



# Australian Plants Society

## South East NSW Group

Newsletter 174

August 2021

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

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### Next Meeting

**Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> September 2021,**

**at home, in your garden or nearby local bush area**

Dear Members,

This newsletter is being prepared in a period of state wide lockdown, so I hope you are all in a good place.

Fortunately for this group we were able to attend our August Meeting and John will detail the outcome of a very pleasant botanic stroll through the Dalmeny bush. We came across range of forms of *Epacris impressa* on our wanders, and I was taken by this lovely salmon coloured form featured here, which I think is worthy of a spot in gardens.

As you can appreciate the committee is sometimes finding it difficult to determine what we do when, in this ever changing scenario, so I would like to thank you for your patience.

**At this stage the committee is holding off on outlining any activities for September. We will wait and see if the regions remain in lockdown and then assess the situation.**

**The newsletter is a positive way of us linking with the group even if we are unable to attend a gathering, and I would encourage you all to contribute to upcoming Newsletters.**

We know the membership has a passion for native plants and a desire to learn so please let us know what you have been discovering and what has inspired you and share the enthusiasm.



While I was at the Eurobodalla Botanic Gardens the other day I had a conversation with Jane Eleck (retired Entomologist and ERBG volunteer) who was looking at plants to see if there were many bees active. We often hear of concern for mammals and plants impacted by the bush fires but not as much about the insects. If you are interested in native bees and encouraging them into your garden, there is some helpful information on the **aussiebee** website.

<https://www.aussiebee.com.au/bee-friendly-garden.html>

There is also an in depth article about observations of native bees after the Gospers Mountain fire

<https://resources.austplants.com.au/stories/bees-and-fire-a-tale-of-two-sites/>

Jane has also provided some more information from other websites re plants for gardens. The lists are not specific to this area and not restricted to native plants, but they do contain many plants that we would use in our own gardens. They also contain other suggestions about protecting bees and providing bee habitat.

<https://beeaware.org.au/pollination/native-bees/supporting-native-bee-populations/>

<https://www.agrifutures.com.au/wp-content/uploads/publications/12-014.pdf>

Something to think about.

Until next time,

**Di Clark**

## **Last Meeting**

**(Photo credits, Di Clark, Sue Knight, Sharon Pearson, Alison and Chris Spurgeon)**

**Success is not always achievable, despite best laid plans.**

We feel Paul Hattersley's frustration as once again he was prevented from leading this activity, having been at Tamworth whilst a Covid infection was reported, and despite testing negative on return, was still required to isolate for 14 days.

The committee decided that we should nonetheless proceed as planned, giving members an opportunity to spend some time in the bush, and away from the confines of home. Sixteen members took advantage of the lovely sunny late winter day, and had no issues with the new sign-in requirements, scanning in the QR codes using the Service NSW app, and even remembering to sign out at the end.

We were pleased to welcome new member Dylan Morrissey, recently appointed as Horticulturist at ERBG, to his first outing, and keen to pick up as much local knowledge as possible to assist in his learning of 'What Grows Where'.



**John discusses the day's program.  
Not everyone pays attention.**

Social distancing was not an issue, as members soon established a long winding trail, those walkers quickly moving ahead of stragglers intent on close observation, recording everything able to be identified.



**Young mixed forest with grassy understorey**

John agreed to record the plants we identified, and was ably assisted by other members, with local knowledge from Margaret Lynch and Sharon Pearson adding weight to our efforts.

**In total 187 species were recorded, and this list is attached as an excel spreadsheet for any member wishing to have a copy for their own reference.**

I am especially thankful to Sharon for supplying an additional list of species she has recorded, which we did not see on the day. These are included in the spreadsheet. She was also able to correctly identify a couple of species of which my dim eyes struggled to perceive minor features, and which led to incorrect determinations.

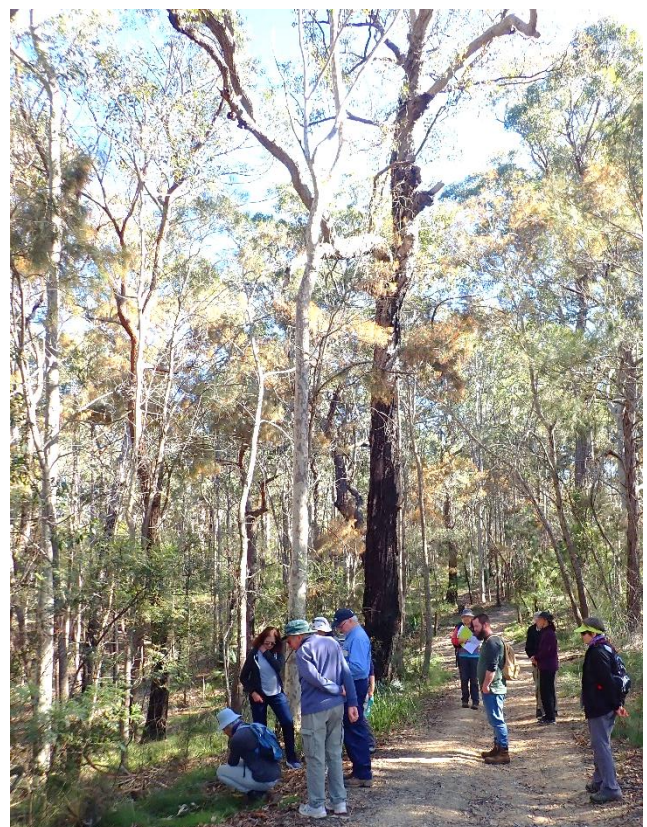
The large tract of biodiverse forest contains a range of relatively intact plant communities, but is threatened by future development which will probably see most of the bushland cleared for housing under current zoning plans.



**Dylan records *Cymbidium suave* to add to his growing collection of local plant pictures. Good practice to reinforce the day's observations**



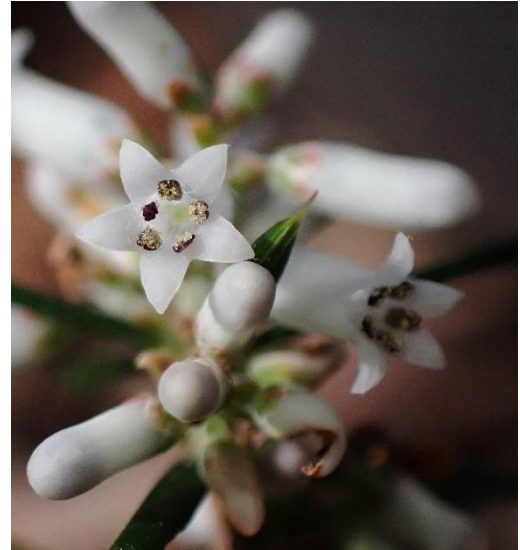
**We are all different.  
Some see black, others white. Some look up, others down**



**Now we are on the same page**



*Hibbertia linearis*, a slender shrub ideally suited to a semi-shaded garden



*Lissanthe strigosa*, Peach Heath, is a tiny woody sub-shrub in the Ericaceae Family



Chris Spurgeon spent the morning as an orchid detective, finding 2 species of Greenhoods. Then sadly spent the afternoon looking for his expensive glasses which had somehow fallen from his pocket. Thankfully they were found.



Alison found a small branch of *Eucalyptus botryoides* which had fallen from a tree, and spent her afternoon producing a lovely pastel drawing.

Spring was certainly in the air, with usual early indicators, *Acacia longifolia*, *Hardenbergia violacea*, *Tetrateca thymifolia*, *Pimelea linifolia*, *Hibbertia dentata* and even *Aotus ericoides* trying to muscle in with an early flower, and the promise of many more to come.

Our proposed 2 hour stroll took nearly twice that, and we were relieved that lunch was waiting for us back at the cars. Our excursion proved a worthwhile exercise, providing a comprehensive albeit

incomplete list of the plants which inhabit this lovely bit of bushland. Some also had time to enjoy naming the varied birdlife which accompanied us.



*Tetratheca thymifolia* is an adaptable sub-shrub, *Hibbertia dentata* prefers a shady spot, and *Hardenbergia violacea* loves the sun, but all are great garden plants. Try to find a spot for these in your garden. What a colourful start to the coming spring

Let's hope that we can again get out and explore before another spring season is lost to covid lockdowns.

## Proteaceae Project at ERBG

### Report by Di Clark

Since the last newsletter we have had three sessions at the ERBG and the project is gaining momentum. On 30th July 2021 a group of us met at the gardens to meet with Dylan Morrissey, the Horticulturist at ERBG. The aim of this meeting was to assess the list of plants in the Proteaceae family that are local to our area and discuss how we might collect, grow and display them. John Knight provided us with a lot of information and we have asked John to prepare a landscape plan of the bed to present to ERBG. This will give us a list of plants that we hope to plant in the beds. The group has already started propagation of some of the common plants and the landscape plan will give more direction as to what is required.

On 3rd August John had assistance from Barry Hart, Geoff Gosling and Norm Hulands to measure out the bed and this will enable John to work to a scaled drawing. On 13th August several members met to continue works. More plants were propagated and some of the previously sown seed was potted up. The outdoor workers continued cleaning up the area by removing unwanted plants that have grown in abundance after the fire.

**After lunch we were given time to view the plan that John has produced and provide input.**

We will be attempting to make this information accessible as a PDF file and to make it available to members of the Proteaceae Project Group. If you are not on this list but would like to join in or receive information please let me know and I will add you to the group. Anyone wishing to join a working bee needs to have undertaken an induction as an ERBG volunteer and this can be arranged to take place on the day if required.



*Banksia spinulosa* growing at the head of the Corn Trail. This variable plant will be a feature of the Proteaceae bed, with its many forms on display



We will be hoping to have working bee's on a monthly basis as long as this fits with the current Covid - 19 restrictions and ERBG policy. At this stage the date is unknown but the group will be advised by email sometime in September.

**Members are reminded that President Di is co-ordinating the project on our behalf, and all queries or comments regarding the project are to be made through Di..**

## Members Musings

Lyndal Thorburn,

Tom and I spent a weekend at Tombarra, a conference centre in Mongarlowe, in early May, playing Old Time American music. The venue is on 28 acres of native forest, and we went on several walks in between music sessions. It was following weeks of heavy rain, and we couldn't get near the Mongarlowe River, which was flowing very swiftly. Much of the understorey was *Lomatia fraseri*, and *Prostanthera lasianthos*. We found some interesting plants, including ground cover Goodenia, and *Vittadinia muelleri* (Narrow leaved New Holland daisy) along with *Russula sp.* (a fungus, not a plant) and also very evident under near by pine trees was the brilliantly coloured *Amanita muscaria*.



Typical woodland of the tablelands east of Braidwood



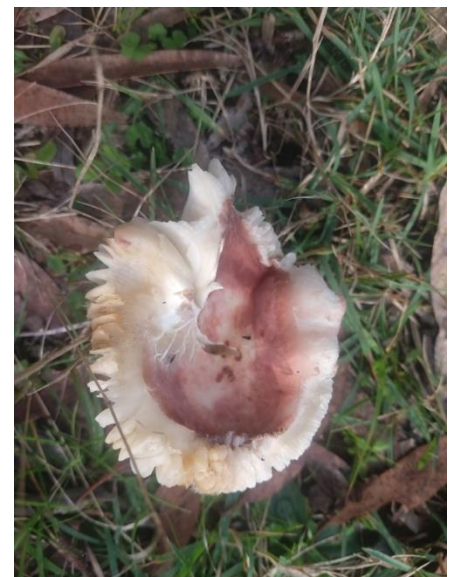
Mongarlowe River, here in flood, is usually a gentle waterway meandering to the Shoalhaven



Above, *Lomatia fraseri*, a shrubby member of the Proteaceae Family, with attractive white flowers during spring and early summer, prefers a sheltered, well-watered site but grows happily once established.

Bright red *Amanita muscaria* is commonly found in pine forests.

The *Russula* group comprises around 750 species of mushrooms worldwide



## What's in a name *Pimelea*, and *pimeleoides* (like a *Pimelea*)



**Pimelea**, Rice Flowers, is named from the Greek **pimele**, (fat or lard), refers to either the oily seeds or fleshy cotyledon leaves

*Pimelea linifolia* is a cheery small woody shrub, quite common in the drier forests of the south coast. It can be found on coastal heaths, forests of the ranges and on the tablelands. With such diverse habitat, you would think that it would present no problems in our gardens, but not necessarily so.

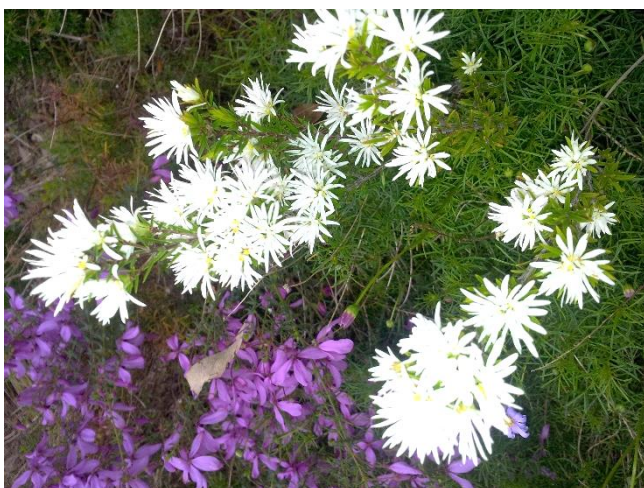


*Pimelea linifolia* flower head

Plants seem to be happiest when left to their own devices, and prefer dry, lightly shady sites without being pampered with regular watering and fertiliser. The photo shows a happy plant growing beneath a high Eucalypt canopy, and in the company of just a few grasses and sedges, with fallen leaves providing some protection from drying soils.

Plants are readily propagated by cuttings of just firm growth taken early summer following flowering, and do not require hormone treatment for successful striking.

When potting, use less fertiliser than might be usual, for plants often drop leaves if the level of fertiliser is too high.



Revision of the Family **Euphorbiaceae** sees the plants lacking latex moved to a new Family **Picrodendraceae**, and refers to the bitter taste of some of the fruits.

Within this Family we find **Pseudanthus**, named from the Greek **pseudos** (false) and **anthos** (flower), and refers to the clusters of small flowers which appear as a single flower.

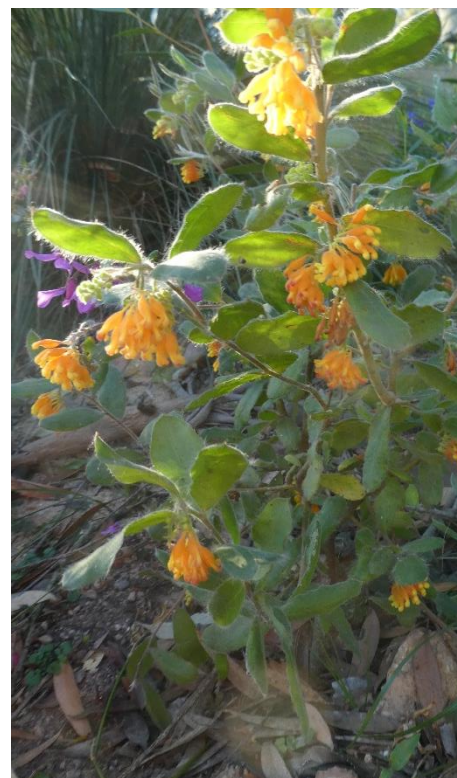
*P. pimeleoides* is a small shrub found in moist gullies of forests and heaths around the Sydney region.

Plants are monoecious, that is having individual male and female flowers on the same plant, the male flowers larger and more numerous than the smaller female flowers

The plant is slow growing but long lived, and is readily grown in a well-drained, semi-shaded position, and tolerates dry spells once established. In my garden plants are 8 years old, and still only 50cm high. Propagation however is a bit hit and miss, hence the plants are rarely available in nurseries. Success requires using fresh new growth in early summer following flowering, and applying mid-strength hormones around 3000ppm. Light pruning during or after flowering produces a flush of growth providing suitable propagation material.

**Grevillea** honours the co-founder of the Horticultural Society Charles Greville (1749 – 1809).

*G. pimeleoides* (previously known as *G. drummondii* ssp *pimeleoides*) is a small to medium shrub, and occurs naturally on well-drained soils east of Perth. It was popular in cultivation during the latter part of last century, but has fallen out of favour, replaced by the large flowered modern hybrids. Although the flower conflorescences are relatively small, they are well displayed, and are bright orange with red tips, strikingly obvious against the hairy, celery green foliage. As **Mark Noake** has found, when grown in deep, well-drained soil, plants can reach 1.5m, but respond positively to light pruning during or after flowering. My plant is relatively recent, only 2 years old, growing under *Eucalyptus olsenii* in dryish conditions, but flowers reliably for 6 months from April.



Plants perform best when in dappled shade rather than full sun, and mulching of soil to prevent temperature fluctuations also helps. Propagation, using firm young growth from early summer, usually gives good results, but the hairy leaves can be affected adversely if too frequent watering occurs.

## Wattle Day, September 1

It's time to think about adding an Acacia or two to our gardens.

The variety of Wattles is endless, and selecting a couple of smaller species to add to the Australian-ness of our gardens is sure to bring benefits. Not just the cheerfulness of bright yellow flowers, but the life these plants bring, firstly from insects visiting the flowers, but when seed sets, there will be plenty of avian friends like Billy, calling by to tidy up the seeds.



Our latest friend, Billy, (or Betty) the Brown Cuckoo-dove, has spent the last couple of weeks poking around the garden

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