



Australian Plants Society

South East NSW Group

Newsletter 189

November 2022

Corymbia maculata Spotted Gum and
Macrozamia communis Burrawang

Contacts:

President,

Di Clark,

diclark17@mailfence.com

Secretary,

Paul Hattersley

paul.hattersley26@outlook.com

Newsletter editor, John Knight,

johnonvista49@gmail.com

Group contact

southeast@ausplants.com.au

Dear Members,

Welcome to our November newsletter.

If you were at the last meeting you will know that the committee has begun to think about the year ahead and have been planning activities to keep us all interested and inspired.

The year will commence in February with our AGM and would like to invite you all to think about joining the committee. The committee only meets a few times a year and our main aim is to fill out the year with monthly activities that fit the bill for our diverse organisation. We are all passionate about native plants so if you would like to help us come up with ideas to inspire others and keep the organisation growing, please think about becoming a committee member.

Last weekend I visited the Southern Highlands and attended **the APS NSW Southern Highlands Gathering.**

This is a once a year 2 day event that APS NSW organises and is hosted by a regional group.

It was interesting to visit a very different type of environment and to learn that we all share many of the same difficulties and joys. Please see further into this newsletter for more notes and pictures.

The weekend also included a District Groups presidents meeting.

All district group presidents, committee members and reps were invited and I went along to represent our committee.

The main item on the agenda was to discuss work health and safety issues relating to APS district groups. The consensus was that most groups try to provide a duty of care to our members but that more could be done. This is something that the committee will be looking at next year, so we will let you know of any outcomes.

In the meantime, keep looking out for one another, look up and down (especially the orchid lovers) and wear sensible shoes. We will try and provide clear descriptions of any planned activity so that you can assess the suitability of the activity for yourself.

As the year comes to an end I hope you, your gardens and the bushland prosper and thrive.

Di Clark

Next Meeting

Saturday 3rd December 2022, end of year picnic at ERBG

As we wind down towards Christmas, we can reflect on what has been a fairly wet year, which has been both a blessing, in that our garden plants have put on plenty of healthy growth, and for others a curse, with some plants being unable to cope with constantly wet soil.

Not to mention the explosion of weeds with mass germination from seed stored away for years. Needless to say we had all better at least stop these plants from flowering so another bumper crop is prevented.

This will be a social event, a chance just to chat with friends, and as such we will arrive at the gardens

around 10.30 a.m. for morning tea

There will be an opportunity to have a look at the progress of the Proteaceae garden project, and also walk around other Gardens areas to see the recovery after the devastating bushfires. As is apparent throughout the local forests, nature has proved resilient, and is now at its best, and the gardens are green as never before.

Bring your lunch, and dress appropriately to enjoy a day in the bush. The meeting will proceed regardless of the weather, as there is shelter available be it wet or hot.

Please also note that although the Covid 19 regulations have relaxed, there has been an increase in infections recently, so our guidelines remain unchanged. These being :

- 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.

Last Meeting Garden Visits

Spring is definitely in the air, and we were treated to a lovely sunny day, with 27 members attending what proved a most enjoyable day of garden visits.

Di had arranged that 4 gardens were open for us, and we began the day at the large **Broulee garden of Don and Julie Beattie**. After an introduction by Don on the process of developing the garden, we were given free rein to explore the varied tracks. What most impressed was the many species growing happily on the infertile soil, and also that many plants in the garden are so rarely encountered these days. Specimens over 20 years old demonstrate that with a little care and perseverance, so-called bush plants make lovely garden subjects.



Don and Julie, introducing their garden project



Having a large garden helps. Seeing mature plants, especially the many species we ‘used to grow’ made this a most memorable visit.

Two large *Eucalyptus botryoides* trees provide structure, and are complimented by other large plants on adjacent properties.

Some of the group enjoying morning tea in the shade. Coastal plants make great natural sculptural subjects



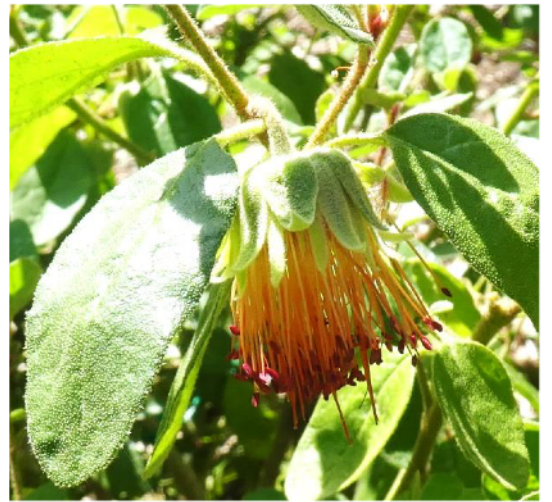
Corner of the Beattie garden Di Clark

The garden featured many plants in the Myrtaceae family, and Don pointed to a few which had suffered Myrtle Rust damage over the past couple of years, but all had grown through this and were now sporting healthy new growth.

Callistemon, Melaleuca, Calothamnus and Verticordia were prominent. The Proteaceae were not ignored, with Grevillea well represented. It was a pleasure to observe many Hibbertia species as well, for not many gardens support such a range. Don was proud of a Western Australian *H. cuneiformis*, the Cut-leaf Hibbertia, endemic to the forests of the south west, now 23 years old, about 3m tall and still flowering strongly.

Among many other plants worth mentioning, were large old specimens of Diplolaena and Boronia, in the Rutaceae family.

The genus name Diplolaena refers to the floral bracts, being arranged in 2 rows around the unusual flowers, which have 5 tiny petals and 10 long prominent stamens. Plants have proved temperamental under cultivation, but Don has found an ideal spot for his healthy plant.



Show and Tell,

The afternoon session began after heading to Rosedale. First up was our show and tell at Dianne's home.



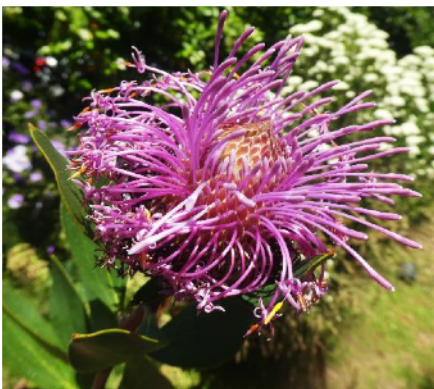
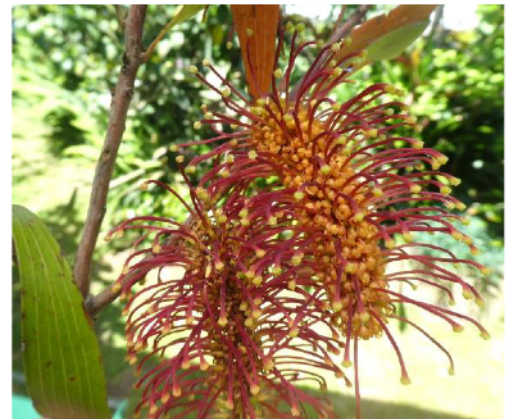
Marjorie brought along a full bucket of treasures, mostly a range of small plants.

It's been a great year for Callistemons, with a dazzling display of colour on show. Catriona talked about a couple of her spectacular shrubs, then produced a bunch of her specialty, *Isopogon*, to drool over. Not to be outdone, Phil presented the largest ever spike of *Banksia grandis*.



Norm won the bravery award, bringing a very prickly *Hakea teretifolia*, and had the wounds to prove it was a battle.

His next specimen was much more likeable, *Hakea archaeoides* with flowers dripping



Norm also brought in a *Isopogon cuneatus* which he grafted on one of Phil's Coaldale Cracker.



Jenny showed a delightful slender *Billardiera* which she thought was *B. cymosa*, but the jury is still out.



After a quick lunch, Di rounded up the group and led us to the first of 3 gardens which we were able to visit. Each was quite different, with varied design and plantings.

No. 12 Tallwood presented prominently to the street, with some older shrubs providing depth for the more recently planted rockeries. Note the pots of vegetables taking advantage of the sunny front yard.

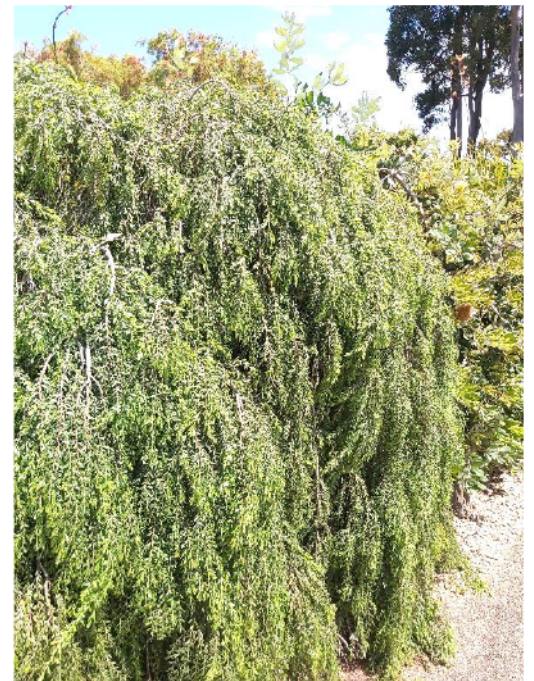
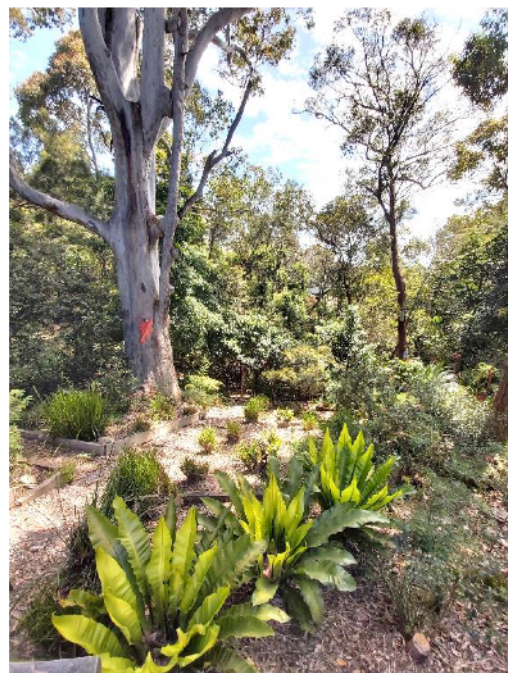
The fern *Doodia aspera* enjoyed a bright sunny spot as well, and shows it's enjoyment of all the rain and mild weather, whilst the flamboyant *Alyogyne huegelii* waved precocious blooms in the breeze.



Just across the road is the garden of **Colleen and Denis Callanan**.

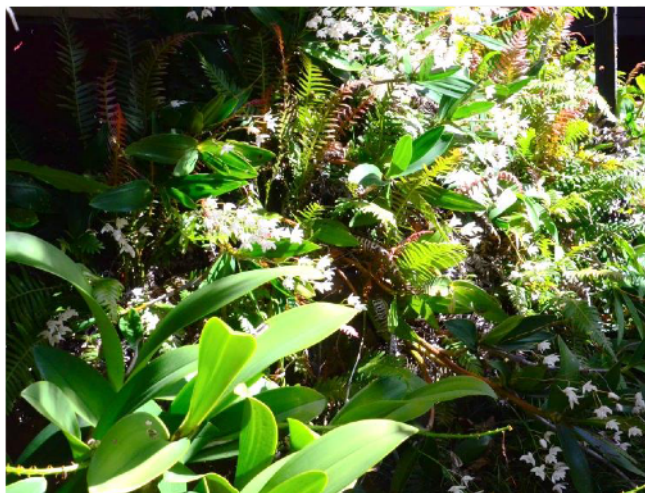
The landscaping on what is a fairly steep site shows imaginative use of rocks to stabilise the cutting necessary to place the house.

The result is a well-drained garden which supports a range of cascading native plants, including *Banksia integrifolia* prostrate, the form of *Casuarina glauca* known as 'Cousin It', for its dense shaggy tumbling growth, and



a tight hedge of semi-prostrate *Acacia howittii*, which responds kindly to regular clipping. (pictured)

At the rear of the property, a gully protected by natural Spotted Gum forest, has been transformed into a rainforest haven, using a range of hardy native rainforest species such as *Toona ciliata* (Red Cedar), *Syncarpia glomulifera* (Turpentine) *Davidsonia jerseyana* (Davidson plum), *Brachychiton acerifolius* (Illawarra Flame Tree) and a number of Lilly Pilly, beneath which many ferns and strappy plants find a safe haven. Also enjoying the protected position is a large group of *Dendrobium speciosum*, Sydney Rock Orchid, with large sprays of scented blooms, jostling for prominence with *Dendrobium kingianum*, Pink Rock Orchid, with ferns for company .



a section of Jane's garden

Di Clark

The gully shares borders with several neighbours and in some cases there has been a collaborative arrangement to continue the natural, but maintained theme. Between the Callanan boundary, and the **garden of Jane Enright**, the owners have installed an artistic gate, which allows access to each property.

Jane's garden has been designed to enhance the local bush and also to keep a low maintenance, low fire risk garden around the house. Jane has eliminated all the lawn and used gravel and clever landscaping to fill the block.

And so ended a wonderful day exploring the gardens of others, picking up a few ideas along the way. Just a few steps from Jane's and we were back where we started, at Di's, just in time for an afternoon cuppa. The members attending warmly thanked Di for the effort she had gone to in arranging our activity.

APS NSW Get together in the Southern Highlands

On the weekend of November 12th and 13th, Mary Harrison and I set off to the Southern Highlands . After looking at the weather report with trepidation it was a delight to wake up on Saturday morning to bright sunshine. The weekend began with a welcome morning tea put on by the local country woman's association followed by a talk by **Dan Clarke, the APS NSW Conservation officer**.

Dan has previously been involved in surveying selected vegetation types in the Wingecarribee Shire and reporting back to Wingecarribee Council and NSW Department of Planning for mapping of the local area. Dan's talk revealed the amazing diversity of native plants in the shire and reported that many of the plots were on private land. In most cases this was protecting them from being developed but not in every case. Dan suggested that if you just followed the local roads through the area you could be forgiven for thinking that there were very few native plants or bush remaining. Some parts of the shire are known as little England, with good reason.

A different reality was revealed during Dan's presentation. His work sent him out to hidden areas of pristine bush with towering Eucalypts and a vast variety of different soils and plant communities. He presented an interesting talk that helped to inform us all of the different ecosystems in the area. It is encouraging that people like Dan are being employed to do this work and that hopefully the information is being used to help councils and governments make informed decisions.

The afternoon provided an opportunity to visit a large local garden and then to take a walk through Morton National Park. The garden was a very large garden in Moss Vale that had originally been a central house surrounded by exotic gardens and the remaining land being mown lawn.

Tanya Excel spoke to the group and explained that her aim was to increase the biodiversity on her own land. She has achieved this by planting out large beds of suitable native plants, leaving areas to develop as grassland and to maintain the wetlands that were part of the garden. Tanya worked with a local landscaper to achieve her aims and hopes to encourage others to garden with native plants and create habitats.



Tanya Excel's biodiverse garden

The next adventure saw us heading off to **Morton National Park** to go for a wander in the wildflowers. As usual the need for each plant to be looked at and possibly identified slowed the group down and the weather took a turn for the worse with thunder, lightning and heavy rain. Some of us were not to be deterred and enjoyed a very pleasant wet walk out to Echo Point and down to Bonnie View. The names will give you an idea that there were great views of the valleys below. There were many pea plants, orchids, Patersonia and *Dracophyllum secundum* growing on the rocks edge. We were sent on a mission to find the local boronia and managed to find *Boronia floribunda*.

At this point the camera was put away out of the rain.



Echo Point Morton National Park



Massed Melaleuca at Echo Point

The group then met for dinner and were treated to a talk by Jane Lemann about her many years of landcare work on Mount Gibraltar.

Mt Gibraltar is a rocky outcrop that towers out of the ground behind Bowral and Mittagong. It was mined for 100 years for a special rock called micro syenite but in 2013 the environment was also recognised for its special values. The 'reserve' is listed on the Significant Heritage Register both for its Endangered Ecological Communities and the Heritage Quarries Complex.

Jane gave us one of those talks that highlights the achievements one person can make if they are passionate and determined. Jane has previously spent time working in our local region and was involved in helping to protect Rosedale from bitou bush and other environmental weeds. She is an inspiring woman.

On Sunday we woke to fog and threatening rain. This did not deter members attending the two open gardens in Bowral. There was also a plant sale of plants grown by local members, which was very popular. The first garden we visited belonged to Kris Gow. This garden packed many native plants into a small block either by pruning the shrub layer to reveal the understorey plants beneath or by placing plants in pots or raising the pots on structures or

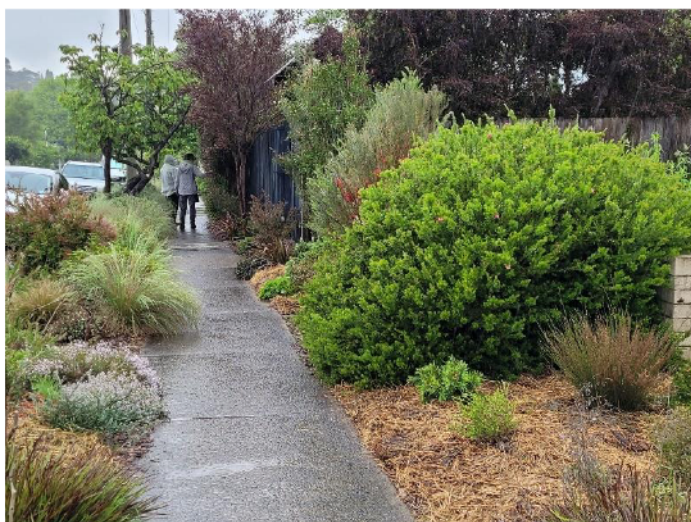
in baskets. Both gardens had extended their gardens out onto the nature strip and this was a wonderful way to advertise the fact that native plants were being used and to allow for more plants to be accommodated.



Mallee trees in Sarah's garden

The second garden had been developed around a more modern house. The front garden contained raised brick beds with overhanging acacia and other cascading plants. There was also a narrow strip of nature strip and beds of vegetables. For me the back garden was the highlight of the day. A small courtyard garden had been planted out with mallee eucalypts and native poa grasses. The effect was stunning, especially in the rain. Sarah Cain described how she dealt with the original weed problem and her battle with onion weed. She showed us one of the mallee plants that she had cut right back to the base and how it was coming back with new healthy growth.

The simplicity of Sarah's garden was very appealing.



Nature strip garden



Sarah's garden

The weekend was a wonderful mix of gardens, bushland, conservation and shared passions. It was great to meet so many other people with similar interests and I encourage you all to attend one of these gatherings if you ever have the opportunity.

In My Garden Leigh Murray

Newsletter 161, June 2020, included an article on a plant in my Queanbeyan garden, which I believed to be *Olearia persoonioides*. This remains a favourite plant, and it's usually a mass of flowers in Spring. It's a small, neat plant, maybe 50cm high and wide, planted over 30 years ago in full sun on our rocky ridge. There was some discussion about the name, as it appears not to be *O. persoonioides*, but some other species, which I sourced through APS Canberra in 1988. That plant is still alive and well, and I was wondering if any member might be interesting in propagating some for distribution through the group. The plant is easily accessible, so if any member is travelling between the coast and Canberra, please consider contacting Leigh (lemur@pcug.org.au) for details as to how to find the plant. Leigh travels often between her inland and coastal homes, so email is best.



The Naming of Plants

Slave traders' names are still stamped on native plants. It's time to 'decolonise' Australia's public gardens.

Dr Brett Summerell, chief scientist of the Australian Institute of Botanical Science

For too long we've dismissed Indigenous knowledge of the natural world. At Sydney's botanic garden, signage is starting to reflect Aboriginal names



The Royal Botanic Garden Sydney has recently launched a plan which focuses on recognising the connection between the gardens, plants and knowledge, and Aboriginal people.

Photograph: James D Morgan/Getty Images

Like all botanic gardens, the Royal Botanic Garden Sydney is a classic artefact of the activities that took place during the colonisation of Australia in the 18th and 19th century.

It was established to create a patch of landscape that mirrored those found in the United Kingdom, with the aim of “discovering” and documenting the floral biodiversity of New South Wales (in itself a name reflecting the perspective of those holding power).

Of course, this was powered by the economic driver to find plants that held potential for new and existing industries – a scenario that was mirrored across Australia and throughout the world by colonial forces of the time.

As a result, the names of effectively all Australian plants were defined by white – primarily male – botanists, based on the presumption that they were not known by humans prior to their discovery.

Many are named using Latinised terms to describe various features or locations, and a number are named after (usually white male) politicians or patrons.

We are finally becoming more aware that this is a preposterous scenario. My colleague **Dr Kevin Thiele** recently highlighted the case in which the plant genus **Hibbertia** is named after George Hibbert, who made his fortune from slave trading.

Aboriginal people have a level of understanding about, and a connection to, the plants in their environment that is detailed and advanced, based on thousands of years of exploration, analysis and observation. Over that period, they have had the opportunity to observe and record how species change in response to the environment, cultural management practices, grazing by herbivores and, through experimentation, how different species could be used for the benefit of their community.



Scientists such as myself still get excited by “discovering” new species – it is something we do each year and a core component of our organisation's role. We do this mainly because we hope to protect these species more effectively before they are subjected to land clearing or the ravages of climate change-induced drought or fire and become extinct.

Botanic gardens and museums are rightfully beginning to reflect on this and there is a great deal of commentary on “decolonising” collections across the globe and how this might happen. A starting point is to ensure that the Indigenous perspective on nature, and in our case plants, is a core component of both our displays, plantings and educational programs. We have had very successful Indigenous education programs at the Royal Botanic Garden Sydney for some time. Plant signage is starting to reflect Aboriginal names as well as the Latin version to educate

the visitor about how Indigenous people used these plants. But there is still much to do, particularly given that botanic gardens are usually located in places that hold significance to local Aboriginal communities.

Enhancing the involvement of Aboriginal people in our science programs is much more complex – and is an issue that affects all fields of science. Programs such as **Deadly Science**, run by Kamilaroi Stem expert Corey Tutt, are doing great things to inspire a love of science from an early age in Indigenous kids and should result in a cohort of scientists in the future.

For now, we need to explore and expand opportunities to increase the involvement and recruitment of Aboriginal scientists in a meaningful way (and not tokenistic or a tick-the-box exercise) across the whole of the science and research sectors. This is critically important in sciences focused on the natural world as these are the areas likely to have an impact on the care and management of Country into the future and which need the input of Aboriginal people to be appropriate and meaningful.

Additional initiatives could include using names based on Indigenous languages – done in consultation – when describing new species. When working on Country do so in collaboration with the Indigenous community, wherever possible spend time in that community and approach the research in a humble manner without the assumption that “conventional science” knows best. It is also critical to ensure that outputs such as authorship on research papers and reports reflect this collaboration appropriately.

We cannot change the past 250 years of science in Australia or the legacy of approaches that dismissed Indigenous knowledge and contribution. However, we can adopt a new approach that incorporates this knowledge and perspective in a meaningful manner that can result in a more effective way in which our ecosystems are respected and managed. At the Royal Botanic Garden Sydney we have recently launched our First Nations Engagement Strategy and Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan, which has a strong focus on recognising the connection between the gardens, plants and knowledge, and Aboriginal people.

The critical thing is to take the time to listen, learn, understand and respect – hopefully this will foster the broader community’s understanding of the depth of knowledge about this continent’s wonderful and unique flora that has existed for thousands of years.

Source: The Guardian Oct 1 2022 <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2022/oct/01/slave-traders-names-are-still-stamped-on-native-plants-its-time-to-decolonise-australias-public-gardens>

Your Committee wishes you a very Merry Christmas, and we look forward to catching up again in the New Year

NSW Christmas Bush, *Ceratopetalum gummiferum*, which this year is producing a bumper crop of brightly coloured sepals



COMMITTEE CONTACT DETAILS

President,	Di Clark	Ph 0402 555 330	e. diclark17@mailfence.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