



# Australian Plants Society

## South East NSW Group

Newsletter 177

November 2021

*Corymbia maculata* Spotted Gum and  
*Macrozamia communis* Burrawang

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Dear Members,

The seasons are changing and we are zooming towards a new year. Hopefully one in which we do less Zoom and more outdoor activities.

As we have had a reduced number of meetings this year we thought it would be a good idea to gather for one last event and share some time with fellow native plant enthusiasts.

This will be our Christmas gathering and will be relaxed and informal, in a member's garden. (See below for the details)

This last year has stimulated a huge amount of plant growth and it has been fascinating watching nature respond. Luckily the activity of weeding is a good time to meditate and also get some exercise.

Thank you to all those members who have contributed to the newsletter over the year. We have received reports of how important it has been when we were unable to physically meet, and how interesting. So keep up the good work and keep on sending those thoughts to John.

We also appreciate any ideas for activities or offers of gardens to visit, so please keep in touch.

I would like to wish everyone a peaceful and safe summer season and we look forward to seeing you, if not at our Christmas meeting, then at an activity next year.

Di Clark

## Next Meeting

**Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> December 2021,**

**A visit to Mary-Jane O'Brien's garden**

**57 Wagonga Scenic Drive Narooma** (see page 2)

**Meeting starts at 11 a.m.**

**(note the late starting time to allow everyone time to vote in the  
Local Council Elections)**

## Directions to our December meeting venue:

**From the north, head through Narooma on the Princes H'way, and turn right onto The Old Highway. Turn right again onto Wagonga Scenic Drive, and number 57 is on the left, just at the end of the bitumen section. (There is a water tank on the right just before Mary-Jane's)**

**From the south, The Old Highway is the first road on your left after passing Narooma High School.**

**Mary-Jane says of her relatively new project,** "Our garden is surrounded by native bush, established when we built about 6 years ago. The area around the house site was cleared to meet fire regulations, and we levelled a building site on the side of the hill.

Challenges included:

1. Poor soil, mainly clay and crumbling shale, and a loss of top soil.
2. South facing block
3. Exposed to southerly winds
4. Working on a hill
5. Wallabies (of course) and swamp rats.

**The garden may be described as a "wild" native garden.**

We have also established a herb garden, veggie plot and orchard, mainly exotic, but we have included Bush tucker plants in these areas.

We have done extensive planting over the last 6 years on exposed banks. Come and take a look.

Wear suitable shoes for wandering around the garden, a sunhat as we have ordered fine weather, don't forget to pack morning tea and lunch and your favourite chair for comfort.

## COVID -19 Regulations

Thank you everyone for complying with the current Covid-19 rules. It is not always possible to keep up with ever-evolving regulations, but the committee will always try to let you know prior to a meeting.

**At present we require all attendees to have been double vaccinated and to be able to show their certificates. We also have a QR code for checking in, and a COVID -19 plan.**

We also require that if anyone is unwell that they do not attend our meeting. As meetings are often outside we currently do not require the wearing of masks.

Up to date information for NSW can be found at <https://www.nsw.gov.au/covid-19/stay-safe/rules>

## Last Meeting,

## Regenerating Bushland in and around Deua National Park

With recent wet weather and the promise of continuing rain, a number of members decided not to risk a day of slippery wet gravel roads.



**Epicormic regrowth, suckering and massive seedling generation tell the story of our resilient bushland**



Weren't they to be upset when the grey of dawn quickly cleared to a sunny day. For those 14 brave members who enjoyed looking at the impressive regrowth of the Deua forests, the day was full of interest, albeit long.

Heading west from Moruya, we began with a drive on Coondella Rd towards its crossing of Donald's Creek. After a couple of kilometres it seemed our journey might be in jeopardy, as the night before a sizeable tree decided to fall across the road. (Sally did warn that such an event was more than possible)

Without a chainsaw we looked in trouble, but Dave and Jan have a property nearby, and are always prepared for such problems. Dave produces a bush-saw, which a few sniggered at, but within twenty minutes the job was done, and with everyone putting shoulders to the task, the road was clear. On we went, hoping that would be the last little adventure.

The roadside understorey was a sea of mostly yellow, with massed *Pultenaea ferruginea* and *P. scabra* competing with the brilliantly bright *Senecio vellioides* and *S. linearifolia* to grab our attention, and camera focus.



Choices: turn around, not really an option on this narrow bush road. Or do the best you can to create a passable roadway. Thanks Dave for making the choice easy.



Seedlings of *Grevillea rhyolitica*

At the creek, the intention was to find the population of *Grevillea rhyolitica*, as this was the location of the original collection for ERBG. As this plant is killed by fire, we were searching for regenerating seedlings, and found quite a number along the roadside. Other plants which benefitted from understorey clearing included *Commersonia breviseta* (previously *Rulingia dasyphylla*) which was flowering and fruiting. (Thanks to Jackie Miles and Sharon Pearson for updating us on the name change)

It was noted that this plant often flowers within the first year of a fire, and over a period of 5 years or so gradually disappears as more dominant

plants take over. So it sets plenty of seed and waits its next opportunity to shine. As a garden plant, it appreciates given some space to grow, a bit of sun, and a regular prune to keep it vigorous. You will be rewarded with plenty of cheery flowers, white petals sitting around a raspberry jam centre.



Past its best flowering, now heavy with developing fruit, *Commersonia breviseta*



At this point we turned around, heading back up Coondella Rd, and onto Donald's Creek Rd. This area carries a mixed Eucalypt forest, with Ironbark (*E. fibrosa*) and Silver-top Ash (*E. sieberi*) common, but the bright red new growth of *Angophora costata* is what caught the eye. The Angophora is found in a few discrete areas locally, although it is most common around Sydney.

Along Donald's Creek Rd. *Coopernookia barbata* caught our eye, but what was most noticeable was the dominance of firstly *Dodonaea truncatiales*, then *D. triquetra*, both presenting impenetrable thickets along the roadside. Again reaching Donald's Creek for a very late morning tea, we discovered flowering and fruiting *Androcalva fraseri* Brush Kurrajong which was previously *Commersonia fraseri*. Botanists have had a disruptive time with not only the Genus of these plants, but have also changed their Family, from Sterculiaceae to Malvaceae. No wonder we get confused! *Androcalva* has the ability to sucker after fire damage, and there was plenty of evidence of this fact. Plants had finished flowering but held many spiny fruits.



Dave Hall crossing Donald's Creek. 4wd not necessary, but handy



*Goodenia heterophylla*, above, and *Scaevola ramosissima*, right, would make ideal rockery plants, although the *Goodenia* would need to be replaced after a couple of years. Thankfully, it propagates readily by cuttings.



Herbaceous plants often benefit when fire clears the bush, and members of the Goodeniaceae were certainly on show.

The roadsides were lit up by yellow flowering of *Goodenia heterophylla*, which seemed to occupy every available space, whilst *Scaevola ramosissima* tried to outdo its more widespread cousin, *S. aemula*. Hibbertias also vied for attention, with low mats of *H. diffusa* flowering so profusely that the foliage disappeared. Then the more upright *H. linearis* and *H. obtusifolia* were noted, framing more *Coopernookia*, their buttercup yellow complimenting and accentuating the mauve of *Coopernookia*. Members also were enchanted by the delicate sprays of white flowers held on slender stalks above deep green herbaceous foliage. These were *Xanthosia atkinsoniana*, in natural drifts right along the roadsides. Heading back up the hill towards Oulla Creek Trail, we stopped off to investigate a drier area of forest, where *Xanthorrhoea* and *Macrozamia* stood prominently beneath the open canopy.



Here we found some orchids, *Caladenia carnea* and *Dipodium roseum* tucked up hard against a tree trunk with *Cymbidium suave* nestled in a fork of a Eucalypt.

Rumblings amongst members suggested it was lunch time, and there was still much to do. So grudgingly it was decided that Hanging Mountain would have to wait for another time, and we headed off along Araluen Road to meet up with Mark and Carolyn Noake on Larry's Mountain corner, where we had lunch before tackling the hillside flora to be found here. *Scaevola aemula* and *Stackhousia monogyna* provided a colourful backdrop along the road.



A convenient clearing, with log seating provided by a generous road construction crew, what more could one ask?

Larry's Mountain area is granite based, but areas of fine grained rhyolite are home to unusual plants. Some previously noted included *Dampiera purpurea*, *Grevillea arenaria*, which is found in a variety of habitats in our local forests, and *Bossiaea rhombifolia* which grows coastal and tableland forests, but never common. This is the only local population of this small shrub we have come across this far south. Another plant which was unexpected for this corner is *Acacia kydrensis*, which mostly grows high on the tablelands in the Kydra Reef area south of Cooma. There is a couple of discrete populations, this one and another in Wadbilliga N.P. Plants grow on just this hillside, on a steep south slope, a small component of a dense shrubby understorey. The day was getting quite warm as we trudged up the roadway to a nearby quarry to see if we could find another plant which should not be here, *Leionema dentatum*, previously collected for ERBG some years back, growing with *Logania albiflora*. The plant usually grows on sandstone of the northern tablelands, down through the Sydney region to the Illawarra. This population is an outlier, which unfortunately appears not to have recovered from the effects of a very hot fire. We will keep looking. Mark and Carolyn then suggested we move further up the road to a logging track which provided access to an area behind the quarry, with easy walking through a varied understorey dominated by regenerating *Allocasuarina littoralis*.



*Acacia kydrensis* finds apparently inhospitable places just to its liking.





*Tylophora barbata*, Jan Douglas

Here was another form of *Grevillea arenaria*, splashes of *Goodia lotifolia* and Jan found a delightful spray of *Tylophora barbata* twining around a slender twig. Hill Daisy *Coronidium oxylepis* (*Helichrysum collinum*) is another herb to take advantage of the open canopy, its many bright yellow/orange flowers topping sparsely foliaged stems. This plant is recognised by its flowers having linear bracts which give it a spiky appearance.



*Coronidium oxylepis* prefers open sunny aspects, and seemingly, bare bony soil

From here we moved onto a population of *Grevillea mucronulata* which has survived roadworks by suckering in scraped areas, and a few larger plants around 1m high growing in a deep gutter, happy despite smothering by kikuyu. Greenish flowers with red styles are small by most *Grevillea* standards, possibly why growers don't appreciate this plant for its many horticultural qualities.

By now everyone was "planted out", so ended a very busy but fruitful bushland experience.



I'm a survivor. *Grevillea mucronulata* unfazed by competition. It's a pity more don't grow this adaptable small shrub, for it flowers for months and is a magnet for smaller birds.

## A great way of documenting the plants we see on our bush visits.

### Using iNat.

A day in the bush with a group of plant lovers can leave you reeling with information and inspiration. We were fortunate to experience this during our last meeting as we explored the Deua Valley. Many of our members like to take photographs of the plants and wildlife that we see and upload it to iNat.

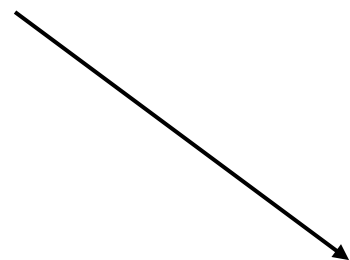
I would like to provide a link so you can also see what we viewed and find it on the map. In the past we have talked about **Nature Mapr**, but **this has now changed to a different platform called iNat**.

The best way to view our records from Saturday 6th November would be to open up the iNat webpage and click on **EXPLORE**.



You don't need to sign up to do this. Once you hit **EXPLORE** a screen will pop up with lots of different options.

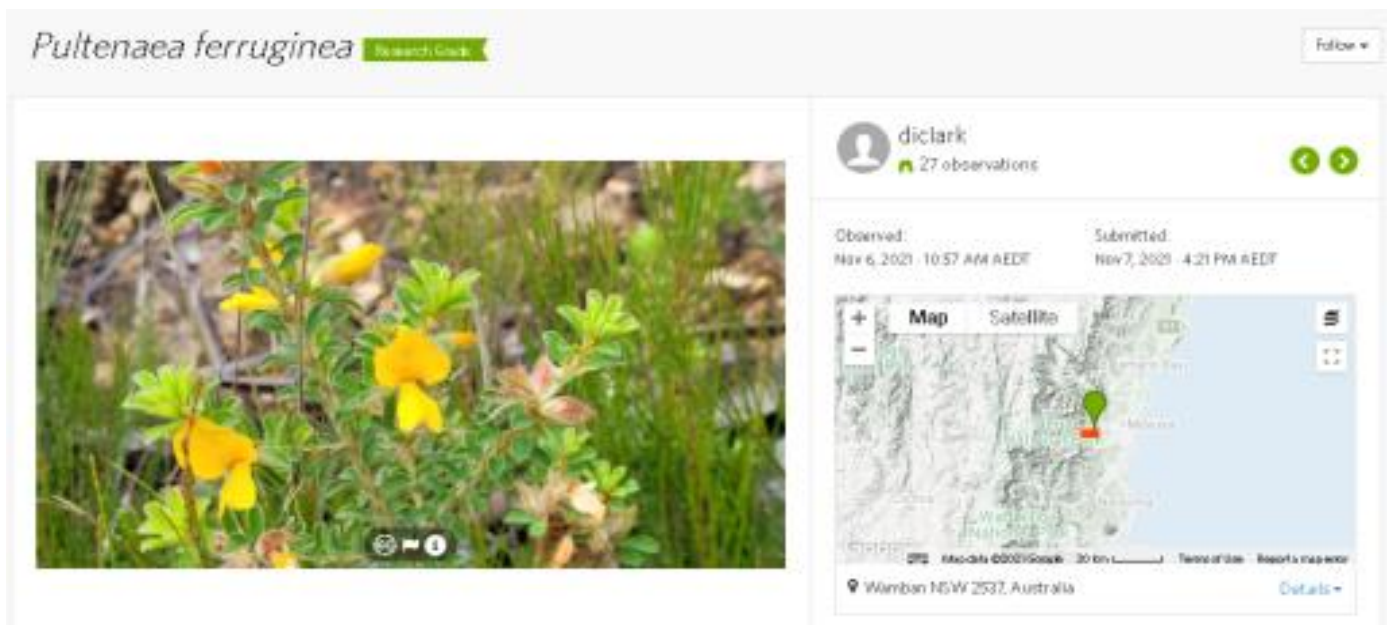
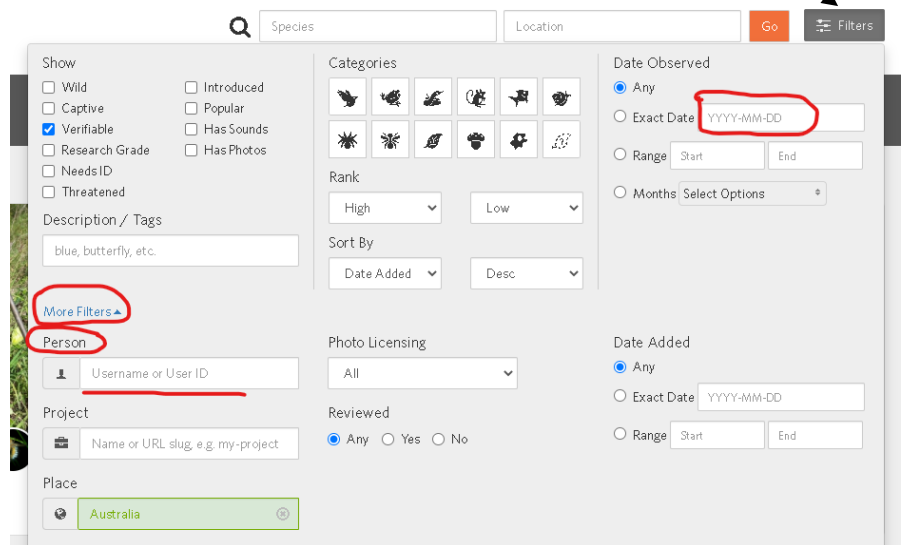
On the top right hand side of the screen, select **Filters** to move onto a page where you can select specific information.



Then, all you need to do is select the date of our trip 2021/11/06 and then open up the **more filters** arrow.

If you type in either **diclark** or **bushrevival** in the **Person** box you will see the sightings that have been uploaded by myself and Sharon Pearson. (Only one person at a time is possible)

If you select a sighting it will open up and provide a map. This will show you where the plant was found. If the plant is considered to be rare and threatened then the location will be more general.



I hope this adds to the information that you learnt on the day and provides some interest to those who could not make it to our meeting.

**Di**

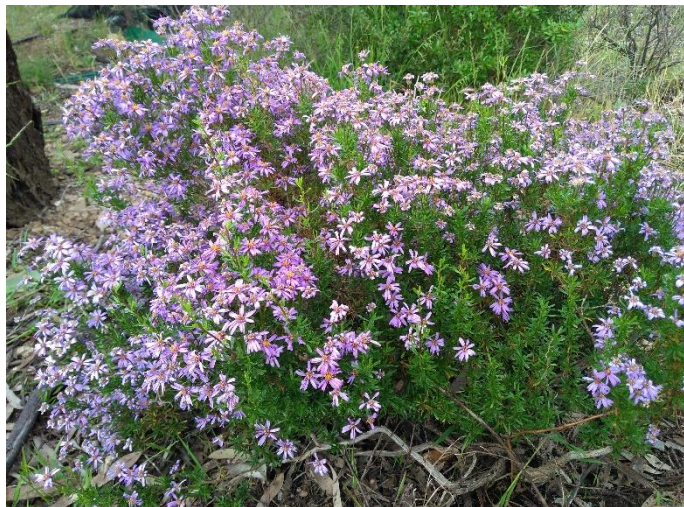


## From our members...

### Olearia etc

by Leigh Murray

My wonderful Olearia (the one we wrongly thought was *Olearia persoonioides*) has been in full flower for the past few weeks at Queanbeyan. It may be unidentified, but it's a little beauty. And a thoroughly mature one, at that - it's 33 years old.



A plant worthy of a place in any garden, this long flowered *Olearia* remains un-named. Leigh, you need to bring some cuttings when you next come to the coast !!

With the lockdowns and an ill partner, I've hardly been at Tuross for many months, and the garden there has had to get along mostly without me. Fortunately, it doesn't seem to have missed me much at all. It's more overgrown than usual, but it's largely OK. All the rain this year has been a huge help in my absences. What I did notice was that the weedy grasses are thriving, and will have to be knocked back. And a huge Norfolk Island Pine branch came down in strong winds, and is currently squishing a *Grevillea* 'Honey Gem'; I'm hoping the grevillea will survive, and recover once the Norfolk branch has been removed - its flowers are very popular with honeyeaters (much tastier, apparently, than *G.* 'Sylvia').

The indoor plants haven't fared so well from the long lockdown. The Kentia has lost a few fronds but seems to have survived, as has the *Cissus antarctica*. Many of the plants are looking a bit ratty (as you would, with no watering for months). Some succulents hardly blinked.

Meanwhile, at Queanbeyan it has rained and rained. And plants are growing like they never have before on our shaly ridge with sparse soil.

It's been a strange year, hasn't it. But the Olearia is flowering magnificently again, as it has every year for 33 years.

### Merimbula member Heather Meek writes

Please pass on my huge gratitude to you all for keeping on keeping on through all the recent challenges. The newsletters have been so wonderful to get throughout this dismal lockdown period. A huge thank you to John Knight and all the team. My responsibilities as carer prevent me from participating, but it means a huge amount to know that others are continuing the most important work of promoting Australian plants through cultivation, the work of the Eurobodalla Regional Botanic Gardens, and the field trips.

I continue creating a "rainforest" here at 13 Woodland Drive, as a defence against fire... and growing as many Australian bush tucker plants as I can fit in. I use the crop from the Davidson's Plum, *Davidsonia pruriens*, plants every year (sensational!) and use the leaves of *Tasmannia lanceolata* regularly in my cooking (added at the last minute to get the full flavour). Botany Bay Greens, *Tetragonia tetragonioides*, flash fried, go well with Chinese food. The animals get my Midyim berries, *Austromyrtus dulcis*, so now I am trying to grow a few in hanging baskets. These are just a few of the Bush Tucker plants I have growing here. Recently I gave 60 seedlings of *Davidsonia pruriens* to the Aboriginal Corporation's Jigamy Farm enterprise between Pambula and Eden, and I am hoping they manage to raise them to fruiting stage. I hope to join in activities when I can.



## Surf Beach Fire Recovery – the Story Continues Lyndal Thorburn

Having been banned from visiting our Surf Beach property since early August, it was with excitement but some trepidation that we scurried down Clyde Mountain as soon as rules allowed in mid-October 2021 to see how things stood. We have a 4G camera in place to view the house site, but all we could see through that during the 2 months we were stuck in lock down was that the Acacias continued to grow apace.



House site, January 2020

and a view to the west in October 2021

When we arrived, the vegetation certainly looked different to the last time we saw it at the end of winter. The biggest change was that most of the weeds had disappeared – a few Farmers’ Friends (*Bidens pilosa*, aka Cobblers’ Peg) still grew along the edge of the easement over the Council’s water pipe and there was couch at the edge of this where it abutted the driveway that was cut last March. But Farmers Friends have disappeared entirely from the house site itself, which is now deep in Eucalypts (of unknown species) and Acacia (probably *A. fimbriata*). Most of the grass on the easement itself is Weeping Grass, *Microlaena stipioides*, and we have *Dichondra repens* in shadier places on the easement as well.

Yes, the *Acacia fimbriata* are very healthy and have now reached about 2m tall. However many Eucalypts have outstripped them and on the house site itself some stood 6m tall. The trees along the edge of the easement, closest to The Ridge Road, appear to be mainly *Corymbia* – we had only a few of these in a stand on the roadside prior to the fire. We shall see how they fight it out – there are probably 20 trees per square metre in the main regrowth area at the moment.

Being spring, lots of plants were flowering. There were swathes of *Kennedia rubicunda* and *Hardenbergia violacea* along the road itself, with fewer evident inside our boundary (those that were present inside were mostly attacking the fence). Clumps of white *Stackhousia monogyna* grew along the edge of the easement, with weedy white-flowered *Solanum radicans*.

Downhill, the early post-fire covering of bracken and macrozamia has now been covered by the local *Passiflora herbertiana*, currently with large orange flowers. It was nice to find the native raspberry, *Rubus parvifolius*, also with pink flowers now.

We also have *Lomandra longifolia* almost 2 metres high, in full flower. Amongst all this is one *Passiflora caerulea*, an invasive weed, which I will deal with next visit. And a couple of plants we put in ourselves near the Lomandra have hardly budged!



*Kennedia rubicunda* has been a prominent sight throughout the region this spring



As might be expected, the small birds were having a great time amongst all this thick undergrowth, particularly the wrens. Next door to the north of us is bare, as the local electricity company has cleared all the scrub under power lines which transect their property – however the Kookaburras sit on the power lines, watching for lizards. There were plenty of Little Wattlebirds around, and while we were visiting, they chased what looked like a Little Eagle across our block.

We will have to clear some of the regrowth soon for the house site (at last!) and we will again be battling the old Farmers' Friend in the cleared space. We have to work out how to balance the clearing requirements (to meet fire rules) and keep the local plants in ascendance. We don't want to have the 'lawn and trees' landscape that is so often found around here, but doesn't do a lot for local wildlife. We have to instal some drains for water management (in case the Council's pipe decides to burst) and we are hoping to populate this with *D. repens* and *M. stipioides*. Wish us luck...



**Two Grevilleas that you might consider adding to your garden**, on the left is *G. alpina* from the northern Grampians in Victoria. This is a small shrub less than 1m high, with arching branches which have carried these colourful flowers since March, and they are still coming. The other is a form of *G. speciosa* from North Head, Sydney, and is growing Mark's Grevillea collection. Shrub grows to about 1.5m, and the flowers are borne at the end of branches, presenting a copious supply of nectar for avian visitors.

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