

CALEYI



NORTHERN BEACHES GROUP austplants.com.au/northern-beaches



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CALENDAR

CANCELLED APS Northern Beaches April Meeting has been cancelled due to restrictions on public gatherings as a consequence of the corona virus outbreak.

In light of the latest Federal and NSW government directives as of 23 March 2020 regarding COVID-19, all APS meetings, events and physical gatherings are now to cease until further notice.

All members of APS NSW should abide by the directives of the NSW State and Federal Governments regarding social distancing and hygiene, both in place now and if these change in the future.

We hope to keep everyone safe in these challenging times.

Many thanks to this month's contributors Russell, Harry, Anne and Penny. If you have any articles or photographs (jpgs as attachments please) that you think will interest our members please send them to me 2 weeks before next meeting.

Editor march@ozemail.com.au 0407 220 380

HARRY IN PATAGONIA

At our meeting on 4 March, Harry gave a talk on his adventures in Patagonia in January 2018. Patagonia comprises the southern tip of South America, divided politically between Chile and Argentina. It is around 50 degrees south latitude, making it cold even in summer - not only cold but, as Harry frequently emphasised, VERY WINDY. He did the trip in two parts, the first part by himself, using local buses to get around and setting up his tent every night.



This part of the trip was generally in the vicinity of Fitz Roy, a jagged peak that featured in many of Harry's beautiful photographs from this area.



Fitz Roy with a *Nothofagus antarctica* in the foreground. Pic: Harry Loots

The lower lands below the peaks are steppe - grasslands interspersed with tough low-growing plants, many with attractive flowers. The area was once a

substantial sheep and cattle producer. The dominant tree of the area is *Nothofagus antarctica*, one of the Gondwana relic species in the area. Its Australian relatives include *G. moorei*, *G. Gunnii*, and *G. Cunninghamii*. Some other Gondwana plants - *Azorella monantha* (Cushion Bush - related to *A. macquariensis*, from Macquarie Island), and *Gaultheria mucronata* (Prickly Heath - similar to *G. depressa* of Tasmania).



The Cuervos, the Horns. The two toned vertical cliff-face that divides into two horns, the Cuervo Norte and the 2,600 metre Cuervo Principal. On top of a black clay stone at the valley's base rise the precipitous light coloured Paine granites, in turn capped by the Cuernos or horns. The Horn's black caps are fine grained metamorphic hornfelds. Pic Harry

For the second stage of the trip, Harry travelled further south to Puerto Natales where he joined a guided tour. The tour started with a ferry trip, followed by transfer to Zodiacs for the journey north along the Serrano River, ending in the Grey Lake. The lake is a large body of water fed by a glacier emerging from the Parque Nacional Torres del Paine. Scenery throughout this region was spectacular, as made clear in Harry's photos. The boat trip was followed by days of long walks - tiring but they were kept going by the amazing scenery of snow-covered mountains, glaciers and lakes.



Embrothium coccineum. Pic Harry



Porcelain Orchid (*Chloraea magellanica*), pic:Harry

Plants seen in this area included more Gondwana species - *Gunnera magellanica* (Devil's Strawberry - similar to *Gunnera cordifolia* in Tasmania) and *Embrothium coccineum*, a member of the Proteaceae family, known in South America as the Firebush Tree. Harry pointed out that the original name for our Waratah was *Embrothium speciosissima* before it was changed to *Telopea*.

Another beautiful plant endemic to the area is a Fuchsia, *F. magellanica*. Orchids of many different species were also abundant through the forests.

A great talk, wonderfully illustrated - thank you Harry.

Russell Beardmore

LESSER FAMILY - GOODENIACEAE - Ed

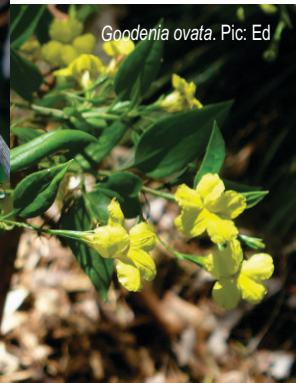
Our lesser plant family for March was Goodeniaceae. Named for a the Reverend Samuel Goodenough. In naming it was, however, a case of 'goodenough' being 'too much' for botanical tastes.

Part of the order Asterales it includes 404 species in twelve genera. Though Robinson claims 410/17 worldwide and 380/16 in Australia.

Members we are most familiar with are *Dampiera*, *Goodenia*, *Lechenaultia* and *Scaevola*. Less so *Anthotium*, *Brunonia*, *Cooperhookia*, *Pentaptilon*, *Selliera*, *Velleia* and *Verreauxia*



Dampiera linearis. pic: Ed.



Goodenia ovata. Pic: Ed



Scaevola nitida. Pic: Ed

An extraordinary feature of this family is the indusium or pollen cup. The flower exposes its pollen here. Some conjecture this is to avoid self pollination others as a fall back strategy for same in case of cross pollination failure.

The hebacious plants usually bear flowers of insect attracting yellows and blues. *Lechenaultia* providing the exception with some varieties of other hues.

The petal formation divides the family into members with the classic fan arrangement, e.g. *Scaevola*, and the uneven split e.g. *Goodenia*.

Many experts suggest the family to be treated as annuals in cultivation or pruned fairly often to encourage new growth.

VISIT TO BOONGALA GARDENS

Penny Hunstead



Boongala. Pic: Anne Gray

On Saturday, 21st March, in perfect weather, four people from our Northern Beaches APS Group visited Boongala Gardens.

Boongala Native Gardens and Rainforest is an 11 acre property in Kenthurst.

Originally a dairy and citrus farm, 25 years ago, Mal and Jenny Johnston have replaced most exotic species with Australian native plants, from all areas of Australia.

At one time, Boongala featured Grevillea species and its varieties, but now incorporates as wide a variety of other species as could be seen in any similar property, open to the public. A singular criticism would be that there could be more labelling of the species.

The original plantings were in large island gardens within wide lawn walkways. These still exist and contain most of the Grevilleas. Other species have been added to these island gardens, over the years.

Beyond the original plantings are a number of feature gardens. These include a bush tucker garden, frog habitat, fern garden and the bottle tree (*Brachychiton rupestris*) forest.

Besides developing those feature gardens, the Johnstons have been continually developing a beautiful rainforest garden, in a sloping area that runs down to a creek. Privets and other exotic weedy trees were gradually replaced with Australian native rainforest species representing all rainforest areas, other than in Tasmania. The guided walk there takes 45 minutes.

Boongala has a nursery selling a large range of native plants. Many of the species and varieties available are not seen in local Sydney native nurseries.

All the garden areas are thickly mulched with wood and leaf chippings. The weed suppression was impressive!

Besides the beautiful island and feature gardens there are other attractions. Native bee habitats, many delightful bird and lizard water dishes; quirky log or carved stone seats, along the walkways; old farm machinery of bygone eras and picnic lunch areas.

Throughout the property, there are large notice boards with excellent photos and information of the plants and animals to be found there, e.g. birds, fungi, bush tucker species, native animals. The large variety of native birds is evident, with many visiting the flowers and the seed trays,

put out for them.

Boongala is absolutely worth a visit during the Autumn and Spring open days. See the rainforest, have a picnic lunch, wander around the feature gardens and finish by buying some lovely treasures for your own garden.



Gazebo Pic: Penny Hunstead



Bush Tucker

Some of our Bush Tucker at Boongala Gardens

Bush tucker board Pic: Penny



Hibiscus Geranioides. Pic: Ed



Kangaroos. Pic: Anne



Medicosma cunninghamii. Pic: Anne



Grevillea 'Golden Lyre'. Pic: Anne



Bee hotel. Pic: Ed