

APS EAST HILLS GROUP NEWSLETTER



August 2019

NEXT EHG MEETING:

7.30 pm, Wednesday 7 August 2019

**Flora in Scotland and Ireland
with a touch of archaeology**

Graham Fry and Liz Cameron

APS East Hills Group

Please bring specimens for the plant table and
something to share for supper.

LUGARNO-PEAKHURST UNITING CHURCH

909 Forest Road Lugarno (opposite the Chivers Hill Lugarno shops)

WELCOME to the August 2019 edition of the APS East Hills Group Newsletter.

In this issue there are some notes and web links from Lyndal Thorburn's talk on Eremophilas. The plant table exploded from four items at our June meeting to about forty at our July meeting (thank you everyone!), and you will find the list of specimens and some notes and photos.

This issue also includes a note from our President, and details and the registration form for the Newcastle Get-together in August – there isn't much time left to register! The usual diary dates are included too. We also mark the recent death of Merv Hodge.

I hope you find something of interest.

Jan Douglas
Editor

<http://austplants.com.au/East-Hills>



A NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

I am very sorry I missed the last two meetings. In June we were holidaying in Scotland and Ireland while in July I was attending the Australasian Ornithologists Conference in Darwin, two very different locations and climates! I would very much like to thank those who kept the meetings going while we were away including Karlo, David, Jan, Tony, Marie, Dorothy and others I have probably missed - thank you, much appreciated.

Unfortunately, we missed two very good presentations, Karlo's on the flora of the Snowy Mountains and Lyndal Thorburn's talk on Eremophilas. I understand that they were both very interesting and informative.

When we were in Scotland and Ireland we took every opportunity to get into the country and see some of their native habitat. Fortunately, there are still some reasonable areas where natural vegetation is still common and Liz spent a lot of time trying to identify it.

It's interesting how our perceptions can be totally wrong. Liz and I are involved in a number of bush rehabilitation projects and some of the most common weeds we remove are northern hemisphere plants such as privet and blackberries. I thought that it would be nice to go to a location that wasn't weed infested and naively thought that the British Isles might be the place. However, this was not to be, as we found out - in both Scotland and Ireland we saw a very common pink-flowered shrub growing in many areas, particularly along roadsides and in disturbed areas. It turns out that this is *Rhododendron ponticum* from the Himalayas and Central Asia which was introduced to the British Isles as a garden plant in the 18th century. But as is often the case with garden plants, the plant found that Scotland and Ireland provided the perfect growing conditions and it has thrived and is now a difficult pest to control. It has also become associated with the spread of two *Phytophthora* pathogens, leading to further difficulties in maintaining their natural forests. I am sure there must be other weed problems as well, so Australia is not alone in having problems with plants introduced from other countries.

At the next meeting Liz and I will give a presentation on some of the sights we saw in Scotland and Ireland, and it will include some images other than flowers.

Graham Fry
President, East Hills Group



Photos of Sylvan Grove Native Garden by Jan Douglas, October 2016.

FROM OUR JULY MEETING

EREMOPHILAS

Lyndal Thorburn – Leader of the Eremophila Study Group

Lyndal began by talking about the genus *Eremophila*, and then spoke about the Eremophila Study Group, including some of its history and its achievements, and included plenty of photos to encourage our interest. I have not tried to summarise Lyndal's talk, but I have put together some of the information she included. However, I haven't run this past Lyndal, so you can safely assume that any errors are mine.



Photos from the Eremophila Study Group image gallery L to R: *Eremophila deserti* by John Newton, *Eremophila neglecta* by Brian Freeman, *Eremophila densifolia* subsp. *densifolia* by Andrew Brown.

The genus *Eremophila* is restricted to Australia and is one of six genera in the Tribe Myoporeae within the family Scrophulariaceae – only some of the other genera occur in Australia. There are at least 260 species of *Eremophila*, and if you include hybrids and varieties the number goes up to about 900.

Lyndal said she fell in love with Eremophilas in 1985, primarily because of their enormous diversity in plant form, leaf colour and shape, hairiness (or not), flower shape and flower colour.

Eremophilas can be prostrate, short or tall shrubs, weeping or erect, small trees, open or dense.

Some Eremophilas are pollinated by birds – these tend to have red, yellow or pink flowers, often with spots, and with longer petals on the top of the flower. Some have sticky pollen. Other Eremophilas are pollinated by insects – these tend to have blue, white or purple flowers, often with patterns visible only in UV light, and the stamens are often enclosed in the flowers.

Lyndal showed a fascinating photo of a colour chart she had made using Eremophila flowers from her garden – a striking illustration of the diversity of flower colour. Lyndal also maintains a chart recording the flowering times of different species.

Lyndal talked about cultivation and propagation. Seed propagation is difficult as the oval fruits are very hard and difficult to open without damaging the four seeds inside. Cuttings are the usual method, and are often successful. In Summer some species set roots within two weeks. Trials have been done with and without bottom heat and plant hormones. Grafting is used, with varying results in terms of long-term survival.

Some cultivation points:

- many are frost hardy
- many grow well in tubs
- in Sydney most species would appreciate sun protection
- in Sydney plants with green leaves would generally be easier to grow than plants with grey leaves

- a breeze is better than still air
- pruning out the centre of grey-leaf plants may help with air flow and plant survival
- they love fertiliser and seaweed extract
- diligent tip pruning is a good idea
- many species can be hedged.

The next topic was the Eremophila Study Group. Membership costs only \$5 per year. The Group is involved in a variety of exciting projects, many directed at sharing information about Eremophilas. One of these projects is the Eremophila image database which you can search by flower colour, plant size etc – see <http://anpsa.org.au/eremophilaSG/gallery/index.html> New study group members are welcome!

Lyndal also brought Eremophila specimens for the plant table and potted plants for our raffle, so many of us were lucky enough to go home with a special new Eremophila for our gardens.

FROM OUR JULY MEETING PLANT TABLE – JULY 2019

List: Jan Douglas Notes: Graham Walters and Jan Douglas.
Thanks to everyone who brought specimens.

What a difference a month makes! After a sparse showing of only four specimens on our June plant table, members and visitors (including our speaker) brought along more than 40 specimens to our July plant table! Unfortunately in the speed and excitement of the discussion your editor lost track of a couple of the Eremophilas, so the list below is incomplete.

We also had one ring-in - that is, not an Australian native plant. It was a *Tamarix*, which had spectacular fragrant fluffy pink and white flowers and attractive lobed leaves. I have been unable to identify the species.

There was some discussion also about whether another specimen, *Hibiscus tiliaceus*, was an Australian native plant. Research after the meeting indicates that it is native to subtropical and tropical areas of Eastern Australia and to other countries. It has become a weed in some places (e.g. Florida, USA) where it has been introduced outside its natural range. For more information see: <http://www.hibiscus.org/species/htiliaceus.php> and <https://www.gardeningwithangus.com.au/hibiscus-tiliaceus-sea-hibiscus/>



ABOVE: L to R: *Eremophila cuneifolia* x *fraseri*, *E. latrobei*, *E. mackinlayi*. Photos by Karlo Taliana.

<i>Acacia baileyana</i>	Cootamundra Wattle
<i>Acacia fimbriata</i>	Fringed Wattle, Brisbane Golden Wattle
<i>Acacia howittii</i>	Sticky Wattle or Howitt's Wattle. <i>See page 6.</i>
<i>Allocasuarina sp.</i>	She-oak
<i>Alocasia brisbanensis</i>	Cunjevoi Lily. <i>See page 6.</i>
<i>Anigozanthos</i> 'Bush Pearl'	Kangaroo Paw
<i>Banksia ericifolia</i>	Heath Banksia
<i>Chrysocephalum apiculatum</i>	Yellow Buttons
<i>Correa glabra</i> x <i>pulchella</i>	
<i>Eremophila calorhabdos</i> x <i>decipiens</i>	
<i>Eremophila cuneifolia</i> x <i>fraseri</i>	
<i>Eremophila decipiens</i> subsp. <i>decipiens</i>	
<i>Eremophila duttonii</i> x <i>alternifolia</i>	
<i>Eremophila</i> 'Fairy Floss'	Hybrid of <i>E. racemosa</i>
<i>Eremophila glabra</i> 'Murchison Magic'	
<i>Eremophila glabra</i> 'Arrowsmith'	
<i>Eremophila glabra</i> 'Kalbarri Carpet'	
<i>Eremophila latrobei</i>	Warty Fuchsia Bush
<i>Eremophila mackinlayi</i>	Desert Pride
<i>Eremophila phyllopoda</i>	<i>Photo below.</i>
<i>Eremophila warnesii</i>	
<i>Eremophila youngii</i> yellow flower form	
<i>Eucalyptus preissiana</i>	Bell-fruit Mallee. <i>See page 7.</i>
<i>Grevillea aurea</i>	
<i>Grevillea bronwenae</i>	A spectacular, narrow shrub from the lower south-west of Western Australia. http://anpsa.org.au/APOL29/mar03-5.html
<i>Grevillea</i> 'Diane's Blush'	
<i>Grevillea</i> 'Elegance'	
<i>Grevillea</i> 'Golden Lyre'	Hybrid between <i>G. formosa</i> and <i>G. 'Honey Gem'</i> . https://austplants.com.au/Grevillea-Golden-Lyre
<i>Grevillea lanigera</i>	Woolly Grevillea
<i>Grevillea lavandulacea</i>	Lavender Grevillea
<i>Grevillea</i> 'Kimberly Gold'	Hybrid: <i>G. wickhamii</i> x <i>G. miniata</i> <i>See page 7.</i>
<i>Grevillea</i> 'Winpara Gem'	
<i>Grevillea</i> , possibly 'Orange Marmalade'	
<i>Hibiscus tiliaceus</i>	Cottonwood, Native Rosella, Sea Hibiscus
<i>Leptospermum scoparium</i>	
<i>Melaleuca filifolia</i>	Wiry Honeymyrtle
<i>Pimelea suaveolens</i>	Scented Banjine <i>Photo below.</i>
<i>Prostanthera incisa</i>	Cut-leaf Mint Bush
<i>Verticordia serotina</i>	<i>Photo below.</i>

BELOW: L to R: *Eremophila phyllopoda*, *Verticordia serotina*, *Pimelea suaveolens*. Photos by Karlo Taliana.



***Acacia howittii* (Sticky Wattle)** is a hardy and quick grower which forms a graceful large shrub or small tree of dense weeping habit to a height of 5 - 8 m. Its perfumed pale yellow globular flowers are produced in Spring. It responds well to pruning. The common name comes from the slightly sticky nature of its foliage.



Its natural distribution is restricted to a part of eastern Victoria from the upper Macalister River area near Mt Howitt south to near Yarram and east to near Tabberabbera where it grows in moist forest. This restricted distribution has led to its listing as rare, however it is not considered to be under threat. It is known to escape cultivation and occurs as a weed in a variety of habitats in bushland in parts of south-eastern Australia.

Photo by Melburnian https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Acacia_howittii.jpg

***Alocasia brisbanensis* (Cunjevoi Lily, Native Elephant Ears)**

This is a common understorey plant in the rainforests of the north coast of NSW and into Queensland, but is uncommon in the Sydney district. It has become popular in gardens because of its handsome foliage and ability to thrive in shade. It is found as a weed in New Zealand and south-western Western Australia.



It is a large clumped perennial with a tuberous rhizome and broad leaf blades on thick spongy stalks which are 30 to 100cm long. The flowers are borne from December to March at the end of upright fleshy stems which are about as long as the leaves. The flowers form an erect single yellow spike with male flowers above and female flowers below. The fruit is an egg-shaped berry 4 - 8mm long.

Photo by Ross Beever

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Alocasia_brisbanensis#/media/File:Alocasia_brisbanensis_\(Bailey\)_Domin_\(AM_AK302022-1\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Alocasia_brisbanensis#/media/File:Alocasia_brisbanensis_(Bailey)_Domin_(AM_AK302022-1).jpg)

***Eremophila youngii* (an Emu Bush or Poverty Bush)**

is an erect highly branched shrub growing to 1-4 metres. It is well-known in cultivation and is appreciated for its foliage, hardiness in a variety of soils and attractive pink or red flowers. It is attractive to nectar-feeding birds. It is easy to propagate from cuttings and will grow in most soils including heavy clay, in full sun or part shade. It is drought tolerant, rarely requiring extra water even during a long dry spell, and very frost tolerant.



Photo by Geoff Derrin

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Eremophila_youngii_youngii_\(leaves_and_flowers\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Eremophila_youngii_youngii_(leaves_and_flowers).jpg)

Its branches, leaves, flower stalks and sepals are covered with a layer of grey or yellowish scales that may be lost as the part ages. The branches are rough due to the presence of persistent leaf bases and are covered with small raised warty lumps. The fruit is dry, cone- or oval-shaped, 8 to 11 mm long, with a papery covering.

The flowering time varies between subspecies.

E. youngii subsp. *youngii* generally flowers between January and October and has branched hairs on the outside of the petal tubes and fruits. This subspecies is widespread in a variety of habitats in a broad band across central Western Australia.

E. youngii subsp. *lepidota* flowers between June and September following rain and has a scaly covering on the petals and fruit. It is a rarely seen plant, growing on clay flats and floodplains in a restricted area of Western Australia generally further north than *E. youngii* subsp. *youngii*.

***Eucalyptus preissiana* (Bell-fruited Mallee)** is a small tree and usually has a mallee (multi-trunk) habit. It may reach a height of 2 to 3 metres with a similar width, but is often smaller. The bark is smooth and leaves are broadly oval, tapering to a point and about 120 mm long by 50 mm wide. The beautiful large yellow flowers may be 30 mm or more in diameter. Flowering occurs in winter and spring and is followed by attractive bell-shaped gum nuts.



Photo by Karlo Taliana .

Two subspecies are recognised: *Eucalyptus pressiana* subsp. *pressiana* and *E. pressiana* subsp. *lobulata*.

Bell-fruited Mallee has been grown successfully in many parts of Australia but is difficult to maintain in tropical and subtropical areas. Its small size makes it appropriate for smaller gardens. It performs best in well-drained soils in full sun. Because of its lignotuberous habit the species should respond to hard pruning to near ground-level.

***Grevillea* 'Kimberly Gold'**

This beautiful specimen is a show-stopper in Marie and Des's front garden. The photos were taken on late afternoons in June and July when the plant was still in bud rather than in flower and the light was fading, but I think you'll agree that the plant is spectacular.



Photos by Jan Douglas.

Grevillea 'Kimberly Gold' is a hybrid between *Grevillea wickhamii* and *Grevillea miniata*. *Grevillea wickhamii* (Wickham's grevillea) is an erect shrub or small tree to 6 metres in height which is endemic to parts of Western Australia, Northern Territory and Queensland. The stiff grey-green leaves are shaped like holly leaves. There are several subspecies with various flower colours including red, pink, orange and yellow. *Grevillea miniata* (Sandstone Grevillea) is also from Western Australia and the Northern Territory. It forms a shrub up to 5 metres tall and has yellow flowers and grey-green rather holly-like leaves.

FROM OUR JULY MEETING
APS EAST HILLS GROUP MEETING – WEDNESDAY 3 JULY 2019

Lugarno–Peakhurst Uniting Church, Lugarno
Notes recorded by Jan Douglas

The meeting was opened at 7.55 pm by Vice President Karlo Taliana in the absence of our President Graham Fry. There were three apologies, all due to travel.

Karlo welcomed everyone, including visitors, and apologised for the late start, due to problems with technology and a lack of milk. Karlo then reminded members of a number of coming events: open weekends at the Illawarra Grevillea Park, the APS NSW Get-together in Newcastle and the ANPSA conference in Albany. Next there was some discussion about the idea of having a visit to Sylvan Grove again this Spring. It was decided to go ahead on Sunday 8 September with a 10 am start, and to invite members of some other groups to join us.

Our Treasurer Tony Porritt spoke briefly about the renewal of our agreement with the Church for use of the building and also about some flora publications for sale from APS in Alice Springs.

This was followed by a fascinating talk on Eremophilas by Study Group Leader Lyndal Thorburn. Unfortunately the main digital projector has still not been fixed and the images are sub-standard. After the talk, there was an overflowing plant table. The evening concluded with supper.

VALE MERV HODGE

The information below is taken from the [Native Plants Queensland Facebook page](#).

17 July at 01:17

It is with sadness that we announce the passing of Grevillea breeder, NPQ Life Member and Australian plants legend Merv Hodge.

Merv readily shared his knowledge of Australian plants and was particularly passionate about Grevilleas. He is regarded as a pioneer of breeding and grafting techniques, and bred our beloved Grevillea 'Superb' (which was featured on an Australian 50c stamp in 2003).

Merv was also the founding leader of the Grevillea Study Group of the Australian Plants Society and was awarded an Australian Plant Award by ANPSA in 2009. Some of his other achievements include:

- pioneering the Mummy Graft technique for grafting difficult to grow species.
- his talents as an accomplished photographer. Many of his photos were used in the Grevillea Books (volumes I-III).

Merv was immortalised by having *Grevillea hodgei* named after him by Peter Olde and Neil Marriott in 1994.

Vale Merv. A Memorial will be held at Great Southern Memorial Park Crematorium, Mt Cotton Rd, Carbrook on Friday 26/7/19 at 11am.

Sandra Connolly: Vale Merv. Merv was also instrumental in starting the Logan River Australian Plants Society on 21st August 1984, which later became the Logan River Branch of SGAP Qld Region, and now known as Native Plants Logan River. We made him a life member in 2014.

An Invitation...

You are cordially invited to the 2019 APS NSW Get-Together, hosted by Newcastle Group, at a range of locations in the Newcastle area with different native vegetation communities to explore. Your visit will take you to some of the gems of the area and you will be able to see the spectacular coastal flora at its peak.

Saturday morning – Hunter Region Botanic Gardens

We'll start at the award-winning Hunter Region Botanic Gardens (<https://huntergardens.org.au>). The Newcastle Group has been involved with the Gardens since its creation in 1986. The Gardens covers 133 hectares of Eucalypt forest on the deep sands of the Tomago sand beds. There are many themed gardens amongst the forest that show our flora, both local to the Hunter Valley and the rest of Australia. The morning features a talk by Dr Stephen Bell on the 'Endemic Flora of the Hunter Region', before guided walks around the Gardens.

Enjoy morning tea and a catered lunch at the Gardens.

Saturday afternoon – Walks in Port Stephens area

We'll head towards the Port Stephens area for walks, guided by our local members. These will feature a range of different plant communities and the coastal flora as well as some spectacular coastal scenery.

**Saturday evening – Dinner at Mayfield**

From 6 pm, meet at Wests in Mayfield for dinner (at own expense). There is a good range of food choices to cater for a range of tastes. <https://www.westsnewcastle.com.au/casual-eats/the-bistro>

Sunday morning – Two walks: Glenrock Scout Camp and Awabakal Reserve

There are two walks, with time to do both:

1. Visit the Glenrock Scout Camp to see the garden of John Le Messurier, the 2018 ABC Gardener of the year (<https://www.theherald.com.au/story/5824155/glenrock-lagoon-pioneer-named-australias-best-gardener/>)
2. Walk out to the bluff at the Awabakal Nature Reserve, the destination for the annual "Awabakal Wildflower Walk". We will be visiting at the spring peak for wildflowers.

**Sunday afternoon – Hunter Wetlands Centre**

Enjoy a catered lunch at the Hunter Wetlands Centre, the home base for APS Newcastle Group (<https://wetlands.org.au>), followed by guided walks around the wetlands and a visit to the Newcastle Group's nursery for an opportunity to buy plants from the wide range of native plants produced by the 'Thursday Mob'.

Please register and pay by 2nd August 2019

Registration for the weekend is \$40 and includes lunch and morning tea on both Saturday and Sunday. Please fill out and return the attached form with payment (either by bank transfer or cheque).

Accommodation

Newcastle and the surrounds are well served by a variety of hotels and motels. There are a number of motels centrally located in the Mayfield area – both along Maitland Road (Pacific Highway) and there is also the Gateway Inn next to the Saturday evening dinner venue (West at Mayfield).



**Australian Plants Society NSW
2019 Get-together hosted by Newcastle Group**

Saturday 17 & Sunday 18 August 2019

Venues: Hunter Region Botanic Gardens, Hunter Wetlands Centre, Glenrock State Recreation Area, Awabakal Nature Reserve, other reserves and parks in the Newcastle area

Registration details:

Name:

Postal address:

.....

Town / Suburb

Postcode

Phone: **Mobile:** **Email:**

District Group

Please complete details below for each person attending Get-together:

Name	Special diet*	Registration \$40		Sat Dinner (At own cost)
		Sat	Sun	
	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N
	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N
	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N
	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N
Cost		@\$40		
Total cost		\$		
Cheque (To: Aust. Plants Society Newcastle Group)				Y / N
Bank transfer (Account name as above, BSB: 650 000 Account: 530408206)				Y / N
Supply details on the Bank transfer which will identify your payment: Family name				
Date Payment made				

* If yes to Special diet, please specify:

Please return by email or post by 2nd August 2019

Registration Secretary: Maree McCarthy 0410 405 815

- **Email** FORM to: secretary.aps.newcastle@gmail.com (payment by bank transfer), **or**
- **Post** FORM and cheque to: PO Box 76, Adamstown NSW 2289

COMING EVENTS – CHECK YOUR DIARY!

You can find more district group events on the APS NSW website at <http://austplants.com.au/calendar>

Wednesday 7 August 2019 From 7.15 for 7.30 pm	East Hills Group meeting – Graham Fry and Liz Cameron: Flora in Scotland and Ireland – with a touch of archaeology.
Saturday 10 August 1 pm	Menai Wildflower Group – Prof Richard Jobson: Bladderworts Illawong Rural Fire Brigade Headquarters, Old Illawarra Road, Illawong.
Wednesday 21 August From 7.45pm for 8pm	Sutherland Group meeting – Associate Professor Clare McArthur: What do possums and deer eat? GyMEA Community Hall, 39 GyMEA Bay Rd, GyMEA
Saturday and Sunday 17 and 18 August 2019	APS NSW Get together in Newcastle. Please register and pay by 2 August 2019. Registration for the weekend is \$40 and includes lunch and morning tea on both Saturday and Sunday. See pages 9 and 10 for details and the registration form.
September – October 2019	ANPSA Biennial National Conference: Blooming Biodiversity. See your journal <i>Australian Plants</i> and https://meetingmasters.eventsair.com/QuickEventWebsitePortal/bloomingbiodiversity/eventinfo



Photos of Sylvan Grove Native Garden by Jan Douglas, October 2016.

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<http://austplants.com.au/East-Hills>

