



Australian Plants Society

South East NSW Group

Newsletter 186

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Corymbia maculata Spotted Gum and
Macrozamia communis Burrawang

Contacts:

President,	Di Clark,	diclark293@outlook.com
Secretary,	Paul Hattersley	paul.hattersley26@outlook.com
Newsletter editor,	John Knight,	johnonvista49@gmail.com
Group contact		southeast@ausplants.com.au

Dear Members,

I hope you are all well and looking forward to a slightly warmer few weeks. The plants are beginning to show signs of breaking their winter dormancy and the moisture is slightly receding from the soil. Once again many of our native plants have been flowering during winter and providing food and habitat for our animals.

This month we have also been concentrating on weeds in our area and also in our own gardens. The last monthly meeting was a wonderful lesson in dealing with some of these problem plants and I know many of us went home and did some weeding. The trick is not to be daunted by the enormity of the task and do what you can.

The last month also provided opportunity to mix with our neighbourhood group from Nowra and a few of us joined them visiting the South Pacific Heathland Reserve and the Milton Landcare Nursery. Nic de Jong once again offered his services as a guide and reminded us that every visit to this wonderful reserve reveals a different suit of plants. Each few weeks different plants bursts into flower.

Our next meeting outlined below is also in the region of Narooma and also involves garden visits. The committee tries to provide a variety of activities for the group, but with the seasons we have had it has been difficult to venture out into the bush and know that the roads would be passable. The garden visits appear to be popular and I thank those members who are willing to open up their gardens for the group to visit and be inspired by.

The Eurobodalla Regional Botanic Gardens will be running a Bioblitz on Sunday 2nd October from 10am. We are still waiting on further details of the event and will let you know in time to book in. Mark the date on your calendar. A bioblitz is a great opportunity to involve younger people in citizen science, so why not think about bringing the grandchildren along.

That's all from me. Once again I will finish with the monthly COVID reminder.

Take care,

Di Clark

COVID Reminder

A few things to consider

- If you are feeling unwell, please do not attend a meeting
- Try and maintain 1.5m between yourself and others
- If we are gathering indoors and distancing is difficult consider wearing a mask
- Wash your hands regularly or use hand sanitiser
- NSW Health strongly advises people get fully vaccinated and wear a face mask where they cannot physically distance

Next Meeting **Saturday 3rd September 2022,** **visiting firstly Alison and Chris' Garden** **12 Garvan Street Narooma (details below)**

Arrive 10.00 a.m. for morning tea, meeting to commence at 10.30 a.m.

Members are invited to look around a newly landscaped suburban garden. The steeply sloping site has been transformed using materials including rock, recycled bricks, reclaimed timber and corten steel. A large retaining wall of sandstone boulders is a major feature. Come along and share your thoughts on planting out this contemporary Australian garden. Prizes for best ideas!

To reach Garvan Street, coming from the North, stay on the main highway, turn right off the highway into Canty Street (at Casey's Café) near the top of the hill, then next left into Garvan Street.

There is a carpark at the end of the street that members should use. Take care walking down the driveway, as it is a bit steep.

After visiting Alison's newly established landscape project and garden, we will move onto to Margaret and Peter's established garden to look at maintaining a mature garden and rejuvenating/replanting areas where plants may not have done well in recent dry or wet conditions, or are looking tired. Learning about the conditions over time and when to get the chainsaw out 🪚.

To get to the next venue, return to the highway, turn left (heading North) and after crossing the Wagonga Inlet bridge, travel about 1.2km and turn right at Dalmeny Drive. Travel another 1km, turning right into Warbler Cres., then immediately right into Beachview Close. This is a short, dead-end street, and parking is limited. Ensure we do not block driveway access to other residences.

Depending on conditions, it might be nice to have lunch on the foreshore at Carters Beach, but this will be decided on the day.

Margaret has provided the following notes and photos as a preamble to our visit.

Peter and I moved from our large Lane Cove Ringlands garden to a suburban block about 8 years ago. One of the first garden tasks was the removal of unsuitable exotic plants and areas of lawn, mulching and planting a variety of native species. This, as always, involved a certain amount of trial and error along the way as patches of dry, wet or impenetrable subsurface rock were discovered.



Some plants thrived, others simply survived but grew poorly, some succumbed to the long period of dry (remember that?) while others, the now prolonged wet that has followed.

These are the challenges I believe that need to be faced as the climate changes. Despite these fluctuating conditions the garden has matured, but as I have replaced plants and rejuvenated areas, I have adopted a strategy of planting for survival, hopefully having learnt what will survive where and at the same time making things easier for myself as I too "mature"!

Since the rains came I have had numerous seedlings spring up, some left to grow, others relocated or given away. This activity along with a desperate attempt to remove weeds also having germinated and thrived under the conditions, meant unfortunately as the garden grew apace maintenance tasks such as pruning have been largely neglected.

This is about to be rectified come spring! So currently my garden is a mix of successful rejuvenation and total wild, enjoyed by birds but facing a much needed haircut!

Last Meeting

Weeds !, every garden has them.

One issue that all gardeners have at least some affinity with is weeds.

At our well attended July meeting, we were fortunate to have Bush regenerator and knowledgeable weed identifier Sharon Pearson discuss her process for identifying and dealing with these troublesome plants.

President Di introduced Pat and Sharon, and was pleased to welcome some new, and young members, Daniel and Emily, and also we were pleased to see Jan Robilliard and Sue Sullivan, who made the long trip north.

Pat Helsing welcomed members to her garden, and provided an introduction :



Pat Helsing welcomes members

This property covers 3 acres and is a semi formal mix of indigenous and non-indigenous native plantings around the house, with bush beyond and backing onto the Ringlands track and Wagonga Inlet.

With my late husband, I bought this property in 2011 but the mainly Australian native garden was established by the previous owners, 7 years before. We moved from an English cottage style garden in Queanbeyan to a native and bush garden at the coast so it was a steep learning curve. Fortunately my neighbour at the time was Margaret Lynch who was happy to pass on her knowledge of native plants. We became friends and she introduced me fellow plant lovers and to APS.

After my husband died in 2016, I was left to tend the garden on my own. Rather daunting but gardening proved to be very therapeutic and still is. I have help in the garden from Mathieu, who is a horticulturist. He comes for a few hours a week and this has enabled me to continue living here instead of thinking of downsizing. I also concentrate on the immediate area around the house and leave the bush mostly to itself to grow wild.



Pat uses fallen timber to surround plants on the slopes, to slow water and retain mulch.

Trees in the garden do not have to be large. Judicious pruning of *Leptospermum* and *Callistemon* produces attractive multi-trunked trees in scale with the garden



I try to garden sustainably as much as I can with organic or minimal chemical use, mulching prunings, composting, worm farming, growing some fruit and veggies, planting to attract bees, birds and native fauna (except wallabies!) There is a dam on the block and this water is used on the garden. In the bush area, I started making terraces or berms across the slope, from branches, leaves, prunings and compost. They are loosely based on permaculture principles. They have decomposed now and make a great place to plant trees or shrubs and slow the water flow down the slope as well as providing habitat.

I had the idea of asking Sharon to help with weed identification on my block and methods of removal after I became quite overwhelmed by the problem earlier in the year. After all the rain, the weeds were flourishing. I was unsure in some cases, what was weed and what wasn't, and as the garden is half natural bush, I was especially concerned as they started to escape into this area. Also, some indigenous species are not weeds but I didn't want them taking over my ornamental garden. I wanted some one-on-one advice to identify weeds on my block, quickly and efficiently.

Knowing about Sharon's background in bush regeneration, I asked her for help. Sharon suggested photographing the weeds in situ, on the block, with me following her around as she identified them and suggested ways of control. This led to the idea of a folder with photos, identification and control notes. It evolved over time as refinements were made & the result is a great resource which I value and use.

We are happy to share this folder and will provide it in .pdf format for anyone to use if they provide their email address.

The methods I use to control weeds are manual weeding, glyphosate used carefully and judiciously, or Slasher, followed by mulching with aged wood chips or gravel. I know glyphosate is controversial but I find it practical for the gravel paths, areas of grass when establishing new beds and for tough weeds and I never use it in the food growing area or near the dam. I am careful with protecting myself to accidental exposure by wearing appropriate clothing including gloves and a mask. I am considering buying a gas blowtorch weeding tool to assist.

I pull some weeds without seeds and leave these in situ to die down or bury or compost and if in doubt, I solarise them in a black garbage bin before disposal. I have come to embrace some degree of weedy natives in my ornamental garden.

I would like to acknowledge Sharon for helping me to identify and control (or at least try to control) the weeds on my property and develop the weed manual. Thank you so much Sharon for your time, enthusiasm, patience and willingness to share your knowledge, culminating in this garden visit today. I hope others will also find it useful.

Thanks to my friends and members of APS for sharing your gardens, advice, ideas, inspiration, encouragement and practical help. I have certainly been inspired to grow, love and conserve our native plants since I became a member and have made some lasting friendships.



Nothing goes to waste. Even old tools, past their use by date, are recycled

The following notes are generously supplied by Sharon,

“ I’m going to talk about Weeds and the Weed Manual that I’ve created to assist Pat in the control of weeds in her garden. Afterwards we’ll ID some weeds, and I’ll and give you some tips on removing them.”

We all have weeds in our garden. Despite our best weeding efforts there will always be a few in our garden: Either the birds bring in berries, or neighbours have plants which have seeds that are blown in by the wind, especially if you live near farmland. Animals may bring in sticky seeds on their fur, or you can introduce weeds yourself when planting nursery bought plants.

So, what’s a weed? One definition is a plant that’s growing in the wrong place. Another definition is a plant that you like (often because it is pretty Eg Lantana), but you are unaware of its invasiveness. A plant that you like because it is doesn’t need much watering or pruning and has a pretty flower (eg Mother of Millions), but you are unaware that it is spreading into bushland or your neighbours garden. Or, you admire the field of ‘yellow daisies’ (Eg Fireweed) but you are unaware that this plant is toxic to livestock.

The technical meaning (and less subjective) is a plant that has (or has the potential) to have a **negative impact** either by being invasive, or outcompeting other plants, or being toxic to humans and livestock, and using up resources (water, nutrients, light etc) that could otherwise be used by natives/crops, and they can also harbour pests & diseases.

So, as gardeners, we can all play our part to minimise these impacts by reducing the weeds in our home garden. Sometimes the number and variety of weeds can be overwhelming and it is hard to know the best way to remove them properly.

And, this is why Pat asked me to produce a weeding manual for her.

- The weed manual doesn’t include all weeds – just those found in Pat’s garden.
- This has made it easier for Pat to recognise, learn and control her relatively small number of weeds.
- Other APS members may find they have different weeds because they live in different areas (different soils, watering systems, other influences etc), or
- live in farming/rural areas, or, have weedier neighbours etc

Weeds in Pat’s garden are generally nuisance weeds, some environmental weeds and a few declared weeds.

Declared weeds (the new term for noxious weeds) are classed under the Biodiversity Act 2015, as being detrimental to animals (incl. livestock), having a negative impact on farming and the environment, These Declared Weeds should not be sold, and must be removed or minimised from your land as much as possible.

Eg Fireweed, Lantana & Asparagus Ferns which are Weeds of National Significance [the worst weeds in Australian – invasive, easily spreads, negative impacts on the economy & the environment]

Eg Mother of Millions which are difficult to eradicate

Environmental weeds - those weeds that are invasive in bushland and other natural areas and smother and out-compete native species, and are difficult to control.

Eg Inkweed (berries spread by birds)

They may also include weeds that potentially could become declared weeds in the future.

Nuisance weeds are ones that detract from the look of your garden or lawn, and are difficult to control in your garden due to more water & nutrients being available

Eg Flickweed, Catsears

they may also include 'Sleeper Weeds' i.e. potential environmental weeds, these can include some weedy natives such as **Whiteroot**, or garden escapees from your neighbours eg **Cootamundra Wattle**



Sharon explains how to effectively remove tubers on Turkey Rhubarb *Rumex sagittatus*

My process in preparing Pat's weed manual was to keep it simple using photos, where possible, of all stages of growth to help the ID of weeds especially when they are young.

Often people will wait until they flower in the warmer months to work out what the plant is but by then it could be too late as seeds have already formed and dropped or blown away.

Or weeds might be flowering but as they don't have obvious flowers/fruit, weed seeds have already dropped or blown away. **Eg Petty Spurge & Slender Celery**

Effective weed control is important:

Being able to ID a weed accurately will assist in knowing the most effective way to eradicate the weed – this is where the manual will be handy for Pat. Otherwise you waste your time. Pulling off the stems from a Bridal Creeper when the underground rhizomes needs to be removed in order to eradicate it, or pulling at Sow Thistles and finding the stem easily snaps off and the plant re-grows.

There's the old saying "One year of seed, 7 years of weeds"

So, to start controlling weeds in your garden you need to break the weed reproductive cycle **early**, i.e. stop the weeds flowering and fruiting in the first place.

Being able to ID weeds while young is essential to weed control. Also they are easier to remove by hand or without the need to use herbicides. In the manual I've tried to include photos of weeds in their seedling stage.

Another method to reduce weeds is by doing short stints of regular weeding throughout the year – this is better than being overwhelmed by loads of flowering & fruiting weeds during the warmer months.

Other weed control methods are Mulching, planting groundcovers between shrubs, and plant thickly (shrubs & groundcovers) to out-compete weeds as much as possible.

Also to reduce weeds in your garden is to dispose of your weeds appropriately.

As many weeds are often fruiting without you realizing, as soon as you uproot a weed put it straight into your weeding bag/container....DO NOT leave it on the ground and pick it up later – you might not realise that there are fruit on the weed & many plants drop their seeds easily.

Only compost weeds that you know can be composted.

Only compost weeds that you know will be properly composted as the heat will be sufficient to kill the seeds – if in doubt solarise weeds in a black plastic bag and put in the hot sun for a few weeks.

If in doubt, put them in the garbage bin.

My basic tools for weeding include a Knife/trowel or Macatool, a lightweight short handled mattock like tool which effectively removes weeds without wearing out the user.

On the completion of her talk, Sharon worked through an exhaustive range of weed specimens brought to the meeting by members, and provided succinct information on the habit, flowering and seeding of each plant, with helpful hints on successful removal. Rather than list all the weeds discussed, I suggest if you need reminding, send an email to the editor, who can provide a complete list. But do you really want to be reminded?

Show and Tell, and no weeds !

Prior to breaking for lunch, we looked at some plants which we would welcome in our gardens.

Dylan kicked off with a selection of potted orchids, including a pot of very healthy *Pterostylis oblonga*.

Alison produced a good selection of colour, with *Chorizema cordatum*, *Hardenbergia violacea* white form, *Philotheca 'Profusion'* living up to its name, *Indigofera australis*, *Anigozanthos 'Bush Ranger'*, and a variegated leaf form of *Grevillea 'Honey Gem'*. She also brought in a box of *Ammobium alatum* plants, which with the wet have proliferated in her garden. These went to good homes.

Pat displayed some lovely branches of *Acacia covenyi*, which has also appreciated the wet after struggling for some years under her forest trees, and also had a vigorous display of *Grevillea 'Copper Rocket'*

Sharon also had *Chorizema cordatum*, which she recommends be pruned hard after flowering to develop a strong and long flowering plant. *Libertia paniculata* is flowering early this year, along with *Coronidium scorpioides*, *Xerochrysum bracteatum*, *Leptospermum 'Pink Cascade'* a very popular arching shrub which many members grow, and a ground cover *Grevillea lanigera* often sold as 'Mt Tamboritha' form.

Sue Sullivan owns a property at Lochiel, on which grows one of only a couple of populations of the endangered species *Zieria formosa*, a delightful grey foliaged shrub which has thrived with the wet. Sue says the plant only grows on broken granite, and during dry weather is often a sad sight, but over the past couple of years many new seedlings have emerged, and the flowering this year is the best ever. Masses of small pink flowers adorned her specimen. Her plants are subject to regular survey by NPWS to see how the plants are coping.

Margaret brought along a range of Epacrids, including *Epacris longiflora*, *E. impressa 'Bega Form'* which she assures is hardier than most, *E. 'Pan Pipes'* a hybrid of *E. reclinata* x *E. longiflora*, *E. microphylla*, and *Dracophyllum secundum*, which Margaret grows in special conditions in a container. Also a couple of local *Grevillea*, *G. epicroca* and *G. rhyolitica* cream flowered form.

Paul brought in a large specimen of *Grevillea longifolia*, which he has growing under heavy shrub cover, and it is exhibiting the growth of a ground cover. There was general consensus that it will soon get up if the overhead cover is thinned.

Anne grows a range of *Hakea*, and brought a specimen of *Hakea nodosa*, a nice yellow flowered form, which has the tiniest flowers but quite large woody fruit, which were available for members to take home.

After lunch, a wander through Pat's garden



A weed problem area, the septic dispersal sprinklers, which unceremoniously came on whilst we wandered by.



Emily and Daniel listen to sage advice from Di., with Jan adding a comment on the natural bush. Joan has a different plant to look at.



Pat leads members through her 'arbor' of Callistemon, Sue taking care of note gathering, whilst Jenny J and Jenny V hold their own discussion.



Persoonia linearis



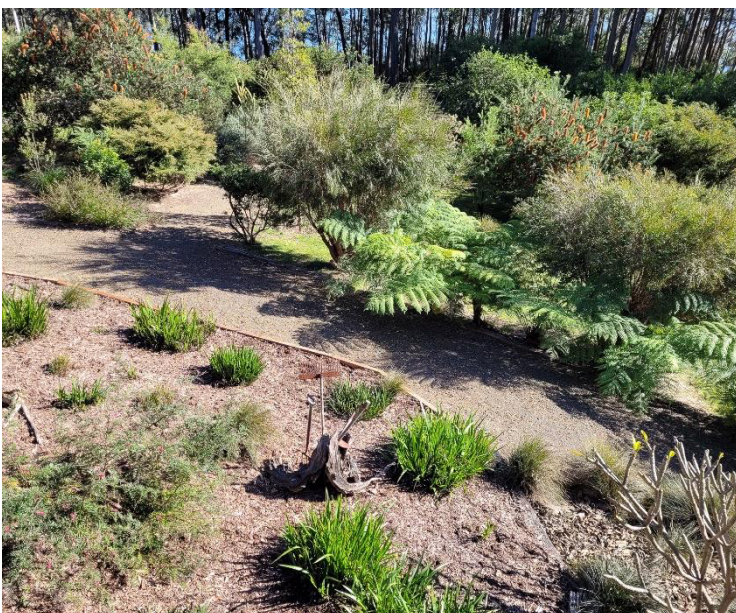
Acacia covenyi



"Tree" sculpture, photo Di. Clark



A steep slope in Pat's front garden is home to the largest *Grevillea* 'Poorinda Royal Mantle' groundcover, with informal plantings of *Leptospermum* 'Pink Cascade' and some naturally occurring *Pomaderris lanigera*



Overview of Pat's garden, Di. Clark



Pat found this thermos cup after the meeting. She will bring it along to the next meeting.

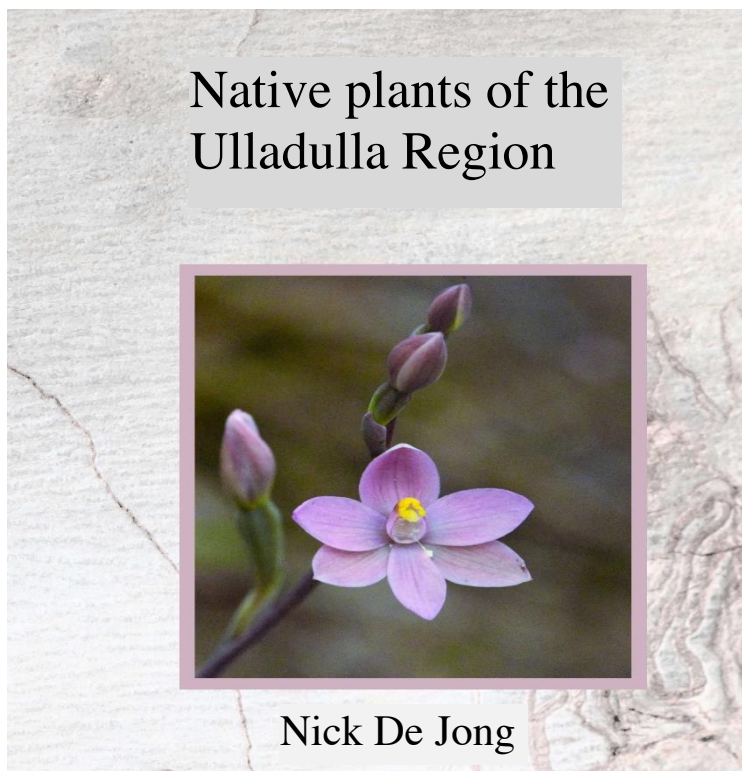
Visit Ulladulla on August 14th The South Pacific Heathland Reserve

The heathland at Ulladulla always offers the visitor plenty of choices to study the flora and fauna. At the August visit, it was apparent that spring is well on the way. 5 of our members made the journey north, and met with many from Nowra APS, and the group was joined by Nick de Jong, whose intimate knowledge of the reserve ensured any natural plant was identified and remarked upon.

Nick is the author of 'Native Plants of the Ulladulla Region' 'Their ecology and the walks where you will see them'

This book, with details of 620 plant species and 22 walks, includes native plants one might see on bush walks from Snapper Point in the south to Yatte Yattah Rainforest in the north and west to Didthul and Little Forest Plateau. The book is only available from Harbour bookstore in Ulladulla.

Christmas isn't far away, so this might be a great gift for someone interested in plants of our region. Maybe for yourself ??



Here Di is caught photographing Daniel, who is photographing a Waratah, *Telopea speciosissima*



Just like on school camp, kids are always attracted to tree hollows. Lyn, Mary, Di and Daniel demonstrate the resilience of our trees.

The full suite of plants were on show, on both the open heathy headland, and the forested areas, where Acacias, Correas, Isopogons, Grevilleas and the afore mentioned Waratah were in full flower.



It was a gorgeous late winter day, and the heath was alive with colour. Yellows are *Phyllota ericoides* and *Acacia echinula*



COMMITTEE CONTACT DETAILS

President,	Di Clark	Ph 0402 555 330	e. diClark293@outlook.com
Secretary,	Paul Hattersley	Ph 0412 426 413	e. paul.hattersley26@outlook.com
Minute Sec.,			
Treasurer,	Geoff Gosling	Ph 0438 286 382	e. geoff.gosling@bigpond.com
Membership	Jenny John	Ph 0437 304 173	e. peteandjenny.john@gmail.com
Publicity	vacant		
Members	Norman Hulands	Ph 0427 276 803	e. normanhnrh@icloud.com
	John Knight	Ph 0434 674 347	e. johnonvista49@gmail.com
	Sally Power	Ph 02 4474 3600	e. sallymcdonald9@gmail.com
	Website .		southeast.austplants.com.au