

August 2023 Sutherland Group Newsletter

Celebrating 60 Years of Sutherland Group 1963-2023

About Sutherland Group

We meet from 7 pm every third Wednesday from February to November at Gymea Community Centre, 39 Gymea Bay Rd, Gymea. Visitors welcome.

We support awareness and conservation of Australian native plants.

Visit our <u>website</u> & Facebook http://austplants.com.au/Sutherland



www.facebook.com/APS.Sutherland sutherland@austplants.com.au

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Newsletter Deadline:

Second Wednesday of the month

Coming up...

Wed, 16 Aug Sutherland Group meeting:

Using odour to protect plants from animals

Sat, 19 Aug Walk, Wises Track, RNP

Sat-Sun, 2-3 Sept Our Open Gardens weekend

Sun, 3 Sept, Joseph Banks Reserve working bees Thur, 7 Sept

Wed, 20 Sept Sutherland Group meeting: Spectacular spring

Look out for... Acacia elongata



This open shrub to 3 m has distinctive long thin phyllodes which are upright or erect. It has long sprays of paired lemon-yellow ball flowers in August–September. The species name *elongata* is from the Latin for stretched or elongated, referring to the leaves. It is common in heath and woodland. Available from Sutherland Council nursery. Ph: P. Shelton.

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For your diary

Contact John Arney ph 0418 607 685, johnarney@ozemail.com.au

We follow APS NSW Health and Safety guidelines

Wed, 16 Aug

Sutherland Group meeting. Wallaby foraging behaviour – can we nudge it with smell? Clare McArthur, Professor of Behavioural Ecology at the University of Sydney, will present a talk about a new way to protect plants using odour information, with updated research results.

After the talk, we'll have our plant table segment which showcases native plants in Shire gardens at this time of year. Bring along a specimen of your own and have it identified. Feel free to also send a photo for the newsletter.

Please note the new earlier start to our meetings. The hall is open at **7 pm**. Our President Leonie Hogue formally starts the meeting at around **7.30 pm**, followed by our speaker. Come from 7 pm for a cup of tea, chat, plants and books, and enjoy the earlier finish. All visitors welcome. From 7 pm, Gymea Community Hall, 39 Gymea Bay Rd, Gymea.

Sat, 19 Aug

Walk - Wises Track, RNP

Due to limited parking at the start of the track we will offer a car-pool from the parking area near Sutherland Leisure Centre. Contact John Arney to confirm the exact spot, from 8.50 am for 9 am departure. Otherwise, meet at 9.20 am at the Wises Track.

Parking at the Wises Track entry is on both sides of Bertram Stevens Drive. Please park close to other vehicles to maximise the limited spaces available. The walk will be dry underfoot and around 2 km (4 km return). The terrain is mostly flat with just one short steep (80 m) section.

Our goal for the day will be to identify many of the 100+ plants along the way, with a plant list for the walk handed out on the day. We will aim to finish by around 2 pm. Bring a big morning tea (early lunch), drinking water, camera, and pen.

Contact John Arney on 0418 607 685.

Sun, 20 Aug

Blue Mountains Group visit to Joseph Banks Reserve - Cancelled

Sat-Sun, 2-3 Sept

Open Gardens weekend To celebrate APS Sutherland Group's 60 years in 2023, we are having an open gardens weekend on 2–3 September.

Six members have kindly agreed to open their gardens to the public to show the beauty and diversity of Australian natives on their diverse sites. Gardens range from level access to steeper sites, from sun to shade, and from well-established to more recent. Each garden has something different to show about gardening with natives.

On Saturday, the four open gardens are centred around Jannali, and on Sunday the two open gardens are in Engadine.

Visitors from further afield can make a day out in Sutherland Shire and also visit Joseph Banks Native Plants Reserve at Manooka Place, Kareela and Sydney Wildflower Nursery at Heathcote. Both are open 7 days, 9 am to 5 pm.

Entry to each garden is by gold coin donation. Refreshments and plant sales at selected gardens.

See the attached page for the garden descriptions and addresses. More information: www.austplants.com.au/event-5342648 or use the QR code.



Please volunteer

We'll need volunteers at each garden to support the hosts. If you can help for approx. 2 hours at the entry table, please let Rhonda know at the August meeting or at rhdaniels@bigpond.com so we can develop a roster and support every garden. Gardens with stair access have a flat area at the entry. There will be time for volunteers to see gardens at the end of the day.

Sun, 3 Sept Thur, 7 Sept Joseph Banks Reserve working bees at Manooka Place, Kareela, 9 am – 12 noon. We have two working sessions a month at Joseph Banks Reserve – the first Thursday with Bushcare Officer Grace Lonergan and the first Sunday of the month. It was lovely to see long-time volunteer Aileen Phipps visiting with daughter Penny on Sunday in August. More information here.

2-3 & 9-10 Sept

Spring Open days, Illawarra Grevillea Park at Bulli

These are the last two open weekends for the year. Enjoy grevilleas in full flower and more. Plants for sale including grafted grevilleas. Entry: \$7 adult.

Details: illawarragrevilleapark.com.au

Sat, 16 Sept

APS NSW Quarterly gathering, hosted by Illawarra Group

There are 3 walks to choose from in the morning, from 10 am. Meet at 1 pm at Corrimal Community Hall for talks, trivia, plant sale and more. \$5/\$10 payable at door. The speakers are Leon Fuller and Emma Rooksby on Indigenous plants for streets and Dr Ann Young on Dharawal National Park — mining, past impacts and current management plan. Pogister new Chook details in the ARS NSW encoupletter.

plan. Register $\underline{\text{now}}$. Check details in the APS NSW enewsletter.

Wed, 20 Sept

Sutherland Group meeting. Spectacular spring flowers

We'll have a display of spectacular spring flowers from members.

Other APS groups nearby

Have you considered visiting another local APS group? Each group welcomes APS members and visitors, so check your diary. Please try to confirm meetings at the group sites provided.

Harbour Georges River Group (formerly East Hills)

Check their activities page https://austplants.com.au/Harbour-Georges-River/

Illawarra Group

Check activities at their <u>website</u>. Walk on **Sunday 20 August**, Dharawal NP.

Menai Wildflower Group

Usually on the 2nd Saturday of the month (Check links below, closer to the date) Illawong Rural Fire Brigade Old Illawarra Rd, Illawong

https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100068944233153

https://austplants.com.au/Menai-Wildflower

At our July meeting

An old burrawang in a new garden by Ralph Cartwright

Where it came from

About 40 years ago, in the early 1980s I took the family to stay in some cabins near Racecourse Beach just north of Batemans Bay for the summer holidays, shaded by iconic spotted gums with a burrawang understory. This was long before I got interested in native plants or had joined APS, but I already appreciated the plants that I saw, so I 'liberated' a burrawang seedling from just outside the cabin to take home and plant in my garden.

About burrawangs – Macrozamia communis

The burrawang is *Macrozamia communis*, one of 40 species in the Cycad family and all native to Australia. It can be found from the Taree region in the north to near Bega on the far south coast and inland to the ridges of the Great Dividing Range. *Macrozamia* is from the Greek makros meaning large and Zamia, a genus of cycads, and *communis*



is from the Latin communis meaning common, referring to its abundance in dense stands, sometimes dominating the shrub layer. It is the most commonly occurring and most widespread cycad in NSW and the most southerly occurring cycad species in the world. Its common name, 'burrawang', is derived from the

Dharuk language spoken by the Aboriginal people of the Sydney and Illawarra regions for whom it provided a food source after thorough treatment. The same common name is frequently misapplied to other Australian cycads.

Burrawangs are cycads

The cycads are an ancient plant, sometimes referred to as dinosaur food. Worldwide there are at least 300 species, with more being discovered all the time, particularly in Central and South America. Some species of cycad found in Mexico can grow to 15 metres tall.

M. communis is a medium to large cycad and has a woody trunk which is 30–80 cm in diameter and 30–200 cm tall. The trunk is typically underground, but may be emergent where growing on shallow soils or on rocky sites. It has 50–100 flat, pinnately compound leaves up to 200 cm long, arranged in a gracefully rounded crown arching out from the central trunk. The literature says that large specimens transplant readily.

All cycads are dioecious, meaning that female and male reproductive organs are situated on separate plants. Female plants typically bear 1–3 cones with hundreds of large seeds turning an orange, bright red, or sometimes yellow when ripe. They can be propagated from seed, but can take 6–24 months to germinate. The cones look a little like a pineapple, although the pineapple plant is actually a bromeliad, not a cycad.

An eruption!

When my house was demolished to be rebuilt, the builders flattened my cycad and planted a portaloo on top! After several months, the new driveway was constructed with the excavated soils being mounded up on top of where the cycad used to be. After some weeks this pile of earth was used to create new garden beds. I used the tree root from my old *Syncarpia glomulifera* as a feature in the new bed, along with some of the sandstone and the excavated material mounded up against it.

Roughly 12 months after my burrawang plant was 'destroyed' by the builders, in about mid January, I noticed what could only be termed an 'eruption' of the soil in my new bed. It dawned on me that it was likely to be my cycad and over the next couple of weeks, up she came. For she was a female plant with cones.





Ralph's new front garden

The cut to create the driveway was around one metre and this material was mounded up and had to be removed. There was a decent amount of quite attractively coloured sandstone removed and I saved as much of this as I could. Some was used to create a retaining wall.

I used some of the smaller lumps of sandstone on the other side of the driveway in a less formal arrangement. The soil on this bed was mounded up to a depth of around 50 cm on top of the original soil level. Everything was then mulched very heavily with a good quality native mix leaf mulch. Other large rocks were used to create a bit of a rockery. *Correa* 'Clearview Giant' and *Grevillea* 'New Blood' were original plants from 2011 and 2014 respectively, and survived the builders.

Another plant that has re-emerged is *Alpinia caerulea*, native ginger, originally planted in 2010. There were still some large rhizomes underground and several young shoots have now re-appeared. It prefers some shade and was originally in a very shady south facing spot. It is now in full sun, although soon to be shaded by a *Grevillea* 'Bronze Rambler', planted at the top of the bank as a sprawling groundcover.

I've planted another grevillea and a banksia at the top of the slope as low growing groundcover forms, to eventually cover and stabilise the bank. *G. gaudichaudii* is fast growing and reputed to grow only 30 cm tall but spreading to 3 m. It is a naturally occurring hybrid of two grevilleas from the Blue Mountains. One parent, *Grevillea acanthifolia* grows in swampy areas or on wet rocks and is up to 3 m tall and the other parent is *Grevillea laurifolia*, a prostrate trailing shrub, spreading to 6 m wide. The banksia is another low-growing and fast spreading form of *B. integrifolia* 'Roller Coaster', a more well-known cultivar. I also have an *Eremophila maculata x racemosa* purchased from Bilby Blooms, which is very fast growing with pale pink flowers.

On the other side of the driveway is the newly constructed bed, with the sandstone rocks and the freshly laid mulch. The first things that I planted were 3 lilly pillies to form a bit of a hedge and hide the bin area. Eight months later, they have bushed out and the kangaroo paws have taken off. I've also started to fill in the rest of the bed with an eclectic assortment of plants.

Part of the front garden was fenced off and protected, so what I call my forest survived. It contains five good sized trees including the turpentine, as well as several shrubs and vines and other shade loving plants. In the corner, this was the deepest of the cuts for the excavation and most of it was rock, with just a thin layer of soil, supporting a surprisingly large NSW Christmas Bush, *Ceratopetalum gummiferum*, which is so tall the flowers and showy bracts at Christmas are seldom noticed, unless the cockatoos come for a feed and prune it heavily. It is not a particularly bright colour form and it needs a good boy prune with a chainsaw to get it to bush up closer to eye level, at least for a few years.

Hibbertia scandens was planted to scramble over an old dead tree trunk and eventually took over the fence, flowering all year long. The rough treatment by the builders did result in a lot of dieback, so I pruned it heavily and left just a handful of stems. It has now bounced back remarkably well – a tough plant for sure. They seem to seed and germinate quite readily and also appear from underground runners.

Come and visit at Engadine

I have a database of plants in my garden which now has over 95 entries! Quite amazing what you can stick in such a small area really. Come and see my garden at 25a Dubarda St, Engadine on Sunday 3 September. See Part 2 on Ralph's new garden – the side and rear – in the September newsletter.



Ralph's newly created front garden (photos: Ralph Cartwright)

Ralph Cartwright

From our June meeting: The updated video by Liz Aitken about our Charlotte Pass trip is on YouTube here. Liz, Rhonda and Leonie visited Aileen Phipps recently to show it to her and she was delighted to see the people, the plants and the memories.

On the plant table in July

Our plant table is a great way to see what grows well in Sutherland Shire and what flowers when. Please feel free to email photos for the newsletter.

Plant steward Phil Keane's nursery, <u>Ausplants R Us</u>, is in Sutherland. Visits by appointment or check out sale days (often Saturday 12 – 4.30 pm) on https://www.facebook.com/ausplants/
Ph: 0435 410 857 or ausplantsrus@gmail.com

We had a better selection than our June meeting. Thanks everyone.

There were several acacias including *Acacia vestita* (from western NSW), our cover plant *Acacia elongata* with long thin stiff leaves, and an acacia to 6–8 m with greyish foliage.

Senna artemisioides is a small hardy shrub to about 1 m with fine silvery foliage and covered in yellow pea flowers. It is easy to grow and produces lots of seed. Photo: Peter Shelton.



Local favourites

- Lambertia formosa, despite its common name of mountain devil from its horned woody fruit, is actually found from the coast to the mountains. Unfortunately, it doesn't produce a lot of seed. There is one in the Sutherland Group garden at Joseph Banks Reserve which has had some dead limbs but is now regrowing from a lignotuber.
- Smilax glyciphylla is a local climber.
- Dillwynia retorta, another local plant with yellow pea flowers, came up naturally in Joan Zande's garden.
- Glochidion ferdinandii is known as the Cheese tree, from the cheese-wheel-shaped fruits which start off green, then ripen to red and then split open. It is easy to grow.

Grevilleas

Grevillea sericea has pink to purple flowers, plus there is a rare white form from Grays Point. Phil says it can get bigger than people think. Grevillea 'Orange Marmalade' grows to 3–4 m. There were several grevillea hybrids with small pink-red flowers including a Grevillea baueri hybrid with a small red spider flower, a G. rosmarinifolia hybrid 'Rosey Posey' and a G. lanigera hybrid, with pink flowers and greyish foliage. G. 'Gold Fever' is low to 0.5 m, with gold spider flowers. Grevillea synaphae from the Jacksons is similar to G. flexuosa, both from WA with delicate cream flowers. Grevillea shiressii is a rare plant, from the Central Coast. It has greenish flowers, and is good for a shady spot to 4 m.

For shade

Joan Zande brought in our June newsletter cover plant – *Callicarpa pedunculata* (velvet leaf or beautyberry). There are Australian and Chinese versions and they can be hard to tell apart.

There are various species of *Syzygium/Acmena* (lilly pillies) that have edible fruit, and are prunable for a compact shape or hedge. This one from Peter Shelton had white fruit, to 2 m (photo below). The smaller varieties tend to have smaller leaves.



Backhousia citriodora (lemon myrtle) can be pruned to keep it shorter and shrubbier than its natural tree form. Add potash.

Pollia crispata (from John Aitken) is a fleshy groundcover for a shady spot.

Correa baeuerlenii is different from most correas. With dark green leaves and pale green flowers it is good for shade. Correa 'Dusky Bells' is one of many cultivars.

Philotheca myoporoides, in the Rutaceae family, has a touch of perfume, and makes a good cut flower with showy white to pinkish starry blooms.

Ralph's famous kangaroo paw

Once again, Ralph Cartwright brought in a very tall dark red flower stem (2 m) from his kangaroo paws (*Anigozanthos flavidus* cultivars). There are many different cultivars and colours available.



He explains: "Along the left hand side next to the neighbouring property, there are a handful of small cuttings of a kangaroo paw. I have had this plant forever, no idea where I got it or what it is called. It is very vigorous and hardy with loads of flower stems to around 80–90 cm bird attracting and quite striking flower colour with the red and green, especially in massed plantings like this. It's been dug up and divided many times.

Following comments from Phil Keane about my *Anigozanthos*, I dug one up and split it into 7 new plants. I planted 3 out and kept 4 in pots to sell at the open garden day on 3 September. The photo below shows the similar sized clump next to the one I dug out and I counted 21 flower spikes on it."

If you have excess stock of something in your garden that others may like, feel free to bring in some to our meetings – whether seeds, cutting material, seedlings, material to divide, or potted up excess from your propagating.

Rhonda Daniels

More information at these websites:

www.anspa.org.au www.anbg.qov.au plantnet.rbgsyd.nsw.gov.au www.wikipedia.org resources.austplants.com.au/plant-database/

Plus: Dan Clarke has all the monthly plant table information compiled in his <u>Plant Table Master List</u> available from <u>our website</u>.

News and more

Walk report: Robertson Knoll, Saturday 22 July

Our walk from Audley up to Robertson Knoll and back down was well-attended and we surprised ourselves with how many plants we could "tick off" the list provided by John Arney, based on an 1980s list by Pat Akkersdyk. We also added some plants to it. Some people even had enough mental energy to listen out for birds and identify those too. The slower pace of climbing uphill allowed us to stop and focus on just about every plant, in perfect conditions for walking and enjoying the bush.



View from the top of Robertson Knoll, looking north over the Audley causeway to the city





Some of the group

Emerging flower of *Coronidium elatum* (photos Bruce Simpson)

Book review

Bush Flowers: Australian flowers and foliage for decoration and design by Cassandra Hamilton and Michael Pavlou (Thames and Hudson Australia)

This book will be an inspiration for anyone interested in displaying and arranging our Australian native plants. It has a section on floristry supplies to get you started. It includes profiles of 50 native plant species, including foliage nuts and berries, with notes on growing, cutting, drying and of course arranging beautiful displays.

It is full of helpful tips like "Don't worry if your banksia cones don't stand up straight, just make that part of the design" and has inspirational full colour illustrations. It is available at Sutherland Libraries.

Clare McColl

In flower at Joseph Banks Reserve

Working in different parts of the reserve, sometimes away from the main paths, is a chance to discover and re-discover all sorts of things. Along the top of the escarpment to the east of the Acacia garden are quite a few grass trees with flower spikes. Further south near the Sunny garden, while weeding at our Thursday session, I noticed the plants in the photo (right) growing in a crevice along the rocky edge – possibly the parasitic *Exocarpos cupressiformis?*

There are many plants coming into flower throughout the reserve including acacias, grevilleas, kangaroo paws at the entry and the orchid *Dendrobium kingianum* with delicate pink flowers, so drop in for a visit.

A spare Wollemi pine for JB?

The Wollemi pine in the shady garden at Joseph Banks Reserve, which had been donated several years ago, has sadly died. This was a great feature and we would like to replace it. If you have a Wollemi pine in a pot that is now surplus to your needs that you would like to go to a good home, please let me know, or drop in to Joseph Banks Reserve.

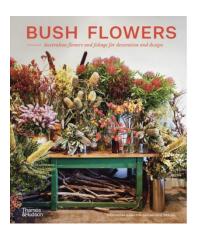
Rhonda Daniels

We need your recipes

As part of our 60th anniversary celebrations, we'd like to compile recipes from members for morning, afternoon or supper bites to eat and share (sweet or savoury). If it has a native plant ingredient, even better. The exact final format – pdf only or printed – is still be decided. If you regularly make something and would like to share your tried and tested recipe, please email it to Rhonda at <a href="mailto:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:rhonda:

We need your laptop

We need to upgrade our existing laptop, previously donated by member Ruchir Sodhani, which we use to run Powerpoint presentations at our monthly meetings. If you happen to have a surplus PC laptop, 2–3 years old you would be happy to donate or lend to us, please contact me (rhdaniels@bigpond.com).





Update your first aid for free

Members can complete the one day first aid course at the St George and Sutherland Community College at Jannali for free. It is held regularly through the year on Saturdays, approx. 9 am to 3 pm. If you would like to attend, check the dates here www.sgscc.edu.au/courses/WorkSkills/first-aid-courses and contact and pay the college directly or phone 8543 7412. Let me know at rhdaniels@bigpond.com so we can keep track and reimburse you \$120 on course completion. We all benefit from up-to-date first aid knowledge.

Your APS membership

If you are not receiving the monthly APS NSW enewsletter at the end of each month, please email enewsletter@austplants.com.au so we can sort out whether we have your correct email address in our records. Members receive an email from APS NSW when their membership is due through the year and can renew online on the APS website. Check with our treasurer Anne Webb at the next meeting or by phone.

Aussie plants abroad

A Wollemi pine in Kyiv - how did it get there?

Ralph Cartwright came across this uplifting story which he shared at the July meeting. Back in 2021, the Australian Ambassador to Ukraine, Bruce Edwards, promised the A.V. Fomin Botanical Gardens in Kyiv a Wollemi pine tree. It was intended to be part of celebrations to commemorate the 30th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Australia and Ukraine. The gardens were established in December 1991, just several months after Ukraine's independence was declared.

The gardens are in the middle of Kyiv and are associated with the Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv right next door. They occupy 22 hectares and have 17 greenhouses and 12 orangeries. There are over 8,000 plant species, with 4,000 being tropical and subtropical.

The gardens have a very checkered history, being virtually destroyed in the first world war after being shelled and then looted by soldiers. In the second world war, the invaders cut down many old trees for firewood and the Germans looted dozens of palms and orchids. In 1974, city authorities reconstructed the garden. The drainage system was restored and new trees were planted. In 1978 the greenhouse complex was built with the highest in the world at that time, the 32-metre Klimatron. It now houses many tropical plants and palms including a 30 m tall *Livistona* palm, which was planted in 1839. It flowers regularly and is a tourist drawcard. Another Aussie highlight is an Illawarra Flame Tree, *Brachychiton acerifolius*.

Now the centre of another war, the gardens have again suffered from a combination of things: water shortages from bombed infrastructure and power cuts which meant the greenhouses could not be heated and some plants were lost. In 2022, the Ukraine Botanic Garden Appeal was launched and is ongoing.

The Wollemi pine is one of the world's oldest and rarest tree species. It was known from fossil records and presumed extinct until trees were discovered in 1994. There are only around 100 individual trees left in the wild in 3 small groves, deep in Wollemi National Park.

The Wollemi pine has been propagated and distributed worldwide to ensure the longevity of the plant for future generations and return royalties to fund conservation of the Wollemi pine in the wild and assist other threatened and endangered species.

The Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney sent two trees to Kew Gardens in London in 1997, with the tallest now well over 6 m tall. The next batch of 15 trees were sent in 2005. In 2009, the late Duke of Edinburgh planted one of two Wollemi pines near the Orangery at Kew to celebrate their 250th anniversary. The first seed from these trees was collected in 2011. From that program, in 2009, the first trees were sent to Kernock Park Plants based at Saltash in Cornwall to grow and market the tree in the UK and Europe. The Bruce Tree has been propagated from one of those first trees in Kew.

In 2023, the logistics of delivering a tree to Ukraine in the middle of a war complicated the project. Which brings us to Shaun Hopkins from the small town of Tredegar in the Valleys of South Wales in the UK and his team of volunteers from their charity UK4UA.org. They help get much needed medicines and supplies to Poland and Ukraine. On his 28th run from Wales to Poland and Ukraine with supplies, Shaun included the Bruce Tree.

The tree has been delivered and planted. This story has not received much publicity yet because Australia's embassy in Ukraine is currently closed and operating from Warsaw. When the embassy re-opens in Kyiv, the ambassador hopes to visit the tree in its new home.

Maria Gaidarzhy, the director of the gardens, says that the tree is still actively growing with new lateral and apical shoots visible and it has since been transplanted into a larger pot with a more suitable substrate. She also says that "It is fantastic that such an ancient plant was found at the end of the 20th century".

More Aussie plants abroad

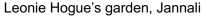
Our travelling newsletter editor Peter Shelton reports that a popular tourist activity in Bruges, Belgium is boating on the canals that are decorated with colourful flowerboxes with plants such as scaevolas in several colours. There are other flowerboxes with pink brachyscomes. The farmers market, held in the market square, has Geraldton wax amongst numerous flowers for sale (but where does it come from?).





Don't miss our Open Garden weekend, 2-3 September







Karen Thorn's garden, Engadine

APS Sutherland - August 2023

If undeliverable, return to: Australian Plants Society, Sutherland Group 169 Peninsular Road Grays Point NSW 2232

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APS Sutherland Group – Celebrating 60 years

Open Gardens weekend, 2–3 September 2023

Enjoy six gardens of Australian Plants Society Sutherland Group members. Entry to each garden by gold coin donation.

Refreshments and plant sales at selected gardens.

Saturday 2 September 2023, 10 am to 3 pm

Hogue garden – 75a Wattle Rd, Jannali Mostly level with colourful shrubs and small plants in the plentiful sunshine of a northern aspect

McColl garden – 13 Shorland Ave, Jannali Stair access up to shady and sunny plantings with sandstone and garden art

Aitken garden – 44 Buchanan Ave, Bonnet Bay Stair access down to south-facing block with shaded lush ferns and shrubs under a canopy of trees

Zande garden – 8 Bates Dr, Kareela A semi formal garden with manicured lilly pilly hedges. Six stairs at front with 2 stone steps at side to access garden by side gate, or walk up a moderate grass slope.

Plus Joseph Banks Native Plants Reserve, Manooka Place, Kareela Sutherland Shire Council's native plant display garden with paved paths, toilets, picnic tables and BBQs. Free entry. Open 7 days, 9 am to 5 pm.







Sunday 3 September 2023, 10 am to 2 pm

Thorn garden – 18 Caldarra Ave, Engadine Level garden in lots of sun with colourful flowering shrubs

Cartwright garden – 25a Dubarda St, Engadine Level access to four garden 'rooms', with some mature plantings and some very new

Plus Sydney Wildflower Nursery – 9 Veno St, Heathcote 10% discount to Australian Plants Society members. Open 7 days, 9 am to 5 pm.

More information

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