

# Blandfordia



North Shore Group  
(ABN 87 002 680 408)

APRIL 2023

## President's Message, Sue Bowen



Our native figs are one of my favourite plants because of their wonderful root systems and their unique pollination system that requires wasps to pollinate the flowers that are actually inside the figs themselves. This particular fig is growing on the side of a quarry at Killara.

We really enjoyed selling plants at the Friends of Berowra Fauna Fair on Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> March and I was very pleased to meet so many of our members. Don't forget that we will be open for plant sales (cash only) and growing advice at our Wednesday propagation afternoons at our shadehouse at the Ku-ring-gai Wildflower Garden on **5<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup> April**.

We will also have plants for sale at our next meeting at

Hornsby on Friday **14<sup>th</sup> April**. New members should ask for their 2 free tubed plants.

We are always keen to welcome new people at our propagation afternoons (plant sales are our main source of revenue) and also invite you to come to our **working bee** at our Ku-ring-gai Wildflower garden shadehouse on **Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> April**. Our priority is to remove the ferns and Selaginella that have proliferated under our work benches.

Sue Bowen

*PS If you have a **large space** there is a 2m tall bunya pine in a plastic grow pot. The lucky new owner (with a large property) will need a ute to move the tree and should contact Sue on 0478 957 951 for details.*

For a good image of a bunya pine and its potential height and shape see <https://www.dreamstime.com/stock-photos-bunya-tree-fog-image587223>

## Next APS NSG General Meeting

Friday 14 APRIL 2023

7.30 pm for 8pm

at Beatrice Taylor Hall, Willow Park Community Centre  
25 Edgeworth David Ave, Hornsby

**Speaker:** Karen Benhar

**Topic:** Local Stewardship Creates Habitat

**Background:** Karen is the President of Friends of Berowra Valley, co-founder of Wild Habitats Inc. and an experienced Bush Regenerator. She also lives on the edge of Berowra Valley National Park. This initiative is about reaching out to local residents who live on the edge of good bushland and teaching them how to take care of the bush to enhance local vegetation communities and wildlife.



### MAY meeting:

**12 May Topic: Members' experiences (successful & unsuccessful) of creating and maintaining a native garden**

Members are asked to send < 10 images to Jan Williamson by **Friday 5 May** at [janw7531@gmail.com](mailto:janw7531@gmail.com)

Jan will compile these into a presentation. If you would like to contribute but won't be able to attend the meeting please send your images with accompanying notes. Please contact Jan by email [janw7531@gmail.com](mailto:janw7531@gmail.com) or phone on 9875 2262 between 6pm -9pm if you have any queries.

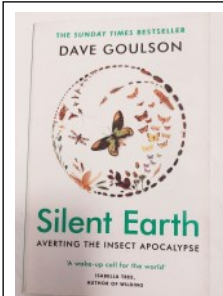
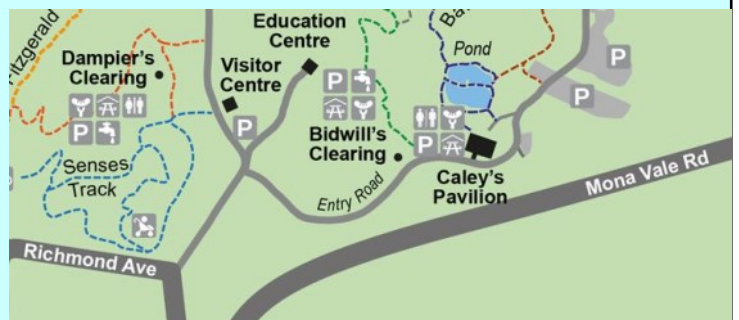
**Saturday 22 April  
9am to 1pm**

Working bee at APS NSG Shadehouse KWG. The shadehouse is located behind the Visitor Centre.

Wear suitable clothing & covered, non slip shoes. Bring food (morning tea & lunch) & water, sunscreen, insect repellent and tools for weeding and a kneeling mat. A sieve may prove handy.

Contact Sue Bowen on 0478 957 951 if weather is a concern. Working bee will be postponed if wet.

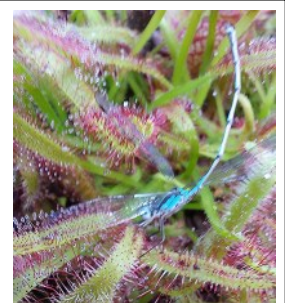
<https://www.krg.nsw.gov.au/Things-to-do/Ku-ring-gai-Wildflower-Garden/Wildflower-Garden-bush-trails/Wildflower-Garden-tracks-and-trails-map>



Jeff Howes wrote:

*I have just finished reading a book detailing the dramatic decline in the World's insects. Up to 80% loss occurring for so many known and unknown reasons. Depressing reading and a real worry for us humans. I have noticed the lack of insects in my garden, except for many dragon flies over the last month or so. I now have one less as my pot of sundews has claimed a victim.*

Ed Note: Maybe Karen's talk will encourage us to do our bit to reverse this trend.



Friday 10<sup>th</sup> March

## Aussie Plants Beside the Seaside

Brian Roach presented a most interesting challenge to the meeting when he discussed both *Ceratopetalum gummiferum* (NSW Christmas Bush) and *Banksia vincentia* and raised the question of to what extent do seaside conditions such as wind and salt spray possibly change the genetics of a plant.

Brian first encountered the dwarf form of *Ceratopetalum gummiferum* in 1983. Just prior to then it was found in Evans Head near Chinamen's Beach. Brian has since studied it and propagated it vegetatively and in 2004

registered it as Ceratopetalum Johanna's Christmas Bush: <https://resources.austplants.com.au/plant/ceratopetalum-johannas-christmas/>

From the initial cuttings only 3/50 cuttings survived. Persistence, and trial and error, paid off and today this dwarf variety is available from many sources. Brian commented that this form needs to be kept moist when grown in pots. It does not have a lignotuber. It tolerates all fertilisers. In the ground, once established, it needs no extra care or watering.



Last year, through a chance encounter while in the country, Brian rekindled his quest to find the original plants at Evans Head. Then by chatting with locals at Evans Head he was able to revisit the area and found two specimens. One was about 2.5m high x 6m wide- very different from the characteristic growth of *C. gummiferum* in other areas, including in the Hornsby area. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ceratopetalum\\_gummiferum](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ceratopetalum_gummiferum)

The beach area was heavily mined for rutile in the early 1970s and Brian thinks that this plant was one of the few to survive. Brian also commented that with GPS coordinates now able to be readily recorded, finding plants again is much easier than the serendipitous method he used.

*Austromyrtus dulcis* (Midgen Berry) <https://www.anbg.gov.au/gnp/gnp12/austromyrtus-dulcis.html> is growing in abundance at the same location at Evans Head.

The other plant that was discussed is *Banksia vincentia* that was first identified as a dwarf banksia species in 2010. It only grows to about 80cm high and is propagated from cuttings. This is fortunate as only 6 individual plants are known to be in the wild. Discussion is ongoing as to whether this is a dwarf form of *Banksia spinulosa*.

<https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/news/banksia-vincentia>

Written by Jan Williamson

Image by Brian Roach

Another long standing and highly esteemed member, **Bob Failes** also spoke at the March meeting. Bob spoke on *Learning about native plants- a hands on approach*.

Bob, a life members APS NSW, spoke of his long association with the **Walks and Talks programme** and explained how it is "hands on learning" where all aspects of the plants are examined- leaves, flowers, fruit, bark. Notes are available on the website. <https://www.austplants.com.au/Walks-&-Talks-Resources>

The programme has always been designed, as much as possible, to coincide when the plants are flowering. Specimens for examination in the Talk part of the session are only collected where there is an abundance of plants.

Bob and Wendy Grimm have created a comprehensive resource which can be accessed by using the following link. <https://resources.austplants.com.au/stories/learning-about-native-plants-a-hands-on-approach/>

The group is extremely grateful to their work and to the contribution by so many people over the years to the Walks and Talks Programme.

Jan Williamson

## Monday Walks & Talks

### Ku-ring-gai Wildflower Garden (KWG), 420 Mona Vale Road, St Ives

Be guided by members of the North Shore Group of the Australian Plants Society on a walk in the Ku-ring-gai Wildflower Garden to see and learn about our wonderful native plants as they come into flower.

These sessions are free. No prior knowledge is required. Information sheets will be provided.

Meet at **9.45 am** at Caley's Patio (behind Caley's Pavilion) in KWG. No booking necessary.

Enquiries: Wendy: [wendyagrimm@gmail.com](mailto:wendyagrimm@gmail.com) or 0419 323 035

Walks are easy/medium. Sessions run 10am to about 12 noon.

Please wear a hat, have suitable footwear and carry water/snack.

Sunscreen and insect repellent would also be a good idea.

**Date: Monday April 17**

**Topic: Bush foods & fibres**

**Leader: Wendy** (Please note 17.4.23 falls during school holidays)

**May 15 Monday Walk only Insects & inspiration Leader: Margo**

Wendy Grimm

For more information and the full 2023 W&T programme see <https://austplants.com.au/North-Shore-Walks-&-Talks>

#### VALE Mrs Ruth Hyde

Our condolences are offered to the family, especially her treasured sister Margaret Hamilton, and the friends of our much valued member, Mrs Ruth Hyde.

Ruth's warm presence and quiet contributions to the group are greatly missed. Over recent years Ruth often manned the raffle sales at APS NSG events.



#### WELCOME

A warm welcome to Eva K, Brendan M, Craig F and Karl v D, our newest members. We look forward to meeting you and sharing in our knowledge and enjoyment of our native plants.

### ***HELP still required for 2023 committee***

The following positions are currently unfilled. Your assistance is required. The committee meets once a month via zoom and meetings last for a maximum of 2 hours. Full job descriptions are available.

**Correspondence secretary:** mainly filtering incoming correspondence, few outgoing correspondence.

**Excursions coordinator for garden visits:** maximum of 2-3 visits a year

**Publicity Officer:** contacting APS NSW for enewsletter, local papers etc

**Conservation Officer:** taking an interest in local projects that may involve input from the group on conservation grounds

**Health & Safety Officer:** liaising within group. APS NSW is establishing guidelines and support for all groups.

**APS NSG delegate** to APSNSW Board.

For more information contact Sue Bowen 0478 957 951 or [northshore@austplants.com.au](mailto:northshore@austplants.com.au)

## APS NSW activities– recent past and near future



On 11<sup>th</sup> March Sue Fredrickson, Jan Williamson and Bob Failes ventured to Bundeena in “The Shire” to attend the Quarterly meeting hosted by APS Sutherland. Sue and Jan visited the garden of two of the members and then headed to the coast to look out over the ocean at the Balconies. As always, the sandstone cliffs are impressive, the ocean vast and everchanging and the coastal heath is brimming with insects and birds. Also, like in many areas of Sydney a view of Sydney’s

CBD is possible from an area of native vegetation. How fortunate are we to live here.

Unfortunately for Bob his morning activity was experiencing City Rail’s idiosyncrasies. We did all meet up with other members of APS from different groups for lunch and then were treated to a most informative talk by Ann Young.



This is Ann’s summary of her talk: *Mosaics of vegetation - the rocks and dirt story.*

- Water availability and temperature are major controls for both soil development and vegetation growth.
- Geology and topography are important in varying soil parent material and water movement.
- We can’t ‘read’ patterns in the mosaic but there is intricate and beautiful variation.

The next Quarterly meeting of APS NSW & AGM, hosted by APS Central Coast, will be on **Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> May at Kariong**

*Speaker:* 1.45 - 2.30pm - **Olga Blacha** *Achieving a New Civic Australian Style Garden*

Full details: see <https://austplants.com.au/event-4549820>

Jan W



### *Senna artemisioides*

Hardy ornamental, suitable for areas of low maintenance.

This plant fulfils this description perfectly. These images were taken in August 2022. This plant is thriving in a small garden on Pennant Hills Road, Thornleigh

Jan W

2023 Activities : SEE <https://austplants.com.au/North-Shore>

MONTHLY **GENERAL MEETING** with guest speaker

**WALKS & TALKS 2022** is held at Ku-ring-gai Wildflower Garden (KWG) 420 Mona Vale Rd, St. Ives *see page 4*

MONTHLY **GROUP ACTIVITY** *see page 2 Working bee*

**PROPAGATION** is held at KWG on alternate Wednesdays from 1-4pm 5 & 19 April 3, 17 & 31 May

**THE KNOLL** The Knoll is a display garden at KWG.

**PLANT SALES** and growing advice at our shadehouse (with white roof) at KWG (behind Visitors' Centre & KWG Nursery) on propagation afternoons every 2nd Wednesday (weather permitting) (cash only).

**FLOWER DISPLAY** at KWG Visitor Centre

**BUSHCARE** (KC) in KWG on alternate Wednesdays from 9am-12pm: 12 & 26 April from 9am -12pm 10 & 24 May

## 2023 Activities CONTACTS

<b>Walks and Talks at KWG</b>	Wendy Grimm	0419 323 035
<b>Propagation at KWG</b>	Tania Lamble	0415 043 671
<b>Bushcare at KWG</b>	Sue Bowen	0478 957 951
<b>The Knoll</b>	Wendy Grimm	0419 323 035
<b>Flower Display at KWG</b>	Jan Marshall	0403 908 042

### Do you want to know more about native plants?

Have you tried <https://austplants.com.au/> and within that site <https://resources.austplants.com.au/plant-database/> ?

### REMINDER

#### Suggestions for speakers at the general

**meetings** . If you know of anyone, or hear of anyone who you think would have a topic/ presentation suitable for our group please contact Jan Williamson on

[janw7531@gmail.com](mailto:janw7531@gmail.com)

### Committee Contacts

[northshore@austplants.com.au](mailto:northshore@austplants.com.au)

#### President:

Sue Bowen 0478 957 951

**Website:** <https://austplants.com.au/North-Shore>

**Newsletter Editor:** Jan Williamson  
9875 2262 [janw7531@gmail.com](mailto:janw7531@gmail.com)

The preferred method for Membership Applications & Renewals is to go to the APS NSW website and follow the instructions at <https://austplants.com.au/about-membership>

If joining or renewing online presents any problems assistance can be given by emailing your query to [northshore@austplants.com.au](mailto:northshore@austplants.com.au)

#### Are you in a joint membership of APS NSW?

Would you prefer to use separate email addresses and/or contact numbers? This arrangement would mean that you each receive electronic communications, e.g. *Blandfordia*. This can be arranged by contacting Merle Thompson [apsnswmembership@gmail.com](mailto:apsnswmembership@gmail.com)

### March 2023 Committee Meeting Notes

- Speakers at meetings
- Plant label machine: purchased
- Unfilled committee positions
- Plant and card sales
- Hornsby Shire Council & Westleigh Park proposal
- Purchase of Square Terminal
- APS NSW Board meeting report: including Annual report & financial report, update on Health & Safety safety manual & recommendations & plant listings of rare and endangered species.
- 2023 Val Williams Scholarship update

#### More plants for sale

**Brian Roach** (APS NSG member) at Westleigh Native Plants  
Contact [westleighnativeplants@gmail.com](mailto:westleighnativeplants@gmail.com)

**Newsletter submissions:** Deadline for submissions is the third Friday of the month.  
For the May 2023 edition is Friday 21st April 2023 Editor: [janw7531@gmail.com](mailto:janw7531@gmail.com)

***Blandfordia*** *The Newsletter of the Australian Plants Society North Shore Group*