



Australian Plants Society

South East NSW Group

Newsletter 191

January 2023

Corymbia maculata Spotted Gum and
Macrozamia communis Burrawang

Contacts:

President,	Di Clark,	diclark17@mailfence.com
Secretary,	Paul Hattersley	paul.hattersley26@outlook.com
Newsletter editor,	John Knight,	johnonvista49@gmail.com
Group contact		southeast@ausplants.com.au

Dear Members,

The new year has begun and it is now time to get back into the swing of life in the beautiful South Coast Region. The committee and I look forward to meeting you in person at one of our monthly meetings. Once again, we will try to provide a year of interesting garden visits, bush exploration and talks by a variety of experts and enthusiasts.

Our next meeting will be our Annual General Meeting and I would like to encourage you all to consider joining the committee. We welcome fresh ideas and different perspectives. Nomination forms can be found at the end of this newsletter and all positions will be declared vacant.

This year we have combined forces with the Eurobodalla Regional Botanic Gardens and will share a public speaker in the afternoon after our AGM.

Please see details below and note the modified start time.

Unfortunately, I still need to remind everyone to not attend any meetings if you feel unwell.

The new committee will get together some time after the AGM in order to clarify the planned activities for the year ahead.

We have previously mentioned the idea of a plant swap so get inspired and keep growing. More details will be provided next newsletter. If you have any questions about our activities, please ask the committee (see details at the end of the newsletter) and if you wish to contribute to the newsletter at any time, please contact John Knight.

Thank you to everyone for your support, enthusiasm and for the inspiration.

Kind regards,

Di Clark

Next Meeting

**Saturday 4th February 2023,
arrive 10.30 a.m. for social morning tea**

(note the later starting time)

**Annual General Meeting,
followed by a presentation by Dr Kevin Mills,
featuring Ferns of the South Coast (see page 3)**

**The meeting will be held at
Eurobodalla Regional Botanic Gardens**

AGM starts at 11.00 a.m.

Following morning tea, President Di will commence proceedings for the AGM, presenting her report on the previous year's activities, then the Secretary will present the minutes of the previous AGM.

Other reports by committee members, Treasurer and Membership Officer will follow before the Returning Officer is called to conduct the election of Office Bearers for the coming year.

At this point all positions will be declared vacant, and nominations called for.

It is still not too late to consider your involvement in deciding what we as a group can achieve, and what types of activities best suit our purposes. President Di, or any other current committee member would be happy to discuss the opportunities available. Don't be shy ! **There is a nomination form on page 5.**

At the conclusion of elections and closing of the AGM, the Elected President will take the chair and our usual monthly meeting will commence.

As the afternoon session does not commence until 2 p.m. there will be ample time before we break for lunch, to discuss activities and plans for the coming year, and members ideas will be eagerly canvassed.

An important feature of our meetings is members Show and Tell, and we ask everyone to bring along some summer flowering plant specimens for discussion. This is a popular activity, giving members the chance to find out what others are growing successfully. **Bring along an armful of treasures to show off !**

As mentioned in a previous newsletter, we are working towards getting more members involved in the satisfying, although sometimes frustrating activity of **propagating plants**. The next couple of months are an ideal time for propagating by cuttings, as the soft spring growth firms to ideal cutting material. Please keep it in mind when you are out gardening or visiting friends with interesting native plants.

Seeds too can be germinated over the warmer months, with young plants kept sheltered until cooler weather of autumn. We would love to see everyone trying to propagate some native plants and bring along some spares to share with the group at a planned Plant Swap later this year.

Time to get growing !

FERNS OF THE NSW SOUTH COAST

Dr Kevin Mills

The south coast of New South Wales contains about 68 percent of the ferns to be found in New South Wales. These range from tiny filmy ferns to tree ferns growing over 10 metres tall. Most of these ferns are easily found by those interested in our native flora, but experience is needed to be able to accurately identify the species. Kevin's talk will deal with the different fern groups that can be identified and the way in which ferns can be identified. The talk will be illustrated with many photographs of the region's ferns.



Prickly Tree Fern *Cyathea leichhardtiana*.
Photos supplied by Dr. Kevin Mills



The climbing Fragrant Fern *Dendroconche scandens* (syn. *Microsorium scandens*).

Dr Kevin Mills is a botanist and ecologist, and has lived in the Illawarra for over 40 years. He has studied the region's flora, especially rainforests, for many years and is currently working on various projects in the region, including studies of all offshore islands on the South Coast, and various rare plant surveys. He is a long-time member of the South Coast Regional Advisory Committee to the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, and has presented numerous talks on varying subjects within his broad knowledge of our South Coast flora.

He has authored or co-authored several books on plants including *Native Trees of Central Illawarra*, *Rainforests of the Illawarra District*, and *Native Trees of the NSW South Coast*.

His most recent work is a review and field study of the ferns of the south coast, which he is about to publish as a book on the ferns of the south coast. Kevin is an excellent presenter, able to speak to all levels of botanic understanding, and the results of his study will be the focus of this talk.

Kevin wears many hats, and one of his keen interests is to get people enthused about their local flora. To this end he has, for over a decade, produced *BUDAWANGIA* a monthly e-newsletter for all those interested in the native plants of the NSW south coast, which aims to connect those interested in the native flora of the NSW South Coast, to share up to date information on the flora of the region and to broaden the appreciation of the region's native plants. Any member interested in receiving this informative newsletter could contact Kevin by email at kevinmillskma@gmail.com

In my garden

Christmas has come and gone. We usually have plentiful sprays of NSW Christmas Bush, *Ceratopetalum gummiferum*, to fill vases with Christmas cheer. However, with the wet and benign conditions of recent times, our plant had raced again to tree proportions, and needed a severe prune, back to a stump, which meant no display for this year.

The resultant regrowth provided foliage colour, and was complimented by sprays of a local plant, *Leptospermum morrisonii*. This plant grows to small tree proportions, 5 – 6m., with light green new growth highlighting the large white tea-tree flowers. Leptospermums make lovely small trees for gardens, with attractive trunks obvious when under pruned.

After 3 years of wet conditions, the recent dry weather has caused some changes in plant behaviour. We all have experience of plants growing, and growing some more, all the while looking very happy, and flowering abundantly. The late spring flush of Callistemon flowers was impressive, although some members noted that the flowers didn't last as long as expected. Too much growing to do I suppose. Over the past few months, members have noted that some plants have looked decidedly unhappy, and indeed, deaths of some treasure has been common. Did we forget to water, thinking that the ground would be saturated. Many are the reasons plants don't always respond to our garden conditions, and although Australian plants are adaptable, one must remember that we do try to grow many which are maybe a little temperamental. This is a good reason, when purchasing a nursery plant, to propagate a couple before digging a hole.

Weeds, weeds and more weeds.

There is unlikely to be a member who has not been troubled by unstoppable germination of myriad weeds during recent times. We have over the past couple of years delved into the world of weeds, generally cursing our misfortune to own the best crop in the area.

Whilst perennial weeds present constant headaches, these weeds can usually be defeated with constant vigilance. On the other hand, annual weeds pop up at a time of their choosing, and despite removal on sight, always appear again and again from a seedbank. A common curse of gardeners, Flickweed, and Chickweed find the sneakiest place to germinate, and often have seeded before you find them.

As the weather has warmed, there is another persistent pest which defies eradication, *Euphorbia maculata*, (syn, *Chamaesyce maculata*) Eyebane, which appears from nowhere, hides in tiny cracks and seeds prolifically when just a few leaves. Roots on even the tiniest plants are tenacious, and broken stems exude a milky sap which causes some people issues. There are couple of very similar native species, but neither of them have the distinctive spots on the leaves.

I would like to feature a weed or two in future newsletters, and ask that members send details of their least favourite plants, with a photo if possible. It would help if you offered some advice on how you control the pest plant. There will be a secret prize for the best offerings.

How do I control Eyebane ? As it grows mainly in warm, open sites, you can usually spy young plants, and remove by hand and in the bin, not compost. However, just a week is enough to set a supply of seed, so diligence is needed. Heavy mulching over young plants will cause them to rot, but who knows what is left behind.



Australian Plants Society (APS) NSW South East Group

Nomination for Committee for 2023

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

Nominate _____

For the Position of: _____

Or Ordinary Committee Member (circle if applicable)

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

Signature of Nominee _____ Dated / / 2023

COMMITTEE CONTACT DETAILS

President,	Di Clark	Ph 0402 555 330	e. diClark17@mailfence.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	vacant		
Members	Norman Hulands	Ph 0427 276 803	e. normanhrh@icloud.com
	John Knight	Ph 0434 674 347	e. johnonvista49@gmail.com
	Sally Power	Ph 02 4474 3600	e. sallymcdonald9@gmail.com
	Website .		southeast.austplants.com.au