



## NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2017

Thanks to Pauline and Jen for their contributions to this newsletter - most of the newsletter.

### 'SILVER WATTLE' WALK

On Saturday 11 March, an early fog gave way to a bright, fresh sunny morning as Jen, Gudrun and I undertook the lovely drive to Bungendore and on to Silver Wattle.

The start of the walk took us through the productive section of the property. We then made our way down towards the lake, past a rock maze, to follow a path slashed along the edge of the high water mark. Shortly, we decided to venture out onto the lake to see what was growing on the dry surface.

Amongst the cracking earth, we identified *Persicaria prostrata* and *Scaevola hookeri*, as we marvelled at the size of the sky and the broad expanse on which we walked. From ground level it seemed as if the water was literally miles away, on the shimmering horizon, so we turned back towards the high water mark. As we got close to a number of ancient *Eucalyptus viminalis*, life seemed to return—in the mobs of kangaroos we disturbed and in the busy flutter of wings of the small, woodland birds.

By this stage it was starting to warm up, so we decided to have an early lunch to recruit our strength for the walk up the escarpment. Another local joined us, as we soaked up the view over the lake and distant hills.

Refreshed, we followed a zig zag track cut out of the steep hillside—taking lots of opportunities along the way to admire the view. The land which had previously been cleared for grazing was starting to be regenerated with *Acacia decurrens*, and other plantings of Eucalypt. As we neared the top of the hill, we were met by the unexpected sight of a host of *Xanthorrhoea johnsonii* which spread out across the western gully. They were in stark contrast to the eastern side of the hills, and seemed like a remnant from an ancient landscape.

As we crested the hill, the full expanse of Lake George spread out before us. We were then able to see that the water's edge—which had seemed so distant at ground level, was really quite close. Suddenly talks of strange happenings on the lake, with people becoming disoriented, seemed to be much easier to

comprehend.

Silver Wattle is a place of great beauty, tranquillity and a hint of mystery.



Flower of *Scaevola hookeri*



*Xanthorrhoea johnsonii* landscape



Atmospheric phenomenon at Lake George

## MARCH PROPAGATION

Two propagating mornings held in one week in March were highly productive, and voted a success by those able to take part. As Bob has explained in emails, his trip to the property of Christine Gow from the Southern Highlands APS provided a huge range of cuttings and plants which will become our stock for future plant sales. This promises to be of enormous benefit to the local community, as it has expanded our selection of attractive and highly saleable species for local gardens.

We were also able to pot on some of the cuttings made in February (particularly *Correa*), which had grown a surprising amount of root in just one month (Pauline)

As a result of the last 4 propagation days we now have 86 pots of 48 species in the propagation units, half with the Gallands and half with me.

With the warm and humid weather some cuttings propagated in February had already put out good roots and were potted up into tubes on the March days. If our success continues at this rate we will need a potting up day soon. The variety of species obtained from the Southern Highlands garden means that we will have a much greater range of garden species than usual. Thank you to all those who came to 'pot', especially Pauline, Ray and Ros and Bob and Celia.

There will be some Acacias and other shrubs/trees available when I sort out the plants needed for the Wetlands. We usually grow excess to requirements, but I have to do some sorting first. (Jen)



Plenty of roots there!

## WETLANDS GARDEN MAINTENANCE

The busy month of March concluded with a working bee at the Wetlands, where additional plantings were made in the display gardens created by the APS in 2015. In all, 127 new plants went in; 49 had been bought from the Canberra Australian Native Plant Society autumn sale. Many of these plants were pretty daisies (a range of *Brachyscome*) as well as a local species - *Coronidium scorpioides*, which will provide a colourful understorey in the woodland garden.

Many of the plants from our own stock included a range of attractively flowering shrubs such as *Melaleuca pulchella*, *Calothamnus quadrifidus* and a prostrate *Kunzea ambigua*. These filled out the gardens surrounding the carpark, while additional *Croweas* and *Correas* were planted in the semi-formal garden near the bird-hide on the southern side of the wetlands.

We were most fortunate to have a dry morning to get the plants into the soil, which was lovely and moist, and then have a beautiful steady rain on the days following the planting. Due to the small numbers of members able to assist on the day, very little weeding was able to be accomplished, with the focus being to get the new plants into the ground. A follow-up maintenance day would be beneficial to ensure the new plantings don't have to compete with weeds.



Fencing off wetlands garden section - *Xanthorrhoea* in pots

## 2017 CALENDAR

Sat Apr 1	Walk at Nadgigomar NR eastern section
Wed Apr 12	Wetlands Garden Maintenance
Sat May 6	Walk on private property - near Currawang
Sat May 20	Walk at reserve in Tallong
Sat Jun 3	Walk in Morton NP via Bundanoon
Sat Jul 1	Bees/Birds/Soils presentations
Sat Aug 5	Walk at Pomaderris Reserve
Sat Sep 2	Walk in Monga NP via Braidwood
Thu Sep 14	Propagation - seeding - Jen's place
Sun Sep 17	Propagation - seeding - Jen's place
Sat Oct 7	Walk at South's Reserve via Kooringaroo Rd
Wed Oct 18	Wetlands Garden Maintenance
Sat Nov 4	Walk at Reedy Creek TSR
Sat Dec 2	Xmas party, AGM and property walk - Raina's place