





# **APS HARBOUR GEORGES RIVER NEWSLETTER – January 2023**

## **NEXT HARBOUR GEORGES RIVER EVENT:**

Wednesday 1st February from 10 am
University of Sydney
Tour of extensive native plantings
And Chau Chak Wing Museum
Meet at Abercrombie & Shepherd St, Redfern
Charles Kernan Reserve

With an opportunity to socialise over coffee

## VISITORS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME

Welcome to the January 2023 edition of the APS Harbour Georges River Group Newsletter.

We have a lengthy report on last year's achievements from the Annual General Meeting and some new volunteers working on needed tasks. We have begun to plan for this year's events now that everyone has recovered from the festive season. There is some more on propagation - from seed this time, and some supplies for sale. Events in the neighbourhood contain some good news and some not so good news with another patch of bush under threat. Eternal vigilance is certainly needed from all hands to protect our precious remnants & regeneration efforts.

Plenty of opportunities to step up & be counted.

Dorothy Luther, Editor

In the spirit of reconciliation, the APS Harbour Georges River group acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of country throughout Australia and their connections to land, sea and community. We pay our respect to elders past and present and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples today.

https://www.austplants.com.au/Harbour-Georges-River

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## A NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Members,

Wishing you all a very happy 2023.

I hope you enjoy your gardens as you try different plants and designs that will bring pleasure to you and your family.

The last few years have been challenging for native plants. It can give us an opportunity to try something different as we chat to each other about our garden issues.

I look forward to seeing you all at our different events throughout the year. The Committee welcomes any suggestions and feedback to keep our group engaged and engaging in the APS.

We are continuing to expand our membership and reach within the community. This means more tasks to be done such as propagation and organising events, not necessarily committee roles, but very important. We also need to tighten up our financial processes to work within the modern electronic age. Please consider volunteering a few hours of your month towards our group and spreading the word about native plants in our patch. Many hands make good teamwork and small tasks for everyone.

Warmest regards to you all.
Marie O'Connor. President HGR APS.



Marie's photo of the *Rhododendron lochiae* in their garden.

Her story about them:

I bought two of them from Brian Roach at a quarterly meeting. They have been in for about three years, in a shaded well drained position, at the side of our house.

They are easy to grow and propagate from cuttings.

I need to prune ours regularly due to the space available.

Sylvan Grove also has quite a few planted throughout the garden.

#### **NEXT MEETING**

## University of Sydney, Wednesday 1st February 10 am

Visit University of Sydney to explore the extensive use of native plantings; and later visit the Chau Chak Wing Museum. We will be guided by one of Andrew's contacts, or by the Mobile phone app. of the native plantings. We will adjourn to the museum café for refreshments after the tour.

#### Where

Recommend catching a train to Redfern station. Turn left into Lawson St & then left again into Abercrombie St. (at the Glengarry Castle Pub). We'll be loitering in the little park, Charles Kernan Reserve, before the lights on the corner of Shepherd St.



## LAST MEETING – CHRISTMAS PARTY

## **Report on the Annual General Meeting**

#### President's report

Most of the President's report was in the last newsletter. Here is an excerpt.

I wish to thank the outgoing committee for all their help and support throughout the year. Also welcome to the members who are attending their first Christmas party with us. I wish to particularly thank Dorothy for standing in as acting President when I have been dealing with health issues for Des & I.

In spite of COVID and monsoonal rains, we managed to hold 10 meetings (including this one), mostly outdoors. Two were held via Zoom and one became an impromptu lunch at a member's home. Only 2 have been held in a church hall, unlike previous years. Only one was cancelled due to rain. Following our goal to get to know 'our patch', we visited the length & breadth of 'our patch' from Sylvan Grove to Malabar, from the Royal Botanic Gardens to Hurstville.

The group is growing and we look forward to a great 2023.

We can be proud of our achievements and all that our group has done. It endorses what I have become aware of, the power of a group working together, each using their skills and we are then able to have a successful & positive group.

#### Treasurer's report

During 2022 our finances were satisfactory with a surplus for the year of \$360.62. This was achieved through increased income from plant sales and lower expenditure due to not having any meeting costs because of the lack of indoor meetings. We had a significant one-off cost due to IT costs associated with the renaming of the group. No donations were made to conservation groups during the year.

	2022	2021
Income		
Membership	\$ -	\$ 48.00
Rebate from HO	\$220.00	\$ 90.00
Plant Sales	\$497.50	\$ 351.00
Raffles	\$47.30	\$ 192.00
Bank Interest	\$ -	\$-
Donations	\$ -	\$-
Sundries	\$100.00	\$-
Total	\$864.80	\$ 681.00
Expenditure		
Subs to APS	\$ -	\$ 48.00
Postage	\$ -	\$-
Editorial Expenses	\$ -	\$-
Plant Purchase	\$55.90	\$-
Admin	\$448.28	\$-
Cost of Activities	\$ -	\$-
Meeting Costs	\$ -	\$ 433.13
Donations	\$ -	\$-
Sundries	\$ -	\$-
Total	\$504.18	\$ 481.13
Surplus\Loss	\$360.62	\$ 199.87
Account Balance as at 31st December	\$5,338.39	\$4,977.77

#### Notes:

**Membership** is money received by HGR for membership & forwarded to APS NSW. We no longer use this method of paying membership.

**Rebate from HO** is the amount that HGR receive out of your membership each year. It is paid in arrears, on the anniversary of joining. We only receive the rebate from memberships registered as primary members of our group. Although we had 32 members at the end of December, some are joint memberships and we get \$10 from the couple.

#### Secretary's Report

This was the first AGM of the Harbour Georges River Group of APS NSW which was created in December 2021 to replace the East Hills Group. We replaced monthly evening meetings in Lugarno with events held at different times and days of the week and at locations spread across the catchment.

It was difficult to have a traditional plant table at outdoor venues but Boyd Webster, Dave Crawford and Jan Douglas managed to provide notes and photos of plants encountered at most of our events. Plant sales were limited for the same reason, but some propagated by Karlo Taliana and Graham Fry raised revenue for the group.

Wet weather complicated our plans in 2022, but thanks to the efforts of Dorothy Luther and Marie O'Connor, we were able to accommodate changes to the program at short notice.

We held ten meetings, the first two on Zoom - Ruby Stevens (Macquarie University) spoke in February on "Floral traits in Australian plant communities" and in March, we were given a virtual tour of Marie & Des O'Connor's garden in southern Sydney.

Our May event was a gathering at Sylvan Grove Native Garden, to plant three native trees in memory of senior East Hills Group members who had died recently - Hugh Stacey, Kyrill Taylor and Graham and Margaret Walters. It was attended by members of their families and representatives of other APS groups.

In June a volunteer guide at the Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney gave us a tour of some iconic Australian plants in the grounds and introduced the Inside the Tide exhibition in The Calyx. Rain spoilt our plans in July for a Patches of Urban Bush (PUB) crawl along the inner west light rail line but Dorothy Luther generously hosted a lunch at her home where two Inner West Environment Group (IWEG) members gave a talk about the urban bush regeneration program along the Greenway.

August's event was a tour of sand dune restoration guided by a Randwick Council Bushcare Officer, then a walk in Malabar NP (rescheduled from April because of wet weather). In September we returned to Sylvan Grove for a guided tour with resident horticulturist Jim Mackay of iconic trees and shrubs in flower.

Our open garden event postponed from March, finally happened in October at the homes of Marie and Des O'Connor (Connells Point) and Graham Fry and Liz (Hurstville Grove).

The second last meeting of the year was held indoors in the Earlwood Uniting Church Hall where there was a discussion and demonstration of propagation of Australian native plants. We returned to the UC Hall in December for our AGM and Christmas party.

Some of our members attended the APS NSW Quarterly gathering in March hosted by Menai Wildflower Group at Illawong Rural Fire Station, and the ANPSA Biennial Conference in Kiama in September where HGR President Marie O'Connor assisted with the organisation.

HGR members also partnered with the Wolli Creek Preservation Society to hold an enjoyable Picnic for Nature in Girrahween NP, Earlwood as part of a state-wide event coordinated by the Nature Conservation Council.

#### **Election Of Office-Bearers**

Trevor Jennings then conducted the election of office-bearers for 2023, declaring all positions vacant and calling for nominations. The following were elected:

Position	Nominee
President	Marie O'Connor
Vice-President	Graham Fry
Vice-President	Dorothy Luther
Secretary	Liz Cameron

Treasurer Sandra Rogers [change]

Committee member Karen Fong

The following members accepted operational appointments:

PositionAppointedNewsletter EditorDorothy LutherWebsite EditorDorothy Luther

Facebook Group Administrator Andrew Sinclair [new role]

Plant Table Recorder Boyd Webster

Librarian Kerry Snelgrove [change]

## **General Meeting**

Extract from minutes of meeting, prepared by Liz Cameron.

Jennifer Street, Eastern Suburbs – threats to the integrity of an endangered ecological community. Andrew Sinclair drew the group's attention to a development proposal for 11 Jennifer Street, adjacent to the Jennifer Street section of Kamay Botany Bay NP. A critically endangered ecological community, Eastern Suburbs Banksia Scrub (ESBS), grows in Jennifer Street and the development will undoubtedly have deleterious effects on it. Andrew read a letter he has drafted to Randwick Council, voicing the concerns of Harbour Georges River group of APS. The meeting approved Andrew's submission on behalf of our group.

## **Christmas Party**

The meeting was followed by a musical interlude - Karen Fong led us in singing some Australian songs inspired by the bush, while she accompanied us on her English concertina; it was a joyful Christmas experience.

Two lucky door prizes were drawn; Ebony Jennings received a potted kangaroo paw grown by Marie, and Karen Fong drew a pair of gardening gloves.

The gathering concluded with a delicious supper generously provided by members (including Marie who sent her famous passionfruit sponge and decorative tablecloths). It was great to see everyone mingling and sharing conversations over the meal.



1 Colin and I were in the Botanic Gardens this morning. I thought you'd all appreciate this photo of the cassowary with his Xmas decorations. from Karen

## **GROUP NEWS**

## **Planning for 2023**

In 2022 our group's monthly gatherings were held at a range of localities and at different times of the day and on different days of the week. In 2023 we plan to continue holding some events outdoors and others indoors (mostly evenings).

So far, we have 3 more activities planned:

- Sat 11 Mar 2023, piggy back onto APS NSW Gathering at Bundeena Community Hall, hosted by Sutherland group. Bundeena can be accessed by ferry from Cronulla: <a href="https://cronullaferries.com.au/ferries-to-bundeena">https://cronullaferries.com.au/ferries-to-bundeena</a> old/bundeena-timetable/ Details to be confirmed.
- Wed 5<sup>th</sup> April evening, indoor meeting with a guest speaker (TBA), at the Earlwood Uniting Church Hall, 16 William Street, Earlwood.
- Sun 7<sup>th</sup> May, from 10 am. Visit Sydney Park coffee shop, community gardens, wetland, 2 hr walk. Meet at the brickworks, opposite St Peters Station. There are also buses along Princes Highway. Details to be confirmed.

## **Garden Supplies**

Ashlie Stevenson, a member of HGR, has donated to our group some garden supplies, including plant foods and pesticides. It was agreed that the supplies be offered to HGR members and that we reimburse Ashlie for any that we use. You may also have friends or neighbours who would be interested in acquiring some of these items. Please feel free to advertise this bounty.

Prices shown below are estimated retail and are negotiable. Ashlie is a very experienced retired horticulturist, in straitened circumstances, so please be generous.

The goods can be collected at our indoor meeting on Wed 5<sup>th</sup> April. Please contact Liz Cameron by email elsmere02@gmail.com if interested or to make other arrangements.

Item	Quantity	Price
Miscellaneous orchid mix	c. 10 litres	\$10
Osmocote orchid mix	c. 5 litres	\$5
Sulphate of ammonia	c. 8 kg	\$20
Sulphate of ammonia	5 kg (unopened)	\$12
Sulphate of ammonia	c. 1 kg	\$5
Sulphate of potash	c. 1 kg	\$5
Hortico Weed & Green ferrous sulphate (controls	c. 5 kg	\$20
lawn weeds)		
Amgrow buffalo lawn weeder	c. 100 ml	\$10
Slasher organic weed killer	c. 750 ml	\$20

Item	Quantity	Price
Yates easy-see spray dye to identify areas sprayed	c. 300 ml	\$20
for weeds		
Bin-die lawn weeder	c. 240 ml	\$20
Paspalum and crabgrass weed killer	500 ml (unopened)	\$30
Glyphosate, undiluted	c. 500 ml	\$10
Amgrow Wettasoil liquid concentrate	c. 300 ml	\$15
Amgrow Wettasoil granular soil wetter	c. 1 kg	\$20
Chelated iron	c. 500 g	\$20
Spredmax spreader wetting agent	c. 100 ml	\$5
Horticultural charcoal	5 litres (unopened)	\$18
Amgrow Nitrosol liquid plant food	c. 750 ml	\$15
Hortico snail and slug control	500 g (unopened)	\$10
Ecosnail snail and slug repellent (surface barrier)	c. 700 ml	\$10
Confidor lawn and garden insecticide	c. 100 ml	\$5
Yates scale gun spray	c. 200 ml	\$5
Pyrethrum insect spray concentrate	c. 200 ml	\$10
Amgrow 'Conquer' lawn and garden insecticide	c. 200 ml	\$10
Pestoil insect spray	c. 600 ml	\$15
Rose black spot and pyrethrum concentrate	c. 300 ml	\$15
Yates fungus gun spray for black spot etc	c. 700 ml	\$20
Searles Maricozeb Plus fungicide	200 g (unopened)	\$20
Amgrow lime sulphur fungicide and miticide	500 ml (unopened)	\$14
Amgrow lime sulphur fungicide and miticide	250 ml (unopened)	\$8

#### PLANT PROPAGATION

## **Propagation from Seed**

From Karen who volunteers at the Marrickville Community Nursery:

"The nursery has 3 'bibles' - Robinson's Native Plants of Sydney, Benson's Missing Jigsaw Pieces and Ralph's Growing Australian Native Plants from Seed. Though Karen (manager of the Nursery) still needs to sometimes research the best way to propagate some seeds. e.g. with *Notelea* she decided to scratch some seeds before sowing and with others just clean them. They were labelled and she'll see which ones do better. So, Ralph's book is a good place to start but doesn't have all the answers".

The nursery propagates local provenance plants, mainly from the Wolli Creek valley, for sale to the local community and for council planting projects.

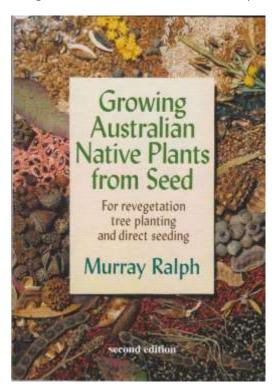
#### **Book Review**

Ralph, M. "Growing Australian Native Plants from Seed" revised 2<sup>nd</sup> edition Review by Dorothy Luther

This book is self-published by Bushland Horticulture, based in Victoria. Email bushort@hotmail.com

It is available from online book stores.

Recently, propagation of Australian native plants has been concentrated on a narrow range of species including common highly ornamental easily grown or useful species. This book addresses the interest in propagation of more diverse range of species including native grasses, lilies, herbaceous and aquatic plants.



The discussion in chapter 2 explains at some length why germinating native plant seeds is so difficult. Many species have a protective mechanism to stop the seed from germinating until the appropriate conditions of rain, heat etc occur.

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Chapter 3 covers an enormous array of techniques for getting the seeds to germinate, ranging through standard things like heating, cooling, scratching, all the way through to cleaning with bleach and soaking in the toilet cistern.

Chapter 4 goes through the details of looking after your seeds and seedlings. It has detailed explanations and many clear drawings of methods and processes involved. It covers quite a bit of technical data such as the guide for when to plant out by looking at the root to shoot ratio.

Chapter 5 covers genera that are suitable for direct seeding, with a list of suitable species. The list has three categories - those that have been successful, those that have had some success and those that may be successful.

Chapter 6 is the bulk of the book at 110 pages. Each genus is described with what is known about propagating it. The information varies from a sentence to 2 or 3 pages on some of the more common genera such as acacia. The common genera are often described at species level. I estimate that the book covers about 800 genera. For some genera, it also has information about growing from cuttings.

The book also has some interesting tables such as the percentage of viable seed that you're likely to find in a gram of seedstock. In some cases, this is quite low.

There is a one-page glossary and a 7-page bibliography.

I believe that this book could be usefully published as an online wiki type tool that people can add to as more research is done.

## **NEIGHBOURHOOD NEWS**

There is a lot happening in our patch, with community groups and local councils being active in promoting native plants. My plan is to feature a local group or event each month. I welcome contributions - stories about your other favourite groups.

## **Queen's Platinum Jubilee Tree Canopy Project**

IWEG was successful in applying for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Tree Canopy Project. The aim of the project is to create a legacy of tree plantings across the nation and increase and/or enhance the area of tree canopy. The tree species must be species that, when mature, have a height of 2 metres or more.







1. Pigott St, Dulwich Hill - Jo Haylen, MLC & Mayor Darcy Byrnes

2. Jo Haylen planting the first tree

3. Hawthorne Reserve - Penny Sharpe, MLC and Inner West Councillors: Kobi Shetty, Zoi Tsardoulias, Philippa Scott and Pauline Lockie.

Applicants were encouraged to consider how commemorative plantings can provide enduring environmental and community benefits This includes: how they may provide additional food sources and habitat for native fauna; improve the connectivity, extent and

condition of existing natural habitats; reduce urban heat effects; beautify the local environment; create colour; create or enhance local vegetation themes; and enhance community well-being and enjoyment of their local environment.

IWEG has two sites, one in an existing Bushcare site at Pigott St, Dulwich Hill and another at Hawthorne Reserve, Leichhardt. A very successful community event was held at both sites to launch the project and unveil the commemorative plaque.

Tree species to be planted are from the Sydney Turpentine Ironbark forest plant community including: Acacia binervia, Acmena smithii, Angophora floribunda, Eucalyptus paniculata, Eucalyptus robusta, Eucalyptus punctata, Eucalyptus botryoides, Syncarpia glommulifera, Melaleuca decora, Melaleuca linariifolia, Melaleuca styphelioides, Melaleuca nodosa, Acacia falcata, Cassinia longifolia, Breynia oblongifolia, Dodonaea triquetra, Notelaea longifolia and Polyscias sambucifolia.

## Jennifer Street, Eastern Suburbs

Andrew Sinclair often goes for walks around patches of bushland in the South East of the city. One of these is in Jennifer Street, La Perouse, through a patch of critically endangered Eastern Suburbs Banksia Scrub. He noticed a section of the remnant had a development notice on it. Part of it sits within the national park and part of it is privately owned, but it is a continuous piece of bush. Probably harder to advocate for, but still important. The development notification period ended on Thursday 8 December. Its late, but he is raising awareness about it.

As well as our letter (see meeting report), Andrew has taken other steps on this matter: "There is a 'Save Jennifer Street' Facebook page I've just joined and messaged the admin to ask about the notification end date. They've confirmed Thursday is the deadline for public feedback on **the latest proposal**. (There have been several, all knocked back so far).

"I sent the letter to Randwick Council on behalf of the HGR group, stating our opposition to the Jennifer Street development. It went to the Randwick Council Mayor, Dylan Parker and



2 Jennifer St, photo by Andrew

the council's Development Assessment Manager. I also emailed the national environment minister Tanya Plibersek MP and the NSW environment minister James Griffin MP. So far, I have not received any responses.

"Over last weekend (21st Jan), I visited the Jennifer Street boardwalk and noticed new fence banners advertising the coming development along the 11 Jennifer Street site. I will be contacting Lynda Newnam of the Save Jennifer Street group to ask about next steps."



## National Parks & Wildlife Hollowlog

Creating nesting nooks for vulnerable species

Tree hollows are critical for 15% of Australian wildlife. Wind, lightning, fire, and decay from fungi and insects create hollows slowly over time, with large hollows found mostly in trees over 200 years old.

After nearly half of the Kempsey Shire was burnt in the black summer bushfires, habitat was lost, posing a significant risk for vulnerable species. Fortunately, a new tool called the **hollowhog** has allowed us to mimic naturally occurring tree

hollows, to provide breeding and roosting opportunities for local wildlife without the wait. Photo from NPWS newsletter.

## **RANDOM JOTTINGS**

These are items of general interest found on the World Wide Web. All contributions for future editions gratefully accepted.

## From The Guardian Newspaper

Christmas Day, 2022

I like the idea that this tree has overheard 2,000 years of very mundane human chat and it reminds me of Amitav Ghosh's observation that "on a different timescale it might appear evident that trees are gardening humans".

https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2022/dec/23/max-porter-2000-year-old-small-leaved-lime-coppice-peace-sacred









5 January 2023

More frequent fires and dry cycles cause carbon stocks in forests to fall.

it was commonly assumed carbon lost to fire would be reabsorbed by forests as they recovered and regenerated in the 10 to 15 years post-fire. But the extent to which forests were able to recapture lost carbon would depend on their ability to fully recover and the absence of further disturbances in the recovery period.

For soil organic carbon, recovery after fires was estimated to be about 60% after 20 years but this estimate did not account for additional bushfires during this time, the NRC said.

https://www.theguardian.com/australianews/2023/jan/05/nsw-forests-could-become-netcarbon-emitters-in-coming-decades-report-finds

#### **New Board Members**

I happened to be looking at the administrative part of the Austplants web site and noticed that two new board members have been appointed:

- Andrew Knop from Central West [appointed 16 August]
- John Desmond from Southern Highlands (retired accountant) [appointed 6 Dec] Congratulations to both of them for stepping up.

## **CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED**

## **Newsletters Received - December/ January**

The full text of the APS newsletters is available from the APS website, on the District Group pages – usually under 'Resources'

## <u>Australian Plants Society, South East NSW Group - Newsletter December 2022</u>

One of this year's activities will involve a day of plant swapping.



The brilliant *Persoonia pinifolia* never fails to provide a Christmas treat, with lovely soft foliage, stunning flowers and as a bonus, always carries its colourful fruits as decorations through the festive season.

## <u>Australian Plants Society, Armidale NSW Group</u> - Newsletter November 2022

Experiments with growing *Eremophilas* as standards. How different plants can look when grown on a stick, bringing flowers and foliage closer to the eye level. You can also put something underneath so you can plant more. Lots of photos of different species.

Armidale Bicentennial Arboretum Annual Report – not badly affected by the heavy rains. Farewell to one of the giants of Australian Botany, Alex Floyd, famous for his outstanding knowledge of rainforest flora, both in Australia & Papua New Guinea.

## **COMING EVENTS**

For further details of coming district group events, please see the APS NSW website at <a href="http://austplants.com.au/calendar">http://austplants.com.au/calendar</a>

Wednesday February 1 <sup>st</sup> , 10 am	APS HGR outing to Sydney University. Meet at the boardwalk at the end of Shepherd St, (Redfern side of the campus).
Saturday February 4th	South East group AGM and a special guest with a passion for ferns.
Wed, 15 Feb, 2023	Sutherland Group Meeting
Wed 8 March, 3 pm to 5 pm	APS HGR Committee meeting at the Bush Music Hut in the Addison Rd Community Centre, 142 Addison Rd, Marrickville





3 Marie's *Rhododendron lochiae* is putting on quite a show. photos by Marie

## **EAST HILLS GROUP CONTACTS**

President	Marie O'Connor	9546 8105	madoc71@gmail.com
Secretary	Liz Cameron	9580 6621	elsmere02@gmail.com
Newsletter Editor	Dorothy Luther	9564 6513	dlutherau@yahoo.com.au
Website Editor	Dorothy Luther	9564 6513	dlutherau@yahoo.com.au

https://www.austplants.com.au/Harbour-Georges-River