

# APS EAST HILLS GROUP NEWSLETTER



## April 2020

**NEXT EHG MEETING:**  
**7.30 pm, Wednesday 1 April 2020**  
**HAS BEEN CANCELLED**  
**BECAUSE OF THE COVID-19 OUTBREAK**

**WELCOME** to the April 2020 edition of the APS East Hills Group Newsletter.

As we enter a world without face-to-face meetings of our Group, perhaps members would like to use the newsletter to share some of our plant experiences? I would really like to stay in touch with you, and hear about your gardens and what you are learning about Australian native plants. Could you consider taking a walk around your garden and sending me a few photos – say up to 12 – with a few words about the photos and what's happening in your garden? Tony and Kate Porritt are starting us off in this issue with a few photos. If that doesn't appeal, could you share something else related to Australian native plants – what you've been learning from reading or watching or listening, on-line or in the real world?

Also in this issue we have a Note from the President, notes from our March meeting, including the plant table, and a little quiz. (Send me your answers, or write them down ready for the solutions in the next newsletter.)

Take care, and I look forward to hearing from you. The next newsletter should come out before the end of April, so please try to send me your contributions by about 20 April! If you feel enthusiastic, send them to me today!

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## A NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

With the corona virus having such a devastating impact on the world it is hard to keep positive. One way is our gardens, we are so fortunate in this country that we can either spend time in our own garden or (so far) visit the many local parks and gardens in our localities (maintaining appropriate distances of course). Liz and I get great pleasure in our garden, easily losing track of time and spending hours when we thought we would only spend 30 minutes gardening. My recommendation is get out into the garden - it is likely to be much safer than going to a shop.

Those of us who are regular viewers of the ABC's Gardening Australia program would be most impressed by the recent segment about the Menai Wildflower Group\*. Lloyd Hedges gave a good outline about the group and its activities, and they had plenty of flowers in bloom ready to impress. I am sure it would have influenced many viewers about the benefits of growing our Australian native plants, particularly their variety and beauty.

Finally, to those who are suffering financial or health concerns, we are thinking of you. Liz and I are available at any time for a chat. [See last page of the newsletter for phone numbers – Editor.] Keep calm and healthy.

Graham Fry  
President, East Hills Group

\*To view the program, go to <https://www.abc.net.au/gardening/factsheets/menai-wildflower-group/12097772> - Editor.



Photos above by Jan Douglas

**FROM OUR MARCH MEETING**  
**APS EAST HILLS GROUP MEETING – WEDNESDAY 4 MARCH 2020**

Lugarno–Peakhurst Uniting Church, Lugarno  
Notes recorded by Liz Cameron

Meeting opened at 7.45 pm with an attendance of 15 including Lloyd and Mary Hedges from Menai Wildflower Group. Apologies from Tony and Kate Porritt, Marie and Des O'Connor, Boyd Webster and Ellie Smith.

Graham Fry thanked Karlo for producing the March Newsletter.

Graham reported on the proceedings of an APS NSW Board Meeting the previous week:

1. Main business was about the 2019 accounts
2. Merle Thompson reported a slight decline in membership, mainly through people failing to renew their memberships. (Dorothy Luther reported difficulties in renewing her membership online - online problems may be a factor in the failure to renew)
3. APS NSW will develop a policy on bushfires and appropriate responses
4. Groups will be requested to acknowledge the Aboriginal land on which they meet, at the beginning of each meeting

Announcements:

1. Menai Wildflower Group meeting Wednesday 11th March – “Science on the ‘Endeavour’ with an emphasis on botany”
2. First quarterly gathering for the year hosted by Parramatta-Hills Group on Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> March at Kenthurst and Cherrybrook. Speakers will be Sarah Cains and Kris Gow, Southern Highland Group, on “Native Plants for Small or Cottage Gardens”; Kris has observed the group has been successful in attracting more members by calling itself as a ‘garden group’ [Subsequently cancelled due to Covid-19 outbreak – Editor.]
3. Next EHG meeting Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> April. Speaker will be Sophie Moore, a biological science postgraduate student at Macquarie University, speaking on “Functional Diversity of Urban Street Trees” [Subsequently cancelled due to Covid-19 outbreak – Editor.]

Doug Rickard gave a presentation on “The Native Plants [that once were on] on Kangaroo Island”. The presentation was based on his visit to the island before the devastating bushfires in early January 2020, but Doug provided an update on the post-fire status of many of the endemic and near-endemic plants. He also referred to the very heavy losses in wildlife species and their habitats. About 860 species of native plants grow on Kangaroo Island, and more than 75 are endemic or found only on a small part of the adjacent mainland. There is evidence of genetic drift in species on the island, away from the parent populations on the mainland; an example is leaf shape in *Goodenia ovata*.

Doug also touched on the visits to Kangaroo Island by Matthew Flinders and French explorer Nicolas Baudin, and the names they gave to some of its landmarks.

Some species illustrated by Doug were: Twining Fringe Flower *Cheiranthra volubilis*; Scarlet Mintbush *Prostanthera aspalathoides*; Spiny Mintbush *Prostanthera spinosa*; Drooping Velvet-bush *Lasiopetalum schulzenii*, and many peas belonging to a range of genera.

Sale of plants propagated by Karlo raised \$78. Raffle ticket sales raised a further \$33.



**FROM OUR MARCH MEETING**  
**PLANT TABLE – MARCH 2019**

List: Ashlie Stevenson

*Thanks to everyone who brought specimens.*

*Eremophila cuneifolia x fraseri*

*Corymbia maculata*

*Cupaniopsis anacardioides*

*Glochidion ferdinandi*

*Grevillea bronwenae*

*Grevillea preissii* subsp. *glabrilimba*

*Hibiscus geranioides*

*Homoranthus porteri*

Spotted Gum

Tuckeroo

Cheese Tree

Spider Net Grevillea

A	
B	
C	
D	
E	
F	
G	
H	

**QUIZ PART 1: CAN YOU MATCH THE PLANTS LISTED ABOVE TO THEIR PHOTOS BELOW?**

*HINT: Two plants have no photos and one plant has two photos!*



Photo 1



Photo 2



Photo 3



Photo 4



Photo 5



Photo 6



Photo 7

The photos above are by Karlo Taliana.

**FEATURE PLANT: *Homoranthus porteri***

Notes by Graham Walters

*Homoranthus porteri* is an open shrub to 2.5 m. The leaves are a dull green, small (12mm long 1.5mm wide) and arranged spirally in pairs. The small flowers hang in pairs on a stalk from the leaf axils. Flowers have red bracts and a style protruding from the centre of the flower petals. Flowering occurs mostly in autumn, but flowers and fruit may occur sporadically all year. It was first formally described in 1931 and called *Darwinia porteri*. In 1991 the name was changed to *Homoranthus porteri*.

*H. porteri* has a restricted range in woodland, scree slopes and heath on shallow sandstone soils and rock outcrops in an area between Mareeba and Ravenshoe in Queensland. It is listed as vulnerable.

### A bit more about *Homoranthus porteri*

Jan Douglas



Dave and I have *Homoranthus porteri* growing in our garden, and it is one of my favourite plants. Its flowers are intricate and colourful and occur in great numbers over a long period. It has also coped well with dry soil and drought. The photo above was taken at the Australian National Botanic Garden in January this year.

*Darwinia porteri* was named after Charles Porter, who collected the type specimen. (For an explanation of type specimens, see [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Type\\_%28biology%29](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Type_%28biology%29)). A brief internet search retrieved no further information about Mr Porter, but I discovered that the sample was submitted to C T White, Government Botanist of Queensland, who described the species, by a Mr W J Gallogly. Now that would have provided a much more interesting species name!

You can read the original description here

<https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/item/189685#page/187/mode/1up>. It mentions that 'When cut and placed in water it retains its freshness for a considerable length of time'. Dave and I kept the sample from the EHG March plant table with the idea of taking it to the March meeting of APS South East Group, and found that it was still looking pretty good after two weeks, mainly not in water.

An interesting article about growing *H. porteri* is here <http://anpsa.org.au/APOL25/mar02-9.html> And there is some more information here <https://apps.des.qld.gov.au/species-search/details/?id=13970>.



**QUIZ PART 2: CAN YOU NAME THE PLANTS IN THE PHOTOS ABOVE - A COMMON NAME? THE GENUS? THE SPECIES?**



## FROM MEMBERS' GARDENS

Kate and Tony Porritt shared photos of three gorgeous plants in flower and a basket of berry bounty!



Clockwise from main photo:

- *Banksia ericifolia* × *B. spinulosa*
- Lilly-pilly fruit harvest
- *Brachyscome* 'Radiant Magenta'
- *Verticordia serotina*

## COMING EVENTS

Because of the Covid-19 outbreak, there are no face-to-face events to report. However, there are lots of Internet sites to visit, and I expect there will be online events before long. In the meantime, remember to look at [www.anpsa.org.au](http://www.anpsa.org.au) Australian Plants online from the Australian Native Plants Society (Australia) and the APS NSW site <https://austplants.com.au/>

Please send me the internet addresses of one or two of your favourite (preferably non-commercial) sites related to Australian native plants for inclusion in future newsletters!

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