



Australian Plants Society

South East NSW Group

Newsletter 165

October 2020

Corymbia maculata Spotted Gum and
Macrozamia communis Burrawang

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Next Meeting

Saturday 7th November 2020, 10a.m.

Gardens of Christina and Trevor Kennedy

Horse Island Road Bodalla

Dear Members,
Welcome to the October Newsletter.

This newsletter brings some good news regarding COVID -19 restrictions. **It appears that we will now be able to gather as a group of 30 people at our next meeting.** I have been hearing the word complacency frequently, and I would just like to remind everyone that we will still need to undertake our social distancing and follow our COVID - 19 plan. Thank you all for your patience and support during this difficult time.

There are other positives coming out of the year that we have had. If you have been walking in the bush you would have noticed an abundance of flowering plants. The birds and insects are evident as well and our gardens are bursting with new growth. If you believe the weather report we may be in for a wet summer, so it will be a good time to keep planting as long as possible.

If anyone finds, or knows of a wonderful place to go walking and view our native plants please feel free to share that information with this group. Sometimes we don't know what is right on our doorstep.

In the past we have decided not to have a December meeting, but this year we will be hoping to go ahead with a social gathering in an outdoor space and have a chance to catch up. Stay tuned for the details.

In the meantime, enjoy your spaces and your time.

Regards,

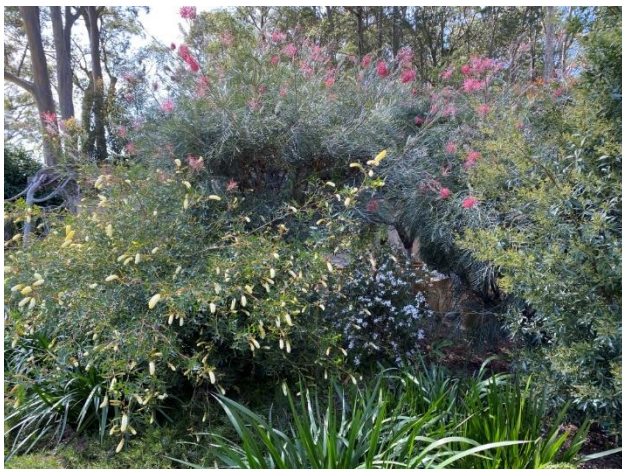
Di Clark

To whet our appetites for the upcoming visit, Christina sent a few photos of some of the plants flowering in her extensive garden at Horse Island.



Dampiera teres is a lightly suckering herbaceous plant, thriving in a well drained position, with a preference for full sun

Grevilleas rate among Christina's favourite Australian plants, and quite a range of species can be found throughout the garden. Above, yellow flowers of *Grevillea* 'Wattlebird' and the brightly contrasting red of *G. 'Winpara Ruby'*. Not to be outdone, *G. 'Sylvia'* broods over *G. flexuosa*, with *G. rhyolitica* 'Deua Flame' partnering a standard *G. banksii*.



Some of the smaller plants include Qualup Bells, *Pimelea physodes*, the striking yellow of *Verticordia chrysantha*, and from near Coff's Harbour the rare ground covering *Zieria prostrata*



As Di mentioned in her opening, we are now able to accommodate 30 visitors at our open garden events. This means more members are able to attend, however we are still asking you to RSVP for our November event to ensure we continue to comply with the government's and APS Covid restrictions. We will need you to only come if you are well, and prepared to undertake social distancing.

Members wishing to attend should respond through your newsletter editor, via email to johnovista49@outlook.com, and bookings will be open upon the receipt of this newsletter. (Map to Horse Island is included on page 10.)

Don't forget to bring along some plant specimens to show off at the Show and Tell session.

As the weather might be warm, pack a hat and sunscreen along with your own refreshments.

Covid Restrictions

The APS COVID-19 Safety Plan is to be followed by the group, and all members attending must comply.

Don't forget to read our safety plan prior to nominating to attend this event, as you will be required to provide contact details and sign a declaration on the day, stating that you are well and have not been in a Covid hotspot within the past 14 days.

Last Meeting



Members gathered at the entrance to the reserve to hear from our special guests before splitting into 2 groups

Our meeting at **South Pacific Heathland Reserve** was enhanced by lovely weather, and supported by two very knowledgeable locals.

On arrival **President Di** offered some introductory comments on the program for the day, and then handed to **Helen Moody**, a passionate reserve volunteer and member of the trustee board. Helen welcomed us to the reserve, and told us a little of its history and development, before accompanying some our group to her favourite spots. She also showed us to a lovely coffee table book titled "**Trees of Historic Berry**" co-authored by another passionate plant person, Berry's Hazel King, and which she had some rare copies available for purchase.



Helen Moody



Nick de Jong

Before we began our wandering, Di introduced **Nick de Jong**, noted authority on all the plants and associated fauna of the reserve. Nick has authored and self-published definitive books on the plants, but unfortunately had none left for sale, much to the disappointment of some who had anticipated they might be able to obtain a copy. Good for Nick that they have all sold, and he is now working on a more comprehensive tome which will include details of many more plants occurring over a much wider geographic range within the NSW south coast.

After Nick completed his initial tales on the plants found locally, we split into 2 groups, with first time visitors to the reserve accompanying Nick on a clockwise traverse of the reserve, to take advantage of his intimate knowledge of the plants to be discovered on the walk.

The remaining members went with Helen on an anti-clockwise wander, inspecting and recording every plant observed, flowering or not. Mild spring conditions with reasonable rainfall meant the reserve plants were in tiptop condition, and those flowering put on quite a show.



Pultenaea retusa above, is one of many small shrubby pea plants ideally suited to home gardens. Below is *Dillwynia glaberrima*, another which deserves wider appreciation



Mirbelia rubiifolia is a lightly scrambling pea plant



Local Smokebush, *Conospermum taxifolium*, is an unusual shrubby member of the Proteaceae family



Heath form of *Grevillea parviflora*, a small long-flowering subshrub, quite happy to grow in the shadow of taller plants. To the right is *Hibbertia obtusifolia*, the flowers of which provide a sunny platform for some brightly coloured beetles



A white flowered form of the small woody shrub *Kunzea capitata* struggles its way to the sunshine through the dense heath, accompanied by the shy herb *Dampiera stricta*, lower left



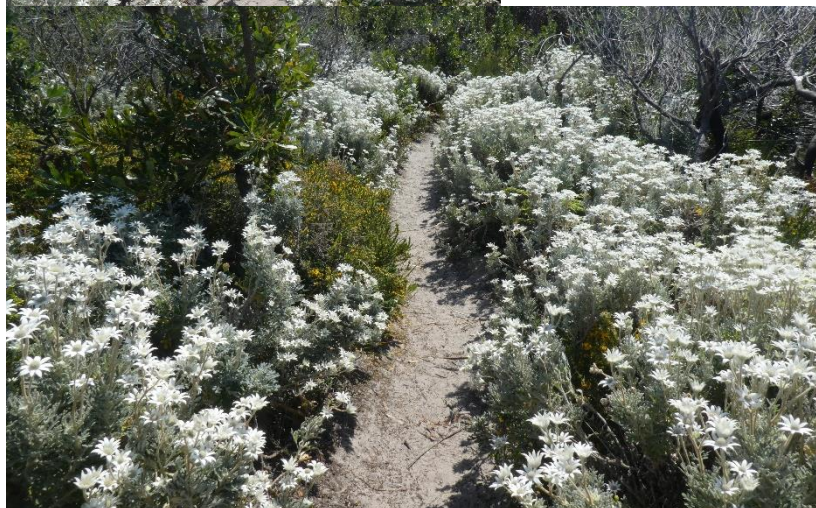
Lambertia formosa Mountain Devil, flowers over many months, and makes a lovely, albeit prickly garden shrub. Despite its attributes, it is rarely grown these days.



Helen despairs at the wanton destruction of the heath as a result of arson earlier in the year. The fire was so hot that almost no seedlings have regenerated, and only now are some grasses and a few shrubs beginning to show life from suckering.



Dave and Di dawdle through the spectacular masses of Flannel flowers, *Actinotis helianthi*, which have regenerated thickly following fires a few years earlier. Could there be a more attractive path to wander along?



Don't forget me screams Purple Fan-Flower *Scaevola ramosissima*. I might be small, but when I fight my way through all that white stuff, well what more can one say.



Helen invites a rest whilst waiting for the stragglers caught up in the Flannel-Flower fog

South Pacific Flora Reserve is a stronghold of *Grevillea macleayana*, many shrubs of which reach 3m x 4m over time. There is however a much more amenable prostrate form which remains under 50cm high, and flowers for many months from July. It is popular with honeyeaters. The plant is unfortunately killed by fire, regenerating only from seed, so repeated fires will threaten its existence



After a quick break for lunch, members moved north to Catriona and Phil's extensive garden at Lyrebird Lane Little Forest. First on the agenda was our **Show and Tell session**, introduced by Phil, who showed that he doesn't need a microphone to make a statement.

As Di points out below, there was a broad range of flowering specimens, as well as plenty of plants for sale. **Denise Krake** brought along a delightfully colourful collection of small herbaceous plants, **Di Clark** talked about her developing *Lechenaultia* garden, **Jan Douglas** displayed her passion for the more unusual plants such as *Guichenotia sarotes*, and **Cliff and Marjorie** had a full bucket of joy, including *Prostanthera linearis*, a number of *Grevillea* spp. and many others, pieces of which were snapped up for cuttings at the end of the day. **Lesley Vincent** talked about plants regenerating on her property after the fires, and to check that they were indeed native. **Norm Hulands** regaled us with a story of Western Australia's *Banksia petiolaris*, and how the leaves can live for up to 13 years, the longest living leaf of all flowering plants, and believed to be an adaptation to living in nutrient poor soils.



Not to be outdone, **Lesley** had sacrificed a stem of her Kangaroo Paw, *Anigozanthos manglesii*, W.A's floral emblem



By now we were all keen to get into the garden, with both Catriona and Phil taking small groups to favourite corners, Phil proud of the many grafted **Proteaceous plants (Banksia, Grevillea, Hakea and Isopogon/Petrophile)**, along with a stunning collection of **Eremophila** in flower, and thriving in deep monzonite soil. Catriona, not to be outdone, was happy to show off the many small plants along path edges, and her magnificent Waratah, *Telopea speciosissima*.

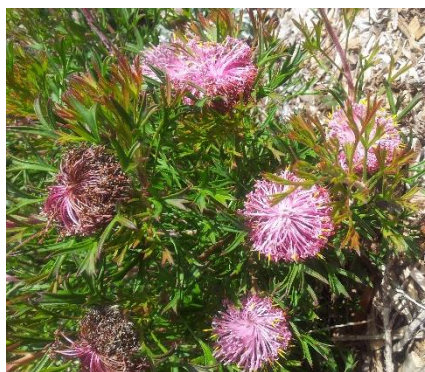


Regular pruning is the key for Catriona getting a Waratah to flower like this.



Doing our best to remain socially distanced whilst Phil talks about his *Banksia vincentia* hedge

The following is selection of plants in flower during our visit. It is not practical to show them all, but a list is available if any member would like it. Just email the editor.



We couldn't start without mentioning some spectacular *Isopogons* Left is *Isopogon dawsonii* and *Isopogon divergens*



Grevillea candelabroides



Grevillea lanigera Green Cape form



Hakea bucculenta



Pimelea spectabilis



Grevillea prostrata



Pimelea ferruginea

Dampiera sericantha



Long term successful *Banksia* graft



Chamelaucium x Verticordia
'Paddy's Pink' makes an excellent long lasting cut flower, suitable to any well drained sunny spot

***Sarcomelicope simplicifolia* subsp. *simplicifolia*:**

a rare local species, Jenny Liney

There is a small to medium rainforest tree that is fairly common in subtropical and dry rainforests north from about the Illawarra into Queensland, but somewhat scarcer in southern regions where it is confined to coastal littoral rainforests as far south as Brogo. It is so rare in the ERBG Collecting Region that many of our knowledgeable plant naturalists have no knowledge of it.

The first specimens to be collected in the ERBG Collecting Region were found in 1880 in the Tilba area on the slope of Mount Dromedary. Most of the dozen or so collections made since then were in the Dromedary-Tilba area, with a couple from Belowra, and one from the southern side of the Wagonga Inlet. It would appear from the published map coordinates that some of these collections were taken from the same tree, or group of trees.

Then recently I received a call from an ecologist friend from Guerilla Bay. She had located a medium sized specimen in closed forest adjacent a cool gully right on the edge of the village. We thought this was very exciting, as there have been no documented collections between Narooma and the Illawarra. The immediate question was ‘how did it get here?’ But we could not answer that. I took specimens, including flowers, to add to the Wallace Herbarium at the ERBG; the location data will eventually be lodged with the Australasian Virtual Herbarium and will be available internationally.

Sarcomelicope simplicifolia subsp. *simplicifolia* is in the **Rutaceae** family, but unusually for Rutaceae species it is dioecious; that is, it takes two trees of a single sex each – one male, one female – to produce viable seeds. The Guerilla Bay tree turned out to be a male, so unfortunately, as there does not seem to be a female plant anywhere close, there is no apparent likelihood of any seedlings. The fruit (if you have two trees, one of each sex) are between 1-2cm long, 4-angled, brown, hard and only slightly fleshy.



Female flower (photo CSIRO)



Male flowers

The name *Sarcomelicope* is a bit of a tongue-twister. It is derived from three Greek words; *Sarco* meaning fleshy, *meli* – honey, and *kope* – cutting.

All this refers to the fleshy nectary with notched glands.

simplicifolia means that the leaves are simple, not compound as they once would have been.

The leaves are a bright, glossy green, about 12cm long and 5cm wide, rather elliptic in shape, with a long petiole 3-4cm, whitish and with a distinct joint where it connects with the leaf. (See the photo.) This type of leaf is called **1-foliolate**; the joint indicates that at one time in its evolutionary history, each leaf had more than 1 leaflet; i.e., it was a compound leaf.

Being a plant of the Rutaceae family, the leaves have oil dots, but they are small, neither crowded nor particularly fragrant.

A name for this Australian species was first published in 1834 by an Austrian botanist, Heinrich Wilhelm Schott, in *Fragmenta Botanica* under *Acronychia baueri* (think here *Grevillea baueri* – the same Ferdinand Bauer). *Fragmenta Botanica* (*Fragments of Botany*) was a journal published in Europe in the early 1800s, and contained copper etchings of



Sarcomelicope fruit (Photo ANBG)



named plant species (*figuris coloratis illustrata*). I tried to find a drawing of *Acronychia* (*Sarcomelicope*) in *Fragmenta Botanica* but did not have any success.

Acronychia is a genus that was well known in the early 19th century, and which is also in the Rutaceae family, closely related – and therefore somewhat similar to, *Sarcomelicope*.

Sarcomelicope was separated from the numerous *Acronychias* in 1896 as *tax. nov.*; that is, a new species. The new name was then applied to the small number of species in the Northern Hemisphere. But it was not formally recognised in Australia until 2007, although it had been in use for some years previously.

All this name to-ing and fro-ing means that most of the collections of *S. simplicifolia* taken from the ERBG Collecting Region were under one of the several names that were recognised at the time, but all have now been adjusted to the currently accepted name.

I took some material for the ERBG Nursery to try propagation, but Di Clark was not very hopeful. It is too early to say whether or not the cuttings will be successful.

It would be truly amazing if we could come across a female specimen within reasonable distance, but I don't think it would be likely.

REFERENCES

Harden, McDonald and Williams. *Rainforest Trees and Shrubs: a field guide to their identification*; Gwen Harden Publishing, Nambucca Heads: 2006

Australian Plant Census. anbg.gov.au/apc

Australian Plant Name Index. anbg.gov.au/apni

Australasian Virtual Herbarium. avh.ala.org.au Google images



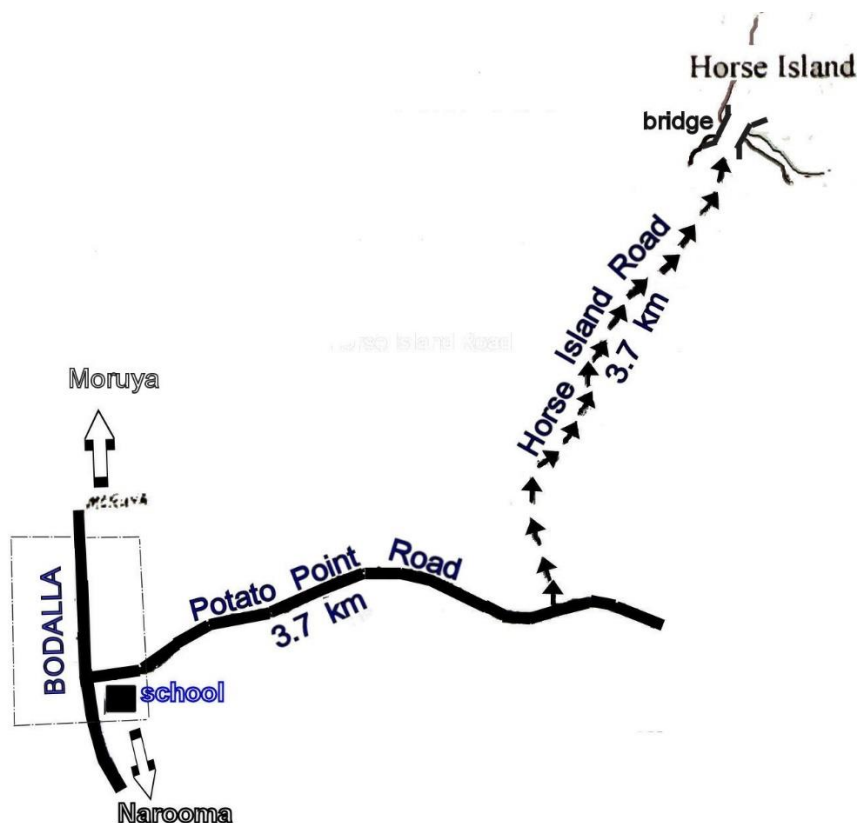
Members might recall an article from Leigh Murray, in the June newsletter, discussing a plant she thought was *Olearia persoonioides*, although not quite sure that it was named correctly. The original label is metal, firmly attached by wire, buried for years under leaf litter.

The plant is now flowering again, as shown in the photos, and the cropped close-up shows that the foliage is

distinctly warty, which should assist in identification. Please can members with experience in growing *Olearia* species in days gone by, for they are seldom grown these days, have another look at the foliage, and see if your memory might be jogged. Regardless of the species, this certainly is one spectacular and hardy plant.

Leigh would love to know what it is. Partner David still wonders if it could be a form of *O. iodichroa*.

There will be prize for any member who can correctly identify the plant.



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