Hakea fraseri

Australian Plants Society

Armidale & District Group

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President:	Secretary:	Treasurer:
Barbara Nevin	**John Nevin**	**Phillip Rose**
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From Your President (at Mascot and about to board plane)

The cooperation and friendship of our members with the couple of major functions that we have had in the last few months has been very pleasing.

First we had the post conference tour following the ASGAP Conference in Newcastle; when John and I hosted a bus tour to the New England Region. In Tamworth Bill Harden had great support from the Tamworth members for their end and then our members joined walks in Torrington and Washpool/Gibraltar NPs. The trip was rounded off with our members hosting morning tea at the Tree Group Nursery and Environmental Centre in Armidale and then on to Warren and Gloria's garden. The comment from our visitors was that they enjoyed meeting up with other members form the host groups.

Our next major function was the St Peter's Open Garden and plant sale at the Stroud's; thank you all who helped with that. Despite the rain there were many visitors and we sold over 400 plants. Our thanks to the Stroud family for allowing us to use their garden for this.

I hope to see many of you at our Christmas function on 2 December at Mulligan's Hut at Gibraltar NP and don't forget the plant swap. If we don't see you then on behalf of your committee I wish you all a most fantastic Christmas season and that 2008 is as good as you could wish for yourself .

Best Wishes

Barbara

Participants; the post-conference tour, October 2007

Thank you authors for this month's articles and reports
Contributions to this newsletter are gratefully accepted at any time
Send to the Editor: Pam Rooney PO Box 807 Armidale 2350 or pamrooney@bigpond.com

GROUP INFORMATION

(Group commenced 6th August 1977)

We are a very friendly and helpful group who enjoy monthly meetings, garden visits and field trips to help members enjoy the search for knowledge about our native flora. 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 to our outings (page 9).

Business 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 Function is held in June.
Wattle Day Function is held on a day closest to 1 September.
December Meeting is taken up by an end of year function, usually a BBQ or picnic.

ALL YOU NEED TO JOIN OUR GROUP IS A GREAT LOVE OF OUR NATIVE PLANTS

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

Newsletters by email

If you received this newsletter by post and would be happy with an emailed copy in future please send an email to the Editor, ***pamrooney@bigpond.com*** .

Members without email addresses will continue to receive their newsletters by post.

General Meeting, 16th October:

Those of us who were able to attend the meeting were fortunate to hear our guest speaker, Colin Broadfoot from **'boggy creek natives'** Bellingen, speak about 'Native Plants in Landscaping'. Colin loves Australian plants and loves talking about them. He learned to propagate with the SGAP in Tasmanian and remains an enthusiastic propagator.

He gave us information about 70 or so plants that he finds useful including various ground covers, grasses and other monocotyledons, small shrubs, large shrubs and small trees and illustrated the talk with his excellent slides. For ground covers he mentioned, among others, prostrate forms of plants such as *Banksia integrifolia* and *oblongifolia*, *Casuarina glauca*, and *Leptespermum polygalifolium.* His small shrubs included *Kunzea opposita*, *Grevillea humilis* (prostrate form) which suckers and is good for banks, and also *Grevillea leiophylla* which also suckers and which Colin regards as a very useful plant. His larger plants included *Isopogon dawsonii* which he said is very hardy and he suggested growing *Jacksonia scoparia* to provide a continuum from the bush.

I warmed to many of his ideas such as green flowers in the landscape; Colin particularly likes *Callistemon pachyphyllus*.

I found this to be a very interesting and useful talk, thank you Colin.

Pam Rooney

Arboretum Working Bees are on the 1st Saturday of the month except November, December and January. Do bring all the relevant gardening equipment including a wheelbarrow if possible, plenty of water, sunscreen and hat and afternoon tea things.

Sunday Markets

The September Markets were exceptional with 62 plants sold. The good rains in late August may have triggered the gardening mood or perhaps it was a combination of school holidays and a lovely day?

We had good sales again in October with a further 45 pots sold. It was, I believe, a pleasant day with average good crowds.

The bubble did burst with November sales down to 25 pots. It was a beautiful day with an average crowd but they were not spending. Perhaps they were all shopped out due to the Centro opening earlier in the week. Non-plant stalls had a similar experience as well as other plant sellers.

Thanks to R Single, P Rooney, C&G Mulquiney. **Pat Urbonas**

Bi-Centennial Arboretum

Our October working bee consisted of planting out 34 plants, a little weeding and rubbish collection, and a lot of watering. It had been very dry and hot since the good rains late August and the hoses were going full bore! I had a look at the Arboretum plants recently (late November) and they were all looking good.

If we can get rid of the large copse of suckering Acacia boormanii , it may be worth while putting in some raised beds next year as a replacement and continue with massed planting of smaller growing plants.

Thanks to P&J Rose, P Rooney, C&A Grigg. **Pat Urbonas**

Markets in the Mall : Pat (6771 2293 or mob 0427 327 719) would like some help with the Plant Display at the monthly markets**.**

A letter from member, Kate Boyd:

"I am working for Armidale Tree Group on a contract for Armidale Council to help the grassy woodland ecosystem in Manna Gums Bushland Reserve regenerate: I wondered if any APS members would like to help with this.

The reserve is between O'Connor Rd and Memorial Drive near Armidale Cemetery. It includes a section of Black Gully as well as Manna Gum woodland on heavy black basalt soil and Blakely's Red Gum – Manna Gum woodland on areas with ironstone and river gravel in clay (I guess there might originally have been some Yellow Box but there is none surviving). Groundcover includes 10 native grasses and 35 native forbs and nearly as many introduced species (weeds). Two key parts of the project are controlling weeds and puting back into the least weedy areas some of the plants that were probably more common in the past (the weediest areas will continue to be slashed about twice each year). We have done a lot of weed work but can only hope to get make small sections close to weed-free if volunteers are interested in doing on-going bushland regeneration. We have also started the revegetation by growing some local wildflower species specially and got a few volunteers to help with planting these, as well as more trees, shrubs and Lomandras. The flowers we have planted so far are mostly peas and daisies (Jacksonia, Lotus australis, Cullen tenax (Psoralea), Indigophora adesmiifolia and Hardenbergia, 50 Yam daisies and a few plants of 4 other daisies) plus a few plants from other families.

Please could you ask APS members if they would like to help either as volunteers in the reserve or by growing some of the local wildflower species that are indigenous to our grassy woodlands? The volunteer sessions are usually on Thursday afternoons (e.g. between 4pm and 6pm or earlier if it suits anyone). If someone wants to grow plants to put in the Reserve I am happy to discuss what species would be most appropriate.

Also the small group of volunteers who do bushland regeneration in Drummond Park near Apex Lookout on Friday mornings would welcome new helping hands (any time between 7am and 11 am)."

Kate can be contacted at home on 6772 4026 or mobile 0429 72 4026.

From Warren and Gloria Sheather

Dungowan Star Bush

Some time ago we were given some cutting material of the rare Asterolasia from the Dungowan Dam area, near Tamworth. I thought that all the cuttings had expired but one survived. This plant disappeared amongst all the other plants waiting to find homes in the garden. I eventually found this specimen but in my ignorance though it was a Correa alba. The plant survived and thrived in the garden. Gloria maintained that the plant was not a Correa and in the fullness of time was proved to be correct.

This plant is about one metre tall with soft, hairy, almost oval leaves. The white flowers have five petals and prominent yellow anthers. Flowering occurs in spring and the blooms are carried in clusters on the ends of stems. Flowering is usually profuse. The Dungowan Star Bush has proved to be drought and frost tolerant.

The species is probably rarer than the highly-publicised Wollemi Pine.

10th October 07: The Sheather Garden; Warren Sheather with post-conference tour participants

The World's Tallest Kunzea

During a field trip near Comboyne we came across a tree with pendulous growth habit and small leaves. When the foliage was crushed it had a Myrtaceous perfume. The plant was identified as *Kunzea Species A*. Since then Volume 2 of the Flora of NSW has named the species as *Kunzea Middle Brother Mountain* and is found in wet sclerophyll forests, in the ranges between Taree and Kempsey. The species is uncommon.

Cuttings struck rapidly and the first specimens were planted about 11 years ago. These plants are now about 5 metres tall. Since then more specimens have been planted throughout the garden. In springs plants become covered with white, fluffy, typical Kunzea flowers. Although coming from moist and warm areas our plants have not suffered any damage from drought and frost. We would be happy to provide cuttings to any members who would be interested in growing this rare and splendid plant.

Prostanthera striatiflora

*Prostanthera striatiflo*ra is known as the Streaked Mint Bush or Jockey's Cap. The latter name refers to the shape of the flower. The flowers are about 2 centimetres long, white to cream with purple-striped throat. The lower petal lobe had orange blotches. Blooms are carried from August to November and are profuse and conspicuous. The leaves are 4.5 centimetres long by 1.3 centimetres wide and aromatic. Plants are said to reach a height of 2 metres. Our plants rarely exceed 1.5 metres in height. As with most Prostantheras, Jockey's Cap propagates rapidly from cuttings.

Prostanthera striatiflora is widely distributed and is found in semi-arid areas in NSW, South Australia, Western Australia and the Northern Territory. We have observed the species growing in the Flinders Ranges, South Australia and near Mootwingee, north east of Broken Hill.

Jockey's Cap is a very hardy, free-flowering plant that should survive and thrive in local gardens.

Grevillea williamsonii

Grevillea williamsonii is another rare species this time from Victoria. According to Olde and Marriott there is only one known population, of 12 plants, in the Grampian Mountains. Our plant was purchased from Sarah and David Caldwell (Mole Station Nursery). We are constantly amazed by the range of interesting plants that David and Sarah produce. Now the species is in cultivation its future should be assured.

Grevillea williamsonii is a spreading plant that will reach a height of one metre. The leaves are leathery, elliptic in shape and crowned with a sharp point. The unusual flowers are yellowish green with reddish pink styles.

Our specimen has survived one winter and the ongoing drought. The species would be suitable as a foreground plant in native garden beds.

Warren Sheather

20 facts about mulches — Kevin Handreck SA

(This article is taken from Garden Design study Group Newsletter N0 58 May 2007and was previously published in 'Gardening Australia', page 74 November 2005)

In nature, virtually all soils have a mulch on their surface. The soils of forests have litter and leaf mould; those of grasslands have a layer of decaying grass and mosses; many desert soils have a stony surface; the sand of sandy deserts is an excellent mulch.

In our gardens we use mulch as a substitute for these vital natural soil covers.

1. Look at the organic litter on a forest soil. It grades from very fine highly decomposed humus at the soil surface to the coarseness of recently fallen leaves and twigs on top. In our gardens the ideal mulch will be like that.

2. The most important property of a garden mulch is that it should reduce the rate of water evaporation from the soil below.

3. A mulch is like a blanket on the soil. The best mulches allow rain or irrigation water to move into the soil below, but they minimise the loss of water by evaporation. They reduce evaporation partly by providing a break between soil water and air. Water is not then simply 'sucked' out of the soil by the sun and wind. It has to pass as a vapour through the still layer of air within the mulch and this is much slower than direct evaporation.

4. Many of the organic mulches available in retail packs are too fine to be of top effectiveness. A thick layer (eg 50 mm) of fine mulch will hold most of the light rain that falls on it; only with heavy rain will the water actually reach the soil. There is no break between water and air so water wicks up through fine mulches. The rate of water loss from fine mulches can in fact be **higher** than that from bare soil.

5. In good mulches most of the particles will be larger than about 5mm. Only a small proportion will be smaller than 2 mm. The high the proportion of 'fines', the less effective will be the mulch in reducing water loss.

6. Loss of rain or sprinkler water from fine mulches can therefore be faster than that of bare soil. But if most of the water is applied below them (by drippers or soaker), they will reduce evaporation rate.

Continued on page 6

20 facts about mulch: Kevin Handreck (contd from page 5)

7. Fine mulches are excellent seed beds for weed seeds that are blown into the garden.

8. The large particles of coarse mulches will gradually decompose, so that after several years of additions, the earlier additions will have decomposed to be like fine humus of the bottom layer forest litter. The later additions will be doing the work of reducing evaporation. To speed up this process on a new bed, you could first apply a thin (eg 10 mm) layer of fine mulch and then a thicker layer (eg 40 mm) of coarse mulch that has few fines.

9. In summary the best benefit is obtained from water by applying irrigation beneath a coarse organic mulch.

10. Organic mulches are living mulches. They are gradually decomposed by small soil animals, fungi and bacteria. In the process nutrients are released for use by the plants.

11. But in addition plants actually help themselves to the nutrients in the mulch. Most plant roots have beneficial fungi (mycorrhiza) growing on them. These fungi send out hyphae into the lower layers of leaf mould where they secrete acids and enzymes that dissolve nutrients such as phosphorous and take them back to the plant.

12. Proteaceous plants do the same thing by producing clusters of fine roots in the humus layer. If you repeatedly remove leaf litter from a garden bed, you are robbing you plants. Poorer health and growth are inevitable.

13. Another benefit of mulches is that they protect the soil from the pounding of rain and irrigation water. On sloping ground soil erosion is minimised.

14. Mulches also shade the soil below. In summer the lower temperature under an organic mulch allows roots to continue to grow into the topsoil.

15. But in winter mulched soil will tend to be cooler tahn bare soil and plant growth may be slightly reduced and the effects of frost severe.

16. Any problems? There can be but they are minor compared with the benefits.

17. Uncomposted 'waste' material may contain weed seeds, may be temporarily toxic to plant roots and can reduce oxygen supply to plants for some months. Compos ting kills weed seeds and eliminates toxicity. Some extra nitrogenous fertilizer should be applied to woody mulches.

18. If you find that repeated heavy mulching produces water repellence in you soil, overcome this in the short term with a wetting agent; reduce applications.

19. Organic mulches are the best, but what about non-organic mulches (stones, crushed rock etc). These can give interesting decorative effects, but they are difficult to maintain in good condition. Fallen leaves have to be removed, so the benfits of the leaves to the plants is lost.

20. Plastic sheeting must not be used a s mulch. Unless it has holes punched into it, neither water nor oxygen can move into the soil below. Plants will be harmed. If you do want to use palstic, use woven products such as weed mat, whose holes allow water and oxygen to pass.

Kevin is the author of the book Gardening Down-Under (CSIRO).

EQUIPMENT AND MATERIALS LIST

For field work
- Small sketch pad or Botany book
- Digital camera (optional)
- Practical footwear and clothing for walking, hat and sunscreen etc
- HB pencil / pacer
- 2 x Large Cliplock bags
- Pruning shears or garden scissors

For studio work
- Plant identification books
- A3 Pad of "BondBank" paper
- Pencils ranging from F - 6B
- Sharpener of craft knife
- Kneadable Eraser
- A3 Cartridge paper (4/5 sheets or pad)
- Lamp (clamp or reading lamp)
- 30cm clear plastic ruler

***Note:** A limited amount of equipment will be available for students who are unable to bring their own. Specimen stands will also be available for sale for $10 each.*

PARTICIPANTS IN THIS WORKSHOP WILL LEARN:

- Basic botany – how to recognise local plants in the field
- How do collect visual field information to assist your drawing
- How, when and where to collect a good botanical specimen
- Techniques on how to identify the collected specimen
- How to set up a simple studio
- How to arrange the a specimen for drawing, securing, keeping it alive
- How to study and draw the plants characteristics in detail
- How to do draw a specimen to scale
- To clarify your drawing and transfer onto other papers
- Techniques on how to see and add tone
- Introduction to the different styles of botanical illustration

YOUR GUIDING ARTIST

Chris Rockley B. Natural History Illustration

Chris has a Bachelor in Natural History Illustration from Newcastle University. She has also completed a Plant Internship at The Royal Botanical Gardens Sydney. As well as spending several months with the in-house botanical illustrator.
Chris has a strong interest in science and botany in particular. She has created illustrations for three newly discovered plant species which are soon to be published.
Originally from the Inverell district she has a good knowledge of the local plant species.

"Drawing Native Plants"

WORKSHOP

12th & 15th December, 2007
Agriculture Research Station
Wellingrove

Adults: $75.00
Concession: $65.00

REGISTRATION BOOKINGS AND ENQUIRIES:
Chris Rockley - Phone: 0405 102963
Email: chris@chrisrockley.com
OR
Kathleen Davies - Phone: 0428 243 944
kathleen.davies@environment.nsw.gov.au

9.00am – Meet at studio
Talk on basic botany, scientific names and the main plant families in the local area. Students will be briefed on equipment to take out in the field and tips on how to overcome problems.

Field - Collecting visual information and specimens in the field.

Morning bush walk – This will give students a chance to see different plant families in the field. They will be asked to choose a plant and record it by drawing the plant shape and taking notes of how and where it grows. Also identifying distinctive features on the plant ie flowers, bark, leaf, roots or nuts. This will be combined with photos and small sketches of the plant to later identify your plant.

Specimen collection:
Kathleen Davies – Threatened species officer
Students will be made aware of laws regarding specimen collection. This will cover legal collection areas and protected species of the area.

They will learn to choose an ideal specimen for drawing and how to take a specimen without damaging the entire plant.. Extra leaves, flowers and nuts should also be collected for further investigation and dissection.

10.30am - Return to studio for morning tea.

Specimen identification: We will identify our chosen plant using reference books (a list of good reference books will be supplied and a list of local plants). Both the specimen and the visual recordings will be used to obtain this.

Setting up a studio: Tips include lighting, seating, tools and papers. Students will set up their drawing space, ready to draw.

Arranging the specimen - Setting up for the best composition, ways to secure the specimen in place, how the light falls, taking more photos of the specimen in this position (in case it dies, falls apart, flowers open up etc). Floristry techniques and original stands will be used.

12.00 – 12.30pm - Lunch

Becoming familiar with the plant - Students will sketch up the parts of their plant. Also having a closer look under the microscope or hand lens, is it hairy, raised or shiny? How does it reproduce? Some of these characteristics will have already been noted in the field.

How to draw the specimen to scale – Contour (line) drawing marking out the length, distance apart and angles etc. Use the drawings of the plant elements to draw up the leaves as reference. Composition and foreshortening and perspective will be looked at.

Clarifying the drawing – Using bond, tracing paper or bank paper, the students will trace over their rough outline and create a more finished line drawing.

Transferring the final drawing – Techniques including window/light box and graphite paper transferal.

How to see tone – Students will be shown how to see the different tonal areas using:
1. Lamp 2. Natural light 3. Photo & print out

Introduction to different styles of botanical artwork – Stylised, realistic, scientific, fabric or wallpaper design or architecture.

4.00pm – Pack up

Handouts will be given out on other courses available.

FOR YOUR DIARY, COMING EVENTS: December 07 to February 08

Wednesday 12th December	Workshop: Drawing Native Plants. Information page 6
Saturday 15th December	Workshop: Drawing Native Plants. Information page 6
Sunday 23rd December	Markets in the Mall
January	No activities
Saturday 2nd February	Working Bee at Arboretum 1pm
Monday 4th February 2008 7.30pm	Business Meeting at Nevin's. ALL WELCOME
Tuesday 19th February, 7.30pm	**Annual General Meeting** and Election of Office Bearers at the Tree Group Woodland Centre. All positions will be vacant. Please consider your skills and interests. Are you able to help our Society? Remember 'many hands make light work'. We are looking for new blood. If you are interested in helping please speak with a current committee member. The topic for discussion at this meeting will be "Plant labelling in the Garden". Members please bring your ideas for discussion.
Sunday 24th February	Markets in the Mall
Monday 3rd March	Business Meeting at Nevin's. ALL WELCOME
Tuesday 18th March 7.30pm	General Meeting at the Tree Group Woodland Centre

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION / RENEWAL FORM
for Australian Plant Society (ABN 87 002 680 408)

MEMBERSHIP TYPE: please tick appropriate box	**Annual Fee**	**Concession**
Single:	**$44**	**$36**
Joint: (2 adults at the same address)	**$52**	**$44**

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: ( )..... **email:.....**

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