



# Australian Plants Society South East NSW Group

Newsletter 147

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*Corymbia maculata* Spotted Gum and  
*Macrozamia communis* Burrawang

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## Next Meeting

**Saturday 6th April 2019**

**Meeting at 10.30am at the home of  
Geoff Lovie and Lesley Vincent**

**453 The Ridge Road, Surf Beach**

See map and directions on page 12

**President Dianne has arranged for members to visit this spectacular garden, sitting high on a ridge facing out to Batemans Bay. Lesley is a member of our Group, and also volunteers at the ERBG.**

**The following introduction, by Lesley, sets the scene for what should prove a delightfully educational day, highlighting gardening on a steep block.**

Our home, completed in 2015, is situated on a NNE facing slope next to the Mogo State Forest. The three and a half acre block was in a partially cleared state when we purchased it some 15 years ago.

The indigenous species on the block were primarily Eucalypts (predominantly *Eucalyptus paniculata*, Blackbutt), with *Macrozamia communis*, Acacia species and native grasses. At the bottom of the block is the start of a dry rainforest gully, which we have left untouched.



Geoff is an architect and I am a native plant enthusiast.

In 2013, I completed a Certificate 3 in Horticulture in anticipation of moving to the coast and building our new house and garden. Geoff designed and managed the construction of the house which nestles along the contours of the site and takes advantage of the northerly orientation with water views of Batemans Bay and the surrounding Eucalypt forest.

**In Geoff's words** "This efficient house is set in about a NNE facing slope with views of majestic trees, big sky and ocean. It's about landscape that wraps around it. There is prolific birdlife and nature. The house immerses the occupant in sun, sea air and the ever-changing views".



**As the site is fairly steep**, we needed to consider how best to deal with the slope and manage storm water. To this end, we terraced the 1 in 4 slope to provide a house pad, circulation and a more level grassed area, and planted & mulched the banks.

We removed some of the original native trees and retained others in accordance with the requirements of the Rural Fire Service and Eurobodalla Council. Around these trees and Macrozamia, we created managed garden beds to separate them from grassed areas.

The garden beds become less manicured as they get closer to the forest and the lower section of our lot, which includes original trees and forest is left untouched for use by wildlife.

In designing the landscape we were conscious of our proximity to the forest and the risk of bushfire.

My aim was to have a predominantly native garden so I could indulge in my growing interest in Australian native plants, and attract native birds and

insects.

Plantings close to the house are kept low so as not to impinge on the view from the house and further down the slope I have plantings of Grevillea, Banksia and Anigozanthos which are enjoyed by a variety of native birds in full view of our lounge and kitchen windows.

'Ed'. Our visit to this garden will prove the perfect follow up from our March meeting, which as highlighted below, provoked much comment amongst members, and challenged the owners of the gardens, Jenny and Peter, and then Paul, to think more broadly about their plans.

In the afternoon, we will spend some time in Mogo State Forest looking at the diversity of the flora.

**As always, members are advised to bring morning tea and lunch, and a seat. Wear sensible clothing and shoes suitable for the planned outdoor activities.**

**Note also that dogs are not permitted at APS activities.**

## Last Meeting,

### Landscaping a new garden, presented by Landscape designer Shane Doherty

The following report is entirely the work of Shane, and your editor is very thankful that she agreed to prepare such a detailed work.

Although the presentations she made at each of the gardens was recorded, I must say trying to precis 4 hours of recorded words, and make it read at least a little sensibly, was a task which I struggled with. So thanks again Shane.

On 2<sup>nd</sup> March we visited two established gardens whose landscape structures and planting have been inherited by their current owners.

The owners would like to make changes to their gardens and asked APS members, with assistance from Shane Doherty, landscape designer, to look at how they could approach changing the existing garden design.

#### The first garden visited belongs to Jenny and Peter John.

Starting at the entrance to the garden, we discussed the importance of *looking at* the *aspect* of a house and garden – what is first seen on entering a property.



Shane discusses aspect and prospect, terms we were to become familiar with as the day progressed.



Taking it all in, as Shane explains the theory, and suggests options for putting thoughts to action. I think Peter, seated, might be concerned with the task ahead.

*Looking out from the house* – the *prospect* – is equally important, as we saw when we stood on the verandah and looked out towards the view. The view requires framing, so it's important to think about height of plantings so a view is not blocked.

#### Easterly view to Montague Island from the front verandah



#### This is important for several reasons:

- A garden entrance is the first impression of a garden home.
- Entrances serve as preludes to what lies beyond.
- Entrances are symbolic signs of welcome.
- Garden entrances that reflect a home's architectural style create unity.
- Entrances serve as directional guides and transitional points from one area to the next.
- Certain key elements serve as components of an entrance.

This garden requires boundary screening, which is essential for privacy and a sense of pleasant enclosure in a garden.

Some screening shrubs to consider are:

### *Syzygium australe* 'Pinnacle'

The narrow nature of this tree has made it popular for use in narrow landscape areas that need screening. It also makes a great feature tree when pruned



yearly in a conical shape. Although this tree will reach 6 metres or more it can be pruned down to and kept at a height of 2 metres if desired.

### *Tristaniopsis laurina* 'Luscious'

This form of *Tristaniopsis* has large shiny leaves with red new growth and striking bark. It is a good size for residential gardens and makes a wonderful shade tree.



*Syzygium smithii*  
'Red Head'

Red Head is an attractive large shrub / small tree with glossy rounded, deep green foliage. New growth flushes red to deep claret then changes to chocolate before hardening off the dark green foliage. The dense foliage can be pruned down to 1.5m high and is fire retardant. This tree is one of the best forms for pleaching. It is highly Psyllid and borer resistant, and does not get Myrtle rust. Its compact size makes it a great shade tree if the first 1.8 metres is cleared on the trunk. It is great for screening or as a feature tree, especially with its beautiful red new growth twice a year.

***Plant examples downloaded from [www.ozbreed.com](http://www.ozbreed.com)***



**Screening along the road, and the borrowed landscape of the forest provide privacy,**

**but improving the planting on the northern boundary is necessary to provide adequate screening**



*Syzygium smithii*  
'Sublime'

Sublime is a mid-sized tree with refreshing lime green new growth and dense foliage to the ground, although if the trunk is cleared to 1.8 metres it makes a dense shade tree. It has proven to be a very reliable plant Australia wide, with excellent Psyllid and Myrtle rust resistance. For screening it is a trouble free plant, and can be pruned regularly, or if forgotten it responds well to harder pruning.

We looked at how levels in the garden can make the difference between difficult and easy access, pedestrian stability and ease of use for wheelbarrows, walkers and wheelchairs.



The rear garden has a cross slope and structures that currently limit the view of the garden.

We started to have an interesting discussion on how to open up the garden, overcome the slope and prevent stormwater runoff problems, but ran out of time, as we had another garden to visit in the afternoon.

We did talk briefly about constructing a pergola or having a living canopy of large shrubs/small trees to provide shade over an outdoor area.

The two photos here are European, but some trees to consider for a living canopy are *Tristaniopsis laurina*, *Hymenosporum flavum*, *Syzygium smithii* ‘Red Head’ and *Acacia coventyi*.

It is vital to start formative pruning when planting and to prune little and often to ensure a clear trunk, spreading canopy and desired height.



**Screening and a sense of enclosure**



**Enclosure – A garden room defined by borders of various materials**

## After lunch we visited Paul Hattersley's garden.



### Paul listens as Shane explains a finer point on aspect/prospect, and how this affects our perception of his garden

Looking at the boundary planting we talked about establishing texture, pattern and rhythm by planting drifts (three or more) of the same, or similar to the existing *Murraya* and *Syzygium* species. This planting can be punctuated by an exclamation point of colour, such as an existing *Grevillea* 'Peaches and Cream'.

The eye seeks symmetry and order and the idea is to create a sense of rhythm and harmony in a garden, rather than creating discordance and distraction by planting one each of different plants.

It's also wise to think of where the plants originate – sparse dry land plants often don't sit well next to the lush green tropical or sub tropical species.

- Plants growing in a large drift or colonies appear more spontaneous and natural, as happens in our bushland.
- To gain its full effect, abundance has to be contained to the point where it is not a distraction.
- A few "workhorse plants" used generously establish abundance without excess.

Texture, pattern, and shape add layers of richness and interest to a garden.

- The cadence created when planting in patterns implies rhythm, order, and dependability. Observe patterns in bushland.

Paul has lovingly collected and mapped many plants in his garden, but has decided he'd like to have a garden that is easier to access and maintain.

The inherited garden had a hierarchy of plants starting with the tallest close to the house and reducing in size to small plants on the boundary. This created a sense of exclusion rather than inclusion in the garden, access around the house and in the garden was difficult, and there was no boundary privacy or sense of enclosure.





This garden will respond well to selective removal and judicious pruning of plants.

A boundary of tall shrubs and small trees will provide privacy and a sense of enclosure.

Replacing tall plants adjacent to the house with small shrubs and groundcovers among carefully placed rocks will allow for gently winding paths that not only give access for maintenance and enjoyment of plants, but will add mystery and intrigue.

- Mystery in a garden uses the unknown, the unseen, and the imagination as elements of design.
- Mystery heightens the imagination of visitors, setting up the anticipation of surprise.
- Intriguing paths invite exploration.

Around a corner a seat can be placed for observing birds in a birdbath. In a clearing sculpture can add interest and enjoyment.

- Whimsical touches personalize the garden.
- Humour in the garden adds enjoyment to the outdoor experience.
- Themes of whimsy running through a garden can add harmony, wit, and surprise.

**The two gardens we visited are both suburban but different in character and landform. Thank you to everybody who gave ideas on design and planting and thank you to Jenny, Peter and Paul for allowing us to join in the fun of creating somebody else's garden! Shane Doherty**

**Goodeniaceae Family, a few photos of plants in gardens visited during the FJC Rogers seminar**



**Wartook Gardens, the creation of Royce and Jeanne Raleigh on the western side of the Grampians, Victoria**

***Coopernookia polygalacea***

***Dampiera adpressa***

***Dampiera linearis***





The delightful mauve pink flowers of *Goodenia macmillanii* exude a sweet chocolate fragrance.



The small woody shrubs of *Lechenaultia formosa* come in a wide range of colours. *L.* "Lola", a pink form has been in cultivation since the 1970's



The spectacular *L. biloba* from Moora is possibly the most intense blue of any plant. The plant below is *L.* "Ultra Violet" a hybrid of *L. biloba* and *L. formosa* bred by Greg Lamont of Gosford in the 1980's



*L. formosa* red flowered prostrate form



The brilliant orange of *L. formosa* "Starburst"



Panrock Ridge, Stawell. Garden of Neil and Wendy Marriott, growers of a huge diversity of Australian plants. Mounded planting beds provide good growing conditions, and ensures that should heavy rains fall, excess water drains away. Panrock Ridge also holds the *Grevillea* collection



Plants which should prove adaptable in our gardens, the suckering *Dampiera alata*, and on the left, *Scaevola aemula*, which comes in a range of flower colours, from white through pink mauve and purple.





Phillip Vaughan is widely recognised for his nursery skills, and one can always find an excellent range of unusual plants at his Pomonal nursery. He has developed some lovely display gardens which feature many smaller plants ideal for planting in rockery style gardens. Of note is the range of grafted plants, which should improve the reliability of some of the choice Western Australian plants we would love to grow.

The scale of this small raised area is one which we could easily replicate in our own gardens.

The dominant plant below, *Velleia foliosa* displays the most brilliant orange flowers displayed prominently above the foliage on a plant which grows about 50cm high.

Note that each of the gardens from which these photos were taken use gravel exclusively as a mulch. This ensures that any rain which falls reaches the soil, and in cooler months the gravel retains some heat. Of course, gravel also catches any weed seed that blows in, and provides an ideal location for germination, so you need to be diligent with maintenance. The rewards are that you will be able to grow some treasures that might fail in beds mulched with organic matter.

Many plants in the **Goodeniaceae** family are short lived perennials, and for this reason we may resist trying them.

**Maybe you have “tried them before and they all died”.**

So, did you anticipate that they would live for years, like a *Grevillea*, for example? In Europe and the United States, many of these desirable plants are grown as annuals, their vibrant colours admired during the summer months, and the plants then discarded, just as you might discard an annual flower which has passed its best.

There are some species which sucker, and therefore regenerate from roots. These will prove long lived provided drainage is adequate. Even plants which look as if they have gone where dead plants go will often regenerate following a decent fall of rain.

So, to inspire members to expand the range of **Goodeniaceae** in our gardens, the following information on propagation should give encouragement. There was a very detailed article by **Hazel Dempster**, a member of the Wildflower Society of W.A. in the Spring 2015 issue of *Australian Plants*, which gives details about how to grow a range of species. **Hazel presented this information in a paper to the FJC Rogers Seminar, and it is reproduced here in part.**



The suckering habit of *Dampiera salaha* makes it an ideal plant for edging a garden bed or path.

Hazel began experimenting with leaf cuttings of **Goodeniaceae** species some years back and has been successful in propagating many species.

**When treating leaf cuttings** dipped in Clonex Hormone Gel, plants produced strong roots within a few weeks and, from those roots the rosettes appear a few weeks later. These positive results meant that collecting species from the wild allowed leaf collections for propagation purposes, a viable alternative taking cuttings or finding seed.

Joyfully, I found the same method was successful with species of the *Stylidium* family, which is my other favourite family.

This discovery of the appearance of adventitious roots from leaf cutting, I believe creates the potential;

- To increased amount of vegetative material available for propagation
- To be more economical for production
- To increase the mass numbers per species,
- To increase the knowledge of the diversity of species within the Goodeniaceae.
- To increase the species diversity of species within horticulture, and
- For home gardeners to learn how to easily propagate and grow their own plants and replenish their own seasonal colour into their gardens.

### **Unearth these horticulture treasures by Propagation**

My growing is carried out in the Northern Suburbs Wildflower Society volunteer nursery in the Landsdale Farm School. The methods are simple; an igloo covered with horticultural film, and automatic sprinkler system. The sprinkler system is used once a week in winter and twice a week in summer or as needed.

The propagation mix is 50/50 Perlite/native seed raising; Clonex Hormone Gel; normal setting of cuttings; a fungal spray (when needed) and covered with a 2 litre cooldrink bottle with the base removed. Cuttings strike relatively quickly, mostly within a few weeks.



Photo Hazel Dempster

**Many Goodeniaceae species have a dry summer dormancy**, so the best opportunity for success is waiting until the vigorous growth period, appearing from March onwards. There is a plethora of leafy herbaceous perennials at this time of year, many of which also sucker, while others provide the opportunity for division of rosettes and shoots from around a basal tap root. The surface of this tap root often splits to form islands of plant tissue from where the opportunity for healthy propagating material is formed.

**Working with Goodeniaceae species**, around 90% - 100% of the plant material to be used for propagation.

Part of the journey in working with Goodeniaceae is to explore the form of the plant to acquire the best material.

The following provides information on propagation techniques.

### **Suckers**

Many Goodenia species present with suckers appearing from the central root system of the plants or along the adventitious undergrown roots as they spread under that surface of the soils. These are able to be collected, intact any time of year in bush. They usually strike readily, and are an easy learning method. *Dampiera* species, particularly, grow from suckers or shoots.



**All parts of a plant can be used for propagation, stems cut into single nodes, suckering roots removed and treated as cuttings, and single leaves, which is discussed further.**  
Photo Hazel Dempster

### Leaf cuttings

An easy-to-learn propagation method. The fleshier leaves are most successful. Collect leaves from plants when in flower, as taking rosettes usually have flowering spikes. Individual leaves are removed gently from the base of rosettes or tufted species. Note that there doesn't have to be any part of the stem on the leaf. Leaves can be collected at any time through the growing phase of the plant.

**My trial of leaf cuttings, began after returning from the seminar. Cuttings are treated as usual, but the leaf cuttings were set beneath an upturned plastic tray (one in which we had purchased apples)**



The photos to the right show success with *Goodenia varia*, *Goodenia affinis* and *Velleia foliosa* each successfully producing roots in around 6 weeks. My propagation mix is 1 part sharp sand, 1 part peat and 3 parts perlite. Leaves were set without any hormone treatment.

### Rosettes and divisions

Side shoots are collected usually from around the base leaving the main bunch of rosette intact. Treat the rosette cluster as a normal cutting.

Once established with the plant forming more rosettes, they can be separated by gently pulling or cutting the sections of plants apart to form individual plants. Take care not to damage any new season's white roots, cut away old roots then remove damaged and dead leaves.

The whole plant can be divided to form perennial divisions from the central point and also, suckers along the adventitious roots. Collection and division is best carried out in autumn and after first rains when new roots form at the base on the new division

### Division of clumping plants

This method is the best way to grow small rockery plants which grow tight or in rosettes, or off shoots from the top of tap root.

### Tip cuttings

Collect new firm growth after flowering. These single tip cuttings do strike quite easily leaving the base of the suckering stem in place.

### Section Cuttings

By cutting each section of the long ascending stems from which all the flowers are displayed, immediately under the leaf clusters, and settling them in as cuttings, quantities of plants can be achieved. These clusters strike well and soon send out new shoots to form the traditional ascending mounds. This method produces a lot more plants and sometime up to twenty clusters can be gained from one stem.

As stem shape in the genus *Dampiera* can be varied, in my experience flat leaf and triangle shaped stems are just as successful.

### Semi Hard wood cutting

On woodier stems species the same method of cutting directly under a single leaf, work successfully the stem gives more support to the leaf during the striking process.



**Hazel Dempster**



## Instructions to get to Lesley and Geoff's Place

The house is on the western side of Surf Beach up on The Ridge Road. There are a few ways to get there.

**From Batemans Bay**, take Beach Road, and continue until reaching the High School. At these traffic lights bear right onto Glenella Road. This leads onto George Bass Drive at a new roundabout, where your bear left and continue on George Bass Drive, turning onto Tall Gums Way which is indicated by a large sign pointing to Tomakin and Mogo. Follow Tall Gums Way to a T intersection at The Ridge Road. Turn right and follow this winding road till you get to 453 on the right, in a cleared area.

Note that if you can read this old map, Surfbeach Road has changed to Tall Gums Way, and Old Malua Bay Road is now The Ridge Road. Using Google maps you will have no problems.

**If you come in from the south** along Princes Highway, you turn onto Tomakin Road at Mogo (near the bridge). After 4.4km, turn left at Dunns Creek Road and travel 7.9km until you reach the intersection of Dunns Creek Road and The Ridge Road. Turn left onto The Ridge Road Follow this winding road till you get to 453 on the right, in a cleared area.

## Committee news

Eurobodalla Regional Botanic Gardens was, whilst I was Manager, supported over many years by Canberra Signwriter Paul Mlakar.



**ROSEDALE TREE CHANGE CLOSE TO THE BEACH**  
6 Bower Place

Paul has recently passed away, and his widow Penny has reluctantly decided to sell their Rosedale hideaway. The cottage is tucked away on 2 acres of pretty bushland. As APS members, we are sympathetic and supportive of retaining such natural areas, so I thought it appropriate to let you know that this unique property is currently on the market.

Nestled amongst tall gums and located in one of the South Coasts most sought after areas is this private retreat on 7796 sqm block. It features a comfortable 1 bedroom, 1 bathroom cottage close to South

Rosedale beach and has huge potential. Properties of this size and in this location are very rare and one of a kind. Contact Peter Asbury at Fraser Gray Real Estate Broulee 02 4471 6444 for details and inspection.

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