



APS HARBOUR GEORGES RIVER NEWSLETTER - August 2022

NEXT HARBOUR GEORGES RIVER EVENT:

Sunday 4th September from 10:30 am
Sylvan Grove Spring Visit
And Father's Day
to see the Orchids in bloom
With chances to socialise over coffee

Please RSVP to Liz on elsmere02@gmail.com in case of cancellation.

VISITORS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME

Welcome to the August 2022 edition of the APS Harbour Georges River Group Newsletter. We have quite a lot about the last meeting at Malabar, thanks to Boyd, Karen, Jan, Graham & Liz who wrote their stories. It's always good to get other people's points of view about events. We also have updates from other groups in our area, and there is a postscript – things I thought of after I'd got the layout right, and couldn't fit in. See the second last page. Looking forward to another lovely day at Sylvan Grove for Father's Day, with a guided tour by Jim, the head gardener. Hope to see you there.

Dorothy Luther, Editor

In the spirit of reconciliation, the APS Harbour Georges River group acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of country throughout Australia and their connections to land, sea and community. We pay our respect to elders past and present and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples today.

<https://www.austplants.com.au/Harbour-Georges-River>

A NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Members,

Those of us who joined our Maroubra man Boyd, for the meeting in August had an enjoyable day, with a picnic lunch, a quick meeting then a talk about the bush at the beach & the national park.



1 View south across the sand dunes. Emily explaining the finer points of native couch grass. Photo by Jan Douglas

The talk was about the Randwick Council sand dune stabilisation project with one of the supervisors. We were introduced to coastal spinifex, which is quite delicate. Even our members who live in the area were impressed with the work being done – it's not obvious as you stroll past. Malabar lost much less beach than other areas.

It gave me a greater understanding of the importance of the native plants of the area. The weather was delightful and sunny with a gentle breeze. A good & informative day was had by all.

There are only a few weeks to the bi annual conference. You can book for one or a few days if not wanting to attend the whole time. <https://www.austplants.com.au/ANPSA-Biennial-Conference-2022>

Our garden is coming to life with the Dendrobium orchids producing more flowers this year. The Xanthorrhoea spike is now two & a half metres high in the back garden.

The swamp orchids have flower spikes & the cuta orchids are amazing. It's a joy to spend time in the garden and unwind from the challenges of life.

Warmest regards to all,

Marie O'Connor.

President Harbour Georges River Group APS NSW.



NEXT MEETING

September, Sun 4th, 10:30 am – Sylvan Grove Visit

Celebrate Fathers' Day with a gift of sox & hankies? No way!!! Better to take Father to Sylvan Grove for a beautiful day out in a large, tranquil garden setting with lush rainforest, and a **spectacular display of flowers, including a great selection of orchids.**

By special invitation from Jim & Steve the on-site horticulturists, following our visit on 4th May to honour some senior members. Jim will take us on a tour & may also highlight some new plantings for us.

Address is

Sylvan Grove Native Garden, 7 Sylvan Grove, Picnic Point. Sylvan Grove is a dead-end street off Henry Lawson Drive.

<https://www.cbcity.nsw.gov.au/environment/parks-reserves/sylvan-grove-native-garden>

Parking on site is limited, but there is parking available in the street.



This site of 1.5 ha and was opened in 1970 and managed by Bankstown Council Parks & Gardens staff, senior horticulturist: Jim MacKay. Situated in a pleasant and natural bushland setting, a unique haven of natural bushland displayed along a winding bush track. It has over 1500 species of native plants which have been lovingly gathered and nurtured from all over Australia by Council's Parks and Gardens staff during private and sponsored trips. Donations of species have also been received from interested

persons and groups. [including HGR]

Contingency Plan

Since La Nina is hanging about still, we need a plan in the event of heavy rain. Please advise Liz by email on elsmere02@gmail.com if you are intending to come to the event so we can let you know if there is a change of plans.

LAST MEETING

Wed August 3rd - Maroubra Sand Dunes Restoration, Demonstration Walk

and Malabar National Park walk.

From Boyd Webster

After a self-catered picnic lunch, 10 HGR APS members were guided around the dunes by Emily Strautins, Randwick City Council Bushcare Officer. For 20 years Randwick Council has been involved in preventing wind erosion of the South Maroubra sand dunes. Weed control

and planting programs are undertaken by both contracted labour and volunteers in the council supported bush care program. Another bush care group (Friends of the Malabar Headland) is active on the adjacent Malabar Headland National Park. The Randwick Council nursery supplies plants, including many grown from seed and cuttings collected in the heaths of Eastern Suburbs Banksia Scrub on the headland.



2 dune cover & flexible fencing, photo by Boyd

The dunes rise from the bare sand of the beach to low grass groundcover and then shrubs up to the level of the Surf Club lawn and adjacent boardwalk and track. Trees, mostly Coastal Banksia (*Banksia integrifolia*), with an understory of shrubs occur only on the leeward side of the dunes, towards the car parks.

Flora on sand dunes must counter an almost continuous exposure to salty wind. Repeated foot traffic by humans and animals can trample and dislodge tender plants covering the sand. (Randwick Council has erected flexible fences around parts of the dunes, leaving designated pathways to the beach and surf. The fencing is made from recycled plastic, which doesn't rust).

Early attempts at providing dune cover involved the use of exotic plants, including bitou bush, lantana, gazania species, storksbill, turkey rhubarb. Easily dispersed and lacking natural predators, these plants outgrew and suppressed native flora. Bush care on the dunes involves removing these exotics, allowing the native species to recover over the sand, supported by quick growing endemic grasses and shrubs.

Adjacent to the beach, the natural groundcover on the dunes are the native grasses, (Beach spinifex - *Spinifex sericeus* & Sand couch - *Sporobolus virginicus*) and the succulent Pigface (*Carpobrotus glaucescens*). As storksbill and gazania are removed the native geranium (*Pelargonium australe*), the dune fan flower (*Scaevola calendulacea*) and the sea daisy (*Wollastonia uniflora* formerly known as *Melanthera biflora*) have been planted; interspersed with *Lomandra longifolia* tube stock

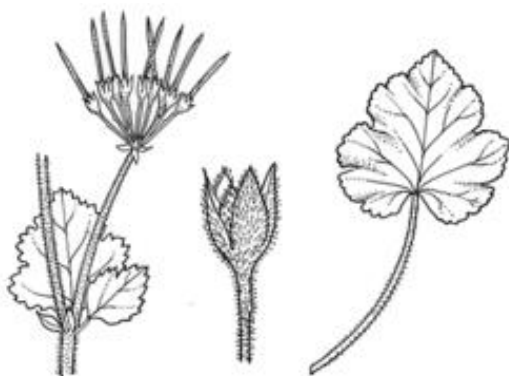


3 Beach spinifex, photo by Boyd

Coastal Wattle (*Acacia longifolia* subsp. *sophorae*) is the predominant shrub growing to height of 1 -1.5 metres. The coastal tea tree (*Leptospermum laevigatum*) and the tree broom heath (*Monotoca elliptica*) are also coping with the sea winds.

From Karen

From our informative Bushcare Officer, Emily Strautins from Randwick City Council, we learnt about the history of the work being done on the Maroubra dunes. Their revegetation really is a work in progress and a long-term project. We could see how much has been achieved in planting indigenous plants to stabilise these dunes. Emily pointed out, for example, the Beach Spinifex (*Spinifex sericeous*) whose leaves are hairy and so withstand the hot temperatures in summer, the Beach Fan Flower (*Scaevola calendulacea*) and the Native Geranium (*Pelargonium australe*) which also has soft hairy leaves and stems.



5 *Pelargonium australe* Source:
<https://plantnet.rbgsyd.nsw.gov.au/>

4 native & imported geranium leaves - note hairs on lower native leaf, [photo by Dorothy]

Adding another layer on the dunes, Emily pointed out the Coastal Banksia (*Banksia integrifolia*) and the Coastal Tea tree (*Leptospermum laevigatum*). These and the other re-introduced species over the last couple of decades have all helped to bind the sand grains together, deflect the wind and so protect the sandy soils.

It was so good to see what enthusiastic Bushcare leaders and volunteers can do to protect our beaches.

From Liz & Graham

Some impressions:

Bird life –

White-faced Herons foraging on the rock platforms

Swamp Harrier cruising over the revegetated dune, unusual species for this area. On the Birddata database there are only 3 records for the species in this area and they were all during the winter months. In the ALA database there are only 2 records from this area and again they were in the winter, July and August. Tends to confirm that they are winter visitors to coastal NSW.

Nankeen Kestrel hovering above the dunes.

Willie Wagtail – feeding above the revegetated area as Emily spoke.

New Holland Honeyeaters feeding on the banksias

Frogs –

Eastern Common Froglet – cricket-like chirping around seepages along the track to Magic Point - I didn't notice the calls until we were returning to the car park – maybe they have a siesta?

“this tiny [3 cm] frog species is often heard but rarely seen”

<https://www.frogid.net.au/frogs/crinia-signifera>



muricatus). See photo

<http://www.reptilesaustralia.com/lizards/agamids/amuricat.htm#.Yv9o2HZBysM>

Emily emphasised the importance of the continuous strip of dune vegetation as habitat for reptiles and said [?7 species] had been recorded in the revegetated areas including some uncommon lizards - Mainland She-oak Skinks (*Cyclodomorphus michaeli*) and Jacky Lizards (*Amphibolurus*



Interested to see *Banksia aemula* in its natural surroundings and how it differs from *banksia serrata*.

[The laughing banksia seed cone, photo by Dorothy].

There did seem to be some odd plants along the walkway, I suspect the contractor brought in some non-local species.

I was interested in Emily's presentation, especially the plants they were using for regeneration, in particular the Spinifex grass. I also

liked her observation about how the beach has not been washed away like many other Sydney beaches and they think it is due to the stabilisation effect of the vegetation on the dunes.

Native Plants in Flower – South Maroubra

There was no plant table at the August HGR APS picnic lunch meeting. The following natives were noted to be in flower in the dunes area or were seen from the Eastern boardwalk of the Malabar Headland National Park.

Maroubra Dunes area

<i>Acacia longifolia</i>	Sydney golden wattle	
<i>Acacia longifolia</i> subsp. <i>sophorae</i>	Coastal wattle	Endemic
<i>Banksia integrifolia</i>	Coast Banksia	Endemic
<i>Carpobrotus glaucescens</i>	Pigface	

<i>Correa alba</i>	White Correa	Bushcare plantings
<i>Leptospermum laevigatum</i>	Coastal Tea Tree	
<i>Monotoca elliptica</i>	Tree Broom heath	
<i>Pelargonium australe</i>	Native Storksbill	Bushcare plantings
<i>Scaevola calendulacea</i>	Dune Fan Flower	
<i>Westringia fruticosa</i>	Coastal Rosemary	Endemic

Additional species noticed adjacent to Eastern Boardwalk

<i>Allocasuarina distyla</i>	Scrub she oak	Pollen +++ on male plants
<i>Baeckea imbricata</i>	Ridged Heath Myrtle	
<i>Banksia ericifolia</i>	Heath Banksia	New flowers, orange
<i>Banksia serrata</i>	Old Man Banksia	Old flowers
<i>Hibbertia scandens</i>	Climbing Guinea Flower	
<i>Kennedia rubicunda</i>	Dusky Coral Pea	
<i>Melaleuca armillaris</i>	Bracelet Honey-myrtle	
<i>Micromyrtus ciliata</i>	Fringe Heath Myrtle	
<i>Philotheca buxifolia</i>	Box -leaf Wax Flower	
<i>Pimelia linifolia</i>	Slender Rice Flower	

Plant Notes

South Maroubra & Malabar Headland - Notes by Boyd Webster

Melaleuca armillaris (Bracelet Honey Myrtle)



A grove of melaleuca was seen on the beach side of the rough track that leads to the start of the Eastern Boardwalk. A few white flowers were appearing on the upper branches. As shown in the photo, the arrangement of the flowers in a cylindrical cuff proximal to the tip of the branch has led to the bracelet (Latin -armillar) description in its name. The cream or white flowers appear in spring and mature to small woody capsule. Typically seen as a tall shrub in coastal NSW, it may grow to a tree of up to 8 metres. Spread has occurred to WA, SA and Victoria. Specimens of the shrub were collected by Joseph Banks. Solander's genus name of *Metrosideros*, was changed to *Melaleuca* in 1797.

Monotoca elliptica (Tree Broom-heath)

Several small windswept examples of the shrub were present on the dunes. Many of the shrubs showing new growth had small white flowers towards the tips of the branches. These mature to an orange or red fruit. Propagated cuttings are being planted in the restoration efforts. This heath is a widespread coastal plant in south eastern Australia. Specimens collected in Botany Bay were initially named *Stypheia elliptica* before a genus name change to *Monotoca* in 1810



Scaevola calendulacea (Dune fan flower)

This groundcover found naturally on sand dunes in NSW, SA, Victoria and Queensland is being encouraged to spread “mat-like” in the sand adjacent to the beach. The blue petals of the flower arrange in a fan shape, hence the common name. Flowers appear throughout the year, but mainly in summer. Also photographed are examples of the purplish globular fruit. A member of the *Goodeniaceae* family and first described in 1798, the genus name of *Scaevola* was applied in 1918.



GROUP NEWS

Revesby Workers Garden Club

On Saturday 6th August, Graham, Liz, Karen & Dorothy attended the monthly meeting of this group. There were about 50 people at the meeting, which was very interesting. Our main purpose was to tell them about our group and a bit about native plants. The talk went quite well and was well received. There was a lot of interaction from the audience. We had a good discussion about different soil types and the kinds of plants and problems with that. Many of the members already have native plants in their gardens, and had long discussions with Graham, Liz and Karen, who were minding the plant table.

It was financially profitable as we received a donation of \$50 and we sold half a dozen plants, raising \$35.

I think we might have quite a good relationship with this group as they are generally interested in native plants and also interested in environmental issues.

Food and Gardening Book

The Newcastle group posted about this author on the APS NSW Facebook group

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/apsnsw>

Julie Weatherhead: "Australian Native Food Harvest: A Guide for the Passionate Cook and Gardener!"

Julie and her partner Anthony Hooper have been championing Australian native foods from their polyculture farm and cooking school, Peppermint Ridge Farm in West Gippsland for more than 20 years.

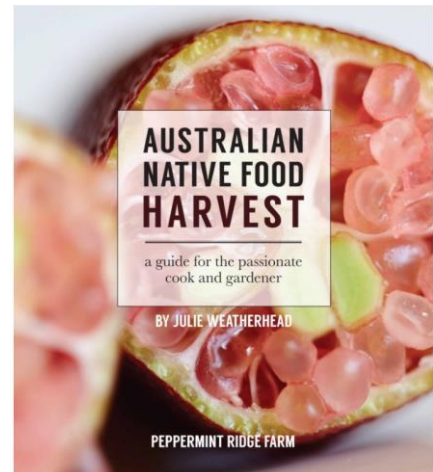
<https://peppermintridgefarm.com.au/> Julie has a permaculture background, and provides tips & recipes for her selection of 30 plants suitable for sub-tropical, temperate and cool climate regions.

The book

<http://peppermintridgefarm.com.au/product/australian-native-food-harvest/> costs \$35 plus \$15 postage, for up to 4 copies.

If you would like a copy, contact me & I'll arrange for bulk postage purchase.

dlutherau@yahoo.com.au



NEIGHBOURHOOD NEWS

There is a lot happening in our patch, with community groups and local councils being active in promoting native plants. I welcome contributions - stories about your other favourite groups.

The Magpie Tree

Last month I reported on the threat to 3 *Eucalyptus nicholii* trees in Jubilee St, Lewisham. I did get a very nice reply from Council but it took a while to get permission to reprint it. So here is their side of the story:

“Trees are living, dynamic organisms and they play a significant role in the biodiversity of our area. The notified trees are showing high levels of epicormic shoots, characteristic of senescent trees. Those stress related epicormic shoots and the canopy also have dieback demonstrating over-maturity and rapid decline. Remedial pruning has been considered and would cause further wounding to the trees and accelerate their decline given their low health. The current health is directly linked to the trees poor ability to translocate water, nutrients and materials through the leaves, branches, trunks and roots. The tree roots also play an important function for anchorage and foundational stability, and these roots are now dysfunctional. Although we assess all our trees on a case-by-case basis, Council has attended to several whole-tree *Eucalyptus nicholii* failures over the 8 years and these notified trees have reached their safe useful life expectancy.

The notified tree outside 5 Jubilee Street has multiple mechanical wounds and phellinus fruiting bodies [a genus of fungi], which causes white rot and lignin breakdown affecting the

tree's structural strength. These trees have been assessed by experienced, expert arborists employed by Council and from a public liability-risk perspective they now present an unacceptable risk to the public and property.

Tree removal is always the last option for Council and we spend many phone calls daily with residents informing them as to why we need to protect tree and educate property owners as to why we need to keep trees (or not prune them unnecessarily). Regretfully, they do need to be removed in the interest of public safety."

Seagrass & Kelp Forests

Following our visit to the Royal Botanic Gardens Calyx installation 'Inside the Tide', I found this of interest in the Guardian:

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2022/aug/21/living-sea-walls-and-kelp-forests-the-plans-to-lure-marine-life-back-to-sydney-harbour>

The NSW government will **plant kelp forests** and **install hundreds of living sea walls** across Sydney Harbour in a bid to repair damage caused by decades of rapid urbanisation. The idea



□ A seahorse swims in seagrass planted during a restoration project in Sydney Harbour. Photograph: Dave Harastil

behind a living seawall is to add texture and shape and form ... to support easier attachment for barnacles and mussels, and that in itself would bring in additional life.

The initiative also includes the replanting of seagrass meadows and kelp forests in at least nine locations across Sydney Harbour. That can create habitat, places for animals to hide or to grow and be protected.

Dr Dafforn [Marine ecologist and co-lead of the project] said living sea walls can support species like oysters, which filter and improve water quality, and seaweed, which can absorb contaminants "and clean things up".

The NSW Environmental Trust is granting \$6.6m to the project, with partners contributing a further \$2.5m.

Wolli Creek Preservation Society

From the President's annual report for 2021/ 22:

Under the general description of our work as being "Preservation, restoration, expansion of the natural and cultural heritage of the Wolli Creek Valley" we grouped our priorities for the year around four major themes:

Educating and raising awareness

Advocating for the Wolli Creek Valley

Enhancing Habitat, Protecting Wildlife

Maintaining WCPS as a community organisation

Further details are available from the WCPS web site at <http://www.wollicreek.org.au/>



6 Girrahween Fern gully, photo from WCPS web site

RANDOM JOTTINGS

These are items of general interest found on the World Wide Web. All contributions for future editions gratefully accepted.

This month, something to do while it's raining and you can't be in the garden.

DigiVol

<https://volunteer.ala.org.au/>

DigiVol is a **crowdsourcing platform** that was developed by the Australian Museum in collaboration with the Atlas of Living Australia. It is used by many institutions around the world as a way of combining the efforts of many volunteers to **digitise their data**. This data may be in the form of museum object labels, field notebooks and diaries, recording sheets, registers or photographs.

Anyone can become a DigiVol volunteer, all you need is a computer, internet access and an email address. Then you will spend hours going on armchair expeditions, staring at your screen transcribing hand written labels, looking at motion activated videos or analysing photos. They now have audio expeditions too, listening for frog calls. There is lots of training & guides on what to look for & what to do. It's really easy. Have a go & tell us about your adventures!

Share your favourite sources on our new Facebook Group.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1328674687627886/>

Gardening Books

Something to drool over?

https://www.theodorebruceauctions.com.au/auction-catalog/books-botanical-gardening-collection-of-dr-h_U5292WSUJZ

The sale closes on about 9th September, and includes art books as well as gardening.



7 Coastal wattle in bloom. Photo by Dorothy



8 Malabar Headland - wind sculpted shrubs in National Park. photo by Jan

CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED

Newsletters Received – August

The full text of the APS newsletters is available from the APS website, on the District Group pages – usually under ‘Resources’

Australian Plants Society, Parramatta Hills NSW Group - Newsletter August 2022

What’s in a name – plants with habitat names. Early research into Australian plants . . .at the Powerhouse Discovery Centre, Castle Hill. Our bushland playground at Kenthurst (Part 3) in 1960s. Spines, thorns and prickles. Our Group’s history [from 1972]. Jones Road Fire Trail walk Kenthurst.

Australian Plants Society, Newcastle NSW Group - Newsletter August/ September 2022

A megadiverse country must have at least 5,000 endemic plants.... Australia has 18,000 endemic plants and 3,000 endemic vertebrate animals. Diuris Orchids & lots of other flower photos.

Australian Plants Society Menai Wildflower Group - Newsletter August 2022

Peter Olde on colonial Sydney and the early European botanists; Counting Koalas - koalas have distinctive physical features from battle damaged ears to delicate nostril mottling that are as individual as fingerprints. Two new Grevillea species found. SE Glossy Black Cockatoos moved to the Vulnerable category.

Australian Plants Society, South East NSW Group - Newsletter August 2022

Weeds - process for identifying and dealing with these troublesome plants

Australian Plants Society, Sutherland NSW Group - Newsletter August 2022

Conservation of Australian Terrestrial Orchids – very technical propagation processes required. Extensive plant table notes. Walk report – Anana Ridge Fire Trail, RNP. Illawarra Grevillea Park Botanic Garden – launch of new name.

Australian Plants Society, Northern Beaches NSW Group - Newsletter August 2022

West Head walk – lots of flowers; the Malvaceae family – including hibiscus

Other Groups Newsletters

We have begun to swap newsletters with other environmental groups in the Harbour Georges River area. Links to their web sites are provided where available.

Oatley Flora and Fauna Conservation Society, August/September Newsletter

<https://www.oatleyflorafauna.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/AugSep-22-Newsletter-Final.pdf> National Tree Day plantings; environmental impacts of microplastics - synthetic turf. Protecting Myles Dunphy Reserve

National Parks and Wildlife Service

See the stunning display of spring wildflowers in Muogamarra Nature Reserve, located north of Sydney near Cowan, by booking your spot now on a guided or self-guided tour for the open season (13 August-18 September).

POSTSCRIPT

Sedges

Some discussion on how to separate sedges from reeds produced the following from Jan:

Sedges have edges, rushes are round.

Grasses have knees that bend to the ground.

Or this version from [https://www.riverkeepers.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Sedges Grasses and Rushes_DONE.pdf](https://www.riverkeepers.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Sedges_Grasses_and_Rushes_DONE.pdf)

Sedges have edges, Rushes are round,

Grasses are hollow. What have you found?

So now you know!

Threatened Species Day, 7th September

Since this comes soon after Wattle Day (1st September), maybe we should have a feature on threatened or endangered wattles. **What is your favourite?**

Tony's spreadsheet for Southern Sydney lists the following as officially rare:

Acacia	bynoeana	Bynoe's Wattle; Tiny Wattle
Acacia	echinula	Hedgehog Wattle
Acacia	flocktoniae	Flockton Wattle
Acacia	ptychoclada	[From the Blue Mountains]
Acacia	pubescens	Downy Wattle; Hairy Stemmed Wattle
Acacia	terminalis	Sunshine Wattle

Images from <https://resources.austplants.com.au/>



Acacia echinula, image Alan Fairley



Acacia ptychoclada, image Alan Fairley

COMING EVENTS

For further details of coming district group events, please see the APS NSW website at <http://austplants.com.au/calendar>

1st September	National Wattle Day. Find out more about the history and meaning of Wattle Day at the National Museum of Australia, https://www.nma.gov.au/explore/blog/wattle-day
Sun 4th September, 10:30 am	Harbour Georges River Sylvan Grove visit – Orchids in flower
7th September	Threatened Species Day - the date the last thylacine died from exposure in 1936
Sat Sept 10 to Fri 17 Sept	ANPSA Conference, Kiama Pavilion, with tours before & afterwards https://www.austplants.com.au/ANPSA-Biennial-Conference-2022
3,4,10,11 Sep	Grevillea Park Botanical Gardens open days.
Saturday 24 September	Parramatta Hills group - Celebration of our Group's 50th anniversary
26 September, 7:30 pm	Oatley Flora & Fauna talk - Rewilding Minibeasts for Biodiversity Function, Peter Contos, OFF Research Grant Recipient. Via Zoom
Sunday 2nd October from 10am	The Eurobodalla Regional Botanic Gardens are running a Bioblitz
Sunday October 9, 9 am to 3 pm	2022 Stony Range Spring Festival – Northern Beaches Group 810 Pittwater Rd, Dee Why
Nov 16 to 18	2022 Linnean Society of NSW Natural History Field Symposium - natural history of the north eastern Sydney basin. Presentations and field trip http://linneansocietynsw.org.au/symposia/symposia.html

EAST HILLS GROUP CONTACTS

President	Marie O'Connor	9546 8105	madoc71@gmail.com
Secretary	Liz Cameron	9580 6621	elsmere02@gmail.com
Newsletter Editor	Dorothy Luther	9564 6513	dlutherau@yahoo.com.au
Website Editor	Dorothy Luther	9564 6513	dlutherau@yahoo.com.au

<https://www.austplants.com.au/Harbour-Georges-River>