



Australian Plants Society

South East NSW Group

Newsletter 167

January 2021

Corymbia maculata Spotted Gum and
Macrozamia communis Burrawang

Contacts: President, Di Clark,
Secretary, Paul Hattersley
Newsletter editor, John Knight,
Group contact

dianneclark293@gmail.com
paul.hattersley26@outlook.com
johnonvista49@outlook.com
southeast@austplants.com.au

Next Meeting

Saturday 6th February 2021, 10.30a.m.

at Lesley and Norm Hulands home, 9 Mountainview Road Moruya

**Our AGM, followed by an illustrated
"A Pity You Missed the Wildflowers" talk by Lyndal Thorburn**

Dear Members,

With this, our first newsletter for 2021, I trust this message finds you looking forward to a brighter, and more productive year. There is no doubt that the South Coast area has been through its share of trauma during 2020, but we can remind ourselves also that we are so lucky to live here.

It is the aim of this organisation to enhance that experience, and hopefully inspire you to build on your knowledge of Australian plants and the environment.

If you make a few friends along the way so much the better.

The Group's first meeting for 2021 will include our AGM. Details appear later in this newsletter.

All committee positions will be declared vacant at the AGM, so if you were thinking of joining the committee please complete the nomination form included with this newsletter.

Ours is a great committee to be part of, the main function of which is to plan the year's activities, so if you would like to have more say in what we do, please join the committee.

Having a vibrant, growing committee also brings a new freshness to the group and will help us to be viable for many years into the future.

If this is important to you, think about joining.

At the AGM we will also be asking you to think about the aims and purpose of our South East NSW Region Group.

Are we satisfying your needs?

Is there some activity you would love to do as a group?

These questions will be raised and if there is need for greater discussion we will plan a separate time to do so.

We are looking to an exciting year ahead commencing with Lyndal's talk on Western Australia's wildflowers, followed in March by a visit to Guerilla Bay and an opportunity to assist with some citizen science. In April we will visit the home of Catriona Bate and Phil Trickett where a grafting demonstration and participatory session is planned. Please note the April meeting will be on the second Saturday in April so as not to clash with Easter..

These are the current plans.

We will obviously need to be aware of any NSW Health guidelines regarding COVID - 19 and gatherings.

COVID 19 restrictions will still apply at this meeting.

Members will be required to sign our attendance record, and supply contact details for tracing purposes should that need arise. Also, you need to supply your own refreshments, as a "no sharing" policy is adopted by the committee until we are advised by APS NSW Region that this requirement has been relaxed. We plan to meet indoors, and it would assist if you could bring along an easily managed chair, just in case.



The small shrub *Pimelea linifolia* is a cheery summer flowerer, happy in sun or light shade, but does need good drainage. Di,

We will keep you informed of any changes to plans. I hope to see you all many times during the year.

Di Clark
President

Next Meeting

Order of business

**Annual General Meeting: presentation of Committee reports,
election of Office Bearers for the coming year**

Show and Tell session

Speaker presentation

"A Pity You Missed the Wildflowers" a talk by Lyndal Thorburn

Bio:

Dr Lyndal Thorburn is an ecologist whose keen interest in gardening and native plants has been with her since childhood. Despite not working directly in biology, she has maintained her interest of all things plants through long membership of ANPS Canberra (of which she is now a Life Member) and past involvement in organisations like the Canberra Ornithologists' Group and Barren Grounds Nature Reserve.

Lyndal has been a member of the Eremophila Study Group since 1985 and its leader since 2015. She and her husband Tom have been active in the propagation activities of ANPS Canberra since 1979 and host a hotbed and greenhouse on their Queanbeyan property. Lyndal and Tom take photos of plants, bugs and birds wherever they travel. Lyndal is currently documenting the return to life of their 7 acre Surf Beach wet sclerophyll forest block (burnt on New Year's Eve in the Mogo fire), posting their findings on the Budawang Coast Nature Map.

In late September and early October 2013, Lyndal Thorburn and her husband Tom Jordan drove around a small piece of Western Australia, east and north of Perth.

They traversed over 2000km, but only made it as far north as Hamelin Pool. Everywhere they went, people would say "what a pity you missed the wildflowers" - meaning the daisies for which WA is famous, not realising that there was plenty more in flower. Lyndal will share some of the many photos of Western Australian wildflowers, including a few daisies which she and Tom saw on that trip.



An appreciative Lyndal enjoying a close up encounter with *Lechenaultia biloba*, discovered whilst travelling from York towards Mt. Talbot

Symbiosis

Recently, we had a walk through the **Eurobodalla National Park** in back of Pedro Point at Moruya Heads. We had been to the beach area there several times over the years but had not headed inland as we did this year.

It was an interesting walk along a well made sandy track with the usual collection of flora until we came upon a Burrawang (*Macrozamia communis*) growing a bird's nest fern (*Asplenium australasicum*). Obviously old friends, both plants were doing well.

Both plants are well known to us all but this is the first time our group had seen them so in love. The bird's nest is epiphytic and will grow on trees, on rock or in soil provided it is not too exposed to the sun so maybe we should not have been so surprised to find this one. Burrawangs are as tough as old boots (I haven't managed to kill one yet) and this one was displaying no signs of distress playing host to the bird's nest.

The Encyclopaedia Britannica (yes, it still exists, and I prefer it to Wikipedia) says symbiosis is any of several living arrangements between members of two different species, including mutualism, commensalism, and parasitism. Both positive (beneficial) and negative (unfavourable to harmful) associations are therefore included, and the members are called symbionts. Once upon a time symbiosis was only applied where the two organisms were mutually dependent but that has now been abandoned. So, our two plants are symbiotic.

Geoff Gosling



November in our rainforest and garden:

A rainfall event, followed by heat and boosted by fire ash from last summer's fires, created an explosion of flowering along our rainforest creek at Currowan late in spring, with November being the peak month.

Species never seen in flower here previously flowered prolifically. *Claoxylon australe* Brittlewood, was covered in sprays of tiny white flowers. *Clerodendrum tomentosum* flowered with elegant white trumpets, on bushes noted in previous years but not seen with flowers. Now (January) those bushes are covered in interesting, immature green drupes within large red bracts. *Backhousia myrtifolia* (Grey Myrtle) understory trees along the creek resprouted after the fire, and flowered massively. *Callicoma serratifolia* did likewise.



Claoxylon australe is in the Euphorbia family, and is recognised by a grouping of glands at the base of the leaf lamina, where it joins the leaf stalk. Plants may have both male and female flowers on the same plant, but always on separate racemes.



Clerodendrum tomentosum often occurs on the margins of rainforests, but is overlooked unless flowering, or more likely when in fruit. The common name of Lollybush alludes to the prominent rounded black fruit which is displayed within a bright red fleshy calyx

The *Ficus coronata* (Sandpaper Fig) tree survived unburnt (in the only part of the creek bed that was not destroyed) and produced many small figs, evidently appreciated by birds, as seedlings have popped up in inappropriate places. Other species flowered for a second time (*Prostanthera lasianthos*, Victorian Christmas



Bush), or earlier than usual (*Ceratopetalum apetalum*, Coachwood) that burst into flower in late October. *Grevillea robusta* produced a tree-top bounty of golden orange flowers for Wattlebirds. New appearances of self-sown vines included *Pandorea pandorana* in two



A background of brilliant golden orange flowers of *Grevillea robusta*, Silky Oak, draw the eye away from an equally floriferous *Ceratopetalum apetalum*, Coachwood

flower colours – pale pink and deep orange. Riberry (*Syzygium luehmannii*) produced many more flowers than usual, and *Persoonia linearis* flowered for the third time since the fires...



So did the pink-flowered *Elaeocarpus reticulatus*), which put on a magnificent show for several weeks. The Cheese Tree (*Glochidion ferdinandi*) was badly scorched on one side, but has resprouted and produced a mass of miniature “cheeses” – pale green fruits with brilliant red seeds inside.

A very interesting November indeed!

Another summer project, whilst stuck at home

John Knight

The covid menace scuttled our plans to join family for a holiday in Adelaide, so it was suggested that I use time wisely, aka someone has a job for me.

During Council’s annual hard rubbish collection last year I noticed that VP Geoff had discarded a small garden pond, which was thought might come in handy. So we asked if we could have it, although no plans were in place for its immediate use. It had been laying around for a while, and had buckled a bit from being exposed to sun. Being hard plastic, I foolishly thought that the base could be returned to its natural shape by allowing it to heat up on a sunny morning, and then forcing the distorted section back to where it belonged. Not entirely successful, as the side split, and left a gaping hole. A little experimentation with various glues eventually sealed the damage, so I could get on with the project of incorporating it into the front garden. The pond is about 1 metre wide and 1.2m long, with a depth of about 400mm, big enough I expect to provide sanctuary for a few frogs.



Hole dug, soil removed, pond in place. No challenge. Luckily a few cool summer days meant that I didn’t expire from heat exhaustion. Fill with water, leave overnight, still full, Hooray! The area around was backfilled, and planting could begin. Placement of the pond required removal of a couple of larger plants, but the bonus of course is that many smaller plants can be used as replacements.

Close to the water edge, some recently propagated *Goodenia glomerata*, *G. paniculata*, and *G. bellidifolia* provide bright yellow flowers which attract hoverflies and other insects. These are complimented by a group of *Bulbine glauca* and *B. bulbosa*, with *Blandfordia nobilis* (Christmas Bells) finally being released from captivity after 4 years confined to a pot.

Background planting includes *Grevillea olivacea*, red flowered form, *G. rhyolitica* “Deua Flame”, and a few daisies left over from the verge planting discussed in the last newsletter. A few stepping stones to reach my contemplation seat, river pebbles for mulch, and the job was done.

Now we just need some water plants, which included a neighbour's *Azolla filiculoides*, Red Ferny Azolla, and *A. pinnata*, both of which are floating plants which colonise very quickly (too quickly) and require removal almost daily. The discarded material does make a good mulch, and cannot grow away from free water. We also had some plants in tubs which could be divided. These included *Marsilea drummondii*, (Common Nardoo), *Gratiola peruviana*, (Pink flowered Brooklime), a small leaved *Myriophyllum sp.*, *Baloskion tetraphyllum* (Tassel Cord Rush), Yellow flowered *Villarsia exaltata* and *Ornduffia reniformis* (Marshflowers).

With the plants settled, it was time to find some tadpoles, and fortuitously Norm and Lesley had noticed some frog spawn in a drain, and offered us some. Eggs subsequently hatched, and we now have some tadpoles, and one already has legs. Getting excited.

Avian surprises

Since Christmas, we have had a small bird roosting under the eaves, holding on tightly to the bricks. At first we thought the droppings might have been from a small bat, but being the wrong colour, decided on a bird. Each day when we went out the front door, fresh droppings adorned the patio, but there was no evidence as to the donor. Curiosity piqued, we finally went out into the dark with a torch, to find a fluffy ball of feathers clinging tightly to the wall. When the light was turned on, the visitor decided this was just too much interference, and flew away. We thought the flight reminded us of the furtive flip flopping of an Eastern Spinebill. Why would such a species roost in what appears a quite uncomfortable situation. So we suspected maybe a swallow was considering making a nest. But after 3 weeks, no evidence of nest-making, but the bird returned every night on dusk, and disappeared at first light. Might it have been abandoned by its parents?



Ball of fluff first noticed



Daily calling cards



The culprit awaiting identification

Is there anyone among us who can offer an identification of our friendly but messy visitor ?

On the subject of odd bird behaviour, we were intrigued that a male Bower Bird was hopping up and down on the driveway, pecking at the ground. Odd indeed.

Next day he was jumping up and down on the flexible branches of *Austromyrtus tenuifolia*, and dislodging ripe fruit, which fell away from the branches. He then proceeded to hop up and down the drive, picking up his reward.

Smart bird indeed.

Austromyrtus tenuifolia is a shrubby plant which inhabits moist forests around Sydney, and is said to need shelter from harsh conditions. Ours is in anything but a sheltered site, having been planted in a narrow garden adjacent to the driveway, facing west and getting the full force of reflected heat from the concrete drive. A tough plant which flowers prolifically without any help from me.



Committee news

Annual General Meeting

The Australian Plant Society is required to present annual reports, prepared for the year ending 31st December each year, to members at the AGM.

Notice of Annual General Meeting

Notice is hereby given that the Annual General meeting of APS South East Region Group will be held at **10.30am on Saturday 6th February 2021, at the home of Lesley and Norman Hulands, 9 Mountain View Road Moruya**

The business of the meeting is:

1. Confirm the minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting
2. To receive and approve the annual President Report
3. To receive and approve the Annual Financial Report
4. To receive a report from the Membership Officer
5. To determine the number of ordinary committee members for the coming year (currently up to 6)
6. Questions arising from these reports will be dealt with, then the Returning Officer will call for nominations for all Committee positions.
7. To elect office bearers and ordinary members of the committee for the coming year

All committee positions will become vacant. Nominations for the committee for the coming year can be submitted on the nomination form below, and presented to the Returning Officer prior to the meeting. According to the rules governing our association, there must be nominations for the positions of President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer.

Current serving committee members are eligible to be re-nominated.

The committee encourages all members to consider seriously offering to join the committee. Please print this page and complete the form and bring it with you to meeting.

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Australian Plants Society (APS) South East NSW Group

Nomination for Committee for 2021

I, (the Nominator) _____, being a financial member of APS South East Group

Nominate _____

For the Position of, _____

or as an Ordinary Committee Member

I accept nomination as a Committee Member or for the position specified

Signature of Nominee _____ **Dated** / / 2021

For our Group to function successfully, it is important, and necessary, to have a strong committee to plan and implement activities for the benefit of all members.

The AGM presents an opportunity for all members to offer themselves to join the committee, keeping the Group invigorated and active.

As is often the case, getting people to volunteer to join a committee is nigh impossible, despite the fact that the workload of our small committee is not onerous.

Leaving it to “someone else” may be an easy option, but does not address the needs of the Group. Now might be time to consider your personal involvement, so the Group continues to promote the growing of Australian plants in our gardens.

If you would like to discuss how you could be involved in the committee activities, call a current member as listed below.

Elections will be held for all positions, namely President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Membership Officer and Committee Members.

The newly elected committee will select from its members a Minute Secretary and Publicity Officer at the first gathering of the committee following the AGM.



Goodenia glomerata enjoying time in the sun. This is a fleshy leaved herb with hairy flower stems supporting quite large flower heads, and thrives in moist soils.

COMMITTEE CONTACT DETAILS

President,	Di Clark	Ph 0 4 02 555 330	e. dianneclark293@gmail.com
Vice-President	Geoff Gosling	Ph 0438 286 382	e. geoff.gosling@bigpond.com
Secretary,	Paul Hattersley	Ph 0412 426 413	e. paul.hattersley26@outlook.com
Minute Sec.,			
Treasurer,	Geoff Gosling	Ph 0438 286 382	e. geoff.gosling@bigpond.com
Membership	Jenny John	Ph 0437 304 173	e. peteandjenny.john@gmail.com
Publicity	Carolyn Noake	Ph 02 4474 3135	e. carolyn.noake@westnet.com.au
Members	Marjorie Apthorpe	Ph 02 4478 1142	e. marjorieapthorpe@gmail.com
	Norman Hulands	Ph 0427 276 803	e. normanhulands@bigpond.com
	John Knight	Ph 0434 674 347	e. johnonvista49@outlook.com
	Sally Power	Ph 02 4474 3600	e. _sallymcdonald9@gmail.com
	Website .		southeast.austplants.com.au