

# APS EAST HILLS GROUP NEWSLETTER



## August 2018

### NEXT EHG MEETING:

**7.30 pm, Wednesday 1 August 2018**

### **Travels in Colombia – Robert Walters**

Robert has visited the country twice, and recently trekked there.  
Come along for the adventure!

Please bring something to share for supper.

### **LUGARNO-PEAKHURST UNITING CHURCH**

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

**VISITORS WELCOME**

**WELCOME** to the August 2018 edition of the East Hills Group Newsletter. The main focus is our July meeting – just a sample of the interesting information and experiences from our members' night.

During our August meeting we'll travel to Colombia with our speaker, and also focus on things nearer home, including planning for the APS NSW quarterly gathering in September, an invitation from Bunnings and our annual donations. I hope to see you there!

Jan Douglas  
Editor

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



## FROM OUR JULY MEETING

Our July meeting included presentations from six members. Here's a taste of what they shared with us.

Words compiled by Liz Cameron and Jan Douglas  
Photos were provided by the members who spoke.

### Boyd Webster – An encounter with *Eucryphia lucida* (Tasmanian Leatherwood)

Boyd was on an ANPSA post-conference tour in January when he visited Nelson Falls in the Wild Rivers National Park and found Tasmanian Leatherwood (*Eucryphia lucida*, family Eucryphiaceae) flowering in abundance. He captured their beauty in his photos – petals strewn across the forest floor, white flowers with delicate anthers fading from red to grey, long narrow green leaves and lichen-covered trunks. The Leatherwoods were a prominent feature of the rainforest and Boyd recalled their pervasive fragrance. Leatherwood honey is a famous Tasmanian product, and there were clusters of beehives in forest clearings.

The Leatherwood is endemic to western, central and southern Tasmania and flowers from December to January. The trees Boyd saw were 2-10 m tall but the species can grow to 30 m and some cultivars are available.



### Dorothy Luther – A visit to Lord Howe Island

Dorothy recently visited the island for the first time and spent a week there. She briefly described its volcanic origin and topography and explained that a warm ocean current supports a coral reef around the island, with tropical species such as giant clams, clownfish, brilliantly-coloured wrasse, and hard and soft corals. A professor of macro-algae was also visiting Lord Howe and Dorothy learnt of the diversity of macro-algae – the browns, greens and reds - and their many uses in foods and other products. She described how the varied soils were reflected in changing vegetation from the low sandy centre of the island to rainforest on the slopes and cloud forest on the summit of Mt Gower (800 m above sea level).





The island has many endemic plant species, most famous of which is probably the Kentia Palm (*Howea forsteriana*, family: Arecaceae) which is a major export. Kentia Palms are slow-growing understorey plants and the first settlers used their fronds and trunks to build their houses. Photos above show a Kentia Palm nursery and Kentia Palms growing wild. David Crawford commented that the species is named after Johann and Georg Forster - father and son naturalists who first saw the palms when they accompanied Captain Cook on his second voyage to the Pacific.



Dorothy illustrated the luxuriant forest vegetation along the steep tracks – lots of ferns including stag horns, *Pandanus forsteri* with very long prop roots and one banyan (*Ficus macrophylla* f. *columnaris*) (photo above centre) that covered an area the size of a three-bedroom house. She met the flightless Woodhen (whose population has grown, with intensive conservation efforts, to about 320), and some of the Lord Howe Island stick insects or ‘tree lobsters’. The latter were wiped out on Lord Howe Island when Black Rats escaped onto the island from a shipwreck, but a very small population was discovered on nearby Balls Pyramid and a few individuals were collected. Those stick insects are the basis of a captive breeding colony and it is planned to release them on Lord Howe Island if a campaign to eliminate the rats is successful.

### Graham Walters – Success with *Acacia holosericea*

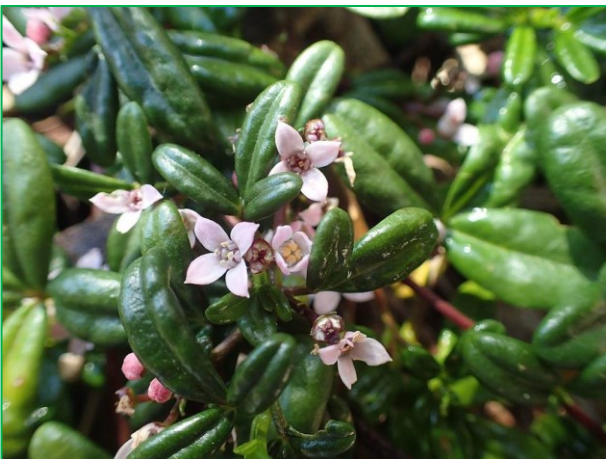
Graham won a small specimen of *Acacia holosericea* (also known as Strap Wattle, Candelabra Wattle, Soapbush Wattle or Silky Wattle) at the APS AGM and quarterly gathering hosted by the Central Coast Group at Kariong in May last year. It is a native of northern Australia, including the Pilbara. In Sydney Graham’s plant has already grown to 2 m in six months (maximum height about 4 m). Graham illustrated its attractive shape and broad blunt-tipped leaves which have earned it a common name of Strap Wattle. The flowers grow in bright yellow rods 3 – 6 cm long, usually in pairs. The resulting pods are tightly coiled, and usually tangled.





Graham also talked about and showed photos of the McCabes' garden outside Coffs Harbour which he visited during the APS regional gathering last September (photo above right).

### Graham Fry – *Zieria prostrata* (Headland Zieria) and other Zierias



Graham believes this plant is underappreciated. As the name suggests, it has a prostrate habit and in Graham's garden cascades attractively over a sandstone wall, the clustered glossy dark green leaves highlighted by small pale pink starry flowers in October and November. It is endemic to small patches of coastal heath north of Coffs Harbour and is listed as endangered at state and national level, but it is reasonably easy to propagate. Specimens in Graham's garden have lived for more than 20 years.

*Z. prostrata* was not described until 1996.

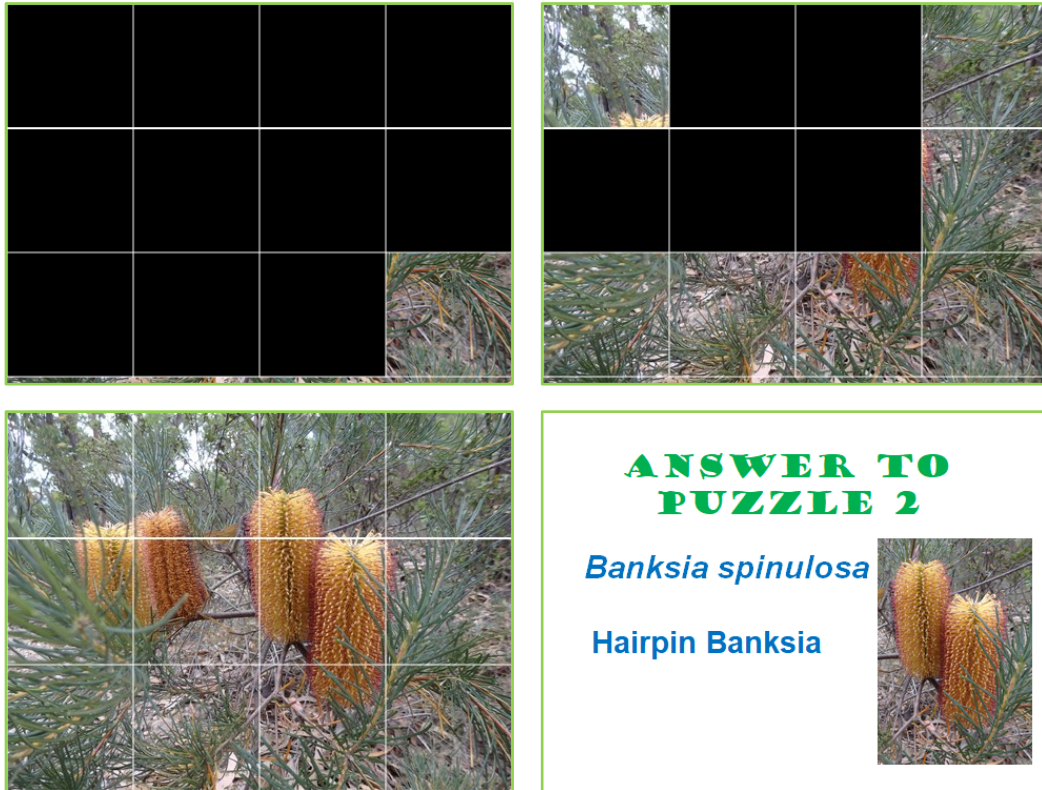
The genus *Zieria* was described by British botanist James Edward Smith in 1798 and about 45 species are currently recognised, almost all restricted to Australia. *Zieria* is related to *Boronia* but unlike the latter whose flowers have eight stamens, *Zieria* flowers have only four.

### Kyrill Taylor – a problem with *Lepidozamia peroffskyana* (Scaly Zamia)

Kyrill has an impressive specimen of this cycad, with a frond span of about 5 m, which has been growing in his garden for 55 years. It has produced fruits, and 'pups' which he has potted out, but for the last three years it has failed to produce any new fronds. It is not too dry and he has tried fertilising it with horse manure (known in EHG circles as 'Condell Park caviar' in memory of late EHG member and Eremophila guru Noel Gane) without success. Kyrill invited suggestions for encouraging new growth on the plant. [At least two members have since provided Kyrill with a possible reason for the lack of new fronds – *Editor*.]

## Jan Douglas – A plant identification puzzle

Jan showed photos of seven species of plants, gradually revealing their features and inviting identification by the audience.



### ANSWER TO PUZZLE 2

*Banksia spinulosa*

Hairpin Banksia



## PLANT TABLE – JULY 2018

Notes by Graham Walters.

Thanks to those who brought along plant specimens.

*Correa sp.*

*Grevillea fililoba*

*Grevillea lavendulacea* Black Range form (Lavender Grevillea)

*Grevillea leptobotrys* (Tangled Grevillea)

*Grevillea pinaster*

*Grevillea* 'Poorinda Constance'

*Grevillea* 'Winpara Gem'

### ***Correa sp.***

Correas are shrubs in the Rutaceae family. There are eleven species in the genus, which is native mainly in the eastern states. The genus is named after the Portuguese botanist and polymath Correia da Serra.

Correas generally grow to about 1 m high and can spread to 2-5 m, although hybrid Correas tend to be more compact than the wild species. They have opposite leaves. Their flowers have four petals united into a tube (except in *Correa alba*) and they have eight stamens.





### ***Grevillea fililoba***

This plant is considered by some to be a subspecies of *Grevillea thelemanniana*, both being similar in appearance. It occurs naturally on the Western Australian coast. In cultivation it is often known as *G. 'Ellendale'* or *G. 'Ellendale Pool'*.

*Grevillea fililoba* is a small dense spreading shrub which attains a height of 0.5 -1 m and spread of 1m to 2m. It prefers full sun. It has bright green narrow leaves and produces racemes of bright red or dark pink spider-shaped flowers with cream or yellow tips on the styles in winter and spring. Propagation is from seed or from cuttings, which strike fairly readily.

### ***Grevillea lavandulacea* Black Range form**

*Grevillea lavandulacea*, commonly called Lavender Grevillea. It occurs naturally in heath and woodlands in western Victoria. and south-eastern South Australia. It is a variable species with a number of distinct horticultural forms in cultivation, mostly named for their geographic origin. The Black Range form is from western Victoria.

The form from Tanunda area in SA is one of the most popular. It is a low spreading stub to 0.3 m high by 1 m spread with brilliant red spider flowers. Other forms include 'Penola' and 'Victor Harbor' (from South Australia) and 'Billywing' (from western Victoria). The differences between the forms may include flower and foliage colour and plant growth habit. All forms are small shrubs rarely exceeding 1 m in height.

Some botanists recognise two botanical varieties: The type variety, *Grevillea lavandulacea* var *lavandulacea*, occurs across the whole range of the species, while *Grevillea lavandulacea* var *sericea* is restricted to Western Victoria. It differs from the type in having narrow leaves with silky hairs, hence the name 'sericea', meaning hairy.

*G. lavandulacea* is popular in cultivation. It performs best in drier climates without excessive summer humidity. It prefers a sunny position but will tolerate some light shade and is tolerant of at least moderate frost. Cuttings strike fairly readily.

### ***Grevillea leptobotrys***

(Photo at right by Karlo Taliana.)

This beautiful plant occurs in woodland in the south-west of Western Australia. Its name is derived from the Greek 'leptos' meaning slender, referring to the small slender clusters of flowers. For many years it was sold under the name *Grevillea flexuosa*, a separate species which is not common in cultivation.



*G. leptobotrys* is a very unusual species, certainly not what most people would regard as a typical Grevillea. It is usually a low spreading shrub, ranging from completely prostrate to about 0.5 m tall and spreading up to 3 m across. The leaves are up to 100 mm long, usually divided into segments, with prominent stalks. The tips of the leaflets have a small point. The pink flowers form in racemes the ends of the branches in the upper axils and usually occur from spring through to mid-summer.

*G. leptobotrys* is a very desirable garden plant because of its attractive foliage, flowers and growth habit. However it has not been particularly successful, even in dry summer climates, which would be expected to suit it. In more humid areas it rarely survives more than a few seasons. For any sort of success, well-drained soil in a semi-shaded situation is required. Some success has been achieved by growing the plant in a container. In the long term grafting onto a hardy rootstock (such as *Grevillea robur*) is required. Propagation from cuttings of firm current seasons growth is reasonably successful.

### ***Grevillea* 'Poorinda Constance'**

This is a fast-growing dense shrub which can attain a height of 2-4 m and makes an excellent hedge or screen. Its profuse orange-red spider flowers appear in autumn, winter and spring and attract birds. It prefers well-drained light or heavy soils in full sun or partial shade and tolerates heavy frost and extended dry periods once established. Prune for compact growth when young; doesn't need or like heavy pruning once established. It is assumed to be a hybrid between *G. juniperina* and a red-flowered form of *G. victoriae*.

### ***Grevillea* 'Winpara Gem'**

This attractive plant arose as a seedling on a property called 'Winpara' at Jervois in South Australia in 1981, and is purported to be a hybrid between *G. thelemanniana* and *G. olivacea*. It has proved to be more vigorous than *G. thelemanniana*, is drought tolerant and relatively frost hardy. An open sunny position is best.

*Grevillea* 'Winpara Gem' is a dense shrub to 2 m tall by up to 3 m wide. The leaves are grey-green, deeply divided (almost to the mid-rib), with a pungent tip to each lobe. Leaf edges are rolled under. The venation is particularly prominent. Flowers are in terminal racemes on short lateral branchlets arising from the older wood, and occur from April to mid-October. The perianth is dark in colour but appears lighter due to a dense covering of fine white hairs. Propagation is by vegetative means.

## **THE BUSINESS**

### **East Hills Group meeting – 4 July 2018**

Minutes by Liz Cameron

Income at meeting:

Raffle tickets	\$20
Membership renewals	<u>\$96</u>
Total	\$116

The meeting opened at 7.45 pm with 15 in attendance, including two members from Menai Wildflower Group – Lloyd and Mary Hedges.

Graham Fry explained it would be an informal meeting, with members contributing short presentations on a range of topics. These were as follows – more details are given in the meeting report (starting on page 2):

- Boyd Webster – An encounter with *Eucryphia lucida* (Tasmanian Leatherwood)
- Dorothy Luther – A visit to Lord Howe Island
- Graham Walters – Success with growing *Acacia holosericea* (Strap Wattle)
- Graham Fry – *Zieria prostrata* (Headland Zieria) and other Zierias
- Kyrill Taylor – A problem with *Lepidozamia peroffskyana*
- Jan Douglas – A plant identification puzzle.

Announcements at the conclusion of the presentations:

Graham foreshadowed discussion and planning at the next meeting, on 1<sup>st</sup> August, on

- hosting the APS NSW regional meeting at Sylvan Grove and Lugarno Uniting Church Hall
- an invitation from Bunnings Kingsgrove for an APS member to talk about growing native plants and
- annual donations to conservation organisations to be made at the next meeting on 1st August. [Recipients of donations made in previous three years are listed below].

Graham Walters has lined up some excellent talks for the next three meetings –

- August – Rob Walters on travels in Colombia; he has visited the country twice and recently trekked there
- September – Rhonda Daniels (Sutherland Group) on Sir Joseph Banks, his legacy, and the Joseph Banks Native Plants Reserve in Kareela. A few of us heard Rhonda's presentation at the Sutherland meeting in June; it is highly recommended
- October – Dr John Martin, Wildlife Ecologist at the Royal Botanic Garden Sydney; John's research projects include the urban ecology of cockatoos, ibis, Powerful Owls, Grey-headed Flying-fox and European Red Fox.

We welcome suggestions for a speaker at our November meeting.

Graham Fry confirmed that the delayed election of office-bearers for the APS NSW executive was successfully completed at Sutherland Group's monthly meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> June.

Lloyd Hedges reminded members that the next meeting of Menai Wildflower Group will be on the Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> July at 1 pm. Speakers will be Drs Mark Ooi and John Porter, on 'Season and Smoke – key elements in germination and dormancy'. The gardens at the Illawong Rural Fire Station will open at midday.

Dave Crawford announced that a replacement was needed as Wendy Grimm was stepping down from her role as Study Group Co-ordinator.

Plant table.

Only a few plants available for the raffle – this is an indication of the extent to which Karlo Taliana has been contributing in the past to the propagation of plants for our meetings.

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Previous donations to Conservation Organisations

Organisation		2015	2016 6 July	2017 1 Nov	2018
NCC (Nature Conservation Society)		\$50	\$50		
EDO (Environmental Defender's Office)		\$50	\$50	\$75	
AWC (Australian Wildlife Conservancy)		\$50	\$50	\$75	
Australian Bush Heritage		\$50		\$75	
TEC (Total Environment Centre)			\$50	\$75	

Extract from notes from EHG meeting 1 November 2017:

Usual amount is \$200 in total but Karlo suggested an increase because EHG income has increased, largely thanks to sale of plants (many of which Karlo propagated).

THAT \$75 be donated to each of following organisations: EDO (Environmental Defender's Office), AWC (Australian Wildlife Conservancy), Australian Bush Heritage and TEC (Total Environment Centre).

Moved: Graham Fry

Seconded: Dorothy Taylor

CARRIED



Marie O'Connor suggested smaller organisations might need modest donations such as this more than the larger organisations. Something to consider when disbursing donations next year.



## COMING EVENTS – CHECK YOUR DIARY!

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

Wednesday 1 August 2018 From 7 for 7.30 pm	<b>East Hills Group meeting:</b> Robert Walters: Travels in Colombia. Please bring supper to share and specimens for the Plant Table.
Saturday 4 August 1 pm	<b>East Hills Group propagation session</b> with Menai Wildflower Group. Illawong Rural Fire Brigade Headquarters. <a href="#">[click for map]</a>
Saturday 11 August 1 pm	<b>Menai Wildflower Group Meeting:</b> Emeritus Professor Gerald Nanson from University of Wollongong talking on Australian biogeography of plants. Illawong Rural Fire Brigade Headquarters.
Wednesday 15 August 7.45 pm for 8 pm	<b>Sutherland Group meeting:</b> Tony Porritt: Rare and interesting plants from the Top End Gynea Community Hall, 39 Gynea Bay Rd, Gynea.
Wednesday 5 September	<b>East Hills Group meeting:</b> Rhonda Daniels (from Sutherland Group) on Sir Joseph Banks, his legacy, and the Joseph Banks Native Plants Reserve in Kareela.
Saturday /Sunday, 8/9 September 9.30 am – 4 pm	<b>Westleigh Native Plants sale and garden open day.</b> Free entry. 47 Eucalyptus Drive, Westleigh 2120
Saturday 22 September	<b>APS NSW quarterly gathering hosted by East Hills Group.</b>

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