

NEWSLETTER

Illawarra Group

Issue No. 2

March/April 2024

A Note from the President

We had a very rewarding walk at Thirlmere Lakes National Park on 11 February - thank you to Daniel Rajaratnam, President of the Australasian Native Orchid Society, Illawarra group (ANOS Illawarra in short), who accepted our offer to walk with us. Daniel not only spotted all the orchids we saw, but he also named them as well. In the photo below, we are admiring a *Xylomelum pyriforme* - Woody Pear!

After the walk, we had a short meeting, I proposed to our group and Daniel, I would like to explore, either formal or informal links with the Australasian Native Orchid Society, Illawarra group, as we have mutual conservation concerns, and may find strength in unity on conservation projects in the future.

I proposed also, that [the Friends of Tallawarra Wetlands](#) FB group, which Gleniss Wellings and myself created, to help protect and preserve these wonderful wetlands for future generations to enjoy, could be linked to our APS Illawarra Group. To raise awareness of the wetlands. All at the meeting supported both items.

Stream Hill Landcare group will be made an official group on 16 February. This group of volunteers are from the APS Illawarra group, Kembla Joggers and the community to regenerate the weedy Robins Creek area at Integral Energy Park.

Michael



About Illawarra Group:

We meet on the third Sunday of the month for a morning walk, followed by a meeting. See calendar of upcoming walks inside this issue.

President:
Michael Swire

Vice President and
Webmaster:
Tracee Lea

Treasurer:
Geoff Dernee

Secretary:
Ruth Livingstone

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Link to our FB group.

[Australian Plants Society
Illawarra Group](#)

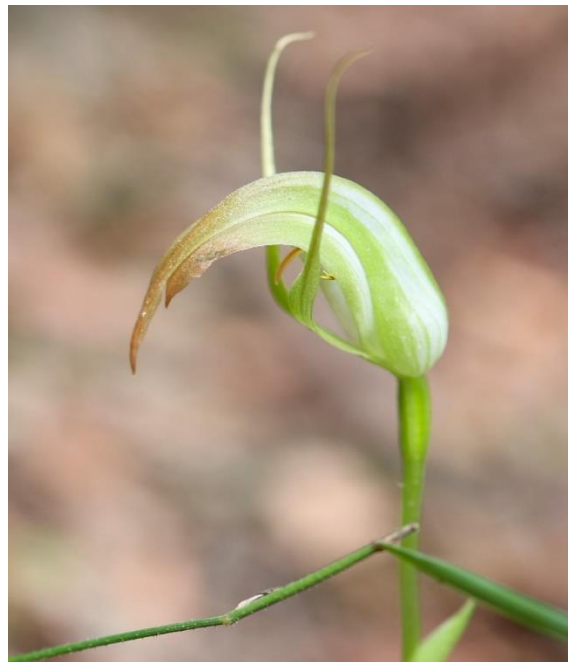
Orchids at Thirlmere Lakes National Park - 11th February 2024



Chiloglottis diphylla - Common Wasp Orchid
side shot



Chiloglottis diphylla - Common Wasp Orchid -
front shot



Pterostylis acuminata - Sharp Greenhood

Photos provided by Michael Swire

Autumn Fungi

As the humid Summer months draw to a close, conditions become suitable for a variety of fungi to begin appearing around the region. The parts we see above the ground are the fruiting bodies of what is often a vast underground network. Fungi are in a class of their own regarded as being neither plant nor animal. From species that provide food to us to weird and wonderful shapes and colours and even some that glow in the dark, they are amazing organisms. They provide an important role in breaking down organic matter so that it can then be reused and recycled, isn't nature wonderful! So while you are out and about this autumn, look out, you never know what you might come across!

Article and Photos by Tracee Lea



What's Flowering Now

Whether in your own garden, a public garden or local bushland there is always something in flower. As the seasons change and the weather becomes less hot and humid, plants come out of their summer dormancy and prepare to flower over the coming months. Most are seen as flowering mainly in Spring but all the major plant families have species flowering now.

At the Grevillea Park, the Autumn flowering Grevilleas are beginning, such as *Grevillea formosa* and its hybrid offspring *Cooroora Cascade*, *Golden Lyre* and *Bulli Envy*. Other species of Grevilleas such as *plurijuga*, *paradoxa* and *subtilifolia* are also in bloom. A particularly pretty flower is *Melastoma affine* with its beautiful lilac colour. Summer flowering plants are producing colourful seed such as the Hairy *Clerodendrum* and *Callyera megasperma* while Bunya nut cones are dropping from our specimen tree.

Article and Photos by Tracee Lea



Clerodendrum tomentosum



Grevillea formosa



Araucaria bidwillii, Bunya Pine



Melastoma affine



Grevillea paradoxa



Grevillea plurijuga

Upcoming Program

Our walks take place on the **third Sunday of the month** followed by our monthly Committee meeting. Everyone is welcome and the walks are designed for all abilities. It is always possible that a date/location may change so please check any email correspondence from Ruth or Michael closer to the time.

<u>Date/Time</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Details</u>
17 March	Otford Coast Track	Meet at 10am at Lady Wakehurst Drive Otford car parking area – see map attached. Followed by short meeting at Otford Pantry.
21 April	Killelea State Park	Meet at 10am at car park near Kiosk.
19 May	Tallawarra Wetlands	
16 June	Stanwell Tops	
21 July	Providential Walk Royal National Park	
18 August	Dharawal National Park	
15 September	Croome Reserve Albion Park	
20 October	Barren Grounds Jamberoo Mountain Road	
17 November	Bungoona Lookout Royal National Park	
15 December (to be confirmed)	Kembla Joggers Clubhouse Christmas Festivities	

Our next walk

17 March Otford Coast Track

Meet at 10am at Lady Wakehurst Drive
Otford car parking area – see map
attached. Followed by short meeting at
Otford Pantry.



If you have a story/news item/photo you would like included in the Newsletter, please contact Mary via: maryvalentine999@gmail.com