

*Hakea fraseri*

# Australian Plants Society

Armidale & District Group

PO Box 735 ARMIDALE NSW 2350

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**President:**

John Nevin - 6775 2428 (H)

**Secretary:**

Kristine Gow

**Treasurer:**

Graeme Fairweather - 6777 1456

## President's Report

The past year would have to rate climatically as one of the most difficult I have experienced in Armidale. From freezing conditions in July with regular  $-12^{\circ}$  nights, to sweltering  $33^{\circ}$  days of January with blustery North Easterlies, and to top it off, a failure of the winter rains and the summer monsoon rains to date.

The great variations in temperature coupled with low rainfall has put a lot of stress on the garden plants. In winter, we sustained damage to and losses of plants that had gone through earlier winters unseathed and the unusually dry hot summer has put further pressure on those plants. Most of the established ones have managed, except for those used to higher rainfall viz *correas*, some *banksias* and *metaleuca ericifolia*. I have had some losses of recent plantings but most have survived thanks to regular soaks from our dripper system. Thank God for the bore!

Outings have been difficult too, with many areas burnt out or under threat from fire.

On the positive side, we are closer to the breaking of the drought and a visit to the burnt out areas next Spring should provide a splendid spectacle as regeneration occurs.

I trust everyone is recharged after a restful Christmas and ready for our AGM in February, as we resume activities after the summer break.

*John*

**OFFER YOUR SERVICES FOR A POSITION AT THE AGM ON  
18 FEBRUARY!!!**

**CONTRIBUTIONS TO THIS NEWSLETTER ARE GRATEFULLY ACCEPTED at ANY TIME**

Postal address as above or email - [jnevin@northnct.com.au](mailto:jnevin@northnct.com.au)

## GROUP INFORMATION

We are a very friendly and helpful group who enjoy monthly meetings, garden visits and field trips to help members to enjoy the search for knowledge about our native flora. Most of all we range from raw beginners to others who have been at the game for many years - all willing to share their knowledge.

**General Meetings** are held at 7.30pm on the third Tuesday of each month (except December, January, June and July) at The Tree Group Woodland Centre where a display of flowers is presented by members. Old and new members and visitors are very welcome to these meetings and any outings that we organise.

**Committee Meetings** are held on the first Monday of the month at 7.30pm - see diary for where - members are welcome to these meetings too.

**Annual General Meeting** is held in February.

**Solstice Dinner** is held in June.

**Wattle Day Dinner** is held on 1 September.

**December Meeting** is taken up by an end of year function, usually a BBQ or picnic.

*Cover: Background is adapted from a drawing of Hakea fraseri in Forest Flora, NSW*

## FANTASTIC INVITATION

### WESTERN AUSTRALIA WILDFLOWER TOUR

SEPT 19 - OCT 5

COME ON THE ARMIDALE TREE GROUP COACH TOUR TO THE  
WILDFLOWERS OF WA IN PEAK SEASON.

VISIT 16 NATIONAL PARKS and other places of interest INCLUDING

New Norcia Benedictine Monastery, Pinnacles in Nambung NP, Kings Park, Stirling Ranges, Fitzgerald River, Cape Naturaliste, Margaret River, Cape Lewin, Gloucester Tree, Valley of the Giants, Cape Le Grande Flinders Ranges in SA

Also whale watching at the Head of Bight from the cliffs of the Nullabor.

This camping and motel accommodated tour starts and finishes in Armidale. The approximate cost of \$1500 covers all accommodation, entry to all National Parks and most meals.

We travel in a fully equipped coach with two drivers and a cook. Easy to erect tents, camping equipment and mattresses supplied.

FOR FURTHER DETAILS CONTACT PETER METCALFE

WA WILDFLOWER TOUR

6773 3412

[pmetcalf@metz.une.edu.au](mailto:pmetcalf@metz.une.edu.au)

## Another Couple of Web Sites

From the January newsletter from Harbourside Group – <http://www.nana.asn.au> for the Native Animal Network Assoc. for an article on living with possums and to find out how to build a possum nest box..

From the Correa study Group December newsletter – <http://www.katandragardens.com.au/gardens.html> for a look at Katandra Gardens that featured in ABC Gardening Australia programme and Australian Open Gardens Scheme.

### HOW DOES YOUR GARDEN GROW?

What a terrible time in the garden at present. Please share with us your successes and failures by writing a small piece for the newsletter. Now no bad words, but it would help the rest of us to cope with the next drought that is only about another seven years away if we are lucky.....Ed!

### SOME MORE CREEPERS by Wes Blackert

*Kennedias* – These come in a range of interesting flower colours. Some are vigorous growers (eg *nigricans* and *rubicunda*) but are easily pruned. Frost damage may be a problem but growing them among other plants provides both climbing support and frost protection.

*Eustrephus latifolius* (Wombat berry) – This hardy plant appreciates climbing support such as other plants. Mine have flowered regularly but produced no berries, unless these have been eaten before I discovered them. Rabbits or possibly kangaroos have eaten off exposed plants.

*Clematis (aristata)* – One of these has been growing wild on my block for at least 20 years on non-basalt soil and is more successful than the ones I've planted on basalt – even though most of these have been mulched and some have had occasional supplementary watering. Some have proved long-lived but their flowering has been disappointing.

*Billardieras* – I have grown white, blue, yellow and green flowered ones with some success but many proved weak and short-lived.

*Sollyas* (possibly to be merged with *Billardieras*) – These are more vigorous. I have blue, pink and white forms, all of which are hardy and free flowering. Their vigorous semi shrubby growth can overwhelm other plants if they are used as support. *Sollyas* can self-seed and they have become environmental weeds in some places so they are not recommended for gardens near natural bush.

### An Appeal from Kath Wray!

Congratulations to all those who bothered to respond to this appeal from Kath. Good news is that the problem has been resolved and the trees saved. Well done!!

**NB** Please read your label so that you can keep up with when your subscriptions are due.  
If there is a red dot here you need to renew your membership ASAP.

### WATTLE APPEAL from the Ed!!

Remember that I asked for a list of the wattles (acacias) that are growing in your garden. (Or like most things have I imagined it all?) Anyway I would like to put together a list of wattles that are growing in our Armidale area and put it together by Wattle Day 2003 (August/September newsletter). So far I have received a list from two members and look forward to receiving your list.

## ON THE WAY TO YARAANDOO - SUNDAY 23 MARCH

Meet 8.45 am at the Macdonald Park picnic spot on Barney Street so that we can leave by 9 am. We will have morning tea (\$3 - \$6) and lunch (\$12 - \$20) at Yaraandoo. Just bring the makings of afternoon tea and drinks for our visit to NE National Park. Plus your other walking gear.

The building is a unique environmental feature so this is our chance to learn about the plans for the Centre. There are 8 ks of graded bushwalks with a particular one to the creeklands that passes through several vegetation habitats.

Several of our members have been there before so they can show us around but on the day we hope to have Lachlan Copeland to show us around both areas. Lachlan has done plenty of work in the area identifying local flora.

Please let us know, at the AGM, if you are going so that we can organise some car pooling and catering for lunch and morning tea. If you will not be at the AGM (but of course you all will be) let Pat know beforehand.

### **TWO RARE GREVILLEAS from the SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS from Warren and Gloria Sheather**

Because our son Lachlan lives in Mittagong we often visit the Southern Highlands. Most gardens in this part of the world are a trifle formal. Cypress and Box hedges dominate the horticultural environment.

On a more positive note, extensive areas of Hawkesbury Sandstone vegetation surround these regimented areas. These areas bulge at the seams with a bewildering range of native plants. Most of these areas are protected in National Parks, State Forests and Council Reserves.

On a recent visit we searched for two rare *Grevilleas*. *Grevillea molyneuxii* occurs near Wingello. This recently named species develops into a small spreading shrub with narrow, prickly leaves. Red flowers appear in spring and autumn. Our search was unsuccessful probably due to the fact that we were looking in the wrong location. We now have a precise location so hopefully next time a more successful search will be undertaken.

*Grevillea raybrownii* is the other rare species. This species occurs in the Box Vale Reserve near Mittagong. *Grevillea raybrownii* is a bushy, medium shrub with divided, prickly leaves. White flowers appear in spring. This species is similar in appearance to *Grevillea triternata* that is found on the Northern Tablelands. We have observed a few plants of *Grevillea raybrownii* on previous visits. This time we walked further into the reserve and were pleased to see large numbers of this prickly shrub. In some places it was one of the dominant understory shrubs.

### **ARBORETUM WORKING BEES**

Our Arboretum working bees are set to commence for 2003. We spend a few hours, starting at 1.00pm on the first Saturday of the month, unless told differently by Pat, and we bring afternoon tea as well as the usual gardening implements such as wheelbarrows, pruners, shovels, buckets, picks and of course our hats and plenty of water. Please look at the Diary, on the back page, for dates.

## VINNIE FORD FOLLOWS UP ON OUR QUESTIONS AT CHRISTMAS FUNCTION

Some five or six years ago the Glen Innes Group came here for a visit. Cannot remember much about the day except for the good number of Donkey Orchids (*Diuris punctata*, *D. chrysantha*) in flower and slender Bearded Orchid (*Calochilus gracillimus*). These are usually in flower around mid October. I do remember John Courtney taking photos to add to his already impressive collection.

Shortly after this visit Jean Mott sent me an invitation to one of their meetings which was to be attended by an orchid guru whose name has slipped my memory. However I do recall that he was accompanied by a very attractive lady.

His talk was intensely interesting and somewhat disturbing as subsequent visits to former flowering sights came up negative. Assuming the habitat has remained undisturbed could the culprits be the wallabies and larger macropods?

Over the past four years I have been watching the Hyacinth Orchids both *Dipodium punctatum* and *D. hamiltonianum* which flower around mid November onwards. Having both of these within 30 meters of the house enables the mandatory daily watch for the emergence of the asparagus type spears.

Having sighted *D. hamiltonianum* procrastination in finding some form of plant guard must be avoided at all costs, as the swamp wallaby will have found and devoured it within 2 days.

Naturally this is not the case all the time as we do see the more abundant *D. punctatum* (pink) flowering untouched.

*D. hamiltonianum*'s most frequent visitor is a black ant (uncommon) with a bone coloured splotch on it's abdomen. A little smaller than the harmless red sugar ant.

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – 18 FEBRUARY 2003

Our annual General Meeting will be held on Tuesday 18 February 2003 – the first meeting for the year. Please consider nominating a member for a position (ask them first), or stand for election yourself, (WE DO TAKE VOLUNTEERES)

**These positions are there for you to grab!!!**

**President** – chairs the meetings and generally directs the years activities (with a lot of help from their friends).

**Vice Presidents (2)** – helps out the President to guarantee the smooth running of the group.

**Secretary** – records the minutes of the Committee and General meetings, collects mail and attends to any correspondence, in and out.

**Treasurer** – handles all money matters.

**Membership** – keeps an up to date members list and produces same when needed.

**Editor** – produces a bi monthly newsletter with articles from all members and other groups.

**Publicity** – keeps the profile of the group in the public eye.

**Catering** – organises supper on the night of our monthly meetings (with help from others).

**Above all we help each other so if any of you wish to know anything more about any of the positions, you only have to ask the present committee. With all these positions you have the support and help from all other members of the committee so you are not alone.**

**WE CAN ONLY FUNCTION PROPERLY IF WE ALL PLAY OUR PART!**

# CREATING A BACKYARD FOR WILDLIFE

from Citizens Wildlife Corridors Armidale Inc. Summer Newsletter

There are five easy steps to making your garden an attractive place for native wildlife.

**1. Ensure that you have native plants, local to the area, in your garden.**

By growing plants that were originally in your area you can help attract native wildlife to your garden, by providing food, water, shelter and perhaps even breeding sites. In this way you can help conserve native wildlife and rebuild important biological relationships that existed in the past.

**2. Ensure you have native plants of different heights in your garden.**

In natural bushland plants occur in five main layers, or heights. There are tall trees (eg eucalypts), small trees and tall shrubs (eg wattles, tea trees, banksias, bottlebrushes), medium shrubs (eg hakeas, correas, wattles), small shrubs and herbs (eg heath plants, creepers, daisies, lilies, grasses) and a litter layer (eg twigs, leaves, braches, mosses, lichens). Different animals live in different vegetation layers and some animals need different layers or plant types for feeding, versus roosting, versus breeding.

**3. Have plants flowering in your garden all year around.**

In unspoilt bushland there is often a range of landforms (eg moist gullies, rocky hilltops, swamps). The plants within the different habitats often flower at different times of the year, particularly if the habitats vary in their protection from frost. Even in one habitat the plants will flower over an extended period when all species are accounted for. Year-round flowering provides a year-round food source for wildlife. For example, different wattles flower over spring and summer, banksias flower in autumn/early winter, correas flower in autumn, some heath plants flower in winter and some plants flower anytime there is enough water.

**4. Practise responsible pet ownership.**

Ideally, don't own domestic pets that need some unrestrained outdoor life. If this is not possible practise responsible pet management, it is not difficult. For example, keep pets inside at night (and ensure your neighbours do too), have your dog and/or cat desexed, walk your dog on a lead and avoid going through bushland areas, pick up dog droppings, keep your dog in a run which is separate from your wildlife garden. Promote responsible ownership in the area.

**5. Eliminate or reduce the use of chemicals in your garden.**

Chemicals such as weed killers, pesticides and anti-fungal agents are easy to apply and usually have quick reliable results. However, they are often deadly to organisms other than the ones you wish to control. Native organisms can be seriously affected.

It is vital to remember the importance of insects and microfauna that are involved in the cycling of nutrients, enriching of soil and which are predators or parasites of pests. Non-chemical alternatives for controlling pests in the garden include:

- quarantine and sanitation practices,
- biological control agents (often there anyway),
- mulching
- hand-weeding, hoeing, cultivation or other mechanical methods,
- mowing, slashing or strategic grazing,
- plant competition (ie thick plantings),
- companion plantings, and
- rotational planting in garden beds.

**A 'Five-Star' garden has:**

- At least three different types of locally native flowering bushes at different heights.
- A highly visible and safe place for birds to drink and bathe.
- An area of grass (allowed to grow tall and go to seed) and low-growing plants.
- At least one tree over 2.5 metres tall, or several nesting boxes anchored firmly to posts or buildings, or in tall shrubs.
- An area covered with stones, fallen branches, twigs and leaf litter-where animals can look for insects, worms spiders, etc.

# Coming Diary Events

- Monday 3 February at 7.30 pm:** Committee Meeting at the Nevins
- Saturday 8 February at 1.00 pm:** Arboretum Working Bee – bring afternoon tea, hats and gardening implements such as wheelbarrows, gloves, pruning shears and saws
- Tuesday 18 February at 7.30 pm:** **Annual General Meeting at Tree Group Woodland Centre**  
Slide presentation of Central Australian 4WD trip by Colin Mulquinney.
- Sunday 23 February at 8.00 am:** **Plant Display at Markets in the Mall**
- 2pm Antelope Creek* **at 1.00 pm:** **Garden Visits to ? Uralla Creeklands (to be confirmed) and afternoon tea at the Nevins–** *SALE YARDS* *Meet at the Saleyards (more information at AGM)* *McKibbin* *ALONG ROAD*
- Monday 3 March at 7.30 pm:** Committee Meeting
- Saturday 8 March at 1.00 pm:** Arboretum Working Bee – bring afternoon tea, hats, and usual garden implements such as wheelbarrows, gloves, pruning shears, etc
- Tuesday 18 March at 7.30 pm:** **Monthly Meeting at the Tree Group Woodland Centre**  
Grampians Trip 2002 by some of those who went
- Sunday 23 March at 8.00 am:** **Plant Display at Markets in the Mall**  
*3.0 PM*
- 8.45 am** **Visit to Yaraandoo Eco-Lodge and Function Centre and New England National Park (see page 6 for information)**

**NB:** Pat (67752280) would like some help with the Plant Display at the monthly Markets in the Mall –he would very happy to hear from you.

## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION / RENEWAL FORM

**MEMBERSHIP TYPE:** please tick appropriate box

	Annual Fee	Concession
<b>Single:</b>	\$40	\$32
<b>Joint:</b> (2 adults at the same address)	\$46	\$38
<b>Concession</b> applied for: Limited Fixed Income		Full Time Student

**PERSONAL:** Joint members please complete a) and b)

a) Mr Mrs Miss Ms Dr Other..... b) Mr Mrs Miss Ms Dr Other.....

Given Name (s):..... Given Name(s) .....

Surname:..... Surname:.....

Postal Address:.....

.....Postcode:.....

Tel: Home ( )..... Work: ( ).....

Fax: ( ).....

**PAYMENT:** Payment of \$..... is enclosed by:

Cheque Money Order payable to APS Armidale Branch

**Please return this completed form with your payment to :**

Membership Officer APS Armidale Branch PO Box 735 ARMIDALE NSW 2350