

EAST HILLS GROUP NEWSLETTER



AUGUST 2017

NEXT EHG MEETING:

From 7 pm for 7.30 pm start, Wednesday 2 August 2017

**LIZ CAMERON – WASPS AND FIGS – ‘Waps’ the connection?
GRAHAM FRY – A TRIP TO GHANA – One of Africa’s oldest democracies, a
fascinating country that few Australians visit**

LUGARNO-PEAKHURST UNITING CHURCH
909 Forest Road Lugarno (opposite the Chivers Hill Lugarno shops)

Visitors are welcome.

If you can, please bring something to share for supper and labelled specimens for the plant table.

WELCOME to the August 2017 edition of the East Hills Group Newsletter.

In this issue you can find lots of information about coming events: Open gardens, the Annual Get-together at Coffs Harbour, our coming visit to Sylvan Grove Native Garden, the ANSPA 2018 conference in Hobart, meetings of our neighbouring APS Groups (bladderworts, turtles and Bhutan!) –and more!!

Also, you can enjoy a short historical ramble from our July meeting and also some notes and pictures about the July Plant Table, and there is a mini quiz.

Enjoy your garden!

Jan Douglas, Editor

www.easthills.austplants.com.au



ANPSA 2018 CONFERENCE – HOBART

Grass Roots to Mountain Tops

The Australian Native Plants Society (Australia) Inc. (ANPSA) National Biennial Conference, in conjunction with the ANPSA Biennial Meeting and Seminar, is being held in Hobart, Tasmania in January 2018.



Dates; Seminar and Biennial Meeting Sunday 14 and Conference Monday 15 to Friday 19 January 2018.

Highlights are Pre and post Conference tours on King Island, Bruny Island, alpine and rainforest areas of the Tasmanian mainland and Hobart & Environs including National Parks and World Heritage areas. An excellent program of speakers, A J Swaby Address, Conference dinner, Reception at Government House, Royal Tasmanian Botanical Gardens 200th year, excursions to local plant communities and member's gardens, Study Group focus and of course, socialising with old and new friends.

Key Dates: **20 August** closes for *King Island Tour*; **30 September** *early-bird registration* closes; **15 December** *standard registration* closes.

REGISTRATION is open. Follow the links on the ANPSA website Home page <http://anpsa.org.au> to the Biennial Conference website.

Photo: Hobart Waterfront – Business Events Tasmania.

THE EHG JULY 2017 PLANT TABLE

Thanks to everyone who brought plant specimens.

Hugh Stacy

Plants on the table at our meeting on 5 July included:

Crowea exalata

Goodenia ovata (Hop Goodenia)

Grevillea 'Hills Jubilee'

Grevillea mucronulata

Grevillea sp. (possibly *lanigera* x *alpina*)

Grevillea sp.

Grevillea 'Splendour'

Hakea gibbosa (Hairy Hakea)

Hardenbergia comptoniana

Hibbertia scandens (picture at right)

Themeda triandra syn. *Themeda australis* (Kangaroo Grass)

Thryptomene saxicola

Zieria smithii



Photo: Jan Douglas

***Goodenia ovata*:** This plant grows in all mainland states except WA, generally as a groundcover, sometimes a shrub to 1.5 m. Glossy green leaves to 8 cm have toothed margins. It has yellow flowers for most of the year, but mainly from October to March. It will grow in most soils with good drainage and prefers part shade.



Photo: Brian Walters <http://anpsa.org.au/g-ova.html>

***Hakea gibbosa*:** The name is from Latin *gibbosus*, very humped, probably referring to the shape of the fruit, which turns 90 degrees early in its formation, so that the two halves open like a book, with the two seeds lying with axes parallel. This hakea has no lignotuber and reaches 3 m or more in height. Its new growth is densely covered in white villous hairs on stems and leaves. The leaves are terete, stiff and pungent, to 8 cm long, and 1.5 mm diameter. Cream to yellow flowers form in leaf axils, up to four on a rachis to 1.6 mm. Pedicels to 4.5 mm, perianth 5 mm, moderately covered with tomentum; pistil to 11 mm. Plants like friable soil and full sun and cannot stand frost.



Photo: Murray Fagg <http://anpsa.org.au/h-gib.html>

***Zieria smithii*:** This is a shrub of eastern Australia, found from the Atherton Tableland to Victoria, but widespread and common on coast and ranges of NSW, especially on the edge of rainforest and in rocky places. It usually is 1-2 m high. It has leaves formed of three leaflets, the middle one lance shaped, with a pointed tip. Usually white flowers form in groups of up to 60 in upper leaf axils; the group is shorter than the leaves. Each flower is 6-7 mm in diameter and has four stamens.



Photo: Lisa Ford

Zieria smithii, *WetlandInfo*, Department of Environment and Heritage Protection, Queensland, viewed 23 July 2017, <<https://wetlandinfo.ehp.qld.gov.au/wetlands/ecology/components/species/?zieria-smithii>>

SUTHERLAND GROUP OPEN GARDENS – 26 AUGUST 2017

Three gardens of APS Sutherland Group will be open to APS members between 10 am and 3 pm on Saturday 26 August. A gold coin donation is payable, and there will be plant sales.

The addresses are:

- Hogue garden at 75a Wattle Road, Jannali
- McColl garden at 13 Shorland Place, Jannali
- Aitken garden at 44 Buchanan Place, Bonnet Bay.

The photos at right are from Leonie Hogue's garden in 2013.



LAST CHANCE! APS NSW 2017 ANNUAL GET-TOGETHER COFFS HARBOUR 2 – 3 September 2017

Rainforest riches revealed

The program includes lectures and discussions with the following Rainforest experts: Alex Floyd, Barry Kemp, Lawrie Smith AM, Ecologists Mark Graham and Craig Stehn, Dan Clarke (APS Conservation Officer), Gwen Harden and Peter Poropat.

Other features include guided tours of Coffs Harbour Regional Botanic Garden; bird watching in the Gardens; a visit to the Coramba garden of APS members, Rowan and Lyn McCabe; a guided tour of Coramba Nature Reserve; a visit further north to the garden of APS members Gwyn and Geoff Clarke.

For more information and the registration form, see your copy of the April 2017 issue of Native Plants for NSW, or visit <http://austplants.com.au/component/attachments/download/123.html>



Photos above are from around Coffs Harbour, as shown in Native Plants for NSW.

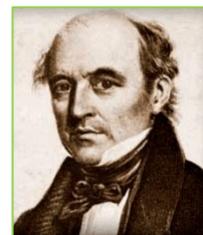
Botanical History or How you can stumble onto something out of the blue!

Presentation by Graham Fry, President, APS East Hills Group

In June, Graham and Liz visited Cocoparra National Park, located on the rocky Cocoparra Range about 25 km north-east of Griffith. They read that John Oxley had explored the area in 1817, and that later a stock route, also used by Cobb & Co coaches travelling between Victoria and Queensland, was established on the western side of the park.

Graham was keen to learn more about Oxley's expedition, which aimed to explore and survey the course of the Lachlan River. The expedition left Bathurst in April 1817 and returned in August. Conditions were dry, and Oxley formed a very poor impression of the land around Cocoparra. He referred to 'these deserts, abandoned as they seem to be by every living creature capable of getting out of them'. A member of the party planted some acorns, peach and apricot-stones, and quince-seeds on the King's birthday (4th June), and Oxley commented that this was done 'with the hope rather than the expectation that they would grow and serve to commemorate the day and situation, should these desolate plains be ever again visited by civilized man, of which, however, I think there is very little probability.'

That member of Oxley's party was Allan Cunningham, who had arrived in New South Wales only the previous December. At the time he was relatively unknown but included on the expedition because of his experience as a botanical collector. He collected over 450 plant specimens on the trip, and most of them were sent back to Kew Gardens where they were described and named.



On 3rd June 1817, in the vicinity of Mt Caley, in what is now Cocoparra National Park, Cunningham collected flowering specimens of a eucalypt which was described as *Eucalyptus sideroxylon*; in his diary he called it the western iron bark (today it is better known as the Red, or Mugga, Ironbark).



Allan Cunningham subsequently participated in numerous significant expeditions in Australia as well as voyages around the continent, and he visited New Zealand. He returned to England in 1831 but came back to Australia six years later to assume the position of government botanist. That appointment did not last long - he resigned in the following year on learning that one of his duties was to grow vegetables for government officials!

Allan Cunningham died of consumption in Sydney on 27 June 1839, aged 47, and was buried in the Devonshire Street Cemetery. When that area was re-developed for Central Station in 1901, his remains were reinterred in an obelisk in the Royal Botanic Gardens that had been erected in 1844 to commemorate his outstanding achievements in exploring Australia and recording its flora.



A number of significant plants were named in his honour, including the Hoop Pine *Araucaria cunninghamii*, Bangalow Palm *Archontophoenix cunninghamiana*, River She-oak *Casuarina cunninghamiana*, Tasmanian Myrtle *Nothofagus cunninghamii*, Kimberley Jigal Tree *Bauhinia cunninghamii*, and Brown Beech *Pennantia cunninghamii*. The far-flung distribution of those trees reflects Cunningham's extensive travels in Australia.

Graham and Liz were delighted that their visit to Cocoparra coincided with the 200th anniversary of the visit by Oxley and Cunningham and grateful they saw the country in better conditions, with prolific flowering of Yellow Box *Eucalyptus melliodora* and Spearwood *Pandorea pandorana*.

WILDFLOWERS AT MUOGAMARRA NATURE RESERVE

Muogamarra Nature Reserve is set in spectacular Sydney sandstone scenery, just north of Sydney, about 54 km from Peakhurst. It is known for its Spring wildflowers and lovely views of the Hawkesbury River. The reserve is open for only six weekends a year.



This year Muogamarra Nature Reserve will be open every weekend from Saturday 12 August until Sunday 17 September.

There is a park entry fee: \$15 adults, \$10 children, \$40 family (2 adults, 2 children). You must pay the entry fee (even if you have a National Parks annual pass), unless you pay for a NPWS guided walk – the walk fee also covers the entry fee.

At the Reserve, you can take yourself for a walk or a picnic, or you can join a NPWS guided walk. Guided walks cost \$20, \$30 or \$50 per adult, depending on which walk you choose, and the walk fee also covers park entry.

NPWS advise that visitors need to book and pay for guided walks online as numbers are limited and places can fill quickly. They also recommend that if you're interested in a self-guided walk, you should contact Kalkari Discovery Centre (Phone 9472 9300 or 9472 930) for information on walking track options.

For more information, see www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au/visit-a-park/parks/muogamarra-nature-reserve



QUICK QUIZ

Can you name the genus of each of the nine plants shown in flower in the photos above?

Can you name the species? (No prizes, no glory for the correct answers!)

Photos taken by Jan Douglas at Muogamarra in August 2013

Photo credits for images in Allan Cunningham article on page 5:

- Portrait: https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/7/75/Allan_Cunningham07.jpg
- Flowers: Jan Douglas
- Obelisk: by Whiteghost.ink at https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/8/84/Memorial_obelisk_to_Allan_Cunningham_%28botanist%29.jpg

THE BUSINESS - East Hills Group meeting – 5 July 2017

Meeting notes by Liz Cameron

The meeting was chaired by President Graham Fry. The meeting opened at 7.45 pm. There were thirteen in attendance and five apologies.

Matters arising:

Sylvan Grove visit: Jim Mackay has been in touch with Graham Fry and East Hills Group will visit Sylvan Grove on a Wednesday in September; date to be finalised.

Blue Mountains Group – reminder of the Quarterly APS gathering and Annual Seminar in Blaxland on Saturday 8th July.

Coffs Harbour Group – reminder of annual Get-together on 2-3 September. Graham Fry and Liz Cameron are going, Graham Walters and Boyd Webster are also interested in attending.

Trivia Night – raised \$200 altogether. A card of appreciation for all their hard work has been sent to Karlo and Lisa Taliana.

Income at July meeting: Plant sales: \$20, Donations: \$2, Sale of clothing: \$95.

The clothing was generously donated to Dorothy Taylor, representing the East Hills Group, by an APS member from Kenthurst, Ian Cox. The tops had belonged to his wife Tamara who died in February. There were five 'sloppy joes' and three T-shirts, all beautifully embroidered and appliquéd with native flora and fauna motifs, some by a Victorian craftswoman. Ian thought they would be better appreciated by APS members than by customers of an op shop.

Business was followed by a number of talks by members:

- Graham Fry – Botanical History or How You Can Stumble onto Something Out of the Blue! (For an account of this talk, see page 5 of this newsletter.)
- Graham Walters drew attention to items in several current newsletters:
 - The Total Environment Centre's newsletter includes information on its outreach education project – Ocean Action Pod - <https://www.oceanactionpod.org/>
 - The April issue of Australian Plants, which focuses on mistletoes and includes an article by Dick Turner; it dispels a number of myths about mistletoes and emphasises their many benefits for fauna and even for soil fertility.
- Liz Cameron noted that another article in that issue was on the rare terrestrial mistletoe, *Atkinsonia ligustrina*, an endangered species known from only a few localities in the Blue Mountains. This genus was named by Ferdinand von Mueller for Louisa Atkinson, a naturalist who found many new plants in the Blue Mountains, including the specimen of *A. ligustrina* on which Allan Cunningham based his description of the species. Liz has a copy (courtesy of Jan Douglas) of *The Natural Art of Louisa Atkinson* by Elizabeth Lawson, featuring many of Louisa's water colours and drawings of Australian plants and animals.
- Hugh Stacy – a close-up look at some Banksias and Hakeas.

This was followed by the Plant table and supper.

TRIVIA NIGHT – TREASURER'S UPDATE



Our July Trivia Night made a significant contribution to the Group's bank balance: the total raised was \$200. This included the \$5 entry fees, \$22 for plant sales and small amounts for incorrect answers in the Pondering Puzzles.

COMING EVENTS – CHECK YOUR DIARY!

You can find more district group events at <http://www.austplants-nsw.org.au/calendar6.html> .

Sunday 30 July	National Tree Day
Wednesday 2 August From 7 pm for 7.30 pm	East Hills Group meeting – Pollination of figs (Liz Cameron) and A Trip to Ghana – A fascinating country (Graham Fry).
Saturday 5 August 2017 1 pm	East Hills Group propagation meeting with Menai Wildflower Group. Illawong Rural Fire Brigade Headquarters. [click for map]
Saturday 12 August 1 pm	Menai Wildflower Group meeting – Prof Richard Jobson: Bladderworts. Illawong Rural Fire Brigade Headquarters.
Wednesday 16 August 7.45 for 8 pm	Sutherland Group meeting – Turtle Rescue with Kane Durant. Gymea Community Hall, 39 Gymea Bay Rd, Gymea
Saturday 26 August	Sutherland Group Open Gardens Day 10 am – 3 pm Jannali and Bonnet Bay. See page 4 for details.
2-3 September	2017 APS NSW Get-Together, Coffs Harbour – Rainforest Riches Revealed. Program includes walks, talks and garden visits. Registration form & details in 'Native Plants for NSW' and at www.austplants.com.au/specialevents.html
Saturday 2 September 1 pm	East Hills Group propagation meeting with Menai Wildflower Group. Illawong Rural Fire Brigade Headquarters.
Wednesday 6 September From 7 pm for 7.30 pm	East Hills Group meeting – Ray and Elma Kearney on The Living Art of Nature's Gallery. The topic includes the interdependency of species - plants (including orchids), animals and fungi - and some recent data about the imported Tomato Red Spider Mite which attacks plants of the Solanum family and their discovery of a new host plant.
Saturday 9 September 1 pm	Menai Wildflower Group meeting – Ross Jeffree: Conservation Successes in Bhutan. Illawong Rural Fire Brigade HQ
Wednesday 20 September	East Hills Group visit to Sylvan Grove Native Garden.

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