

Banksia Bytes

Native Plants Sunshine Coast



Native Plants Queensland

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Newsletter

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Events for the rest of 2016

November 13 – 2pm. Our outing is to a private garden in Witta. Hilary Pearl will talk to us about her PhD Study on the Wallum. Contact the secretary for more details.

November 18 - Mapleton Community Library - Plant sale. This is Native Plants Sunshine Coast's last event for the year and we hope to enthuse the Mapleton locals with an array of native plants for their gardens.

Mapleton gardeners like small, colourful native plants so we will be focussing on these. Gretchen is going to pot up some ferns and Wendy has supplied some understorey plants. Joan Dillon is working on some plants we know are winners. We will work with a native plants nursery to get extra stock but if you have any great little plants potted up and ready for sale, let Marie know.

Some members have already volunteered to help but if you would like to spend some time in the very pleasant surroundings in Mapleton and help enthuse the locals about native plants, let Marie know as soon as possible.



December 11 - 2:00pm. Our annual Christmas Party at Forest Heart Nursery, 20 Coral St., Maleny. Karen is providing afternoon tea and Spencer is speaking on a surprise topic.

This is a RSVP only outing. Please contact Cat Secomb on npscsecretarycs@gmail.com



From the Editor

We are enjoying the big flowering trees in our garden. First to flower was the native frangipani, *Hymenosporum flavum*, then the tree waratah, *Alloxylon flammeum*, then the silky oak, *Grevillea robusta*, and now the black bean, *Castanospermum australe*. Have you ever noticed how beautifully camouflaged a rainbow lorikeet is when feeding on the black bean flowers? In this newsletter, Marie describes how much she enjoys the spring/summer flushes of the foliage plants in her garden. But summer is nearly here. I wonder what it will bring to the garden.



Triangle Slug

When cleaning the first-flush diverter from one of our tanks recently we were surprised to find a triangle slug nestling comfortably within. Refer to Banksia Bytes No.8 for a description of this creature.



Native Plants Queensland Mt Coot-tha Spring Flower Show

Wendy Johnston

Our Spring Flower show this year, held over 2 days, was a resounding success. The show was beautifully presented and there were lots of knowledgeable people to talk to visitors about plants, frogs, birds, butterflies, bushfood, botanical art, and maybe other topics related to plants that I haven't mentioned. Our branch set up a display featuring water plants as we were partnered with the frog society. We also had plants for sale. The venue was crowded to breaking point on the Saturday but quieter on the Sunday. There have never been so many attendees before and the plant sales were also greater than previously. It is wonderful to think how many gardens now have native plants.



Photo: M.Livingstone

John Dillon, Jan McArthur, Deb Wagner, and Barbara Henderson at the Sunshine Coast Branch display at the Native Plants Qld Spring Flower Show

Around the garden – Peachester

photos and text by Marie Livingstone

Fabulous foliage is the backbone of my garden and it has been putting on a vibrant display this year.

While flowers are the first love for many, my plant choices always seem to end up revolving around foliage shrubs. What is not to love - no dead heading, no pesky weeds entangled with the plant, usually tolerant of robust pruning, no special watering required - everything a lazy gardener requires. The small birds love to nest in the dense foliage and species like Noisy Miners are not impressed by the lack of open space.

Some of my favourites:

Stenocarpus davallioides has spectacular pale green leaves that are like fern fronds, and they have a good vase life. It does have a mass of cream flower heads which attract bees and bugs in such numbers that the humming sound carries into the house. Specimens seem to vary in leaf shape - some very fine and filmy, some more like the one in the photo. It seems that small frogs like to hide in the foliage.



Flacourtia sp. Cooktown has insignificant flowers but its vibrant flushes of new growth more than compensate. It is a hardy shrub which does not require any attention, apart from the occasional prune. The Australian Rustic butterfly uses it as a host plant but does not do any real damage.

Neorites kevediana is an upright tree with sprays of bronze foliage at the top of each stem. If you have space for a taller tree, this is one to try.



While it has attractive foliage, I have to admit that the flowers of *Alloxyylon flammeum* outshine the leaves. It has just burst into flower in the past week. I am constantly surprised at how hardy it is, living on a steep, dry slope it maintains foliage to the ground and flowers from tip to toe, without any help from the gardener.

Of all the beautiful Banksias we can grow in our area, I find *Banksia plagiocarpa* particularly appealing with its velvety maroon to bronze new growth and its silver grey cones.



In the past year, we have seen large flights of the yellow tailed black cockatoos returning to the garden, up to 60 in a group. When we first arrived at Peachester in 1987 these birds were prolific and they slowly dwindled to small numbers. It is possible their return has been sparked by the increasing number of Macadamia trees in our area. The local farmer is not impressed but having every Banksia festooned with these noisy visitors is a treat.

By now you are probably saying - all these plants come from North Queensland. True, but they seem to do well here and I have not found they self sow.

Open grass areas also attract wildlife and one of the most intriguing visitors is the Echidna. Many excavations and upturned logs around our place indicate they are very active at the moment - always looking very focussed as they sniff out their next meal.



Annual fern renewal by Wendy Johnston

Our hanging basket of *Davallia denticulata* has lost all of its old fronds and is preparing for a new start with the thick, white, hairy rhizomes exploring in all directions. Once the fronds grow, these rhizomes will be totally hidden.



Davallia denticulata October 2016



Same pot of *Davallia denticulata* February 2016

The basket ferns in the genus *Drynaria* have now shed their leaflets. We cut the old stalks off as they don't shed these. The new fronds are just beautiful.



Drynaria rigidula var. *whiteii*

Yahoo for Yabba 2016

text by Chrissie McMaster and photos by Ian McMaster

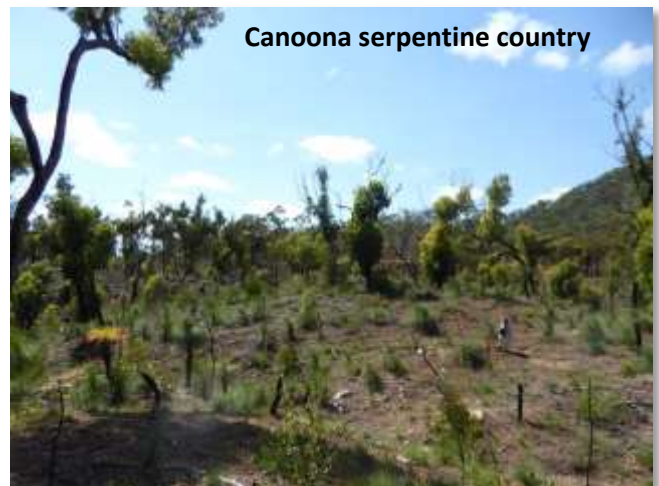
It's a warm evening in Rockhampton. Participants wander in after settling into their accommodation, and we gather in the local 1950s-style community hall, complete with cyclone-proofing. Drinks in hand, we surreptitiously glance at each others' name badges as conversations strike up. Rockhampton volunteers struggle in with boxes of supplies for the night, barbecue aromas drift into the hall, chatter gets louder. Yabba 2016 has begun.

Yabba is the biennial Qld mini-conference, held as a weekend gathering somewhere in Qld. Toowoomba in 2014, Rockhampton this year, I wonder where in 2018?

Rockhampton local members of SGAP (pronounced locally to rhyme with snap) prepared for this event for months. Now it was underway, an opportunity to greet old friends and meet new people. People came from around the state, from Cairns to Ipswich and many places between. Some branches turned up in droves, others just singly. There were even lone members who live where no group is available. After Friday night dinner there was a discussion of business matters, but bed called many early.

Saturday brought a bus trip, on board by 8 am and off to wonderful places. Rockhampton President Neil Hoy's bus commentaries throughout the day gave a cracking insight into the complex interactions of rock, soil, rainfall, temperature, wind and water movement, plants, fungi, animals and humans in the landscapes we visited.

Oh, the delights of the serpentine country, with its soils rich in nickel, chromium, cobalt and manganese but lacking in nitrogen and essential elements such as potassium and phosphorus. With such particular soil characteristics, there are many plants endemic to the region and others that tolerate the mineral combinations well, so wandering through the gullies of Canoona was a joy, with a new discovery at every turn. The *Xanthorrhoea johnsonii* beside the *Hakea trineura*, flowering *Astrotricha intermedia*, Mitchell spinifex (*Triodia mitchellii* var. *mitchellii*), *Macrozamia serpentina*, *Hibiscus* sp. "Glen Geddes", *Hovea longipes*, forbs such as *Cajanus reticularis* in flower... I could go on and on.



Then on to the limestone karst areas of Cammoo Caves and a visit to a revegetation project intended to protect the area from the predations of weed infestation and fire damage. The project visionaries have invited many local groups and individuals to participate, ensuring community ownership of the reveg area, to assist with the project's long-term survival after the planting ends and funds are withdrawn. A quick trip up to the previously-mined caves area allowed us to wander into the coolness and beauty of the karst

caves with their bat inhabitants, including the Little Bent-wing Bat (*Miniopterus australis*) and the rare Ghost Bat (*Macroderma gigas*), Australia's largest carnivorous bat.

Mt Etna National Park for lunch, followed by an afternoon wander on the tracks within the park. On the way to ME NP we heard about the long-running battle between miners and conservationists, a deeply vitriolic dispute over preserving the caves or mining the limestone. After more than 30 years of conflict, the dispute was resolved, the parties made their peace and the area was declared a National Park. It was a privilege to see such country, knowing that a different outcome would have meant the destruction of

this fascinating, flora-rich landscape. Saturday's trip ended with a gentle wander along the Mt Etna National Park walking tracks, led by NPQ members who were both knowledgeable about the plants and generous with that knowledge.

Another barbecue (gosh, the food continued all weekend) followed by the Bill Tulloch Memorial Lecture, delivered by Leslie Lowe, a Bandjalung man from the Northern Rivers area of NSW. Leslie, one of the 2013 NPQ Diversity



Bursary recipients, spoke about the medicinal uses of local plants, touching on the intellectual property rights of indigenous people in the face of drug company appropriation of native plants.

Sunday morning 7 am, on coach seats again, and off we headed to Blackdown Tableland National Park, nearly 200 kms away. Yes, the long trip was worth it! John McCabe delighted us with a commentary combining serious plant and historical info with quips and asides to lighten the trip. The sandstone country of the BT NP has spectacular views, wonderful creeks, waterholes and gorge systems and, with a more



temperate climate because of the elevation, a vegetation range different from other places in the region. Our day meandering out there was a day well spent. Blackdown Fan Palms, *Livistona fulva*, add a beautiful grey graceful form to the surrounding bush, climbing orchids (*Erythrorchis cassythoides*), wander their way up tree trunks, *Grevillea longistyla* flame their brilliant flowers through the surrounding foliage, *Scaevola ramosissima* nestle near *Banksia spinulosa*, and so many more ... such plants to delight the eye and the heart.

With lots of nodding heads and closed eyes (but not the bus-driver's, thank goodness) on the return trip, we finished back at Parkhurst, goodbyes were said, gratitude expressed. Yabba was over. Whew! What a couple of days.

So what did I gain from the weekend?

Plants in all their glory, in their local context

A huge appreciation of the Rocky volunteers

A treasuring of new places

Awareness of the immensely complex interactions leading to the development of particular plant communities.

Immense respect for our experts who bring rigour to the ID process, then share their knowledge generously.

Admiration for the people who work to protect natural areas in the face of those wanting destructive outcomes.

Insight into other branches of NPQ and valuing of the members.

Outstanding plants in their places of natural beauty!

Oh, and in case I didn't make it plain, I had a wonderful weekend with NPQ plant nuts.

Missed this Yabba? There'll be another in late 2018... so make your plans now!



Walking in the Wallum

Sept 11 Forestry Rd

Marie Livingstone

We enjoyed a reviving cup of coffee at Buck's Bakery and then joined with members of the Wallum Study group for a walk through a section of Wallum country on Forestry Rd, Landsborough. John Birbeck was our very knowledgeable leader.

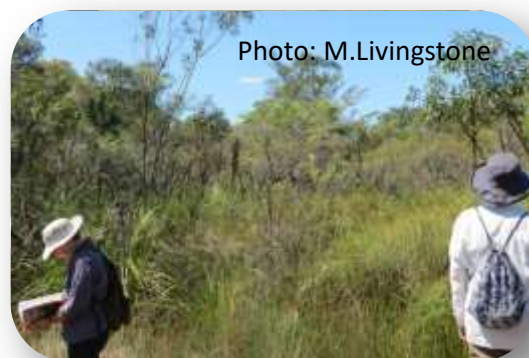


This is an area with plenty of contrasts. The cleared paddocks on private property sported a mass of flowering *Conospermum taxifolium* and the bush areas were full of the usual suspects with one harder to find specimen of *Grevillea leiophylla*.



Both the local and "imported" Melastoma were discovered and the photo of the reverse side of the leaves helps to distinguish them. The Qld Herbarium informed Kumbartcho nursery that the only "foolproof" way to distinguish the two is by looking at the shape of the hairs where they join the leaf. Our local Melastoma has a slightly widened base on the hair. So being certain "what is what" might be trickier than imagined.

An especially interesting feature was a patch of Wallum which had been translocated 20 years ago, under the direction of the Council. This patch is now a thriving community of plants.



Oct 23 Bobbie Sattler Bushland Reserve by Marie Livingstone

Some Sunshine Coasters joined the Wallum Study Group for a walk in the Bobbie Sattler Bushland Reserve at Meridan Plains. We were joined by Jill Chamberlain from the Wildlife Preservation Society who knew Bobbie Sattler.

Gus and Bobbie Sattler arrived in the Caloundra area in 1946 and owned Sunshine Apiaries. Bobbie joined with Isabel Jordan, Stan Tutt and Kathleen McArthur in the fight to preserve the wallum and its wildflowers. Bobbie Sattler gave almost 40 hectares of land to the Council and this is now the Bobbie Sattler Bushland Reserve. Jill Chamberlain and the Wallum Study Group leader, Barbara Henderson, have spent many years fighting to preserve the Wallum, following in the footsteps of the earlier environmentalists.

A highlight of the walk was the profusion of *Xanthorrhoea fulva* which were just coming into flower, following a burn off approximately 2 years ago. Diana O'Connor spotted a *Cryptostylis subulata* and Eric Anderson submerged himself in the understorey to take photos.



Photo: E.Anderson



Xanthorrhoea fulva
Photo: E.Anderson



Cryptostylis subulata
Photo: E.Anderson

October outing to John and Joan Dillon's garden

by Marie Livingstone

John and Joan gave us a fascinating talk on the geology and history of their property before we went through the garden. Joan is constantly experimenting with native plants for their horticultural possibilities and her garden is her workshop. A new experimental section contains about 70 different species and varieties.

The mix of enormous rainforest species like *Toona australis* with vibrant Brachyscomes, Kangaroo Paws and a range of Banksias and Wallum plants showcase what is possible in one garden, not just with plants but for wildlife.

The Lomandras were putting on a spectacular show.



Photo: M.Livingstone



Photo: M.Livingstone

Joan has discovered that planting rainforest understory plants like Aspleniums into a log "dam" gives them a really good start in life.

Joan's garden is an inspiration to all plant enthusiasts.



Photo: M.Livingstone



Photo: J.Dillon



Photo: M.Livingstone

Outings for next year, 2017

February 12 – 2:00pm for our AGM Cat Secomb's house, 1111 Landsborough-Maleny Rd Maleny and have a talk by Cali Salzman about the Cranbourne Botanical Gardens in Melbourne.



March 12 – 2:00pm. This will be a plant ID walk with an Eric Anderson in Flaxton.

