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Date: May 29, 2020 8:28:35 PM
Subject: APS NSW enewsletter – June 2020

Welcome to the June enewsletter



Native Plants for NSW – June 2020

The monthly enewsletter of the Australian Plants Society NSW



Dendrobium kingianum (also known as *Thelychiton kingianus*), the pink rock orchid, photographed by Jeff Howes in his garden.

In our June issue

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Welcome to the enewsletter

Usually when you miss a talk, you have to hope and wait for it to be summarised in a newsletter. This month we promote our YouTube channel where, due to the marvels of multimedia, you can watch a selection of speakers from recent APS meetings.

Our newsletter is emailed to members at the end of the month. Each issue is also saved as a pdf file [here](#). Your stories, photos, virtual events, feedback and more are welcome. Please email the editor, Rhonda Daniels, at enewsletter@austplants.com.au

From the President John Aitken

I hope that you and your families are having a safe passage through this difficult period and that the restrictions have not been too onerous. I have taken the opportunity to do a lot of work in my garden using the money saved from not travelling to buy plants and materials.

Thank you to all those who attended our AGM held by Zoom on 16 May. More people attended than usual, undoubtedly due to Dr Brett Summerell's excellent talk, which you can watch below. Congratulations to Ian Cox of Parramatta Hills Group, and Chris and Leigh Cousins of Hunter Valley Group, who were awarded life membership of APS NSW. All three are most worthy recipients of the highest accolade we can bestow on a member.

Many groups are taking advantage of our Zoom subscription for their meetings and have invited members from other groups to join in. In this way we can keep communication open with all members and enjoy the benefit of a variety of meetings.

Report on the AGM, 16 May 2020

Our Annual General Meeting was held for the first time by Zoom, with over 75 participants. John Aitken was re-elected President for his sixth and final year, Harry Loots as Treasurer and Merle Thompson as an untitled office-bearer. Read the minutes by secretary Heather Miles [here](#).

Life memberships were awarded to Ian Cox and to Chris and Leigh Cousins – read more below.

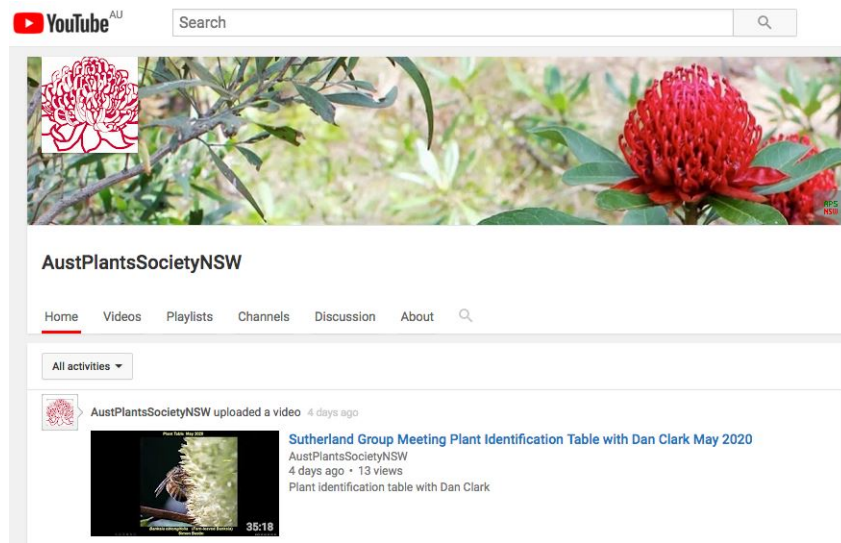
After the AGM, Dr Brett Summerell, Director Research and Chief Botanist at the Botanic Gardens and Centennial Parklands, gave his talk by Zoom and discussed the botanical work of Banks and Solander in 1770, the herbarium collection they created and its scientific importance, and the impact of the bushfires on Australia's unique plant life. Watch Brett's talk in full in two parts on YouTube – details below.



Watch our recent Zoom talks on YouTube

Watch Dr Brett Summerell's talk in two parts as videos on the APS NSW YouTube channel [here](#). Thanks to Ralph Cartwright for the tech marvels and to Liz Aitken for managing our YouTube channel. We also have several other talks and you can subscribe to the channel to get automatic updates when we upload new content.

- Dr Brett Summerell on the Banks and Solander collection, at the AGM on 16 May [here](#).
- Dr Brett Summerell on recovery from bushfire, at the AGM on 16 May [here](#).
- Dr Peter Weston on Gondwana connections, at the Sutherland Group meeting on 15 April [here](#).
- Brian Roach on the pick of the crop of native plants for Sydney gardens, at the Menai Group meeting on 13 May [here](#).
- Demystifying plant names by Rhonda Daniels, at the Sutherland Group meeting on 20 May [here](#).
- Dan Clarke on identifying plant photos from Sutherland Group members at meetings in April [here](#) and May [here](#).



Congratulations to life member Ian Cox

Congratulations to Ian Cox from Parramatta Hills Group who was awarded life membership at our recent AGM. Ian has been an active member for many years, serving as President of Parramatta Hills Group, Vice President of APS NSW and in many other roles. He is a strong supporter of the Australian Flora Foundation and is currently secretary. You'll also recognise Ian as a regular contributor to the eNewsletter, such as his recent articles [here](#) and [here](#).

Read more [here](#).



Congratulations to life members Chris and Leigh Cousins

Congratulations to Chris and Leigh Cousins from Hunter Valley Group who were awarded life membership at our recent AGM. The husband and wife team have been active members since 1983 and stalwarts of the small Hunter Valley Group. They have shared their prize-winning suburban garden with members and the public and promoted Australian plants at a range of local events.

Read more [here](#), with before and after photos of their garden.



Demystifying native plant names – an introduction

Botanical names can seem a little confronting at first glance, but the names do make sense (more or less) when you understand their origins. Names often reflect a distinctive characteristic of the plant such as the flower, leaves, fruit, bark, size, shape or habitat, or reflect connections with people or places. Rhonda Daniels explains the origins of species names, including common prefixes and suffixes which make up names, with tips to remember what they mean. *Pittosporum undulatum* below has wavy or undulating leaf edges. Read more [here](#).



Growing orchids for a stunning display

Jeff Howes has been growing Australian native orchids in his Sydney garden for more than 30 years. He shared his experiences in how he grows a stunning display of orchids for the GardenDrum gardening website in 2015. Read more [here](#).



All about mulch

Mark Abell from Hunter Valley Group summarises what you need to know about mulch to keep your native plants happy whether the purpose is to save water, suppress weeds or condition the soil. There are also some issues to avoid such as the potential for collar rot and nitrogen drawdown. Read more [here](#).



New Study Group – Pea Flowers

A study group has been reactivated to study plants with pea flowers and has been renamed Australian Pea Flower Study Group. In the past, a study group for this purpose was named the Fabaceae Study Group, as pea flowers were previously recognised as a separate family. If you are interested in the identification, classification, cultivation, propagation or conservation of Australia's pea flowers, join the new group by completing the online form [here](#). Membership is free for emailed newsletters.

Study Group updates

Explore our wide range of [Study Groups](#) and their newsletter archives. Read how to join a group for free [here](#). Study Group liaison officer Nicole Maher has the highlights from recent newsletters.

[Eremophila Study Group](#) Newsletter No. 127, May 2020

The feature species *E. oppositifolia* (Twin-Leaf Eremophila) is widespread and grows mostly as a rounded shrub. It is spectacular in floral arrangements and is also reported to be a useful fodder plant. It is long-lived, grows in full sun and full to filtered shade, and is very drought-tolerant. Lyndal Thorburn details the impact of pruning on different species, ranging from species that are known to tolerate hard pruning (eg *E. decipiens*, *E. glabra* and *E. nivea*), to those that do not like being pruned at all (eg *E. dempsteri*). Several members discuss experiences with grafting, and refer to a useful 'how to' video on the [ABC Gardening website](#).

[Goodeniaceae Study Group](#) Newsletter No. 18, April 2020

A list of plant species released by the Wildlife and Threatened Species Bushfire Recovery Expert Panel as the highest priorities for urgent management intervention to support recovery from the 2019-20 bushfires includes a number of members of the Goodeniaceae family. Group Leader Royce Raleigh highlights that native plant groups across Australia should be much more proactive in ensuring that many of these lovely plants get into Australian gardens. Dr Rachel Jabaily from the US reports on recent research projects conducted with four undergraduate students, to improve the phylogeny and inform the taxonomy of *Dampiera* and provide insights to help resolve the *Goodenia pinnatifida* complex. The work was part funded by groups of the Australian Plants Society Victoria, and used samples collected by Kelly Shepherd of the WA Herbarium. See results of the research at [Kelly's ResearchGate profile page](#).

[Isopogon and Petrophile Study Group](#) Newsletter No. 26, April 2020

Members share tales of their experiences as they struggle to help their plants through ordeals such as drought (Moruya NSW), heavy rains (Boolarra Victoria) and grasshoppers (Blayney NSW). Catriona Bate summarises the impacts of the bushfires on Isopogon and Petrophile hotspots, noting that while national parks are one of the main ways we conserve biodiversity, the recent fires particularly occurred in national parks and surrounds. In NSW over 150 national parks had more than 50% of their area affected, with over 50 having more than 99% burned. About 96% of South Australia's Flinders Chase National Park was devastated; the endemic species *Petrophile multisepta* was not previously considered vulnerable due to healthy local populations, but this may now be radically different.

Members are encouraged, when restrictions permit, to get out into the bush to observe the response of *Isopogon* and *Petrophile* species to fire. This will help to determine which species have a lignotuber (and therefore will resprout after fire) and which are reseeders. The impacts of climate change on future fires also highlights the importance of preserving species in our gardens, as well as in botanic gardens and seedbanks.

Members are encouraged to use the Study Group to share cuttings and seed.

There is more to the beauty of isopogons and petrophiles than their flowers! The distinctive drumsticks and cones have many intricate elements and can be used in floral arrangements. Delayed greening can produce foliage of reds, yellows and bronzes as leaves change colour through a process that conserves phosphorous during leaf development. Diallagy can also create colour changes in leaves where the foliage turns from its normal green to red or pale to conserve moisture during extremely dry weather, and then reverts to green when moisture is restored.



On the APS NSW website

Our [website](#) has our membership benefits, [how to join](#), District Group details, office-bearers and many resources including our Plant Profile database. Members receive an email reminder about membership renewal and can also renew online [here](#). The form in *Australian Plants* is for the journal only.

Photo finish



Chris and Leigh Cousins' garden with the benefits of mulch.

This enewsletter is emailed to members of the Australian Plants Society NSW

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