



# Newsletter of Menai Wildflower Group

## June 2020

### Contents

<b>Covid19 Extra edition</b> _____	<b>1</b>
<b>President’s message</b> _____	<b>1</b>
<b>Coming events</b> _____	<b>1</b>
<b>Member recognized in Queen’s Birthday Honours</b> _____	<b>2</b>
<b>Eden Penguin Project</b> _____	<b>2</b>
<b>Using Zoom</b> _____	<b>3</b>
<b>Of interest</b> _____	<b>4</b>
<b>Still looking for contributions</b> _____	<b>4</b>
<b>Other activities</b> _____	<b>4</b>
<b>Donation from Australian Geographic</b> _____	<b>4</b>
<b>Nursery news</b> _____	<b>5</b>
The Tip .....	5
The Compound Nursery .....	5
Working Bees .....	5

### Covid19 Extra edition

We are publishing this update in addition to our regular quarterly newsletter to keep you connected while we remain isolated! Our regular meeting reports will come out in the next scheduled edition.

### President’s message

Now that the current restrictions are being eased, I find myself almost sorry not to have unlimited time to complete all those self-imposed tasks like pulling out the weeds, cleaning the oven, updating the family photo albums and “weeding” the bookshelves!

I found myself planting small vegetables as well as all those great native plants in tubes from Westleigh and our own propagation units. I’m glad that those gentle rains descended on Sydney just at the right time to benefit those new plantings. I have been wondering about the longer term effects of social distancing on our local APS groups: do

members see advantages in online monthly meetings? It has been easier to see and to hear the experts, so long as one has access to a decent computer, and perhaps a handy grandchild to give advice. Outdoor voluntary work has continued, after a shaky start, but normal committee activities have proved more awkward. The social aspects have been missed, I am sure, by all our members. However, our hardworking organiser of guest speakers has managed to lock in great speakers on a good range of topics for the rest of the year. Watch the MWG pages online for the latest information about activities and venues. We’ll look forward to seeing one another online or in the flesh very soon. Stay well,

*Pam Pitkeathly, President*



*Acianthus fornicatus*, J Prats.

### Coming events

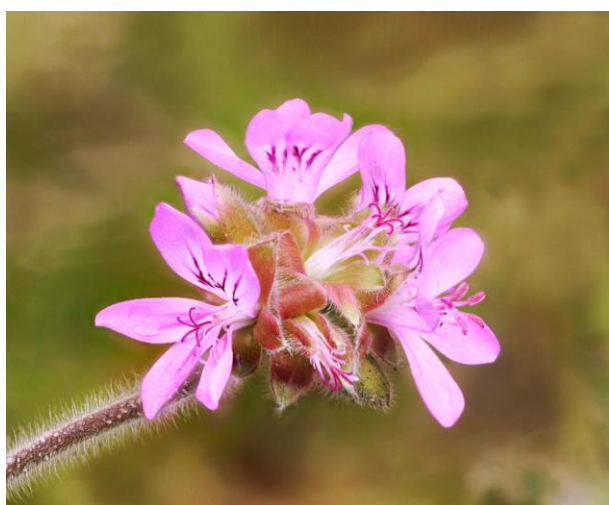
Due to the ongoing Covid19 restrictions, planning is uncertain. Monthly meetings will continue on Zoom at least till August.

**8 Jul Meeting 7pm, online. Members will receive an invitation via email. Doug Rickard will talk about the Flora of Kangaroo Island.**

**8 or 12 Aug Narelle Happ's discussion of Indigenous Food, may need to be online but if possible, we will return to the fire station on Saturday, 8 Aug 1pm.**

**12 Sep NSW APS quarterly gathering will be held at Menai, hopefully, in-the flesh, with a presentation by Phil Trickett.**

**14 Oct Meeting 7pm, format TBC. Peter Olde will tell us what's happening with hakeas.**



Native Pelagonium, L Hedges.

### **Member recognized in Queen's Birthday Honours**

Congratulations to Peter Olde who has been awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia for his services to Australian plants. Peter's OAM is well deserved after spending much of his time learning, writing, speaking and teaching about native plants as well as his work as President of Sutherland and NSW APS, Leader of the Grevillea Study Group. The construction of one of the very best native gardens at Oakdale is the Macadamia nut on top of the tree.

Peter APS achievements since joining in 1977 include; President, 1988-1990, Leader, Grevillea Study Group, since 1980, President, Sutherland Group, 1977-1982, and he was made a Life Member in 1998.

Peter has also been an Honorary Research Associate, National Herbarium of New South Wales, Botanic Gardens Trust Sydney, since 1993. As well, Peter has co-authored The Grevillea Book, 1994, exhibited, with Marg, their garden 'Silky Oaks in the Australian Open Garden

Scheme, and was a founding member of Illawarra Grevillea Park in the 1980s. He was awarded the Australian Plants Award in 2015, by the Australian Native Plants Society, and is a Fellow, Linnean Society of NSW.

Well done Peter! Very well deserved award. We will humbly accept a little reflected glory as he does live much of the time in the neighbourhood and Margaret is on our committee.

*Pam Forbes and Lloyd Hedges*

### **Eden Penguin Project**

MWG has enjoyed several presentations from Chris Lloyd and members have participated in a range of activities with Chris, combining plants and birds. Chris is currently working on a project to encourage penguins back to the NSW south coast by providing artificial burrows as ready-made homes. Penguins like to join an existing colony rather than start a new one so Chris is enticing them to their new homes with some cheerful penguin noise. Chris has given us this update of the interesting project.



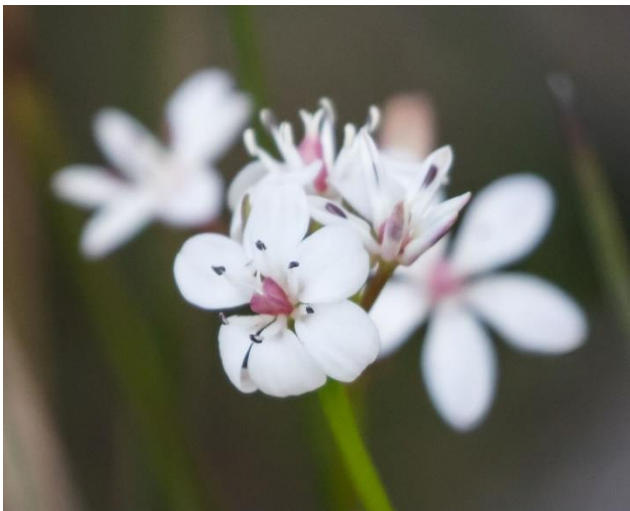
A small team installed some of the experimental penguin burrows at Wheel Cove, Eden in mid-May, just before the breeding season. Nicholas Carlisle, Chris Lloyd and local ranger Wendy Noble used an inflatable rubber boat (RIB) to get five burrows, tools, and a sound system into the cove where they were assembled and installed over the next few days. The solar powered sound system broadcast penguin colony noises out to sea. One highlight during installation was hearing penguins calling from the water just off from the cove. The sound system during the day also attracted the local White-bellied Sea Eagle pair who attracted the Ravens and so on until there was quite a cacophony in the narrow gullies.

There are still more burrows to install but these will come down when a more community focussed event can be made of the installation. There were a few

glitches and the residents on Eagles Claw, including the Sea Eagles, are getting the sound effects night and day instead of just nightly. Hopefully someone with better technical skills than mine will sort that out. We tried as far as possible to get materials sourced from the area, including the solar system, and we are grateful for assistance from the *Cat Balou* and the NPWS Eden Workshop and staff.

It's now up to the local penguins to inspect the new housing estate and give us their verdict.

Chris Lloyd



*Burchardia umbellata*, L Hedges.

## Using Zoom

It is great to see so many members joining our online meetings, and a special thank you to Joan for sharing her lovely wildlife with us at the June meeting. Thanks to all for supporting the efforts of the team working hard to provide the platform. If you are still tentative, there is Zoom training at <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/categories/200101697> or chat with one of our “expert” members with one or two meetings under their belts.

Check out the notes provided for our first meeting which are summarised below.

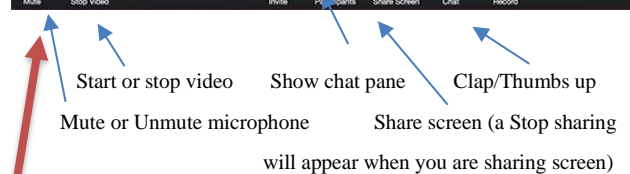
Please try out Zoom or watch the tutorials before the meeting so you are familiar with its operation.

We will send you a link to the Zoom meeting in an email giving the meeting details and a link to it. You do not have to get a Zoom account but if you have one you can join the meeting with the single click on the link. Otherwise you can enter the meeting ID and password manually.

We are only inviting APS members (Menai, Sutherland and East Hills) but if you know someone who would like to attend you can give them the link. Please do not publish the link generally (for

example on your Facebook page) as this is a potential security risk.

Please click the link in the invitation to enter the meeting’s waiting room. You may have to wait a short time before you are accepted into the meeting. All participants enter the meeting with microphone and video turned off. You do not have to turn either on to listen to the meeting. If you want to speak, remember to turn your microphone on as you enter (there is a test audio option which can be useful to check it works) and if you wish to be seen you can turn your video on. Give yourself time to settle in. Check that you can hear others when you enter and turn on your own audio and video if you want. You can chat before the meeting officially starts but watch out for everyone talking over one another. Once you have joined the meeting, you will see the meeting control icons at the bottom of the meeting window. You may need to hover your mouse to bottom of screen to see these meeting controls. The mute/unmute and video on/off are on the menu at the left. If you have your microphone on and you need to answer the phone, have another conversation or feed the cat ... please mute your microphone while doing so!



Meeting controls are on bar at the bottom

Graphic from Zoom.com

The meeting convenor may turn your microphone off at various times, for example so that the audience is not distracted by background noise while the main speaker is presenting.

You can Chat (in Zoom this means communicate via text) to other participants. Please note the option to

Chat to individual participants rather than the whole audience. Some people are distracted by extraneous text conversations so please be courteous if using this facility.

You can change the layout of the screen but the person currently speaking will always be highlighted in some way.

## Of interest

### **Deadline for contributions to the next newsletter is Sunday 2 August.**

Any items suitable for inclusion in the newsletter may be sent to the Editor (Email [mwfeditor@gmail.com](mailto:mwfeditor@gmail.com)) **before** the deadline. Preferred format is **unformatted** text in a **Word** file and photographs as .jpg.

**As Covid19 restrictions ease, our activities are restarting but please do not feel an obligation to return until you are comfortable and of course, do not come if you feeling unwell. Please confirm that events are on before attending.**

**Working Bees** are held on the **second Thursday** of month at IRFB starting at 9am and include weeding, mulching and munching.

**Propagation days** at Illawong Rural Fire Station on each **Tuesdays 9am** for members and the **3rd Saturday 1pm** for the community, and are a great opportunity to be involved in interesting projects and learn new skills. Members can assist in MWG ventures or propagate species for themselves. We also propagate at the **Tip nursery on Monday** morning. Please contact Lloyd (95431216) for more details on these opportunities.

Keep up to date with our [Facebook](#) page or [website](#).

**Meetings** look like they will be online for at least another month. These are on the second Wednesday at 7pm in summer and the second Saturday of the month at 1pm over winter. New members and friends are welcome.

Visit the APS NSW website [www.austplant.com.au/](http://www.austplant.com.au/) to check out what other districts are doing, particularly our neighbours East Hills and Sutherland:

<http://easthills.austplants.com.au/>

<http://sutherland.austplants.com.au/> .

*Lloyd Hedges*

## Still looking for contributions

Fantastic contributions to our May meeting came from John P. and Lloyd and from Joan in June. But we are always looking for more contributions to the meetings. Have you something you could talk

about, supported by anything that you can bring up on your computer screen? This could be a photographic or video presentation on a plant, technique or place, a plant or object in view of your computer's camera, a Powerpoint or Prezzi slide show or an interesting website. You can share this content with the meeting by Sharing your screen. As a general guide, contributions should be under 5minute but discuss with meeting chair if you want longer. Please let us know if you want to contribute at least 48hours before the meeting so we can schedule it. Please email [mwfeditor@gmail.com](mailto:mwfeditor@gmail.com) with details of what you want to do (topic, duration and if you will be sharing content).

*Editor*



*Hardenbergia violacea*, L Hedges.

## Other activities

There are many online opportunities which you can find out about at the APS website.

MWG will be hosting the spring quarterly gathering on 12 September, hopefully face to face! At 1pm Phil Trickett, will talk on Isopogons and Petrophiles, with workshops on grafting and propagation.

Recordings of our Zoom meetings are available on the NSW APS Youtube channel. Russell Barrett's talk on the Kimberley for example is in two parts at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3xA4qvjdJA4> and <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-fnJLjT7gbo>. Lots more to see too!

## Donation from Australian Geographic

We recently received a donation of over \$1700 from Australian Geographic after they ran a public fund raiser for the "Glossies in the Mist" campaign. They approached this project who suggested we should be the beneficiaries because of the seedlings we had supplied to help regenerate the Sheoak corridor between Morton NP and the Blue Mountains. We

have supplied 7000+ free seedlings over the past few years and there are more to be grown for next year.

We have already used these funds to order and receive 3000+ tubes, 75 crates and 2m<sup>3</sup> of potting mix. Our thanks go to Australian Geographic and Lauren Hook and Pat Hall from GITM who have been great to work with.

## Nursery news

### The Tip

The Tip Nursery has been quietly ticking along during the corona virus disruption. A shipment of sheoaks is going to be picked up next week and we should get new seed to sow the next lot. The flannel flowers numbers in cultivation are growing thanks to Marian W and Pam F. Unfortunately, not many will be ready for the Grevillea Park in July should it go ahead, but there should be plenty for Spring.



### The Compound Nursery

The compound nursery is slowly emerging from self-isolation and working the stiffness out of its joints, a bit like me really. Bring along seed or cuttings of whatever native you have and Anne or Jan can help you to propagate it. There are also plenty of plants past their use by date and looking for a home if you turn up on a Tuesday.

The Tip and Compound Nurseries and IRFS garden, are operating and new helpers are always welcome. Please contact Lloyd.



Join Anne and Jan at the fire station nursery.

### Working Bees

As the Thursday working bees are not working out, working bees have moved to coincide with the Tuesday propagation days. Come along from 9-12 to help maintain our beautiful garden. Instead of 4m<sup>2</sup> we will guarantee 40m<sup>2</sup> all to yourself!



Please address all correspondence to the Secretary,  
PO Box 3104 Bangor NSW 2234

Website is [www.menaiwildflower.austplants.com.au](http://www.menaiwildflower.austplants.com.au)

E-mail is [menaiwildflower@austplants.com.au](mailto:menaiwildflower@austplants.com.au)

President	Pam Pitkeathly	0414 646 569
Secretary	Annette Tuckfield	9543-1490
Treasurer	Jan Riley	9543-4727
Editor	Pam Forbes	
Publicity Officer	Marion Payne	9543-1040
General Committee	Margaret Olde	9543-2242
	Mary Hedges	9543-1216
	Alan Ferguson	