



LOOKING FORWARD - LOOKING BACK

These words (the title of an old Slim Dusty song) describe well an aspect of our current thinking. In putting the last newsletter together late February, I expressed the hope that the bushfire crisis would not further affect our program for the year; almost as an afterthought, I mentioned the strange new virus.

You know the history. There is however, a good deal of light at the end of the tunnel and as you know we will be doing a walk June 6, albeit with some restrictions.

From the recent email from Kaye, you will know that you need to register with Jen (walk coordinator) by email at ashwell@activ8.net.au, to ensure you will be one of the group of ten. Apart from family members, you will need to have your own transport. Any other restrictions will be emphasised before the start.

WELCOME

A warm welcome to two new members - Jo and Angus - from Tallong. Jo and Angus have nominated the Southern Highlands Group as their 'extra membership' so they will be keeping an eye on the goings-on in both groups.

Welcome also to Deborah from Braemar. For Deborah, Southern Highlands is her primary group and we down here are her 'extra membership.'

NOT IDLE

While the Covid-19 phenomenon has imposed curbs on travelling and other activities I am quite sure that members have been doing things within their own domains. Peter has been propagating in an attempt to compensate for the propagation sessions that had to be abandoned. Ashley and Greg have been keeping an eye on the vegetation in the Alison Hone Reserve and have had an interesting find; the full account is included below. Pauline's report on the Wetlands is here as well and the outlook for the continuation of the wetlands project seems very secure with the recent rain.

WETLANDS UPDATE MAY 2020

After holding on through the heat, dry and smoke of a torrid summer, the Wetlands responded happily to the February rains. The thick layer of mulch spread out in spring, coupled with targeted hand watering during the hottest months kept most of the plants alive. Others actually flourished, even through the toughest of conditions. The standout species were the little *Chrysocephalum*

apiculatum plants which Bob had separated at the Spring working bee. These were planted out around the car park, and the ones which survived have shown a stunning display of yellow buttons for many months.



Correa and Crowea in the garden near the birdlife

With the improved weather outlook for coming months, May presented an opportunity to put in a few more trees and shrubs in the top garden closest to the golf course. This is extremely rocky, clay ground, so any of the plants that do well will deserve an accolade. Some of the plants being trialed include *Isopogon anethifolius* (Drumsticks), *Acacia decora* (Inland Silver wattle) and *Dillwynia retorta* (Heathy parrot pea). (Pauline)

The Isopogon is a shrub we often see in the sandstone areas to the east and north - the drumstick fruits are yellow and the shrub has divided foliage. When you travel west you will see the *A. decora* along road verges; the foliage is more a grey-green than silver - spreading shrub to about 1.5m high. *D. retorta* is a pea plant. Local occurrence is from about Mayfield Road (east of Tarago) to the Cullulla area; a spreading shrub to about 0.5m high. (ed.)

ALISON HONE RESERVE (contributed by Ash Mahoney)

During February 2020, Goulburn received ~140mm of rain. This had a dramatic effect on the plants within Alison Hone Reserve (AHR). The first change was the flowering of *Lomandra filiformis*. Even with only a few leaves on the plants, all seemed to find the energy to flower. In the weeks following, they produced many more leaves which had the effect of a once grey-brown hillside changing to the blue-green colour of their leaves. Along the creek, a great number of *Entolasia stricta* seedlings germinated. The

eucalypts that were suffering began producing epicormic shoots from their trunks and branches. All the shrubs that had seemingly disappeared began to put out new shoots with one or two of them producing an odd flower here and there e.g. *Dillwynia phyllicoides*, *D. sericea*; *Hibbertia obtusifolia* and *Bursaria spinosa*.

After a few more weeks, the following plants began to re-grow:

Cymbonotus lawsonianus, *Acaena novae-hollandiae*
Einadia nutans, *Clematis leptophylla*,
Veronica perfoliata, *Goodenia hederaceae*
Glycine tabacina and *G. clandestina*
Stellaria pungens, *Ajuga australis*
Cynoglossum australe, *Hackelia suaveolens*
 (prev. *Cynoglossum* - ed.)
Bossiaea buxifolia, *Asplenium flabellifolium* (fern)
Cheilanthes sieberi (fern), *Cladia retipora*
Dichondra repens, *Opercularia hispida*
Hardenbergia violaceae, *Asperula conferta*
Hydrocotyle laxiflora

After two to three more weeks and with the warm mild weather continuing, there were a number of species taking advantage of the favourable conditions and began flowering out of season, especially along the Mt Wayo Creek side of the Reserve providing brilliant colour to the bushland. They were:

Einadia nutans and *E. hastata*
Wahlenbergia sp.
Vittadinia sp., *Mentha saturoides*
Chrysocephalum apiculatum, *Glycine tabacina*
G. clandestina, *Stylidium graminifolium*
Brachyscome rigidula, *Cymbonotus lawsonianus*
Cynoglossum australe, *Hackelia suaveolens*
Goodenia hederaceae, *Pimelea curviflora*
Lepidosperma laterale, *Veronica plebeia*
Plantago varia, *Solenogyne dominii*
S. gunnii, *Cotula australis*
Senecio quadridentatus, *Zornia dyctiocarpa*
Desmodium varians, *Asperula conferta*

There was also spot flowering of the following: *Veronica perfoliata*; *Convolvulus angustissimus*; *Stellaria pungens*; *Dianella revoluta*; *Ranunculus lappaceus*; *Veronica calycina* and *V. gracilis*; *Craspedia variabilis*; *Arthropodium fimbriatum*; *Ajuga australis*; *Leucochrysum albicans*, *Coronidium scorpioides* and *C. isolepis*.

Grasses to put on a late showing of flowers were: *Microlaena stipoides*; *Bothriochloa macra*; *Themeda triandra*; *Sorghum leiocladum*; *Austrostipa bigeniculata* & *A. scabra*, *Rytidosperma* sp.

Interestingly, quite a number of *Acacia* and *Convolvulus* seedlings also germinated at this time. It would be interesting to know if it was purely the hot dry conditions of summer or the smoke inundation the area was swathed in, or the combination of both, that prompted this germination.

I have seen no germination from seed of *Billardiera scandens* but the old rootstocks are re-shooting. The rain fell early enough for the autumn flowering orchids to come out of dormancy. The species seen flowering were: *Eriochilus cucullatus*; *Genoplesium clivicola*; *Pterostylis rubescens*; *P. truncata*; *P. reflexa*; *P. ampliata* (referred to as *Pterostylis* sp. B on Plantnet) and *P. laxa*. It was the first time that Greg or I have spotted *P. ampliata* or *P. laxa* at AHR. I was informed that *P. laxa* is quite rare. I'm not sure what is happening at AHR but I first spotted the latter orchids on my own and took photos with my phone camera and went back the next day with Greg and my DSLR to take better quality photos only to find they had disappeared. I'm hoping it was marsupials looking for a tasty snack. This means no seed production this year, let us hope they have better luck next year!



Two photos from Ashlea's visits to the AH Reserve; on the left is the greenhood *Pterostylis laxa*. On the right is a trailing pea plant, *Glycine tabacina*

Thanks to Ashlea for her extensive work; surely a message from it must be - there is a lot out there to see!

CALENDAR

Sat June 6	Walk at South's Reserve
Sat July 4	Native Plant Forum
Sat/Sun Aug 1-2	Royal NP overnight trip
Sat Sep 5	Walk in Bango Nature Reserve
Thu Sep 17	Propagation
Sun Sep 20	Propagation
Sat Oct 3	Dalton Reserves
Sat Oct 10	Wetlands Working Bee/ Goulburn Connects
Sun Nov 8	Rare plant sale Riversdale tbc
Sat Nov 21	Bundanoon area walk
Sat Dec 5	AGM and end-of-year lunch