



Corymbia maculata Spotted Gum and
Macrozamia communis Burrawang

South East NSW Group

Newsletter 199

September 2023

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For your diary:

Next meeting,

Saturday, October 7th

Mt. Bushwalker,

Little Forest Plateau

Details on Page 3

Future meetings

November 4th

**Garden visit Joan Lynch's
garden and bushland Narooma**

December 2nd

**Latest news on Isopogons and
Petrophiles Phil Trickett and
Catriona Bate at Lesley and
Norm Hulands Moruya Garden.
Celebratory Pizza lunch.
Plant Swap**

February 3rd 2024

2024 Annual General Meeting

**Details on these events will be
presented in the newsletter
closer to the day.**

Dear Members,

Spring has arrived and I have been out staring at the garden again. This time I have been searching for insects and other pollinators. I have been invited to talk about this subject in November as part of **Pollinator week at the ERBG**, so I thought I better do some research. It has been a delight to actually find some native bees and flies, but I am also a bit concerned about the lack of activity in my garden. The European bees are out there, bee-ing busy, but I have seen very few other pollinators. This includes small birds and it makes me wonder if I am not like the old frog in the pot of water. I haven't noticed the changes around me and I suspect the water is heating up.

I am aware that there was a huge drop in the small bird and insect populations after the 2019-2020 fires but I am also reading about areas that have not been through a bush fire, and are still noting the change. I would be interested in hearing from anyone who has managed to create a successful garden for all creatures, especially using native plants.

The lack of insects is not the only worry in the garden and bush at the moment. We can only hope that we do have some decent rain to get the gardens through summer.

On a positive note, the plants are still providing us with flowers and shelter and the echidnas are on the move. There is joy in the garden if you listen and look.

I hope you have time to get out and enjoy it.

Kind
regards,

Di Clark



This appreciative echidna enjoys the water Di has provided in her garden

Committee News

Dylan's suggested "walkers" group, to meet separately to our usual activities, has received interest from a couple of members. The walks, centred around identifying flowering plants, aim to improve our knowledge of the plants found in local bush areas. Members should contact Dylan to register their interest, who will plan activities. Email : Dylan-morrissey@hotmail.com

Proteaceae Working Bee

Our last Proteaceae Garden Working Bee was on **Friday 22nd September**.

This month we planted many plants to get them going before summer really sets in, and surrounded the new plants with a variety of tree guards to protect them from wallaby predation.

Everyone is aware that the dry spell we are experiencing is not only affecting our garden plants, but the available food for wildlife is quickly diminishing, meaning plantings are under even more pressure.

Our next working bee will be on **Friday 27th October**. **Keep the diary free !**

If you can't make the working bees but would be interested in **helping out with the spring/summer watering** occasionally, please let me know. We can work out a time that suits you and go through the process. The watering days need to be during the week.

Thanks everyone for your support and I hope to see you at one of our sessions
Di Clark 0402 555 330

Plant Swap

Earlier this year, the Committee proposed, and advertised, that the group would hold a Plant Swap. It is confirmed that this will be **included in the December meeting activities**. Group members are encouraged to bring along any Australian plants they have propagated, and exchange with other members. You might have noticed over recent times that the range of plants commercially available has shrunk somewhat, but in our gardens there is sure to be some old time favourites which you grow. Please take the opportunity over the spring growing season to grow some excess plants to share the joy of growing Australian plants.

Annual General Meeting

Members will note that our Annual General Meeting is planned for February 3rd 2024.

The current committee is seeking support from other members to join, to bring new ideas and enthusiasm, and ensure our group remains vibrant and relevant.

Please give this some consideration. Feel free to discuss options with President Di, or any existing committee member. Contact details are on last page



Some of our hard working members, John and Leonie on light duties, Barry carrying the can, Norm adopting the council supervisory role, Christina and Sally, tools in hand having completed planting, ready for morning tea.

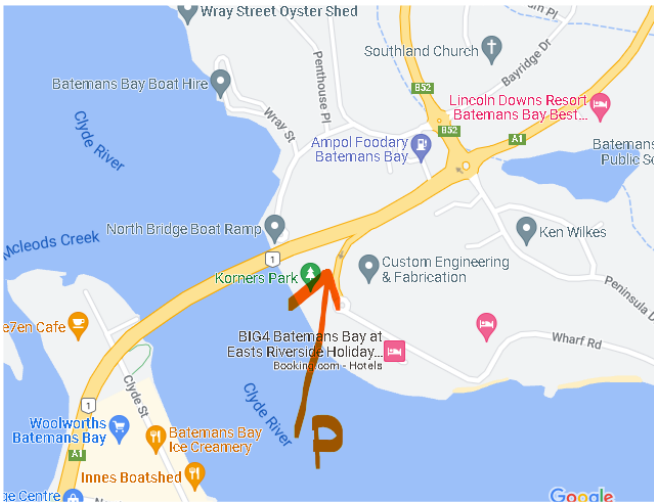
Next Meeting:

Saturday 7th October 2023, Little Forest Plateau- Mt Bushwalker Track

As this is a special spring meeting/walk we will be meeting at the Car Park in Batemans Bay at the North end of the Bridge at 9am.

Access to the car park from the North is via a slip road on the left, just before the bridge. Access from the south is via Kings Highway roundabout. You will need to go past and turn back to then access the slip road on the left. See map below.

We will meet in the car park at 9am with the aim of leaving at 9:15am. The road into Little Forest Plateau is a little rough, but not as rough as the last time visited. **We still recommend carpooling if possible.**



From the Batemans Bay car park we will travel North to Milton (60km), which should take less than 1 hour.

Leaving Milton, we continue north for 8.5km (past Yatte Yattah) and make a left on Porters Creek Road. Travel up this road for about 10km till you get to a T intersection, where we right turn and head 4km towards Mt Bushwalker Track car park. We aim to meet in the car park around 10:30 am for a quick morning tea. There is a drop toilet in the car park area.

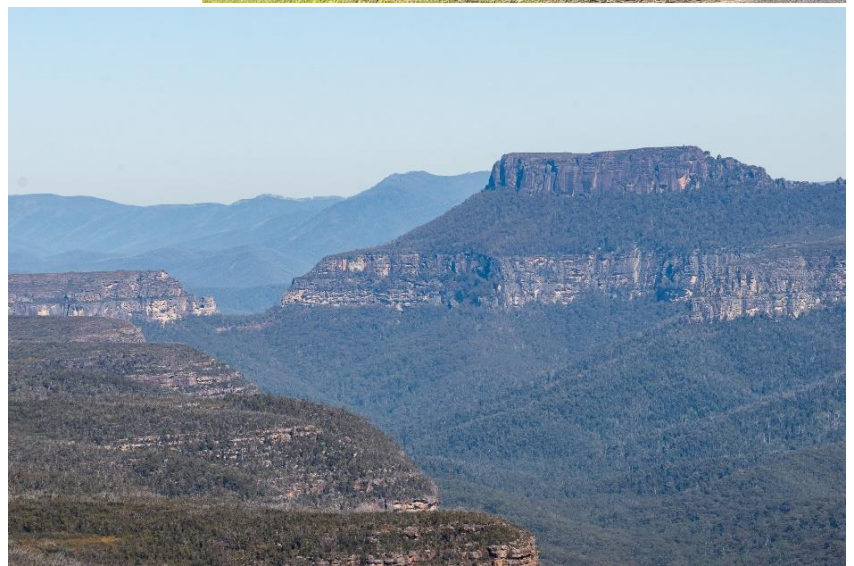


This whole area was burnt so the car park and the walking track infrastructure have been rebuilt over the last couple of years. The walk is mostly flat, either on boardwalks or rocky areas. It can be damp on the rocks and tracks and you will need to wear appropriate shoes. Also be prepared for changeable weather as this is plateau can be very exposed. **The walk itself is 7.2km return.** We will be walking slowly so as to take in the plants and views. We will plan to have lunch at the viewing platform at Mt Bushwalker.

When we get to our destination

The Castle, viewed across
Clyde Gorge

Daniel Bateman



This walk has been described by the Milton Branch of National Parks Australia NSW as the best in the Budawangs in terms of effort required compared to rewards (views) received. I would add the rewards are plant and photography based as well.

Mt Bushwalker is part of the Little Forest Plateau.

This is the southern end of the Sydney sandstone and the vegetation is part of the Sydney Montane heaths. The soils are limited and frequently damp.

There is a high diversity of vegetation, mostly shrubs, herbs, grasses and grass like plants. There are Mallee Ash in sheltered pockets and at the tops of the gullies. At present the taller shrubs are regenerating so it a great time to observe the views and the smaller ground plants.

As usual you will need to bring hat, sunscreen, snacks and lunch, water and a raincoat. (To maybe encourage some badly needed rainfall.)

Be prepared is the motto.

Comesperma ericinum
on Little Forest Plateau
Di Clark



Last Meeting , Christina Kennedy's Horse Island Garden

Photos courtesy Daniel Bateman, Di. Clark, Sue Knight and Amanda Marsh.



Christina and Julian, at the start of the day, and at the of a long day, still smiling, saying how much they enjoyed our visit

A perfect spring day greeted our group of over 30 members. We were met by head gardener (and APS SE member) Julian Nimmo, who escorted the group to the central area of the garden, where morning tea awaited. Freshly brewed coffee and homemade cakes, what a start.

Christina was unsure whether, having just endured two knee operations, she would be able to make it home to Horse Island, but there she was, standing, unaided by crutches or sticks, encouraging everyone to help themselves to her generous spread. What a joy it was to talk to her about the success of the recent repairs, and how great she felt without constant pain when walking or standing.



President Di addresses the group, detailing activities for the day

Once preliminaries were completed, Christina and Julian invited us to wander where we would, enjoying the sight of such variety of Australian plants as could be successfully grown on the island. Despite recent dry months, the garden was, as always, looking lush and well-maintained.

Long views,

feature throughout the extensive grounds



generous garden beds



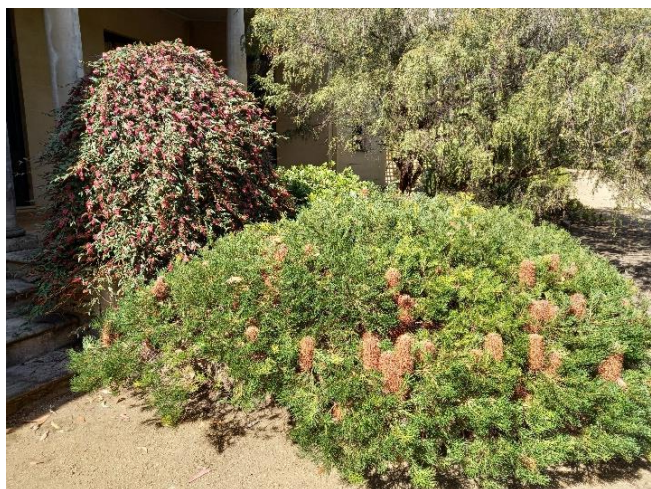
and venerable trees such as this Kurrajong, *Brachychiton populneus*, some hundreds of years old



The Garden is renowned for its innovative use of formal and informal pruning techniques to show plants their best advantage.

Members recalled that some years back Ray Brown, of Grevillea Park Botanic Garden, Wollongong, took chainsaw and serious hedging shears to some of Christina's treasures, and she took pleasure in showing how positively healthy they now are, having suffered what at the time what seemed a too severe pruning .

It must be noted that the Grevilleas pruned were some of the large flowered cultivars. Not all can be treated so, and Julian recommended that for most Grevillea, in fact any plant, regular light pruning will give most satisfactory results.



A Grevillea standard, *Grevillea Poorinda* Royal Mantle, (grafted onto *G. robusta*) and *Banksia spinulosa*, dwarf coastal form



The formal layered effect of the grey foliaged *Homoranthus flavescens* from north east NSW is supported by Western Australia's *Grevillea obtusifolia* 'Gin Gin'



Strappy foliated plants.

Top left, the highly ornamental *Lomandra cylindrica* 'Lime Wave',

above, Blue foliated *Lomandra glauca* 'Blue Ridge'

and left, the generously proportioned Lord Howe Wedding Lily *Dietes robinsoniana*

For a bit more drama, large clumps of Gynea Lily, *Doryanthes excelsa* which are perfectly placed throughout the garden



Largest of Australia's Cycads, *Lepidozamia peroffskyana*, occurs in northern NSW and south east Q'land, but is quite at home framing Christina's formal lawn, fruiting reliably.

The elkhorn ferns, *Platycerium bifurcatum* are welcome volunteers, floating spore having found a comfortable resting place.

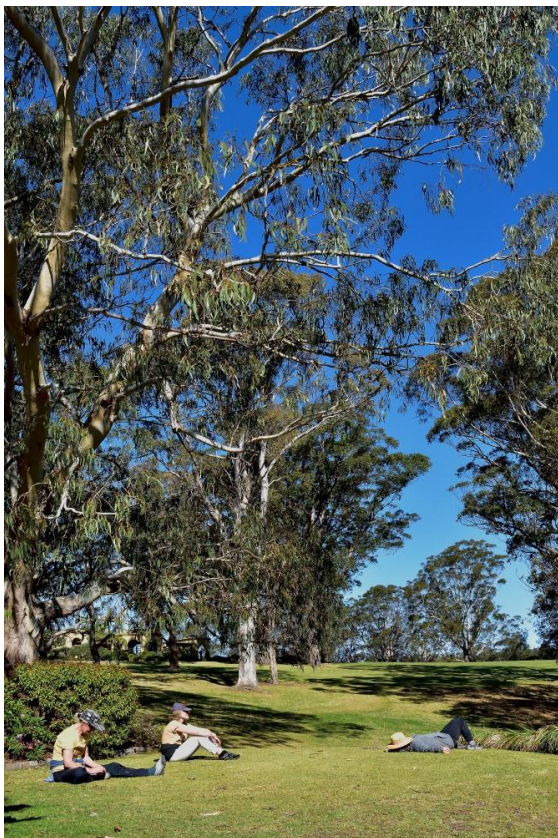




An interesting place to grow. Another volunteer, this time *Dendrobium teretifolium*, Rat's Tail Orchid flowering happily under a lichen covered hardwood seat



Inspiring sculpture is dotted around the garden, with this eagle commissioned by Christina in memory of Trevor.



The pace slowed somewhat after lunch, with some just relaxing in the sun, absorbing inspiration from surrounding gums.



Julian discusses issues with a recent planting of 1800 Dianella 'Crackerjack', intended to provide a wave of bright green on this steep bank. Many plants have been affected by rust during wet conditions, and the plants are still suffering. Advice from members varied, but most suggested a heavy prune, removal of all the foliage and treat the regrowth if necessary. Drier conditions may ease the problem. Mass plantings of one species can be problematic if a pathogen establishes. Christina is loathe to change the landscape, and hopes that the rust can be overcome with diligent attention.

Plants not often seen in gardens these days, *Grevillea dielsiana*, *Dryandra praemorsa*, (*Banksia undata*) and *Grevillea synapheae*



Many years back, Christina was at the forefront of pioneering the role of grafted Australian plants, and has an impressive collection, mostly using *G. robusta* as rootstock.



Above, *Grevillea* 'Bush Lemons' still sprightly after a decade in the ground, but the elephant at right is showing signs of decline, with one half having fallen. Still, Christina is enthusiastic as to these plants role in her garden, and is keen to add more. Not all her grafted plants are *Grevillea*, with *Banksia* and *Isopogon* added to the mix.

Show and Tell

During our lunch break, **Jenny John and Norm Hulands** entertained us with a selection plants from their gardens.

Jenny showed a couple of rarely grown Myrtaceae, *Kunzea affinis*, (shown right) a shrub from south west W.A., which grows to around 1.5m, and flowers heavily through August to October. Jenny suggested that the plant needs tip pruning to keep it bushy, and is happy in full sun or dappled shade. It tolerates dry conditions once established, and as our climate changes, judging by the interest shown by members, this *Kunzea* might again find favour.



Most gardens sport a *Callistemon* or two, but *Melaleucas* seem to be overlooked. Jenny is very keen that we should be growing some of the smaller western species, such as *Melaleuca fulgens*, which comes in a variety of flower colours, apricot, pink, purple, salmon and orange, but Jenny prefers the brilliant red form. The epithet **fulgens** means bright colour, and aptly describes this plant of around 2m. Pruning again will keep the plant compact.





Grevillea preisii is a spreading shrubby plant around 2m x 3m, occurring naturally in shrubby heathland both north and south of Perth. The prostrate selection, 'Seaspray' is a low growing coastal form, about 50cm high, but with a strong spreading habit. Flowers are held outside the grey foliage, and well displayed for many months.

Other plants from Jenny's garden included *Prostanthera nivea*, *Leptospermum polygalifolium*, *Eremophila glabra* yellow, and *Hakea macraeana*

Norm encouraged members to think about **Hakeas** when planning a garden. The prickly foliaged *H. sericea* and the related *H. decurrens* both flower prolifically in tough conditions, and provide excellent habitat and refuge for small birds. Flowers are well attended by a range of insects, and judging by the abundant fruit set, the pollinators do an excellent job. He also displayed a large specimen of *H. macraeana*.

Pink flowered *Hakea sericea*



Australian Plant Society announces the upcoming conference. Members are encouraged to consider booking now to assist the organising committee complete preparations
Go to the website (apsvic.org.au) and register your interest.



ANPSA BIENNIAL CONFERENCE 'GARDENS FOR LIFE' VICTORIA
30 September - 4 October 2024 Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre

The next ANPSA conference will be hosted by APS Victoria. During the conference we will hear about all types of gardens and their impact on our life and the life of our world. We will visit spectacular gardens during the in-conference excursions including the world renowned Australian Garden at Cranbourne. **TOURS:** Pre and post conference tours to Gippsland, the South West and the Grampians will be offered, visiting some of Victoria's best scenic areas and spectacular displays of wildflowers. Conference attendees will have the opportunity to choose up to two out of the three tours. Each tour will visit areas of wildflowers in natural bushland, plus public and private gardens. The pre-conference tours are from Monday 23 September to Saturday 28 September 2024 and post conference from Saturday 5 October to Thursday 10 October 2024.

In my Garden

You must be noticing that the bushland areas are showing significant signs of distress as the dry weather continues. Mass leaf fall and shrivelled flowers tell us that already the soils are much drier than usual for this time of the year.

Much the same in the garden. We know it hasn't rained properly since before May, with just the odd shower adding a millimetre or two to the rain gauge, muddying the dust which had accumulated.

You know it's dry when all the foliage falls from a 30 year old, 12m high *Brachychiton acerifolius*. This is the first time it has been deciduous since we purchased 14 years ago. But there is a bonus, as the tree is carrying a bumper crop of flower buds. Can't wait to see these burst.



Not all plants seem to mind the dry. *Brachyscome formosa* 'Pilliga Posy' (pictured left) is the best it has ever been, suckering strongly and producing mass flowers.

The confused naming of *Brachyscome angustifolia* var *heterophylla* has to some degree been sorted, with the naming of 3 species of this NSW plant. We now have *B. sieberi*, *B. triloba* and *B. brownii*, whilst the *B. angustifolia* var. *angustifolia* is now *B. graminea*.

I am none the wiser, as the many colourful forms of *Brachyscome* on the market come with just commercially attractive names like Purple Passion. These are good garden plants though, flowering boldly throughout the year, so I am less concerned that they don't have a 'real' name. Their many insect visitors also don't seem to care.

When visiting Mt. Annan Australian Botanic Garden some years back, I was taken by a brilliant orange flowered *Carpobrotus*. Just last year I noted this plant overflowing a flower box in Narooma, and 'collected' a piece. This tough ground cover is loving the dry, and is covered in blooms. I do hope it is native, as it makes a lovely ground cover along the drive.



Another daisy plant which will earn its keep is *Olearia tomentosa*, a local plant which deserves much wider recognition. A woody shrub to around 1.2m, the plant is now covered in blooms, and thrives in dry shade. Prune after flowering to encourage another flush of flowers in autumn.,

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