It's a great plant for any garden, only growing to around 1 m in height. It has large, spectacular inflorescences initially with pink flowers, and when the deep burgundy styles emerge the inflorescence is even more beautiful.

Soft, grey/green foliage is also a highlight, particularly the new growth which is pink/pale green with white hairs.



Note the lyrebird lurking at the front of the banksia. We find this form much less troublesome than the more typical, highly active ones that frequent our garden.

On a par with the *Banksia lanata* is our first *Banksia praemorsa* (Burgundy form) to flower.

It is also grafted on *B. integrifolia*.

This is Catriona's favourite banksia and I have had plenty of reminders over the years of its non-appearance in our garden! It's now around four years old and has grown to around 2 m so far. We have a number of the yellow forms in the garden but for some reason I have never had success grafting and growing a burgundy form. The colour is quite stunning and well worth the wait.

(Norm Hulands collected seed of the burgundy form from plants in W.A., and has grown some successfully in his and Lesley's Moruya garden, but they all produced yellow flowers !)



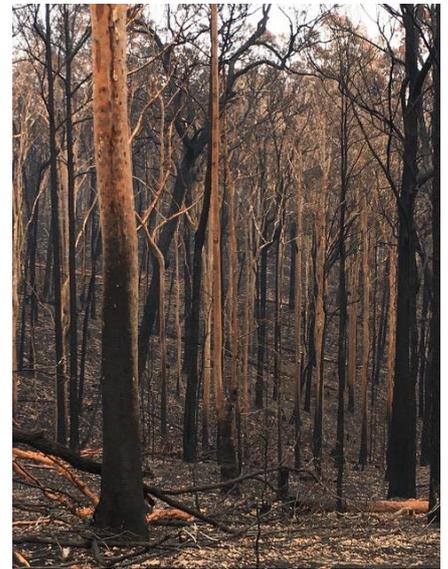


Another spectacular banksia in flower at present is the local *Banksia ericifolia*.

We cannot remember where we acquired this plant but it is incredibly floriferous, and flowers later than our other plants of this species.

Unfortunately no seeds are available on the plant due to a family of yellow-tailed black cockatoos which pilfered every cone last year.

(Phil, you need to try some cuttings, surely other members would be happy to have such a lovely plant)



## In the Forest

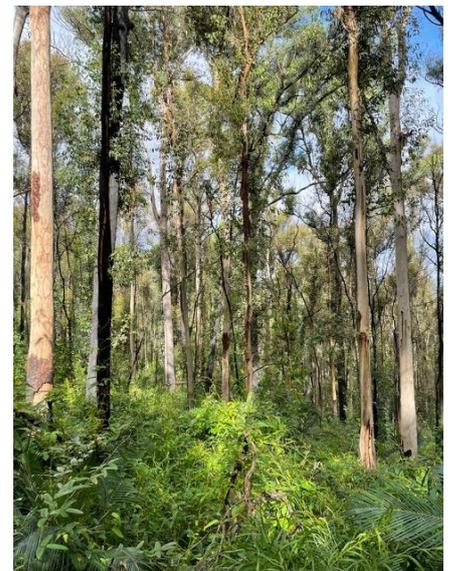
Lesley Vincent

I am so fortunate that I can take my daily exercise during the lockdown in the forest adjacent our home. This spring has brought so many delights that I thought I would share some photos with you. It is all the more amazing when I think that it is just 20 months since the Bushfire ravaged the whole area on New Year's Eve, 2019.

I think the most stunning display this spring would have to be that of the *Hardenbergia violacea*. (Many members have commented on how brilliant the Hardenbergia display has been this year, obviously flourishing post fire)

I even spotted a couple of pure white flowers amongst the purple. Other flowering species I have come across this spring that have re-emerged in the forest following the fire include:

*Billardiera scandens*    *Comesperma volubile*  
*Clematis aristata*    *Daviesia ulicifolia* (centre)  
*Hibbertia dentata*    *Leucopogon ericoides*  
*Leucopogon lanceolatus* (below)    *Pandorea pandorana*  
*Pultenaea daphnoides*    *Prostanthera incana*    *Zieria smithii*





**Jan Douglas and Dave Crawford** sent these photos of some of the myriad plants flowering in the Deua N.P. adjacent to their Moruya property. Climbing plants are a lot more noticeable, as others have noted. As Jan says, “the bush is alive” following the recent fires.

**Apple Berry, *Billardiera scandens*.**  
**Or am I?** The closely related *B. mutabilis* is very similar, and often difficult to distinguish. One needs to look closely at the fruits, which in *B. scandens* are covered by velvety hairs.

**Love creeper, *Comesperma volubile***



## My Waratah Garden

**Anne Keaney**

Today on a warm blustery Saturday I completed a bit of planting in my waratah garden. In went two additional Monga Waratahs (*Telopea mongaensis*) and one NSW Waratah (*Telopea speciosissima*). This garden bed is on a north easterly slope with reasonable afternoon shade and reasonable protection from the westerly winds. As my soil is a clay/clay loam it's not ideal for waratahs but overall its relatively friable and drains on this slope.

Over the past few years I've planted Monga Waratahs, Braidwood Brilliants, a Shady Lady, NSW Waratahs and Tasmanian Waratahs (*Telopea truncata*). I've had mixed success at best. My Monga Waratahs are rather stunted and reluctant to flower but I haven't planted them in very good positions so I'm hopeful these two will do a bit better. My NSW Waratahs are pathetic. They generally appear to be on deaths door with zero likelihood of ever flowering.

My greatest disappointment, however, has been my Tasmanian Waratahs. I was very excited to be given 4 of these in super tubes last November. I immediately planted one in a bed of mainly compost and within days some creature had completely defoliated it and it never recovered. Numbers 2 and 3 were planted in early autumn. Their roots balls had not really developed, and six months later though both still alive, are still sulking. I keep checking to look for signs of some activity but nothing so far. My fourth one I kept in its super tube to plant out this spring. It grew a fair bit and was looking promising. Then only two weeks ago I overwatered it and its now dead as well.

On a more positive note my garden is redeemed by my Braidwood Brilliants. The photo is of one of these which has been in the ground for about four years and is only days away from blooming.

What could go wrong?



## Locals Only

I've recently also started introducing to my garden plants endemic to, or at least local, to my area. Some of these include Araluen Gum (*Eucalyptus kartzoffiana*),

Wolgan Snow Gum (*Eucalyptus gregsoniana*),

the rare Monga Tea Tree (*Leptospermum thompsonii*),

Bitter Pea (*Daviesia mimosiodes*) and of course the

Monga Waratah (*Telopea mongaensis*).

Last summer the local form of Strawflower (*Xerochrysum bracteatum*) had a big flowering in this area. Although they became quite straggly once they started flowering I collected some seeds to ascertain how they would perform in a garden situation. The seeds germinated easily and I planted out quite a few during August.

While their large soft leaves have been knocked about by the wind and frost, a few have started to flower. The ones I planted in an old compost heap are doing best so they obviously enjoy good soil. I'll see how they look over the next few months to determine whether they are worth planting more widely throughout my garden in future years.



## Garden Pots

Alison Spurgeon

I am waiting for my new garden to be landscaped so unfortunately have not had much chance for gardening in the lockdown. I'm restricted to pots at the moment - here's a selection of colourful ones:

*Anigozanthos* 'Federation Flame' with *Bracteantha* Mohave White

Dwarf form of *Chorizema cordatum* growing well in a pot

*Brachyscome* Fresco Candy



## and, A Short Walk in the Narooma Bush

A recent bushwalk in State forest to the southwest of Narooma was highlighted by a stunning display of wildflowers.

The undergrowth was very thick after the fires, and maybe recent rains triggered the beautiful flowering. Setting out early from Punkala Bridge, masses of *Stackhousia monogyna* banked up on the roadside glowed through the morning mist.

Later we came across thick carpets of purple *Hardenbergia violacea* punctuated by bright yellow pea bushes - a great colour combo.

There were many more flowers putting on a display, but it was a special treat to see the lovely red flowers of *Passiflora cinnabarina* rambling through the bush. The fruits of this native passionfruit are edible, with reports of the taste ranging from delicious to not especially palatable.



*Stackhousia monogyna*



## Pluses and Minuses of a Garden

Jenny John

Though lockdown is distressing it has allowed me more time at home to survey the garden. Longer days, rain and increasing warmth have roused the plants and colour is appearing everywhere. The peas are looking good.

*Hardenbergia violacea* has smothered the Port Wine Magnolia that is too close to a drain to be safely dug out, and judicious pruning makes sure that the *Hardenbergia* keeps the upper hand.



*Eutaxia obovata*, which has struggled for a couple of years is a golden welcome at the base of our entrance steps and *Indigofera australis*, donated by Mark & Carolyn Noake colours the shaded bed on the other side of the path. Following the suggestions of members who attended a meeting on garden design held at 12 Riley St back in 2018 we terraced part of the front yard and the beds are now filling up with *Banksia*, *Grevillea*, *Zieria* and *Adenanthos*, giving the small birds alternative feeding when the red wattlebird chases them from the back yard.

On the whole our limited plantings have been successful. An increasing diversity of birds now visit the garden to entertain us but the block, being part way down a slope, receives a large amount of run off when there is rain, particularly on the north side. A few shrubs like *Grevillea* 'Lady O' that flourished when first planted, have collapsed following recent Autumn and Winter rains, proving I suppose, that the garden drainage needs to be improved. I would like to know if any members have similar conditions and whether there are any shrubs that can cope with occasionally flooded roots.

Another problem we need to solve is *Pittosporum undulatum*. Delightful as it is to be greeted by the perfume at the front door when the tree is in flower, better judgement says that this tree and another in the back yard should be removed to reduce the potential for ever more invasion into the local bush. Can anyone recommend a competent arborist around the Narooma area who could remove the trees without excessive damage to the surrounding plantings?

I count myself lucky that in these restricted times I can forget my cares by spending time in a garden. It really is the best therapy despite the occasional heartbreaks it engenders.

## September in our Currowan garden – inside the fence. Marjorie Apthorpe

Long ago, before lockdown, the APSSE committee discussed a September meeting to visit Verdigris Fern Nursery at Currowan, then to adjourn for lunch in our garden (which is next door). Due to the forced cancellation of our meetings the September gathering did not happen. But here is a glimpse of our garden, parts of which are looking very pretty.

The garden is best described by the polite viewer as eclectic – a combination of plantings of azaleas from the previous owners 20 years ago, local natives, natives that have simply appeared under their own steam, and a few West Australian imports. Drought and fire destroyed some areas, and we are still in the process of replanting.

The Currowan fire burned the bed nearest the back door, killing the large *Grevillea rhyolitica*. We replanted this bed with West Australian coastal shrubs *Alyogyne huegelii* (Lilac Hibiscus) and *Hibbertia racemosa*, in addition to *Grevillea* "Crackles" (a dwarf orange cultivar, one parent of which is *G. alpina*) and Jo Benyon's gift of *Grevillea* "Jelly Baby" (a very floriferous pink flowered hybrid of *G. alpina* and *G. lavandulacea*).

Appearing without any input from us, *Indigofera australis* have graceful sprays of violet flowers above the centre of the bed, *Hibbertia aspera* popped up, and two Grevillea hybrids with parents in the *rhyolitica* group have appeared and are flowering vigorously, so have been spared. In addition, a number of grape hyacinths and daffodil bulbs survived the fire and put on a show. The variegated *Platysace lanceolatus* also survived and is in flower.

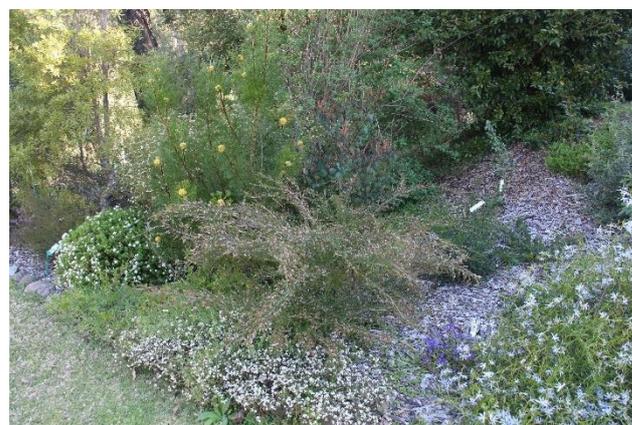


Other beds surrounding the lawn survived the fire untouched. The eastern side of the garden is framed by several large azaleas, in front of which are a *Westringia*, two more *Hibbertia racemosa*, and *Astartea* “Winter Pink”. A golden-red flowered *Pandorea pandorana* has appeared and is draped over the top of the azaleas. Behind the azaleas in deep shade are plantings of *Chorizema cordatum* and *C. ilicifolium*, both covered in pink and orange pea flowers.



The southwestern side of the lawn contains a bed of experimentation, with various plants having died and been replaced, among

some older native and exotic plantings. Sasanqua camellia, Viburnum and *Backhousia myrtifolia* provide shade and a windbreak to this area. Large shrubs include *Prostanthera incisa*, *Ceratopetalum gummiferum* and an *Isopogon anethifolius* (grown from seed), now in flower. A dwarf form of *Homalanthus populifolius* has reddish flower spikes and interesting foliage next to the Isopogon. These are contrasted with the white bracts and light green leaves of *Spyridium coactilifolium*, a South Australian species from John Knight’s garden, which never stops flowering. In the front of the bed are lower growing plants: from left, *Tetratea thymifolia* with sprays of pinkish-violet flowers; a neat mound of white-flowered *Pimelea linifolia* (also long flowering); the pink sprays of *Thryptomene denticulata* that are finishing after seven months in flower; a brief explosion of white-flowered *Commersonia hermannifolia* groundcover; deep blue *Dampiera stenophylla* and pale blue *Scaevola porocarya* that has happily flowered all winter. Other plantings include new *Correas* and a surviving single *Crowea* “Coopers Hybrid”.



Other plants worth noting in the garden are the Currowan hybrid Grevillea that appeared on a rock slope behind the pool, and continues to impress with large red terminal flowers and foliage that remains fresh green and without rust patches. Another Grevillea on a rocky slope is *Grevillea* “Ocean Reef”, pictured at right, a P1 (Priority 1) West Australian plant that originated from a hybrid plant that has formed a large suckering clump. Despite the W.A. Department of the Environment bulldozing part of the clump “by mistake” during bushland clearing for the building of a marina at Ocean Reef, the parent plant mostly survives, and a number of plants have been grown from cuttings.

My plant has had an eventful life: planted on a rocky slope near the septic tank to screen it (a mistake on my part), the small bush was protected by a wire cage to



keep the wallaby from devouring it; half the plant was scorched black during the January 2020 fire. During floods and subsequent regrowth the bush grew through the wire cage which had to be cut away, and the long branches headed downhill and are now a tangled sprawl of grey green leaves, the older ones developing small spines on their tips. The first small flower heads appeared this spring and have just begun to open to show white flower heads tinged with pink. Peter Olde remarked that this species seems to have potential as a root stock for some West Australian species that have proved difficult to grow on their own roots in the eastern states.

Another West Australian plant that I have managed to grow with difficulty is *Pimelea ferruginea*. In the wild this beautiful coastal plant varies from deep pink to white in its flower colours. I have so far managed to kill two of the deep pink varieties. One surviving very pale pink flowered form is still alive, growing on a “mini-dune” (a small pile of sand enclosed by rocks). Its flowerheads have just started opening. The leaves are a striking glossy green, arranged symmetrically in rows down the stem.

Some of the easier W.A. plants that I have experimented with are the Chorizemas (*C. cordatum* and *C. ilicifolium*). Having four plants of these, I put one of each species in moderate shade under an *Elaeocarpus reticulatus* tree and under shrubbery. I also planted one *C. ilicifolium* in deep shade under a *Pittosporum undulatum*, and one *C. ilicifolium* – *cordatum* hybrid(?) in full sun on a rocky slope facing north. The last plant has managed well in the sun, to my great surprise. It has needed supplementary watering in summer, but has flowered profusely this spring. Two of the plants produced lots of seed last year and some seedlings are underway.



Last but not least, two of the W.A. rockery plants with small flowers have flowered this year. *Rinzia communis* from the SW of Western Australia is a wiry little plant with thin arching stems that carry pale pink flowers scattered along the stems. *Calytrix tetragona* (prostrate form) is a groundcover with dense bright green small leaves, and clusters of star-shaped pale pink flowers. Both are growing under the branches of a large *Banksia ericifolia* on a steep slope.

## Colourful Moruya

## Norm and Lesley Hulands

Our sprawling garden continues to provide us with great joy. No point moaning about being stuck at home, we just get out and enjoy the bounty of nature. We don't need to chase the spectacular or difficult to grow plants, but are just grateful those we do choose seem to like us too.

Well mostly !

We have a great variety of plants, and could fill this newsletter with tales of success and failure. These few we have selected are easy to grow and rewarding.



*Dampiera dysantha* is a suckering sub-shrub, growing naturally in western Victoria and lower South Australia. It requires good drainage, and tolerates dry conditions once it starts to sucker. During early spring and summer, bright blue flowers are a great contrast against whitish stems.



*Grevillea* “Shirley Howie” is a hybrid of *G. sericea* and *G. capitellata*, and has been in cultivation for at least 40 years, but no one seems to grow it these days. An ideal garden plant growing about 1.2m, it flowers heavily for many months, and tolerates some shade.



From Western Australia comes *Hibbertia racemosa*, a small shrub which flowers for many months. We can thank Marjorie for providing the cuttings. Here it is growing with a local form of *Dampiera purpurea*.



We are always happy when plants, grown from seed we collect travelling, decide they enjoy Moruya's climate, and no more so than *Banksia praemorsa* growing on its own roots.



The other Banksia shown is *B. media*, of which we have a number that flower regularly, but the foliage often shows signs of iron deficiency. Here I am trying an old farmers trick, driving an iron stake into the root system, where it will slowly rust and leach iron in to the soil.

## Colourful Moruya, 2, Mark Noake

I mentioned in an earlier article that we should be growing SPECIES plants, and not just the latest 'in fashion' hybrids. Our garden is full of natural plants, a few of which are highlighted here to demonstrate their value as garden plants. Each of these Grevilleas occur naturally in the Sydney region, and grow reliably here. The first is *G. buxifolia*, which I have found likes our conditions, but has proved a bit difficult to propagate.

A plant often found with *G. buxifolia* is *G. speciosa*, with the most brilliant red flowers, displayed prominently for many months.

The last is *G. laurifolia*, an absolute cracker of a ground cover. This plant occurs in the Blue Mountains, but has proved easy to grow, has dense foliage and massed flowering.



## Brush-tailed Phascogale Susan Rhind article forwarded by Lyndal Thorburn

### Rare. Elusive. Are they still here?

Have you seen one of these cute critters?? If so, you have spotted one of the rarest animals on the NSW far south coast - the brush-tailed phascogale (phas-co-gale). I am a wildlife biologist who has worked with this species for years and thought the pretty marsupial with its bottle-brush tail was extinct - or near enough - on the NSW far south coast. However, when reviewing records for the revised edition of 'The Mammals of Australia' published by the Australian Museum, I came across a recent sighting at Broulee. So now I'm seeking help from locals to work out where phascogales might still be and where they may have been recently.



Brush-tailed phascogales are rare. They are listed as a threatened species in every state and territory of Australia. In total there are only 21 records for southern NSW – about 3 records per decade. The one at Broulee was spotted at night foraging in the compost heap at Carroll College (2015) and before that there was a sighting at Longbeach (2007), at Duesbury Hill at Dalmeny (2001) and Dunn's Creek Rd, near Malua Bay (1997).

This species is not often seen as it is arboreal and doesn't like coming down to the ground. It is also nocturnal and solitary, and within the trees can be so lightning fast that it vanishes before you get a good look. It is completely dependent on large, old, trees for hollows to nest in during the day and for its food of bark insects - so habitat destruction, logging, clearing for development - and more recently drought and wildfires – are all a worry. Cats are also a big problem.

### So how do you know if you have seen one?

In appearance they are around the size and the colour of a sugar glider (about 30cm head to tail), but they look a bit like a squirrel because of their bushy black tail. When excited all those hairs stand on end and the tail looks like a bottle brush. That is the really distinguishing feature.

The most likely way you might encounter one is if it has moved into your ceiling (they do this quite commonly) or the cat has brought one home. They also love nestboxes, and if you have these on your property the "best" time to do some nest box watching is at dusk in May-June during the mating season, when the males run around like crazy, and again between November to January when the young are dispersing.



Two youngsters keen to get out of the nestbox at the same time

If you have seen a phascogale in the past on the far south coast please get in contact with me, Susan Rhind, via this dedicated email address: [PhascogaleFSC@gmail.com](mailto:PhascogaleFSC@gmail.com)

### COMMITTEE CONTACT DETAILS

President,	Di Clark	Ph 0 4 02 555 330	e. <a href="mailto:diClark293@outlook.com">diClark293@outlook.com</a>
Secretary,	Paul Hattersley	Ph 0412 426 413	e. <a href="mailto:paul.hattersley26@outlook.com">paul.hattersley26@outlook.com</a>
Minute Sec.,			
Treasurer,	Geoff Gosling	Ph 0438 286 382	e. <a href="mailto:geoff.gosling@bigpond.com">geoff.gosling@bigpond.com</a>
Membership	Jenny John	Ph 0437 304 173	e. <a href="mailto:peteandjenny.john@gmail.com">peteandjenny.john@gmail.com</a>
Publicity	Marjorie Apthorpe	Ph 02 4478 1142	e. <a href="mailto:marjorieapthorpe@gmail.com">marjorieapthorpe@gmail.com</a>
Members	Norman Hulands	Ph 0427 276 803	e. <a href="mailto:normanhulands@bigpond.com">normanhulands@bigpond.com</a>
	John Knight	Ph 0434 674 347	e. <a href="mailto:johnonvista49@gmail.com">johnonvista49@gmail.com</a>
	Sally Power	Ph 02 4474 3600	e. <a href="mailto:sallymcdonald9@gmail.com">sallymcdonald9@gmail.com</a>
	Website .		<a href="http://southeast.austplants.com.au">southeast.austplants.com.au</a>