

Native Plants for NSW - Quarter 4 2024



Chelsea Garden at Olinda (H Miles)

From the President

Dear {Contact_First_Name},

The last few months have been a mixed bag with a well attended September gathering, hosted by the Harbour Georges River group, providing an amazing Acacia talk described in this issue. Sadly though, the November Gathering which was to be hosted by the Armidale and District group, had to be cancelled due to low numbers registered. This newsletter also describes the enormous project recently completed, spearheaded by Tony Maxwell, on native plant distributions in New South Wales.

The cancellation of the Armidale gathering does emphasise the difficulties in advance planning for functions and activities and I believe that as an organisation we need to contemplate ways to handle this and also to encourage greater

participation in both District Groups and State-wide activities. At the State level I would be pleased to hear from any members who may have some spare time and could assist in the various activities of this totally volunteer organisation.

On behalf of the Board and the entire organisation I extend best wishes for the end of the year and look forward to an even better 2025. We will also look forward to sharing District Group reports for 2024 in the new year which we hope will both entertain and inspire.

John Desmond, President

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Events and activities

Northern Beaches - Meeting & Talk: Threatened flora of the general Sydney area (Dan Clarke)

When: Thursday 7th November, 7:30pm

Where: The Corkery Building, Stony Range Regional Botanic Garden, 810 Pittwater Rd, Dee Why

Dan Clarke will cover some threatened flora of the Sydney Region and detail some of the ones he has worked on in the Western Sydney nature reserves as well as Royal National Park, as part of the NSW Saving our Species Program. The talk will include monitoring, planting and some seed collection of threatened flora.

Dan is general manager of Arcane Botanica Pty Ltd, a member of APS NSW and a long-time contributor to the APS NSW plant database on this website.

All welcome.

More details [here](#)

North Shore - Walks and Talks

When: Mondays, 9:45am

Where: meet at Caley's pavillion, Ku-ring-gai Wildflower Garden, 420 Mona Vale Road, St Ives.

- Nov 4 Monday Callistemon, Kunzea, Melaleuca (Family Myrtaceae)
- Nov 11 Monday Grasses (Family Poaceae), followed by BBQ and a planning meeting for W&T 2025. Bring food to share if you like.

Sessions run 10am to about 12 noon unless a later return time is indicated.

Sessions are free. No booking required.

No prior knowledge is required and information sheets will be provided.

Walks are easy/medium grade.

Please wear a hat, have suitable footwear and bring water/snack. Sunscreen and insect repellent would also be a good idea.

More details [here](#)

Central Coast - Meeting & talk: Sorting out the bacon and egg pea flowers (Shirley McLaran)

When: Saturday 9th November, 1:30pm

Where: Philip House, 21 Old Mount Penang Road, Kariong.

Shirley's presentation will cover how to recognise pea flowers with tips on how to spot the different genera of those yellow and red flowers which we group together as 'egg and bacon pea flowers'. She will provide clues to help us identify a handful of genera in the field by showing characteristics for us to look out for.

Shirley is the leader of the Pea flower study group, which is interested in identification, cultivation, propagation and conservation of Australia's pea flowers with field trips, pea flower forages and newsletters to keep members informed and connected.

All welcome. \$3 for members and guests

More details [here](#)

Parramatta Hills - Meeting & talk: James Indsto - Forensic botany in major crime and drug identification

When: Saturday 23rd November, 2pm

Where: Gumnut Hall Gumnut Place Cherrybrook

In his talk, James will explore some of the techniques used to present evidence, such as analyzing leaf fragments, wood, pollen, and Cannabis. James says, "Simple microscopy techniques can be very useful. Quality photography is a big advantage. Forensic botanists usually have limited time and resources for specimen preparation, so simple is good. My forte is specialized photography techniques, so these will be featured..."

All welcome. More details [here](#)

Dates for the Diary

ANPSA biennial conferences

The next conference is 24–28 August 2026, hosted by APS South Australia in Alice Springs with the theme Amazing Arid Australia.

The conference after that is in August 2028, hosted by Native Plants Queensland likely in Toowoomba with the theme Beyond the Great Divide. For this one, there is a survey to assist with planning - <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/MNSGWMW>



And finally, don't forget there is a full listing of all APS NSW events including district groups on our website [here](#)

Amazing Acacias

Acacias are very representative of Australia. With about 1,000 species, these shrubs and trees are found across Australia in a range of ecosystems, including rainforests.

They are tough, hardy, and opportunistic, flowering throughout the year, particularly in winter, and providing a blaze of bright colour from cream to yellow to gold. In the natural environment, they are an important food source and help fix nitrogen in the soil through bacteria on their root nodules.

At the September 2024 APS NSW gathering, hosted by Harbour Georges River, Rhonda Daniels gave a fantastic talk on these wonderfully diverse plants. Read on for more.

[Read more](#)



Acacia rubida (A Fairley)

Garden news and tips



Ian Cox's garden (H Miles)

How to create a bushland or habitat garden

A bushland or habitat garden mimics nature. Such gardens are designed to create as much habitat as possible for local wildlife. This means they have to be multilayered, diverse and complex and create food and shelter year round.

Heather Miles shares with us some characteristics and tips and tricks you can use to create your own bushland garden.

[Read the story](#)





Boronia 'Showoff' (J Howes)

Boronia success at last

Boronias have a reputation for being difficult to maintain in the garden, and this is true in my garden, which has heavier clay soil that the plant's root system struggles to penetrate in order to establish itself. Additionally, the soil is dry due to neighbouring trees. So, when Boronia 'Showoff' caught my attention, I decided to grow it in a pot to ensure the soil was well-drained and maintained an even supply of moisture. I could also make sure the plant was protected from the hot afternoon sun, which Boronias dislike.

Jeff Howes now has a Boronia 'Showoff' plant in its fourth year! He shares with us the ways he's been able to have success growing this (sometimes tricky) but beautiful plant.

[Read the story](#)

Conservation



Grassland, Woorndoo, Victoria (S Rogers)

Indigenous burning practices in grasslands - more biodiversity and lower bushfire risk

Indigenous Australians have used and still use fire for various purposes, practices often called “cultural burning.” These practices have had ecological consequences over the long-term. Fire affects the structure of ecosystems in various ways.

It can have beneficial effects, such as maintaining the biodiversity of grasslands, for example. Some argue that, to lower bushfire risk in Australia, non-Indigenous hazard reduction burning is less effective than Indigenous cultural burning techniques, which should be used more in bushfire risk reduction programmes.

[Read the story](#)

Threatened flora of the Cumberland Plain

The Cumberland Plain is a defined region of the Sydney basin that covers most of Western Sydney. It is said to generally extend from the Hornsby area down to Picton, as far east as around Ryde and Strathfield, extending west to Penrith (Nepean River) and northwards to Windsor-Richmond and Cattai. One of the main features of the Cumberland Plain is its underlying soil, which is different from the iconic Hawkesbury Sandstone landscape. The Cumberland Plain has shale-derived soils (clay-based) as well as alluvial gravels and aeolian sand deposits. Often, the terrain consists of long, rolling, and gradual hills, contrasting with the ruggedness and cliffs of the Hawkesbury Sandstone.

At the May 2024 APS NSW gathering, Dan Clarke gave a talk on the threatened flora in this area. Read on for a written summary, or you can view the recorded talk on Dan's youtube channel [Arcane Botanica](#).



Pimelea spicata (D Clarke)

[Read the story](#)

Native plant distributions - all regions complete!



Tony Maxwell, project manager

The Australian Plant Society NSW is excited to announce the completion of the Native Plant Distributions project, a major undertaking designed to document and map the locations of native vascular plant species across Eastern NSW. This project, spearheaded by Tony Maxwell, represents the culmination of years of data collection from reputable sources, all brought together into an easily accessible format for APS NSW native plant enthusiasts.

[Read the story](#)

Blue Mountains Adventure

Recently Ian Cox came across a write up from a Blue Mountains trip that two members of the Parramatta Hills members went on, back in 2019. This write up had never been shared, so it was published in a recent Calgaroo.

The number one priority of the trip to the Blue Mountains on 7th September 2019 was to hear Liz Benson's talk about the Wollemi Pine at the Wentworth Falls History Centre. While they were there, in addition to absorbing the views around the falls, they wanted to do some plant exploring on Kings Tableland and take a look at the location of Grevillea 'Lawson Queen,' discovered by Pip Gibian in 1988. Read on for their day, and to see some photos from the trip.



G. sericea (B Walters)

[Read the story](#)

Final words... with the end of the year approaching, we start thinking to our festive season. And how our native plants can participate too! Have you thought about this? We stumbled on [an article on just this topic](#) to give you some ideas.

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Western Wanderer Expedition

12-Day Camping Tour – Departs Perth 23 April 2025 - Max 10 participants

Spend 12 days travelling from Perth to Newman and discover Western Australia's beautiful coastline and ancient Pilbara region. You will fly and land on the Abrolhos Islands, visit the HMAS Sydney Memorial & Maritime Museum, explore the Shark Bay World Heritage area, swim the Ningaloo Reef (perhaps alongside a Whale Shark) and explore the wonders of Karijini National Park.



South Australian Lake Eyre & Flinders Range Tour

10-Day Camping/Accommodated Tour - Departs Alice Springs 19 June 2025 - Max 10 participants

This adventure is a must for all who long to experience the Australian outback. Travel on the Oodnadatta Track, gaze out over Lake Eyre, and visit iconic outback towns including Coober Pedy, the opal capital of Australia (if not the world). We also visit Wilpena Pound, a natural wonder and amphitheatre of mountains in the Flinders Range, covering 8000 hectares. Join us on this outback adventure showcasing South Australia!



Contact us for further information and for details of our full natural history expedition program.

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