

APS EAST HILLS GROUP NEWSLETTER



September 2021

NEXT EHG MEETING:

Meeting via Zoom, Wednesday 1st September at 2 pm

Zoom link

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82015335720?pwd=akxsYTIiU3Y5QzBiNnp2VHYvRUtMdz09>

Graham & Liz Fry in Western Australia

Update on the impact of Board Initiatives on East Hills

Send photos for the online display table to Dorothy by Tuesday

Hoping to see you all back again in October.

Stay safe & well until then

VISITORS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME

WELCOME to the September 2021 edition of the APS East Hills Group Newsletter.

This month's newsletter is becoming the new normal. I begin to despair of ever seeing Sophie Moore speaking on the benefits of urban trees. Instead, we have another big adventure, this time from Graham & Liz Fry. Karlo has been prevented from visiting Georges River National Park so has given us an article on some of the native flora seen within local Government Reserves in his LGA. Much is happening on the Board strategic initiatives front so there is an update.

Dorothy Luther, Editor

In the spirit of reconciliation, the APS East Hills 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.

<http://austplants.com.au/East-Hills>



A NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Members,

The format of the September meeting is a little different due to COVID.

The Zoom meeting will commence at 2 pm with time to catch up & chat. The presentations will begin at 2:20 pm. Graham & Liz will tell us about their trip to Western Australia, which they managed to fit in between lockdowns. Dorothy (our new Board delegate) will talk a bit about the strategic initiatives mentioned in the last newsletter. They will have some impact on our group so we need to know about that.

Since we can't have our beloved plant table in the flesh, can you please send photos to Dorothy (dlutherau@yahoo.com.au) by Tuesday evening. She will arrange them into a slide show and you can talk about them at the meeting. There will be time for socialising after this as usual, but BYO afternoon tea (sorry, Zoom technology isn't up to delivering afternoon teas yet).

Des & I hope you are all well and using your gardens as a way to stay safe and not being overwhelmed by the current Covid-19 situation.

Those who have health issues, we wish you all the best in these difficult times.

Warmest regards to all,
Marie O'Connor.
President, East Hills Group

Some of Marie's orchids in flower:



Dendrobium



Dendrobium Elegant Heart is an orchid hybrid originated by W.T.Upton in 1986. It is a cross of Den. Peewee x Den. speciosum.

MEMBER ADVENTURES

*Pilbara Reef and Ranges Expedition
a trip by Graham Fry and Liz Cameron in June 2021*

In June this year while Tony and Kate Porritt were exploring the deserts of central Australia, we travelled from Perth to Broome with Coates Wildlife Tours. It was an 'easy camping' bus trip for twelve passengers with a naturalist guide, Diana Papenfus. Our route followed the coast to Exmouth Gulf, then turned inland to Karijini NP before leaving the Pilbara for Eighty-Mile Beach and Broome.



Firewood Banksias *Banksia menziesii* [GF pic]

North of Perth the diversity of plants in **Kwongan heath** growing on low-nutrient white sandy soil ranged from tiny Red Ink Sundews (*Drosera erythrorhiza*) to Firewood Banksias *Banksia menziesii*. Dominant eucalypts in the Kwongan were Marri (*Corymbia calophylla*) and Tuart (*Eucalyptus gomphocephala*). Approaching Geraldton, we unexpectedly encountered River Red Gums (*Eucalyptus camaldulensis*), growing sideways in response to the prevailing westerlies.

From Geraldton we had a day flight to **East Wallabi Island** in the low-lying Houtman Abrolhos (infamous for the wreck of the *Batavia* in 1629). East Wallabi, composed of limestone overlain by sandy dunes, has a surprisingly diverse flora. One of the most attractive shrubs is the Tamala Rose (*Diplolaena grandiflora* Rutaceae); other low-growing shrubs looked vaguely familiar, but different – Shore Westringia (*Westringia dampieri*), Shrubby Riceflower (*Pimelea microcephala*), Thick-leaved Fan-flower (*Scaevola crassifolia*) and Stalked Guinea Flower *Hibbertia racemosa*

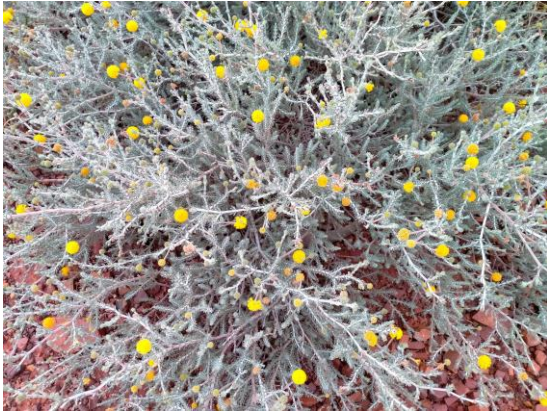
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/East_Wallabi_Island



Tamala Rose (*Diplolaena grandiflora* Rutaceae) [GF pic]; Stalked Guinea Flower (*Hibbertia racemosa*) [GF pic].

As we travelled north into more arid areas, eucalypts became scarce and acacias began to dominate the vegetation. In Western Australia the transition from eucalypt-dominated open woodland to Acacia-dominated shrublands has been mapped and recognised as the mulga-eucalypt line or boundary, corresponding to the isohyet of 250 mm annual rainfall.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mulga-eucalypt_line



Grey-whorled Wattle (*Acacia adoxa*) [GF pic]



Hill's Tabletop Wattle (*Acacia hilliana*) [GF pic]

The Pilbara supports at least 55 species of *Acacia* and we identified at least six (13 on the entire trip); they included the Grey-whorled Wattle (*Acacia adoxa*) and Hill's Tabletop Wattle (*Acacia hilliana*). In the Pilbara we found a wealth of flora quite different from the coastal vegetation further south.



Pink Mulla Mullas (*P. exaltatus*) [GF pic]

The amaranth family was well-represented by mulla mullas (*Ptilotus* species) and their relatives. Tall or Pink Mulla Mullas (*P. exaltatus*) sometimes clothed the red rocky slopes in mauve, interspersed with yellow *Senna glutinosa* flowers. Liz had difficulty telling mulla mullas from the related gomphrenas but learnt that *Ptilotus* is virtually endemic to Australia, its leaves are alternate, and inflorescences are often cylindrical or conical; *Gomphrena* occurs also in Indonesia and Central and South America, its leaves are opposite, and inflorescences are often round.

There were also many species of Goodeniaceae. The widespread Currant Bush or Prickly Fan Flower *Scaevola spinescens* has off-white flowers and is important bush tucker and bush medicine as well as having the potential to re-colonise country now dominated by the introduced buffel grass (*Cenchrus ciliaris*) that overgrows creek lines. Liz was stumped by several pretty blue-mauve flowers until she realised they were goodenias, not scaevolias, eg *Goodenia stobbsiana*.

<https://www.agric.wa.gov.au/rangelands/currant-bush-scaevola-spinescens-western-australian-rangelands>



Goodenia stobbsiana [GF pic]

Some pea flowers also puzzled Liz. A spreading shrub with reddish flowers and simple leaves turned out to be *Indigofera monophylla* - at least its name is self-explanatory! Vivid Sturt's Desert Pea (*Swainsona formosa*) was growing wild, and also in cultivation in Marble Bar. Other attractive species of *Swainsona* had deep pinky-mauve or purple flowers, and blue-green leaves.

Arid grevilleas and hakeas lent colour and scale to the vegetation. Examples were the ubiquitous Holly-leaved Grevillea (*Grevillea wickhamii*), and the Corkwood or Honey Hakea (*Hakea lorea*). The mallow family, Malvaceae has many representatives in the Pilbara. Apart from *Hibiscus coatesii* and *Gossypium robinsonii*, growing in the gorges were Rock Kurrajong (*Brachychiton acuminatus*), and Yellow-flowered Rulingia (*Adrocalva luteiflora*), an attractive shrub with round spiny fruits.



Holly-leaved Grevillea (*Grevillea wickhamii*) [GF pic]



Yellow-flowered Rulingia (*Adrocalva luteiflora*) [DA pic],

We should not overlook a nondescript plant that a member of our group noticed growing on a cliff face near Hancock Gorge in **Karijini NP**. It was the Ironplant, *Astrotricha hamptonii*, a member of the Araliaceae family (which includes the elderberry panax, *Polyscias sambucifolius*, common in Sydney). The Ironplant is restricted to the Hamersley Range and is a bio indicator of high-grade iron ore deposits; Lang Hancock's prospecting partner identified and mapped it from the air to identify the richest iron ore deposits in the area.



Ironplant, *Astrotricha hamptonii*, [DA pic].

On the plains north of the Pilbara we began to see trees and shrubs that occur across much of northern Australia – Cooktown Ironwood (*Erythrophleum chlorostachys*), Lemonwood (*Dolichandrone occidentalis*), Bauhinia *Bauhinia cunninghamii* and Boab (*Adansonia gregorii*). Then it was back to coastal plants at Eighty Mile Beach before our trip ended in Broome where the air felt considerably more tropical.

The photos were taken by Graham Fry except for two by Deb Andrew (labelled DA pic).

GROUP NEWS

What are you doing to keep sane during lockdown?

Someone asked that question the other night at the APS Zoom meeting.

I think its a good question & needs answers. So here is mine:

'Lakme' Flower duet https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C1ZL5AxmK_A

One of my favourite songs - this version proves that sopranos don't need to be enormous & draped in satin & pearls to sing like that.

Please email me your answers for next month's newsletter. Garden activities are welcome; you don't have to send a song.

Board Strategic Initiatives

As you have read in the August e-newsletter:

We have now agreed our next five years' strategy and are starting to implement it. The outcomes are simple – more native plants in gardens, more native plants conserved, more sharing about native plants and our members supported. Read a short summary of the strategy [here](#). In the next few months, we will be sharing more information about:

- creating two virtual groups open to all members: a Small Spaces Interest Group and Regen Interest Group
- better promoting and supporting members' own conservation activities
- improving our support and engagement with members.

Your ideas on what you value most as a member are welcome.

The strategies are aimed at increasing membership and lifting the profile of APS in the community.

The EHG committee discussed what this means for us. We will discuss it further at the meeting. See the committee meeting minutes at the end of the newsletter.

Neutrog

APS has negotiated a deal with this Aussie supplier of fertilisers to provide members with discounted supplies. The deal is channelled through the District Groups. This is described in the September e-newsletter. East Hills group will discuss how this might apply to us at the September meeting. If we join the deal, we need to find a collecting point convenient to all group members – a challenge given our geographic spread. While collecting your order can be quite a social event, it requires some coordination.

Speakers List – Mining the Newsletters

From Ralph Cartwright:

At our recent 5 year APS NSW Strategy Workshop, we discussed the value of great speakers at district group meetings. Members really enjoy the new ideas and fresh knowledge and it's a way to attract visitors.

To support district groups to find great speakers, a database of past speakers is being developed! Tony Maxwell from Parramatta and Hills started collating the list and Ralph Cartwright from Sutherland group has added to it and converted it into a database. So far, the database contains details of speakers from the past 5 years from 4 district groups plus APS NSW meetings.

All district groups are invited to contribute their speaker lists and can have access to the database. If a group has a topic they are thinking about including in their program, they can easily see which other groups have had speakers on that subject - a great starting point for sourcing their own.

Please contact Ralph via email at ralphc@spin.net.au for more information on how to contribute and to get access.

If you have a topic you are willing to speak on at a district group meeting, we'd love to hear from you!

What's Flowering Now

From Karlo Taliana

Here is an article prepared on some of the native flora seen within my local Government Reserves, as I'm now unable to visit the Georges River NP (outside 5km radius for me)

Early spring colour in the Bankstown LGA

With Covid restrictions currently limiting my walks to within 5km of where I live, I have not been able to take my usual walks at Picnic Point in the Georges River National Park. This has given me the opportunity to pay more attention to the flora within our local bushland reserves, some of which contain species not found on the sandstone-based soils at Picnic Point.

My local reserves include The Crest Bushland Reserve (Georges Hall), Carysfield Park (Bass Hill), Mirambeena Regional Park (Landsdowne) and Deepwater Park (Milperra) – all lying on the heavier clay-shale soils of the Cumberland Plain.

Flowering now is *Acacia pubescens* (Downy Wattle), a threatened species that is scattered across the Cumberland Plain, with healthy populations found mainly within the Canterbury-Bankstown and Liverpool LGA's. Unfortunately, many sections of its original habitat across western Sydney have been cleared as a result of urban development



Acacia pubescens (Downy Wattle)
Carysfield Park, Bass Hill

Our local reserves are also well represented by members of the pea family, *Fabeaceae*. With better rainfall over the past two years, most of these are decorating our local bushland with plenty of colour as they flower profusely. Some of the local pea flowering species have great potential if grown as garden subjects.



Indigofera australis (Native Indigo)
The Crest Bushland Reserve



Glycine clandestina
at Deepwater Park



Daviesia ulicifolia (Gorse Bitter-pea)
at Landsdowne

Indigofera australis (Native Indigo) is a shrub to 2 metres with open branching that grows and flowers well in both shade and full sun. It is seldom cultivated but makes a very attractive garden plant as it can be kept down to around a metre with regular pruning.

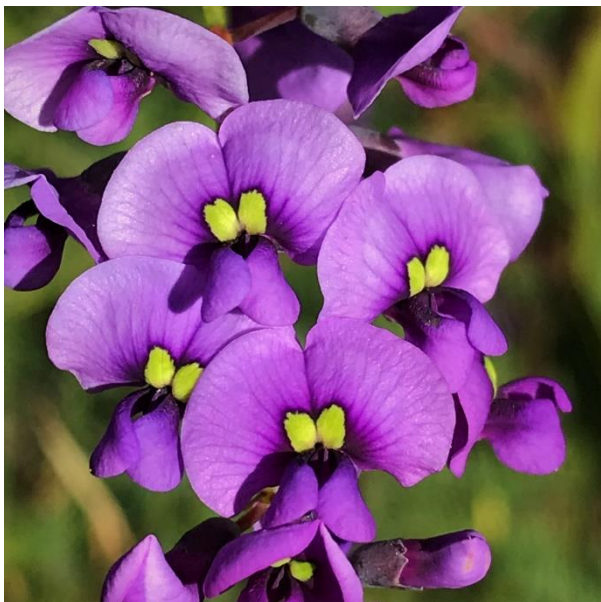
Glycine clandestina is a non-aggressive climbing species that would add some interest if grown in the garden. It tends to climb through other plants making its flowers more visible to potential pollinators. This twining species has tri-foliolate leaves and sprays of attractive sprays of mostly bluish mauve flowers, although flower colours may vary from white to pink.

Daviesia ulicifolia (Gorse Bitter-pea) is a small to medium shrub to 2 metres with sharply-pointed leaves so it should never be grown alongside garden paths. It produces small yellow and red pea flowers through much of Spring. This species also provides good nesting sites for small bird species.

Dillwynia sieberi (Sieber's Parrot-pea, Prickly Parrot-pea) is probably the most common pea-flowering shrub in our local reserves. More broadly, it grows in woodland areas across the ranges and western slopes of NSW and more coastally between Newcastle and Nowra; also into the ACT, south-eastern Queensland and parts of south-eastern Victoria. It grows as a shrub to 1.5 metres and also bears needle-like foliage. It flowers from April to November with its peak flowering through Spring. The flowers are yellow-orange with reddish-brown markings that can vary within the species.



Dillwynia sieberi at Carysfield Park, Bass Hill



Hardenbergia violacea
at The Crest Bushland Reserve, Georges Hall

Hardenbergia violacea (False Sarsaparilla, Purple Coral-pea) is another climber very common in our local reserves. It may scramble along the ground or climb if given the opportunity by surrounding shrubs. It may produce growing stems up to two metres long but can easily be kept pruned in a garden situation. In fact, this species responds very well to regular pruning which creates a more dense habit with even more flowers. Leaves are narrow-lanceolate to 10cm long and purple flowers occur from late Winter through to Spring. It occurs naturally along coastal regions and adjacent ranges from south-eastern Queensland as far south as Tasmania and across into eastern South Australia.

Karlo Taliana, August 2021

FROM OUR AUGUST MEETING

APS EAST HILLS GROUP MEETING

No meeting because of COVID

Committee Meeting

Minutes of APS East Hills Group Committee meeting held Wednesday 4 August 2021 via Zoom
Present: Marie O'Connor, Dorothy Luther, Jan Douglas, Dave Crawford, Graham Fry and Liz Cameron

Apologies: Tony Porritt, Karlo Taliana

Marie opened the meeting at 2.05 pm with a Welcome to Country.

Agenda:

1. APS NSW Strategic Plan 2021-2026 –

Our new motto - We Love Aussie Plants – Knowing Growing Conserving

The Plan has been finalised and Dorothy is helping Heather Miles (APS NSW President) to write scope documents for the Plan. Heather has been doing an enormous amount of work for APS. For the committee, Dorothy ran through the PowerPoint presentation that outlines the five-year Plan. Heather Miles invited Presidents, Secretaries and committee members of District Groups, and strategy workshop participants to join a Zoom meeting about the future of APS NSW on 10 August at 7pm. Items covered:

- Strategy for the next 5 years - slightly updated from the Strategy workshop
- Initiative on membership care - focusing on the first 3 - 12 months of membership
- New benefit for members - Neutrog agreement on Bush Tucker
- Speakers database - this database is now up and running, and Ralph Cartwright will demonstrate it

The strategy is summarised in the August e-newsletter. Points covered in the meeting:

- The activities associated with the Biennial Conference in September 2022 will include a big native plant sale.
- State and districts working together on projects
- One such project is gardens in small spaces – to appeal to a population becoming concentrated in high-density areas.
- Possibility of inner-city group being re-started; if so, some EHG members may switch to it.
- Possibility of closer co-operation with other local groups eg EHG with OFF
- Set up workshops or short videos to demonstrate techniques such as propagation, identification; show groups how to use social media
- Improve care for new members – often their treatment is scrappy. Groups need to focus on the first 12 months of new memberships. Important to improve the experience of new members to keep them connected. We should contact new members, ask what they are interested in & how they would like to be involved.

2. Application to EHG:

- Change of name for East Hills Group to better reflect its catchment area? It is one of the oldest groups in APS NSW. Alternative names might be St George or Southern Sydney?
- Propagation should perhaps focus on rare plants, endemics and true species (most natives sold in commercial nurseries are cultivars).
- Offer to speak at meetings of Probus Clubs etc where retirees gather. They are a major constituency.
- Saturday street stalls – sell plants and engage the public.
- Dorothy is interested in making bags designed for carrying tube stock that have been purchased – cut-down version of a wine bottle carrier. Base made from a plastic tray with handles around it.

3. Other Matters

Instead of holding all meetings at the hall, it is suggested that we hold reciprocal garden visits between members – social and informative; just need to take a chair and a thermos.

Plant propagation – Karlo is resigning from the position of propagation officer at the AGM. Instead of searching for a new propagation officer, EHG might just source plants from Sutherland Shire Nursery.

To thank Karlo for his great contribution as propagation officer, agreed to present him with an appropriate book; an amount of about \$100 was thought appropriate. We also discussed reimbursing Karlo for materials he has bought for propagating plants over the years, but no decision on a value

Liz to make a welfare call to members – Kyrill and Dorothy Taylor, Graham Walters, Karl Schurr, Vida Riepon

MOTION RE BOOK FOR KARLO

THAT in recognition of Karlo Taliana's long and very significant contribution to propagating native plants for the East Hills Group, the EHG committee approves expenditure of up to \$100 for an appropriate book to present to him.

Moved: Liz Cameron Seconded: Graham Fry

OUT OF MEETING DECISION, by email

THAT Dorothy Luther be appointed as the East Hills District delegate the APS Board, effective immediately.

Moved: Marie O'Connor Seconded Tony Porritt carried by email vote

Correspondence Received - August

The full text of these newsletters is available from the members area of the APS website

Native Plants for NSW – August 2021

The monthly e-newsletter of the Australian Plants Society NSW, available at <https://resources.austplants.com.au/newsletters-journals/monthly-ene newsletter/> many interesting pieces of news about plants & environment.

Australian Plants Society, Newcastle Group - Newsletter Aug-Sept 2021

Climbers, creepers & twiners and grass trees

Australian Plants Society, Central Coast Group - Newsletter August 2021

Tree ferns; Native pollinators vs honey bees in National parks

Australian Plants Society, Sutherland NSW Group - Newsletter August 2021

Tribute to Doug Rickard; On catching smart rats

Australian Plants Society, South East NSW Group - August 2021

Native bee resources; COVID safe bushwalk finds 187 species

Australian Plants Society, Menai Wildflower Group - Newsletter August 2021

Tony Porritt's talk on wildflowers of North Western NSW Parks; about acacias; exploring Georges River

Australian Plants Society, Northern Beaches NSW Group - September 2021

News from Western Australia; more on wattles & other potentially invasive natives

COMING EVENTS

For details of coming events, please see the APS NSW newsletter (which members should be receiving by email at the end of each month).

You can find more district group events on the APS NSW website at <http://austplants.com.au/calendar>

Wednesday 1 September 2021 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm	East Hills Group meeting. - Lugarno Peakhurst Uniting Church, 909 Forest Road Lugarno Via Zoom link https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82015335720?pwd=akxsYtliU3Y5QzBiNnp2VHYvRUtMdz09
Sunday 12 th September 9am to 3pm	Stony Range 60th Birthday Celebrations, 810 Pittwater Rd, Dee Why cancelled
September, daily, 10am- 4pm	Boongala Gardens - open for Spring 2021, 76 Pitt Town Road, Kenthurst NSW 2156. Admission charge, guided tours
Wednesday October 13 th , 7 pm	Karlo Taliana talking about our local Native Orchids. Menai Wildflower Group, Illawong Rural Fire Brigade Headquarters, Old Illawarra Road, Illawong. For a map: https://austplants.com.au/Menai-Activities
15-18 October	Four day APS trip to the Central West, including visits to Burrendong Botanic Garden and Arboretum near Wellington, Dubbo Botanic Garden, Taronga Western Plains Zoo and the Knop property at Narromine.
Wednesday November 10 th , 7 pm	Helen Patience giving tips for handling and caring for native cut flowers. Menai Wildflower Group

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	6564 6513	dlutherau@yahoo.com.au
Website Editor	Karlo Taliana	9786 8299	karlo.taliana@optusnet.com.au

<http://austplants.com.au/East-Hills>

