

President	Secretary	Treasurer
Maria Hitchcock	Liisa Atherton	Phillip Rose
6775 1139	6779 1968	6775 3767

President's Report

Winter has arrived with a bang and the usual frosty nights. It's always a challenge gardening in New England but it amazes me which plants seem to thrive in the low temperatures. Scaevolas usually die back and hibernate before shooting again the following spring. I have a *Scaevola* 'Mauve Clusters' which did not die back but stayed green and lush looking all of last winter. This year it is still flowering strongly despite the sub-zero temperatures.

During April Don and I drove across to Perth to visit our son Ben who has bought a house in the northern suburbs. Along the way we photographed the odd Wattle for my next book and collected some mallee seed. The Nullarbor is quite a happening place these days - we came across the Mercedes F-cell team test driving their new concept cars on a world tour. Our first week in Perth was spent doing lots of gardening in deep sand (no rocks!!!)- constructing beds, paving, planting and helping Ben establish what is essentially a bachelor's garden, i.e., it has to look after itself a lot of the time especially during windsurfing season.

We did get to King's Park which is always magnificent, cycled around Rottne Island, explored the Crystal cave at Yanchep and Don spent a morning photographing in the WA Museum while I hit the shops. What struck me most was the lack of dew. You could wash jeans in the late afternoon and they'd be dry in the morning! The housing development and infrastructure in Perth is astonishing - lots of mining money I suppose. I did meet up with members of the Northern Suburbs branch of the WA Wildflower Society. They have a regular Saturday morning get-together in a greenhouse they rent where they potter on with their own collections and grow a few plants for sale.

Our Forums have been very well received and no-one seems to be missing the formal meetings. We've had some interesting discussions and it's been very good to see new faces turning up and walking away with lots of suggestions to help them in their gardens. The value of the forums is that we can all share our experiences and help each other. Up till now we've had a topic for each forum but the committee resolved at the last business meeting to leave the next few forums open. We'll see how that works. Sometimes someone asks an interesting question which leads the discussion in a whole new direction.

Thank you to all contributors. The deadline for the next newsletter is Friday **22 July**. All articles, snippets and photos are welcome. Please email to Maria at maria.hitchcock@gmail.com or send a hard copy to PO Box 735 Armidale NSW 2350.

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Thanks must go to Barbara Nevin for taking charge in my absence. A report on Nic's Wetlands talk is included in this Newsletter. At our last Forum Peter Metcalfe told us about the loss of Yellow Box trees (*Eucalyptus melliodora*) in the area over the past century and how landowners are being encouraged to replant on their properties. Apparently there is some grant money being made available soon.

A review is being made of our involvement with the Arboretum and Patrick, John and Phil met recently to come up with some ideas. They will present these at the Solstice Luncheon and we will be able to have an informal discussion about it and hopefully decide on a way forward. John and Barbara Nevin are currently overseas so Phil and Patrick will lead the discussion.

We are now going into the winter break - for me that's the time when I do a lot of gardening and catch up on jobs around the house. I hope to see you all at Liisa's place on the 19th June.

Maria Hitchcock

GROUP INFORMATION

The Armidale and District Group of APS-NSW started on 6th August, 1977 as the New England Group of the Society for Growing Australian Plants. It has been running continuously since that time with a couple of name changes. We are a very friendly and helpful group who enjoy monthly forums and 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 gardening and researching for many years - all willing to share their knowledge.

Formal Meetings are held at 5.30pm on the second Tuesday of each month at Col Mulquiney's place. Members are welcome to attend.

Native Plant and Garden Forums are held on the 3rd Tuesday of each month (except June, July, December and January) from 7.30 – 9.30 where members talk about plants in flower from specimens displayed on the flower table and share information about gardening topics. The Forum is followed by a delicious supper and an interesting speaker.

Old and new members, visitors and families, are very welcome to these meetings and to our outings (see page 8 for details).

Annual General Meeting is held in February.

Solstice Function is held in June. This is usually a lunch and garden ramble at the home of one of our members.

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

Christmas Party is held early in December at the home of one of our members.

ALL YOU NEED TO JOIN OUR GROUP IS AN

Banksias

Text by Liisa Atherton

At our first forum, we discussed the genus *Banksia*. *Banksia* is an Australian genus in the family Proteaceae. The plants are readily recognised by their characteristic flower spikes and infructescences (cones). Banksias produce copious quantities of nectar, and are known as bird attracting plants. Some species attract small mammals and of course lots of insects (which then attract lots of birds).

The genus was described by Linnaeus' son, hence *Banksia* L.f. and honours Joseph Banks who accompanied Cook in 1770. The forum first discussed propagating banksias. The website <http://anpsa.org.au/APOL24/dec01-1.html> has an article by Russell McLean on 'The Propagation of Banksia'. Most banksias are readily grown from seed. Some members have tried cuttings and found these tended to be dormant for 'quite a while', before showing signs of growth. Of course cuttings will come true to the parent whereas plants from seed may not.

Some species grown in the Armidale area were discussed. *Banksia integrifolia* is a local species. There are both tall and dwarf forms. The inflorescence is yellow. The species ranges down to the coast but if collecting seed collect from tableland areas. *Banksia marginata* is one of the hardiest species. There is a Cathedral Rocks form, which may be available from the Tree Group. Maria grew her plant from seed collected in Tasmania. It is very hardy and flowers well; this form has a yellow-gold inflorescence. *Banksia spinulosa* has fine foliage. It is more difficult to grow.

Banksia spinulosa var. *neoanglica* is found near the New England National Park. It has wider leaves and black styles. Most dwarf banksias sold are probably forms of *B. spinulosa*.

Members found these tend to do better in pots than the open ground. *Banksia ericifolia* has very fine narrow leaves. There are two forms: the Sydney sandstone form, *B. ericifolia* var. *ericifolia*, and the north coast form, *B. ericifolia* var. *macrantha*. The latter has a large orange inflorescence.

John Nevin has about 14 *Banksia* species growing including some WA species such as *B. grandis* and *B. dryandroides*, so talk to him if you need information on WA species that survive here. Young plants need regular watering until well established, but be wary of water-logged soil. In an extended dry spell you will need to water regularly. Quite often foliage may yellow in autumn and winter and green up again in summer. A suggested tonic developed by ABC's Saturday gardener Marcia Ajani that can 'boost' plants and correct yellowing foliage is:

One (1) teaspoon each of liquid seaweed and fish fertiliser, sulphate of potash, magnesium sulphate and sulphate of iron. Mix in five (5) litres of water, and spray it on the plant until saturated



Wetlands

Text by Liisa Atherton

Our guest speaker for the April Forum was Nic Cobcroft.

Nic has been/is actively involved in tree planting, the Tree Group, State Government contracts, Wetland Care Australia in northern NSW and North Queensland and lately in the activities of HICUB (High Country Urban Diversity) in our region. Nic spoke on wetlands and some of the conservation issues involved.

What are wetlands?

Wetlands encompass both marine and fresh water environments. Marine areas include bays and coastal areas up to 10m from the shore, and estuaries, both saltwater marshes and mangroves. Fresh water areas include rivers and creeks, artificial wetlands and dams, lakes and lagoons (more shallow than lakes), as well as ephemeral lagoons, swamps, springs and ephemeral pools.



Gymnoschoenus sphaerocephalus

Photo: Adam Gosling

Some wetland plants

The plants associated with wetlands can be categorised into a few distinct groups.

Floating plants: free-floating such as *Azolla* or floating attached such as *Nymphaea*. Semi-submerged species include *Myriophyllum*.

Emergents: plants rooted in the water-logged areas such as *Elaeocharis*, *Baumea*, *Cyperus*.

Halophytes: plants such as *Sarcocornia*, *Juncus kraussii* in salt marshes.

Edge Dwellers: plants such as *Leptospermum*, *Lomandra*.

The boundaries of most wetlands can move so there may be changes and overlap in the species particularly on the edges.

Management options

Many wetland areas have been extensively modified by settlement, agriculture and industry. In NSW 80% of the coastal floodplains have been destroyed or are being threatened. Estuaries, for example, are important fish breeding sites, the interface of fresh and salt water.

Coastal development and the side effects of this can impact on these communities. Some areas, such as salt marshes are protected by State legislation. The upland lagoons of our area are also protected by State and Federal legislation. Unfortunately very few sites are intact, with agricultural practices and development impacting on and modifying the sites and their catchments. Weedy species tend to take over and out-compete native species, yet there are many plants endemic to these lagoons so conservation measures are necessary. The aquatic plant industry has few controls put on it and many plants for sale are potential weeds.



Hakea microcarpa occurs locally on the edge of swampy ground. It is adaptable to drier conditions.

Nic's current work involves the Urandangie lagoons near Guyra, a project where HICUB is working with the landowner who has fenced off the shallow lagoons. He is also involved with wetlands in the Burdekin area south of Townsville where extensive development of cane fields has seen lagoons permanently cut off from the main river. Fish species have been affected and weedy species are covering the sites. One project he told us about was a conservation project with a cane farmer to restore the connection between one of these lagoons and the tidal flows.

With increased awareness in the community and the cooperation and support of private landowners, as well as government support and legislation, some of these endangered wetlands may be restored and or preserved.



Cyperus difformis - a widespread species
Drawing: <http://plantnet.rbgsyd.nsw.gov.au>

More on Frost Protection

From the April Forum - contributed by Liisa Atherton

Some members lost new plantings last winter, probably due to frost, and were looking for ideas on how to minimise losses. Some suggestions included:

- local sourcing of plants/seed, though frost severity can still be an issue
- establishing some 'nursery' plants as cover, such as wattles, to protect later plantings
- trying to ensure plantings are well established before the frosts, the bigger they get, the further away from the frost layer
- ensuring good drainage by adding sand to the soil or raising beds
- ensuring adequate watering but not too late in the day
- using milk carton tree guards (keeps rabbits away as well)
- a good covering of mulch but not against the trunk
- close planting – Warren's 'three plants in one hole'
- using sand as a mulch instead of an organic mulch, in order to maximise heat radiation at night to protect the part of the plant above ground. (The drawback with this method is a subsequent weed problem).

Editor's Comments

I still feel that creating microclimates is the key - having an overhead canopy can reduce temperatures by about 10C. Planting thickly with more sensitive plants in between tougher varieties is a big help. Choosing very hardy varieties as the basic structure of the garden is essential - put the tender ones near the house or in a more sheltered spot. Think about the sun - early morning sun causes rapid thaw of tender leaves causing cells to collapse. Frost tender plants need to go on the southern or western side of the garden where they will thaw out slowly after a heavy frost. Taper off the watering in autumn to slow down growth and harden plants up for winter.

Most of the time all of these methods will work to a certain degree. Every garden is different and it is impossible to guard against a rainy season which keeps plants growing lushly only to be hit by a sudden devastating frost which is what happened last year. Let's hope this winter is kinder and milder allowing our gardens to recover.

Genus of the month: *Correa*

Text by Liisa Atherton

Correa Andrews is an Australian genus in the family Rutaceae. The genus was named by Andrews, H.C. (1798), The Botanist's Repository for New, and Rare Plants 1: t. 18 (<http://www.cpbr.gov.au/cgi-bin/apni>) after the Portuguese botanist José Correia da Serra (1750-1823), known as Abbé Correa (Wikipedia). (I also found out *Correa* means a 'leather strap or belt' in Spanish). The name is a conserved name. The flowers are bell-shaped;

the leaves as in all Rutaceae have a distinctive scent when crushed. Apart from the true species there are numerous hybrids and cultivars available to gardeners.

The correas were in full bloom at the time of the forum and numerous specimens were on the display board.

Local correa species include *Correa reflexa* var. *reflexa* (green flowering), *C. reflexa* var. *reflexa* (red flowering) from Torrington and *C. lawrenceana* var. *glandulifera* from Washpool.



Correa reflexa var. *reflexa* Torrington red Photo: M. Hitchcock

Most correas grow well in Armidale, tolerating the cold and dry. Some of the specimens at the display included:

Correa "Pink Frost", *C. alba* var. *alba*, *C. "Blush"*, *C. "Candy Pink"*, *C. "Isabell"*, *C. "Ivory Bells"*, *C. "Ivory Dancer"*, *C. "Portland Belle"*, *C. "Skye Bells"*, *C. "Vanilla Cream"*, *C. "White Tips"*, *C. "Western Pink Star"*, *C. "Cane's Hybrid"*, *C. "Federation Belle"*, *C. "Kiss Me Kate"*, *C. "Marian's Marvel"*, *C. "Eucla Gold"*, *C. "Dancing Lipsticks"*, *C. baeuerlenii*, *C. calycina* var. *calycina*, *C. decumbens*, *C. glabra* var. *glabra*, *C. "Cappuccino"*, *C. "Inglewood Gold"*, *C. glabra* var. *turnbullii*, *C. "Ian Fardon"*, *C. lawrenceana* var. *cordifolia*, *C. lawrenceana* var. *glandulifera*, *C. lawrenceana* var. *rosea*, *C. pulchella*, *C. "Orange Glow"*, *C. "Dusky Bells"*, *C. "Little Cate"*, *C. "Mannii"*, *C. "Misty Pink"*, *C. "Wreck of the Ethel"*, *C. reflexa* var. *nummularifolia*, *C. reflexa* var. *reflexa*, *C. "Lemon and Lime"* and *C. "Red Empress"*.

Many thanks to John Nevin for the list of local correas and the list of correas in the plant display at the April forum.

Paper Daisies at Mitchellside

Text and images by Penelope Sinclair

I found Maria's article in the last news letter most interesting and informative with details of the different Paper Daisies available.— as some members may be aware I am a particular champion of the local paper daisy *Xerochrysum bracteatum* which is frequently dismissed as a garden flower partly because it is so common along our roadsides and on non-grazed land. I have noticed three main colour variations in the local daisies—the golden yellow, a vibrant orange and a soft lemon—the most common being the golden yellow.

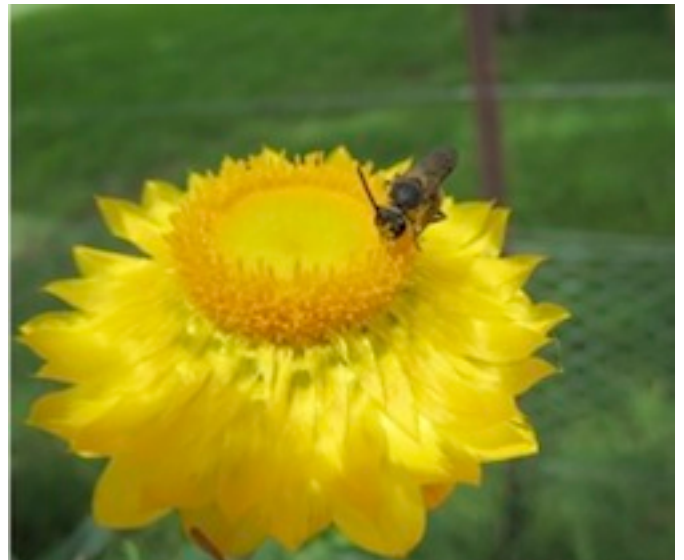
At Mitchellside it is allowed (and encouraged) to self seed in the lawn and has to be mown around through the summer—a tedious task but we are greatly rewarded.

Apart from their toughness and ability to self propagate we value them as insect habitats and as such they are also appreciated by the small birds—wrens, finches, and thornbills which flit through the clusters and feed on the insects readily available. Even the parrots seem to enjoy swinging from stems and so provide us with a lot of interest and entertainment.

Another useful characteristic of the paper daisies is that they are great for floral arrangements. The flower heads can be preserved by inserting a florist's wire into the top 1 cm of green stem. As the stem dries the head will be held fast. Choose buds that are not quite open and they will open as they dry without losing their yellow bracts. They can be added to any arrangements, provide colour when mixed with foliage and can be used again and again. On a once only basis they proved useful for an Art project!



Mitchellside front lawn



Native bee



Local colours

Congratulations to

John Nevin

who will be awarded
APS Life Membership
during 2011

Orchard Butterflies

Text and images by Peter Metcalfe

We have been enjoying the languid flight of quite a few Orchard Butterflies around the house in the last month or so. Usually we see one butterfly at a time but occasionally you see courtship behaviour with as many as four males dancing in attendance on the one female for perhaps half an hour.



Blue-banded Bees are frequent visitors. This is one of the larger native bees and is over one centimetre in length. The abdomen is black with metallic-blue bands. *Derwentia arenaria* flowers are one of their favourites. A few springs ago we counted 20 Blue-banded Bees visiting the flowers on one plant. *Melaleuca* and *Plectanthurus* blooms are also visited. One individual has taken a liking to the yellow flowers of a prickly cucumber. The specimen illustrated is approaching the flowers of a *Melaleuca nesophila*.



For the first time this morning I noticed the distinctive larvae of the Orchard Butterfly on one of our *Correa* bushes. When we looked more closely we found about a dozen larvae of different sizes on the one *Correa* bush.

Now we understand the reason we have the butterflies here. We have no lemon or other citrus trees here but many *Correas*. Being members of family Rutaceae, *Correas* are food plants for the caterpillars of this species of butterfly.

We are happy to share our big *Correa* plants with this handsome butterfly. Perhaps they can become the agents of biological control for the feral *Correas* appearing in our gardens!

Native Bees

Text and images by Warren and Gloria Sheather

Native Bees are another group of insects that visit our garden regularly especially in spring when there are plenty of flowers. At least ten species have been observed but not all have been identified. Some are very small and may only be identified by microscopic examination. Australia wide there are over 1500 native bee species with 200 found in the Sydney region.

Carpenter Bees favour our *Callistemons* and *Sennas*. These large bees are blowfly size. The female is metallic blue and the male metallic green. They have a loud, deep drone as they fly between flowers. Carpenter Bees are often heard before seen. On a trip through Italy we even managed to photograph a European bee visiting a daisy.

Arboretum Working Bees
Ist Tuesday of the Month at 1.00 pm
We need your help
to plant and mulch the native gardens
Contact Pat Laher (6775 1842 or mob
0427 327) 719)

Wildlife in the garden: gumleaves anyone?

Text and images by Edward Hannah



Photo 1

As well as the delights of the plants themselves our gardens provide opportunities for playing birdspotting and it was while indulging in that activity on 29/9/10 that my glasses accidentally alighted on the scene in Photo 1; it depicts a mother with a very large offspring. To get to the location shown they would have had to travel some distance on the ground so I was quite surprised to find that they had vanished when I returned a few hours later to try for a better photo: one would not expect the mother to be very fleet-of-foot when so encumbered.



Photo 2

Photos 2, 3 and 4 relate to another occasion (30–31/12/10): this time the koala is a young male and it is noteworthy that the same tree is featured again. The tree in question, *Eucalyptus scoparia*, started life as tubestock from the Muswellbrook Forest Nursery and despite early setbacks has survived the ravages of beetles and scale better than many of its species have managed in cultivation. To mark the tree's 36th birthday its height of 15 metres has been recorded and there's a full-length portrait in Photo 5.



Photo 3

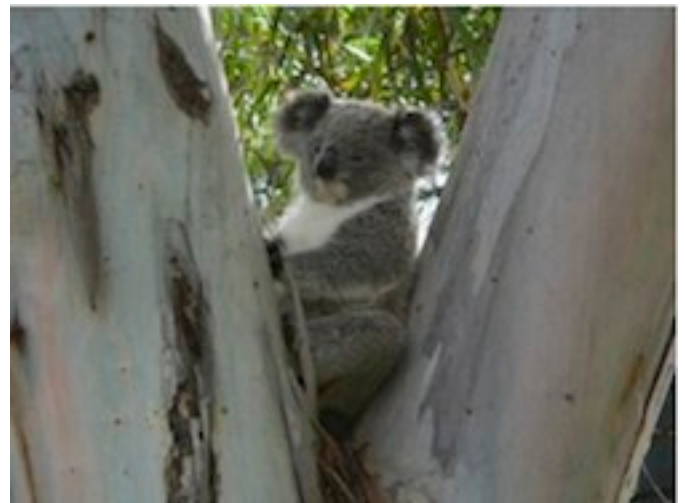


Photo 4



Photo 5

FOR YOUR DIARY: June 2011 – August 2011

June

Tuesday 7	1.00 pm	Arboretum Working Bee
Sunday 19	12.00 noon	Solstice Luncheon at Liisa Atherton's – 'Pinora' 672 Lagoon Rd, Guyra See map and details below
Sunday 26	8.00-12.30 pm	Markets in the Mall

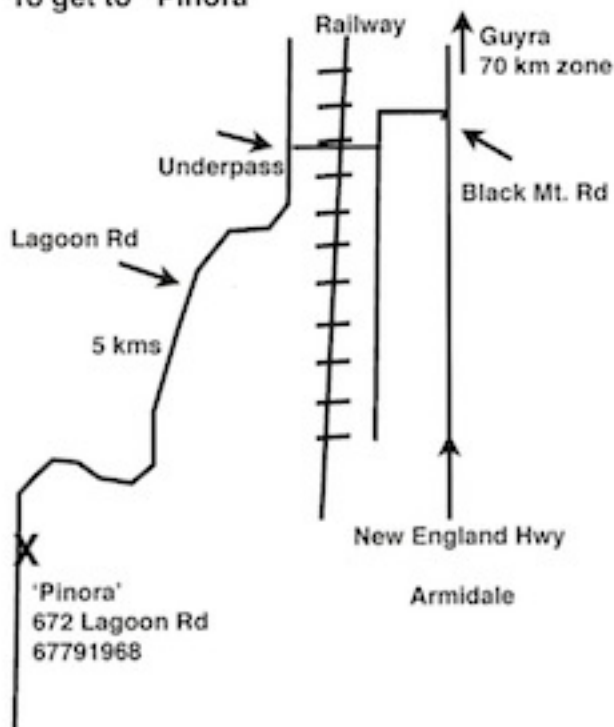
July

Tuesday 5	1.00 pm	Arboretum Working Bee
Sat/Sun 23/24		Weekend visit to Hat Head National Park - Accommodation at Hat Head Caravan Park - easy walking - If you are interested ring Maria 6775 1139
Sunday 31	8.00-12.30 pm	Markets in the Mall

August

Tuesday 2	1.00 pm	Arboretum Working Bee
Tuesday 9	5.30 pm	Meeting – Col Mulquiney's place
Tuesday 16	7.30 pm	Native Plants Forum - Speaker: Nick Sadgrove – Chemical properties of Australian plants
Sunday 21	8.30 am	Goonoowigall Bushland Reserve on the Tinga Rd, 5km S of Inverell. Meet at saleyards at for car pooling. Morning tea at Goonoowigal at 10.30 (Bundarra to Inverell Rd entry – closest to Inverell. Next turn after Golf Club. Bring morning tea and lunch. Contact: Patrick Laher 0427 327 719
Sunday 28	8.00-12.30 pm	Markets in the Mall
Sat/Sun 27/28		APS State Groups get-together - Burrendong Arboretum

Solstice Luncheon To get to 'Pinora'



Solstice Luncheon

Please join us at our annual luncheon which is always a lot of fun. Bring a meat dish or salad or dessert and own drinks. Tea/coffee provided. Contact Liisa on (02) 6779 1968 or email: liisaa@bigpond.com

Hat Head NP

This is your chance to learn about some of the coastal wildflowers and thaw out a bit on the warm coast. Cabins cost \$79 per night. There are many interesting walks through dunes, woodlands and even rainforest.

Contact Maria 6775 1139

Goonoowigal Reserve

This reserve is situated near Inverell and has an interesting collection of local wildflowers. There are interpretation signs and even some interesting history on the Aboriginal families which lived in the area. We are happy to car pool if you don't want to drive that distance. Walking is fairly easy on a good track.

Become a member and save!

Did you know that there are a range of discounts available to members? Tell your friends and urge them to join our group.

Armidale & District members only (25% discount)

All Mole Station plants at the **APS stall** at the Mall Markets and our annual plant sale. At \$2.00 per plant discount, you can easily save your annual subscription each year.

Cool Natives, 16 Hitchcock Lane Armidale 2350 Ph. 6775 1139. Specialist in Correas, Northern Tablelands Flora
Online catalogue coolnatives.com.au Open by appointment. Selling at Farmers Market/Mall Market/Mail order

All members of APS-NSW

Glenbrook Native Plant Reserve, Great Western Highway, Glenbrook 2773 Ph (02) 4739 4465. Sat, Sun, Wed. 12am-4pm.

10% discount to members Web: www.apsbluemtnsgroup.org

The Wildflower Place, 453 The Entrance Rd, Erina Heights 2260. Ph (02) 4365 5510. 5% discount - tell staff before purchase

Wombat Gully Native Nursery, 1729 Coxs Creek Rd, Rylstone 2849 Ph (02) 6379 6202. 5% discount

Mildura Native Nursery 10% discount on the purchase of any native plants or other products including the Watertube ordered online at www.nativenursery.com.au

Leearne Neal at Newcastle Wildflower Nursery, 260 Lake Rd, Glendale 2285 Ph (02) 6379 6202. 10% discount

A.R. Native Plant Nursery, 177 Terania Ck Rd, The Channon NSW 2480 (far north coast) Ph (02) 6688 6365

10% discount Fri/Sat/Sun 9am-5pm other times by appointment

Bonney Hills Garden Centre, 1055 Ocean Drive, Bonney Hills 2445 Ph (02) 6585 5764 10% discount on all plant purchases

Earthcare Nursery, 'Timbertown', Oxley Hwy Wauchope 2446 (opp. Timbertown) Ph (02) 6585 2117 10% discount

All Greengold Nurseries (except landscape materials or discounted stock) see www.greengold.com.au for location details etc.

Annangrove Grevilleas 98 Annangrove Road, Kenthurst 2156 Ph (02) 9654 1380. 7 days 9am-5pm

Florilegium: The Garden Bookstore 65 Derwent St, Glebe 2037 PO Box 644 Rozelle 2039. Ph (02) 9555 8589.

7 days 9am-5pm. 10% discount

Forests NSW Nurseries 10% discount on all potted lines. West Pennant Hills, Musselbrook, Gunnedah, Wagga Wagga, Narrandera, Dubbo & Forbes For details see <http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/forests/business-services/nurseries>

Sydney Wildflower Nursery, 9 Veno St Heathcote NSW 2233. Ph (02) 4739 4465. Sat, Sun, Wed. 12am-4pm. 10% discount. Web: www.sydneywildflowernursery.com.au

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

MEMBERSHIP TYPE: (please tick appropriate box)	Annual Fee	Concession
<input type="checkbox"/> Single	\$50	\$42
<input type="checkbox"/> Joint (two adults at the same address)	\$58	\$50
Concession applied for: <input type="checkbox"/> Limited Fixed Income <input type="checkbox"/> 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: ()	Email:

Please return form with payment to: **Membership Officer, APS Armidale Branch, PO Box 735, Armidale NSW 2350**

PAYMENT: \$..... is enclosed by:

Cheque, payable to APS Armidale Branch

Money Order, payable to APS Armidale Branch

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