

Hakea fraseri

Australian Plants Society

Armidale & District Group

PO Box 735 ARMIDALE NSW 2350

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President's Message

What a funny world we live in! Recently several of our group joined Peter Metcalfe's Western Australian wildflower tour. We were a varied group in terms of age, interests, occupations and backgrounds, but largely from the New England area.

In a little over two weeks and about 10,000 kms by bus we explored some of the best wildflower country that WA could offer; from Kalgoorlie to Cervantes to Flinders Bay to the Stirling Ranges and Fitzgerald National Park.

What a stunning display of varied, beautiful flora from the 'Jewel Box' of the Australian bush. But what did we see in so many cities and towns? To my surprise town plantings were frequently anaemic, sick looking representatives of the 'eastern states' flora. Talk about distant fields being greener!

I came home to my own anaemic, sick looking representatives of the western states flora and flourishing examples of our local flora. The lesson? – we often do not appreciate enough what is under our own nose, be it in WA or Armidale.

What a lot we have to learn about the horticulture of Australian plants before we can replicate, or exceed the magnificence of our flora in its natural setting.

John

A HINT FROM WARREN ABOUT WARATAHS

*Do not plant out until a bulb (lignotuber) forms at the base of the trunk.

Warren heard this from a Nursery lady who grows waratahs.

*Plant in a well drained position with no root disturbance.

*The cultivar 'Shady Lady' is best for this area.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THIS NEWSLETTER ARE GRATEFULLY ACCEPTED at ANY TIME

Postal address as above or email – jnevin@northnet.com.au

GROUP INFORMATION

(group commenced August 1977)

We are a very friendly and helpful group who enjoy monthly meetings, garden visits and field trips to help members to enjoy the search for knowledge about our native flora. Most of all we range from raw beginners to others who have been at the game for many years - all willing to share their knowledge.

General Meetings are held at 7.30pm on the third Tuesday of each month (except December, January, June and July) at The Tree Group Woodland Centre where a display of flowers is presented by members. Old and new members and visitors are very welcome to these meetings and any outings that we organise.

Committee Meetings are held on the first Monday of the month at 7.30pm - see diary for where - members are welcome to these meetings too.

Annual General Meeting is held in February.

Solstice Dinner is held in June.

Wattle Day Dinner is held on 1 September.

December Meeting is taken up by an end of year function, usually a BBQ or picnic.

Cover: Background is adapted from a drawing of Hakea fraseri in Forest Flora, NSW

From the Sheathers Gone but not Forgotten. An Obituary for a Glasshouse and Garden.

Recently a Botany Department glasshouse and its surrounding garden were demolished. The elderly glasshouse was situated near the corner of Trevanna and Library Roads. It is being replaced by a larger and more efficient structure known as a Mesocosm glasshouse. The demolished glasshouse was nearly fifty years old. One end of the structure was home to rainforest plants and a fern collection. The other end was used for succulents and plant propagation. The plants were used for practical classes and over the lifetime of the glasshouse, hundreds of internal and external students used these plants as part of their Botany courses.

For much of its life Hans Wissmann expertly maintained the glasshouse. Hans was also responsible for planting the garden surrounding the glasshouse. This garden contained a number of interesting plants and it was a shame to see its destruction. On a more positive note, the new structure will be surrounded by a landscaped garden. Staff of the Botany Department are propagating many rare and interesting local natives and no doubt many of these plants will find a home in the new garden.

We should mention some of the plants that have disappeared. A specimen of *Melaleuca tortifolia* was at least twenty years old. This rare *Melaleuca* is only found on Barren Mountain in New England National Park. The species is becoming well known in cultivation and is available from the Armidale Tree Group. There were two mature specimens of *Allocasuarina inophloia*, the Stringybark She-oak. The name applies to the unusual fibrous bark. Near the She-oaks there was a couple of *Hakea petiolaris*, the Sea Urchin Hakea. The fruit of these specimens differed slightly from the "conventional" Sea Urchin Hakeas and they may have been hybrids. *Acacia menzliei* is a native of South Australia and developed into a compact, spreading shrub with sticky foliage with yellow spring flowers.

Both the glasshouse and garden were part of the history of the Botany Department in particular and the University in general. It was sad to see them disappear. The new structure and garden will open another chapter in Armidale's academic history.

ONLY TWO MONTHS TO GO

Yes!!! Only two more months to go until the 22nd Biennial Conference and Seminar of ASGAP being held in Tasmania January 2004 at Launceston.

5-9 January Pre conference tour, North-West & West Coast of Tasmania

10 – 16 January – Conference (**Garden in isolation..... tarns, tiers and coastal dunes**)

17 – 21 January – Post conference tour, East Coast & Southern Tasmania

for more information – <http://ASGAP2004.trump.net.au>

ARE YOU GOING?

FEEL LIKE A WALK IN THE WILD

National Parks Assoc. invite us to join the inaugural **GREAT AUSTRALIAN BUSHWALK** between the gorges. At Long Point Picnic Area, Oxley Wild Rivers National Park.

On Saturday 25 October 2003 from 12 noon.

Getting there: Long Point is 20km from Hillgrove and a 45 min drive from Armidale. A bus will leave the Armidale Tourist Centre at 11am and return at 9pm (\$10). Bookings are essential

Activities:

Walks 1-5pm - Choice of walks led by specialist leaders, including children's nature walks

5-7pm - : Twilight supper with a string quartet under the trees. Reasonable prices for good food

7-8pm: Spotlighting (bring a torch)

8-9pm: Bus returns to Armidale Tourist centre.

What to Bring: A packed lunch, drinking water and a torch

Registration/booking: Essential by 18 October. Phone Peter Metcalfe on 67760024.

(I know this is late but they might have some vacancies.)

MOLE STATION WEEKEND – 25/26 October by Pat Urbonas

Saturday 25 – Meet 10am for morning tea at Basket Swamp picnic area. BYO food and drinks for tea, lunch, morning and afternoon tea.

Directions: Turn right past shops in main street of Tenterfield into Mt Lindsay Highway. Sign posted to Bald Rock etc. Approximately 20 mins turn right at intersection sign posted Basket Swamp. Allow approximately 2.15 hours from Armidale to Tenterfield.

We will leave Basket Swamp late afternoon for overnight stay at The Shearers Quarters at Mole Station.

Sunday 26 – After a look around garden and nursery, we will need to load up approx 700 + plants to bring back to Armidale to be sold at St Peters garden weekend.

Accommodation – The Shearers Quarters sleeps eight, BYO food and drinks as everything else is supplied eg linen and cutlery. Bring meat and wine for BBQ on Saturday night, Cost per person approx \$12-\$15.

This is always a fabulous weekend and I believe the Swamp is looking fantastic. I need to know numbers staying overnight to make sure we have enough beds. If you're unable to attend our meeting on the 21st but will be there Saturday night please ring me at home on 6775 2280

WA WILDFLOWER TRIP

What a yummy trip!!!!

The Armidale Tree Group sent a bus load of us on this million mile excursion under the leadership of Peter "Orchid" Metcalfe. We were a highly intelligent, very well educated, beautiful and highly cooperative group so wasn't he lucky.

Even though we had to travel such vast distances Peter had arranged to have little places dotted along the highway for us to have regular stops, you know how it is.

Forget about the ideas that you have about the vast desert along the Nullarbor Plains, they are wrong!!! After the best rains that they have had for many years the whole area of Southern WA was bursting with plants and even the wheat crops looked lusciously green, good for the farmers and eventually us I suppose.

Once we left Port Augusta the trip really began and our leader had such a mission in life, he made us put up our tents in wind gales so bad that we were not game to take our false teeth out as they would end up somewhere in the middle of the next paddock (Ceduna). He had this wish to go as far in one day as you could and the only way we could get him to stop was to tell him that it looked like orchid country and then proceed to find some when he did let the bus stop.

Over to the Head of Bight to view the whales. There were several whales swimming around and our intrepid leader also arranged for a mother to bring her calf close to where we were all standing at the lookout so there followed quite a lot of oohs and ahs and camera clicking. The ocean there was quite spectacular, the most beautiful turquoise colour.

Passed through Kalgoorlie (learnt about this in primary school) and saw this most incredible front garden in front of this little cottage. It was full of brilliant nasturtiums, that's right, none of that native rubbish.

Next trial for our leader was when we met very heavy rain as we approached Merredin. No worries our leader just arranged for us to transfer to overnight vans and backpacker accommodation. We were all very comfy and even though Helen had to get the meal ready at a *really* late hour we were all in good cheer and had such faith in our leader that it was palpable.

On to Cervantes, via some other really great places, where we all looked forward to seeing the sun set into the Indian Ocean. Mother Nature had other ideas by producing cloud cover so we just had to be satisfied with a small dip in the water (boy was it cold). I must say that even though it was a sheltered bay I was quite disappointed with the Indian Ocean.

After this we navigated into Perth where we visited Kings Park before jetting into Fremantle to stay. Back to Kings Park the next day for their annual Floral Festival. Walked through the bush that makes up part of the park and saw lots of Kangaroo Paw (WA national flower). There spread all around us were these incredible green and red iridescent flowers waving around in the wind. Met up with John Wrigley (Coffs Harbour) and he like John and Pat were very disappointed that they did not have any seeds for sale. Even though they did look at the plants for sale they reluctantly understood that they could not bring them back to NSW as they were planted in soil and there is a very big danger of importing phytophthora. If you want to read about the devastation cause by this soil borne plant pathogen, there is a wonderful article written by Sally Muir in the Tamworth Newsletters of Winter 2002 (WA) & Spring 2003 (local). Anyway much to Peter's disgust I quite enjoyed seeing the vast collection of WA plants in one place without having to search for them in the bush.

Off over a couple of days to Albany where we stayed with Cheryl at the Dog Rock Motel I must admit that the many motel stop overs that Peter organised were a welcome treat to this body.

Next day a streak to the Stirling Ranges via the Banksia Farm at Mt Barker, where they just happened to be having an open day. They have a complete collection of banksias and only two shy of the Dryandra collection and much more. By this time it was raining and you really must admire the calmness of the owners because this large tourist bus rocks up and they take it in their stride. Kevin Collins gave a short talk on the make-up of the farm and you should have seen the look that came over John and Pat's faces when he said yes we use a mixture that means that you can take plants back to NSW, with our stat. dec. - talk about walking into a lolly shop. Next off to the plant sale but you must admire their restraint as they restricted their buying to only a couple of plants because of the comfort of the other people in the bus. Oh Yeh!! What a great set-up this is and must be put onto any programme if visiting that area at that time of the year.

We will have to keep an eye on Philip Rose after this trip as he spent far too much time with Pat and John so he became a kleptomaniac too. The three of them were a sight to behold.

This grumpy fellow sitting next to me who kept whinging about not stopping enough spoilt some of my trip(not really JN). Now who in their right mind would want to stop every 5 minutes when we had such vast distances to go and the sides of the road were far too wet and soft to support the weight of a very heavy bus. He knew that but he still whinged until we passed Fremantle and then we were in new territory for him..

Thank you Peter for such a wonderful trip and really big thanks to the Bus drivers, Neil and Lionel and wonderful cook Helen and her very able assistant Rachael for looking after us so well. Helen produced some wonderful meals under really adverse conditions.

Much much more happened and I have not mentioned any of those plant names so I suggest that you come to our November meeting where those people who know all will be giving a slide show of the trip and there will be names swirling all around your head. I will also have a print out of the diary of the trip that has been put together by our members who went.

Barbara

FUTURE WILDFLOWER OUTINGS

Members have the option of joining in the following combined APS weekend outings:

- 1 Glen Innes/Coffs Harbour weekend to Gibraltar Range on 25/26 October 2003.
- 2 Glen Innes/North Coast weekend to Torrington on 8/9 November 2003

Contact Jean Mott on 6732 2931 for details.

A TITBIT FROM NORTH SHORE GROUP OCTOBER 2003 NEWSLETTER

Now that spring is here – think compost

To get a compost bin working well, just remember the following:

“Equal parts of green and brown help the microbes break it down.:

Anon

<p>NB Please read your label so that you can keep up with when your subscriptions are due. If there is a red dot here you need to renew your membership ASAP.</p>
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WATTLE DAY OUTING SUNDAY 31 AUGUST

What a long time ago that seems to be but this year we tried something different when we had a garden visit involving several of our member's gardens.

Firstly we visited the Hardaker garden in Wells Lane. Shirley greeted us with an enormous bowl of flowers from 'The block' that they own out of town. There followed an identification period where everyone put in their two cents worth. We really must visit this obviously wonderful place some time. Amongst the trees I particularly liked *Ac. Viscidula* that looked a lot like a casuarina. The southern side is terraced with lots of plantings but Shirley told us that she really enjoyed the view of her neighbour's acacias that were planted many years ago by the land care group. A very peaceful area with lots of birds.

Our next stop was the Croft's who live off Erskine Street. John tried to get a bit of sympathy by meeting us at the door with a walking stick but that did not work a bit. John's native plants are in the back yard surrounding a pool. We were met firstly by a lovely prostrate *Grevillea* 'Woolly *Grevillea*' miniature. Next there were some sighs when we saw a lovely *Grevillea* at the back of the pool but unfortunately John did not know its name. The flowers were very red and large. Cuttings were taken so perhaps someone will get some growing.

Morning tea was upon us and Glenda Mulquinney invited us to visit their garden, off Erskine Street. Colin was not expecting us so his garden looked normal as he had not rushed around to get it ready, as you do. The native plants looked as they do when winter is upon us but they had a lot to plant out as they had been visiting a nursery with a large native section at Tweed heads (Boyd's nursery). We were really impressed with Colin's carnivorous pitcher plant collection. Looking forward to seeing this when the frosts are over.

Before our lunch break we visited Maria Priscina's garden in Perrott Street. Our first impression was of multiple flowers of *Banksia ericifolia*. To make it more outstanding Maria prunes off the extra greenery to make the flowers terminal. This normal town block was chock a block full of native plants. As mature trees reached their use by dates they are being replaced with more suitable sized plants. One thing Maria did say was to not believe everything that you read on plant labels, especially in regard to height. Grasses were used sculpturally in the backyard on the artificially made slope that has a meandering path so that you can wander amongst the tree ferns and other plants such as *Eremophila calohrabdos*. In the front garden there is a lovely *Eucalyptus scorparia*. This is hit hard by Christmas beetles each year but so far it grows back very well afterwards. Such a lot to see in this very small garden.

Up to the Arboretum to have lunch amongst the gum trees. There has been a great survival rate amongst the new plantings and all looks well for the coming growing season.

After a quick gulp a drive out into the country to see the Metcalfe's garden on Dumaresq Dam Road. Peter started his tour with us by saying that he does not have a garden, he grows to a system – what will be will be! Anything that grows goes as long as it looks after itself. There are many acacias that he is growing and he pointed out *Ac. fimbriata* that is very resistant to borers. Others in this group are *cultriformis*, *pravissima* and *boormanii*. He has recorded 136 different bird types on the Yellow Box hill with a jasper ridge going through the middle. This was a lovely bush block of 36 acres that had sheep taken off it 30 years ago.

Our last garden was the Sheather's out on Bundarra Road, over the mountain. As usual there was lots in flower and many more plants in their cultivation igloo. This time the *Grevilleas* were showing well and attracting many honeyeaters. *Grev.* 'Red Clusters' took my eye because while it was not in flower it had lovely bronze tips to the leaves. A couple of small acacias were attractive, *lineata*, *paradoxa* and *acinea* that would look good in any small garden. You really have to visit these gardens to appreciate what they hold and

We thank Shirley, John, Glenda, Marie, Peter, Warren and Gloria for sharing their gardens with us.

Coming Diary Events

- Tuesday 21 October at 7.30pm:** **Monthly meeting at the Tree Group Environmental Centre**
How to plant for butterflies and insects in an Armidale garden (David Britton - Australian. Museum, Sydney)
- Fri, Sat, Sun 24/25/26 October:** **Weekend at Mole station, Tenterfield.**
Main purpose to pick up plants for sale in the Open Garden Scheme. But wait- there's more – see details on page 3
- Friday 31 October:** Set up for annual St Peter's Open Garden Scheme plant display and sale at the Thiele's garden
- Sat, Sun 1/2 November:** St Peter's Open Garden Scheme and plant sale at Thiele's Garden
- Monday 3 November at 7.30pm:** Committee meeting at the Nevin's
- Tuesday 18 November at 7.30pm:** **Monthly meeting at the Tree Group Environmental Centre**
"Slide show of WA trip"
- Sunday 23 November:** **Workshop to be held at the Nevin's**
Grafting and propagation led by David Caldwell of Mole Station Nursery
- Sunday 30 November:** **Plant Display at Markets in the Mall**
- Sunday 7 December:** Christmas BBQ at the Rose's garden with a visit to Yana Native Reserve next door. (more information in next newsletter)

NB: *Pat (67752280) would like some help with the Plant Display at the monthly Markets in the Mall –he would very happy to hear from you.*

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION / RENEWAL FORM

MEMBERSHIP TYPE: please tick appropriate box

	Annual Fee	Concession
Single:	\$40	\$32
Joint: (2 adults at the same address)	\$46	\$38
Concession applied for: Limited Fixed Income	Full Time Student	

PERSONAL: Joint members please complete a) and b)

a) Mr Mrs Miss Ms Dr Other..... b) Mr Mrs Miss Ms Dr Other.....

Given Name (s):..... Given Name(s)

Surname:..... Surname:.....

Postal Address:.....

.....Postcode:.....

Tel: Home ()..... Work: ().....

Fax: ().....

PAYMENT: Payment of \$..... is enclosed by:

Cheque Money Order payable to APS Armidale Branch

Please return this completed form with your payment to :

Membership Officer APS Armidale Branch PO Box 735 ARMIDALE NSW 2350
