

# AUSTRALIAN PLANTS SOCIETY

*Southern Highlands Group*

*...your local native garden club*

**President**

Kris Gow

[krislloyd2@bigpond.com](mailto:krislloyd2@bigpond.com)

**Vice President**

Sarah Cains

[sfcains@gmail.com](mailto:sfcains@gmail.com)

**Secretary**

Kay Fintan

[kaynbrian@bigpond.com](mailto:kaynbrian@bigpond.com)

**Treasurer**

Bill Mullard

[bfmullard@gmail.com](mailto:bfmullard@gmail.com)

**Newsletter Editor**

Trisha Arbib

[trisharbib@gmail.com](mailto:trisharbib@gmail.com)

**Communications**

Erica Rink

[ear2703@icloud.com](mailto:ear2703@icloud.com)

**Committee Member**

Louise Egerton

[legerton@swiftdsl.com.au](mailto:legerton@swiftdsl.com.au)



Wonderful displays of bottle brush flowers along the main road in Moss Vale and I'm sure elsewhere in the Southern Highlands.

---

## In this issue . . .

---

- P. 2 Diary Dates and News from your Committee
- P. 4 Snippets  
New National Parks app.  
*Eucalyptus maidenii*
- P. 5 The Weird and Wonderful World of Boabs – Louise Egerton
- P. 6 W.S.C. Community Nursery – Fran Mullard
- P. 7 Western Australia Trip – Erica Rink
- P. 9 Florilegium of Threatened Species in the Southern Highlands: Artists' Guided Walk in Penrose – Cathryn Coutts

---

## Diary Dates

---

**Monday November 19th 2018** *Committee meeting* at Louise Egerton's.

**Sunday December 2<sup>nd</sup> 2018** *Christmas Gathering.*

**Please note that the venue has changed.** It will now be at Bill and Fran Mullard's at 150 Devon Road, Exeter from 11.30 a.m. Chicken, bread, and drinks will be provided. It would be appreciated if you could bring either a salad, or something else savoury or sweet to share.

**Thursday February 5<sup>th</sup> 2019** *Members' meeting* at Moss Vale CWA rooms. The art of botanical illustration extends from medieval times to the present. Whilst the importance of the images as a reference for medical benefits has diminished, the beauty of the images endures. Geoff Cains has prepared for us an overview of this special art form with the inclusion of Australian plants.




---

## News from your Committee

---

Our **Annual General Meeting** was held on Thursday 1st November. The president's report follows. There were few changes to office bearers and no new committee members. Kris Gow, Kay Fintan, Bill Mullard, Louise Egerton and Erica Rink still hold the same positions. Sarah Cains is now vice president, and Trisha Arbib is editor. Sarah has been an amazing editor over the last 6 years and has handed over a most attractive and informative newsletter which I will enjoy continuing.

The A.G.M. was followed by a fascinating talk by John Creighton on wombats. There are great problems locally with wombats being killed by cars on the road, leaving behind babies in the pouch. Mange is also a severe problem that will kill if left untreated. John spoke with great passion and concern on these and other issues, and on raising the injured wombats that survive, before releasing them in the wild. There will be a detailed report on his talk in the January 2019 newsletter.

## President's Report for 2018

2018 started with a new committee and an old president. Trisha Arbib Vice President; Kay Fintan secretary; Sarah Cains newsletter editor; Bill Mullard treasurer; Erica Rink and Louise Egerton committee members.

In our first meeting we were privileged to have Elizabeth Jacka an esteemed Landscape Architect and Town Planner speak on Boddy's Eastern Park Nursery in Geelong belonging to her parents.

Several members attended the Tasmania ANPSA meeting this was the topic of our April meeting presented with great slides and generating much conversation.

At the August meeting Pat Hall spoke on her campaign to save the glossy black cockatoo by encouraging locals to plant Casuarina their main food source. In October Jennifer Slattery WSC Bush care officer, known to many of us gave a very informative talk on the Council's nursery.

Our group had several outings which were well attended—Grevillea Park; Roma Dix' garden; Erica and George's garden at Mittagong; bushwalk at Caves Creek.

During the year I have attended several APS get-togethers, in comparison to most groups our numbers have slowly increased.

Thank you to those who kindly submitted items for the newsletter. Also a big thank you from the committee to Fran Mullard who on many occasions assisted when things needed to be done on short notice.

Lastly thank you to a very supportive committee working behind the scenes arranging speakers for meetings and outings. Our year ended with a healthy bank balance raised from sale of plants and door donations. The monies have been used for sponsoring the roundabout at the intersection of Boardman and Kangaloon Road. After consultation with the manager of Coles we were permitted to plant natives in their planter boxes. After several months the plantings are starting to take shape, with many positive comments.

Next year's program is well under way and there should be something for everyone to enjoy, hope to see you all in 2019.

*Kris Gow*

## Good News from the Treasurer: APS Southern Highlands Group 2018

### Overview

Financially a very successful year ending with a bank balance 46% higher than last year.

73% of Income was received from plant and donated merchandise sales and raffles, with membership payments, donations and bank interest making up the rest.

Main expenditure was on CWA Hall and Projector Hire (37%), and Community Support including plants for East Bowral roundabout, Coles Bowral planter boxes and Moss Vale CWA garden (35%). Other expenses were newsletters and postage, gifts for guest speakers and garden visit hosts, and sundry expenses.

Thank you all for your contributions, particularly those who splashed the cash on our sales.

The Bundy Ramble sale sold out and represented 41% of the plant and donated merchandise revenue. A big thanks to chief propagator Kris Gow and Erica Rink who must be the CEO of the Mittagong tote-bag manufacturing centre. Thanks also to Trish Abib for her propagating effort and Jan Jaleski for her generous donation of rescued plants, and of course the few volunteers who gave their time over the two days.

Membership is steadily increasing as we now have 77 members, including 13 joint memberships. Keep spreading the word!

We look forward to another successful year in 2019.

*Bill Mullard* [For a more detailed account please talk to Bill]

---

## Snippets

---

### New national parks app

Download their new, free app to have the ultimate NSW parks guide at your fingertips. The app features information on over 225 national parks, plus hundreds of things to see, to do and places to stay. You can download park information and maps at home, then access it in a park, even without reception.

### *Eucalyptus maidenii*

Living in Bundanoon, it's always interesting to learn more about its early plants and plantings. Sylvia David recently told me about some beautiful *Eucalyptus maidenii* that were planted in Erith Street near the pedestrian railway crossing almost opposite the doctor's surgery. Originally there were 3 of them and they were planted by Joseph Maiden who was the Director of the Sydney Botanic Gardens. Sylvia understands that he did a lot of botanising by train checking out local flora.

Joseph Henry Maiden was an extraordinary man in Australia's botanical history. In May 1896 he became director of the Botanic Gardens and government botanist. He sought to make the gardens a centre for public education as well as recreation and aesthetic enjoyment. His major achievement was the creation of the National Herbarium of New South Wales, with a museum and library, opened in March 1901

His major works were *A Critical Revision of the Genus Eucalyptus*, appearing in over seventy parts from 1903, in which he recognized 366 species, and his *Forest Flora of New South Wales*, in seventy-seven parts from 1904.

It's amazing and intriguing that this giant of a man had a connection with Bundanoon, and one that still persists.

<http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/maiden-joseph-henry-7463>

*Trisha Arbib*

---

## The Weird and Wonderful World of Boabs

---

Louise Egerton

No other plant characterised the Kimberley more than the Boab (*Adansonia gregorii*). When I visited this year I couldn't wait to see these crazy-looking trees. I had expected a few to be scattered here and there but they turn out to be abundant, growing all over the place.



*I call these trees 'The Three Sisters'*

Not just dotted among the spinifex mounds across the savanna woodlands but also growing out of monumental blocks of sandstone along ridges. In towns, too, I'd see them in backyards littered with sheds and old car bodies and they'd been planted as street trees. They occur throughout the Kimberley region becoming sparser east of Kunnunurra and petering out beyond Victoria River in the Northern Territory.

The most distinctive feature of Boabs is perhaps their swollen trunk but, as young trees, they must sprout upwards before bulging outwards. Only their cone-shaped base hints at the growth to come. They are most striking during the Dry season. As the monsoonal rains recede and seep down into the water-table, the Boab drops its glossy palmate leaves and its beautiful large creamy white petals, with their mass of projecting stamens. What remains is a 'vase' of stiff bare branches sticking up into the air from which the fruits or 'nuts'—some the size of emu eggs—dangle. The paraphernalia of transpiration, pollination and dispersal now gives way to the role of the insubstantial spongy wood within the cavernous trunk, which retains moisture from the summer rains and sustains the tree through the long dry months of winter.

### African Cousins

Indigenous to Australia, this species is one of 9 in its genus. The two from mainland Africa and six from Madagascar are commonly known as Baobabs. These trees are extremely long lived, some say for up to a 1000 years. As they grow they expand outwards, their sleek



*Sometimes several old trees merge together to form one grotesquely malformed one*

bottle shaped trunk becomes bulbous and eventually they can take on a bloated, drunken appearance. The once smooth burnished bark becomes pockmarked, scarred and dimpled.

### Trees with Human Form

No two ageing Boabs look alike. Perhaps the spiritual nature of country began to rub off on me because I couldn't stop noticing that these strange-looking trees bore an uncanny resemblance to human forms. First, as children, later as curvaceous young women, maturing into more lumpy matronly bodies. There were 'family

groups', where different aged trees grew beside one another, and ancient misshapen 'grandfathers' with enormous girths, 20 metres or more.

### A Useful Tree

Boab wood is useless for fence posts, cabinetwork or structural work but the tree has plenty to offer. Aboriginal people were able to extract water from the wood and roots. They



*A hand-carved Boab 'nut'*

traditionally ate the pithy seeds, raw or dipped in water and honey. They made fishing lines from the roots. Today local Aboriginal craftsmen carve images of animals, plants and creatures from their Dreaming for sale to tourists. Many of them are beautiful and elaborate works.

Black Flying-foxes, Sugar Gliders birds and insects, including hawkmoths, forage on Boab flowers (and pollinate them). Their branches provide ideal nesting sites, especially for birds of prey. Above all, though, the Boabs provide a sense of mystery, antiquity and other worldliness to a landscape that is so monumental and old that we can only stare and ponder our place in the scheme of things.

## Wingecarribee Shire Council Community Nursery

### Fran Mullard

On Thursday 4th October 2018, 27 of our members attended a presentation by Jennifer Slattery, who is from the Wingecarribee Shire Council's Bushcare Team. The WSC Community Nursery was established in 2007, with Jennifer and her team being instrumental in its recent growth.

The nursery in Berrima Road was set up to satisfy the high demand for plants of provenance for revegetation and rehabilitation projects. It was established on a trial basis of just one year with a very limited budget and two shade cloth igloos to begin with.

In 2009 and 2010 more funding became available and a seed storage fridge and a propagating house (misting polyhouse) were purchased enabling more successful processing of finer seeds and cuttings.

In 2011-2017 a proposal to make a commercial venture of the nursery was considered but this did not go ahead. However, the nursery continued to grow, so it was refurbished as the council could see the value in being able to propagate its own plants. The old igloos were taken down and the on-site drainage was upgraded. Centralised irrigation was installed, and work benches were upgraded.



*A new Green House was built*

A new greenhouse with under-bench heating and ventilation was built along with a dual-purpose polyhouse for propagation.

A new seed fridge was provided as well as temperature-controlled roof-openers to help create optimum growing conditions.

Heating installation enabled the plants to be maintained over winter and propagation time to be extended.

The main function of the nursery is to produce as many native plants as possible.

The types of propagation utilised are seeds, cuttings and divisions for stock beds. There are also transplants or plant rescues as well as plants propagated by Bushcare groups. Only provenance plants (no hybrids) are propagated. The integrity of propagation materials is strictly controlled. Material is collected in accordance with Flora Bank guidelines and a scientific licence is required for propagation of threatened species and these propagated plants must be replanted in their places of origin.



*Propagation benches*

The nursery is not open to the public but working bees are held on the first Saturday morning of the month at 9:00-12:00.

The nursery is a splendid example of community and council collaboration. Thank you so much, Jennifer, for an enlightening and highly enjoyable presentation.

## Western Australia Trip

*Erica Rink*

Western Australia Trip Tuesday 14th August to Monday 17th September, 2018



*Mullewa carpets*

We flew into Perth and picked up our rented car. Budget upgraded us to a great big Toyota Prado which we hadn't expected. The plan was to head north to Karijini National Park, then Millstream Chichester NP, up to Karatha then back down to Perth via Exmouth Kalbarri NP and the wildflowers. We took a small tent and basic cooking equipment. We knew the flowers would be good because WA has had an incredibly wet winter.

1200 kms and 3 days later we arrived in Newman. Really a mining town (Hancock made his fortune out here mining iron with all the services needed). We had planned on stocking up on wine and by 9am hoped to get provisions plus a few bottles and head off to Karijini NP. The bottle shop didn't open till midday and we didn't want to wait so we headed off with some tomato juice and Worcester sauce. Karijini is in the Pilbara region of WA. It is known for its spectacular gorges. 204 kms later we arrived at Dales Gorge and set up camp next to a bench and table, having no chairs/table ourselves. The temperature was a pleasant 27 plus so ideal for swimming in the fern pool and walking up and down the gorge. George started chatting to our camp neighbour and he offered us some red. Turns out he was an ex publican so we were lucky.

During our stay an astronomer with 3 telescopes was offering star gazing. Amazing what you can see with an \$800 telescope. In the middle of the Southern Cross is a group (1000's) of stars called the Jewel Box. You really could see different coloured stars.

Karijini NP has many gorges some of which you can walk into, others you look down on. We camped at the Eco Retreat closer to Joffrey, Weano, Hancock, Kalamina and Hands Gorges. After 3 days we headed to Hamersley gorge. Amazing bent rock formations. I have so many photos but space is limited. We were seeing wildflowers, roadsides full of Mulla mulla's. After Millstream Chichester, more camping, swimming and photos then back on the Rio Tinto private dirt road to Karatha. Cossack and Port Samson interesting places near Karatha.

Karatha itself is pretty new looking with all the usual supermarkets etc. We headed to Exmouth next (550 kms). Did a whale watching tour, they have Humpbacks over there. Plus the wildflowers. Heading down the coast towards Kalbarri via Coral Bay and Carnarvon. Kalbarri NP is amazing. You can't camp in the park but need to drive 35km into the park each day from Kalbarri. There's so much to see and do in the park we went back 3 times. It's on the Murchison River which contained plenty of water.



*Our first cowslip orchid sightings were here*

Our first cowslip orchid sightings were here. The road in was full of flowering wattles, smoke bush, woody pears, banksias, lambs tails and smelly socks in bud just amazing. We had about a week left to explore the wildflower for carpets of everlastings, orchids, wreath flowers and so much more.



*Woolly lambs tails, Lachnostachys eriobotrya*



*Grevillea petrophiloides*

Coalseam Conservation Park didn't disappoint for yellow, pink and white carpets of daisies. Other great spots were Mingenew, Morawa, Moora, Perenjori, Carmanah and Green Head. Some of these towns have special nature reserves. Moora had the Carnaby Cockatoo walk. Huge nesting boxes have been placed on poles for nesting and the birds are using them.

When in Perth we visited Kings Park and were still surprised. It was spectacular. In just over a month we drove 6000 kms and that was only north of Perth. Imagine the treat we are in for when next year's Plant Conference is held in Albany.



## Florilegium of Threatened Species in the Southern Highlands: Artists' Guided Walk in Penrose

Cathryn Coutts



*Penrose State Forest Walk (L to R) Joanna Thomas, Janet Hicks, Dennice Fletcher, Steve Douglas, Katherine Thompson, Sylvia David, Jane Pye and Cathryn Coutts*

Our local group, BDAS Botanic Artists, based in Bowral Art Gallery, is undertaking a project to compile a Florilegium of paintings of threatened species of the Southern Highlands.

The first of these paintings were exhibited in Bowral Art Gallery from 19-30 October, 2018. Since the exhibition the project continues, as we complete more paintings and determine how best to make the collection available for future public viewing.

During the project, we have received a great deal of help from knowledgeable people, who have generously given us their time to show us

some of the plants.

For example, as part of our research we were taken on a guided walk in the Penrose State Forest on September 10. Our two wonderful guides were Katherine Thompson, Convenor for the Penrose Swamps Conservation Group and Sylvia David bush-care volunteer and a member of newly formed Bundanoon Field Naturalists.

In a small area of bush they were able to show us a number of threatened plants, not the least of which was the *Acacia bynoeana*. It is such a tiny, unassuming, but very endangered plant – easy to step on if you're not careful.

On the walk, in addition to the *Acacia bynoeana*, we were also shown a number of other uncommon and threatened species around the vicinity of the Penrose Swamps. These include: *Eucalyptus aquatica*, *Phyllota humifusa*, *Persoonia mollis*, *Helichrysum calvertianum*, *Isopogon prostratus*, *Bossiaea prostrata*, *Rulingia prostrata*, *Hovea linearis*, *Mirbelia platyloboides* and *Epacris paludosa*.



*Epacris paludosa*



*Mirbelia platyloboides*

We were surprised by the diversity of plants that this small area of Penrose swamp habitat contained. Sylvia expressed it so well, by saying that many people do not realise how special and unique these plant communities are, right on our doorstep. We were very fortunate to be shown them. Painting these plants will certainly keep us busy for quite a while.

It begs the question: how many more plants, as threatened as these, are growing all around us in the Southern Highlands? We hope that our Florilegium project will help to raise public awareness of our native plant heritage and the need to protect it.

**MANY THANKS** to all contributors to this November newsletter: Louise Egerton, Fran Mullard, Erica Rink, Cathryn Coutts, Kris Gow and Bill Mullard.