

APS EAST HILLS GROUP NEWSLETTER



July 2019

NEXT EHG MEETING:

7.30 pm, Wednesday 3 July 2019

Eremophilas

Lyndal Thorburn

Leader of the Eremophila Study Group

Please bring specimens for the plant table and something to share for supper.

LUGARNO-PEAKHURST UNITING CHURCH

909 Forest Road Lugarno (opposite the Chivers Hill Lugarno shops)

VISITORS ARE WELCOME

WELCOME to the July 2019 edition of the APS East Hills Group Newsletter.

We have something special for our July meeting – Lyndal Thorburn, Leader of the Eremophila Study Group, is coming to speak to us. Our thanks to her, and also to Kate and Tony Porritt for hosting her at their place. Eremophilas or Emu Bushes are certainly amazing plants which can prompt devotion or even obsession – long-term East Hills Group members will remember Noel Gane and his amazing Eremophila garden. David Crawford wants to share his explorations of Eremophila with you so you will be 'primed' for Lyndal's talk – so please see page 2. This issue also includes details and the registration form for the Newcastle Get-together in August – don't forget to register! The usual meeting notes and diary dates are included too.

Something else to discuss at our July meeting: will we run an event at Sylvan Grove this Spring?

Our plant table last meeting was rather sparse, so do see if you can find something of interest to bring along to the July meeting. It doesn't have to be in flower!

Jan Douglas

Editor

<http://austplants.com.au/East-Hills>



A PRIMER FOR EREMOPHILA

David Crawford

Our guest speaker this month is Lyndal Thorburn, leader of the Eremophila Study Group. To get the most from this opportunity I thought I should do a little reading about Eremophila in preparation. Then I thought I should share a summary with members so we all come 'primed' and ready to learn and better appreciate this genus of plants.



Eremophila is a genus of plants entirely endemic to Australia (perhaps the largest such genus?). The name was created by Robert Brown in 1810 and the genus is generally included in the family Scrophularaceae. But an alternative botanical classification (which seems to be out of fashion) includes it in a smaller Australian based family Myoporaceae.

Eremophila is a widespread genus within Australia, being found in arid areas of all the mainland states. It is absent from Tasmania and at its commonest in Western Australia. In 2016 about 260 species were recognised with 220 described at that time and about 40 waiting to be described.

The name comes from Ancient Greek, 'eremos' meaning lonely or desert, and 'philos' meaning dear or beloved. It therefore alludes to the plant's preference for arid or desert conditions. Common names include Emu Bushes, Poverty Bushes and Fuchsia Bushes.

One species has been introduced to New Zealand (*E. debilis*). Some species are very widespread (e.g. *E. maculata* is found in all mainland states) while others have extremely restricted distributions and are therefore vulnerable to extinction.

The flowers are pollinated by birds or insects. They have the appearance of a two-lipped curved tube but in fact the corolla has five petals which are fully or partly fused. The upper lip is a different shape from the lower one and the structure reflects the preferred pollinator. The insect-pollinated species have flowers with two petals forming the upper lip and three for the lower, thus producing a 'landing pad' which may protrude while the stamens generally remain enclosed in the floral tube. These flowers are often blue or purple or white. Those 'designed' for bird pollination have four petals forming the upper lip and only one for the lower. The stamens are often exserted (protruding from the tube) and the flower colour is likely to be red, orange, yellow or green. In addition to the petals the flower generally has five sepals (some have only four) and these often add considerable interest and colour to the flower.

The fruit is a fleshy drupe (an indehiscent fruit in which an outer fleshy part surrounds a single shell of hardened endocarp with a seed inside). I believe it is a myth that they need to pass through an Emu in order to germinate. But I also believe that propagation from seed is not easy and cuttings are preferred. Grafting is also recommended for many species and Myoporum species are popular as rootstock.

Here in NSW I could find 21 species listed on PlantNet (Royal Botanic Garden Sydney) - this in contrast with 229 species in Western Australia. Our only local species here in Sydney is *Eremophila debilis* (Winter Apple or Amulla) which is an attractive groundcover plant and worth trying in the garden.

Robert (Bob) Chinnock is regarded as the leading expert on these plants. He is a retired professional botanist from the State Herbarium of South Australia.

A former member of East Hills Group, Noel Gane, who lived at Panania, was a dedicated and very successful grower of many Eremophila species. Noel grew many plants in raised beds in his

back yard and was very generous in the use of his special fertiliser, Condell Park Caviar (horse manure from the stables at the local trotting track).

Books

Eremophila and Allied Genera

Chinnock 2007 682 pages Rosenberg Publishing

Australia's Eremophilas: Changing gardens for a changing climate

Boschen, Wait, Goods 2008 271 pages Bloominings Books

A Field Guide to Eremophilas of Western Australia

Brown, Buirchell 2011 336 pages Simon Nevill Publications



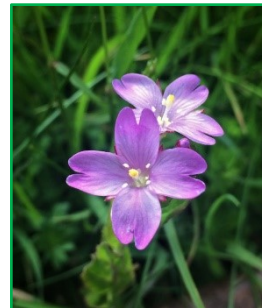
FROM OUR MAY MEETING

Karlo Taliana: Kosciuszko National Park – Landscape, walks and wildflowers

Here are some photos from Karlo Taliana's presentation on Kosciuszko National Park at our May meeting. Thanks Karlo!



L to R: Granite outcrops, Kosciuszko summit walk; *Veronica derwentiana* (Derwent Speedwell); *Orites lancifolia* (Alpine Orites).



L to R: 1 - *Hovea montana* (Alpine Rusty-pods); 2 - *Richea continentis* flower in close-up; 3 - *Eucalyptus pauciflora* (Snowgum) along Snowy River, Guthega; 4 - *Epilobium gunnianum* (Gunn's Willow-herb); 5 - *Prostanthera monticola* (Buffalo Mint-bush).



L to R: *Brachyscome spathulata* (Spoon Daisy); *Pimelea ligustrina* (Tall Rice Flower); *Stackhousia pulvinaris* (Alpine Candles).

FROM OUR JUNE MEETING PLANT TABLE – JUNE 2019

David Crawford provided the following list of plants from our June plant table.

Graham Walters and Jan Douglas provided the notes.

Adenanthos sericeus

Albany Woollybush

Banksia integrifolia

Coast Banksia

Hibiscus insularis

Phillip Island Hibiscus

Banksia integrifolia or **Coast Banksia** occurs along the East coast from Port Phillip in Victoria to Fraser Island where sandy soils are deep and consolidated. It is a common tree around beaches and woodlands near tidal inlets where it may grow to 15 m tall.

The adult leaves are mostly entire, oblanceolate and 5.5 to 10 cm long and 15 mm wide, dark green above, silvery underneath. Some leaves are irregularly toothed. The flower spikes are relatively small, about 10cm long, a lovely clear yellow, with straight styles. Flowers occur chiefly from January to June. The woody valves of the fruit protrude from the spike and are usually open, as the seeds are released as soon as they mature and the dry cones remain on the tree.

Coast Banksia is a handsome tree in the garden and provides nectar for birds and insects.

There are several subspecies. One of these, *B. integrifolia* subsp. *monticola* (White Mountain Banksia), is unusual in that it occurs in inland locations (its natural range is between Mount Wilson and New England National Park) and grows on soils derived from igneous rock, rather than in sandy soils.



Banksia integrifolia: **L to R**: tree at Snake Bay, south coast NSW; young flower spike; mature flower spike; cone. Mature flower photo by Karlo Taliana; other photos by Jan Douglas.

Adenanthos sericeus or **Albany Woollybush** is from the south coast of Western Australia. Its outstanding features are the fine soft texture and silvery-green colour of its foliage. It grows into a large shrub with a bushy habit that makes a great feature plant. Pink or red flowers occur in Spring – Summer, but they are tiny and scattered in ones and twos and are not a major feature. The shape of the individual flowers is like those of Grevilleas, but unlike Grevillea flowers they do not grow in showy clusters. Like Grevilleas, Woolly Bushes are in the Proteaceae family.

Albany Woollybush is often said to be best suited to areas of southern Australia that have dry summers



rather than the humid climates of Sydney and Brisbane, but good specimens have been grown in our part of Sydney e.g. Penshurst, Lugarno, Heathcote. Other species of the genus may be less tolerant! The Albany Woollybush prefers full sun or light shade in a dry, well-drained position and can be grown in containers. It can be propagated from seed, soft-wood cuttings and layering.

Hibiscus insularis or **Phillip Island Hibiscus** is listed as critically endangered and is found only on Phillip Island, a small island just to the south of Norfolk Island. (Not the island in Victoria known for motor racing and penguins!) The entire natural population is found in just two clumps.

In cultivation it is easy to grow and can be used as a hedge or a feature or background plant. It grows into a large shrub, up to 2m or more high, but copes well with pruning to shape. The leaves are about 5cm long and have wavy or lobed margins. The flowers are quite large (though not as large as on exotic hibiscus), start out a pale yellow and fade to mauve, have prominent maroon styles and a dark centre, and occur for much of the year. The photo shows the shape of the leaves, the variation in flower colour and the pale buds.



The plant copes well with dry conditions once established but seems to flower better if watered in dry times. It can be propagated from cuttings.

FROM OUR JUNE MEETING

APS EAST HILLS GROUP MEETING – WEDNESDAY 5 JUNE 2019

Lugarno–Peakhurst Uniting Church, Lugarno

Notes recorded by Jan Douglas

The meeting was opened by David Crawford in the absence of our President Graham Fry and Vice President Karlo Taliana at 7.35 pm. There were five apologies, most due to travel and one (Karlo) to illness.

David welcomed everyone, including our visitors, congratulated Lloyd Hedges on his recently-awarded Life Membership of APS NSW and mentioned a few coming events. He also reminded EHG members that their APS subscriptions are due at the end of June.

Our guest speaker, Miriam Stacy, gave a fascinating talk about the colonial history of the Rocks area of Sydney. Miriam described the regulatory framework for its management of development and provided thought-provoking examples of the challenges of retaining historic properties in the Rocks in a time of changing societal expectations (such as air conditioning) and competing interests. Before and after photos of various old buildings illustrated the story. Unfortunately the main digital projector at the church continues to be poorly adjusted, reducing image quality very significantly.

After Miriam's talk, Lloyd Hedges gave an account of the recent presentations at Menai Wildflower Group about the Five Islands restoration project. The plant table, raffle and plant sales followed. Three plants were offered for sale - these had been provided by Altra Nursery at a reduced price, and two were sold at that price. Our thanks go to Altra for this.

Supper concluded the evening's activities.

An Invitation...

You are cordially invited to the 2019 APS NSW Get-Together, hosted by Newcastle Group, at a range of locations in the Newcastle area with different native vegetation communities to explore. Your visit will take you to some of the gems of the area and you will be able to see the spectacular coastal flora at its peak.

Saturday morning – Hunter Region Botanic Gardens

We'll start at the award-winning Hunter Region Botanic Gardens (<https://huntergardens.org.au>). The Newcastle Group has been involved with the Gardens since its creation in 1986. The Gardens covers 133 hectares of Eucalypt forest on the deep sands of the Tomago sandbeds. There are many themed gardens amongst the forest that show our flora, both local to the Hunter Valley and the rest of Australia. The morning features a talk by Dr Stephen Bell on the 'Endemic Flora of the Hunter Region', before guided walks around the Gardens.

Enjoy morning tea and a catered lunch at the Gardens.

Saturday afternoon – Walks in Port Stephens area

We'll head towards the Port Stephens area for walks, guided by our local members. These will feature a range of different plant communities and the coastal flora as well as some spectacular coastal scenery.



Saturday evening – Dinner at Mayfield

From 6 pm, meet at Wests in Mayfield for dinner (at own expense). There is a good range of food choices to cater for a range of tastes. <https://www.westsnewcastle.com.au/casual-eats/the-bistro>

Sunday morning – Two walks: Glenrock Scout Camp and Awabakal Reserve

There are two walks, with time to do both:

1. Visit the Glenrock Scout Camp to see the garden of John Le Messurier, the 2018 ABC Gardener of the year (<https://www.theherald.com.au/story/5824155/glenrock-lagoon-pioneer-named-australias-best-gardener/>)
2. Walk out to the bluff at the Awabakal Nature Reserve, the destination for the annual "Awabakal Wildflower Walk". We will be visiting at the spring peak for wildflowers.



Sunday afternoon – Hunter Wetlands Centre

Enjoy a catered lunch at the Hunter Wetlands Centre, the home base for APS Newcastle Group (<https://wetlands.org.au>), followed by guided walks around the wetlands and a visit to the Newcastle Group's nursery for an opportunity to buy plants from the wide range of native plants produced by the 'Thursday Mob'.

Please register and pay by 2nd August 2019

Registration for the weekend is \$40 and includes lunch and morning tea on both Saturday and Sunday. Please fill out and return the attached form with payment (either by bank transfer or cheque).

Accommodation

Newcastle and the surrounds are well served by a variety of hotels and motels. There are a number of motels centrally located in the Mayfield area – both along Maitland Road (Pacific Highway) and there is also the Gateway Inn next to the Saturday evening dinner venue (West at Mayfield).



Australian Plants Society NSW
2019 Get-together hosted by Newcastle Group

Saturday 17 & Sunday 18 August 2019

Venues: Hunter Region Botanic Gardens, Hunter Wetlands Centre, Glenrock State Recreation Area, Awabakal Nature Reserve, other reserves and parks in the Newcastle area

Registration details:

Name:

Postal address:

.....

Town / Suburb

Postcode

Phone: **Mobile:** **Email:**

District Group

Please complete details below for each person attending Get-together:

Name	Special diet*	Registration \$40		Sat Dinner (At own cost)
		Sat	Sun	
	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N
	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N
	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N
	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N
Cost		@ \$40		
Total cost		\$		
Cheque (To: Aust. Plants Society Newcastle Group)				Y / N
Bank transfer (Account name as above, BSB: 650 000 Account: 530408206)				Y / N
Supply details on the Bank transfer which will identify your payment: Family name				
Date Payment made				

* If yes to Special diet, please specify:

Please return by email or post by 2nd August 2019

Registration Secretary: Maree McCarthy 0410 405 815

- **Email** FORM to: secretary.aps.newcastle@gmail.com (payment by bank transfer), **or**
- **Post** FORM and cheque to: PO Box 76, Adamstown NSW 2289

COMING EVENTS – CHECK YOUR DIARY!

You can find more district group events on the APS NSW website at <http://austplants.com.au/calendar>

Wednesday 3 July 2019 From 7.15 for 7.30 pm	East Hills Group meeting – Lyndal Thorburn, Leader of the APS Eremophila Study Group.
Saturday 6 and Sunday 7 July 10am to 4pm	Open Days: The Illawarra Grevillea Park , rear of Bulli Showground, Princes Highway, Bulli. Close to Bulli Train Station. For further information: The Illawarra Grevillea Park/Facebook, www.grevilleapark.org , johnelton@grevilleapark.org , or phone 0424 830 925. \$5 entry for others, children free. Plant and book sales, garden tours at 11 am.
Saturday 13 July 1 pm	Menai Wildflower Group – Ken Griffiths on Tracks in the Royal National Park . Illawong Rural Fire Brigade Headquarters, Old Illawarra Road, Illawong.
Saturday 13 and Sunday 14 July 10am to 4pm	Open Days: The Illawarra Grevillea Park – see entry above for more information.
Wednesday 17 July From 7.45pm for 8pm	Sutherland Group meeting – The Wonderful World of Wattles with Sutherland Group member Rhonda Daniels. Gymea Community Hall, 39 Gymea Bay Rd, Gymea
Saturday and Sunday 17 and 18 August 2019	APS NSW Get together in Newcastle. Please register and pay by 2 August 2019. Registration for the weekend is \$40 and includes lunch and morning tea on both Saturday and Sunday. See pages 6 and 7 for details and the registration form.
September – October 2019	ANPSA Biennial National Conference: Blooming Biodiversity. See your journal <i>Australian Plants</i> and https://meetingmasters.eventsair.com/QuickEventWebsitePortal/bloomingbiodiversity/eventinfo

EAST HILLS GROUP CONTACTS

President	Graham Fry	9580 6621	fryg45@gmail.com
Secretary	Liz Cameron	9580 6621	elsmere02@gmail.com
Newsletter Editor	Jan Douglas	9533 2187	janhd@iinet.net.au
Website Editor	Karlo Taliana	9786 8299	karlo.taliana@optusnet.com.au

<http://austplants.com.au/East-Hills>

