

**AUSTRALIAN
PLANTS SOCIETY**



COFFS HARBOUR GROUP

NEWSLETTER No 132 – July 2017

Next Meeting at NCRBG
10 am Tuesday 11th of July
"A plant for every situation"

The theme of the day meeting, 10am, Tuesday 11th July "A Plant for Every Situation" has three speakers: Jennie Watkins will speak on the topic "Micro-climates in the garden and where to plant Australian natives". Janice Fitzpatrick will speak on "Clay soils and Australian native plantings", while Robert Watt will speak on the topic "Hedging and slopes, what can Australian natives provide?" It promises to be an interesting morning. Members and guests are also invited to bring along plant specimens for the display table and a light morning tea will be available.

Next Outing Sunday July 23rd Fortis Creek National Park.

The July outing will be to Fortis Creek National Park, 20m km north of Grafton, and will be led by Morrie Duggan. Fortis Creek National Park has a rich sandstone flora enjoying much damper conditions than the flora at the Rocky Creek Nature reserve visited last year. Plants already in flower include *Boronia rosmarinifolia*, *Ricinocarpus pinifolius*, *Lobelia andrewsii* and *Caladenia catenata*. There should be many more on the day

Since Morrie lives close to Grafton, we will initially gather at Morrie and Fiona's place for morning tea before heading off to the Park. Bring your lunch to have in the Park. **We will have morning tea at about 10 am and depart promptly for the Park at 10.30.** If you would like to check out Morrie and Fiona's garden and/or property, feel free to arrive as early as you like (within reason!) for a look around.

To get to Morrie's place (519 Mulquinneys Road, Braunstone) from **Coffs Harbour** take the **Coramba Road** and **Orara Way** through **Coramba**, **Nana Glen** and **Glenreagh** towards **Grafton**. About 60 km (give or take a bit) from Coffs Harbour, look for the **Neumann petrol station** at **Lanitza** on your right. Continue towards Grafton for 5.5 km. You will cross **Fiddlers Creek** and then **Bald Hill Creek**, and then pass a **'Road subject to flooding'** sign. **School Lane** will be on your left (there is a bus shelter on the corner). Turn left into **School Lane** and follow to the end (about 1 km) where it joins **Mulquinneys Road**. Turn left onto **Mulquinneys Road** (gravel) and follow across **Fiddlers Creek** (concrete bridge). We are the first house on the left about 500 metres past the bridge. **519** is marked on both the fence and the mailbox. If you live north of Coffs, you can follow the Pacific Highway north and turn left onto **Kungala Road** just before the **Rose Farm at Halfway Creek**. Follow **Kungala Road** until it meets the **Orara Way** south of **Lanitza**. Turn right then follow the above instructions from **Lanitza**.

If you have any questions, contact Morrie on 66493202 or morris@guarana.org.

Survey of Members

One of the annual tasks of the Committee is to produce a programme for the following year. This includes finding **speakers for the 12 monthly meetings**, as well as **venues for 6 outings**, every second month. We have our own opinions and we have tools to assist, including a record of previous speakers, a list of previous outings and outings together with the number of members attending each. But our President thought it would be a good idea to ask our members in a survey which will be sent as a separate email. Please take the time to fill it in.

Advance Notice Plant Photography November 14th

The Committee have decided that the theme for the discussion at the AGM on Tuesday, 14th November, 2017 starting at 10am, will be **"Talking Plant Photography"**. We already have interest from a number of members who are interested in plant photography and are willing to bring photographs they have taken and will speak about photographic techniques they have used - be they with highly technical equipment or the humble instamatic. However if **any member** would like to show examples of photographs they are really pleased with, please get in touch with Janice Fitzpatrick. We would be happy to show them on the day and any details of how they were taken can be given.

Xanthostemon youngii

Common Name: Red Penda

"Distribution and Ecology

Endemic to Queensland occurs in Cape York Peninsula. Altitudinal range quite small, from near sea level to 30 m. Grows in beach forest on sand dunes.

Natural History

A spectacular tree that produces large bunches of bright red flowers. It is unfortunate that it is difficult to grow except in deep sand."

The above is from Australian Tropical Rainforest Plants Key & gives the impression that this plant is particularly hard to grow. This is yet another example of, if you don't try you will never know.

I acquired this plant in 2001, as a very young seedling approx. 15cm high and have grown it in a container until recently when I decided to plant it in the ground. The main reason for growing in a container was the need for the plant to never dry out as this would mean certain 'death' for the plant & hence I used a water well pot up until 2016.

After moving to Wauchope in 2016 I decided the time had come to plant my Xanthostemon in the ground & see what happens. Well lo & behold it not only grew but has now flowered.

After 16 years I have eventually seen my plant flower & it was certainly worth the wait.

Finally I would say to anyone who is thinking of growing a plant that the books say is very difficult to grow ---- have a go, you never know what might happen & be pleasantly surprised.



Wayne Jeffery

May Outing Report Cathedral Rocks

Cathedral Rocks National Park is one of the regions' best kept secrets. It has diverse vegetation coupled with spectacular granite outcrops and our hardy and dedicated group were not disappointed on the day. Although it was raining at the coast, up on the ranges, the rain had cleared by lunch time. This is a great area to see massed flowering of *Banksia neoanglica*. This was previously known as *Banksia spinulosa* var *neoanglica* and was considered to be similar to *Banksia spinulosa* var. *cunninghamii* but has a lignotuber. (<http://anpsa.org.au/index.html>)



Tasmania stipitata (Dorrigo Pepper Bush) was showing off its distinctive blue fruit (which is edible but not addictive) in thick swathes intermingled with *Lomatia silaifolia*





Eucalyptus dalrympleana was a feature amongst the granite boulders, its bark colours enhanced by the wet weather. The granite boulders provide habitat for a wide diversity of lichens, mosses and ferns.





Thanks to Rob Watt for organising a great day out and to the other six stalwarts who didn't let a bit of rain stop them.

May Meeting Report

Alison Moore gave a very entertaining account of her and Angus' two months voluntary work for "Parks and Wildlife Service Tasmania" on Bruny Isle which is on the south east coast of Tasmania. The work involved maintaining a lighthouse and an old quarantine station as well as giving information and guidance to visitors. The talk was illustrated with images of the vegetation, views and wildlife plus she also added a comprehensive history of the area. The island's landscape has changed significantly in the past 230 years. I think one of the highlights must have been having quolls living under the cottage they were staying in. Thanks Alison for another informative and interesting presentation.

June Meeting Report Gwyn Clarke "Flora Round and About The Great Eastern Highway of Western Australia"

The Great Eastern Highway takes you from Perth to the Eastern States. On the way you travel through an area of WA with great granite rocks. Pockets of soil are trapped in the hollows and at the base there are various shrubs and other plants. Further from the rocks are Mallee woodlands with understorey plants. Much of these woodland areas have been cleared to allow wheat crops to be grown. From Billycatting Hill you can see this kind of scene.



While in spring this is quite an enjoyable area to explore with many colourful plants to see, other times of the year are less attractive. The average annual rainfall is 250mm. It is cold and frosty in winter and very hot in summer with many days in the 40s. This is a very different climate from ours and makes you wonder how any plant can grow there. Soils are often shallow and of low fertility too.

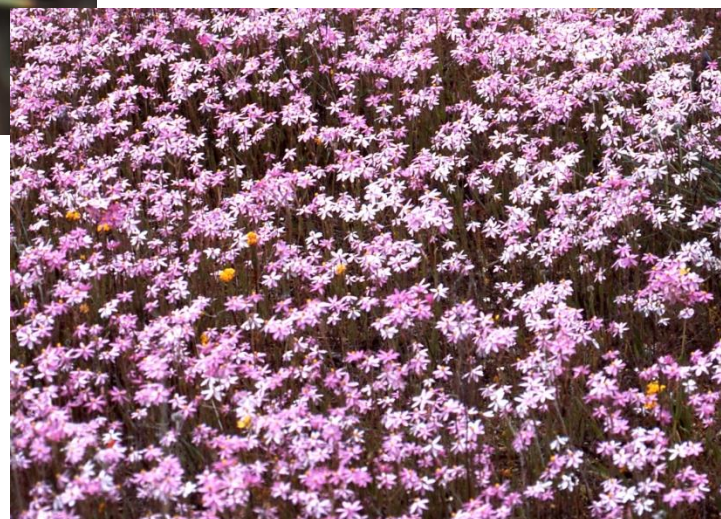
The plants living there have developed strategies to help them survive the stressful times. Most of you are familiar with the eucalypts, grevilleas, banksias etc. that grow in WA but other unusual and interesting species grow there. They have developed a range of techniques to help them survive.



This Comesperma for instance uses its stems for photosynthesis instead of leaves.

This helps the plant conserve moisture. Other genera also use this technique. I have an *Acacia aphylla* {from WA} that does exactly the same thing.

There are lots of other strategies used by plants. *Schoenia cassinianum* is a daisy that produces lots of flowers and seed so when the weather gets too hot and they die they have left behind a seed bank for the next wet season. Other plants that do this include many other daisies, goodenias and other short lived plants.





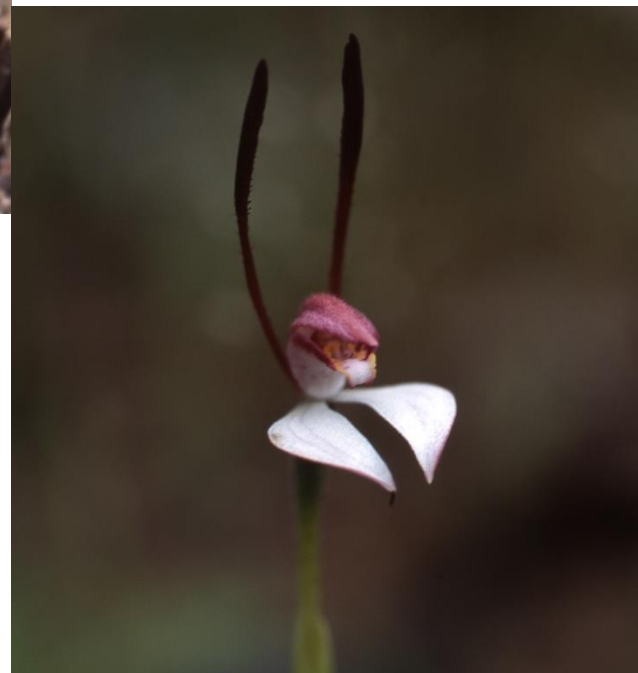
Plants (such as *Drosera*) use insects as food to help them cope with the poor fertility soils. Sticky pads catch the insects and they are digested by the plant.



Another strategy is having tough leaves, leaves with powdery coating, hairy leaves, waxy leaves, succulent leaves, narrow, pointy leaves or just tiny leaves. These all allow the plants that use them to conserve moisture. This is *Balaustion pulcherrimum*; notice the tiny silver coated leaves. Balaustion is a member of the Myrtle family

Then there are those plants that die on the top and leave behind a tuber, corm, thickened root etc., so that when the next good season comes around they will be ready. Many orchids use this method as do many of the strappy leaved plants.

This is the Hare Orchid.



Gwyn Clarke (Photographs by Geoff Clarke)

New Members

Please make welcome a new member John Gray and also Tim and Jennie Watkins who have re-joined after a year off

From the Editor

Thanks to Wayne Jeffery, Janice Fitzpatrick, Rob Watt, Gwyn Clarke and Geoff Clarke for their contributions to the Newsletter. The deadline for the September newsletter is August 31. As I will be away for most of July I am seeking two volunteers to write up a brief account of the July 11 meeting and of the July 23 outing to Fortis Creek. First in will get the jobs.

APS 2017 Annual Get Together in Coffs Harbour

Reminder to register now – Early Bird discount ends on July 14.

See our Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/nativeplantsCH> for details and registration form. The Saturday has talks, guided walks in the NCRBG and a dinner, with birdwatching, garden visits and a nature reserve walk on Sunday.

We urge all local members to come along to help showcase our amazing natural environment to our colleagues from across the state – it's not quite like volunteering for the Olympics but we'd appreciate all the help our local members can give over the 2 days to make visitors from other groups welcome.

For more information, or offers to help over the weekend, contact:

Janice Fitzpatrick: jfitzpatrick9@bigpond.com mob: 0418 350 937

Robert Watt: rob8milehill@yahoo.com.au ph: 02 6655 0043

Angela Lownie: angela_lownie@hotmail.com ph: 02 66561254 or 0408 605 057

Janice Fitzpatrick

“GROWING NATIVE PLANTS ON THE NORTH COAST OF NSW”

Our Group's Book is out of print and we are planning a new edition. We would like to give all members an opportunity to have input, especially where the plants we choose are concerned. Over the next four months we will be sending out lists of plants from the first book. It is very easy to provide information on these plants and then add some that have done well for you.

1. Have you grown any of these plants? Just put a tick next to those you have grown
2. Were the plants successful? Add Y or N after the tick
3. Put a cross next to any plant you would not recommend
4. List plants not on the list that have been successful in your garden

Also please tell us what the problems were with plants you would not recommend. I hope there are not too many.

Then the sheets can be forwarded to me at gcl.38500@bigpond.com. If you wish to post them the address is 123 Sandstone Drive Kungala 2460.

I look forward to receiving your input.

You will find the list on **Small Shrubs and Rockery Plants** and the list on **Shrubs** in a separate email. I would like them returned to me by the end of July please.

Many thanks,

Gwyn Clarke

Committee

President: Alison Moore E-mail: anchorsmoore@westnet.com.au (away on a Tasmanian lighthouse until May 1)

Vice President: Gwyn Clarke gcl.38500@bigpond.com

Secretary: Rob Watt E-mail: rob8milehill@yahoo.com.au

Treasurer: Janice Fitzpatrick Ph. 0418350937 E-mail: jfitzpatrick9@bigpond.com
39-41 Gale Street Coramba 2450

Newsletter Editor: Phil O'Shea P.O. Box 6176, Coffs Harbour, 2450. Ph. 0417988437
E-mail: philip.oshea@bigpond.com

Publicity Officer Angela Lownie E-mail angela_lownie@hotmail.com

APS Coffs Harbour Group Programme 2017

Day Meetings	Evening Meetings	Outings
11 July Tuesday 10am – 1.00pm “A Plant for Every Situation”		July Outing: 23 July Fortis Creek NP 20k north of Grafton (Leader Morrie Duggan)
	8 August Tues 7pm 10pm Guest: John Ross Proteaceae	
12 Sept Tuesday 10am -1.00pm Guest: Get-Together Debrief		September Outing: 24 September Mary Gibson's garden, Macksville
	10 Oct Tuesday 7pm 10pm Economic Uses of Native Plants” Angela Lownie	October Outing: 22 October Conglomerate SF –Plum Pudding Rd, via Sherwood Rd, off Bucca Rd Leader :Craig Henderson
14 Nov Tuesday 10am – 1.00pm AGM: Plant Photography discussion		
		Christmas Party Venue , date and time TBA