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Welcome to the September enewsletter



## Native Plants for NSW – September 2020

The monthly enewsletter of the Australian Plants Society NSW



*Acacia gordonii* (photo: Lesley Waite)

### In our September issue

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### Welcome to the enewsletter

This issue shows how we can have plant sales in these uncertain times, in two different ways, and there are still many ways to enjoy native plants including acacias on Wattle Day on 1 September.

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

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### From the President John Aitken

Liz and I have just returned from three weeks travelling down the Darling River from Lightning Ridge to Wilcannia. Unfortunately we were too early for many of the flowers and rain closed many roads. We were greeted along the way by stands of *Senna artemisioides* covered with masses of sweet smelling golden yellow flowers. It was wonderful to see the new growth following the rains in western NSW. The coming months should produce a fantastic display of flowering plants.

Central Coast Group has set up an online plant sale on the APS NSW website [here](#) for pick up orders. Read more below. Many thanks to Heather Miles, our website coordinator, for her hard work in setting the site up.

Great news that, following our letter to Central West members about the group's closure, a member from Nyngan has expressed interest in reactivating the group and discussions are under way.

Hoping to catch up with you at the APS NSW Zoom gathering on Saturday, 12 September with Phil Trickett and Catriona Bate, leaders of the Isopogon and Petrophile Study Group. Details below.



## Activities – Quarterly gathering by Zoom

**Saturday 12 September, 3 pm – An Isopogon and Petrophile tour of our Little Forest Garden**

Catriona Bate and Phil Trickett, leaders of the ANPSA Isopogon and Petrophile Study Group, invite us into their South Coast garden to show us what species to grow, how to care for and propagate them, new discoveries and the latest developments in cultivation and grafting. They will discuss the effects of drought and fire, dampness and humidity, heat, cold and frost.

While we can't visit their garden in person due to COVID, this virtual tour will introduce the wonderful world of isopogons and petrophiles and hopefully inspire more of us to include them in our own gardens.

Zoom details [here](#).



## Activities by Zoom

Check our events page [here](#) for Zoom links and join in a talk at another group, all from the comfort of home.

**Wednesday 2 September, 7.30 pm start – Newcastle Group: Gavin Phillips, Seedbank Officer at the Australian PlantBank**

Click [here](#) for the Zoom link.

**Friday 11 September – North Shore Group: Farhad Masoomi-Aladizgeh on *Themeda triandra***

Farhad, the 2019 recipient of the Valette Williams Scholarship, will present research on stress tolerance genes in Australian ecotypes of *Themeda triandra* (kangaroo grass). Contact North Shore Group for Zoom details [here](#).

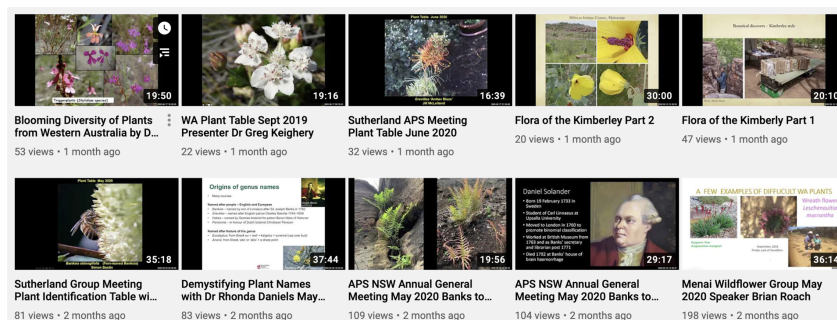
**Wednesday 16 September, 7.30 pm start – Sutherland Group: Spectacular spring flowers**

Members will share photos and videos from their gardens of spectacular spring flowers. Click [here](#) for the Zoom link.

## Catch up on recent talks by Zoom

Watch recent talks by Zoom on our YouTube channel [here](#) including:

- Looking for bees by Michael Batley at North Shore Group in August, [here](#)
- Edible native plants by Narelle Happ at Menai Group in August, [here](#)
- Art, culture and botanical science by Associate Professor Rosanne Quinnell at Sutherland Group in August, [here](#)
- Plants in flower at Sutherland Group in August, [here](#).



## Activities – in person

We have updated the COVID-19 message on our website. Please follow organisers' instructions for a COVID-safe activity.

### Mondays in September – Walks at Ku-ring-gai Wildflower Garden by North Shore Group

- 7 September – Pea shrubs and vines
- 14 September – Orchids and other monocotyledon plants
- 21 September – Waratahs and other members of Proteaceae

These are walk only sessions (no lecture), 10 am to 12 noon. Walks are easy to medium. It is essential to book your place by the Saturday before the Monday walk with Wendy Grimm on 0419 323 035 or [wagrimm@tpg.com.au](mailto:wagrimm@tpg.com.au). Limited numbers and social distancing apply. Please wear a hat and suitable footwear and bring water. Ku-ring-gai Wildflower Garden, 420 Mona Vale Road, St Ives.

### 5–6 and 12–13 September – Open days, Illawarra Grevillea Park, Bulli

Enjoy the grevilleas in full spring flowering at the last open weekends for the year. Entry: \$5 per adult. Plant sales. Details [here](#).

### November – Quarterly gathering deferred

Unfortunately, our November get-together, to be hosted by Southern Highlands Group, has been cancelled as local councils have imposed a maximum of 20 people for their halls. A great program had been planned, but it has been deferred till next year, when hopefully things will improve.

## In search of *Acacia gordonii*

In late July, APS Parramatta Hills Group set off to search for the endangered *Acacia gordonii* in their local area of Glenorie. Pip Gibian reports they were pleased to see the 1 m shrub with very bright gold flower heads flourishing in a number of areas and also found many other plants in flower. Photo below by Lesley Waite.

Read more [here](#).





## Acacias in flower at Joseph Banks Reserve

Joseph Banks Native Plants Reserve at Kareela may have been named to commemorate Joseph Banks, but it has many species of *Acacia*, both local and cultivars. Rhonda Daniels shares some photos of the diversity of wattles in flower from groundcovers to shrubs and trees in an easily accessible environment. Photo below: *Acacia triptera*.

Read more [here](#).



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## Online plant sale by Central Coast Group – limited time

Central Coast Group has long propagated native plants for sale and has relied on the income generated, particularly from the annual Plant Lovers Fair, usually held at Kariang in September. When the Fair was cancelled this year due to the pandemic, Central Coast launched an online shop on the APS NSW website offering 26 species in large forestry tubes.

Buyers need to pick up their plants from Phillip House, Kariang on two dates: Sunday 4 or Sunday 18 October.

Read more by Pat Carlton [here](#) and shop online [here](#).

Read [about the native garden created last year at Phillip House](#) [here](#).



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## A successful COVID-safe plant sale

North Shore Group had propagated many plants to sell at the annual Ku-ring-gai Wildflower Garden festival, but when the event could not be held, they came up with an alternative to find new homes for their plants. Sue Bowen reports on their recent successful plant sale at Caley's Pavilion.

While they had enough customers for a third day, they just ran out of plants. Volunteers were amazed at how many plants people bought and they had to replenish stocks regularly until the shadehouse was virtually empty of anything saleable. Edible plants were popular.

Read more [here](#).



## Propagating kurrajong trees

In a story last issue [here](#), Glenda Browne introduced our experts group which answers the many email questions we receive. One recent question was about how to propagate almost 50,000 seeds of kurrajong. Glenda summarises the response on propagating, then potting on and planting out. Beware of the potentially irritating hairs.

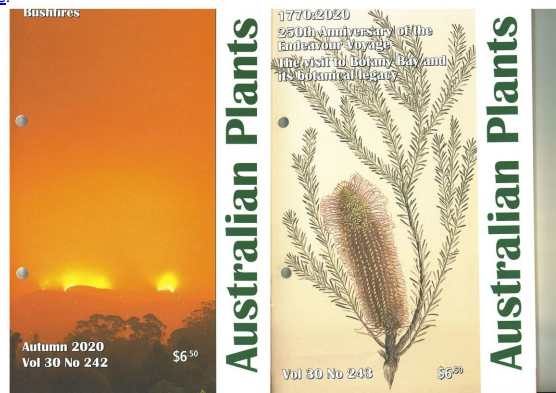
Read more [here](#).

## Australian Plants: latest issues

Two issues of *Australian Plants* were posted to members in late August. The Autumn 2020 issue is on bushfires. The theme was originally decided in early 2019, but the issue was delayed to enable it to reflect recent experience. It discusses the impact of fires on our Australian native flora and the ways in which it recovers after fires.

The Winter 2020 issue marks the 250th anniversary of the *Endeavour* voyage under the command of James Cook and its explorations along Australia's east coast. This issue features the visit to Botany Bay and its botanical legacy, while an upcoming issue features the Queensland section of the journey.

Read more [here](#).



## 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.

### Dryandra Study Group Newsletter 79, August 2020

This newsletter focuses on some of the *Dryandra* species which have underground stems. Most form clumps with upright stems, and in many the flower heads form under the soil as terminal buds, then flower above ground, usually around the perimeter of the plant. Photos of taxa of *Dryandra*, including (where possible) a close-up of the flower and at least one view of the plant, are now available on the [website](#). Lyn Alcock has set up a Dryandra Lovers Group on Facebook.

Photo below: *Dryandra obtusa* by Margaret Pieroni



#### Fern Study Group Newsletter 145, July 2020

Peter Bostock has retired as leader after 15 years. Steve Lamont is the new leader, with assistance from Peter Hind. At a June excursion around Evans Lookout near Blackheath in the Blue Mountains, many ferns and mosses were seen, and while much was burnt there was evidence of several resprouting from their deep subterranean rhizomes. The December 2019 fires caused intense damage to trees and tree ferns, with all epiphytic moss and orchids facing the fire being scorched, and all vines, small shrubs and ground ferns disintegrating. The first 10 cm of trunks of many tree ferns were burnt through, with the whole trunk toppling. However there are also patches that are unburnt, and moss and orchids which were growing on the side facing away from fire appeared undamaged. In February 2020, many ground and tree ferns had resprouted or sprouted fresh fronds. *Dicksonia antarctica* that had fallen over had new fronds growing from the trunks, due to their ability to grow new roots where the trunk makes contact with moist ground.

#### Garden Design Study Group Newsletter 112, August 2020

A special feature on fire risk in garden design draws on numerous tips from past newsletters, including the use of saltbush plants (*Chenopodiaceae* family) for their fire suppressing high salt tissues; the use of very low groundcovers or pebbles or gravel as a mulch alternative; the fire resistance of acacias such as *A. mearnsii*, *A. pycnantha* and *A. implexa*; and the recommendation to not grow eucalypts close to the house, and ensure that lower branches are pruned.

Group leader Lawrie Smith includes a fond tribute to 'Shorty', his 2 mm diameter graphite rod used for all design drawings, asserting that Shorty or equivalent 6B–9B pencils are perfect as they are thick enough that you are literally unable to include too much detail in your design sketch! The group plans to produce a series of regionally-based books on garden design with natives, and is calling on members who would be willing to be involved and contribute their experience and knowledge.

#### Eucalyptus Study Group Newsletter 71, May 2020

The group is looking for a new Secretary and Leader, following the sudden death of Stephen Harries. In an effort to bring koala habitat to urban areas, researchers have grafted grey box, which provides koala forage and habitat, to blue mallee, reducing the height of the tree from 10 m to 4 m, making it more suitable for urban landowners and councils. Biologists have uncovered a yellow box that is able to change the smell of its leaves from one side of the tree to the other, by alterations in its genes. If an insect outbreak occurs, by altering the leaves on part of the tree to a strong eucalyptus smell, rather than a floral smell which is more attractive to insects, the tree is able to reduce attractiveness of that part to insects and therefore will still be able to grow and reproduce.

### On the APS NSW website

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

Wattle Day stories:

- [Celebrate Wattle Day on 1 September](#)
- [Wattle Day – why is it 1 September](#) by Alan Fairley
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Also

- [Ablaze with spring colour](#) – photos from the Illawong Fire Station garden
- [How to see the enewsletter images in your emails.](#)

### Photo finish



*Acacia suaveolens* (photo: Ralph Cartwright)

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

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