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Welcome to our first 2020 newsletter



Native Plants for NSW – Jan–Feb 2020

The monthly newsletter of the Australian Plants Society NSW



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Welcome to the newsletter

In 2020, we'll be looking forward to the green (and red) signs of recovery and resilience while looking back in the 250th anniversary of Sir Joseph Banks' botanical legacy of 1770. The newsletter is emailed at the end of the month and each issue is also saved as a pdf file [here](#). Please encourage fellow members to open the newsletter and contribute.

Text, photos, events, feedback and more are welcome. Please email the editor, Rhonda Daniels, at newsletter@ausplants.com.au

From the President John Aitken

Welcome to the start of a new year. For our members who have been affected by the fires and the ongoing drought, my thoughts are with you. Many have been caught up in the bushfires in a number of ways – defending your home, helping others to defend theirs, and giving support and comfort to those who have lost their homes or loved ones. To our members volunteering with the Rural Fire Service throughout NSW, we owe you and the many other volunteers and professional fire fighters enormous thanks for selflessly putting your lives on the line to save our communities from the fires ravaging our country. An ABC 7.30 interview with member Greg Bourke, who successfully saved his Blue Mountains home from fire, can be viewed [here](#).

The devastation to our native vegetation and the consequential loss of fauna are beyond belief. Hopefully it will serve as a wakeup call to our politicians to accept the irrefutable scientific evidence about climate change and take action. It wasn't climate change itself that started the fires, but the increasing global temperatures and the accompanying severe drought conditions have increased the frequency and severity of these fires. While Australia may only contribute 1.3% of the world's greenhouse gases, per head of population we are amongst the world's highest contributors. It is time that we, as a nation, demand that our politicians take the initiative for Australia to become a leader in reducing our impact on the globe. Why are our politicians so reluctant to face the reality of climate change and the role it plays on our environment? If Australia can lead the world in making the wearing of seat belts compulsory and outlawing automatic and semiautomatic guns, we can show leadership in reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Quarterly gathering: Saturday 21 March: Australian native plants for cottage gardens

Our first quarterly gathering for 2020 will be hosted by Parramatta-Hills Group at Gumnut Community Centre, Gumnut Place, Cherrybrook.

10–12 noon: Garden visit at Boongala Gardens and Rainforest, 76 Pitt Town Rd, Kenthurst

The magnificent and extensive gardens over 11 acres have been developed over a number of years by Mal and Jenny Johnston. The property also includes a lush rainforest, which has been maturing for the last 25 years. Discover a wide range of Australian plants, wildflowers and the birdlife they attract. Admission: \$3 donation to Flying Doctor Service. More information [here](#).

12–1 pm: Lunch. Bring your own and enjoy it in the grounds of Gumnut Community Centre. Tea and coffee will be provided.

1 pm–3 pm: Using Australian native plants for small or cottage gardens with Sarah Cains and Kris Gow, Southern Highlands Group

When most people are planning a cottage garden the plants they immediately consider are exotic. However, many Australian native plants are ideal for small gardens, such as the native daisy (*Brachyscome*), fan flower (*Scaevola*), pink paper daisy (*Rhodanthe chlorocephala rosea*), native daffodil (*Calostemma luteum*), everlasting daisy (*Bracteantha bracteata*), kangaroo paw (*Anigozanthos*), flannel flower (*Actinotus helianthi*) and *Banksia*

spinulosa 'Cherry Candles' to name but a few. Not only are they beautiful but they are drought-hardy, easy to care for (they need little extra watering or feeding once established) and they attract plenty of wildlife.

Sarah Cains will talk about design of small gardens and Kris Gow, a former President of Southern Highlands Group, will speak about plant choice for the small garden.

Plants will be available for sale at both Boongala Gardens and Gumnut Community Centre.

Cost \$5. Download a flyer [here](#).



2020 Activities

APS NSW

- Sat 21 March: APS quarterly gathering hosted by Parramatta Hills Group at Cherrybrook.
- Sat 16 May: APS quarterly gathering hosted by Sutherland Group at Kurnell
- Sat 12 September: APS quarterly gathering hosted by Menai Group at Illawong
- 14–15 November: Weekend get-together hosted by Southern Highlands Group at Bowral

More

- Mon 2 March: The autumn term of three walks at Ku-ring-gai Wildflower Garden by North Shore Group starts in March. Details in the next newsletter.
- Sat–Sun 28–29 March – Collectors Plant Fair at Clarendon
- 2–3 and 9–10 May – Open days, Illawarra Grevillea Park, Bulli
- 4–5 and 11–12 July – Open days, Illawarra Grevillea Park, Bulli
- 5–6 and 12–13 September – Open days, Illawarra Grevillea Park, Bulli

Groups can add their regular events directly to the APS website. Please [email](#) Heather Miles for website help and [email](#) any activities for the newsletter to the editor Rhonda Daniels.

Bushfire recovery – what we can do

The 2019/20 summer of bushfires has had devastating impacts, with lives and homes lost, communities disrupted and millions of hectares of native vegetation burnt. Fire is a natural part of the Australian environment, and plants can recover from fire, but fire behaviour and impacts are changing.

Fire impacts have caused much distress and prompted much public debate over the causes and solutions. Here are some ideas for APS members to help recovery of our natural environment from bushfires, based on several sources including *The Conversation*. Depending on your location and skills and regional priorities, there are different ways to help in the short term and long term. Pulling out weeds may be the best way to help nature recover. Read more [here](#).

Gardening in hotter and drier conditions

With our increasingly hotter and drier conditions and water restrictions in many locations, new approaches are needed even for gardeners used to using native plants.

For tips to consider for hotter and drier conditions including very hot days and plants in pots, read more [here](#) and send any of your suggestions or successes to share.

Award winning coastal garden with a Wollemi pine

The Rudder garden in Maroubra has won the Native Garden section of Randwick Council garden competition for the 16th year in a row. Following up Liz Benson's talk on the Wollemi pine at our November 2019 gathering, Kim Rudder shares his experiences and photos [here](#).

Liz revealed that the Wollemi pine was rediscovered when ranger David Noble was checking impacts after the 1994 fires. With significant protection efforts, the grove has survived our current fires.



APS news – new membership benefit and more

Many nurseries offer discounts to APS NSW members as a membership benefit. We are pleased to announce that Randwick Council Nursery is now offering a 10% discount. Check the list [here](#) to see current membership discounts.

Unfortunately, Florilegium bookshop at Glebe, a long-time supplier of books to APS members and other plant and garden enthusiasts, has now closed. We thank Gil Teague for his support of APS and native plants over many years and wish him all the best in his new life.

Seeking nominations for Life members and Conservation award

Life membership of APS NSW and the Conservation award recognise our hard-working members. Groups are invited to nominate members for Life membership and the Conservation award. Nominations are due by 13 March 2020. The application is in members only section of the website or [email](#) secretary Heather Miles.

Seeking new board members for APS NSW

Ever wondered about being a board member? APS NSW is keen to discuss this opportunity with interested members. The board ensures APS NSW acts in the best interest of its members. It needs to ensure that APS NSW has:

- a clear strategy in place
- a risk plan which is monitored
- the right culture
- strong financial management.

If you'd like to know more, please discuss it with a current board member or contact the President, John Aitken. More information [here](#) in the members only section of our website.

Study Group updates

Find out more about our 18 Study Groups, their newsletter archives and how to join a group for free [here](#) so you can read the most recent newsletters in full. Study Group Liaison Officer Nic Maher has the highlights.

[Acacia Study Group](#), No. 146, December 2019

The latest in Australia's new series of banknotes, the \$20 note, was released in October 2019 and, as with the others, features an acacia – this one being *Acacia buxifolia*. Phil Hempel writes about *Acacia bakeri*, marblewood, which is the largest species of *Acacia* recorded at 50 m tall. It grows in lowland rainforest, and the seeds sometimes begin to germinate inside the pods before they drop. No fire or other treatment is required. The final paper of Les Pedley, a long-time botanist at the Queensland Herbarium before his death in early 2019, described ten new species of *Acacia*, all endemic to Queensland and all with restricted distributions.

[Correa Study Group](#), No. 60, December 2019

Maria Hitchcock, holder of the National Correa Collection in Armidale NSW, writes that correas are generally thought to be drought-hardy plants and until the current drought she has rarely had to water her well-mulched gardens. However the current conditions have proven disastrous for many recent and even well-established plants. While Maria's collection is now being held in pots until the drought ends, climate change may lead to a rethink on how we garden, possibly moving towards more deep-rooted trees rather than shallow-rooted shrubs such as correas. As a result, the popularity of correas may wane, and the range of habitats over which they can be successfully grown may also shrink. All Correa Study Group newsletters are now available on the website.

[Eremophila Study Group](#), No. 125, December 2019

Eremophila maculata 'Carmine Star' (photo below) is the first cultivar registered by the Study Group. It is from southern Queensland and was accepted for registration in 1986. It had been thought to be lost, but Ken Warnes provided some cuttings. *Eremophila waitii*, described as a new species in October 2019, is named after the Group's Russell Wait who discovered the species in WA. It is known from a single population of around 50 plants, and has been listed as Priority 1 under the WA Conservation Code. The Final Cultivar Registration Policy has been released, following comments received from several members. Tim Wood presents a report on the pre-ANPSA conference tour, in which 41 named and 3 undiagnosed species of *Eremophila* were seen, together with a range of other fascinating plants including several Queen of Sheba orchids in flower, the wreath *Leschenaultia*, *Leschenaultia macrantha*, and the stunning 4 cm-wide winged fruit of *Dodonaea petiolaris*.



[Waratah and Flannel Flower Study Group](#), No. 18, November 2019

Group leader Maria Hitchcock advises this is her last newsletter, after nine years in the role. A new leader is sought, otherwise the group will go into recess. Greg and Bronwyn Keighery write about the small, insect-pollinated *Actinotus laxus*. It is a summer-flowering wetland species, with thousands of tiny flowers on the ends of the fine, long and leafy stems from around December to March. It is pollinated by tiny insects such as midges and mosquitos. Spectacular close-up photographs show the many tiny flowers of the inflorescence of a flannel flower. White bracts around the outside have a protective function as well as luring insects to the flower.

New on the APS NSW website

Our [website](#) has our membership benefits, how to join, District Group details and events, office-bearers and many resources including our Plant Profile database. Members receive an email reminder about membership renewal and can also renew [here](#). Please do not use the form in *Australian Plants* to renew your membership – it is for subscriptions only.

Articles to read:

- [Three APS members in the media in January.](#)
- [Latest newsletter from Australian Flora Foundation](#)
- [Enjoy a member discount at Randwick Community Nursery.](#)

Activities to do:

- [Enrol in free online natural history illustration short course](#)
- [Volunteer at IndigiGrow Nursery at La Perouse](#)
- [Volunteer to digitise herbarium specimens.](#)



Photo finish



Banksia serrata new growth after fire (photo: Ralph Cartwright, cover photo: Rhonda Daniels)

This eNewsletter is emailed to members of the Australian Plants Society NSW

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