



CALGAROO

Newsletter of the Parramatta and Hills District Group

Australian Plants Society

Eucalyptus parramattensis - Calgaroo

Greetings ParraHills members. Welcome to a new look (and not nearly as professional) edition of Calgaroo. Our editor Leone has resigned, so we have lost her wonderful desktop editing abilities. She and her husband moved out of Sydney and acquired land south of Barrington Tops. They are very busy with regeneration, and planting rainforest plants. Hopefully Calgaroo will be more often and still full of group news.

We badly need a new editor, so please put up your hand anyone who is willing. Reports are done by the member arranging the activity, or meeting. We hope to have more articles by members. The editor should only have to arrange the content, and email it out.

OUR NEXT EVENT

AUSTRALIAN PLANTS SOCIETY

PARRAMATTA HILLS GROUP

VISIT TO MOTHER EARTH NURSERY

SATURDAY 24 OCTOBER 9.30 AM TO 11.30 AM



We will be meeting at Mother Earth Nursery, 1A Annangrove Road, Kenthurst to hear the owner Mark Massey talk about *Unusual Australian Plants* and to view the Nursery.

The Nursery is well known in the Hills for its eclectic range of plants in a truly delightful setting. It is a general nursery with interesting plants, including natives. You will find Mark engaging and well-informed speaker.

Please note the change of time to morning. This is more convenient as parking later on Saturday can be difficult.

AGNES BANKS NATURE RESERVE WALK 26 SEPTEMBER 2020

Agnes Banks Nature Reserve is on the East bank of the Hawkesbury River near Richmond on a small area of windblown sands which overlays alluvial deposits from ancient river systems (65 million years ago). The reserve is a remnant of the original area as most of the deposit has been mined for the sand. It is a unique vegetation community to Western Sydney as it includes species of plants which are more commonly found growing on sandstone on the coast.

15 ParraHills members and friends met to explore the Reserve on 26 September. There was so much to see that we actually didn't get very far in the two hours of the walk! There are five Endangered or Vulnerable vegetation communities in the reserve.

Castlereagh Swamp Woodland, Castlereagh Ironbark Forest, Castlereagh Scribbly Gum Woodland, Agnes Banks Woodland and Shale Gravel Transition Forest. We explored some of the Agnes Banks Woodland and some of the Castlereagh Swamp Woodland. We joked after our two hour walk that, if our group is to explore other areas in the future, we will need to put blindfolds on everyone, and lead them through the first few hundred metres to the next section.

We saw quite a few species with which we were reasonably familiar as well as those which we do not see at all in our area. One of these was *Ricinocarpus pinifolius* which was flowering prolifically. The species of Smokebush found in the reserve is *Conospermum taxifolium* which is fairly common on the coast but not seen in our area.

Our visit coincided with some lovely orchids in flower. We were enchanted to find many Flying Duck Orchids (*Caleana major*) either singly or in large groups. We also saw quite a few *Calochilus paludosus* (Red Beard Orchid). For many of our group it was the first time they had seen a living Calgaroo, the Parramatta Red Gum (*Eucalyptus parramattensis*), after which our newsletter is named.



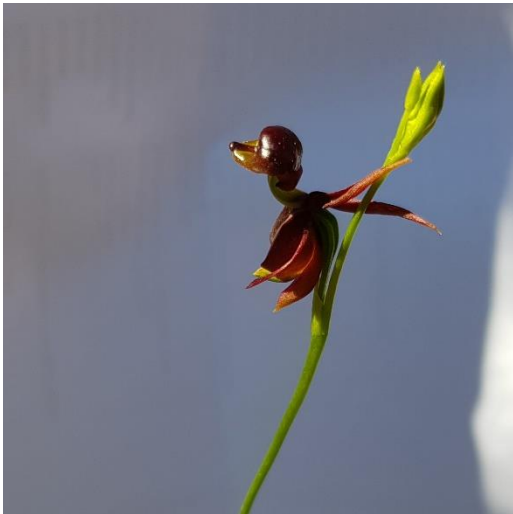
Eucalyptus parramattensis



Ricinocarpus pinifolius

Here is the list of the plants we saw in one small section of the reserve:

Acacia brownii, *Acacia elongata*, *Ampera xiphoclada*, *Banksia aemula*, *Banksia oblongifolia*, *Banksia serrata*, *Banksia spinulosa*, *Bossiaea rhombifolia*, *Caleana major*, *Calochilus paludosus*, *Conospermum taxifolium*, *Dillwynia floribunda*, *Dillwynia glaberrima*, *Dillwynia sericea*, *Dillwynia tenuifolia*, *Eucalyptus parramattensis*, *Eucalyptus signata*, *Haemodorum planifolium*, *Hibbertia fasciculata*, *Isopogon anemonifolius*, *Kunzea capitata*, *Leptospermum parvifolium*, *Leucopogon ericoides*, , *Mitrasacme polymorpha*, *Monotoca scopana*, *Persoonia laurina*, *Persoonia nutans*, *Philothea salsolifolia*, *Pomax umbellata*, *Ricinocarpus pinifolius*, *Trachymene incisa*.



Duck orchid *Caleana major*



Eucalyptus signata



Typical habitat at Agnes Banks Reserve

WATEGORA RESERVE DUCK RIVER WALK

On Saturday 22 August, seven Parra Hills members and three visitors walked along the Duck River track through Wategora Reserve at South Granville.

Duck River is about 7 km long. It stretches from the catchment area of Regents Park in the south, flowing north to its mouth at the Parramatta River in Silverwater. In February 1788, Governor Phillip entered the mouth of the river while exploring the Parramatta River. Seeing a group of wild ducks taking flight from a reed bed, Governor Phillip named the waterway Duck River.

Today the reserve is surrounded by suburban streets on one side and a golf course on the other. It is a relatively intact 11 hectare bushland reserve. Botanically it is the richest area in the eastern part of Sydney's Cumberland Plain with some 264 species recorded. Cumberland Plain communities grew on the fertile soils cleared in the Sydney Basin for farming and later suburban developments. The NSW National Parks & Wildlife Service (2002) estimated that prior to European settlement, the vegetation community covered an area of almost 130,000 ha. It now covers less than 9,000 ha which equates to a loss of 93% of the entire woodland community. For this reason it is known as an endangered community.

The timing of our walk coincided with the flowering of *Acacia pubescens* The Downy Wattle, a plant which is listed as vulnerable but which flourishes in the reserve. We were not disappointed. There were several stands of very healthy plants all flowering beautifully.

We were fortunate to have a list of the plants identified as occurring in reserve prepared by Tony Price, a retired school teacher and member of the Friends of Duck River. In the 1970's he spent three years surveying and collecting plants in the Auburn area, particularly the remnant vegetation of Rookwood Cemetery and Duck River Reserve. He compiled an extensive list of the existing plant species, recorded ecological observations, and interpolated them into a picture of the landscape and vegetation of the district at the time of European settlement. At a time when field botany was inaccessible to many, and the focus of conservation was largely on the broader scale, Price's local scale work at these sites was unusual and important. Though never formally published, Price's 1979 account '*The Vegetation of Duck River and Rookwood Cemetery, Auburn*' has been cited in all subsequent work of consequence for the area. Tony Price passed away in 2010.



Acacia pubescens



Lissanthe strigosa

As well as the *Acacia pubescens* plants we also identified the following plants:

Acacia binervia *Acacia decurrens* *Acacia longifolia* *Bossiaea prostrata* *Calotis cuneifolia*
Calotis lappulacea *Cheilanthes sieberi* *Clematis aristata* *Dillwynia juniperina* *Eucalyptus fibrosa*
E. moluccana *E. punctata* *E. tereticornis* *Eustrephus latifolium* *Hakea sericea*
Exocarpus cupressiformis *Hardenbergia violacea* *Indigofera australis* *Leucopogon juniperinus*
Lissanthe strigosa *Melaleuca nodosa* *Melaleuca styphelioides* *Notelaea longifolia*
Notelaea ovata *Pandorea panderana* *Pittosporum revolutum* *Pittosporum undulatum*

My thanks to Tony Maxwell for sourcing the following article about Tony Price.

Alison Hewitt “Revisiting Tony Price’s (1979) account of the native vegetation of Duck River and Rookwood Cemetery, Western Sydney” in *Cunninghamia* 17/6/2013

Jennifer Farrer



Wategora Reserve Melaleuca Woodland



Pandorea pandorana

Congratulations to Ian Cox

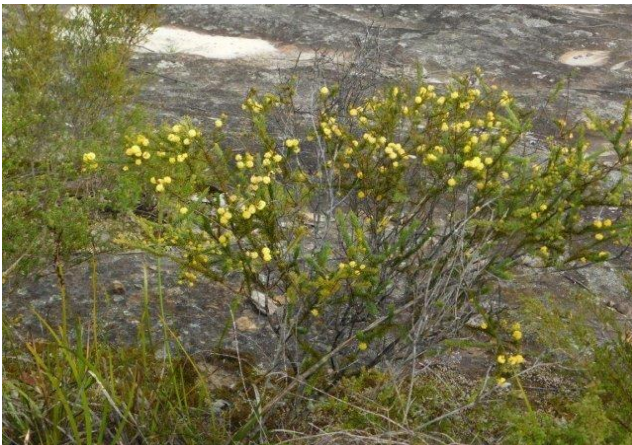
As many may know, Ian has an extensive, beautiful garden surrounded by natural bush in Kenthurst. He entered it into the Baulkham Hills Shire Garden Competition this year.

He was awarded: Environmental Awareness Award
 2nd place in Large Residential Garden owner maintained
 Highly commended in Specialty Garden section

Ian puts a tremendous amount of work into his very large garden and these awards are well deserved.

Group Bushwalk on Saturday 25th July to Glenorie

A group of eleven set out on this walk along the fire trail from the end of Neich Road, Glenorie. To be on the safe side, we all wore face masks. Because of the doubtful weather forecast, the time was changed from afternoon to 9.30am – just as well, it rained later – and we enjoyed a very pleasant morning in the bush. The main aim was to inspect the endangered species, *Acacia gordonii*, which is known to grow there. This little acacia, usually about 1 metre high, has single, very bright gold flower heads on long stalks.



Acacia gordonii in typical habitat



Rocky, sandy ridge-top with *E. eximia*

We were hoping that other species would be starting to flower so early in native plant spring. We were certainly not disappointed. The fire trail runs along a rocky and sandy sandstone ridge-top. The sparse tree cover was mostly *Corymbia eximia*. Large areas of rock shelf, with cracks and crevices, spread out on both sides of the track. This is the usual habitat of *Acacia gordonii*, and there was lots of it in small patches, now very obvious amongst other heath species. Out of flower it is hard to pick because most of the local heath plants there have small, thin leaves. One difference is that, on feeling the leaves, *A. gordonii* has hairy, very soft foliage, especially when young.



Acacia gordonii



Philotheca salsolifera

Boronia ledifolia was flowering in abundance. We even found a white-flowered form, and only took photos. Other species well in flower were *Acacia suaveolens*, *Zieria laevigata*, *Hovea linearis*, *Gompholobium minus*, *Lissanthe strigosa* and *Woolsia pungens*. A great many other species were in full bud with the first one or two flowers bursting out. These included *Leucopogon muticus*, *Calytrix tetragona*, *Micromyrtus ciliata*, *Leptospermum parvifolium*, *Kunzea capitata*, various pea flowers and three Grevilleas - *G.mucronulata*, *buxifolia* and *speciosa*.



Boronia ledifolia white form



Boronia ledifolia



Hovea linearis

At one point the track passed through a more heavily-wooded area. This is not *Acacia gordonii* habitat. Further on, the trees petered out opening on to low heath. The golden pompoms appeared, and were especially healthy. This species flourishing here. One previous area had been burnt about 18 months ago. It had contained a large localised patch of *A.gordonii* in the past. Now there is just one surviving flowering plant and a few small seedlings. Hopefully more will germinate from old seed in the sand. This was a very enjoyable and informative activity. Hopefully our little, endangered plant survives the climate change and the activities of man. Our propagation group intends to grow some if possible, to ensure it survives in captivity.

PROPAGATION GROUP NEWS

Access to the Baulkham Hill Council Nursery is still being denied to the propagation group, but they have been able to remove plants ready for sale.

Plants available for sale

	Quantity	Pot size	Click here for photos and/or details
Acacia ulicifolia	1	medium	here
Crocea saligna	1	medium	here
Doryanthes excelsa	3	medium	here
Eremophila glabra 'Mallee Lipstick'	2	medium	here
Eremophila maculata ssp. brevifolia	1	small	here
Graptophyllum ilicifolium	1	medium	here
Grevillea 'Forest Rambler'	13	medium	here
Grevillea juniperina (red flowers)	13	medium	here
Grevillea 'Lady O'	14	medium	here
Grevillea lanigera	1 14	small tubes	here
Grevillea sericea Collaroy Plateau form	2	medium	here
Hakea bakeriana	3	medium	here
Hardenbergia violacea	1	medium	here
Hibbertia vestita	2	tubes	here
Isopogon anemonifolius	1	medium	here
Scaevola aemula blue	10	medium	here
Thryptomene 'Paynes Hybrid'	7	medium	here
Zieria prostrata	3	medium	here
Zieria smithii	1	medium	here

If you wish to buy plants contact Ian Cox, email itcox@bigpond.com or phone 9654 2533, and arrange to collect from 5 Ivy Place, Kenthurst. Plants are \$6 each for pots and \$4 for tubes.



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