

*Hakea fraseri*



## Armidale & District Group

PO Box 735 ARMIDALE NSW 2350

<http://www.anps-armidale.org.au>

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**Treasurer:**

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### Hello Members,

Spring is sprung, the nights are getting warmer, the days getting longer and the thunderstorm season has started. My plants are growing beautifully but so are the weeds. It's important to control them as soon as you can and not let them take over. Likewise this will be a big year for insect pests so you may need to be vigilant with spraying. There are many organic products on the market now which are safe for wildlife. If you have trees and a thick shrub cover you will probably have many small birds feasting on caterpillars, moths and other pests to feed their nestlings.

Pam Rooney, our newsletter editor is sadly leaving town and relocating to Canberra. We would like to wish her and John our best wishes for the move. If anyone would like to volunteer for the role of newsletter editor Pam can provide lots of assistance before she leaves. All it needs is a computer and some word processing skills. In the meantime please send any articles and items for the newsletter to me.

Patrick Laher, who does so much for our group is in John Hunter hospital for an extended stay. He is progressing well and itching to come home but that may not happen for some time. In the meantime Phil Rose has taken over organising the markets and John Nevin will look after the next Arboretum working bee. Liisa Atherton, Phil Rose and myself manned the September markets which were hugely successful for us. No doubt the rain has spurred the gardeners in the district to get out planting. We are desperately looking for two members to set up and look after the plants stall at the October markets. Phil is tied up with his Open Garden that weekend and many of us are going to Mole Station to collect plants for the St. Peter's Armidale Gardens plant sale the following weekend. Please contact me if you can help. Phil will deliver everything to you with lots of instructions.

At the August general meeting Col Bale gave a very interesting presentation on soils. The Warialda trip was cancelled but Phil & Julia Rose and myself met with the Caldwells, Helen Smith, John Donnelly and Celine Luchart for an interesting ramble in Kings Plains National Park (see page 3). The Wattle Day celebrations at Bunnings weren't such a success and we are planning to do something different in 2011. Thank you to all those who helped. In the meantime I had a fantastic time in Canberra, attending the

President's Report continued page 2

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Thank you all contributors. The deadline for the next newsletter is October 29. Reports, articles, snippets, photos and ideas are all welcome. Please do not embed your photos in a word document, send them as separate files. For the time being until a newsletter editor volunteers please send all contributions to Maria Hitchcock PO Box 735 Armidale NSW 2350 or [maria.hitchcock@gmail.com](mailto:maria.hitchcock@gmail.com)

# GROUP INFORMATION

(Group commenced 6th August 1977)

We are a very friendly and helpful group who enjoy monthly meetings, garden visits and field trips to help members enjoy the search for knowledge about our native flora and our local environment. 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 to our outings (page 9).

**Business Meetings** are held monthly – see diary for where - members are welcome to these meetings too.

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

**Solstice Function** is held in June.

**Wattle Day Activity** is held on a day closest to 1 September.

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

## ALL YOU NEED TO JOIN OUR GROUP IS A GREAT LOVE OF OUR NATIVE PLANTS

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

### President's Report (contd. from page 1)

Wattle Memorabilia Opening at the Canberra Gallery, a citizenship ceremony and spoke at the Centenary Wattle Day dinner. I also had a Canberra launch of my book at the National Botanic Gardens. My local launch was well attended and I thank everyone who came.

We had a great meeting in September learning how to prepare cuttings (page 5). Our punnets are being kept at the Tree Group nursery and hopefully they'll all strike and be ready for potting on at a future date.

On Saturday, 25th a party of 7 members met with John Hunter to go over his new 100 acre bush block to the west of Invergowrie. Tea tree creek flows through the block and the western part has a natural understory of woodland plants.

Don't forget our two open gardens coming up and if you would like to come to Mole Station with us you are more than welcome.

**Maria Hitchcock**

### From the Editor: a farewell

My final newsletter and how I will miss the articles from each of you who have contributed to the newsletter over the past 4 years. There is a great knowledge base within this group and I am privileged to have been the editor. I believe the newsletter has an important function in sharing the beauty of Australian plants in our unique New England environment. Look at Phil's photos on page 3, they couldn't be anywhere else.

We started sending email versions of the newsletter 4 years ago and since then the proportion of members receiving the electronic version has increased to about two thirds. We've been sending out 5 newsletters each year; it is not an arduous task and there are people who can help with the technical side of things if necessary.

I am recommending this position of editor. I have enjoyed it very much. Don't be shy. Different people bring varying skills to a job and there is no "correct" end product. Have a go; you'll find it very rewarding and no doubt you have much to offer.

My best wishes to you all.

**Pam Rooney**

## Visit to Kings Plains National Park.

On the 22<sup>nd</sup> August a group comprising Helen Smith, Celine Luchart (visitor from France), John Donnelly, David and Sarah Caldwell, Phil and Julia Rose and Maria Hitchcock visited the park. The morning was spent walking down the ridge parallel to the river towards the falls. The flowering season had not really commenced, the delay being in line with most people's experience this season. Along the way the most noticeable flowering species were *Melichrus urceolatus*, *Styphelia triflora*, *Hovea linearis*, *Mirbelia speciosa*, *Callistemon sieberi*, *Homoranthus biflorus*, *Grevillea floribunda*, *G. triternata*, *Boronia granitica*, *Correa reflexa* var. *reflexa* and *Zieria odorifera*. Wattles were well in flower including *Acacia buxifolia*, *A. falciformis*, *A. filicifolia*, *A. neriifolia*, *A. pruinosa*, *A. torringtonensis* and *A. ulicifolia*. Other species recorded included *Callitris endlicheri*, *Lomandra longifolia*, *L. multiflora*, *Dianella revoluta*, *Platysace ericoides*, *Xanthorrhoea johnsonii*, *Olearia rosmarinifolia*, *Allocasuarina rigida* subsp. *rigida*, *Eucalyptus bridgesiana*, *E. caleyi* subsp. *caleyi*, *E. prava*, *Hakea dactyloides*, *H. microcarpa*, *Isopogon petiolaris*, *Persoonia cornifolia*, *Petrophile canescens*, *Zieria cytisoides*, and *Exocarpos strictus*. Walking was not easy away from the creek and it would probably be necessary to camp out for several nights to discover the more than 400 species recorded in the park. The campground situated a short distance up creek from the lunch area is spacious and accommodates both tents and campervans. Caravans may find difficulty in busy times. The only toilets are back down at the picnic area. Everyone enjoyed the day and a more detailed trip in the future would be very worthwhile.

**text & photos Phil Rose**

River near the campground



Near the falls



A not so easy track



Time for a rest



Xanthorrhoea johnsonii

## From Yallaroo

### *The 5 E's of Plant Propagation*

One of the most enjoyable aspects of native plant cultivation is propagating your own plants.

In our case the joy of plant propagation is encapsulated in the 5 E's.

1. Economics: Propagating your own plants certainly saves money.
2. Extending: Propagating your own plants extends the range of species and varieties available for planting in your garden.
3. Experimentation: There are many species that are not commonly in cultivation and there is plenty of scope for propagating these species. Eg: few Western Australian Melaleucas are in general cultivation. Also there is scope to try different propagation methods. Eg: propagating Acacias from cuttings.
4. Excitement: we still find seeds germinating and cuttings taking root exciting after nearly 40 years spent propagating plants.
5. Enjoying: Finally when we wander around our garden we are able to enjoy the fruits of our labours. At least 95% of the plants in the garden were produced on the site.

### *Our Method of Plant Propagation*

We use a self-contained propagating unit with bottom heating and intermittent misting. The unit is 1.8 metres

long by 0.9 metres wide and was purchased from Sage Horticulture in Melbourne. The running costs, of the unit, are negligible. The heating mat is covered by a three centimetre layer of river sand and the temperature is set to about 23 degrees.

Our propagating mix is half coco peat and half river sand. The mix is used for both seeds and cuttings. When seedlings and cuttings are potted on the mix is recycled. A 1.5 litre rice cooker is filled with the mix and heated in a microwave for about 15 minutes.

Seeds are sown in square pots and 50 millimetre thumb pots are used for cuttings with six cuttings/thumb pot.

About 90% of the plants we propagate are from cuttings. The genera propagated from seed are what we call the **CH<sub>EW</sub>** group. All **C**asuarinas, some **H**akeas, all **E**ucalypts and some **W**attles are propagated from seed. We are finding that many Acacias with phyllodes may be grown from cuttings. The photo shows some of the results of our propagating labours. Of particular interest is the *Acacia riceana* cuttings (see image). There was a 100% strike rate from this species with roots forming in just over a month. All our cuttings are dipped in red Clonex hormone gel before inserting in the thumb pot.

Seedlings and struck cuttings are potted on into square native tubes. We use BigW potting mix which meets the Australian standard. Plants are ready to go into the garden when they are as tall as the tube and the roots are appearing at the base of the tube.

Propagation continued through winter and at last count we have over 400 plants ready for spring planting.



For the reasons listed above we find that propagating our own native plants gives us great pleasure and satisfaction.

### ***Dracophyllum secundum* plus a smidgen of history**

*Dracophyllum secundum* is a member of the Epacridaceae family. There are about 50 species in the genus. Nine are endemic including one from Lord Howe Island and the rest are shared by New Caledonia and New Zealand.

*Dracophyllum secundum* is a trailing plant with spreading, lanceolate leaves up to 12 centimetres long. The leaves have typical Epacridaceae parallel veins.

The spectacular terminal spikes carry large numbers of tubular cream or pale pink blooms. Flowering occurs from July to December.

The species is found on sandstone rock ledges, wet cliff faces and occurs from Kendall in the north, south to Pigeon House Mountain and west to Blackheath. The specimen photographed was growing in a reserve near Katoomba.



*Dracophyllum secundum*

Propagation is difficult from both seed or cuttings. This is the main reason why the species is not well known in cultivation but could have a horticultural future as a container plant.

Until recently *Dracophyllum secundum* was thought to be the only mainland NSW species but has now been split into three species. The two new species are *Dracophyllum oceanicum* from Jervis Bay and *Dracophyllum macranthum* from a restricted area inland from Taree.

Whilst researching this *Dracophyllum* we noticed that the type specimen was *Dracophyllum verticillatum*, a New Caledonian species and that the author was Jacques Labillardière a French botanist who was a member of the d'Entrecasteaux expedition to Australasia. The expedition was searching for La Pèrouse as well as collecting flora and fauna specimens. The *Dracophyllum verticillatum* specimen was collected when the expedition visited New Caledonia.

The expedition made some notable collections and sightings and these will be pursued in a future article.

**Warren & Gloria Sheather**

### **Plant cuttings workshop presented by Maria Hitchcock at September General Meeting**

Items required:

Cutting board (wood laminate offcut).

Sharp knife (dipped in bleach between plants)

Container of water (can have some bleach diluted in it to deal with mildew etc)

Ideally cuttings should be taken in October & February. Take off all leaves except the top 2 or 3 & cut these in half if large. Cut stem on an angle & at a node. Put straight into water so that leaves don't drain and dehydrate. Dip stem in hormone 'Purple Clonex' for light woody plants and 'Red Clonex' for very woody plants for 5 seconds. If you dip too long the hormone can burn the stems. Using hormone makes stronger roots.

Use a skewer to poke a hole in potting mix (evenly moist potting mix should be used).

Myoporum, mint bushes, correa, westringia and callistemon are easy. Banksia are difficult.

Cuttings from October might strike by February. Could take longer!

Place in green house. Or cover with a plastic bag and keep in a shaded area.

**Note taker Rhonda Wilson**

## John Hunter's block at Invergowrie

John and Vanessa Hunter bought this 100 acre western fall block in early 2009. The block is steep in places and has a wide range of granite country vegetation from a good cover of Eucalypts to small annuals. Tea Tree Creek runs through the property and there are several small falls as the creek descends eventually to flow into the Gwydir River. There are a few tracks wide enough for a 4WD vehicle but seeing most of the good flora requires a bit of a scramble around some rocky outcrops. At the time of our visit several wattles were in full bloom lighting up the bush in the afternoon sunlight. Here is a selection of plants in flower at the time.

*Acacia rubida* was just finishing flowering. This very tough small tree has been widely grown by local gardeners for many years.



Acacia buxifolia

*Acacia buxifolia* is a smaller shrub growing up to 1 m with lovely golden flowers and small neat phyllodes. It is quite hardy and can be planted between other shrubs.

*Acacia gunnii* – a small prickly shrub with pale creamy yellow flowerheads which stand out from the foliage. Not widely grown because of its prickly nature.

*Brachycome nova-anglica* – a small blue daisy with dissected leaves. It is unknown if this plant is in cultivation. It would be nice in the garden grown en masse.

*Correa reflexa* – the local green flowered form. This is a fairly untidy shrub and one for the collector only.

There were large stands of these in places. It is a winter flowering plant so it

was hard to find a flower at this time of the year.



Brachycome nova-anglica

*Diuris* sp. - Donkey Orchid – there were several small populations of this most attractive yellow and brown orchid. Native orchids are not the easiest plants to cultivate. Many are threatened.

*Grevillea floribunda* – Unusual low growing Grevillea which is widespread from the western slopes to the plains. Not well known in cultivation. It may do best grown in a tub in a fairly sandy mix.

*Mirbelia speciosa* – Another widespread plant which is common on the western fall

*Acacia viscidula* is a large shrub growing up to 2 m and having fine weeping foliage. It is a most attractive plant and deserves to be given a prominent place in the garden.



*Acacia viscidula*



*Grevillea floribunda*

*Mirbelia speciosa*



but relatively unknown in cultivation.

*Pimelea linifolia* – The form here was quite beautiful. It grows as a small shrub with long stems covered in clusters of cream flowers. This

plant deserves to be grown more widely in gardens.

*Pimelea linifolia*



Other plants growing on the block include:

*Acacia ulicifolia*, *Acacia neriifolia*, *Acacia pruinose*’ *Mirbelia pungens*, *Brachyscome stuartii*, *Leucopogon muticus*, *Caladenia sp.*, *Wurmbea diocea*, *Hibbertia obtusifolia*, *Hibbertia riparia*

*Petrophile canescens*, *Lomatia silaifolia*, *Lissanthe strigosa*, *Boronia pinnata*, *Calytrix tetragona*, *Dodonaea viscosa*, *Dodonaea boroniifolia*, *Brachyloma daphnoides*, *Olearia viscidula*, *Olearia microphylla*, *Actinotus*

*helianthi*, *Leptospermum polygalifolium*.

**Maria Hitchcock**



Graham Fairweather

**NSW Rural Women’s Award 2010 (Rural Industries Research & Development Corporation)**

This article is from <http://www.ruralwomensaward.gov.au/>

*"Lana Mitchell started her commercial cut-flower venture five years ago, specialising in the Australian native flannel flower. She now sells throughout Australia and exports to the United States, Europe, the United Kingdom and Japan. She has been innovative in the use of hydroponics, resulting in some of the tallest and largest blooms on the market, which have been very popular both in Australia and also overseas.*



*Lana owns the plant breeders rights on a specific variety of flannel flower called 'White Romance' and there is an ongoing commercialisation plan for this plant, with domestic and international growers being licensed to cultivate this flower for the cut-flower industry.*

*Lana is actively involved in the industry, not just as a grower but at a strategic and leadership level. She is a board member of Wildflowers Australia, a member of RIRDC’s Wildflowers and Native Plants Advisory Committee and a member of the New Rural Industries Australia Interim Management Committee. She is also Editor of the 'Australian Flower Industry' magazine, the quarterly trade magazine for the cut-flower industry in Australia with a readership of over 3000.*

*Lana has instigated and implemented a number of projects to build the industry, both in terms of size and sales, including; a project to ensure Australian wildflowers are included on the TAFE floristry curriculums; a yearly national floristry competition to all Australian TAFEs and professional floristry schools; as well as a campaign to educate florists and consumers nationally on the availability and use of wildflowers. In doing these projects she works with and coordinates with people at all levels of the supply chain, working to create cohesion and unity within the industry. She is also actively involved in organising national conferences and getting new people into the business of growing wildflowers commercially.*

*Lana’s Award ambition is to support the Australian wildflower industry move beyond an emerging industry and through effective marketing, promotion and the establishment of sustainable floriculture practices, move into mainstream use for florists and consumers. She plans to use the Award bursary to undertake an international study tour to Europe and the United Kingdom to research the successes of their flower industry associations in building and growing market share. "*

**Sourced by Kath Wray**

## Details of upcoming events

### Mole Station 30 & 31 October

This outing is one of the highlights of the year and if you've never been before this would be a good time to join in. We will leave from the Angus Centre (near the northern bypass roundabout) on Saturday morning at 8.00 am and travel north to Bolivia Range. There we will spend several hours checking out the flora before travelling on to Mole Station where we stay in a cottage (about \$20 per person). We usually have a barbecue that evening then the next morning we go to the nursery and fill our cars with plants to bring back to Armidale. Members can purchase plants for themselves as well. After morning tea provided by Sarah we head back home. Some of us stop for lunch at a pub in Tenterfield on the way. It's always a very enjoyable weekend. You need to bring morning tea and lunch for Saturday plus your own BBQ meal for the evening and breakfast for Sunday morning. In the past members have brought along the odd bottle of wine and some nibblies to share as well. You must let Maria know if you are coming.

### Dangar's Falls – Sunday 21 November

This is the second of our short local trips for 2010 at your request and would be ideal for inviting friends and family along. This is your chance to learn the names of some of those interesting local plants on our doorstep. The walking is all on graded tracks and is easy. Bring a picnic or BBQ lunch. Details are as follows:

11.00 am 11.30 am – Meet at McDonald Park (near TAS) Arrival at Dangar's Falls – short walk to the nearby lookouts to see the falls.

12.00 noon – Picnic lunch in the shelter (if available) – BBQs are available.

1 pm – extended walk on the other side of the creek to the dingo fence and lookout then return.

2.30 pm – leave Dangar's Falls to return home

You must let Maria know if you are coming.



### Open Garden 29, 30 & 31 October

Phil & Julia Rose will be opening their garden under the Australian Open Garden Scheme on 29, 30, 31 October 2010 from 10 am to 4.30 pm to coincide with SLEX. While not part of the SLEX programme the aim is to promote sustainable gardening with Australian plants. Their property, 'Carwell' is situated on Middle Farm Rd off the Grafton Rd. Any members not participating in the Mole Station weekend are most welcome to attend. In particular we are still needing help at the gate even for a short time, so if you feel you could help please phone Julia or Phil Rose 67753767 or email [prosecarwell@bigpond.com](mailto:prosecarwell@bigpond.com)

### St Peter's Armidale Gardens 6 & 7 November.

The St Peters Armidale Gardens takes place on the 6th & 7th November. The Hitchcock garden will be open and our annual giant native plant sale will take place there. We are looking for volunteers to help man the stall that weekend, so please lend a hand even if only for a short time. As in previous years we need helpers to set up on Friday afternoon from 5.00 pm. The plants will be for sale both Saturday and Sunday from 10.00 am to 4.00 pm. And we need volunteers to do either a morning or afternoon shift. As is our custom, there will be a pizza party for volunteers after we pull down on Sunday afternoon. Please let Maria know if you can help.

### Christmas Function – Sunday 5th December

Each year we have a Christmas BBQ lunch at someone's garden. This year we are visiting two gardens in the Invergowrie area. Bring your own morning tea and for lunch bring meat, salad, nibblies, drinks and some cut up fruit for a huge fruit salad. Here are the details:

11.00 am Meet at Kel Hardingham's place (36 Malarpatinti Lane, Invergowrie) for morning tea and a look around the garden.

12.30 Proceed to Barbara Colledge's place (12 Lentara Rd, Invergowrie) for lunch and a ramble through her extensive garden.

Please let Maria know if you are coming.

## FOR YOUR DIARY, COMING EVENTS: October - December 2010

### October

- Tuesday 5, 1.00 pm Arboretum Working Bee Details: Contact John Nevin.
- Tuesday 12, 5.30 pm Business Meeting Venue: Don & Maria Hitchcock's place. All Welcome.
- Tuesday 19, 7.30 pm General meeting at Tree Group Nursery Speaker: Liisa Atherton "A native rose by any other name ...": *Plant names*. Plant of the month is Boronia
- 30-31 October MOLE STATION WEEKEND or OPEN GARDEN, Phil & Julia Rose (details page 8)
- Sunday 31, 8.00 am-12.30 pm Markets in the Mall

### November

- Tuesday 2, 1.00pm Arboretum Working Bee
- 6 - 7 November St Peter's Gardens – Hitchcock Garden plus Plant Sale – Roster needed. (page 8)
- Tuesday 9, 5.30pm Business Meeting – Hitchcock's 5.30pm, All Welcome.
- Tuesday 16, 7.30pm General meeting Speaker: Don Hitchcock – 'The secret gorges'– Plant of the month is Melaleuca
- Sunday 21, 11am **Outing: Dangar's Falls** – Meet at McDonald Park at 11.00am – picnic lunch and walk
- Sunday 28, 8.00am-12.30pm Markets in the Mall

### December

- Sunday 5, 11am Barbara Colledge's place, Christmas Function: first at Kel Hardingham's for morning tea then to Barbara's for lunch 12.30pm. (page 8)

No General meetings in December or January. **Remember that the AGM is on Tuesday 15 February**, all positions will be declared vacant. Think of your skills. If you are interested in a position on the committee please contact a committee member.



### MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION / RENEWAL FORM for Australian Plant Society (ABN 87 002 680 408)

<b>MEMBERSHIP TYPE:</b> please tick appropriate box	<b>Annual Fee</b>	<b>Concession</b>
<b>Single:</b>	<b>\$50</b>	<b>\$42</b>
<b>Joint:</b> (2 adults at the same address)	<b>\$58</b>	<b>\$50</b>
<b>Concession</b> applied for:	Limited Fixed Income	Full Time Student
<b>PERSONAL:</b> Joint members please complete a) and b)		
a) Mr Mrs Miss Ms Dr Other.....	b) Mr Mrs Miss Ms Dr Other.....	
<b>Given Name (s):</b> .....	<b>Given Name(s):</b> .....	
<b>Surname:</b> .....	<b>Surname:</b> .....	
<b>Postal Address:</b> .....		
..... <b>Postcode:</b> .....		
<b>Tel: Home ( )</b> ..... <b>Work: ( )</b> .....		
<b>Fax: ( )</b> ..... <b>email:</b> .....		
<b>PAYMENT:</b> Payment of \$..... is enclosed by:		
<b>Cheque</b>	<b>Money Order</b>	<b>payable to APS Armidale Branch</b>

**Please return this completed form with your payment to :**  
Membership Officer APS Armidale Branch PO Box 735 ARMIDALE NSW 2350

I do NOT wish my contact details to be made available to other members. Signature .....