

Hakea fraseri

Australian Plants Society

Armidale & District Group

PO Box 735 ARMIDALE NSW 2350

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President:

John Nevin – 6775 2128 (H)

Secretary:

Kristine Gow

Treasurer:

Phillip Rose – 6775 3767 (H)

President's Message

Here we are almost at the Winter Solstice. What a mild winter we have had up to date – six weeks past the usual commencement date for frosts and only a couple experienced so far. The plants have certainly appreciated the mild autumn and early winter following the above average rain falls of the first part of the year. Everything has put on a growth spurt with one Sydney Blue Gum I have recently planted going from two metres to four metres in height over four months.

A lot of plants are flowering and it is the earliest I can remember wattles such as the Cootamundra wattles being in full bloom at this time of the year. Here's hoping the plants are not caught out with a series of devastating frosts later in winter.

We visited the three local gardens opened for autumn for the Australian Open Garden Scheme. All seem to be incorporating more Australian Plants in their gardens as part of the garden design and not just shoved down the back in a corner. At 'Rock Abbey', in Uralla, the table at the entrance gate sported a magnificent specimen flower of the Possum Banksia (*Banksia baueri*). The plant was healthy and had been growing well in basalt soil for about four years.

It will obviously grow here so must give it a try. Hope to see you all at the solstice function at Thiele's and Walsh's.

John

another WATTLE APPEAL from the Ed!!

Thank you to Pat, John, Phillip, Allan, Graeme, Vinnie, Wes, Monica, Robert, Peter and Bob for your response to my appeal – we have 126 acacias growing in our gardens that we know about. Come on all you other members - please send me a list of the acacias (wattles) growing in your garden, I will print a list in the next newsletter ready for Wattle Day on 1 September.

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

BLACK COCKATOO THREATENED

an article written by Sophie Schmidt, courtesy of Armidale Express Extra Wed 4 June 2003

Removal of firewood from the natural habitat of Australia's flora and fauna has led to the decline and loss of woodland birds, reptiles, mammals and invertebrates.

The National Conservation Council of NSW (NCCNSW) reports that the south-eastern red-tailed black cockatoo, swift parrot, regent honeyeater and many other flora and fauna are listed as endangered.

Felling of trees, dead or alive, is having a long term effect on biodiversity. The NCCNSW estimates up to 70 hectares of woodland are cleared each day to support Australia's wood heating demands. At present the industry is unsustainable with more wood being removed than replanted.

Collection of firewood is leaving fauna homeless and disrupting the forest and woodland nutrient cycles.

Targeting of hardwood species, such as box and iron bark, "reduces the diversity of tree species as well as the variety of sizes and ages", NCCNSW said.

Firewood consumers need to be aware of the effect firewood collection can have on the environment. Try to ensure that your firewood is sourced from existing firewood plantations: sawmill waste (not treated timber) and other renewable locations. Avoid fossicking through nature remnants and reserves, stock routes and on the side of the road.

Also try to take advantage of passive forms of heating and protect your home from heat loss. Seal out draughts, use curtains and pelmets to avoid heat loss through windows and ensure that your ceiling, walls and floors are well insulated. This will reduce your consumption of firewood whilst still keeping your home warm and cosy.

If you would like any further information visit the National Conservation Council's website at www.nccnsw.org.au. Information of the wood smoke reduction program is available on the Armidale Dumaresq Council website www.armiale.nsw.gov.au or on www.epa.nsw.gov.au/woodsmoke.

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.

A couple of snippets from our last meeting held on 20 May.

- * Member Peter Metcalfe (Education Officer at National Parks) has volunteered to be the Conservation Officer for our branch of APS – thank you Peter.
- * Member Ingrid Kalf has volunteered to be the Librarian at the Tree Group Woodland Centre– well done Ingrid.
- * The Seed Bank is in action at the Woodland Centre. If any members have requests please tell Robert Johnson there so that they can organise the seeds for you

ONLY FIVE MONTHS TO GO

Yes!!! Only five 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>

Another Couple of Web Sites

The Australian Plants Soc, Central Coast Group has notified us that they have changed their web-site to www.australianplants.org

Royal Botanic Garden, Sydney, for full access to their website and its reference facilities –

<http://plantnet.rbgsyd.nsw.gov.au> – from Central coast group Feb'03

Virtual Herbarium – <http://life.csu.edu.au/herb/>

LAST ARBORETUM WORKING BEE

by Pat Urbonas (Arboretum Coordinator)

This was held on Saturday 3 May with 70 plants being planted. It was a glorious day with really pleasant digging conditions. All the plants up there look good with the grevilleas and grafted hakeas in bud.

Members attending were Wes Blackert, Robert Boyd, John and Barbara Nevin and Pat Urbonas.

Members please note that working bees are held on the first Saturday of the month, at 1.00pm, unless advised otherwise.

A reminder about National Tree Day 2003

from Hunter Valley Group April 2003

Planet Ark has now set Sunday 27 July as National Tree Day in 2003. With the drought and fires, the last 12 months have been very hard on our environment. That's why Planet Ark is again asking everyone in the community to help plant more trees. There will also be a Schools Tree Day on Friday 25 July, 2003. Like last year, Olivia Newton-John will be fronting Tree Day 2003 and Toyota and the AMP Foundation will again be partnering Planet Ark in the event. For more information on this year's activities, please go to www.planetark.com/trees.

TWO REPORTS OF THE OUTING TO MT. HYLAND

Mt Hyland Rainforest Nature Reserve (Land of the giants)

by Graeme Fairweather

On Sunday 18th May twelve of our members met with twenty two members of the Coffs Harbour Branch near the Dorrigo turnoff on the Grafton Road. We then, after a quick cuppa proceeded along Marengo Road and Hardens Road arriving at the nature reserve car park after about a 20 minutes trip. From here, as was explained, vehicles had to be rationed for the 1km drive to a small car park where the nature trail started. The lazy, or as it turned out the smarter people opted for a ride while the fitter, or as they soon realised not so fit group as the walk was nearly all uphill, decided to walk. As Kristine commented they had to stop and change to second gear and four wheel foot power for the final half kilometre.

When all had arrived, some out of breath Alex Floyd the leader of the walk and noted authority on rainforest plants then explained that this area where we were was actually where the boundaries of the rainforest and open eucalypt forest met. This area was called ecotone. He then explained how the rainfall and fires controlled either the rainforest expanding in good seasons or retreating in dry years or when fires occurred.

Due to the large number of keen walkers it was decided to split us into two groups with Alex leading one group and John Wrigley and our own John Williams guiding the other group. I chose to follow Alex and we walked on the shorter but steeper track to the summit of Mt Hyland. As indicated in my heading this area could be called "land of the giants" because we came across some huge trees and shrubs along the way. Some included one lone Ribbon Forest Gum (*Eucalyptus nobilis*) with a trunk nearly 2mtrs round and as Alex estimated approx 400 yrs old. White Mountain Banksia (*Banksia integrifolia subsp monticola*) over 25mtrs high with the grand daddy 30mtrs high and 1.3mtrs round the trunk. Other big species were the Tree Mountain Heath (*Trochocarpa species A*), Mountain Walnut (*Cryptocarya foveolata*), Mountain Laurel (*Cryptocarya nova-anglia*), Yellow Teatree (*Leptospermum polygalifolium subsp montanum*) up to 20mtrs high and Wonga vine (*Pandorea pandorana*) twisted and knarled as thick as a man's (or woman's) thigh. Some other species were Veined Mock Olive (*Notelaea species A*), Jungle Mat Rush (*Lomandra spicata*) and Spiny Headed Mat Rush (*Lomandra longifolia*) in the more open areas. Sassafras (*Doryphora sassafras*) with their mottled trunks are very common.

On reaching the summit of Mt Hyland, which was a relatively large flat area we found a comfortable spot amongst the Tussock Grass and enjoyed our lunch. The summit area consisted of Blackwood (*Acacia melanoxylon*) Silvertop Stringybark (*Eucalyptus laevopinea*) Scrub Geebung (*Persoonia media*) and the odd Everlasting daisy (*Helichrysum acuminatum*) and Button Everlasting (*Helichrysum scorpiodes*).

As we started to descend from the summit on the return track we observed two Cassinia growing side by side (*Cassinia aculeata*) and (*Cassinia trinerva*). Just then the other group staggered up the track and we exchanged a few words with them on what we had seen and who had found the largest tree. Further down the track some blossoms were found and on gazing up we were able to identify that they were from the Victorian Xmas Bush (*Prosthanthera lasianthus*). Alec was also able to find Howitts Muttonwood (*Rapea howittiana*), a rare tree with the name Muttonwood derived from the fact that the timber is very oily. Another interesting tree was the Brown Possumwood (*Quintinia sieberi*) whose seeds, that are very fine, use the Rough Tree Fern (*Cyathea australis*) and Soft Tree Fern (*Dicksonia antarctica*) as the host plant for germination. Many other trees, shrubs, ferns, herbs and vines were identified too numerous here to mention. On completion of our walk we were surprised to see the other group had beat us back, no doubt they didn't stop as much as we did on the return journey.

On the trip back to the main car park some once again walked, including myself safe in the knowledge that it was all downhill. A very interesting and enjoyable day and our thanks to Alex Floyd, John Wrigley, and John Williams for their guidance and identification of the many rainforest plants and the Coffs Harbour group for their company for the day.

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Trip to Mount Hyland

by Beth Williams

John and Beth Williams joined with more than 30 people from Armidale and Coffs Harbour groups of Australian Plants Society to scale the heights of Mount Hyland (1400m) in a Nature Reserve east of the Chaelundi area of Guy Fawkes River NP on a beautiful late autumn day on Sunday 18 May. There was much reminiscing as we met up with Alex Floyd and other old friends and colleagues from the Coffs contingent.

Alex explained the ecology of the ecotone between Sclerophyll Forest (Eucalypts) and Warm Temperate Rainforest in the car park area at the base of the ascent, then we split into two groups, one led by John Wrigley and John Williams on the 3km anti-clockwise route, the other by Alex Floyd on the steeper 1km track clockwise to the summit/trig station and great views of distant Majors Point and Point Lookout.

Mount Hyland is a high basalt ridge with 3 peaks giving fertile soils though stony in places, and with well-developed Cool Temperate Rainforest on the upper slopes (1100-1400 metres). This CTRf was minus Antarctic beech but plus the Gondwana South American connection the Redberry Vine (*Berberidopsis beckleri*) with its distinctive leaves. There were also occasional large specimens of Mountain Tree Heath (*Trochocarpa unnamed species*) up to 13 m high and 35 cm diameter trunks, and good examples of Mountain Walnut trees (*Cryptocarya foveolata*) and the smaller Mountain Laurel (*Cryptocarya nova-anglica*)

We lunched, rested and yarned in the semicleared area around the Trig, surrounded by regrowth eucalypts (? *E. fastigata* or *E. laevopinea*), 2 species of *Cassinia*, *Lomatia fraseri*, *Leucopogon lanceolatus*, *Monotoca elliptica*, and *Acacia floribunda* - and we congratulated ourselves, proud to have made it to the top despite aching bones and passage of years. On the way back down Alex's group had the gentler longer descent, but of course both groups covered the same overall distance.

The veteran expert botanists/ecologists/naturalists identified plants and fungi to within an inch of their lives for their interested followers. Common trees were Black Oliveberry (*Elaeocarpus holopetalus*), Prickly Ash (*Orites excelsa*), and Sassafras (*Doryphora sassafras*) Also frequent was Mountain Denhamia (*Denhamia moorei*), restricted to Mount Hyland, Point Lookout and eastwards to Dorrigo. A soft-leaved shrub, *Aristolelia australasica* (Wineberry) was frequently seen. It is of interest in its distribution - the genus is in Southern Australia, NZ and S America; also it is one of the rare CTRf species that is semi-deciduous.

Highlights on the way were the splendid examples of Possumwood (*Quintinia sieberi*) germinating on treefern trunks, then growing into small trees strangling and pushing aside the treefern; the giant Banksias (*Banksia integrifolia subspecies monticola*) and the giant Tea-trees (*Leptospermum ? unnamed species*) both reaching up to 30 m height; giant twisted rope-like liana stems of Wonga Vine (*Pandorea pandorana*) reaching the canopy - the biggest John Williams has seen; Mountain Walnut trees (*Cryptocarya foveolata*) with their large domatia on laurel-type leaves; epiphytic long creeping stems of *Fieldia australis* (African Violet family) growing on trunks of Tree-ferns and Sassafras, along with Kangaroo Fern, Fragrant Fern (*Microsorium sp*), Spleenwort (*Asplenium flaccidum*) and small epiphytic Orange Blossom and Dagger orchids (*Sarcochilus falcatus*, *Dendrobium pugioniformis*); a range of cap and jelly fungi (mauve, red, cream...) on rotting wood, including a luminescent white one identified by Barry, the Coffs Harbour leader.

Mount Hyland NR is outstanding for its isolated occurrence of Cool Temperate Rainforest and for its very large trees of several species including some that don't normally grow in rainforest – White Banksia, Mountain Teatree, Mountain Tree Heath and Forest White Gum (*Euc.nobile*)
A great day and a historic one, re-visiting Mount Hyland in distinguished company after so many years.

Thank you Graeme and Beth – sorry we missed the trip Ed!

Another apology from me – to all those people who took notice of the dates that I had written instead of trusting the normal dates that we have for meetings and working bees, sorry!
Having said that I have great fun getting bits and pieces from the newsletters of other groups. You are reminded that these are available at the Tree Group Woodland Centre Library and really are a great read.

A Great Hint from St George Group

When planting you cutting material, grow in clear disposable cups so that you can see the new roots when they reach the side of the cup. Also they use a mix of perlite, cocopeat and pebbles (for stability) for their potting mix with a dab of Rootex on the base of each cutting.

SOLSTICE DINNER – SUNDAY 22 JUNE

This year the Solstice Dinner will be a day function.

10.30am

Visit Steve Thiele's garden at Braund Street (6772 4769). Steve has volunteered his garden for the St Peter's Open Garden Scheme and Plant Sale. This will be an opportunity to preview the garden and plan sites for plant sales etc at the November Open Garden Weekend

1pm

Lunch at Alan and Anne Walsh's property at 240 Herbert Park Road. (6775 1759). Anne will be coordinating with attendees what dishes to bring for the meal..

After lunch a look over their property and Alan's new water feature.

Those attending please let Anne know on 6775 1759.

A Favourite Native Plant in my Garden by Graeme Fairweather

On checking past issues of our newsletter I was surprised to see just how long it is since I made a contribution to this article.

Way back in February 1996 to be exact. On that occasion I featured *Boronia denticulata*, *Crowea Festival* and *Acacia baileyana*. Sadly the first two have succumbed, the *Boronia* last year, now replaced by another and the *Crowea* earlier this year.

The plant I wish to describe this time is *Eriostemon difformis subsp smithianthus*. This shrub was originally purchased from a nursery at Logan (south west of Brisbane) during our page 6

outing to Merv Hodges garden on the June long weekend 1994. The shrub has now reached a height of 70cms with a spread of 1mtr so is a very suitable plant for a rockery. It has light green terete leaves approximately 1cm long with the edges slightly serrated. The flowers are small white and star like at the terminal of the branches. It has continued to flower over several months and has another flower display late spring through early summer. This shrub handles frosts with no problems and was not affected by the drought during our last summer. One of my favourite plants and "as tough as old boots".

Coming Diary Events

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|---|---|
| <i>Tuesday 17 June at 7.30 pm:</i> | NO MONTHLY MEETING |
| <i>Sunday 22 June at 10.30 am :</i> | SOLSTICE DINNER at the Thiele's and Walsh's (See page 10) |
| <i>Sunday 29 June:</i> | Plant Display at Markets in the Mall |
| <i>Saturday 5 July at 1.00 pm:</i> | Arboretum Working Bee – bring afternoon tea, hats, and usual garden implements such as wheelbarrows, gloves, pruning shears, etc |
| <i>Monday 7 July at 7.30pm:</i> | Committee meeting at the Nevin's |
| <i>Tuesday 15 July at 7.30 pm:</i> | NO MONTHLY MEETING |
| <i>Sunday 27 July:</i> | Plant Display at Markets in the Mall |
| <i>Saturday 2 August at 1.00pm:</i> | Arboretum Working Bee – bring afternoon tea, hats, and usual garden implements such as wheelbarrows, gloves, pruning shears, etc |
| <i>Monday 4 August at 7.30pm:</i> | Committee meeting at the Nevin's |
| <i>Tuesday 19 August at 7.30pm:</i> | Monthly meeting at the Tree Group Environmental Centre
Ruth Tremont (subject to be announced in next newsletter) |
| <i>Sunday 31 August:</i>
<i>ALSO</i> | Plant Display at Markets in the Mall
Wattle Day Happening (see page for details) |
| <i>Monday 1 September at 7.30pm:</i> | Committee meeting at the Nevin's |
| <i>Saturday 6 September at 1.00pm:</i> | Arboretum Working Bee – bring afternoon tea, hats, and usual garden implements such as wheelbarrows, gloves, pruning shears, etc |
| <i>Tuesday 16 September at 7.30pm:</i> | Monthly meeting at the Tree Group Woodland Centre
(to be advised) |
| <i>Sunday 28 September:</i> | Plant Display at Markets in the Mall |

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

Single:	Annual Fee	Concession
	\$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