Eucalyptus parramattensis
(Calgaroo)

Calgaroo

Volume 44, No 6, June 2017

Newsletter of the
Parramatta and Hills District Group,
Australian Plants Society NSW Ltd

ACB 002 680 408

Updating APS NSW Technology and Procedures

The APS NSW Strategic Plan is well advanced in the process of implementing changes to its management operations as recommended by a consultant. Our understanding of this is that these include provision of facilities for:

- simpler management of membership details held by the APS Membership Officer;
- letters to members when their membership is due for renewal;
- direct on-line entry by members for membership updating;
- members to update their other details on line;
- members without computer facilities to attend to matters by other means;
- non-members to join APS NSW on-line;
- an APS NSW web site that will carry the APS NSW material but also include District Group pages to consolidate our Society's presentation to the community;
- a new logo; and
- such other improvements as may be achieved through the use of modern technology.

These changes will make it easier to join APS NSW, easier to renew our membership, and consolidate a record of all the activities of the Society, its District Groups and its members, hopefully making membership more attractive to the community.

The immediate objectives are to increase the awareness of APS NSW within the community, to increase membership by 250 by 2020, and to maintain more effective communications between members and the executive. We hope this will lead to greater appreciation of our Australian flora.

We hope all members will continue to contribute to the achievement of these objectives in any way they can. It appears to be an exciting time for our Society and we who are members.

We thank John Aitken, our President, and the Board for their initiative in leading us forward at this time.

Our Next Meeting

Like to know more about rainforest plants? Come to our next meeting and hear Deidre Jinks from the Sydney Rainforest Nursery.

Deidre will be speaking and showing pictures of local rainforest plants. She said, "The nursery has a focus on local diversity and propagates from local sources." Deidre has a wealth of knowledge to share regarding rainforest plants.

She also teaches conservation and land management at TAFE.

Our meeting will take place at Gumnut Hall, Gumnut Place, Cherrybrook on Saturday, 24 June, at 2.00pm. All are very welcome. Bring a friend(s)!

Parramatta & Hills District Group, APS

Contact us at info@apsparrahills.org.au
or visit http://www.apsparrahills.org.au/
or contact a Committee person direct
or join us on
https://www.facebook.com/APSParraHills/

Calendar

Jun 2017
Wed 14 Propagation at Bidjiwong Community Nursery at 10am
Sat 24 Our Meeting at Gumnut Hall, Gumnut Place, Cherrybrook at 2pm. Our speaker on this occasion will be Deidre Jinks whose topic will be *Rainforests and Rainforest Plants.*

Jul 2017
Tue 4 Deadline for *Calgaroo* news / articles
Sat/Sun 8/9 Blue Mountains Group Annual Seminar. See the details below.
Wed 12 Propagation at Bidjiwong Community Nursery at 10am
Thu 27 Visit to the Seed Bank at the Australian Botanical Gardens, Mt Annan (Bookings made)

Blue Mountains Group Annual Seminar

The Blue Mountains Group will host their Annual Seminar on the weekend of Sat/Sun, 8/9 July.

On Saturday, 8 July, at Sharon Burridge Hall, Blaxland Community Centre, 33 Hope Street, Blaxland registrations will open at 9.30am and presentations commence at 10.00am. Paul Rymer will speak on *Peas Citizen Science Research Program*, David King on *Garguree Swamp Care* and Dick Turner on *Regent Honey Eater Recovery Program*.

That night a dinner will be held at the Emu Plains Sports and Recreation Club, Leonay, and on Sunday there will be a bird walk in the morning. This will be followed by a garden inspection or a walk in the upper mountains. Information and the registration form are available from Jim Plummer at **jimmyandpat@bigpond.com**

Australian Native Plant Society (Australia) Conference 15-19 Jan 2018

"Grass Roots to Mountain Tops" Key dates:

1 July 2017	**Early-bird registration opens $396**
30 September 2017	**Early-bird registration closes $440**
8 January 2018	Start of King Island & Alpine to Rainforest tours
9 January 2018	Start of Hobart Environs Tour
13 January 2018	Bruny Is. Day tour
15-19 January 2018	Conference
20 January 2018	Start of Alpine to Rainforest tours Bruny Is. Day tour

ANPSA
Hobart 2018

Conference program:

Sunday 14 January	Registration
Monday 15 – Friday 19	Half day talks and half day excursions
Monday 15 January	Reception at Government House, Hobart
Tuesday 16 January	A J Swaby Address – open to the public
Tuesday 16 January	Australian Plants Awards
Tuesday 18 January	Conference dinner

Expressions of interest:

To receive updates, register or update your details or indicate your tour preferences please contact a member of the Organising Committee at **asgapjan18@gmail.com** or mail to: **APST Inc.** P O Box 3035, Ulverstone MDC, Ulverstone, Tasmania 7310

The Conference Venue is Wrest Point, Hobart. For more information visit the **Conference web site**. The costs are shown on page 2 of their web site.

Ed. This is a great opportunity to holiday in Tassie and take in the ANPSA Conference while there.

Native Grass Workshop by Ross Rapmund

Marilyn Cross

On a beautiful Saturday in late May we gathered at a bush property in Dural to learn about native grasses and ground covers. Our guide was Ross Rapmund who is an expert in Australian native plants and grasses and manager of the Hornsby Shire Council Nursery.

Ross introduced the subject of our native grasses with a sampling that he had brought. Provided with simple but extensive notes, we learned that across the Hornsby Shire there are over 100 species of native and naturalised exotic grasses. However, accurate identification can be both "difficult and frustrating.

Examining samples brought by Ross

Environmental conditions affect the growth and habit of grasses, especially their appearance. Many grasses grow in strictly summer (C4 grasses) or in winter (C3 grasses).

We then walked around the site finding and identifying a range of species, including Blady Grass *Imperata cylindrica* with its tightly knit rhizomes, Wallaby Grass *Austrodanthonia tenuior*, Basket Grass *Oplismenus* spp, Weeping Grass *Microlaena stipoides*, Kangaroo Grass *Themeda australis* and Right Angle Grass *Entolasia* spp.

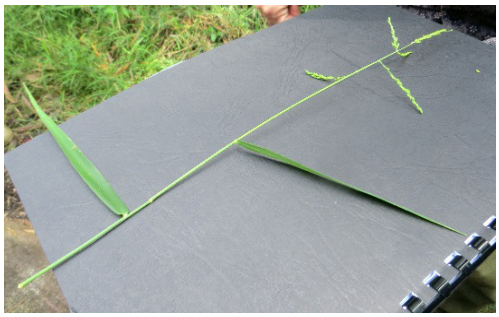
Examples collected in the field

At the end of the afternoon, I went home and discovered, to my horror, we had some fine stands of the exotic Whiskey Grass *Andropogon virginicus*, an invader from America reputed to have arrived in Australia as packing around American whiskey bottles. Needless to say, the invader is being eradicated using Ross' control methods of de-seeding – cutting off seed heads, crowning individual plants, cutting out non-seeding plants and spot spraying where no

Hmm, what can this one be?

Kangaroo Grass
Kangaroo Grass
Themeda australis

Multiple species including Weeping Grass -- *Microlaena stipoides*



Right Angle Grass - *Entolasia spp.*

Wallaby Grass
Austrodanthonia tenuior

New Grevillea Cultivars

Grevilleas seem to be the most popular genus among Australian natives, perhaps because of the wide range in terms of size and colour. This week I came across a couple of new ones (to me), both cultivars. There are three more on page 7.

One was ***Grevillea* 'Alex Pink'**.

It is a dense low spreading Grevillea with dark pink flowers and bronze new growth. Perfect if left to cascade over a retaining wall or for the more creative, try in a pot as a standard. Of course it may be used for erosion control in well drained sunny spots. It is best planted in full sun position for longest flowering season. It tolerates drought and light frost once established. It only reaches about 80cm in height and about 2.5m in width. To achieve dense growth and more prolific flowering prune as required. Fertilise using a native slow release fertiliser early.

***Grevillea* 'Alex Pink'**

The second was **Grevillea 'Amber Blaze'**

This too is a dense spreading shrub with fine bronzy new growth which contrasts beautifully with the grey-green older foliage. It flowers for most of the year and the display of large deep orange flowers is stunning. It can be used for cut flowers and is highly bird attracting. It grows well in sun or part shade and if grafted onto Silky Oak will tolerate most soil conditions. It appreciates some native fertiliser in Spring. It tolerates light frost and is bred for tropical conditions. It grows to about 1m in height but can spread to about 3m in width.

***Grevillea* 'Amber Blaze'**

Kunzea Species

Another of my favourite genera is the Kunzea. There are large and small species and this month we will look at the smaller shrubs. There are only some six species in the Sydney region.

Kunzeas are generally shrubs with alternate leaves. Flowers tend to be terminal, in short leafy clusters, or solitary in upper axils. There are 5 petals and sepals, and a greater number of stamens. The fruit is a capsule, thin walled with persistent sepals.

Kunzea rupestris is an erect shrub up to 1.5 m high. The leaves are narrow-oblong to oblanceolate, 6–14 mm long, concave towards the top, often convex towards the base. The sepals are narrow-triangular, acuminate and the stamens 3–5 mm long. The floral tube is villous. Petals are shorter than sepals. This *Kunzea* is found from Maroota to Ku-ring-gai Chase.

Kunzea capitata is compact shrub growing to about 1.5 m high. Its leaves are 3-veined, concave, to 9 x 4 mm broadening towards the apex, the tip is pointed, mucronate and recurved. The flowers are pink although white in certain areas, in terminal heads with the calyx having 5 triangular sepals, villous; stamens 5 mm long with yellow anthers. The capsule is narrow and 4 mm long. Distribution is from the coast to the ranges.

Kunzea rupestris
Image: Brian Walters

Kunzea capitata
Image: Brian Walters

Another pink flowered *Kunzea* is the ***K. parvifolia*** which is a spreading shrub to about 1.5 m high. Leaves are appressed to the stems, oblanceolate to 4 x 1 mm, and the mid vein is prominent. The flowers are rosy pink terminal heads; the calyx is usually glabrous; the stamens 2-3 mm long with yellow anthers. The capsule is roundedand about 3 x 3 mm. It is found in the Southern Highlands.

Kunzea opposita is neither from the Sydney region nor small. It is a shrub from SE Qld to about 3 m high and the young stems are covered with fine, appressed to spreading hairs. Leaves are usually opposite or ± opposite, narrow-ovate, 1.5–3 mm long, c. 0.5 mm wide, apex rounded to acute, sparsely hairy to glabrous, and sessile. Flowers are pink, sessile, in head-like clusters at the end of branches. Hypanthium long-pubescent, occasionally glabrous. Sepals are triangular and 1–1.5 mm long. Petals c. 1.5 mm long and stamens 2.5–3 mm long. The ovary is mostly 3-locular or sometimes 4-locular, placentation axile; style c. 4 mm long.

Left:
Kunzea parvifolia
Image: Brian Walters

Right:
Kunzea opposita
Image: Murray Fagg

And there are several other species from a total of about 40 species to consider when choosing a Kunzea for your garden. Check them in your reference book or on-line on Google or your preferred search engine.

‘Doomsday’ seed vault entrance repaired after thaw of Arctic ice

*David Twomey

Norway is repairing the entrance of a “doomsday” seed vault on an Arctic island after an unexpected thaw of permafrost let water into a building meant as a deep freeze to safeguard the world’s food supplies.

The water, limited to the 15 metre entrance hall in the melt late last year, had no impact on millions of seeds of crops including rice, maize, potatoes and wheat that are stored more than 110 metres inside the mountainside.

Reuters Newsagency reports water was an unexpected problem for the vault on the Svalbard archipelago, about 1000km from the North Pole.

It seeks to safeguard seeds from cataclysms such as nuclear war or disease in natural permafrost.

“Svalbard Global Seed Vault is facing technical improvements in connection with water intrusion,” Norwegian state construction group Statsbygg, which built the vault that opened in 2008, said in a statement. “The seeds in the seed vault have never been threatened.”

Spokeswoman Hege Njaa Aschim said Statsbygg had removed electrical equipment from the entrance, a source of heat, and was building waterproof walls inside and ditches outside to channel away any water.

The number of visitors would be reduced to limit human body heat, she said. Some of the water that flowed in re-froze and had to be chipped out by workers from the local fire service.

An underlying problem was that permafrost around the entrance of the vault, which had thawed from the heat of construction a decade ago, has not re-frozen as predicted by scientists, Ms Aschim said.

Temperatures in the Arctic region have been rising at twice the global average in a quickening trend that climate scientists blame on man-made greenhouse gases.

Svalbard has sometimes had rain even in the depths of winter when the sun does not rise. “There’s no doubt that the permafrost will remain in the mountainside where the seeds are,” said Marie Haga, head of the Bonn-based Crop Trust that works with Norway to run the vault. But we had not expected it to melt around the tunnel.”

Ms Haga said the trust had so far raised just over US$200 million towards an US$850 million endowment fund to help safeguard seeds collections around the globe. “That is an extremely cheap insurance policy for the world,” she said.

Save Our Flora

Save Our Flora E- Bulletin 17 has been received from Maria Hitchcock and as usual contains some most interesting details. You can access all our previous E-Bulletins online at http://coolnatives.com.au/ **These are three of the items below.**

Flora of Australia pdfs available

Ten volumes can be downloaded from the *Flora of Australia* website
http://www.environment.gov.au/science/abrs/publications/flora-of-australia

The volumes are listed with links so that they can be downloaded. Of particular interest to members would be the three volumes of Proteaceae.

Propagating difficult seed

If you are having problems propagating some seed varieties, soak them overnight in warm water then sow. The Pine Rivers Branch of the Australian Plants Society NT seems to have had a fair bit of success using this method.

Threatened Species Commissioner meets *Banksia vincentia* at the ANBG - Facebook video, 26 May 2017G

Banksia vincentia is one of the world's rarest plants and is making a comeback thanks to Australia's Threatened Species Strategy. Watch the video.

New Grevillea Cultivars

Searching on-line I discovered a series of three cultivars incorporating the name Honeybird – presumably three arising at the same nursery. However, my search resulted in no essential data arising as to their origin.

They are ***Grevillea* 'Honeybird Silvereye Cream'**, ***G.* Honeybird Parakeet Pink'** and ***G.* 'Honeybird Wattleird Yellow'.**

***G.* 'Honeybird Silvereye Cream' Image: Angus Stewart**

***G.* 'Honeybird Silvereye Cream'** is said to be a beautiful small shrub reaching 1.5m in height and some 1.5m in width. Angus Stewart says that as it flowers all year round it is a wonderful plant for attracting birds to the garden. The blooms are lemon and cream and also make great cut flowers. It does best in a sunny position in well drained soil, and with a handful of native fertiliser applied in spring. It is also good as a low informal hedge, for containers and as a stand alone plant. It is low maintenance and naturally compact.

***G.* 'Honeybird Parakeet Pink' Image: Boongala Gardens**

***G.* Honeybird Parakeet Pink'** is a very attractive Grevillea growing to about 1.5m x 1.5m. It has lovely pink "toilet-brush" inflorescences and can be pruned to be quite compact. Foliage is strongly dissected, similarly to *Grevillea* "Moonlight" and others. It can tolerate a range of soil types but make sure drainage is good and sunlight is available most of the day. It flowers all year round.

***G. 'Honeybird Wattlebird Yellow'* Image: Angus Stewart**

G. 'Honeybird Wattlebird Yellow' is a lovely compact Grevillea with large bright yellow brush flowers produced all year round that are bird magnets. It grows to around a metre high, and has been bred to suit subtropical climates. It tolerates light frost and is best in a sunny position in well drained soil. Give it a handful of native fertiliser in spring. It is naturally compact and a great low maintenance variety that can be used for informal hedging, pot culture and as a feature plant. It is waterwise.

Angus Stewart carried details on his web site at www.gardeningwithangus.com.au/

Malcolm Johnston of Boongala Native Gardens has one or more.

Check Malcolm's web site www.boongalagardens.com/ which carries some lovely pictures of his gardens.

Please let us know the plants that do well in your garden!

Global Effort to Expand Carbon Pricing Schemes

Officially established at the United Nations sponsored COP21 climate summit in 2015, the Carbon Pricing Leadership Coalition (CPLC) published an update report detailing its members' efforts to expand carbon pricing mechanisms globally. The CPLC includes corporations such as BT Group, Coca Cola, Nestle, Shell and Total, as well as the United Kingdom, German and Canadian governments.

British environmental website BusinessGreen reports the CPLC is aiming to double the current global reach of carbon pricing schemes, through initiatives such as carbon taxes and cap and trade schemes, to cover 25 per cent of total emissions by 2020, before growing to 50 per cent within the next decade.

I Wish!

What a beautiful Eremophila! This was taken by Bernie Shanahan and produced at the head of the Eremophila Study Group newsletter (full width of the page).

E. glabra is a species of a complex genus of some 214 species which are found across virtually all of the dry centre of Australia.

The species ranges from completely prostrate forms to shrubs up to 1.5 metres high. Leaves may be glabrous (without hairs) or greyish and conspicuously hairy. The flowers also vary considerably and may be green, yellow, orange or red. Flowering occurs from late winter to summer.

The *E. glabra* can be grown in our area but likes excellent drainage and sun for much of the day.

It is commonly known as the Common Eremophila.

***Eremophila glabra* prostrate orange**
Image: Bernie Shanahan

Also included within that Study Group newsletter there is an article written by Ken Warnes of South Australia whose property was partially burnt in bushfires north of Adelaide in 2015. He writes:

"The majority of you may not know what has been happening around here since the Pinery Fire (November 2015). A friend and I have found *Eremophila subfloccosa ssp glandulosa* in 5 burnt scrub areas including a plant in my own scrub. Cuttings taken from the most vigorous plant rooted in a few weeks. **The subspecies was down to a single known plant pre fire**; and they are only the plants we have found. There's now in excess of 50 plants in total so what a result!"

"Incidentally, the one pre-fire plant perished in the fire making the outcome even more amazing."

Ed. Details as to how you join the Eremophila Study Group or any other are shown in the Study Group Directory in your copy of *Native Plants for NSW*. There is a small annual fee that is also shown there.

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We suggest P&H members who need to renew their membership complete the form in the centre of *Native Plants for NSW* and post it to Pip Gibian at her address above or choose the direct deposit option, follow the directions carefully and advise Merle Thompson and Gordon Brooks by email. Alternatively just pay Pip at the next meeting. Please ask if you are unsure of your membership status which is shown on the address label affixed to APS publications received quarterly. Note the fact that you may now renew for three years. A simpler membership renewal system will be introduced very soon.