



Australian Plants Society

South East NSW Group

Newsletter 193

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Corymbia maculata Spotted Gum and
Macrozamia communis Burrawang

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Dear Members,

The year is well on the way, the end of summer has arrived although it remains stubbornly hot. Another wet season has kept the vegetation growing and the weeds looking very healthy. During that time, I have been involved in weed work close to home and also further afield at Kosciuszko National Park, details of which appear in this newsletter.

I know that a large number of our members are also members of other groups such as Landcare, or you may have just adopted a reserve near your home. If you would like to share the highs and lows of such work, we would be interested in hearing from you. It is encouraging how a small community of determined people can make a difference.

I am pleased to report that the plants we have planted in the Proteaceae Bed at the ERBG have survived and grown through summer. The area is slowly beginning to take shape and more working bee days have been scheduled up until July. Our upcoming meeting will be held at the ERBG so you will have a chance to visit the garden.

The committee have put together a tentative program for the monthly meetings. We are still confirming activities and arrangement but I let you know that we will have a wide variety of activities including specialist talks, bush meanders, garden visits and more.

That brings me to the next meeting in April, a hands on propagation day. Unfortunately, I still need to remind everyone to not attend any meetings if you feel unwell.

Again, could members please note that I have again been forced to change my email address, as the "mailfence" address I was using for security reasons has proved too restrictive to send messages to more than a couple of people. My current email contact is dianneclark293@gmail.com

Thanks, and best wishes. I hope to see you at a meeting soon.

Di Clark

Next Meeting

Saturday 1st April 2023,

**at Eurobodalla Regional Botanic Gardens
meet at the nursery area around 10.00 a.m.**

(There is parking at the top of the hill in the Nursery carpark.)

PRACTICAL PROPAGATION

After a social morning tea, the propagation session will begin at 10:30am. ERBG Nursery staff and experienced members will lead the activities.

- **The aim of the day is to share the skills and knowledge of the group regarding propagation and let members test their skills at the ERBG.**
- **There will be plant material available on the day for cuttings but you will also be able to bring in some material from home. Please ensure that all material is healthy and pest free, and ideally labelled.**
- **The ERBG has snips for use on the day but bring your own if you have a special, magic pair.**

ERBG is charging a \$5.00 fee per attending member for the day, to cover our use the pots, propagation mix, labels, gloves and hormones supplied by the gardens. Please bring cash.

The cuttings you prepare will be going home with you, so please bring something to carry them in, and a way of keeping them cool if you are travelling some distance. A few small pots or containers with drainage to place them in would be useful.

We will demonstrate various techniques for keeping cuttings alive at home and also have a brainstorming session to see what our inventive members are doing.

There are many different aspects of plant propagation. If there is something you would really like to learn or see, please let us know before the day and we can prepare.

We will be covering:

- how to assess cutting material,
- how to select a hormone,
- choosing the right pot and media.

This will be a practical session so you will be taking the cuttings yourself.

We can also look at seed propagation if there is interest in that. This is an opportunity to ask any questions, with experienced propagators on hand.

Remember. Our Group is planning a plant swap day for later in the year so this is a perfect opportunity to get some plants growing and share them or swap with our members.

We will also include a show and tell session on this day, and the plants demonstrated can then be propagated if desired. We will have propagation sessions before and after lunch broken up by the show and tell and a walk if people would like to stretch their legs.

OOPS!

In the last newsletter, I mentioned the critically endangered plant, *G. scortechinii ssp scortechinii*, the Black Grevillea, as a prostrate plant from NSW northern tablelands near Guyra. This is of course incorrect, as the ssp. *scortechinii* only occurs around Stanthorpe in Queensland. The ssp near Guyra is *G. scortechinii ssp. sarmentosa*. Apologies for the error, and I thank Grevillea Study Group leader and Grevillea guru, Peter Olde for bringing this to my notice.

Last Meeting

Cullendulla Nature Reserve and Square Head Report by Di. Clark

For our March meeting we were once again treated to a morning of misty rain and the group questioned whether we would enjoy walking through the bush. But as so often happens by the time the nine hardy participants had finished their tea, the clouds were breaking up and we set off to look at Cullendulla Nature Reserve.

The day's activities included two walks. One on the **Surfside area of Cullendulla Creek** along the beach and over the mangroves and the other on the area known as **Square Head**. This is a reserve accessed via Long Beach and includes a walk on the headland overlooking the creek and estuary and Batemans Bay. Both walks were fine examples of very different ecosystems found very close to the suburbs of Surfside and Long Beach.

Cullendulla Beach is interesting because it is the home to a stand of *Casuarina glauca* that grow right on the edge of the beach. Members had memories of the stand of trees being wider and along the edge there is a row of dead trees that have succumbed to storms and higher sea levels. These trees are listed as an endangered ecosystem and we found several *Dockrillia teretifolium* (syn. *Dendrobium teretifolium*) orchids that are mostly restricted to growing on *Casuarina glauca*. Dockrillia is named for eminent Australian orchidologist Alick Dockrill, and was created in 1981 to accommodate the fleshy pencil leaved orchid species previously included in *Dendrobium* sect. *Rhizobium*. The photo (right) by Daniel Bateman clearly shows the long pencil shape of the leaves, hanging tenuously to a lichen encrusted Casuarina trunk.



The beach walk heads into the bush and soon becomes a boardwalk through the mangroves. This area is mostly made up of a population of *Avicennia marina* subsp. *australasica* (Grey Mangrove) but there are a few *Aegiceras corniculatum* (River Mangrove) that we did not see. The grey mangroves have pneumatophores rising out of the ground and the leaves are also able to exude salt. There are a few mangrove areas throughout the Eurobodalla Shire but not where you can walk right over them and see the crabs scurry away and the young fish lurking in the shallow water.



Another of Daniel's photos shows myriad pneumatophores (those sharp looking structures) with some germinating mangrove seedlings and a common saltmarsh plant *Sarcocornia quinqueflora*. (Beaded Samphire)

At the end of the boardwalk you suddenly step into a different environment of grasses and trees. One combination of plants was particularly pleasing and a good example of how the bush can inspire landscape ideas for your garden. (Photo Di. Clark)



Part of this new environment included a salt marsh area of Sea Lavender, *Limonium australe*, a fleshy herb in the Plumbago family. In Daniel's photos, are shown the fleshy rosetted basal leaves, and massed flowers held on leafless stems high above the foliage.



There is a report produced by Eurobodalla Shire Council that assesses the different communities of Mangroves, Saltmarshes and Seagrass and how those communities are surviving in our area. Apparently if mangroves are doing well, it is sometimes at the expense of saltmarsh areas so it was good to see these plants doing so well and holding their own. This report can be found on the Eurobodalla Shire Council web site as Batemans Bay and Clyde River Estuary Management Study <https://www.esc.nsw.gov.au/environment/coast-and-waterways/estuaries/batemans-bay,-clyde-river-estuary>

A wander back to the beach revealed more trees and shrubs and climbers and unfortunately more weeds as we got nearer to developed areas.

After a pleasant break for lunch at the Sandy Beach Picnic area, Long Beach we moved on up the hill to the other side of Cullendulla Nature Reserve. Once again, we walked through a weedy area to get to the better part of the walk where we were treated to beautiful *Corymbia maculata* (Spotted Gum) and *Macrozamia communis* (Burrawang).

I am not sure when this area was last burnt but it was not in 2019. Some of the trees are very large and quite beautiful. Some *Macrozamia* are showing signs of the yellowing older leaves caused by scale damage. The management track that we followed leads to the end of Square Head and there are pathways that venture down the slope towards the estuary. We decided to heed the warning sign of unstable cliffs and return the way we came. We did note that the vegetation changed quite suddenly as you left the main ridge and headed slightly downhill. The eucalypts changed from spotted gums to a different gum with rough bark and an understory of *Goodenia*.



Quietly strolling along Square Head track, through *Corymbia maculata* forest

The area of Square Head is listed as containing a small section of littoral rainforest and this could be seen in the vegetation changes.

The *Elaeodendron australe* subsp. *australe* (Red Olive Plum) is more commonly found in Littoral rainforest than other rainforest types, which could explain why we do not see it very often on our walks.

After returning to the cars several of us decided to use another management track to head down to the estuary. This track led through a forest and then out onto the beach. The mangroves here are not as established as on the other side of Cullendulla Creek and we were able to walk along the beach. The beach was bordered by mangroves and then a narrow section of littoral rainforest. There were large specimens of *Myoporum acuminatum* (Pointed Boobialla), *Pittosporum undulatum*, *Ficus coronata* and many non-native invaders such as African daisy and boneseed.

The term littoral rainforest refers to areas that are influence by the sea. It is listed as an endangered ecological community and the local landcare group have been involved in weeding the area. See below for a link to a report Recognition and Management of Endangered Ecological Communities in the South East Corner of New South Wales. This is a report by botanist (and fellow APS SE member) Jackie Miles for the Eurobodalla and Far South Coast Local Management Teams of the Southern Rivers Catchment Management Authority and published in October 2006, but is still available on the council website if you are interested.

https://www.esc.nsw.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0008/134459/eecbooklet.pdf

During the day the group was looking at all the plants and I had trouble recognising a large climber. It was difficult to see the flowers close up and also other features that are not visible with the naked eye. There is a similar climber growing at the Eurobodalla Regional Botanic Gardens and I was able to look more closely with my hand lens to identify the climber as *Parsonsia straminea*, and also take a close-up photograph. This is just a reminder that we need to look quite closely at the plants around us to identify them. Next time I'll pack the hand lens.



Parsonsia straminea

In my Garden

Much Appreciated Pop-Ups

by Leigh Murray

For many years, we've grown *Myoporum floribundum* on our rocky Queanbeyan ridge. Situated out in the open with no tree cover, they've done quite well, surviving strong droughts and heavy frosts. They form spreading shrubs with a graceful habit and delicate foliage. In summer, they're stunners, with drooping branches topped with closely-packed white flowers that really do look like their common name: **Snow in Summer**. They're a great hit with insects too.



We planted a single *M. bateae* in an unsuitable place, against an east-facing wall and too close to the edge of a major track. (It occurs on the South Coast, and is said to be rare.) It's a pretty shrub when it's in flower, with pale pinkish mauve flowers. To my eyes, it lacks the oomph of a *M. floribundum* in full bloom, but it has its own charm. Our plant hasn't been able to look its best. It leant away from the wall so I had to cut some off to get past, and then strong wind or a colliding kangaroo busted off another large branch. It's had a hard time.

There's been much more rain recently than we can ever remember getting in Queanbeyan. Weeds and plants popped up all over the place. On my travels around the block, I kept seeing pop-ups with what looked like Myoporum foliage; I didn't dream they'd actually be plants we wanted. But when they began flowering, it became clear that we were the happy recipients of at least 9 new *M. floribundum* (almost all in locations where they can

stay), and 5 *M. bateae*, which popped up on the edges of that aforementioned track - I'm trying to retain these by judicious tip pruning. Other recent pop-ups have included *Grevillea arenaria* (a favourite with honeyeaters) and several Acacia species. Some years ago, there were Saltbushes (such as *Einadia* and *Rhagodia* sp., which have berries that Crimson Rosellas adore) and a *Leptospermum* sp. that I call Butterfly because it is a butterfly magnet.

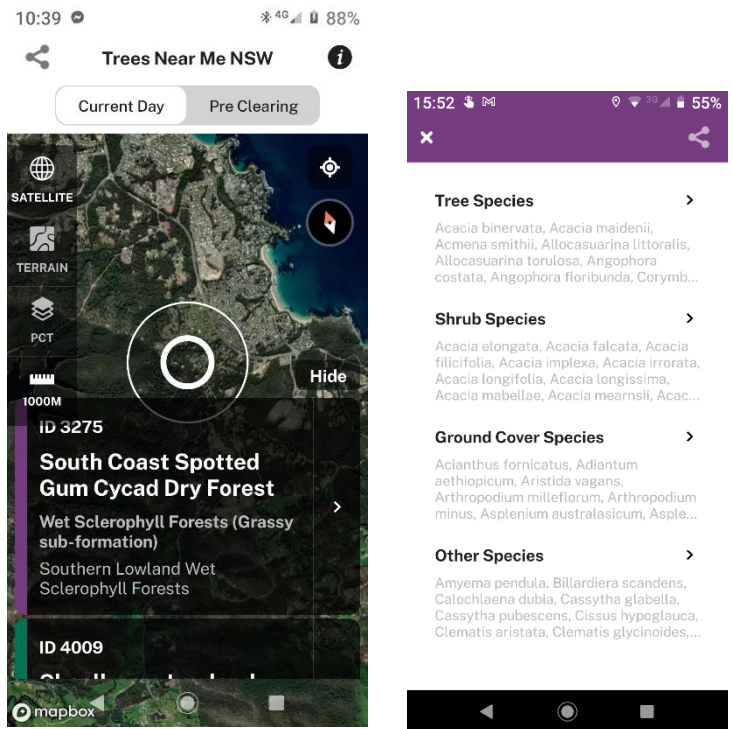
In the past, we've had some terrific pop-ups at Tuross: *Grevillea arenaria*, two *Acacia fimbriata* and several *Banksia integrifolia*. All have been bonuses, much appreciated. (*A. fimbriata* is one of my favourite acacias, with a wonderfully graceful, dense form.) I haven't yet spotted any recent pop-ups amongst the dense overgrowth of our Tuross garden. But I remain hopeful that when I do manage to clear the garden a bit, I'll find some most-desirable, perfectly-placed, freebie plants.

From Lyndal Thorburn, comes news of a useful app. that members might be interested in.

Called **Trees near me**, the free app was launched in late 2022 by the NSW Dept of Planning and Environment. The app is designed to help people discover information on plant communities, trees etc., around the state, and draws on information from the State's Bionet vegetation classification and mapping database.

Lyndal has discovered that you can centre the view on any location in NSW, and it will provide the name of the vegetation class, and a link through to a complete plant list, either now, or before the area was cleared. This would be particularly useful for revegetation projects.

Says Lyndal, "our block in Surf Beach is classed as South Coast Spotted Gum Dry Cycad Forest, wet sclerophyll forest grassy subformation. There is a 5-6 paragraph definition of the area, noting major trees, then a full list of plants grouped as trees. Shrubs, groundcovers and other species. Also available is a species by species description and photo".



Although still experimenting with the app, Lyndal suggests that members would gain useful information about the plant communities close to home. It might even help with plant identification.

Weeds, weeds and more weeds

As a resident of Eurobodalla shire and living on the coast, it is sometimes very disheartening to visit certain areas and see just how many weeds have taken hold.

The shire and other land managers are doing a wonderful job but it is a very difficult task. Once weeds have become established the battle is immense.

It was suggested to me that I could help NSW National Parks prevent further spread of a weed in the **Kosciuszko National Park** so I decided to join the volunteer program supporting the eradication of Mouse-ear Hawkweed in this sensitive area.



Mouse-ear Hawkweed
(Pilosella officinarum)

is a member of the daisy family and originates from Eurasia.

It is a serious weed in many countries, including the USA, Canada, Japan and New Zealand, where it threatens biodiversity and agricultural productivity.

Mouse-ear hawkweed poses a major threat to the Australian Alps because it can create monocultures and outcompete native species.

It is an allelopathic plant, meaning it prevents the germination and growth of other plants by producing biochemicals and secreting them in to the surrounding soil. It also spreads by wind born seed and stolons underground that can form new rosettes nearby.

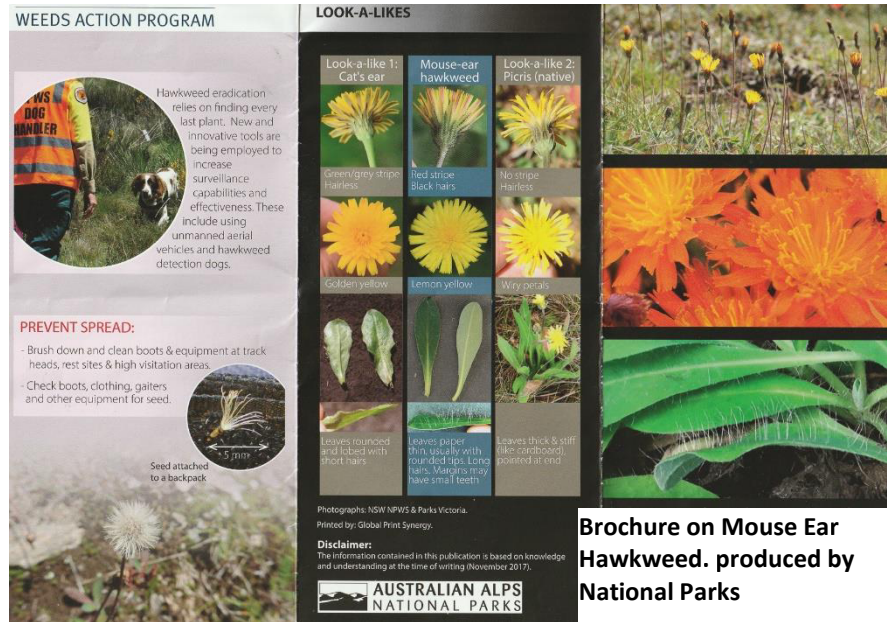
Hawkweed was first discovered in Kosciuszko in December 2014. It has since been added to the Biosecurity Act 2015 as a prohibited matter. The volunteer programme was set up and enables the general public to assist staff managers for one week over the summer period. The task at hand is to be part of daily grid surveillance of pre-determined areas. Hawkweed has been discovered on the main range of the park, so needless to say the scenery was superb.

I was lucky enough to have good weather for the three days that we were volunteering. Other groups have been dealing with snow in February and unseasonal heatwaves. The programme also employs the use of dog trainers and their animal companions. The dogs are trained to sniff out only Hawkweed and cover a much larger area than a group of eight volunteers could manage. It was fascinating to see them at work.

The dogs have an advantage with their superior sense of smell, but we were relying on our eyesight to pick out a hairy leaf daisy growing in the alpine area. Those familiar with alpine areas will know that there are many daisies fitting this description, but like all plant identification there are always some features that separate one plant from another. In this case *Pilosella officinarum* have long distinct hairs on the upper surface of the leaf and downy white hairs on the underside. The buds are covered in black hairs and the yellow flower has a red stripe on the underside of the petals. I do not have any photos of the plant itself as our group were targeting areas of unknown populations and we were pleased to report that no new plants were found. The photos here are from a well-used information sheet. The whole grid system is designed to catch new plants in the most likely area, this could be areas downwind from potential seed release or areas of high public use near tracks etc. NSW National Parks has a fact sheet on their website with further information and also details for those hoping to join the volunteer programme.

I can highly recommend it as a holiday activity. The people you meet are passionate and interesting and the work will help to keep this weed from extending out into the park to more remote areas.

<https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/topics/animals-and-plants/pest-animals-and-weeds/weeds/new-and-emerging-weeds/mouse-ear-hawkweed>



Brochure on Mouse Ear Hawkweed. produced by National Parks

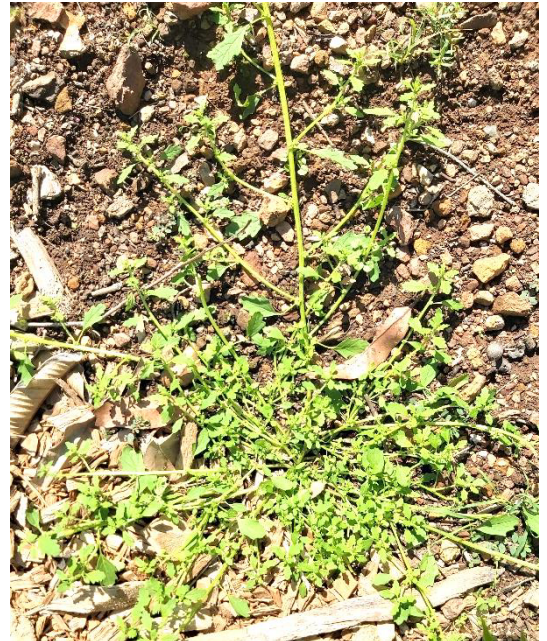


Hawkweed rosette leaves

and more weeds, this time closer to home

Western Australia is home to many desirable garden plants, but one we can do without is the summer flowering *Dysphania pumilio*, (syn *Chenopodium pumilio*) Small Crumbweed, so called for the crumbed appearance of the leaves. This summer growing annual appears quickly from seed following rain, often just a day or two, and before you know, its tiny flowers have formed, fruited and left another crop for next rains. The plant usually spreads, and can grow to 60cm or more across, with upward developing branches holding the tiniest green flowers only 0.5mm across.

Flowers comprise 5 floral segments, but usually only 1 stamen. From tiny reddish-black seeds come even tinier seedling leaves, so small they are easily ignored, until it is too late, and another crop is thickly sown. You need to control this plant quickly. The developed taproot is quite sturdy, so diligence is required.



To end on a positive note,
Barry, Jenny and Di at a recent
working bee, planting out in the
Proteaceae garden



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