

# APS EAST HILLS GROUP NEWSLETTER



*Isopogon anemonifolius*

## February 2020

**NEXT EHG MEETING:**

**7.30 pm, Wednesday 5 February 2020**

### **Members' night**

**Come prepared to talk about something related to native plants!**

Bring a plant or a book or photos or a short presentation – share your plant-related ideas, frustrations or passions with the group!

Also, please bring specimens for the plant table and something to share for supper.

**LUGARNO-PEAKHURST UNITING CHURCH**

**909 Forest Road Lugarno (opposite the Chivers Hill Lugarno shops)**

**VISITORS ARE WELCOME**

**WELCOME** to the February 2020 edition of the APS East Hills Group Newsletter, the first for the new year. Let's hope 2020 brings us all good health, good rain and lots of good experiences and learning related to Australian native plants!

We don't have a newsletter editor yet, so the newsletter is a simplified version this month. I hope you will find some useful information in it.

Jan Douglas  
Interim Editor

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



## A NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

As I write this report I know that some of our members are still anxious about the bush fires and their possible impact on their properties. Our thoughts are with you.

There has been a lot written and spoken about the current bushfire season and the reasons it has been so bad. Unfortunately, a lot has been said by uninformed people, particularly politicians, who conveniently want to ignore the experts.

While there has been a lot of concern naturally about the impact of the fires on humans, we also have to consider the impact that these fires have had on ecosystems. We have seen plenty of very sad images of injured koalas and wombats, bush birds dead on beaches and the devastation of our beloved forest habitats. There is some comfort in the knowledge that Australian flora and, to some extent, fauna are adapted to bush fires, but the extent of these fires is so large that animals in particular may have difficulty in recolonising the bush when it recovers. While the vegetation will probably recover, its recovery will depend on many factors, not the least being the ongoing drought and the lack of soil moisture.

Of major concern is the destruction of the Border Ranges rainforest. It was usually assumed that rainforests don't burn, but this season they did, and the sad fact is that they are not adapted to fire and therefore it is likely that most fire-affected trees will die. It will take many years for this forest to recover - will it be in the same form as before or will it become more like sclerophyll forest? The long term impact of these fires is hard to predict, but it is unlikely to benefit the ecosystem.

On a more positive note, we had a very successful committee meeting in January and planned our year's activities.

Graham Fry  
President, East Hills Group





**Saturday, 21 March 2020**

The first quarterly gathering for the year will be held on Saturday, 21 March, and will be hosted by the Parramatta-Hills Group at the Gumnut Community Centre, Gumnut Place, Cherrybrook.

**Program:**

**10-12 noon: Garden visit Boongala Gardens and Rainforest, 76 Pitt Town Rd, Kenthurst**



Boongala Native Gardens and Rainforest is an 11 acre property located in Kenthurst, NSW. The magnificent and extensive gardens have been developed over a number of years by Mal and Jenny Johnston. The property also includes a lush rainforest, which has been maturing for the last 25 years. When you visit Boongala you will discover a wide range of Australian plants, wildflowers and the birdlife they attract. This is a garden visit NOT to be missed. Donation \$3 to the Flying Doctor Service.

More information can be found at

<http://www.boongalagardens.com/visitor-information.html>

**12 - 1pm: Lunch.** Bring your own and enjoy it in the grounds of the Gumnut Hall. Tea and coffee will be provided.

**1pm - 3pm: Guest Speaker: Sarah Cains and Kris Gow, Southern Highland Group APS NSW.**

Sarah and Kris will share their experiences on the use of Australian native plants for small or cottage gardens. When most people are planning a cottage garden the plants they immediately consider are exotic and include delphiniums, lupins, foxgloves and hollyhock, roses, daffodils, lavender and rosemary, to name a few. Many Australian native plants, however, are ideal for small gardens, such as the Native daisy (*Brachyscome*), Fan flower (*Scaevola*), Pink paper daisy (*Rhodanthe chlorocephala rosea*), Native daffodil (*Calostemma luteum*), Everlasting daisy (*Bracteantha bracteata*), Kangaroo paw (*Anigozanthos*), Flannel flower (*Actinotus helianthi*), *Banksia spinulosa* 'Cherry Candles' to name but a few. Not only are they beautiful but they are drought-hardy, easy to care for (they need little extra watering or feeding once established) and they attract plenty of wildlife

Both Sarah and Kris have beautiful small gardens in Bowral which we will hopefully be able to visit at the weekend gathering which is being hosted by the Southern Highland Group, 14-15 November 2020.

Sarah will be talking about design of small gardens and Kris, who is a former President of the Southern Highlands Group, will be speaking about plant choice for the small garden.

**Plants will be available for sale at both Boongala Gardens and Gumnut Community Centre.**

The information above is a screenshot of information supplied by APS NSW.

My apologies for the poor resolution - Editor.



**FROM OUR DECEMBER MEETING**  
**APS EAST HILLS GROUP MEETING – WEDNESDAY 4 DECEMBER 2019**

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

**APS NSW - East Hills Group Christmas gathering and AGM Wednesday 4 December 2019**

The gathering commenced at 6.30 pm with a very satisfying meal prepared by the members and co-ordinated by Marie O'Connor. Dorothy Taylor and Marie provided festive decorations for the tables, and Jan Douglas created beautiful pastel floral arrangements from flowers and foliage supplied from members' gardens; quite a feat considering the dry conditions.

We welcomed 13 visitors, including members of Sutherland and Menai Wildflower Groups; thanks to visitors Mary Hedges and Pam Pitkeathly for looking after the welcome table, collecting money and handing out lucky door tickets. Vida Riepon brought a fellow-GRC Bushcarer, Merv Dallas, and Graham Walters was accompanied by his wife Margaret and daughter Cathy. Twelve members attended and apologies were received from Tony and Kate Porritt, Karl Schurr, Boyd Webster and Ellie Smith, Chris King, Dorothy Luther and Carol Drew.

Following the meal, the AGM of East Hills Group was held. Outgoing President Graham Fry gave an overview of the year's activities and thanked all the members for their contribution to the success of our small group.



**President's Address - Annual Summary**

Our small group continued to flourish during the year. While our number of members is small, they are active with most attending our meetings and taking part in activities. I think the social aspect is an important part of APS. Our monthly meetings provide an opportunity to socialise with our friends while sharing knowledge and enthusiasm for growing native plants.

During the year we hosted 11 monthly meetings with speakers covering diverse subjects such as:

- Spring in Tasmania
- How Australian Plants will cope with Climate Change
- Kosciuszko Flora
- Eremophilas
- Flora of the Georges River
- A trip to Scotland and Ireland
- Bird banding training in Indonesia

In addition we had a number of members' nights where our members gave short presentations on a subject of their choice. We find these are excellent for uncovering unusual aspects of growing Australian plants and encouraging wide-ranging discussions.

Again this year some of our members entered plants in the Royal Easter Show flower competition and they were successful with a number of awards.

In September, our group hosted an open day at Sylvan Grove Native Garden. It was very well received as the gardens were looking particularly impressive.

One sad aspect of the year was the death of Hugh Stacy. Hugh was a stalwart of our group and his encyclopaedic knowledge of plants is sorely missed.

While all our members actively support our group, some key members of our group are:

- Jan Douglas who does an excellent job producing our monthly newsletter.
- Graham Walters who is our meeting speaker organiser.
- Karlo Taliana who co-ordinates our plant propagation activities and looks after the website.
- Tony Porritt looks after our finances
- Liz Cameron who carries out our secretarial duties

Finally our supper hosts Marie O'Connor, Dorothy Taylor and Kate Porritt provide delicious refreshments which ensures that our meetings finish on a positive note.

Thank you all for contributing to the East Hills Group of the Australian Plants Society.

Graham Fry

## **Elections**

John Aitken then accepted the role of chair for the election of office-bearers for 2020 and thanked East Hills Group for once again sharing food and friendship with other APS groups.

John declared all positions vacant and after he confirmed that Tony Porritt (in absentia) was willing to accept nomination as Treasurer, the current incumbents were all re-elected unopposed:

Position	Nominee	Nominated by:
President	Graham Fry	Jan Douglas
Vice-President	Graham Walters	Marie O'Connor
Vice-President	Karlo Taliana	David Crawford
Secretary	Liz Cameron	Dorothy Taylor
Treasurer	Tony Porritt	Graham Fry

Jan Douglas had given advance notice that she would not be standing again as Newsletter Editor and Karlo Taliana suggested that the role could be shared between committee members.

Graham Fry proposed that arrangements should be discussed at a committee meeting to be held early in the New Year.



Members who accepted re-appointment to their non-executive positions for 2020 were:

Council Delegate	Graham Fry
Propagation Officer	Karlo Taliana
Speaker Co-ordinator	Graham Walters
Hospitality	Marie O'Connor
Newsletter Editor	vacant
Plant Table Recorders	Dave Crawford and Jan Douglas; Ashlie Stevenson as reserve

Graham Fry announced there would be a meeting of the new committee in January and closed the AGM.

The evening's entertainment followed. Dorothy Taylor challenged the audience to an entertaining Flower Quiz based on general knowledge and the lyrics of old songs. Brains were racked for the answers and there occasional sighs of satisfaction when one came to mind; I don't think anyone achieved the perfect score of 18/18.

The quiz was followed by a bracket of folk songs performed by The Fossickers a cappella group, two of whom are grand-daughters of Graham and Margaret Walters. The Fossickers have performed previously at our Christmas gathering, and their mix of traditional and Australian songs, expressed with pleasing harmony, was much appreciated.

The meeting concluded at 9.10 pm with the drawing of the lucky door prize and the raffle. The lucky door prize, donated by Karlo, was 'The Australian Native Garden' by Angus Stewart and A B Bishop; it was won by Margaret Walters. David Crawford and Pam Pitkeathly won the hampers after Vida Riepon kindly ceded her claim to the second hamper, and the O'Connors, Vida, and Ashlie Stevenson won the three raffled plants – two provided by Karlo, and a pink flannel flower propagated and donated by Lloyd Hedges. Guests then enjoyed a leisurely chat over supper.

Plants that Karlo had propagated were sold throughout the evening and raised \$91. Raffle ticket sales and the entrance charge of \$5 per head raised a further \$172.



## COMING EVENTS – CHECK YOUR DIARY!

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

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<b>Wednesday</b> <b>5 February 2020</b> <b>From 7.15 for 7.30 pm</b>	<b>East Hills Group meeting – Members' night.</b> Bring a plant or a book or photos or a short presentation – share your plant-related ideas, frustrations or passions with the group!
<b>Wednesday</b> <b>12 February 2020</b> <b>7 pm</b> <b>OPEN GARDEN FROM 6PM</b>	<b>Menai Wildflower Group – Ruby Paroissien : Germination of the rarely-seen Pink Flannel Flower <i>Actinotus forsythii</i></b> This talk is based on research carried out with the support of Menai Wildflower Group.  <b>Illawong Rural Fire Brigade Headquarters, Old Illawarra Road, Illawong.</b>
<b>Wednesday</b> <b>17 February 2020</b> <b>From 7.45pm for 8pm</b>	<b>Sutherland Group meeting – Doug Rickard: Native plants of Kangaroo Island</b>  <b>GyMEA Community Hall, 39 GyMEA Bay Rd, GyMEA</b>
<b>Saturday</b> <b>21 March 2020</b>	<b>First APS NSW Quarterly Gathering for 2020</b> Hosted by the Parramatta-Hills Group at Kenthurst and Cherrybrook. See page 3 for details.

### EAST HILLS GROUP CONTACTS

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

