



Australian Plants Society

South East NSW Group

Newsletter 168

February 2021

Corymbia maculata Spotted Gum and
Macrozamia communis Burrawang

Contacts: President, Di Clark,
Secretary, Paul Hattersley
Newsletter editor, John Knight,
Group contact

dianneclark293@gmail.com
paul.hattersley26@outlook.com
johnonvista49@gmail.com
southeast@austplants.com.au

Next Meeting

Saturday 6th March 2021, 10.00a.m.

BioBlitz at Guerilla Bay, in conjunction with the local Landcare Group.

Meet at Burrewarra Carpark Burri Point Road Guerilla Bay (see map on P. 13)

Note the earlier start. Full details of the program are on Page 2

President's message

Dear Members,

Thank you to those people who attended the **Annual General Meeting** held at Norm and Lesley Huland's home. All the positions except for Vice President have been filled. Marjorie Apthorpe has taken on the role of Publicity Officer. We are always looking for more people to assist with general committee activities, so if you think you would like to help, it is not too late to come on board.

This March propose a slightly different meeting.

The local Landcare group at Guerilla Bay has organised a Bio Blitz for Friday 5th and Saturday 6th March. Our APS group was asked if we could assist with the plant identification surveys. The dates coincided with our monthly meeting, so the committee thought that we could combine the two.

We would like to invite you all to attend this fabulous opportunity to examine the environment in detail and to help provide information for a local valued area.

Please see the information regarding this event and our proposed involvement on pages 2 and 3.

I would just like to repeat our message of what's coming up .

Your committee is due to meet and plan further ahead so this list will grow. Our aim is to provide advance warning of future activities to help you, but sometimes that is not possible.

March Meeting -Saturday 6th -Bioblitz participation at Guerilla Bay

April Meeting - Saturday 10th April (one week later to avoid Easter). A grafting demonstration and practical session, and garden visit at Phil and Catriona's property at Little Forest.

May Meeting - Saturday 1st May Garden visit or two at Rosedale

Thank you for your patience and support over the last year. **Di Clark**

Next Meeting

Annie Lane, <gbbioblitz@gmail.com> is the co-ordinator of Guerilla Bay Landcare, and organiser of this environment survey.

Annie writes “February is quickly slipping away and already it feels like summer is fading as autumn creeps in. We are on track to hold the Guerilla Bay Bioblitz on 5-6 March. It is shaping up to be a fun and exciting event. The final program as we know it is detailed below”.

It is important to note that participants do not need to have prior knowledge of plants and animals to participate in a survey. In fact, the point of this event is to learn from those who do know, and all of the event leaders are more than happy to share their knowledge. You don't need to learn species' names and there will not be a test at the end.

Ticketing

Note that whilst all activities are free, the Bioblitz is a ticketed event.

This means you will need to “purchase” tickets for all activities you plan to attend. Most activities have a limit on the number of participants to ensure an enjoyable and educational experience for all.

You can reserve your tickets from 0700 on 19 February and closing at 1730 on 5 March.

Here is the link the purchase our tickets.

<https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/guerilla-bay-bioblitz-tickets-140620165701>

You will still need to sign the register at basecamp for each event in which you participate.

Events on Friday 5 March

Event	Start	Finish	Max participants
Bird survey	0700	0830	10
Plant survey – Burrewarra Pt Reserve	9.00 am	10.30 am	
Plant survey – Coastal reserve (behind houses)	9.00 am	10.30 am	
Demonstration and erection of hair funnels and motion sensor cameras	11.00 pm	13.00	20
Nocturnal visitors – hidden camera footage shown at basecamp	Throughout the day		Unlimited
Plant survey – Burrewarra Pt reserve	14.00	1500	
Plant survey – coastal reserve (behind houses)	14.00	1500	
Creating habitat using nest boxes	1530	1630	Unlimited
Bird survey	5.00 pm	6.30 pm	10
Insect survey	8.00 pm	late	Unlimited
Spotlighting	8.30 pm	9.30	

Events on Saturday 6 March

Event	Start	Finish	Max participants
Bird survey	0800	0930	10
Check cameras and hair funnels	0830	0930	20
Bird survey	0930	1100	10
Nocturnal visitors – hidden camera footage shown at basecamp	Throughout the day		Unlimited
Plant survey – Burrewarra Pt Reserve	1030	1200	
Plant survey - Coastal reserve (behind houses)	1200	1330	
Nature writing in the Australian Context	1400	1530	Unlimited
Wind up, pack up, drinks	1530	1800	Unlimited

APS members can attend the Friday sessions as well as our official Saturday meeting.

Members are welcome to participate in sessions other than the plant surveys, provided that the appropriate “tickets” have been purchased previously.

If you look at the proposed start/finish times for the Saturday plant surveys, the program shows there is no break between them. We will have our usual break after the morning session, and commence the afternoon session about 1 hour later. This will give us plenty of time to catch up.

If you miss out on reserving a ticket for your preferred activity and time, Annie suggests you turn up anyway, because chances are that not all people who have reserved a ticket will show.

If it's clear that a particular activity is in high demand, we will do our best to run more of the same activity, either in parallel or in a different time slot.

iNaturalist

All sightings recorded during the weekend will end up in iNaturalist, a free platform designed for citizen scientists.

The Guerilla Bay Bioblitz project has been set up in iNaturalist and all sightings from within the geographic boundary of Guerilla Bay logged during the Bioblitz will automatically fall under the project. [Guerilla Bay Bioblitz · iNaturalist](#)

Observations logged outside of 5-6 March will still be shown in Guerilla Bay, just not under the Bioblitz project.

We will have people who are familiar with iNat assisting survey leaders to record species.

I encourage you to download the app (application) to your smart phone and have a go.

It's really a lot of fun and I've found it has boosted my motivation to record and learn what plants and creatures live in my neighbourhood.

Blitzing your backyard

If you catch the bug, so to speak, and are keen to continue logging sightings between Bioblitz scheduled activities, then why not explore your own backyard. Every sighting adds to the growing body of records for Guerilla Bay. Continue logging after the Bioblitz and you'll be surprised at how many different plants and animals live in or visit your patch over the seasons.

APS Members, you can easily record your observations of plants/animals/insects etc found in your local patch, or even during wanders in bush areas further away, and these observations will add to the store of knowledge for broader areas.

This could be the start of a new hobby. Use this opportunity to learn how to use iNaturalist.

What to bring

Tickets for individual activities include what to bring.

Basically, wear sensible clothing and footwear to suit weather conditions and terrain, bring drinking water, morning tea and lunch, camera and smart phone for recording sightings, and binoculars for birds.

You should also want to bring a chair for use at base camp whilst we enjoy morning tea and lunch.

Can't wait to see you all there!!

If you have any questions about the program, these would best be directed to

Annie Lane

[<gbbioblitz@gmail.com>](mailto:gbbioblitz@gmail.com)

0428837218

Landcare Coordinator Guerilla Bay

Chair, Budawang Coast Atlas of Life

Annual General Meeting

President's report. Dianne Clark

How do you report on the year 2020?

It was a time of great trauma and uncertainty and at times only immediate simple requirements were what mattered. For the South East Region our year began like so many others with devastating bush fires. We managed to fit in our AGM in March before we were forced to cancel meeting and rely on the Newsletter and webpage to communicate. The Newsletter (Editor John Knight) was an invaluable source of inspiration with many contributors and highly praised.

In the latter half of the year we were able to congregate as a group with restricted numbers and we had three monthly activities. These visits are written up in our newsletters, so I will only talk about one visit in more detail.



In September we visited the garden of two of our members, Norm and Lesley Hulands. This is a large rural garden that has been undergoing many changes over time. Norm and Lesley have both been inspired to change parts of their gardens after trips to Western Australia. Norm concentrates on *Banksia* and *Hakea* and Lesley's garden include many small flowering plants of great beauty. Both enjoy propagating their own plants and have been very generous in sharing their successes with the larger group.

In October we once again visited the South Pacific Headland Reserve in Ulladulla and then Catriona Bate's and Phil Trickett's garden near the Little Forest Plateau. Also a garden specialising in certain plants (*Isopogon*, *Petrophile*, *Banksia* and *Hakea*) with many plants grown and grafted by the owners.

Our last formal visit was a return to Horse Island and the garden of Christina Kennedy. The group has had a long association with Christina, and it has been fascinating watching this garden grow and change over time. It is a beautifully designed garden showing off native plants in their glory.

TREASURER'S REPORT TO AGM 2021

To the President and Members

2020 was a quiet year for the SE Region particularly on the money front.

Payments and receipts were minimal although it was heartening to see that members kept renewing and paying their subscriptions. We received \$600 in fees which indicates that 60 memberships were renewed. These could be 60 individual memberships, or a combination of multi-year or multi-persons memberships. We receive \$10 per membership and I still cannot tell from the membership lists how much we should have received. I rely on Regional Office doing the correct calculation. However, this year's receipts were up on last year's \$490.

There was no major expenditure as we postponed the purchase of a new projector for the computer as being unnecessary in the short term. However, we are still faced with having to pay for the use of meeting space at ERBG (or any other Council property). The ERBG fee is \$124 per half day which for non-profit, non-revenue raising group is quite expensive. We may have to re-address these issues when meetings in conference style settings resume with guest speakers.

In the meantime, in summary, we have \$2919.45 in the bank and \$100 in petty cash.

Geoff Gosling, Treasurer

18 January 2021

**STATEMENT of INCOME and EXPENDITURE
presented to the ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2021**

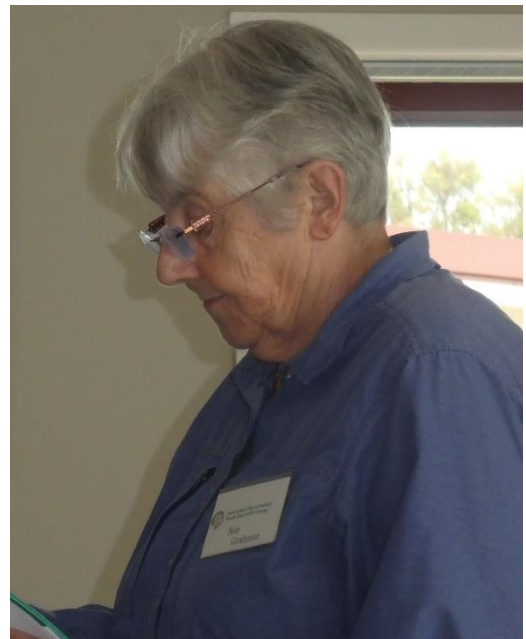
ITEM	DEBIT	CREDIT	BALANCE
Opening balance			2586.18
Memberships		600.00	
Donations	300.00		
Life membership paid	58.00		
Interest		0.27	
Book sales		85.00	
Plant sales		6.00	
Totat debits/credits	358.00	691.27	
Closing balance			2919.45
Petty cash on hand			100.00
TOTAL AT BANK AND IN CASH			3019.45

Following acceptance of the Minutes of the previous AGM, and the presentation of reports by the President and Treasurer, our **Returning Officer Sue Grahame** disclosed the nominations received for our committee positions, and called for further nominations from the floor. With none forthcoming, Sue accepted the nominations received, each of whom were seconded from members attending.

Results of the Annual General Meeting elections

- President, Di Clark**
- Vice-President, Vacant**
- Secretary, Paul Hattersley**
- Treasurer, Geoff Gosling,**
- Membership, Jenny John**
- Publicity, Marjorie Apthorpe**
- Committee members, Norm Hulands,**
- Sally McDonald and John Knight**

Di Clark
President



President Di presents her report to the gathering



Last Meeting

Di, having resumed the chair, introduced our guest for the meeting, Lyndal Thorburn, who had prepared a comprehensive presentation relating to a journey through parts of Western Australia during late September and early October 2013, "A Pity You Missed the Wildflowers"

Lyndal and husband Tom Jordan drove around a small piece of Western Australia, east and north of Perth, covering over 2000km in a hired Motorhome, a new and by no means uneventful experience for them.



Our home for the journey, at times difficult to live with, but mostly a joy, being able to spend long hours on the road and not have to worry about missing out on life's basic and essential necessities

Their trip covered six biogeographical regions of Western Australia. Commencing on the Swan River Coastal Plains, they crossed the northern section of Jarrah Forest, east then to the Avon Wheatbelt, turning north to cover the Yalgoo and Murchison areas, before returning to Perth via the Geraldton Sandplains.

Everywhere they went, people would say "what a pity you missed the wildflowers" - meaning the daisies for which WA is famous, not realising that there was plenty more in flower.

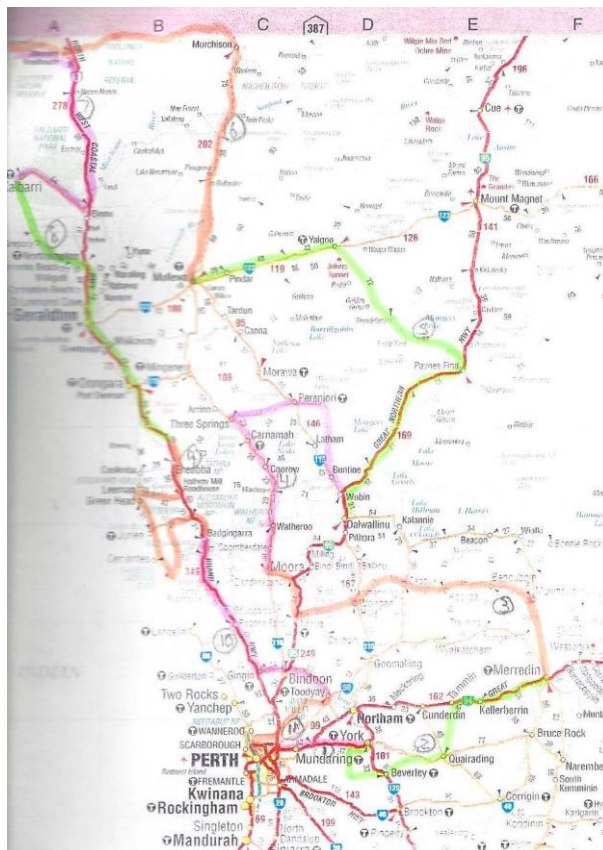
Beginning with an easy day from Perth to York, W.A.'s oldest inland town, travelling less than 100kms, this was just what was needed to get used to the hire vehicle.

Next day, heading through Wandoo National Park – Wandoo Woodlands, named for the typical tree of the area, *Eucalyptus wandoo*, we encountered many delightful and colourful plants, including *Lechenaultia biloba*, a very showy *Synaphea*, possibly *S. acutiloba*, and *Banksia (Dryandra) squarrosa*, commonly known as Pingle, with tall erect branches festooned with brilliant yellow flower heads.

Despite the apparently inhospitable soil, we found colonies of Cowslip orchids, *Caladenia flava*.



Might not have been 'everywhere' but as the map shows, we certainly covered some very interesting country, and saw far more than might be expected





The Avon Wheatbelt is characterised by gently undulating land, and scrub heaths are home to a variety of tough **Proteaceae** species such as *Petrophile brevifolia*, and Plume Smokebush *Conospermum incurvum*,



The broad landscape of the Avon Wheatbelt, with the brilliant purple flowered *Calytrix leschenaultia*

and saw the beginning of a terrific range of **Verticordias**, including this pink beauty below.



The sandy soils support such diversity that planning went out the window, with many unscheduled stops.

Discoveries included *Pityrodia terminalis*, a native foxglove, gorgeously packaged flowers of *Keraudrenia velutina*, Northern Tinsel Flower *Cyanostegia cyanocalyx*, a variety of *Calytrix* sp, including *C. leschenaultia* and *C. fraseri*, and many **Hibbertia** species, which sadly remain just species, as we were unable to identify them to species level. Of course there were **Eremophila**, enough to satisfy even the most avid seeker of such plants. Fairly common were *E. oppositifolia* and *E. glabra* in various forms, with a promise of many more to come.

Being a little later than most travellers to this region meant the roads were mostly traffic free, and we could, and did stop whenever the opportunity arose. Brilliant red flowers, like beacons, demanded attention. *Darwinia oldfieldii* and *D. purpurea*, both low shrubs, flowered prolifically, and whilst these were admired our attention was turned to *Leptospermum erubescens*, and massed *Ptilotus obovatus*. These colours were complemented by stunning yellow Popflowers, *Glishrocaryon aureum*, a member of the **Haloragaceae** family, which paradoxically is the Water Milfoil family, but many genera occur in quite dry locations.

Closer to the ground is the tiny *Goodenia berardiana*, just a few leaves and even less flowers, and as a backdrop to the entire show stood *Banksia (Dryandra) polycephala* (Photo at Right). Lyndal mentioned that this plant demonstrates vividly the mechanism plants use to ensure pollinators only visit flowers which have not already been pollinated, which remain yellow, whilst pollinated flowers quickly turn brown. It has been shown under ultra-violet light that various bees can distinguish which is which, and possibly this is also an indicator to birds.



Heading towards the coast the heath changes structure, with shrubby **Acacias** and **Melaleucas**, such as the stunning bright pink flowered *M. trichophylla*, and contrasting blood-red flowers of *Calothamnus accedens*. Seeking sun between the woody plants, *Patersonia occidentalis* provided a splash of purple, along with *Lecheaultia linarioides* its 2 tone yellow and red/pink flowers dancing on slender stems in the lightest of breezes. Here too we found our first paper daisies, including *Waitzia acuminata*, proving we were not too late after all.

Orange is not a common colour in the plant world, and were delighted to come across *Pileanthus peduncularis*, small shrubs less than 1m high. Whilst enjoying this encounter we were forced to acknowledge that large shrubs of *Grevillea eriostachys* were also worthy of attention, conflorescences to 15cm long with greenish buds opening to yellow.

Perenjori, Dallwallinu and Moora offer the wildflower hunter great reward, the area well known and much visited, mostly for the Wreath Lechenaultia, *Lechenaultia macrantha*, but there is an infinite variety for slow travellers.

Grevillea candelabroides, Candlestick Grevillea, is strongly scented and there is no doubt its display is arresting, the whole bush covered by large creamy white flowers, and a range of insects.

Whilst we might not have seen acres of paper daisies, the display of Parakeela, *Calandrinia balonensis* was just as spectacular, with carpets of bright pink flowers as far as one could see. These little succulent plants were alive with solitary bees. (photo at right)

And of course there were *Eremophila*'s, and who could resist.

E. platycalyx, *E. forrestii*, and *E. galleata* are just a few we saw between here and the coast as we travelled towards Shark Bay.

Kalbarri is another hotspot for flowers, with such variety, one could not take it all in without an extended stay. We did note some interesting *Verticordias*, including *V. grandis*. Lambswool, *Lachnostylis eriobotrya*, is an interesting small shrub with lovely soft woolly flowers with an intriguing blue tip.

With prominent, terminal yellow and orange flowers, *Geleznovia verrucosa*, in the same Family as Boronia (**Rutaceae**) is certainly an oddity, and as many growers have found, difficult to propagate and even trickier to grow, although some are now having success with grafted plants. *Diplolaena grandiflora*, also **Rutaceae** is similarly difficult, but worthy of a place in a sunny well drained and open spot.

Yellow flowered *Calytrix depressa* was prominent, and did I mention

Eremophilas. From the Murchison/Kalbarri area comes a range of excellent garden plants, *Eremophila glabra*, ranging 2m shrubs to prostrate *E. Kalbarri Carpet*. Alongside grew the prostrate *Darwinia virescens*, its greenish red flowers laying outside the foliage, an adaptation to encourage its preferred pollinator. The **Lamiaceae** family holds many reliable garden plants, but one not widely recognised is *Quoya atriplicina*, the Saltbush Foxglove, which has lovely mauve flowers brightly spotted with orange/yellow in the throat.

Heading now south along the highway, *Grevillea leucopteris* stands proud, waving its flowering branches high above the foliage. Another of those white flowered plants with strongly perfumed flowers, is probably first noticed by its intense pungent aroma (smelly socks) and does not encourage close attention on a warm sunny day.

Banksia attenuata is a different story, and we stopped a few times to enjoy these tough plants, whose bright yellow flower spikes just dazzled, and with orange flowered *Eremaea acutifolia* offset by the white flowers of *Pimelea*, it was a garden to behold. Smaller, but no less attractive, tricoloured flowers of *Anigozanthos humilis*, red flowered *Lechenaultia hirsuta* and the most purple of all purples, *Scaevola phlebopetala* complete a very pretty picture.

A visit to **HiValley Farm** at Badgingarra, a 2000ha. sheep and wheat farm owned by Joy and Don Williams is surely not to be missed by anyone travelling to W.A.

Here they protect a large untouched remnant of 'breakaway' natural bush, which is reported to hold more species than nearby Mt. Leseur N.P. Here **Proteaceae** species, **Banksia**, **Grevillea**, **Isopogon**, and **Petrophile** which are common, are rare in other areas. As mentioned earlier, some flowers change colour once pollinated, and this is especially so for *Verticordia nobilis*, which have bright yellow flowers which change to orange, as shown in the photo. Purple flowered *Eremaea violacea* and white flowered *Melaleuca urceolaris* make a lovely combination, highlighting the yellow of the *Verticordia*.



Such a trip opens one's eyes to the infinite variety of Australia's and particularly Western Australia's wonderful flora. Everywhere we travelled, we couldn't help but be in awe at such a spectacular show, and no we do not feel that we missed the wildflowers.

(this article is based on the pictorial and written notes provided by Lyndal, and I thank her for such generosity. It certainly saved a lot of note taking !)

President Di thanked Lyndal for her delightful and thorough presentation, and she was warmly applauded by the assembled audience.

Show and Tell session (sorry for the lack of pics, but we are running out of room)

Following from the feast of flowers depicted in Lyndal's presentation, one might think that members offerings might pale into insignificance, but this was not the case.

Marj always finds plants of interest, and her contributions included *Scaevola* 'Pink Ribbons', *S.* 'Purple Fanfare' and another species she believes to be *S. crassifolia x nitida* with lovely blue flowers. *Spyridium coactifolium* continues to impress, *Crowea exalata* 'Coopers Hybrid' is a reliable small shrub, purple flowered *Thryptomene denticulata*, a small spreading shrub seems never without blossoms, and the local *Grevillea rhyolitica* 'Deua Flame' is another which has proved long term reliable, even having a couple of seedlings pop up in the garden. *Verticordia multiflora* is a small yellow flowered shrub from SW W.A., and is one of many Western Australian plants to thrive in Marj's garden. Finally the white and pink flowered climber *Pandorea jasminoides* graced the table.

Phil produced a few of his hard to grow grafted plants, including the *Eremophilas* *E.* 'Smoke Haze' a hybrid between *E. christopheri* and *E. nivea*, *E. reticulata* and *E. grandiflora*. The small pink flowered *Actinotis forsythii* was much admired. *Banksias* included a dwarf form of *B. aemula* from Yamba in northern NSW, and a grafted *B. canei* from Seldom Seen high the Victorian Alps.

Norm produced a specimen of *Banksia menziesii*, his plants now producing flowers for the last 4 years.

Lyndal showed the white flowered form of *Pandorea pandorana*, pink flowered *Bracteantha bracteata* grown from seed sourced from APS Victoria, and the unusual shrub *Beyeria lasiocarpa*, a plant rarely grown, but has proved hardy and long lived in cultivation.

John again showed *Persoonia pinifolia*, and lamented the difficulties in propagating this hardy shrub from the Sydney area. From the Grampians a delicate form of *Grevillea alpina*, red and yellow flowered, *G. macleayana* from the original collection near Diamond Creek west of Moruya, *Hibbertia racemosa*, a small shrub from W.A. which was first distributed to members by Marj. a couple of years back, *Scaevola albida*, a white flowered prostrate plant from South Aust., and *Swainsona galegifolia* which has large purplish pea flowers throughout the year, and is now producing copious babies in the garden, which were offered to members free of charge, but without success. This plant was from Jo Benyon's garden some years ago, the seed having been collected in 2005.

Jo brought along the delightful Garland Lily, *Calostemma purpureum*, which produces pink flowers on stems to 30cm. The plant grows naturally in seasonally wet areas of inland NSW Vic and SA.

Jenny generously brought in a sizeable specimen of *Rhododendron lochiaie*, with large bright red flowers. The specimen was taken for identification, as there has been some conjecture about the correct name of plants in cultivation. I can report that the specimen Jenny brought along was *R. lochiaie*, the determination based on the design of the floral tube, which was squared towards the base, with the tube bell shaped. *R. lochiaie* was named by Mueller, (as *R. lochae*, after the wife of the then Governor of Victoria) in March 1887 from specimens collected from Mt. Bellender-Ker, which he had seen during an excursion in July 1855 with Gregory's north Australian exploring expedition. More on this in the next newsletter



In My Garden

Firstly an apology, Marjorie.

In last month's story on Marjorie's rainforest and garden your editor renamed her Christmas bush *Ceratopetalum gummiferum* as Coachwood, *C. apetalum*. When looking at the photo supplied, I discerned what appeared to be simple leaves, and took it upon myself to change Marjorie's text. It turns out that the plant does indeed have 3 leaflets, and I should have conferred before making an ass of myself. I'll be more careful in future.

Our Triffids

Leigh Murray

A single *Pandorea jasminoides* 'Bower of Beauty' is making a spirited attempt to spread throughout our Tuross garden. With time, that \$7 plant could fill the entire garden. By rooting at nodes, it has already established a strong base camp on the north-east side. It also slid surreptitiously along our eastern fence line, under leaf litter in a barely-accessible zone beside a brick fence, travelling for maybe 15m before emerging triumphant with pink flowers poking out the top of a white-flowering *P. pandorana* 'Snow Bells' (which is slightly better-behaved). A *Cissus antarctica* was more overt, and just blatantly merged with the pair of them. These triffids grew to overwhelm several sizeable *Melaleuca nesophila*. I've begun to try to tame the triffids by cutting off branches. Unable to trace the culprit stems amongst the dense masses of foliage, I've just had to choose the most likely branches to cut, and then wait (somewhat anxiously) to see which bits die.



A pink flowered form of *Pandorea jasminoides*

Elsewhere in the garden, *Clematis aristata* pops up here, there and everywhere; it winds its way up any shrub it can cotton onto. As long as I notice it, it's easy to reef out of the shrubs, so I guess it's not quite in Triffid Territory. Ditto *Hibbertia scandens*, which is vigorous but more controllable (and has provided a lovely spot for a Ringtail drey). Although being a twiner, it has Strangler tendencies, and will warrant the odd checkup. *Hardenbergias* and *Kennedias* are relatively well behaved for us, and definitely not Triffids. Nor are *Eustrephus latifolius*, the Wombat Berry or the delightful teeny *Glycine clandestina*.

Footnote: The word "triffid" comes from the science fiction novel by John Wyndham "The Day of the Triffids", a book that I greatly enjoyed many years ago. A triffid is defined as a mobile, predatory plant that can grow to a huge size. Some of our climbers definitely qualify!

Jottings from behind the Native Plant Fortress of Privacy Anne Phillips

We have the street to ourselves. The Christmas bustle is over. The summer heat has passed and the evening is still and warm as we sit on the front deck to observe the birds and the garden, plan the surrounds. Yes, it's pre-dinner drinks time. I have added to my wine an ice-block of nettle (*Urtica incisa*) tea – an iron boost, therefore a medicinal glass!

We have lowered the *Melaleuca hypericifolia* hedge to two metres to allow a vista beyond. For the first time in 25 years we have not been bitten by ticks while gardening – probably due to the fires reducing the number of kangaroos and bandicoots. A lot of kangaroos did escape across the lake to South Durras. Our numbers are down to six. I tell you, it is such bliss not to get the itchy bites of ticks.

The colour of *M. hypericifolia* flowers are orange/red and match our two birdbaths, one deep and one shallow, that sit under the *Livistona australis*. To the right is Phil's grafted *Banksia canei*, now three metres. To the left is *Persoonia linearis*, four metres, a gift from John for helping train the new guides at Eurobodalla Regional Botanic Gardens. Underneath this is Nana's *aspidistra* which I can't seem to discard. Dear nana had her issues adjusting to technology, like the rest of us, though in her case it was a television – "I don't want those people in my house". Wise woman.



Banksia canei



A wattlebird enjoying a bath

Under Phil's *Banksia canei* and directly behind the birdbaths, is a Satin Bower bird's bower. The blue plastic pegs and bottle tops that people leave for them, I remove some. Plastic trash. "Wouldn't you like to know what the bird would collect if the plastic was not available?" I leave a blue crimson rosella feather.

The last year or two has seen the invasion of a new weed, *Richardia humistrata*, which appears not to have a common name. Very vigorous. I don't want it overtaking the lovely forbs growing out of the buffalo grass. A favourite is the delicate, pink-flowered *Desmodium varians*, with sticky

scalloped seeds that could latch onto one's socks.

I love my garden and, naturally, the birds come. And providing them with water is the best thing to do. The kangaroos drink from the birdbath, as well. Joanna goanna drinks from it. The red-bellied black slithers past.



Desmodium varians

Avian surprises

My request for help identifying the bird leaving calling cards by the front door met with almost instant responses from members confident they knew the culprit. First was **Jenny**, an acknowledged 'birdo' responding even before the ink had dried on the computer screen, with a definite "**that is a White Throated Treecreeper**".

Over the following days this was confirmed by others, including **Heather Meek of Merimbula**, who had a similar experience, and was able to give a confirming report, including detailed descriptions, as her visitor acted similarly to ours. From **Queanbeyan, Lyndal** also reports her experience is similar, with the bird spending winter safely tucked away from the cold. **David Crawford** found an article printed in the June 2012 newsletter of the **Strath Creek Landcare Group**, reproduced in part below, which describes perfectly our situation, and provides a little information of interest, at least to me.

"The **White-throated Treecreeper** has a clever technique of locking the tendons in its legs so that, with its strong feet and claws, it can sleep while clinging upright to a tree trunk – or a brick wall !

It is worth mentioning the unusual climbing technique of treecreepers. They put one foot ahead of the other, then move the lower foot up level with the front one, and continue in this manner so that the same foot always takes the lead. The leading foot may be either the left or right, but the bird does not hop like some other birds, nor does it "walk" in the usual manner of one foot ahead of the other in sequence. It cannot hang downwards like a sittella, so that, apart from an occasional shuffle backwards down a tree, it only moves upwards, eventually flying down to a low point on a nearby tree trunk. [Reference: *Reader's Digest Complete Book of Australian Birds*]

It brought to mind the relationship between the **White-throated Treecreeper** and the **Varied Sittella**. Both bird species occupy the same ecological niche. Both hunt on the bark of trees for the same types of food. How do they

survive? Well, the treecreeper searches the bark by generally moving up a tree trunk. The Sittella hunts for food by working its way down a tree trunk. The nooks and crannies they see are different because of the direction they travel. In fact local lore says that this is how you easily tell the birds apart – by the direction they move on the tree trunk.

And wondering, as you do when walking for miles along country roads, how much more you see when looking at things from a different perspective.

From **Leigh at Queanbeyan**, “ We get Brown Treecreepers at, and we're big fans. We love to watch them working their way vertically up the trunks of our big indigenous eucalypts. And they have a wonderful, loud, piping call (a bit like a Spinebill on steroids).

Finally **Jackie Miles** offers some advice about keeping the porch clean. She also notes that her visitor insisted on waking everyone up at the crack of dawn as it flew off for it's day's activities. As Leigh said, Treecreepers are one of the most audible of bush birds.

We think we are lucky to have gained (his?) confidence, and quite enjoy the early morning, and afternoon calls, despite the mess at the front door.



Going up! Note those large feet and big strong claws

A look at some different Propagation mixes - Mark Abell Editor Gumleaves, the newsletter of APS Hunter Valley Group

At the November meeting I was discussing the propagation media that I used, & as an experiment I decided to test the mix that I normally use against each of its components.

The main requirements for propagation media is that it firstly holds sufficient moisture, has a reasonable amount of air (**20-25% Air filled porosity**), be free from pathogens and weed seeds, and be able to separate struck cuttings / germinated seeds without damage.

It can be a bit of a balancing act to meet these requirements & as a result over time I've settled on a custom propagation media mix that has worked well for me. This consists of **Scotts seed raising mix** (~50%), **coarse sand** (~25%) & **horticultural grade perlite** (~25%). I sometimes swap the seed raising mix with a fine coco peat. The amounts are approximate, I like to end up with a relatively open and "fluffy" mix. These ingredients can be (& often are) used by themselves as propagation media.

To test the different media, I prepared 4 pots of cuttings, all were the same size pots, had the same mix of cuttings, each with the same treatment. The only difference was the media: 1 pot with 100% seed raising mix, 1 with my custom mix, 1 with coarse sand & 1 with perlite.

Even early on, there were some observations that could be made. The pot with the sand was noticeably heavier than the other pots and the level had also sunk down from its initial level, & the pot with the perlite was noticeably lighter.

The cuttings were put in on the 01/11/2020 & on the 20/12/2020 (7 weeks later) they were emptied out to see their progress & to pot on. By this time roots could be seen emerging from the bases of some of the pots and some of the cuttings were showing new growth. All of the pots had produced struck cuttings. The perlite fell away from the roots very easily, it was also the driest of the media. The sand had the most water and did not separate as easily from the roots. The other two media had good moisture content and the roots of the cuttings were reasonably easy to separate out.

Having used the different propagation media over a longer time frame, there are a couple of additional observations that can be made. The seed raising mix, being purely organic, does eventually start to break down and become less open and free draining. The sand and perlite do not break down at all and retain their physical properties. The custom mix, as would be expected, fits in the middle and stays reasonably open even as the organic parts break down.

If you want a quick and easy media for propagation then the Seed Raising Mix would be a good option, particularly for plants that strike reasonably well. The coarse sand might be good for environments where the watering is not so regular & the pure perlite might be a good option for wetter environments, or plants that don't like "wet feet". **For general all-round use I'll continue stick with my custom mix, with the pre-packaged seed raising mix a pretty close second.**

Committee news

From the AGM;

Geoff Gosling addressed the issue of our Group viability, and the need to satisfy the needs of all members. He called for each of us to consider how best to ensure that we do in fact develop a program of events, talks and meetings which take into consideration the reasons why members belong. He suggested that the committee needs definitive input from everyone as to how we can develop a workable program. **So it is over to each of you to consider this issue, and advise the committee of your thoughts.**

The committee continues to monitor and enforce any NSW Health guidelines regarding COVID - 19 and gatherings.

COVID 19 restrictions still apply at all our gatherings, both indoors and outside.

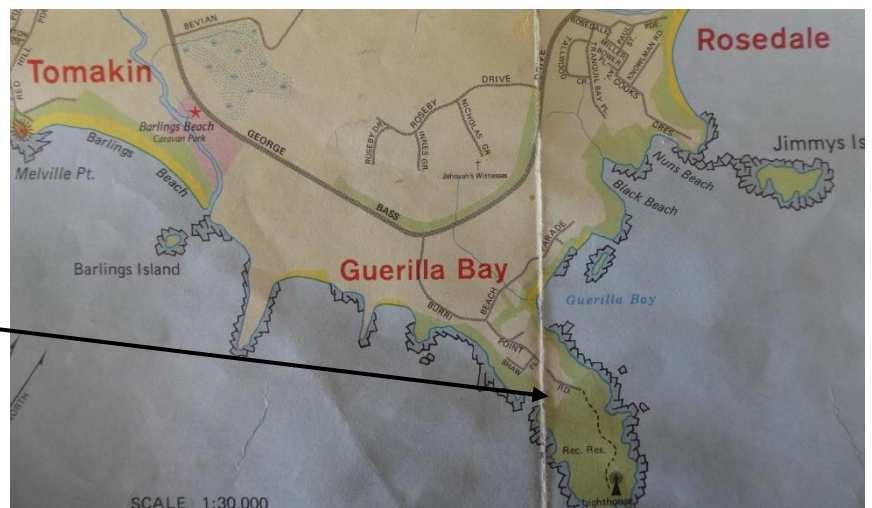
Members will be required to sign our attendance record, and supply contact details for tracing purposes should that need arise. Also, you need to supply your own refreshments, as a “no sharing” policy is adopted by the committee until advised by APS NSW Region that this requirement has been relaxed. We will keep you informed of any changes to plans. We hope to see you all many times during the year.

Please note the new email address for John Knight, Newsletter Editor. I am phasing out the use of the @outlook address as the site has become unstable and prone to spam attacks.

All future contact should be addressed to johnonvista49@gmail.com

Could members please make the change as of now. Thank you.

BURREWARRA POINT. *There is only one road into Guerilla Bay, Burri Point Road, and the car park is at the end of the road. We meet here at 10am, for morning tea and a briefing, before beginning our wanders*



COMMITTEE CONTACT DETAILS

President,	Di Clark	Ph 0 4 02 555 330	e. dianneclark293@gmail.com
Vice-President	Geoff Gosling	Ph 0438 286 382	e. geoff.gosling@bigpond.com
Secretary,	Paul Hattersley	Ph 0412 426 413	e. paul.hattersley26@outlook.com
Minute Sec.,			
Treasurer,	Geoff Gosling	Ph 0438 286 382	e. geoff.gosling@bigpond.com
Membership	Jenny John	Ph 0437 304 173	e. peteandjenny.john@gmail.com
Publicity	Marjorie Apthorpe	Ph 02 4478 1142	e. marjorieapthorpe@gmail.com
Members	Norman Hulands	Ph 0427 276 803	e. normanhulands@bigpond.com
	John Knight	Ph 0434 674 347	e. johnonvista49@gmail.com
	Sally Power	Ph 02 4474 3600	e. sallymcdonald9@gmail.com
	Website .		southeast.austplants.com.au