



Eucalyptus parramattensis - Calgaroo

Calendar

June

Sat 27 2pm to 4pm Zoom meeting. See details opposite. Join Brian Roach on "Growing Australian Plants in Pots, Courtyards and Small Gardens"

Due to Covid-19 restrictions and dangers, there are currently no proposed activities. You will be notified in the next newsletter as to future meetings and activities.

Otherwise, activities will be advertised through our website which you can access at the web address below.

Keep safe everyone and keep up the social distancing!

**Parramatta & Hills District Group,
APS
ABN 87 002 680 408**

Contact us at apsparrahills@gmail.com
or visit

ausplants.com.au/Parramatta-And-Hills
or contact a Committee person direct

CALGAROO

Newsletter of the Parramatta & Hills District Group
Australian Plants Society NSW Ltd

APS Parramatta and Hills Members Meeting on Zoom Saturday 27 June at 2 pm

As we continue to have restrictions imposed on our movements because of the COVID-19 Pandemic the next meeting of our group will be held using the Zoom Platform. Other Australian Plants Society groups have used this method successfully.

The speaker will be Brian Roach, a member of APS North Shore Group who runs Westleigh nursery from his home and has an open garden and plant sales twice a year. Brian has appeared twice on the ABC program Gardening Australia, most recently in November 2019. His topic for our meeting will be "*Growing Australian Plants in Pots, Courtyards and Small Gardens*"

If you wish to attend the meeting you need to register by emailing apsparrahills@gmail.com

Download Zoom here: <https://zoom.us/download>



PLANTS FOR SALE

As you won't be able to see and buy our plants propagated by our members at the Zoom meeting this month, here's a list of plants raised lovingly by our propagation people which we're offering to members for purchase. We don't want these plants to go to waste. They are healthy and can be planted straight away. So if you or any of your friends would like to enhance your gardens, we'd love to hear from you!



The procedure for you to order and obtain these plants is:

- Ordering: Contact Ian itcox@bigpond.com or phone 9654 2533
- Pick up: 5 Ivy Place Kenthurst
- Prices: large \$8; medium-small \$6

Pot sizes are: large 8 inches, small-medium 4-6 inches.

There could be a few days delay after ordering, as the plants will need to be fetched from the Hills Shire nursery.

Payment can be made by EFTPOS to:

BSB 062 139

Acc No. 0090 1865

	Quantity	Pot size	Click here for photos and/or details
<i>Acacia ulicifolia</i>	1	medium	here
<i>Chamelaucium uncinatum</i>	1	medium	here
<i>Correa baeuerlenii</i>	7	small	here
<i>Eremophila glabra</i> 'Amber Carpet'	2	medium	here
<i>Eremophila glabra</i> 'Mallee Lipstick'	7	medium	here
<i>Eremophila maculata</i> ssp. <i>brevifolia</i>	2	small	here
<i>Eremophila maculata</i> x <i>viscida</i>	4	medium	here
<i>Graptophyllum ilicifolium</i>	2	large	here
	2	medium	
	2	small	
<i>Gastrolobium celsianum</i> syn. <i>Brachysema lanceolatum</i>	1	large	here
<i>Grevillea flexuosa</i>	1	medium	here
<i>Grevillea</i> 'Forest Rambler'	4	large	here
	3	medium	
<i>Grevillea juniperina</i> (red flowers)	1	medium	here
<i>Grevillea lanigera</i>	5	small	here
<i>Grevillea rosmarinifolia</i> x <i>baueri</i>	2	small	here
<i>Hibbertia scandens</i>	7	small	here
<i>Melastoma affine</i>	4	small	here
<i>Pimelea ferruginea</i> 'Bonne Petite'	3	small	here
<i>Prostanthera scutellarioides</i>	1	large	here
	7	small	
<i>Westringia fruticosa</i>	1	large	here

THE INDIGENOUS VOLUNTEERS IN MY GARDEN

The benefits of the drenching rains of late January can be seen in our local bushland. Understorey plants which were nowhere to be seen a few months ago are now flourishing. It is the same in my garden.

The structure of my garden comes from the plants which I have planted but a lot of the infill plants are local natives which by and large have arrived unannounced as what garden writer Esther Dean used to call "volunteers" At the height of the drought I was hand watering those plants which I thought needed some help to survive the unusually harsh conditions of last year's December but the local plants which had made their home in my garden I left to fend for themselves. Many disappeared and the garden started to look quite bare.

Now that it has rained they have all returned and those which did survive have been revived.

In no particular order here are the plants which I am talking about



Dichondra repens (Kidney weed)

An excellent ground cover which helps to suppress weeds. Grows best in shady spots



Plectranthus parvifolius (Cockspur)

Plectranthus parvifolius (Cockspur) is a perennial herb with fragrant leaves and spikes of purple white flowers. It grows in full sun and part shade



Viola hederacea (Native Violet)

Viola hederacea (Native Violet) is another plant for shady, moist areas. It has lovely purple and white flowers and spreads rapidly in good conditions. I have also found it a good weed suppressant.



Pratia purpurascens (White root)

White root also works best in shady areas. This scrambling ground cover has white flowers. At the moment it is flowering prolifically in local bushland.



Wahlenbergia communis (Tufted Bluebell)

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A slender herb with light blue flowers which are smaller than those of other *Wahlenbergia* species. It likes full sun and pops up announced between the paving stones and in pots.



Dianella species (Native flax)

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I have two species in the garden which are entirely self sown and one which I planted myself. They are absolutely drought tolerant and will reward you with blue star shaped flowers followed by blue edible berries in Spring. It is also a good plant for providing shelter to frogs and small lizards.



Lomandra longifolia (Mat Rush)

There are quite a few species of *Lomandra* which grow locally but this is the only one which has appeared in my garden. It is a strappy plant with edible flowers and seeds. It gets its common name from the use of its leaves by indigenous women to weave mats and baskets.

Geranium homeanum (Northern cranesbill)

A multibranched ground cover with small pink to white flowers. It grows best among other plants.



Geranium homeanum (Northern cranesbill)
Photo: Forest and Kim Starr -Wiki Media Commons



Einadia hasta

A low ground cover which produces red berries which are beneficial to small birds. It is tolerant of poor clay soils and grows in the sun and part shade

Oplismenus imbecillis (Basket grass)

After a talk at one of our meetings I was delighted to find a patch of this grass in the garden. Its usual growth is ground hugging so it can be used as a lawn substitute.



Cyperus gracilis (Flat sedge)

The bright green leaves of this low growing tufted sedge provide a pleasant contrast to other plants. It makes a nice border to paths

Other sedges such as *Schoenus* have also appeared

Adiantum aethiopicum (Common Maidenhair)

These ferns are a common sight in moister areas of local bushland. At the height of the drought they looked pretty forlorn. This one disappeared completely in my garden but has since revived.

Another local fern, the Rough Maidenhair Fern *Adiantum hispidulum* is also a tough plant to have growing but it doesn't seem to spread like the Common Maidenhair Fern.



Tetragonia tetragonoides (Warrigal Greens, New Zealand Spinach)

This large leaved, scrambling plant is a common sight on the shores of Sydney Harbour and local creeks. It was a popular vegetable in colonial Sydney and has seen a recent revival by celebrity chefs such as Kylie Kwong. Once you have planted it in your garden, plants will pop up in many places. However, this is not a problem as you will be harvesting them to cook as an alternative to English spinach.

I can hear many old hands muttering that these plants are just weeds. A long time ago an older member warned me that if I planted Native Violets they would take over the garden. My response was that I wouldn't mind if they did. Any of these plants are easy to pull out if they appear in the wrong spot for the garden plan or are starting to be too vigorous. Although I have to admit that after this summer's rains I have been overwhelmed by the Basket Grass. It has appeared in many places where it was never seen before and sent up quite tall seed heads. Usually it is easy to control.

Keeping local plants in your garden is beneficial for local wildlife. Also because they have evolved here they will cope with any of the vicissitudes that the climate can throw at them.

However, there are several local plants with which I have a love/hate relationship.



Commelina cyanea (Scurvy Grass)

This is often confused with *Tradescantia*. It is quite closely related botanically but it has blue flowers and a much more substantial root. Its common name is Scurvy Grass because its leaves were eaten in the early days of Sydney to prevent people getting scurvy. I have tried the leaves and wouldn't recommend them. It can be very attractive if you keep it clipped but will take over your garden if you blink.

Cayratia clematidea (Slender grape)

I was quite fascinated when this creeping plant appeared in the garden but now it gets the roundup treatment. It has pretty serrated green leaves and bunches of fruits which look like little grapes. It grows from a tuber which sends roots underground to new sites. It climbs all over your plants, probably not causing them any harm but it gets a bit much when it is climbing over every plant in sight.



Glycine clandestina (Love Creeper)

This was another welcome visitor at first. It has really pretty mauve pea lowers and small leaflets in groups of three. It has a bifurcated root like a clothes peg and was one of the tubers dug up for food by indigenous women in this area. In the bush it seems to grow in dense mats but in my garden it climbs over other plants in a vigorous manner which is quite alarming.

Growing local natives may not have the same challenge as plants from other parts of New South Wales or Australia. However, this is their home and they deserve a place in our gardens. They will survive the next drought and let's face it who doesn't like a free plant?

In 1996 our Group published *Indigenous Plants of the Parramatta and Hills District: a list of Plants for Gardens of the Area*. It distilled the knowledge of three of our most knowledgeable members, Ross Doig, Ted Newman and John Evans. There are still copies available.

Also useful is David Bowen, Geoff Brown and Peter Mobbs ***A Gardeners Guide to the Native Plants of Western Sydney*** ***Western Sydney Conservation Alliance***

Basic Bushland Photography Manual

In lieu of the meeting which was cancelled in April, Lachlan Turner has sent a link to the workbook he uses in his Photography workshops.

Below is the web address of the "Basic Bushland Photography Workshop Manual".

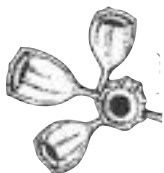
<http://online.fliphtml5.com/awdd/zgvo/>

There are three ways to access this booklet :-

1. Simply click on the address above, provided it is "live" in any email that you may send out to others, OR,
2. Enter the address into the search box of a browser and click enter, OR
3. Enter the address into a Google search box, click enter, then click on what normally is the top entry of the page that appears.

The booklet will then appear as a "Flip Book" where readers can turn the pages and follow the material in the manual which is generally consistent with the content of the Workshop Presentation that would have been given on Saturday April 18.

By selecting full screen it is possible to view two adjoining pages.



FINANCIAL REPORT APS PARRA-HILLS GROUP		
1 st January 2019 to 31 st December 2019		
SUMMARY		
INCOME	Deposits to CBA account	\$2043.70
	Interest from Term Deposit (added to capital)	\$88.45
	TOTAL INCOME	\$2132.15
	EXPENSES	\$4292.77
	DEFICIT	\$2160.62
<p>The deficit reflects the purchase in November 2019 of a new laptop, projector, speakers and the necessary accessories to connect and make these functional. Our equipment was very old and most speakers in 2019 had to bring their own laptop, because our old system could not handle their requirements. Total cost was \$2787.89</p>		
CURRENT FINANCIAL POSITION		
	CBA Bank Balance at 31 December 2019	752.41
	Term Deposit at Bendigo Bank	5402.27
	Petty Cash	450.00
	TOTAL	\$6604.68
(Total on 31 st December 2018 was \$8531.61)		



**AUSTRALIAN PLANTS SOCIETY
PARRAMATTA HILLS GROUP
ANNUAL REPORT 2019**

This has been a year full of activities for our group.

Meetings

We held six meetings for members at Gumnut Hall Cherry brook.

Our February meeting was addressed by Linda Groom from Save Kosci Inc who spoke about her love of the unique flora and fauna of Kosciusko National Park and the threat to the eco systems from the continued presence of brumbies who are now protected by NSW legislation.

Ray and Thelma Kearney who describe themselves as citizen scientists spoke to our April meeting about the relationship between Fungi, Plants and Animals in Nature. Some of our members subsequently attended a Fungi Spotting walk with them.

In June Kath Muir from the Colong Foundation spoke about the proposed Gardens of Stone National Park near Lithgow. Her stunning photos were sufficient encouragement for us to plan to visit the area.

The Medicinal Uses of some Australian Plants was presented by Jennifer Farrer at the August meeting. This knowledge has come from research for guided tours which she does in the local bushland.

In September Julie Evans, recently retired from the Bureau of Meteorology presented a talk entitled "When will it rain?" which at the time was very topical. She explained the weather systems which influence rainfall in Sydney but could not tell us when it would rain

In November Soil Scientist Simon Leake spoke about the Soils and Vegetation of Barangaroo Headland Park. The recreation of this beautiful headland from the site of a concrete wharf is the result of inspiration and detailed scientific research.

NSW Region

The NSW Region arranges three Gatherings each year which are hosted by District Groups. Gatherings in February, May and November were attended by members of Parramatta Hills.

Each year there is also a Get Together hosted by a District Group in regional NSW. In August 2019 the Get Together

was held in Newcastle. Parramatta Hills was well represented at this very enjoyable weekend of talks and walks.

Activities

In 2019 we held two activities in addition to our Bi-Monthly meetings

In July we walked to Refuge Rock in Cherrybrook. A walk in the local area was obviously very popular as it was well attended by members and visitors. Everyone enjoyed seeing and identifying the diversity of plants growing in such a small area, Particularly as many were flowering at the time.

In October we enjoyed a guided tour of the Royal Botanic Gardens which included a visit to two of the Orchid Houses and concluded at the Calyx where the current exhibition of carnivorous plants "Plants which Bite " fascinated all.

Propagation

A dedicated team continues to meet on the second Wednesday of every month at the Baulkham Hills Community Nursery to propagate plants for sale at our meetings.

We held two plant stalls at the North Rocks Shopping Centre, in March and August, which were a great opportunity to raise money and to advertise our Group. In 2019 the total raised was \$724.

Upgrade of our IT Equipment

The committee decided that it was time to upgrade our laptop and digital projector to provide better infrastructure for our speakers. We are indebted to Alan Wright for providing the expertise to ensure that we got the most appropriate equipment for our needs within our budget.

Special Thanks

Thanks to my fellow committee members - Tony Maxwell, Pip Gibian, Marilyn Cross, Ben Turco, Sue Gibbons, Lesley Waite and Daniel MacDonald

Also to Leone de Ferranti our Calgaroo editor and Sue Bell our Web Manager

Jennifer Farrer
Secretary

February 2020

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