

**Celebrating 60 Years of Sutherland Group 1963 – 2023**

**About Sutherland Group**

We meet at 7:00 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 [website](http://austplants.com.au/Sutherland) & Facebook**

<http://austplants.com.au/Sutherland>



[www.facebook.com/APS.Sutherland](http://www.facebook.com/APS.Sutherland)

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**Newsletter Deadline:**

Second Wednesday of the month

**Coming up..**

**Wed, 18 Oct**      **Sutherland Group Meeting** Sutherland Council's  
from **7:00 pm**      Weed Species program  
At Gymea Community Hall, see diary.

**Thu, 2 Nov**      **JB Reserve working bees**  
**Sun, 5 Nov**      more information [here](#)

**Wed, 15 Nov**      **Sutherland Group Meeting**

Look out for..      *Pultenaea tuberculata* (wreath bush-pea)



*Pultenaea tuberculata* (Ph: D. Clarke)

This is not something we see on the plant table, as it is not cultivated widely. However, it is fairly common in local bushland, generally found in coastal parts of NSW from Jervis bay up to Newcastle. It can provide a dramatic splash of orange among the yellow pea flowers. Usually a medium shrub, with plentiful flowering in early spring.

Read about SSC Nursery work propagating this plant [here](#). It would be nice to find it there one day soon.

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# For your diary

Contact John Arney ph 9525 0449, [johnarney@ozemail.com.au](mailto:johnarney@ozemail.com.au)

we follow [APS NSW Health and Safety guidelines](#)

- Wed, 18 Oct**      **Sutherland group meeting.** Sutherland Council's Invasive Species Officer Linda Brown will explain the Council's work to keep our local environment free from invasive weed species. Learn what to look out for and what you can do to help.
- 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. For this month let's try to emphasise Bush food plants you have growing in the Sutherland area. Feel free to accompany specimens by submitting photos for the newsletter.
- Please note the new earlier start to our meetings for 2023. The hall will be open at **7 pm**. Our President Leonie Hogue will formally start 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 7.00 pm** for 7:30 start at Gymea Community Hall, 39 Gymea Bay Rd.
- 16-22 Oct**      Download the Aussie Bird Count app to participate. Details: <https://aussiebirdcount.org.au/>.
- Sat, 21 Oct**      **Sutherland Council Community Nursery Open Day, 8 am to 1 pm**  
The Sutherland Council Community nursery at 345 The Boulevard, Gymea will be open on Saturday. Join in celebrating the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the nursery – another significant anniversary in 2023! This is a great chance to visit the nursery and get some good value local tubestock if you can't make the usual Monday–Friday opening hours. The nursery has a variety of local fern species available to the community in sizes ranging from tubes to 200 mm pots. The nursery is cashless. (See latest SSC Bushcare bulletin [here](#).)
- Thu, 2 Nov**  
**Sun, 5 Nov**      **Joseph Banks Reserve** working bees at Manooka Place, Kareela, from 9 am.  
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. Council has advised that Sunday volunteers should be Bushcare volunteers, and sign a risk assessment each session.
- Wed, 15 Nov**      **Sutherland Group Meeting.** In our final meeting of the year, member Tony Porritt will present photos from his trip to East Arnhem Land in northern Australia. First, we will have our super-speedy AGM. There is nothing to fear.
- Sat, Sun 18-19 Nov**      **APS NSW Annual get together, Goulburn - Southern Tablelands Group** have planned a weekend away based at Goulburn. Details on the APS NSW website [here](#) and you can register now. Details also in the APS NSW enewsletter.
- Sun, 10 Dec**      **Sutherland Group end of year gathering, 3–5 pm**  
All are welcome at our end-of-year afternoon tea gathering at Joseph Banks Reserve, Manooka Place, Kareela. Please bring something to share.
- Wed, 24 Jan, 2024**      **Next Committee meeting**
- From 30 Sep, 2024**      **ANPSA Biennial Conference, Melbourne – Gardens for Life**  
It's less than 12 months to the next ANPSA conference in Melbourne, hosted by APS Victoria. Register your interest and read the newsletters with details of the pre and post-conference tours on the conference website [here](#). Regular attendees know that the tours can book out quickly.  
What is ANPSA? [The Australian Native Plants Society \(Australia\)](#), our national body.

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## 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.

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### Harbour Georges River (formerly East Hills)

Wednesday 15 November, Visit to Royal Botanic Gardens

Check their activities page [here](#)

<https://austplants.com.au/Harbour-Georges-River/>

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### 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>

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Illawarra Group - check for activities at their [web site](#)

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# At the September meeting

*Spring flower spectacular a full plant table*



Phil Keane and Dan Clarke at work by the plant table (Ph: P Sheaffe)

The plant table is a great way to see what grows well in Sutherland Shire and what flowers when. Please free to email some photos in addition to showing the plant specimens at the meeting. These may be included in the newsletter. You can email by reply to the newsletter or to Dan Clarke at: [dmclarkebotanical@icloud.com](mailto:dmclarkebotanical@icloud.com)

Plant steward Phil Keane's nursery, [Ausplants R Us](#), is in Sutherland. Visits by appointment or check out sale days (often Saturday 12 – 4:30) on <https://www.facebook.com/austplants/>  
Ph: 0435 410 857 or [austplantsrus@gmail.com](mailto:austplantsrus@gmail.com)  
...and some will also be on the [APS online plant profile database](#)

It was a very large table this month, so we have not detailed every single item here. You can always find an extensive plant table history, going back a few years now, as referenced below.

## Orchidaceae

***Dendrobium gracilicaule*** (Yellow Cane Orchid)  
Another epiphyte (on trees) or lithophyte (on rocks), naturally found from north of Sydney to northern Queensland, in rainforest. Needs warmth but moisture and some shade to thrive. Beautiful

inflorescences of yellow flowers.

***D. kingianum*** and hybrids, ***D. speciosum*** (Sydney rock orchid, see photo top left) were also seen.

## Ericaceae (subfam. Epacridoideae)

***Epacris longiflora* (Native Fuchsia)** One of the few 'epacrids' that has taken to cultivation and found locally in sandstone outcrops and along watercourses. Stunning red-white tubular flowers for most of the year. Likely needs very good drainage and sandy soils to thrive. Grows to about 1 m tall.

## Myrtaceae

***Verticordia x Chamaelaucium* 'Paddy's Pink'** A medium sized shrub with rose pink flowers in spring, which are great cut flowers. It grows to around 2 metres tall and wide. The foliage has a spicy fragrance. Likes a well-drained soil in a sunny spot, with low humidity.

## ***Darwinia citriodora* (Lemon-scented Darwinia)**

A Western Australian species, very common and easy to grow in cultivation. Desired for its architectural foliage (decussate leaf arrangement) – blue-green leaves, and pleasantly scented red-

yellow flowers produced at the branch terminals.

Grows to about 1.5 x 1.5, give a well-drained soil and in full sun to part shade.

### Euphorbiaceae

***Ricinocarpos tuberculatus* (Wedding Bush)** The cultivar 'Bridal Star' appeared at the meeting which is reportedly a form of *R. tuberculatus* – a threatened species from Western Australia (growing in a small area east of Perth). It can grow to 3 m tall and wide and does well in a sunny position on a sandy soil.

### Proteaceae

Of course, Grevilleas were well represented including *G. caleyi* (Caley's Grevillea), *G. 'Bush Lemons'*, *G. 'Peaches + Cream'*, *G. 'Scarlet Moon'*, *G. banksii* (Banks Grevillea), *G. 'Honey Gem'*, *G. 'Lana Maree'*, *G. 'Honey Barbara'*, *G. 'Pink Surprise'*, *G. 'Bulli Beauty'*, *G. 'Pink Candelabra'*, *G. juniperina*, *G. 'Ivory Whip'*, *G. thelemanniana* (Spider-Net Grevillea).

***Lambertia formosa* (Mountain Devil)** Common in the Sydney basin on sandy soils. Bright red 7-flowered inflorescences with sweet nectar. Pungent linear leaves. Bird attracting. Grows to about 4 m tall. Needs good drainage to do well.



*L. formosa* in the Rooyal NP (Ph: P. Shelton)

***Persoonia levis* (Broad-leaved Geebung)** A common persoonia found up and down the NSW Coast on sandy soils, it has large and broad leaves to 15 cm long and 8 cm wide which resemble phyllodes. Flowers are yellow and produced individually but arranged in groups up and down the stems which then turn into green drupes ripening to purple. Has interesting papery bark.

It can be difficult to grow in cultivation but more and more results are coming forth with *Persoonia* propagation. Will likely need a sandy soil to do well with fast drainage. It is an attractive shrub. Will grow to potentially 5 m tall.

***Isopogon formosus* (Rose Cone Flower)** Small to medium shrub to 2 metres high. Highly dissected leaves to 5 cm long. The inflorescences are striking coming in metallic pink to purple at the

terminals. It is from WA and can be hard to keep going on the east coast but give good drainage and do not over water. Sandy soil essential. Very attractive plant.

***Isopogon latifolius*** Small to medium shrub to 3 metres high. It is endemic to the south-west of Western Australia. It has pink-red-purple inflorescences and intact leaves to about 100 mm long, elliptical-linear in shape. It does not perform overly well in humid areas but if a hot and sunny position is used then it may thrive.

### Apiaceae

***Actinotus helianthi* (Flannel Flower)** Perennial found in sandy soils. A variety of forms exist across its natural range. Showy white daisy-like flowers at the terminals with blue-green dissected foliage. Grow in sand with good drainage.

### Fabaceae

***Hardenbergia comptoniana* (Native Lilac)** A trifoliolate climber from WA, it grows at JB Reserve. Very stunning purple flowers. Very reliable in cultivation – give good drainage and either sun or part shade. May need to be kept in check but very attractive.

### ***Kennedia rubicunda* (Dusky Coral Pea)**

Scrambling climber that is quite a grower once established. Can act as a good groundcover too. Large-ish red pea-flowers that have a wilted look.

***Hovea acutifolia*** A softly-wooded shrub to 4 m tall found generally in rainforest margin forest and damp sites. It has leaves to 7 cm long and pointed. It produces bright purple pea-flowers in the leaf axils. It is a very attractive shrub. Give good drainage to thrive. Works well on a slope but can be short-lived.

Notes: there was some conjecture at the meeting on what species this was, and questions were asked about this species vs. *H. lanceolata*. The evidence is a bit tricky:

This species, as the name suggests, does have acute leaf-tips (apices) and leaves to about 16 mm wide (27 mm is supposed to be the limit); however, statements in the key vs the profile on NSW Flora differ). Leaves have a rusty indumentum of hairs underneath. The calyces and stems generally have simple hairs – loosely appressed. Also – on this specimen – the seed pods were solitary – reflecting the condition of 1 to 4 flowers in each cluster.

*H. lanceolata* is known for having coiled hairs on most parts and leaves to 15 mm wide without the acute apices. Flowers are also produced in 3s commonly or 2s or 4s. So single flowers do not seem to be the case in this species.

In any event – it seems the 2 species are highly variable.

**Gastrolobium celsianum (Swan River Pea)** This scrambling shrub, to about 2 metres wide by 1 m tall is currently being grown by Ralph Cartwright and Dan Clarke. It has ovate grey-green leaves to about 5 cm long and 2 cm wide and somewhat closed but large vivid red pea-flowers. Plants in Dan's garden have been flowering for over 3 months with the flowers regularly visited by Noisy Miners. It can become an untidy wandering plant but pruning can keep it in check. It is native to south-west Western Australia. It used to be known as *Brachysema celsianum*

**Rutaceae**

**Philotheca myoporoides (wax flower)**

Slender shrub to 2 m tall by 1-2 metres wide with elongated oval-shaped leaves. It has stunning white flowers. Grows naturally on sandstone outcrops. There is a cultivar called "Profusion".

Give a well-drained soil with good air flow and dappled shade for best results.

**Boronia pinnata** A shrub to 1.5 metres tall found along most of coastal NSW in sandy habitats.

It can be grown on a sandy sloping garden with adequate moisture as well as drainage. Plants are available from the nursery at Heathcote. Nice dissected green leaves with deep rosy-pink flowers.

**Lamiaceae**

**Prostanthera violacea** A small shrub growing to 2 metres tall, generally found in rainforest and moist sclerophyll forest in central and southern-coastal NSW.

Dan bought this one for his garden but cannot remember where it was purchased and even what species it was! It was identified as *P. denticulata* at the meeting but resembles this species much better. It has mauve flowers and ovate-toothed leaves to about 2 cm long and 1 cm wide which are strongly aromatic. It is growing on a sloping sandstone garden but is not thriving entirely. However, it has made a bit of a comeback in the drier conditions.

We also had the local *P. incisa* (Cut-leaved Mint-bush) to look at.

**Asteraceae**

**Brachyscome triloba** This species used to be called *B. angustifolia*. It has distinctive broad and toothed leaves, to about 1 cm wide, by 4 cm long. The daisies are purple and yellow. There are some cultivars sold such as 'Brasco' and 'Fresco' A useful groundcover growing to about 50 cm wide. Great for borders and rockeries.

**Xerochrysum bracteatum (Golden Everlasting)**

An attractive paper daisy with different coloured forms, they can be put in pots or placed in gardens. Likes a raised spot with good drainage in full sun. Can be temperamental but in a successful mass planting, they are stunning!

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 or material to divide. And even ready potted up excess from your propagating.

**Asphodelaceae**

**Bulbine bulbosa (Native Leek/Golden Lily)**

Found all over NSW in grassy woodlands and forests as well as paddocks in some cases, usually on moister alluvium or shale soils. It is a perennial herb growing to 75 cm high with bright yellow start-shaped flowers produced in a clustered raceme. Can make a lovely show when hundreds of plants are flowering together.

Can be grown in pots or gardens. Give some reliable moisture and an enriched soil. May not do too well on sand. Bulbs can dug up and transplanted. Plant in large numbers in an open sunny area for great effect!

Dan Clarke

More information can be found at these websites:  
[www.anspa.org.au](http://www.anspa.org.au) [www.anbg.gov.au](http://www.anbg.gov.au)  
[plantnet.rbgsyd.nsw.gov.au](http://plantnet.rbgsyd.nsw.gov.au) [www.wikipedia.org](http://www.wikipedia.org)  
[resources.austplants.com.au/plant-database/](http://resources.austplants.com.au/plant-database/)

Plus: Dan Clarke has all the monthly plant table information compiled in his [Plant Table Master List](#) document available from [our web site](#).



*Darwinia citriodora*  
(Ph: M. Fagg, APII)



Time to start collecting Flannel Flower seed (ph. P. Shelton)



Plant table section with Grevilleas, Darwinia, Dendrobiums, etc (Ph: P. Sheaffe)

# News and More

## Membership

If you are not receiving the monthly APS NSW e-newsletter, please email [newsletter@austplants.com.au](mailto:newsletter@austplants.com.au) so we can sort out whether we have your correct email address in our records. Each monthly issue is emailed at the end of the previous month.

Members receive an email from APS NSW when their membership is due through the year and can renew online on the APS website. Check your membership status with our treasurer Anne Webb at the next meeting or by phone.

## We still 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 to be decided. If you regularly make something and would like to share your tried and tested recipe, please email it to Rhonda at [rhodaniels@bigpond.com](mailto:rhodaniels@bigpond.com). Please be aware of copyright (and let us know where the recipe originally came from). We haven't been swamped with recipes so far, but we know there are many keen bakers out there.

## Update your first aid for free

In 2020, we received a federal government volunteer grant for first aid training. We still have some left. Members can complete the one day first aid course at the St George and Sutherland Community College at Jannali. 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.sgsc.edu.au/courses/WorkSkills/first-aid-courses](http://www.sgsc.edu.au/courses/WorkSkills/first-aid-courses) and contact and pay the college directly or phone 8543 7412. Let me know at [rhodaniels@bigpond.com](mailto:rhodaniels@bigpond.com) so we can keep track and reimburse you \$120 on course completion. We all benefit from up-to-date first aid knowledge.

## In flower at Joseph Banks Reserve

*Hakea trineura* is a large shrub right at the entrance near the What's in a name sign, but the orange flowers are easy to overlook amongst the green foliage (tri-neura means the leaves have 3 veins). Looking at the flower, it is easy to see how hakeas and grevilleas are closely related and could even end up in the same genus in time.

Looking down while walking down the path through the Sutherland Group garden area, it is also easy to miss the *Xanthorrhoea* flower spike covered in tiny white flowers. Look up! Many plants are suffering from our dry winter and summer is likely to be tough too, but there's still plenty of interest at the reserve. The kangaroo paws at the entrance are putting on a great show of tall flower spikes in a multitude of colours.

Rhonda Daniels



*Hakea trineura* (Ph: R Daniels)

## What to watch – some interesting options

### ***From AWC, there is a webinar on Australian Bats.***

Presented by Oli Aylen, an ecologist and bat researcher whose work has taken him around the world, from the cloud-forests of Costa Rica to the jungles of Borneo. Now he's embarking on a PhD looking at bats in the Australian arid zone, and whether the presence of large-scale conservation reserves is having an effect. Oli was the 2022 recipient of an Ecological Society of Australia grant in support of this project. Register at this link: [Australia's Amazing Bats](#)

### ***From ABC there was a new documentary about Bruce Pascoe's Dark Emu, released in July.***

A thought-provoking documentary that charts the impact of Bruce Pascoe's *Dark Emu* - the book that challenged Australia to rethink its history and ignited a debate that continues to rage. (2023) Follow this link: [The Dark Emu Story](#) or just look for it on ABC iView.

## *Report on Sutherland Group Committee meeting*

At our Committee meeting on Wednesday 4 October, we discussed the following issues:

- We discussed our AGM in November and officebearers for 2024. We are definitely seeking someone to organise our speakers in 2024. We have a list of possible speakers and topics and email addresses, and the email text Ralph Cartwright uses to contact speakers with all the details. We are also seeking a secretary to be the point of email contact for Sutherland Group and prepare the agendas for our committee meetings.
- We agreed to buy a new laptop and data projector to replace our ageing equipment for our meetings. We may be able to share the cost with APS NSW and other groups as our equipment is often borrowed.
- We made a donation of \$600 to the Australian Flora Foundation and \$155 to the Australian Wildlife Conservancy from our Open Gardens entry donations.
- We thanked Sutherland Council Community Nursery for donating tubestock to sell at our Open Gardens weekend.
- We discussed the importance of being aware of copyright and seeking permission when using images, text or graphics in APS material.
- We agreed to cull unused field guides from our library to sell to members at our meetings.
- Next Committee meeting: Wed 24 January 2024.

*Rhonda Daniels, Secretary*



The Illawarra Grevillea Garden was looking fantastic during the September get together (Photos: P. Sheaffe)

## *A purple banksia?*

An ABC News headline reads "[Rare purple Banksia spinulosa plant excites horticulturalists as cuttings hoped to flower](#)" and yes, of course people are interested. The story highlights these 3 points \

Key points:

- A new colour variant of the plant *Banksia spinulosa* has been found near Braidwood, NSW
- There is a theory the purple colour may have been caused by conditions during Black Summer
- Horticulturalists are waiting to see if cuttings of the plant will produce purple flowers

(follow the [link](#) to read more). The wait continues.

## ***Book Review: Birdscaping Australian Gardens, available in our library***



While showing a visitor our extensive library at the last meeting, I noticed a book called *Birdscaping Australian Gardens: Using Native Plants to Attract Birds to Your Garden* by George Adams. I flicked through it, it looked good so I borrowed it from our friendly librarian Clare McColl.

The subtitle says it all – this is the book about creating native gardens for a diversity of birds. The first section is about how to birdscape, which covers the basics of good garden design. Then there is a plant directory of about 125 pages, with details about cultivation and birdlife for a wide range of common native garden plants. Then it has a bird directory of over 50 birds. There is a double-page spread on each bird with a colour photo, a black and white drawing and information on habitat, feeding habits, and breeding behaviours and nesting. It also has a list of plants for food and shelter. I found this section very useful for identifying birds. At the back, there are resources including a list of native gardens and arboreta to visit, arranged by state. There were 20 places in NSW, including Joseph Banks

Reserve at Kareela. The index has common names and scientific names for both birds and plants.

The design of the book, particularly the plant directory section, made it very easy to read and use. The photos of birds and plants were all very high quality, and with high quality colour printing too. The author took many of the photos, but there were also over 50 other photographers credited.

This is the 2015/2016 edition, and it appears it was first published in the 1980s as *Birdscaping Your Garden* and again in 2011. It's always a good sign when a book has several editions.

I found it so useful and well-designed that I ended up buying my own copy at the Australian National Botanic Gardens bookshop (\$60 full price). This means the group's copy is back in our library for you to borrow.

PS Visiting the national gardens in Canberra in late September, I have never seen so many waratah flowers on so many different plants in one place – they seemed to be everywhere!

*Rhonda Daniels*



Waratahs at RNBG,  
Canberra (Ph: R. Daniels)