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**Subject:** APS NSW enewsletter – October 2021

Welcome to the October enewsletter



## Native Plants for NSW – October 2021

The monthly enewsletter of the Australian Plants Society NSW



A screen shot from our [Instagram](#)

### In our October issue

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### Welcome to the enewsletter

We recently discovered a security certificate for the APS NSW website was not up to date. This prevented some email servers from recognising and delivering APS emails including the enewsletter. It has now been fixed. If you have not been receiving the enewsletters, please also check your 'junk' folder.

Each enewsletter issue is also saved as a pdf file [here](#). Stories, photos and feedback are welcome. Please email the editor Rhonda Daniels at [enewsletter@austplants.com.au](mailto:enewsletter@austplants.com.au)

### From our President Heather Miles

It's been a busy month, notwithstanding the lockdown. I inherited 3 teenagers (all within COVID restrictions of course) and rediscovered the joys of looking after teens – or should I say surviving teens? The image of our forest below is from my new drone. Quick quiz: why is one tree flowering and not others?

We are keen to have new members feel more welcome. Membership officer Merle Thompson and I have been updating the emails people receive when they sign up or renew to be more friendly and informative. We have a new page on our website [here](#) to help new members orient themselves. Please send me feedback: [president@austplants.com.au](mailto:president@austplants.com.au)

The UTS team hosted an inspiring workshop to distill why we exist and help us think about long term sustainability. We used a digital version of sticky notes to develop ideas. Next we are conducting two surveys – one of past members and one of members who are newish within the last two years. Please look out for this survey to let us know what we are doing well and what to improve.



## Activities at home

The end of COVID restrictions is in sight, but many people are still under stay-at-home orders.

### Watch Gardening Australia, Friday 1 October

Maria Hitchcock OAM will feature in the My Garden Path segment on ABC TV's *Gardening Australia*, from 7.30 pm. Maria has been leader of several study groups with an Armidale garden to match. Catch up on iView.

### Participate in the Great Aussie Bird Count

Participate in the Great Aussie Backyard Bird Count [here](#). It's a small thing that most members can do. In November there is the Wild Pollinators count, particularly relevant to plant people, [here](#).

### Enter a spring garden competition

Spend some time this long weekend and get your garden ready for the Royal Agricultural Society's 2021 Sydney Spring Garden Competition. Your entry will promote native plants in gardens and you could win some fantastic prizes including a \$2,000 garden package from Flower Power. Entry is free, but get your gardening gloves on and your camera out because entries close **5 pm 13 October**. Details [here](#).

### Share your Bushcare experience

Many members have their own or group conservation projects going. Would you like to write a story about your project for the benefit and inspiration of other APS members? We will publish stories to honour those unsung heroes who work away week after week. Do you work through a conservation group, either a local group or under the umbrella of a wider organisation? Tell us about the group too – how it is run and what projects it supports. Are you monitoring an endangered plant species in your area? How do you do this and what success are you having? Do you propagate plants for bush regeneration? All these activities help preserve native plants, so please tell us about them.

Send your stories to Dorothy Luther at [dlutherau@yahoo.com.au](mailto:dlutherau@yahoo.com.au). If you are interested in story writing in general, please also contact Dorothy.

### Volunteer for APS NSW

Check the opportunities in the last newsletter to help meet our objectives of growing, sharing, conserving native plants. We are looking for help in:

- developing a curriculum of videos and workshops for members
- designing and organising our calendar of activities
- sharing your own conservation projects and helping plan what we can do as a society
- writing plant profiles and uploading them to the website
- assisting in social media: Facebook, Instagram and YouTube.

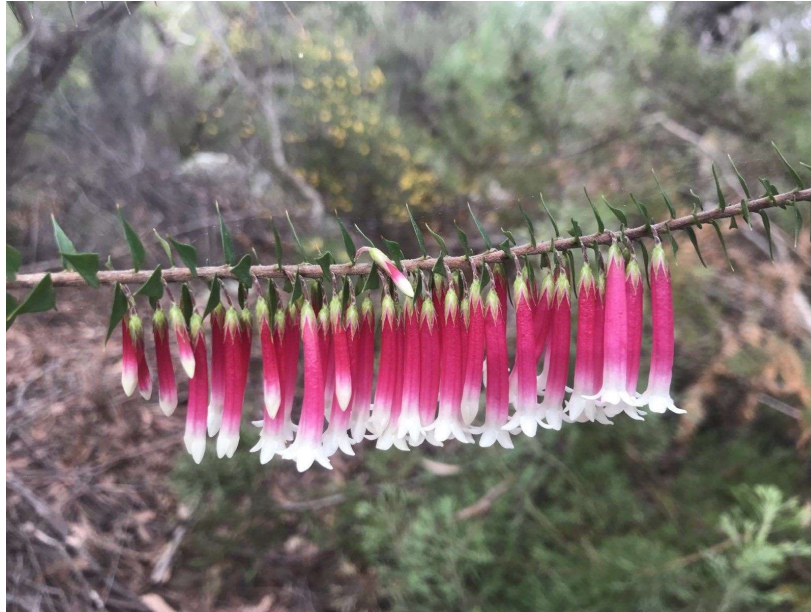
Please contact Heather Miles on [hmiles1672@gmail.com](mailto:hmiles1672@gmail.com) or Dorothy Luther on [dlutherau@yahoo.com.au](mailto:dlutherau@yahoo.com.au)

### Catch up on The Conversation

Check these articles by academics on The Conversation website:

- [How a bee sees: tiny bumps on flower petals give them their intense colour — and help them survive](#) by Adrian Dyer and Jair Garcia, RMIT University
- [Climate change is testing the resilience of native plants to fire, from ash forests to gymea lilies](#) by Rachael Helene Nolan and colleagues

Photo below: *Epacris longiflora* by Jill McLelland



## Keeping busy

Here's what some members have been up to under stay-at-home orders:

- Joan admired Jill's perfume bottles as mini vases in the last enewsletter and has made many like them by using a hacksaw and pliers on the metal spray top.
- Ralph Cartwright has been sampling water quality in the Royal National Park for possible re-introduction of platypus.
- Michael Swire has set up a Facebook group for plants native to the Greater Sydney Region, including the Illawarra and Newcastle [here](#).
- Lloyd Hedges is selling pink flannel flowers Menai Group has propagated to Sutherland Shire residents only under click and collect, but hopefully will be able to sell more widely soon.
- Jill McLelland found this treasure below nestled in a tree hollow on the accessible Bungoona track in the Royal National Park.



## Activities for 2022

With the end of COVID restrictions in sight, we have planned some activities for 2022.

### Quarterly gatherings in 2022

- Saturday 12 March – Quarterly gathering hosted by Menai Group at Illawong
- Saturday 21 May – Quarterly gathering and AGM hosted by Parramatta and Hills Group at Cherrybrook, with Peter Olde on Grevilleas for pots and small gardens
- November – Southern Highlands weekend get-together.

### April – Central West trip, dates TBC

Our trip to the central west has been deferred to April 2022 – dates TBC. We have arranged to visit seven properties, including three properties of APS NSW members. The



owners are enthusiastic to show and discuss what they have achieved in regeneration. If you are interested in joining the trip, please register [here](#) for more information.

### 10–17 September – ANPSA Biennial Conference, Kiama

We are planning for the ANPSA conference in Kiama in September 2022. Registrations for the conference and most tours will open in February. For the Lord Howe Island tours, we already have more expressions of interest than places available. We will be emailing everyone on the list in mid October to sign up and pay a deposit by early November on a first come, first served basis. Join the 'register your interest' list asap [here](#). Information on the conference and tours is on the website [here](#).



## Find your social media channel

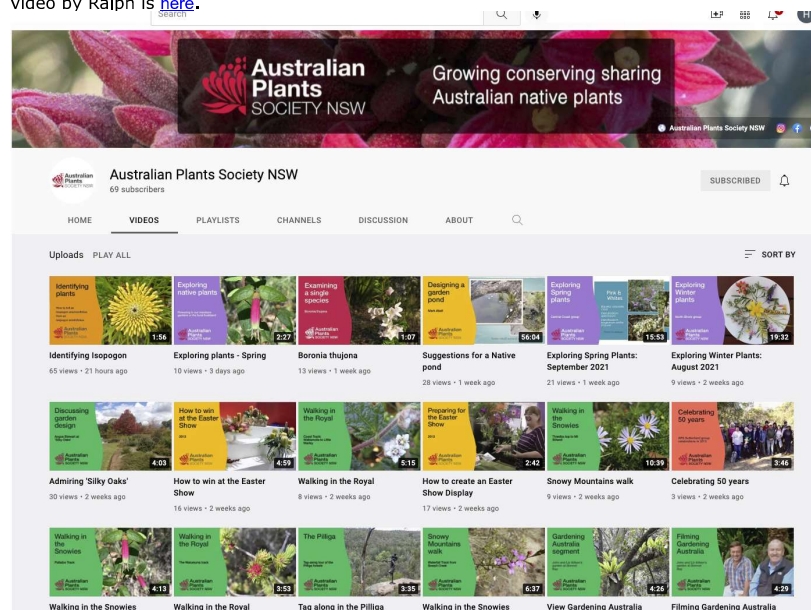
Whatever your preferred social media channel, you can find Australian native plants there:

### APS NSW website

Our website [here](#) has our calendar of activities, stories, resources including our plant profile database, Group details, membership benefits including our discount Neutrogena offer, and more.

### YouTube

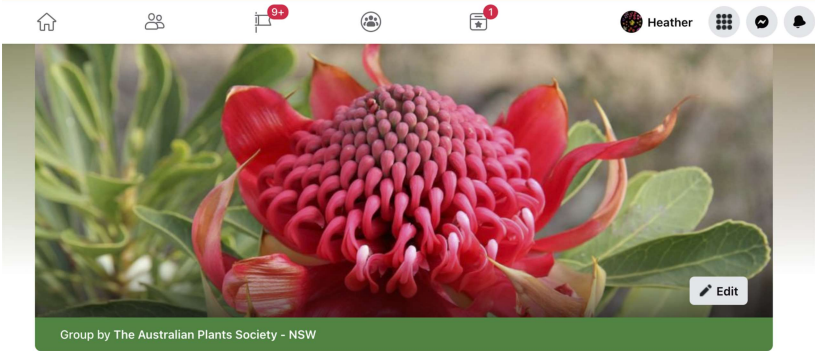
Over the last month, Ralph Cartwright, Liz Aitken and Heather Miles have been revamping our current YouTube videos [here](#). The aim is to share more about native plants and how to grow and conserve them. Some videos have just been rebranded while others are being recrafted. Ralph is a whiz at video editing, as is Liz. It's early days, but we now have 67 videos. We plan to add more and are working on improving sound, resolution and structure of the videos to make them look more professional. You don't need an account to view our videos and there is no cost. However, if you have a Google account, like Gmail for example, you can subscribe which helps us get better exposure and improve rankings. A recent video by Ralph is [here](#).



### Facebook – Members only Forum

As introduced last month, we've created a new virtual place for members to connect. The [Australian Plants Society NSW Members Forum](#) is different from our Facebook page, which many members already follow. It has been created as a Facebook group, free for all members to join, as a place to share your passion for growing and conserving native plants. Share photos of your garden, ask for help identifying plants, seek advice from more experienced members, share news and events and get to know your fellow members (albeit online!)

As a private group, you have to request to join. Click [here](#) to sign up. Over 60 members have already signed up to share ideas, stories and advice.



**Australian Plants Society NSW  
Members Forum**

**Instagram**

Thanks to Rae Basset, one of our new members, we are improving our social media presence. One of her innovations is to invite people to tag us in their Instagram feeds with #apsnsw, and we will feature them. Rae sends them a message to get their permission and then we load the photos into Instagram, with attribution. It's made a big difference to the growth of followers – now up to 3200. Instagram is easy to join and free. People love native plant images and we post pretty plant pics twice a day [here](#).

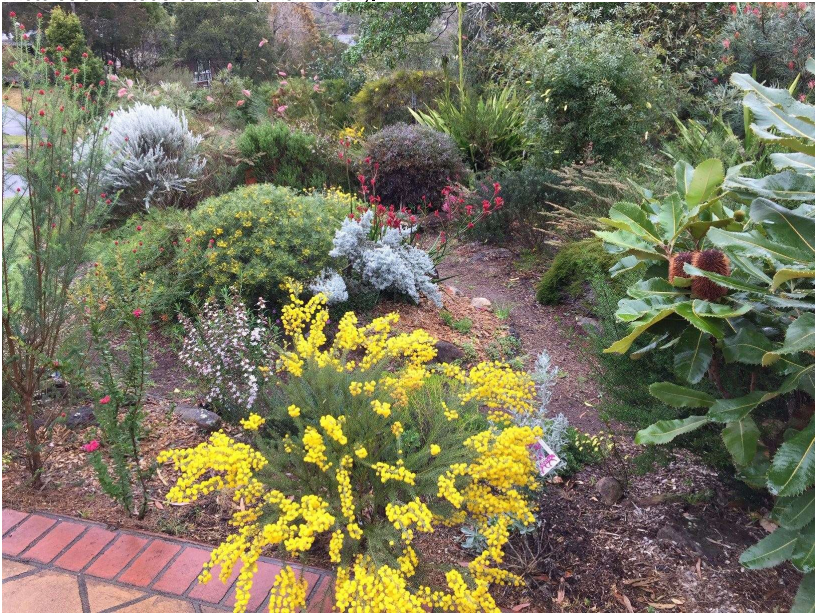


**Enjoy spring flowering**

We may not be able to get out and about to explore as further afield as we would like, but enjoy photos from Brian Roach at Westleigh and past spring flowering:

- Spring garden at Westleigh [here](#)
- Pea flowers of the Georges River National Park by Karlo Taliana [here](#)
- Sylvan Grove at Picnic Point in 2020 [here](#)
- Illawong Fire Station garden from 2019 [here](#).

Photo below: *Acacia conferta* (Brian Roach).



**Garden advice Q&A: answers from our experts**



Glenda Browne summarises recent queries on a range of gardening issues:

- planting for kookaburras (hint: they are not plant eaters)
- small wattle trees and mallee eucalypts for the Hunter region
- plant care: treating disease on a pittosporum, dead leaves on a blueberry ash and brown leaves on *Eucalyptus caesia*.

Read more [here](#), and our previous responses on trees [here](#).

## Conservation: 40 years of the Australian Flora Foundation funding research

Almost \$1 million in research for Australian flora is worth celebrating. In 2021 the Australian Flora Foundation is celebrating 40 years of funding research into Australian native plants. Established in 1981, the Australian Flora Foundation is a charity fostering scientific research into the biology and cultivation of the Australian flora, helping many young researchers. Members of the Australian Plants Society have been keen supporters, including Ian Cox, life member of APS NSW, who is the long serving Secretary. Donations welcome.

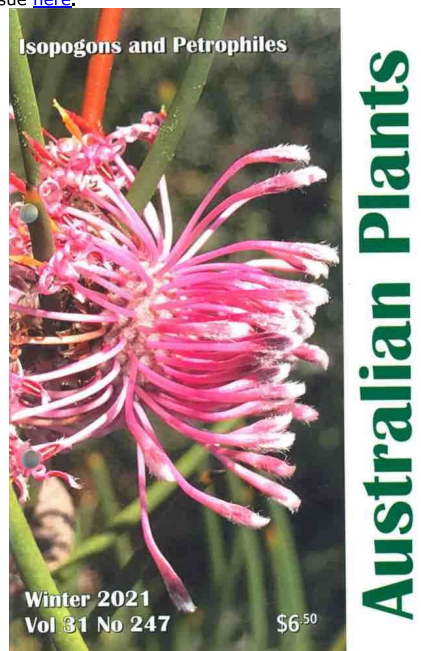
Read more by president Charles Morris [here](#).



## Australian Plants, Winter 2021 – Isopogons and petrophiles

The Winter 2021 issue is all about isopogons and petrophiles, produced by Catriona Bate and Phil Trickett of the ANPSA Isopogon and Petrophile Study Group. It is an especially useful primer because it brings a wide range of up-to-date information together all in one place in an overview of both genera.

Read more about the issue [here](#).



## Study Group updates

Explore our wide range of national [Study Groups](#) and their newsletter archives and see how to join a group for free [here](#). Nic Maher has highlights from recent issues.

### Australian Plants for Containers Study Group Newsletter 38, September 2021 – Try Christmas Bells

Growing *Blandfordia* (Christmas Bells) in pots is not difficult, and you will be well rewarded in summer with the spectacular bell-shaped flowers. A recommended potting mix is a 1:1 mix of coco peat and coarse river sand. They typically grow near swamps, so pots must not be allowed to dry out. Try to mimic the natural flow by letting water run through the potting mix from the top, and using a saucer to catch the surplus (but do not let this water become stagnant). Give them slow-release fertiliser, as well as a liquid fertiliser in spring. Choose a pot that is at least twice as deep as it is wide, to cater for their deep roots, and repot into a larger pot every two years or so. Place the pot in a sheltered place that receives morning sun. When the flower spikes appear (usually November or December), move them into a shadier place where the flowers will last longer. Below: *Blandfordia nobilis* by Alan Fairley from our plant profile [here](#).



#### **Eucalyptus Study Group Newsletter 72, May 2021 – Research projects**

Dieback of snow gums of the Australian Alps is caused by the native wood borer eating trees, however scientists don't know why those insects have been able to take hold in such numbers, and what underlying stressors have left eucalypts so vulnerable to attack. ANU researchers have received two NSW government grants to investigate questions such as what stressors are driving the insect outbreaks, how they are driving it, and how long the stressors have been in place. Dr Matthew Brookhouse of ANU is investigating the growth rings of the snow gums which grow at a high enough altitude that the winter stops their growth, producing easily identifiable rings. This will help understand the history of the tree, and what it was responding to at particular points in time. The grants will also be used for more sophisticated mapping of dieback events, and gene-based research to identify eucalypt species that can cope with increasingly extreme conditions.

Cider Gum (*Eucalyptus gunnii*) produces a sweet sap, that was collected by the Tasmanian Palawa people to make a mildly alcoholic drink known as way-a-linah. Researchers from the University of Adelaide and the Australian Wine Research Institute are using DNA sequencing to identify the microorganisms (bacteria and fungi) responsible for this traditional Australian fermentation. They worked with the Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre and Tasmanian Land Conservancy to collect Cider Gum samples from three locations in Tasmania, and found some bacterial and fungal communities which could represent completely new classifications.

#### **Fern Study Group Newsletter 149, September 2021**

The Study Group has been discussing the two alternative treatments of *Blechnum* and other *Blechnaceae*, particularly those species traditionally included in *Doodia*. Perrie et al. (2014) proposed to include *Doodia* and several other smaller genera in an enlarged *Blechnum*. This is currently accepted, but not fully implemented, in NSW (Sydney Herbarium). Gasper et al. (2016) propose to retain *Doodia* as it is, but split *Blechnum* into many different genera.

#### **Garden Design Study Group Newsletter 116, August 2021 – Pruning for design**

The theme for this newsletter is 'pruning for design'. Pruning can help ensure that a garden design is established and continues to be realised in several ways:

- 'decapitate' new garden shrubs by about one third before planting to encourage a dense branching habit with dense foliage
- 'up-prune' specimen trees immediately and regularly to encourage development of a strong trunk and higher level canopy
- regularly tip prune plants in massed shrubberies to encourage density of foliage and promote more flowers
- pick flowers or prune after flowering
- use espalier where space is limited to form small trees flat and narrow against a wall by training and pruning all side branches to effectively create a green wall of foliage
- prune internally to allow light and better airflow, benefiting the health of the plant, rather than just cutting back the outside of a plant
- prune to correct the structure of a plant, for example if branches are rubbing against each other
- prune part of a plant that is dead or diseased to prolong the life of a plant.

Photo below: Fiona Johnson's Cloudy Hill garden [here](#).



## Discount Neutrog offer for members

As first announced last month, we have an arrangement with Neutrog, producers of Bush Tucker and other great products for the garden. Members can receive substantial discounts on all Neutrog products bought through the Neutrog online store.

Members need to register first through their group, as deliveries are made to one address per group four times a year. Members will then receive details from Neutrog on how to access the special member discounts on the Neutrog online store. Read [here](#) how the discount offer works through your group. The first ordering opportunity is likely to be open in October, so check if your group is participating.



## Membership cards online

To be both more efficient and reduce the use of plastic and paper, we are now providing membership cards online. Access your card at [www.austplants.com.au](http://www.austplants.com.au):

1. Log in. The top red bar will either say 'Log in' or your name.

- If 'Log in', follow the prompts to get to your profile
- If 'Your name', click on that to get to your profile

2. Under the image of a membership card are two clickable options: 'Image optimised for smartphones' and 'Printable PDF'. Click on one (or both if you wish) to get your card.

- If you click 'Printable PDF', a PDF will download that you can then print out and cut out (check your downloads folder if you don't see it).
- If you click 'Image optimised for smartphones', a png file (ie a picture file) will download that you can then either email to your phone or airdrop or message to yourself. You can save to your photos and you may want to create an album for APS NSW so you can easily find it.

3. Optional: Download the Wild Apricot members app called 'Wild Apricot for Members' from Google Play (Android) or App store (ios). Once downloaded and logged in, you will see your profile, membership card and can renew online.



## Membership details

Membership card



Image optimized for smartphones

Printable PDF

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## Photo finish



*Grevillea venusta* (photo: Kevin Stokes on Instagram)

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

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