



NEWSLETTER

JULY 2022

Report on Forum July 2022

We had two very different presenters for the cold/wet Saturday, Pat and husband Warwick Wright from Canberra who are most active and tour guides with the Australian Botanic Gardens, as well as APS ACT. Following morning tea, Peter Olde, the Grevillea Man (from Oakdale), enlightened us with explanation of the history of The Naming of the Genus and where it is up to now.

Pat posed the question, who is smarter, plants or animals? She delighted and enlivened everyone up with her vast knowledge of the way in which plants, and in particular flowers, have adapted to provide a range of attractions to insects, birds and mammals in order for them to act as carriers of pollen (male gametes) from the anthers of one flower to the stigma (entrance to the female gametes) of another. The classic Australian example of this being the Dragon Orchids of W.A. of which each species has developed a labellum that looks like the single species of thynnine wasp, with which it wants to mate.

The information was really well illustrated by a wonderful collection of colour slides.

The use of sticky hairs (*Drosera* sp.) or a bowl of water (pitcher plant) was used to show the way of catching insects to provide the various minerals and other nutrients they are lacking in their environments; swamps and marshes as well as soils low in nutrients, of *Drosera* and pitcher plants.

If you want more information on this, I suggest you get hold of David Attenborough's 'Private Life of Plants'; the book or the video.

Peter was to provide us with a slide show to assist in his explanation of the History of the Grevillea genus, however, incompatibility of his machine with that of the club meant he had to rely on his verbal explanations.

Grevillea was named after Charles Francis Greville, an 18th C patron of botany and co-founder of the Royal Horticultural Society, by Robert Brown in 1810. A guy called Richard Salisbury got in first in 1809 but he wasn't the first to publish the name and describe the group. This caused a lot of conflict between the various experts of the time. It needs to be noted that all the writings and publications at this time were only in Latin, therefore you had to be a scholar of Latin to understand what was going on.

To give you some idea of the complexity of classification of plant species here is a little introduction. The study of plants and organising them into species is called Taxonomy. The allocation of species to Genera (and there are quite a few that have been in and out of Grevillea over the years) has been debatable but is dependent on the study of Ecology (where it is found), Morphology (form/appearance both internally and externally), Phylogeny (the evolutionary history, based on ancestor-descendant family trees) and in the current day and age, Genetics.

So, by 1870 George Bentham was the last to revise what types of plants went into grevilleas which was published in his *Flora Australiensis*.

And then nothing really happened until the 1986 when many new names for Grevillea species were published by Don McGillivray (retired from National Herbarium, Royal Botanic Gardens, Sydney).

Then finally Peter and Neil Marriot a Victorian nurseryman, published *The Grevillea Book* (3 volumes) in 1995.

I haven't referred to the genetics debate, but Peter gave the impression that the genetics need to be considered as just being a contributory factor to the determination of where a particular species, or sub species, belongs.

An APSNWS review of the books suggest that it would be very useful to anyone interested in Grevilleas and I must add that the talks stimulated my brain to such an extent that I was able to look a lot up to help me with writing this piece.

PROPAGATION DAY

The first Saturday of September six members gathered at the Galland's home for our second propagation day of the year. Plants taken from cuttings from the March propagation day were ready to be potted up. A lot of these plants had great root growth and some were even flowering although their top growth of stem and leaves was still short. Frank was particularly delighted with the root growth of his *Boronia megastima*'s which he had brought from his garden to the propagation day back in March. I hope we have some sun and warmer weather to get them growing.

2022 ANSPA CONFERENCE IN KIAMA - BY CELIA

5 of our members attended this conference along with about 250 members from all over this country and some visitors from overseas. The program on our second day of the conference consisted of half hour concurrent sessions on a range of 14 topics that took place in two venues, the Kiama Pavillion and the Anglican Church hall. Members were able to attend 5 sessions over the morning which meant that the speakers gave their talk five times. Topics ranged from 'Models of conservation from bush care to private land conservation', 'Granaries in the Grasslands', 'Lichens', to '5 islands rehabilitation' and many more. A few of the sessions are described briefly below.

Bruce Usher's session on photography was inspiring as he showed us his beautiful photos of all parts of plant life. One relevant point he made about photography in Australia was that we can't take photos between 10am and 5pm because of the tremendous glare from the sun. He talked about taking early morning walks through a native forest when there is a thick fog and seeing different impressions of the forest. After his talk I was enthused to dust my old cameras off or reinvest in new equipment.

A demonstration of the grafting technique was given by Phil Trickett that made the process look quite easy. He did emphasise the point to keep notes so you don't repeat failures. Perhaps if members are interested we could include a grafting session at one of our propagation days.

How many members have difficulty with remembering plant genus and species names? Rhonda Daniels led an interesting

session on demystifying plant names. There is an article on her talk on the APS NSW website at www.resources.ausplants.com.au/stories/demystifying-native-plant-names-an-introduction where you can also access a PowerPoint presentation on the topic.

Both Phil and Rhonda could be possible candidates to present at our annual July forum.

2022 ANPSA Excursion Day BY NATALIE

Among the staggering range of excursions offered at the biannual ANPSA Conference, held in Kiama in September, was Excursion No. 7 to Shoalhaven and the Beecroft Peninsula

Bus tours always fill me with fear of captivity, but this excursion day as part of the ANSPA 2022 Conference expanded everyone's horizons. It began with a visit to John Elton's spectacular *Grevillea*-featuring garden in the lee of Mt Coolangatta, near the town of Berry. John's use of vivid colour, depth of field in planting, rare varieties and novel graftings are inspiring. Created over a period of eight years, from a former blackberry and lantana patch, his garden is still evolving as John replaces plants that don't meet his expectations with promising new specimens — "I'm not a master planner," he says, despite the visually cohesive plantings. He prefers to experiment — making standards of *Grevillea* and *Eremophila* varieties, for example. Two hours in John's generous, knowledgeable company is not enough!

Moving closer to the coast, we stopped for lunch at the Shoalhaven Heads Native Botanic Garden, developed and cared for by volunteers since 2006. Started as an arboretum of east-coast native trees, this calm and beautiful garden now showcases plants from all over Australia. Its digital [inventory](#) with images of most plants featured is a great resource for novice gardeners wondering what will grow in this region. But there's nothing like actually wandering the pathways, illuminated with *Helichrysum* and *Hibbertia*, and coming across the once widespread endemic coastal rainforest tree *Toona ciliata* (Australian Red Cedar), which was logged almost to extinction in the 19th and early 20th centuries.

Next stop, Currarong, and the Abraham's Bosom Walking Track, which trickled like a stream with the overflow of spring rains. Our trek began with a naturally occurring vignette of bubbly-barked *Duboisia myoporoides* (Corkwood tree), in the company of fresh green *Baloskion tetraphyllum* (the rush previously known as Restio), and the tall black flags of *Gahnia sieberiana*. With the help of our wonderful ANPSA guides and

a number of knowledgeable conference attendees, we also identified an incredible list of plants including *Actinotis minor* (the little flannel flower), *Kennedia rubicunda* (Dusky Coral Pea vine), *Prostanthera densa* (a native mint), *Ricinocarpus pinifolius* (Wedding Bush), *Pterostylis nutans* (or nodding greenhood orchid) and the elegant multiple trunks of *Eucalyptus apiculata* (Narrow-leaved Mallee Ash) which now only occurs in scattered populations, such as this biodiverse coastal reserve.

Back on the bus, our heads were reeling with sensual and information overload, and the seeds of ideas on what to do with garden wetlands, boring grassy verges, and garden species that aren't performing to our satisfaction, "Rip them out!" says John Elton. There is no shortage of stunning native replacements.



John Elton standing next to *Eremophila nivea*



Grevillea leucoptera



Hypocalymma angustifolium

More articles to follow on the ANSPA Conference in our next newsletter.

NCC GOULBURN WETLANDS PICNIC DAY

The Nature Conservation Council of NSW is organising for a state wide Picnic Day in various locations on Sunday 16th October 2022.

FROGS Landcare and Goulburn Field Naturalists are hosting a gathering at the Goulburn Wetlands and inviting like-minded groups with an interest in environmental issues to join in on the day. 10am – 3 pm.

Plans will be finalised by Sept 25th & info sent to interested groups. We anticipate group swill :

- put banners on the fence,
- everyone bring their own picnic lunch, chairs etc.
- Pop-up stalls could be set up to discuss issues, distribute pamphlets etc.

The main aim will be to gather together , enjoy a social time and make it low-key, so that if the weather doesn't cooperate, it will be easy to scale down or abandon.

Let us know if you are involved in other groups who may be interested.

It would be best if the Picnic was a-political.

OCTOBER OUTING

The walk proposed for Saturday 1 October is in the Mount Gray Reserve. The path we'll be following is a mountain bike path, with lots of zig zagging across the hillside. Some parts are rougher than others, but for the most part, our route is reasonably smooth underfoot with some short stretches up and down. It's hard to estimate distance due to the nature of the paths. While the walk itself takes a little more than an hour, at our pace, stopping to inspect the flora, I'd guess we'll be somewhere between 2 to 3 hours.

We'll see many Acacias still in prolific flower, as well as a range of peas—Hovea and Hardenbergia are being joined in flower by a number of yellow and orange peas which we'll need Tim's expertise to identify.

Terrestrial orchids are also starting to pop up all over the hillside. Expect to see the fairy orchids *Caladenia caerulea* (Blue Fairy) and *Caladenia carnea* (Pink Fairy), *Glossodia major* (Wax-lip Orchid) and *Diuris maculata* (Leopard Orchid or Spotted Doubletail).

While I've mentioned some of the pretty things currently in flower, in truth, we're likely to see a large portion of the plants in Rodney Falconer's *Down by the Riverside*. So having a flick through the pages prior to our walk will be time well spent.

Meeting at the Council carpark at 8.30am will be simplest, but if anyone wishes to meet at the start of the walk, below are instructions.

The walk will begin from the top of the ridge. Heading north out of Goulburn along Sydney Road, turn right onto Speedway Road (Gorman Road is on the left). Follow Speedway Road until you reach a T-Junction, turn right here and park on the left (near the corner). If you get to the speedway, you've gone too far.

Calendar of Events

1 Oct	Mt Gray Goulburn
5 Nov	STEP Garden Canberra Arboretum
3 Dec	AGM