

APS EAST HILLS GROUP NEWSLETTER



June 2020

**NEXT EHG MEETING:
7.30 pm, Wednesday 3 June 2020
HAS BEEN CANCELLED
BECAUSE OF THE COVID-19 OUTBREAK**

WELCOME to the June 2020 edition of the APS East Hills Group Newsletter. In this issue we visit two gardens, read about the Dorrigo Waratah, consider the contribution of fruits to the garden, and reveal the solution to last issue's crossword.

I have only two items for inclusion in next month's newsletter, so please send me your contributions!

Stay well, stay warm, keep gardening and learning about Australian native plants!

Jan Douglas
Interim Editor
janhd@iinet.net.au / 9533 2187

FROM OUR MAY MEETING APS EAST HILLS GROUP MEETING – MAY 2020

Our May 2020 meeting was cancelled because of the Covid-19 outbreak.

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



IN THE GARDEN: *Graham Walters and Sue Walters*

These photos are of a garden that Graham Walters established in a previous residence in Peakhurst. Unfortunately, Graham is unable to visit the garden at present, so he asked his daughter, Sue, to take photos for inclusion in our newsletter. Thank you to them both. It's impressive to see the growth achieved by this young planting.



Graham also provided this photo (right) of *Eucalyptus caesia* in the Oatley garden of another daughter, Cathy.

The photos of *E. caesia* shown below were taken at Menai Wildflower Group's garden at Illawong Fire Station in June 2019.



IN THE GARDEN: A COUPLE OF MELALEUCAS

Graham Fry

Melaleuca fulgens - Scarlet Honey-myrtle

We have grown this species for a number of years. Although its natural distribution is in dry areas of Western Australia, the plants seem to be able to cope with Sydney's humid climate. Their flowers are in a bottlebrush configuration and can be scarlet, pinkish-red, apricot or purple. We have noticed that the flowers are popular with insects, particularly hover flies.



Photo: Kevin Thiele

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Melaleuca_fulgens#/media/File:Melaleuca_fulgens_-_Flickr_-_Kevin_Thiele_\(2\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Melaleuca_fulgens#/media/File:Melaleuca_fulgens_-_Flickr_-_Kevin_Thiele_(2).jpg)

Over the past 10 years we have grown nine *M. fulgens*. A few died earlier, but most have lived for four to five years. They are a good garden plant with lovely flowers and nice open foliage. They grow to around 3m high and 2-3m wide, are fast-growing and can be lightly pruned. The leaves are narrow, aromatic and up to four centimetres long. They generally flower in spring but the torrid weather of last summer has upset the status quo, and some of ours are currently flowering.



Photo: Geoff Derrin

https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/c/cc/Melaleuca_fulgens_%28flowers_4%29.JPG/1280px-Melaleuca_fulgens_%28flowers_4%29.JPG

Two forms are commonly cultivated, one with red and one with purple flowers. The purple-flowered form may be a hybrid with *M. radula*. We have found that the purple form is more floriferous than the red form.

The species was collected by Robert Brown on the south-west coast of New Holland, but when details were published in 1819 in *The Botanical Cabinet* (a 20-volume series describing the exotic plants cultivated in a London nursery), *M. fulgens* was mistakenly described as a native of NSW.



Photos from Graham and Liz's garden: Left: *M. fulgens*; Centre and Right: *M. lateritia*.

Melaleuca lateritia - Robin Red-breast Bush

This erect shrub reaches a height between two and three metres. Its light green, aromatic, linear leaves are two centimetres long. The bottlebrush-shaped flower spikes are orange-red, up to nine centimetres long. Their best attribute is that they flower in summer when often there is a dearth of flowers and they can add a some colour to a garden which might otherwise look somewhat drab. The flowers are visited by honeyeaters and insects.



Photo: Kevin Thiele

[https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/f/fc/Melaleuca_lateritia - Flickr - Kevin Thiele.jpg/1185px-Melaleuca_lateritia - Flickr - Kevin Thiele.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/f/fc/Melaleuca_lateritia_-_Flickr_-_Kevin_Thiele.jpg/1185px-Melaleuca_lateritia_-_Flickr_-_Kevin_Thiele.jpg)

M. lateritia is found in the south-west corner of Western Australia and is one of the most widely cultivated western species. This melaleuca has proved to be very hardy and free flowering. Occasional pruning will increase both foliage density and flowering. The plant in the images on page 3 has been growing in our garden since 1987 and so can be regarded as long lived.

M. lateritia was named by Alfred Dietrich (1795-1856) in 1834. The location is listed as 'Nova Hollandia'. As well as being a botanist, Dietrich was a skilled botanical illustrator. The species name is from the Latin meaning brick red and refers to the flower colour.

Reference: Articles by Warren and Gloria Sheather on the APS NSW website:

<https://austplants.com.au/Melaleuca-fulgens-Scarlet-Honey-myrtle>

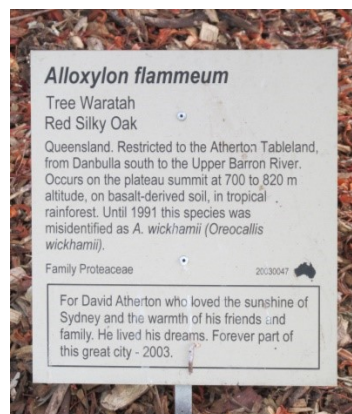
<https://austplants.com.au/Melaleuca-lateritia-Robin-Red-breast-Bush>

RECOMMENDED READING: *Alloxylon pinnatum* – Dorrigo Waratah

Graham Walters

The Dorrigo Waratah is a spectacular sight in full flower! Graham Walters recommends the following web article about it: <https://www.anbg.gov.au/gnp/interns-2005/alloxylon-pinnatum.html>

You might like to compare its flowers with those of a related species, the Tree Waratah, *Alloxylon flammeum*, in the photos below which were taken in the Royal Botanic Garden Sydney in 2013 by Jan Douglas.



SHOULD WE GROW MORE FRUIT?

Jan Douglas

It seems to me that when we plan and plant our ornamental or habitat native gardens and when we talk about them to each other, we focus mostly on the flowers. If we are interested in bush foods, then fruits as well as leaves and flowers become a focus. But I wonder whether most of us may be missing an opportunity for more colour, interest and habitat-value because we don't think enough about fruit. What do you think? Have you chosen native plants for your garden because of their fruit? Do you see fruit of native plants as a common feature in other people's native gardens? What are your favourites?

Fruit is a very wide term. If we use it to mean anything that holds seeds, then it includes hard pods like those on Brachychitons and Wattles and many of the pea plants, and other seed-holding structures like Casuarinas have – many have very attractive shapes and subtle colours. It also includes Banksia cones, and cones of Isopogon and Petrophile. Then there are the soft fruits, like Davidson Plums, Lilly-pillies and Finger Limes. Some of the most colourful are the berries, and many of these have the advantage of belonging to quite small plants, so we can fit more of them into our gardens! Below are a few berry photos from our garden and other fruit photos taken in various places.



Dianella sp. - Flax Lily



Austromyrtus dulcis - Midgegen Berry



Callicarpa pedunculata – Velvet Leaf



Casuarina sp.
Royal National Park



Hakea laurina - Pincushion Hakea
In cultivation, NSW South Coast



Eucalyptus preissiana – Bell-fruited Mallee
Kings Park, Perth, WA



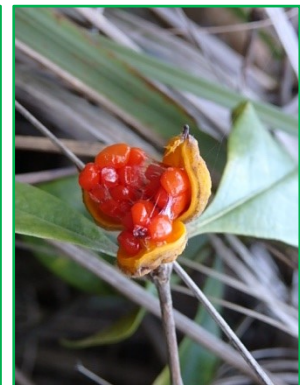
Persoonia sp.
Geebung
Royal National Park



Macrozamia communis
Burrawang
NSW South Coast



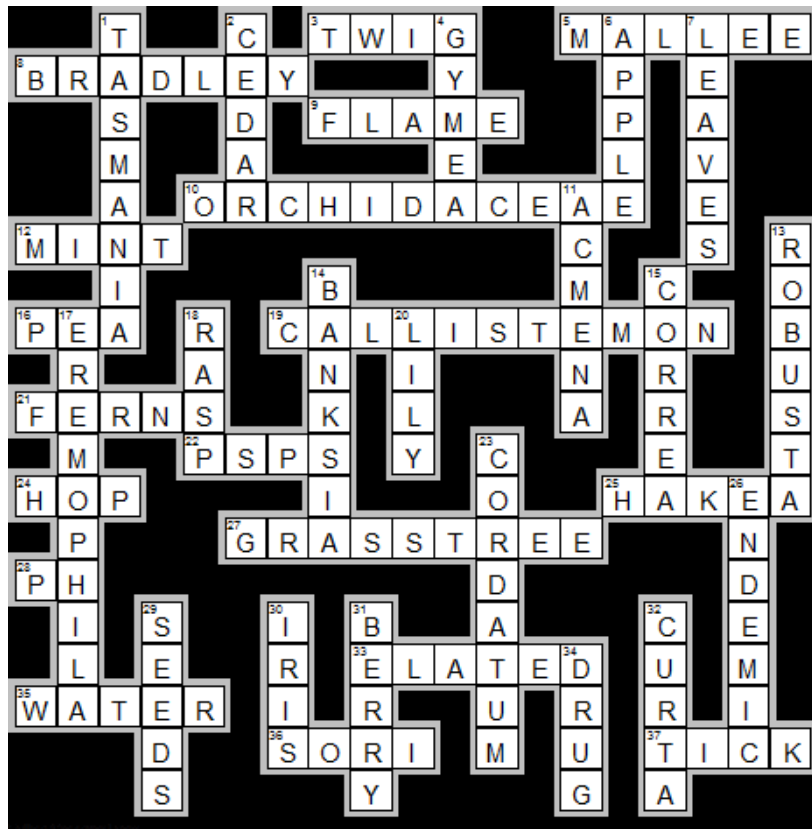
Telopea speciosissima
NSW Waratah
Blue Mountains



Pittosporum revolutum
Hairy Pittosporum
NSW South Coast

FROM OUR MAY NEWSLETTER
CROSSWORD - SOLUTION

Jan Douglas



COMING EVENTS

Because of the Covid-19 outbreak, there are no face-to-face events to report. However, some meetings are being held on-line, using Zoom. For details, see the APS NSW newsletter which you should be receiving by email.

EAST HILLS GROUP CONTACTS

President	Graham Fry	9580 6621	fryg45@gmail.com
Secretary	Liz Cameron	9580 6621	elsmere02@gmail.com
Newsletter Editor	Vacant		
Website Editor	Karlo Taliana	9786 8299	karlo.taliana@optusnet.com.au

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

