

# AUSTRALIAN PLANTS SOCIETY



*Syzygium australe*  
Coffs Harbour's floral emblem

## COFFS HARBOUR GROUP

**NEWSLETTER No 124 – March 2016**

**Next Outing Sunday March 20th 10 a.m.**  
**Flaggy Creek Nature Reserve Orara Way Kremnos Area**

Gwyn and Geoff Clarke, who live in this area, will lead the walk. This reserve is on sandstone (Kangaroo Creek Sandstone) and has a wide range of species representing dry sclerophyll forest and riparian forest with rainforest elements along the creek. This is the time of year for Banksias to be coming into flower and in this area there are always the opportunistic flowerers, just happy to flower after any shower. This area has a hilly descent which needs care, wear sensible shoes for walking. We will have lunch back at the parking area. As there is no seating a folding chair might be useful.

**Next Night Meeting Wednesday April 6th**  
**Display Room at NCRBG at 7.30pm**  
**Fungi Alison Moore**

This is our second night meeting for 2016 and our speaker will be our new president, Alison Moore, who will speak about fungi and in particular the fungi of Deal Island in Bass Strait.

There will be the usual raffle, lucky door prize and bring and buy table. Also bring along anything botanically interesting to share with other members. Supper will be served during the meeting.

### **From the President**

I would like to welcome all our members to the year ahead with a diverse programme which hopefully will have some appeal to everyone with our planned outings and guest speakers; with subjects as varied as Keying out Rainforest species with Gwen Harden in May, Birds in Backyards with Phil O'Shea in July, a talk on Banksias with Gwyn Clarke in August and Grafting Native plants with Col in November. Our full programme is outlined in this newsletter.

Following the AGM in early February both the President, Morrie Duggan, and the Secretary, Gwyn Clarke, stepped down having held these positions for three years. A sterling effort from them both I'm sure you will agree and hearty thanks from us all.

Continuing in their respective committee roles is Janice Fitzpatrick as Treasurer, Angela Lownie as Publicity Officer and Phil O'Shea as Newsletter Editor. New appointments are; Col Broadfoot, Vice-President, Rob Watt, Secretary and myself as President. The Committee would love to increase its members to at least another person, so if you are interested, please think about joining us. We are very friendly and meet every two months or as required. Call/email me or one of the other committee members to have a chat about what's involved.

**Alison Moore**

### **Report on our first outing for 2016, Bush Tucker Walk with Aboriginal Elder and NPWS Discovery Ranger, Mark Flanders.**

It was a warm January day for our first outing this year, which made the chosen location at Coffs Harbour Botanic Garden perfect for our walk along the Coffs Creek with Mark. A group of thirteen adults and two children attended and as we headed down the path towards the grassed picnic area adjacent to the creek Mark began demonstrating the practical uses and edibility of one of our native grasses in the Poaceae family. Further along the track we stopped to sample another bush tucker plant, the soft white pith of a *Gahnia clarkei* or Tall Sawsedge (sometimes referred to as cutting grass plant due to its saw toothed leaves, which slice flesh in an instant).

Next the group stopped at a Grass Tree (*Xanthorrhoea* sp.) where Mark explained a variety of aboriginal uses: as a direction finder when flowers initially opened on the sunny, northern side of the flowering spike, the flowery spikes were also made into a sweet drink by soaking in water and the soft basal parts of new leaves were eaten. The growing tip of the stem could also be eaten, however this destroyed the plant. The tall straight stems of the flower spikes made excellent spear shafts and plant bases were sometimes used to make a resin or gum in tool making.

The native Sandpaper Fig (*Ficus opposita*) fruit were sampled and found to be small and sweet eating. Down in the mud amongst the Grey Mangroves (*Avicennia marina* subsp. *australasica*) lining the creek, lives a great delicacy of aboriginal people, the mangrove worm which Mark assured us were delicious and tasted "like chicken". We



left the worms in peace. Various Scrambling vines were used to make twine and the young leaves of the red ash (*Alphitonia excelsa*) collected, placed in water and vigorously rubbed to make a soapy lather.

Mark is an excellent teacher and we all enjoyed learning and sampling just some of the native plants found along the creek in the Botanic Garden. My warm thanks to Mark for a practical and informative outing.

**Alison Moore**

## **September Field Trip – Goulburn River National Park and environs**

We invite you to join us for our September trip to the Goulburn River National Park and surrounding areas. The Park is located in the western Hunter Valley near the small township of Merriwa. It extends some 70 km along either side of the Goulburn River, immediately adjoining the northern boundary of the better-known Wollemi National Park.

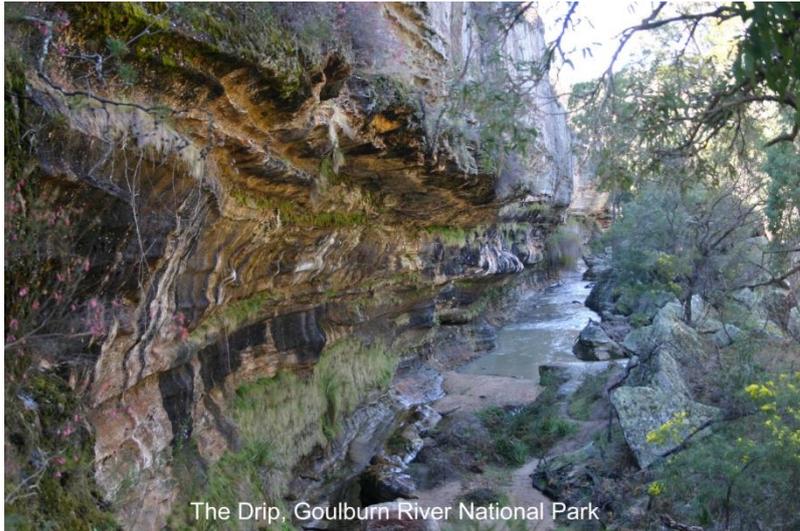
For those who missed my March daytime meeting talk on the park, it is an area having a rich and diverse flora with features of the Sydney sandstone flora merging with species from the somewhat more arid regions north and west of the Sydney Basin. The Park was originally gazetted partly on the basis of the number of rare and endangered species hosted by the area. It is also an area



with a rich indigenous history as a major trading route between the coast and western areas.

The trip will be run in a similar style to the Mount Kaputar trip in 2013 with day trips starting from Merriwa. We will use our own vehicles with car-pooling as much as possible. Accommodation options (detailed below) include motel, B&B and camping.

I happen to own a large (900 hectare) block of uncleared natural bushland adjoining the northern boundary of the park. A fire trail passing through this block and into the National park provides access to parts of the park and the River which are not easily accessible to the general public. This is a unique opportunity to visit this and other areas that can only be accessed through private property. We will also visit a couple of iconic localities including Lees Pinch (type locality for *Homoranthus darwinoides*) and The Drip.



The current plan is to begin the day trips from Merriwa on the morning of Monday 5 and winding up on Thursday 8 September. This means arriving at Merriwa by the evening of Sunday 4 September for the morning start. The timing will also allow anyone who is interested to attend the APS NSW Get-together in Tamworth (less than 2 hours drive from Merriwa) which is planned for the Sat-Sun 3-4 September. If there is sufficient interest, I will also be prepared to have an optional extra day (Friday 9) to a different but nearby area such as the Coolah Tops National Park.

If you are interested in joining us, please contact me as soon as possible by calling me on 6649 3202 (preferably at night) or by email at [morris@guarana.org](mailto:morris@guarana.org). I do not require a binding commitment at this stage but I would like a rough indication of numbers to assist in planning. If you are thinking of using one of the commercial accommodation options, I would also advise early booking as Merriwa is a small town and the number of rooms in the motel and B&Bs is quite limited

### **Accommodation Options**

El Dorando Motel, 50 Bettington Street, Merriwa 2329  
Phone (02) 6548 2273

The Shearers Quarters (B&B), 74 Flags Road , Merriwa, 2329  
Phone 02 6548 2509      Mobile 0409 582 452

B&B on Bettington, 119 Bettington Street, Merriwa, 2329  
Phone 02 6548 2777      Mobile 0409 326 735

[www.bbonbettingtonmerriwa.com.au](http://www.bbonbettingtonmerriwa.com.au)

Merriwa Caravan Park, Golden Highway, Merriwa 2329  
Phone 02 6548 2700      Mobile 0418 668 402.

In addition, there is unlimited space and many great spots for camping (tent, van or whatever) on the Duggan family property (Burrawong) 20 km south of Merriwa on the Merriwa River. This will also be a starting point for two of the day trips.

I will provide more details of itinerary, lunch and evening dining options etc., closer to the event for those who express an interest in coming on the trip.

### **Morrie Duggan**

## **From the Editor**

Many thanks to Alison Moore and Morrie Duggan for their contributions to this newsletter. Our full annual program has just been finalised and will be sent to you soon.

Please make welcome another new member Janet Whittle

**Phil O'Shea**

## **Meeting Report February 10th**

Barry Kemp spoke on the family Asteraceae, and in particular its taxonomy and diversity. This is the largest of all plant families with over 20,000 species worldwide. Australia has about 290 genera and 1400 native species. In addition we have over 200 exotic Asteraceae some of which are noxious weeds. The most distinctive feature of this family is that the flowers are grouped into compact inflorescences that resemble individual flowers. The "petals" we see are actually the outer flowers of the head. Many of the native Asteraceae inhabit harsh environments such as the seaside, deserts and alpine areas and are opportunistic flowerers. The brightness of the desert Asteraceae may be a response to competition for pollinating insects. Barry's collection of images from all over Australia showed the incredible diversity of this often very colourful family. Thanks Barry for another very interesting and well-structured presentation.

## **2106 OFFICE BEARERS**

**President:** Alison Moore E-mail: [anchorsmoore@westnet.com.au](mailto:anchorsmoore@westnet.com.au)

**Vice President:** Colin Broadfoot E-mail: [colbroad20@gmail.com](mailto:colbroad20@gmail.com)

**Secretary:** Rob Watt E-mail: [robmilehill@yahoo.com.au](mailto:robmilehill@yahoo.com.au)

**Treasurer:** Janice Fitzpatrick Ph 0418350937 E-mail: [jfitzpatrick9@bigpond.com](mailto:jfitzpatrick9@bigpond.com)  
39-41 Gale Street Coramba 2450

**Newsletter Editor:** Phil O'Shea P.O. Box 6176, Coffs Harbour, 2450. Ph. 66537472;  
E-mail: [philip.oshea@bigpond.com](mailto:philip.oshea@bigpond.com)

**Publicity Officer** Angela Lownie E-mail [angela\\_lownie@hotmail.com](mailto:angela_lownie@hotmail.com)

**Committee Members:** Vacant

## 2016 PROGRAMME

DAY MEETINGS TUESDAYS 2016 DISPLAY ROOM NCRBG	NIGHT MEETINGS WEDNESDAYS 2016 DISPLAY ROOM NCRBG	OUTINGS 2016
<i>08 MARCH TUESDAY 10.00AM - 12.30PM Goulburn River N.P. Morrie Duggan</i>	<i>10 FEBRUARY WEDNESDAY 7.30PM - 10.30PM AGM The Daisy Family Asteraceae Barry Kemp</i>	<i>30 JANUARY SATURDAY 10.00am START Aboriginal Uses for Local Plants Mark Flanders</i>
<i>10 MAY TUESDAY 10.00AM - 12.30PM Rainforest Key Workshop Gwen Harden</i>	<i>06 APRIL WEDNESDAY 7.30PM - 10.30PM Fungi of Deal Island Alison Moore</i>	<i>20 MARCH SUNDAY 10.00am Flaggy Creek Nature Reserve Gwyn &amp; Geoff Clarke</i>
<i>12 JULY TUESDAY 10.00AM - 12.30PM Birds in Backyards Phil O'Shea</i>	<i>08 JUNE WEDNESDAY 7.30PM - 10.30PM Members Talks R. Watt, A. Lownie, P. O'Shea Silent Auction Books from Library of J. Wrigley</i>	<i>22 MAY SUNDAY 10.00am Coramba Nature Reserve &amp; Star Creek Area Rowan McCabe</i>
<i>13 SEPTEMBER TUESDAY 10.00AM - 12.30PM Rare &amp; Endangered Plants Ian Corbett</i>	<i>10 AUGUST WEDNESDAY 7.30PM - 10.30PM Banksias</i>	<i>24 JULY SUNDAY 10.00am Garden Visit Phil O'Shea</i>
<i>06 NOVEMBER SUNDAY BOTANICA SUSTAINABLE LIVING FESTIVAL NCRBG</i>	<i>12 OCTOBER WEDNESDAY 7.30PM - 10.30PM  TBA</i>	<i>28 AUGUST SUNDAY 10.00am Visit by members of Canberra Region A walk to Tiki Reserve Alison Moore</i>
<i>08 NOVEMBER TUESDAY 10.00AM - 12.30PM Grafting Col Broadfoot</i>		<i>EARLY SEPTEMBER 5 DAY TOUR Goulburn River N.P. Morrie Duggan</i>
<i>CHRISTMAS EVENT 04 DECEMBER SUNDAY 12 NOON - 4.00PM NCRBG</i>		<i>23 OCTOBER SUNDAY Garden Visit Angela Lownie</i>

