



# Australian Plants Society

## South East NSW Group

Newsletter 160

May 2020

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

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Again, whilst not meeting physically, members are continuing to enthuse about their gardens, and Australian plants. This newsletter contains another great selection of articles that members have provided a for your enjoyment.

### Committee News

The committee have not made any decisions as to when we might again be able to meet, but with restrictions being eased, the time might not be too distant when we can again gather as a group.

Obviously it is prudent to wait until advice is received from government and medical authorities that is could be safe to venture out, but to date no word has come from APS NSW Region that they are considering any return to normality. So it is best we sit tight and keep safe.

A couple of groups have held meetings via zoom, and although not quite the same, from experience I can say that the opportunity for contributing to the discussion is better than one might expect. Sutherland Group recently hosted such a meeting, with Dr Peter Weston, titled Gondwanan Connections. Peter has done a lot of research on the origins and evolution of Gondwanan flora, and discusses the results of his studies. Although it was a first try, the presentation went well, and you can watch a replay on youtube: <https://youtu.be/IlkiYpBFbgk>

With approval for small gatherings of friends, maybe it is time for some to visit another member and see how lockdown has been spent doing positive things in the garden. This choice is one we as individuals can make, keeping in mind that the covid virus is still lurking, and it is still possible to contract it.

Meanwhile, maybe you could contribute an article, no matter how small, or detailed, about your garden, or a special plant, or any other topic which would be of interest to members. Don't feel that you lack the knowledge or experience to tell your story. Also if you come across an item of interest, why not let others know.

To help the editor, it is best to provide your article as an email attachment in word or RTF format, and pictures as separate jpg.

I was very sorry to read the stories about gardens burned in the fires down on the coast. Gardens may not have economic value but they take years of effort, patience, creativity and love to create.

Here in Reidsdale, on the western side of the Monga National Park, the Currowan Fire was stopped in the back paddocks of the cattle properties that adjoin the park. My adjacent property was spared. Even so, with the drought, the heat waves, the endless wind and the rabbits it was a very challenging spring and summer in the garden.



**A broad view of the garden and paddocks.**

**Whilst the garden looks reasonably happy, the distant pasture is decidedly not. What a difference rain has made.**

We have had 3 dry years in this part of the Southern Tablelands. In December the Shoalhaven River stopped running and the Braidwood township ran out of water, with water being trucked in from Canberra.

In early November my dam ran dry leaving only my house tank and garden tank for the cows, the house and my gardens. By mid December my garden tank emptied and I was down to 15,000 litres in the house tank. A cow will drink 100 litres of water a day in hot weather. In late December I was forced to purchase 25,000 litres of water from Goulburn, but by then the Currowan Fire was burning on the ridges in the Monga Park above my property and I used all that water in 24 hours wetting down around the house.

With no mosquitoes the rabbit population exploded.

So where did this heat, wind, lack of water and rabbits leave my garden. Not surprisingly, with the exception of my **waratahs** (*Telopea mungaensis*, **Monga waratah** and *Telopea* ‘**Braidwood Brilliant**’, a cross between *Telopea speciosissima* and *T. mungaensis* produced at ANBG Canberra) which I put under shade cloth and continued to hand water weekly, I had to completely stop watering the garden.

In these conditions, amazingly, my garden largely held up.

There was no spring flush, no new growth and nothing flowered, but almost nothing died either. There were a few small tragedies: my two **Tasmanian pepperberrys**, *Tasmannia lanceolata*, one male and the other female died together on Jan 4, the hottest day ever recorded in Braidwood; a newly planted *Banksia grandis* was eviscerated on the same day; a group of Western Australian mallees which hadn't handled the frost, just faded away; the buds of a *Eucalyptus preissiana* which formed in March 2019 finally opened in November and then fell off two days later; some of my **correas** which were relentlessly attacked by the rabbits with every leaf eaten off and the roots repeatedly dug out, turned into dead sticks; **yellow buttons**, *Chrysocephalum apiculatum*, **lemon heads** *Calocephalus citreus*, and **winged everlasting**, *Ammobium alatum* all failed to flower. Overall, however, the garden survived with some plants looking as good as ever. In mid January two weeks after the fires passed, here in Reidsdale we struck lucky, with 2 thunderstorms totalling 70mm. These storms caused quite bad erosion across my grass denuded paddocks but not my gardens which are heavily mulched. The tanks half filled and a puddle formed in the bottom of the dam. My plants woke up. A thin layer of green grass emerged across the paddocks. Then in early February came the big rain. We received 400mm in three days with another 100mm about a week later. For



the first time since 2016 my dam entirely filled as did my 100,000 litre house tank and my smaller garden tank. Within 10 days the grass was eight inches high and brilliant green.



These photos show the remarkable recovery from a dry, brown landscape to a lush green carpet just days after the rain.

Since then, although we haven't received further rain, the wind has stopped blowing, the weather has turned mild and the rabbits have disappeared. With the soils almost saturated, during March and April all the plants in the garden have put on massive growth and the summer flowering plants have finally flowered.



On reflection my best performers in this summer of heat, wind, drought and rabbits were:

*Eremophila* 'Kalbarri Carpet', *Rhagodia spinenscens* and my *Eucalyptus macrocarpa*. However there were many other star performers, not from hot dry places, which seemed to thrive on a total absence of water while enduring multiple heatwaves and constant wind.

Of particular note were *Westringia* 'Wynyabbie Gem', *Grevillea australis*, *G. lanigera*, *G. arenaria*, *G. aquifolium*, and *G. juniperina*, *Micromyrtus ciliata* and most of the acacias including *A. baileyana*, *A. pravissima* and *A. covenyi*.

It's now early May and we have already had four frosts including a minus 5. The garden has a lot of fresh tender growth vulnerable to frost. I've started putting up some frost protection so we shall see how it goes. For now, however, the garden is still looking beautiful.

## In My Garden

Christina Kennedy

### A Ramble - Horse Island

We haven't stopped the hard work in the garden here, much encouraged by the perfect conditions of the last weeks. The moisture in the ground is so good for weeding and planting, and as the ground has still been warm we have done lots of both.

### Smoking

We have found strange behaviours from a range of plants following the Big Dry - Fire - Flood. Thankfully fire did not reach us, but it did come very close down Horse Island Road and in all the surrounding areas. In fact Horse Island became a refuge each time the fires threatened to come tearing down on us, and various families who live nearby relocated to the island at times of worst stress.

We were shrouded in the smoke and ash however, and we are wondering if the smoking has promoted



Garden looking lush after the rain -  
The Grevillea gardens around the Pizza Oven.



natural and unusual self propagation of many plants, particularly germination of **Grevillea** seeds. The hot house now is home to about 50 excavated young seedlings which could perhaps be hybrids as they appeared in different gardens where there is a range of Grevilleas. There are some which must be *Grevillea banksii*. Time will tell.

### Pruning

This has been the main focus of the work over the last few weeks, and it is finally finished with the topping of *Callistemon* 'Great Balls of Fire', the huge *Agonis flexuosa* 'nana' (which are no longer very nana !) and the massed **Baeckeas** around the steps at the Big House.



Baeckeas on the driveway - just pruned. They look severe at first but soften quickly

### Seeding



Eco pots of *Xerochrysums* ready for planting

Last year I bought a packet of red **Xerochrysum** seeds from Nindethana seeds in WA and distributed them around the garden as seedlings in eco pots. I probably had 2 dozen or so and after flowering I collected the seed, and got busy sowing these, again in eco pots, with huge success. All that remains is to poke these little pots into the chosen spots and we will have masses of red highlights around the garden in the Summer.



Red *Xerochrysums* create points of interest in the landscape

### Killing

Since I declared a ban on **Glyphosate (Round Up)** use here, we have been trying out other less destructive herbicides to control feral weed growth in the paddocks and along the pathways and roads. We have been trying **Commercial Safe**, but may switch to **Slasher**. (see information on Slasher on page 13)



Part of the Landcare planting on river bank showing effect of **Slasher** instead of **Roundup**

### Growing

**Landcare** contracted to plant out the river bank on the south east side of the island to prevent further collapse into the river. To conform they too had to



abandon the glyphosate to prepare the planting areas by killing off the long Kikuyu. In the last few weeks the work was done.

They sprayed using “Slasher”, a **herbicide which is acceptable for organic farming**. It seemed to be most effective and many of the trees and shrubs are now in and off to a good start, all boxed up in eco friendly protectors.

I am slightly conflicted after the fires about adding huge plantations like this, and hope that they do not grow up to become another hazard, providing an invitation to embers and flames of the future!

But I do value the integrity of the river bank and am very grateful for the wonderful work by Landcare

## In My Garden

### *Laxmannia gracilis*



It grows naturally on our property and comes up in the driest and the toughest of alleged soils in wind-blown areas under trees and fence lines as well as on embankments.



## Carolyn Noake

We are so fortunate to have this little plant ‘**Slender wire-lily**’ from the Anthericaceae family flowering prolifically now.



It has the cutest little white flower which has a hint of pink to it. *Laxmannia gracilis* grows to approximately 20cm x 20cm. They clearly tolerated the drought conditions but benefitted from the rains when they broke the drought.

I have previously transplanted small plants to other parts of the garden ensuring they were still in tough conditions and watered a few times only, then left to their own devices. One was potted up for Jan and David. Care was taken not to disturb the plant roots. A good amount of soil surrounding the plant was dug up, placed in a tray and backfilled with a mix of our soil and a small amount of native potting mix.

Maybe I should look for seed to grow some more *Laxmannia gracilis*.

A gardener can never have enough plants 😊



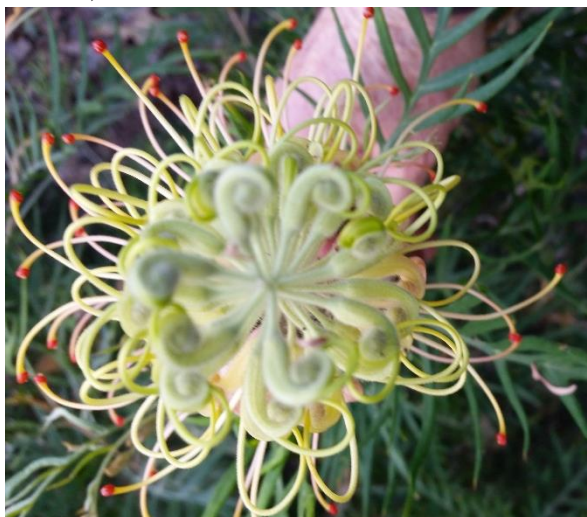
## Grevillea Peaches and Cream in our gardens and on our walls

**G. Peaches and Cream:** “The cultivar is a cross between a white-flowered form of the Queensland species *Grevillea banksii*, and *G. bipinnatifida* from Western Australia, and was selected from a plant which arose in a garden in Logan Village, a southern suburb of Brisbane, in 1997. It was watched and propagated by Queensland horticulturists and SGAP members Dennis Cox and Janice Glazebrook, finally being patented in 2006” ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grevillea\\_%27Peaches\\_and\\_Cream%27](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grevillea_%27Peaches_and_Cream%27))

We have six plants growing well in our garden. The original plant came from a cutting that apparently did not have much hope of success. This story is about three ways in which one little lesson inspired my love of this grevillea.

When John Knight was manager at the ERBG, he taught me things about plants including propagating, pruning, weeding, potting on and planting.

In one propagating session he described to us what to look for to get the best propagating material. G. Peaches and Cream was one of those plants (gift for the biannual ANSPA conference if you were wondering why a cultivar was at the ERBG).



We were to look for semi hard cutting material of this grevillea. John demonstrated a cutting that had new growth and was quite floppy. He then showed us what to choose to get the best outcome from propagating. We gathered our material and learned how to, look for the nodes, remove extraneous leaves, wound the stem, place into rooting hormone and carefully place in the special propagating mix. Watering, caring for the cuttings, checking for root development and even when to tube the plants up.

We all did our cuttings and I hope those that partook can remember their own plants growing roots and developing into beautiful plants.

Remember that little floppy cutting? I could not bear for it go to waste, so I snuck it into my pot of cuttings. My cuttings were duly cared for according to instructions. You may call it beginners' luck or exquisite timing but that little cutting has developed into a wonderful plant. It grows near the house and since the big *Callistemon salignus* was pruned to 1m, is much happier in full sunlight.



**The inspiration of that day's activities and the beauty of that plant led me to experiment further.**

As part of three-year creative embroidery course with the Embroiderers Guild of NSW I was required to design and goldwork embroider a flower.

There is a wonderful painting of Grevillea peaches and cream by botanical artist Anne Hayes.

Please take the time to view her work at <https://annehayes.com.au/botanical/> Her work is so inspirational.

Lacking the beautiful colours of *Grevillea Peaches and Cream* I have used the inspiration of John and Anne Hayes to create my work.

Who or what inspires you?

From where does your inspiration stem (sorry)?

Happy anything to do with plants



## In My Garden

Leigh Murray

### Pop-Ups

Since wonderful rain broke that oh-so-long drought, our gardens have been blessed by lots of plants popping up. At Tuross, one of the main gains has been our gutter goodies. Years ago, I had aluminium gutter guard installed in an unconventional way – done in a way to make it unobtrusive. This was one idea that didn't work. The result was that a nice layer of compost built up within the gutters, under the gutter guard. And in that compost, seeds germinated occasionally.

Nothing much happened during the drought, because the composted soil just dried out. But when the rains came, so did the baby plants. Recently we had the gutter guard replaced by steel guard (also unobtrusive, but promising to be more guarding, less seed-raising). And before the gutter guard was replaced, I went up a ladder and removed a ton of seedlings from the gutter along our lower roof.

One seedling is obviously a **Leptospermum**. There is a big plant of this nearby – itself a pop-up from Queanbeyan. It pulls in the butterflies big time. Not knowing the species, we call it **Leptospermum 'Butterfly'**. Also in the gutter were many seedlings of what look to me like casuarinas. Hoping they are just that, I've planted them out at Queanbeyan where I have plenty of room for whatever size they turn into (big, I hope, and Black-Cocky-attracting too). The only **Casuarinas** I planted at Tuross are **Allocasuarina verticillata**, and the survivors all turned out to be males, so the pop-ups can't be their offspring. It will be interesting to see what these seedlings turn into. Norfolk Island Pines, **Araucaria heterophylla**, frequently come up in our garden there but none have ever come up in our gutters - probably the seeds are too big. Thank goodness.



At Queanbeyan, there are many new plants of what I think is **Solanum cinereum**, pictured. This forms a small shrub. It has fruit the size of cherry tomatoes; these might be attractive to birds (although they are said to be poisonous to stock). The fruit of **S. linearifolium**, which also occasionally pops up there, is certainly popular with birds, as are the fruit of **S. aviculare**, which has occasionally come up at Tuross (where it's only ever survived for a few years). The only problem I have with **S. cinereum** is that it has fierce prickles, ready and willing to attack, so it will have to be removed or kept cut back from beside tracks. (The prickles are the brown things sticking up from the leaves in the photo. Copious, aren't they?) I've raised **S. linearifolium** by striking cuttings in water, and I had several doing nicely at Tuross before the bushfires closed the Kings Highway, keeping us away; they didn't survive

our prolonged absence. I'm finding it interesting to see what comes up at both places now the ground is moist (a rare event on our Queanbeyan land).

## In My Garden

Lesley Hulands

### What just comes up ! Continuing the theme

Since I first began sowing seed of the Western Australian paperdaisy, **Rhodanthe chlorocephala ssp rosea**, I have been rewarded with massed germination of seedlings each year. They pop up here and there in gravel, in the vegie patch and any where else they please. I must say that they do like a bit of tlc, for this year they are already up, and flowering on stout stems to 50cm high, tightly packed in raised beds previously holding strawberries, and heavily mulched with horse poo.

Also appreciating these rich sites is **Scaevola aemula**, **Fairy Fanflower**, a young seedling of which is shown here in Norm's new Banksia bed, now becoming quite a nuisance as it produces many babies throughout the garden, grows vigorously and quickly covers other small but slower growers like **Lechenaultia formosa**. I guess it's a good problem to have.





## In My Garden Di Clark

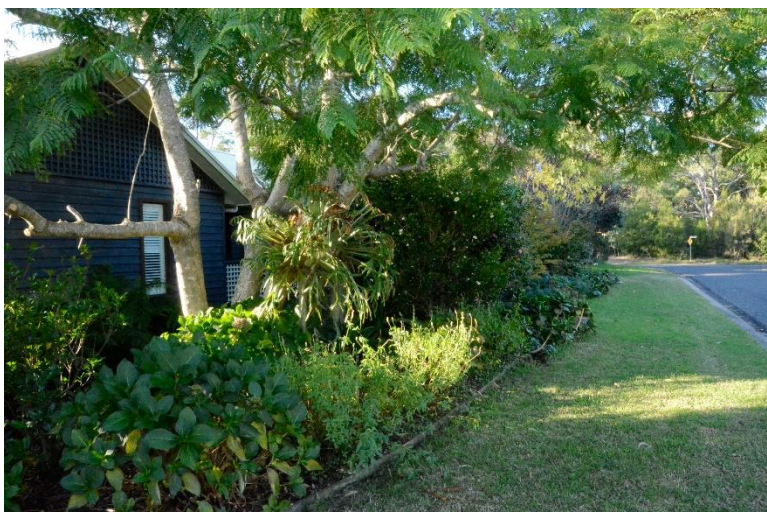
### IS STANDING IN THE GARDEN AND THINKING ACTUALLY GARDENING?

I seem to spend a lot of time standing and reflecting on my garden. I purchased a new home in Rosedale in July 2019 and I have been working in the garden since then, when circumstances allowed.

When I say I purchased a new home, I mean it was a new home for me. The previous owners were very keen gardeners and the house has an extraordinary garden. In one sense this is great, but in another it may be a burden that I have difficulty dealing with.

I would say that the percentage of native plants in this garden is rather small, and the dominating trees and bushes are plants of a different style. I have camellias, magnolias and quite a few Japanese maples, that have yet to prove their worth.

Many perennials that I am still discovering, succulents, fruit trees, roses and bromeliads.



The presence of these plants is not a problem in itself, but the way they have been dispersed throughout the garden and their close proximity to each other is. My natural instinct is to group all the like plants together and simplify what is here. Rather than having a rose bush next to a succulent next to a giant birds nest fern, I would create separate corners of the garden where they would be better suited.

#### **But this is when I start standing in the garden and thinking.**

Do I really want a garden of succulents or bromeliads or fruit trees?

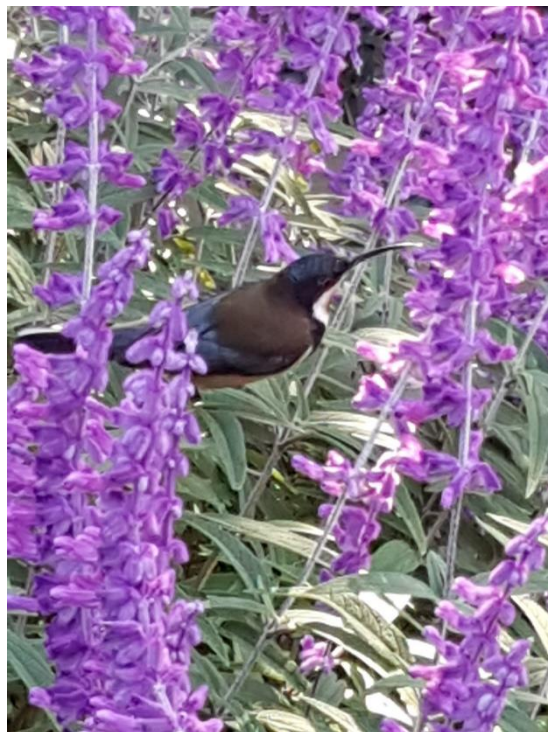
Should I bite the bullet and remove some of these plantings. I can easily remove the agapanthus, because I know they have the potential to become weeds in the nearby bush.

Do I remove a magnolia even if it has been planted too close to the path?

Do I remove the monstrous *Philodendron bipinnatifidum* and leave giant gaps along the boundary fence? The answer to that one is yes. I have waited till the neighbours are visiting less frequently and will plant something more suitable in the gap. Having a gap to fill is one of the highlights of gardening.

The next question is, where do native plants fit into this picture? I have been using native plants in my gardens for a long time now, and actively choose to do this. Some of the most beautiful gardens I have seen have been well pruned, well designed native gardens. Gardens that blend in with the house and the surrounding environment. How do I do this in my garden, which is already full of plants?

Our South East Region Group was planning a visit to my garden in May and you would of all had a chance to see what I am discussing here. I imagine Shane Doherty standing on my deck and asking if the Hibiscus (non native ) needs to stay? I try to see vistas and think of all four seasons, not just the immediate shade and sun issues. I watch the birds. They don't seem to care where my plants originated from, as evidenced by the **Eastern Spinebill** who regularly visits my perennial **Salvia**. Neither do the possums!



There is another issue that has posed a problem in this garden.

There are areas set aside for growing vegetables, which I have been using. This was becoming difficult when we were suffering from drought. I was beginning to rethink if it was a justifiable use of water.



Then when the fires were happening and we had no power for quite a while, my fresh food kept me going. Since then we have had a lot more rain, but now it's good to have home grown food for other reasons. I have dug up part of the lawn, to bring the vegetables closer to the kitchen and it felt wonderful to be creating a blank canvas for me to plant into. Perhaps I should just keep going?

There are so many issues to consider when thinking about your garden. **Shane's renovation advice is to clear ruthlessly, prepare well and have a good idea of how you want your garden to look before you start planting.** Not as easy as it sounds. But a wonderful way to spend the day.

I am looking forward to a time when I can invite you all to view the garden for yourselves.

## In My Garden

## Marjorie Apthorpe

### Currowan creeps back to life:

The fires of 5<sup>th</sup> December and 4<sup>th</sup> January burnt almost all of our forested property, leaving only a tiny patch of bushland on our creek untouched. Due to clearing up of burnt vegetation, plus high winds and falling trees, we have not explored more than a few hundred metres into our forest. But close to home there has been recovery underway.

*Macrozamia communis* (Burrawangs) and *Livistona australis* (Cabbage Palms) were the first to recover, after rain followed the fires.

After the February flood (400 mm of rain) some shrubs went into a delayed or second spring flowering. *Prostanthera lasianthos* put on a confused flowering. Many shrubs of *Persoonia linearis* had been burned, but these are resprouting from the trunks. One tough specimen on the edge of the fire front had been burned up its trunk, but the canopy only wilted. It is now covered in golden flowers.

*Leucopogon lanceolatus* along our rocky driveway burned; only its thick plastic label survived. In clearing the ground it was accidentally chopped down, but it is resprouting from the roots.

*Hibbertia aspera* seedlings,(or suckers) are appearing along the rocky driveway, where no *Hibbertia* was seen before. Suckers of *Podolobium ilicifolium* a bright pea flower with holly-like leaves are popping up, in the same area where their parent plants used to flower. *Dianella caerulea* have appeared in great numbers from burned rootstock. Orchid-like plants are appearing, and are being watched so we can identify them.

Down in the creek bed a great variety of vines are curling upwards over burned trees, and a variety of ferns are now covering the ground, including *Blechnum cartilagineum*, **Gristle Fern**, and the **Black-stemmed maidenhair**, *Adiantum formosum*.

We decided to remove or control the previously rampant *Cissus hypoglauca* vines, so that a greater variety of small plants and vines might have the space. Small herbs, vines and trees, many still to be identified, are appearing all over the creek banks.

**A very hardy fern which regenerates quickly after fire, *Blechnum cartilagineum* is at its most prolific in the first couple of years after fire, when the extra light and moisture favour its growth.**



Burned but not bowed, *Persoonia linearis*





Some we have managed to recognise include, *Smilax glycyphylla*, Sarsaparilla, *Pratia purpurascens*, White Root, *Pseuderanthemum variabile*, Pastel Flower, and possibly *Androcalva fraseri*, previously known as *Comersonia fraseri*, Brush Kurrajong.

We are watching the burnt *Hedycarya angustifolia* (Native Mulberry) and *Baloghia inophyllum* (Brush Bloodwood) trees for signs of life. Some *Ficus coronata* (Sandpaper Figs) and *Breynia oblongifolia* (Coffee Bush) have appeared as seedlings. A parent *Ficus* tree survived scorching and has put on new leaves at its base. A *Synoum glandulosum* (Scentless Rosewood) was badly scorched but is slowly recovering. *Callicoma serratifolia* (Black Wattle, although it is not a wattle at all) burned but is resprouting from the roots. *Trema tomentosa var. aspera* (Poison Peach) trees burned but quickly resprouted leaves, and many seedlings are coming up. Not so resilient were most of the *Claoxylon australe* (Brittlewood) trees in the creek bed. Now we only have the single garden tree remaining, and one possible tree in the creek.

Amongst our massive old blue gums (*Eucalyptus saligna*) one did not burn, but it is slowly dying with only one branch still in leaf, much to our regret. New trees coming up include many *Elaeocarpus reticulatus* (Blueberry Ash), both seedlings and suckers.

We think that of all the local forest shrubs, *Persoonia linearis*, (Narrow-leaved Geebung) is definitely the most fire-tolerant, both in resisting burning and in quickly regenerating afterwards. Seedlings of this continue to pop up in odd places in our garden, and some have been potted for giving away.

We have some plants for the donation bench when we meet again, including *Pandorea pandorana*, *Persoonia linearis*, *Elaeocarpus reticulatus* seedlings (flower colour unknown) *Grevillea rhyolitica* seedlings, and *Ficus coronata*



Probably always around, but seeking private nooks, *Adiantum formosum* is a new addition to our plant list for this site.



Common throughout the region, *Pseuderanthemum variabile* on the left, and *Pratia purpurascens* on the right, seem happy to grow anywhere and everywhere. Those who have well structured and mulched soil will soon recognise the *Pratia* as an enemy, one that invades, hides under shrubs, in the vegie patch, and defies eradication. In its natural habitat, it is a welcome cheery flower dotting the understorey.

A once venerable *Eucalyptus saligna*, sadly now dead following twice being burned. No doubt many of the next generation will fight to take over the space



## Australian plants nurseries selling online

Member Amanda Marsh suggests that we could add to the list appearing last month, another nursery trying hard to survive the lockdown, with an expanding variety of native plants stocked.

<https://www.conservationcollective.shop/>



### A SEED SOWING SAGA

While traveling in W. A. in 2017 we came across a very interesting plant *Crotalaria cunninghamii* the green birdflower. There was no seed to be had there or in any shops so when I saw some seed advertised by **Australian Seeds** in late 2019 I thought I should buy some.

The seed arrived with these instructions, pre-treatment: Scarify in hot water. Sow: Depth of seed width. Germination, 10-21 days: @ 18-22 C.

So on the 5<sup>th</sup> Dec. 2019 I prepared a pot, got some hot water and put in 11 seeds, and when the water was cold I put the seeds on top of the mix and covered with sand to the required depth. After 1 month I dug out a seed and checked its condition. The seed was in perfect condition so it was returned and checked 1 month later and the result was the same. Near the end of April I thought it was time to see what was going on and dug all the seeds out. The seed looked even better than when I planted them, except there were only 5 seeds so it was time for drastic measures .

I got some fine sand paper and got to work trying to get some shine off the seed. Then got some boiling water and put the seed in, and in just 2 hours 2 seeds had more than doubled in size, so these were extracted and placed on the mix and covered with sand. The next morning the other 3 seeds had swollen so they were planted and in 3 days the first 2 started to emerge followed 2 days later by the others. I now have 4 healthy seedlings growing nicely. Now it's wait and see how they go during winter, after which they will be planted out.



Image from Botanic Gardens and Parks WA

### Norm has also been having some success with

*Telopea speciosissima* seed sown directly into the sand base of his heat bed, rather than into pots. The seed is simply buried into the sand in rows, and the sand is kept moist by misting which is used to assist with cuttings. When the seed germinates, and the first true leaf develops, the seedlings are carefully removed and potted. This process avoids damaging other seedlings as can happen in a community pot, and also means that ungerminated seed is not disturbed. **Good thinking Norm.**

**Maybe you also have a tale to tell about propagation successes, or failures that others can learn from. Why not put pen to paper, or fingertips to keys, and tell your story.**

### From Michele Pymble comes this suggestion.

**With more reading time during our isolation Members might like to consider joining the Garden Design Study Group.**

The Study Group produces several extensive newsletters each year, providing a forum for members to discuss garden design principles and allow for a free exchange of ideas and advice. Very informative contributions from members include valuable advice on all aspects of growing Australian plants in our gardens.

Newsletters published over recent years are available for download. In addition, a comprehensive on-line index has been developed, which is updated annually.

For more information on this Study Group go to <http://anpsa> : Select **Study Group** from heading and choose **Garden Design** from the Study Group list. **Membership and emailed Newsletters are free.** However, if you require a posted copy there is an annual fee of \$20 to cover printing and postage.

**STUDY GROUP LEADER/NEWSLETTER EDITOR: Lawrie Smith**

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**You might also be interested to learn that the Fabaceae Study Group has been re-established after some years in recess, and is now called Australian Pea Flower Study Group.**

We recently received the following advice from the **new leader Shirley McLaran**, via APS NSW Region. I have accepted leadership of the **Australian Pea Flower Study Group**.

The reactivation of this group to study plants with pea flowers has been approved by the ANPSA. I would be grateful if you would promote the study group in your newsletters and pass the news on to your branches.

The Australian Pea Flower Study Group is one of a number of Study Groups within the **Australian Native Plants Society (Australia)** whose aims are to further knowledge of Australian native plants.

Members of this study group focus on the identification, propagation, cultivation, and conservation of members of Fabaceae (legume, pea or bean family) which have typical pea flowers.

**(Genera in this Family include Aotus, Crotalaria, Daviesia, Dillwynia, Eutaxia, Hardenbergia, Hovea, Indigofera, Kennedia, Oxyllobium, Podolobium, Phyllota, Pultenaea, Swainsona and Templetonia. With such variety, there is sure to be many species which excite some interest among members.)**

Plants with pea flowers constitute a subfamily of Fabaceae, namely Faboideae. As in all study groups, the members' work is carried out in their own homes and gardens and in their own spare time.

The study group webpage can be found here: <http://anpsa.org.au/pea-flowerSG/index.html>. If you would like to join the group, there is a section on the webpage that can be completed and submitted on-line. **Membership for emailed newsletters is free.**

## **Eremophila Survey**

A reminder that Lyndal Thorburn, leader of the Eremophila Study Group is keen for members to let her know what species of Eremophila are being grown in our area. I know that some of you have a fair assortment of these in your gardens, and Lyndal would appreciate your input to her work as Study Group Leader.

If you do not wish to complete the survey, as detailed in the April newsletter, could you just list your collection in an email to Lyndal, [lthorburn@viria.com.au](mailto:lthorburn@viria.com.au).

## **Fire Response Information**

In the coming months, the newsletter will be detailing how plants have recovered from damage caused by the recent bushfires.

All members are encouraged to add to the store of knowledge by recording which plants in their own garden, and local area, were affected, and to what degree.

Plants may have been killed outright, but seedlings have appeared. Plants may have suffered significant damage, then resprouted from either epicormic buds or suckering from roots.

Plants may have just been lost entirely.

Collating this knowledge will be of help to everyone, so I ask that you take the time to record how your plants have performed so we might all learn. Some, such as Lesley Vincent, have already submitted a detailed report, and I know others are making a list, checking it twice, but please don't keep this information to yourself. Send your list or report to the editor over the next couple of weeks so this work can begin.



**Just one of the many delightful Australian pea flowers, Western Australia's *Hovea elliptica* occurs naturally in the Karri forests and has proved reliable in cultivation.**

## Herbicide Usage

With a worldwide move away from the general and widespread use of **Glyphosate** as a herbicide due to health concerns, gardeners are looking for alternatives. You might recall the podcast suggested by Christina in our last newsletter, and for those who took the opportunity to listen, the program offered some sobering thoughts.

Christina has made a choice to look for safe alternatives, and for her Landcare project, the choice of Slasher over Round-up has proved a success.

Having been out of the horticulture scene for some years, I have not been keeping up with trends in herbicide development, so it was wise to look into what Slasher offers. **Please be aware that this is not an advertisement or a recommendation for the use of any product, and the following is presented for information only. Members should make their own enquiries before using this or any product.**

**Slasher Weedkiller** is an organic herbicide that rapidly kills weeds, moss, algae and lichen.

### HOW IT WORKS

**Slasher Weedkiller** is a non-selective contact herbicide. When sprayed over plants it destroys the outer leaf cells causing plants to desiccate, wilt and die. Slasher Weedkiller is fast acting and requires minimal sunlight or heat to work. Weeds wilt within a few hours and are usually dead by the next day.

**Note:** desiccation will only occur to the green plant parts that have been sprayed so thorough spray coverage is recommended. **Slasher Weedkiller does not penetrate through bark or to underground roots and bulbs.** Do not spray if weeds are wet or rain is expected before the spray dries on the foliage. For best results ensure thorough coverage when spraying weeds. Do not allow spray to contact or drift onto plants you do not want killed

### WHAT'S IT MADE FROM

**Slasher Weedkiller** is made from plant oils (GM-free) which have been converted into a natural acid called **nonanoic acid (also known as pelargonic acid)**. Nonanoic acid can be found in pelargoniums in large quantities and is also produced in other plants when stressed. Nonanoic acid (Pelargonic acid) is produced naturally in plants when the fatty acid Oleic acid is oxidised by stress associated free radicals to form Pelargonic acid. When left unchecked Pelargonic acid denatures internal cells walls eventually causing plant death.

SLASHER Weedkiller does the same thing when sprayed on the outer epidermal layers of plants.

### What makes SLASHER Weedkiller different to other Nonanoic (Pelargonic acid) based

**sprays?** Commercial production of Nonanoic acid for industrial use normally involves 100% synthetic petrochemical processing. Other processes involve ozone based oxidation of animal fats. The Pelargonic acid in SLASHER Weedkiller is produced in a "nature identical" process from GMfree plant oils using the same free radical oxidation reaction that occurs in plants.

### Will SLASHER Weedkiller kill all weeds including woody weeds?

SLASHER Weedkiller will rapidly kill small weeds with a large surface area and small root system, and is ideal for controlling those herbaceous weeds such as Flick-Weed, Mouse-ear Chickweed and the like.

However, if a weed has enough stored carbohydrates in its roots, rhizomes or stems it can reshoot. Hence you may need to re-apply more than once within 7-10 days after the initial spray. Larger weeds including woody weeds may need more than 1-2 sprays to kill the plant.

### HOW SAFE IS IT?

Nonanoic acid occurs naturally in plants and is regularly used in the processing of fruits and added to foods. In the soil Slasher Weedkiller biodegrades within three days and leaves no lasting residue. **There's also no withholding period so it's safe to use in the veggie patch.**

When using Slasher Weedkiller avoid contact on skin or eyes as this may cause irritation.

Once it has dried on the foliage it is safe for people and pets.

### Why is there a warning that SLASHER Weedkiller should be tested on porous surfaces

**before spraying?** SLASHER Weedkiller is a very good penetrant and is easily absorbed by porous surfaces.

Spraying on porous pavers, tiles or concrete may cause a slight change in the colour because of this penetration. A colour change can also occur because algae and moss is killed in the treated area.

**This information was taken from the manufacturers website, [www.ecoorganicgarden.com.au](http://www.ecoorganicgarden.com.au)**

**I do note that not everyone who has used the product has been totally happy with the results, and this is possibly because difficult weeds are not killed outright with just one application.**



## Snippets

**Lesley Hulands** was showing another member some of her treasures recently. Her one and only plant of *Lechenaultia superbum* was looking superb, and she wonders why, the very next day, it was dead as a dodo. Could her visitor have been the cause? One of life's little mysteries.

**John Knight** reports; Lockdown has given Sue and I time to finish the rainforest garden on the south side of our house. The area is about 12m long and 2.6m wide, and we now have a collection of small trees, tree ferns and smaller shrubs with a winding path through a shady glen. Many of these plants have languished in pots some quite a while, for which I feel guilty, but they have been given a new lease of life.

Finally the *Tasmannia lanceolata* have been released, and are already putting out tasty new leaves. We have worked out how to keep the wallabies at bay from this area, and so far everything is going well. Trees planted include *Telopea oreades* from Victoria, *Glochidion ferdinandii*, **Cheesetree**, from Shallow Crossing, with nearby, 2 large Shallow Crossing forms of *Grevillea arenaria* are thriving just a little too well, and needed some harsh pruning to allow passage.

Around the corner, I have a *Grevillea caleyi* which has been in the ground for 6 years now. I can thank Phil Trickett for grafting this lovely long flowering ferny leaved plant, which is growing in full shade, is about 3m high with long rangy branches supported by other plants close by. This **Grevillea** provides the perfect branches for small birds to perch, and look at what we are doing inside. Unfortunately, birds see themselves in the window, males are obviously determined that this is their territory and knock themselves out trying to scare away their reflection. It is not just one species either. As well as our lovely Blue Wrens, just recently we have been entertained by a Rufous Fantail and a Golden Whistler, both lovely birds which we are able to observe at close quarters whilst they try to oust an imagined interloper. Neither of these is perturbed that we come close to the window to see who is about today. Now it is the time for a Yellow Robin to secure his territory. Luckily the Magpies are not attracted to this spot, or we might sustain a broken window.

**Let's hear your stories. Send a contribution for the next newsletter, so everyone can see what you have been up to.**

**Your committee would welcome any suggestions about future activities. If you have any ideas on what excursions the group could undertake, or ideas about meeting topics, please contact any, the details of which are listed below.**

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