



AUSTRALIAN PLANTS SOCIETY SOUTH EAST NSW GROUP

Newsletter No. 96- MAY 2013

NEXT MEETING- SATURDAY 1st JUNE AT 10.30AM at

EUROBODALLA REGIONAL BOTANIC GARDENS(4 kms south of Batemans Bay)

“ A tale of three gardens”

From the perspective of a manager and horticulture staff from Burrendong Arboretum, near Wellington NSW, Arid Lands at Port Augusta, SA and Cranbourne Botanical Gardens in outer Melbourne.

Don't forget SHOW and TELL(bring samples of native plants)
Please bring morning tea, lunch and a chair...also walking shoes, hat and warm clothes.

<u>FUTURE MEETINGS</u>		
DATE	GENERAL/COMMITTEE	TIME/LOCATION
Wednesday 7 th August	Committee	Jenny Johns' at 10.30am
Saturday 7 th September	General-Growing Waratahs	Bermagui Community Centre 10.30am

BAUERA RUBIOIDES: The Australian Dog Rose *By Jennifer Liney*

The English Dog rose (*Rosa canina*), is a very prickly, deciduous, wild climbing rose that uses its large prickles to hook on to a support. The flower is open, pink, with 5 petals and with a bunch of yellow stamens in the middle. The early settlers in Australia thought the plant that they saw growing on creek banks and wet rocky slopes, with arching branches and pink open flowers with prominent stamens, reminded them very much of the Dog Rose from 'home', so that was what they commonly called the species the botanists had named *Bauera glabrifolia*. Dog Rose is still used today, but *glabrifolia* was changed to *rubiifolia*, a name that in turn was discarded in favour of the present name *rubioides*.



Bauera is after the brothers Bauer, Franz and Ferdinand, fine botanical artists who specialised in painting Australian plant species. Franz was employed by Joseph Banks, while Ferdinand, possibly more talented than Franz, sailed with Matthew Flinders on his circumnavigation of the continent. Ferdinand also made an extensive personal collection, much of which is now housed in the Vienna Herbarium. Some years ago there was a wonderful exhibition in Canberra of Ferdinand's exquisite work.

The specific name of the Dog Rose, *rubroides*, is derived from the resemblance of the leaves of a young *Bauera* plant to the genus *Rubia*, a group of sprawling herbs and sub-shrubs native to the Old World, Africa and temperate Asia and America.

Bauera rubroides was first placed in the family Cunoniaceae, a family to which *Callicoma serratifolia* and the genus *Ceratopetalum* belong, but later was given its own family – Baueraceae. However, recently the botanic powers that be have decided to revert to the original placing and it is now back in the Cunoniaceae.

The species was named by Henry C. Andrews, a prolific British plant collector and publisher of the late 18th and early 19th centuries. In 1797 he published the first volume of a ten volume work called *The Botanists Repository of New and Rare Plants*. This series consisted of beautifully detailed, painted illustrations of mostly Old World plant species, illustrations that today are of great value. In naming the plant species that he illustrated, Andrews says he “avoided synonyms and was faithful to the Linnaean system”.

As was the common practice of his time, Andrews did not travel to Australia to study the plants from the new colony. Rather, he worked on plants others brought to Britain and that were grown on in nurseries and wealthy collectors’ establishments. He wrote that *Bauera rubroides* “...a native of Port Jackson, New Holland, was first raised at the seat of the Hon. the Marchioness of Rockingham ... in the year 1793; and from a plant in the conservatory ... our drawing was made”. It was noted that the plant can also “be increased by cuttings”.

Bauera rubroides spot flowers throughout the year, but puts on a wonderful show in late winter and spring, especially if the weather is not too hot or too dry. It is one of our local Australian plants that we should all try to grow.

Bournda Environmental Education Centre Meeting

by Mog Bremner



The March general meeting, organised by Cliff Wallis, was held at the Bournda Environmental Education Centre (BEEC) and the Director of the Centre, Doug Reckord, (pictured) gave us a fascinating look at his work there.

16 people came on a rather grey day, and we enjoyed morning tea before Doug talked us through the BEEC website (<http://www.bournda-e.schools.nsw.edu.au>) looking particularly at the online herbarium. The physical reality of the herbarium is that the sheets are fragile and handling can damage them: they are also obviously just in one place so can be difficult to access. The Centre is photocopying every sheet and making them available

online, where the magnification makes it easy to look closely at details, from anywhere in the world.

Doug then showed us the computer tools he uses for teaching – we were all jealous and wanted to go back to school so that we can play with them too! He has overlaid all sorts of geographic, historical and scientific data on a map of the area to facilitate understanding of the ecosystems, and has an arrangement with Google Earth so that you also can have a virtual tour. Doug modestly says that anyone could do what he has done for their own area, but we know that this is a result of great skill, imagination and hard work.

We finished the day with a stroll down to the picnic area in the National Park and lunch among the trees.

Survey Results *by Cliff Wallis*

Thank you to all of our members who filled out the recent online survey. For your interest, here is a copy of the results. The Committee will be using these in future decision-making.

Twenty seven people responded to the survey covering 39 members.

1. No. of membership years

0-5yrs – 30% 5-10 yrs – 19% 10 years plus – 51%

2. **Postcodes:** 2546 and above : 66% Less than 2546 : 34%

3. **Outings:** Yes – 95% No – 5%

4. **What type:** (Note that respondents to this question were able to choose more than one option. Percentages are calculated on the total of all responses.)

Private Gardens 32%
Field Trips to National Parks 29%
Propagation Workshops 21%
Overnight / longer trips 16%
Social only 2%

5. How many times a year:

2 – 29% 3 – 21% 4 – 47% 5 – 3%

6. Travelling time:

1 hour – 45% Any – 55%

7. Do you read the newsletter:

Yes – 100%

8. Would you be happy if the newsletter was replaced with an up to date website?

Yes – 26% Yes, with email reminders about events – 37%
No – 37%

Other suggestions:

Outings – expert talks; wildlife garden management; bush tucker plants; fire resistant native plants; natives for deep shade; anything that helps understanding; social events

Other: keep it simple; member renewal on website; up to date website on APS NSW site; Q & A on website; survey every 2-3yrs; competitions to get younger folk interested – photography, plant id; lobby head office to put the magazine in A4 and sell in newsagents;

The Right Water

by Leigh Murray, photo by Jan Robilliard

I've had some significant successes in our scruffy gardens, just by the judicious use of water.

Our Queanbeyan house sits on a shaly, exposed west-facing ridge with hardly any soil. On the barest section, most efforts to grow plants failed, even when watered by drippers and occasional hand watering. Success only came after I set up a soaker hose in an otherwise unwatered area planted with some of our toughest cookies: *Lomandra longifolia*, *Correa glabra*, *Acacia iteaphylla*, *Billardiera scandens* and *Allocasuarina verticillata*. After several years, these plants are beginning to form into a nice bushy patch. This is a big change for such a previously bare area. And a bonus is that downhill of this patch, a good variety of indigenous plants are starting to pop up (such as cassinias, acacias, exocarpos and grevilleas). So, the occasional use of one 15m soaker hose has helped to establish quite a large community of plants.

At Tuross, our northern nature strip started out as 3 lonely-looking *Callistemon* 'Dawson River' planted by Council in a sea of kikuyu grass. After a wet summer some years ago, a few grevilleas and acacias began to grow there. I added lomandras, callistemons and carpobrotus, and gave the new plants an occasional watery top-up. The area is now a dense shrubbery needing little attention.



Water is a marvellous drawcard for wildlife, especially if it's in a variety of containers. For instance, Red Wattlebirds love to dunk in a bucketful of water, whereas the little birds (wrens, thornbills, fantails, spinebills) adore splashing in a 22cm pot base. Choughs pack together along the rim of a 50litre recycling crate to drink (about 14 choughs fit), and this container-size is also patronised by kangaroos.

The location of the water can be important too. The Little Bird Base was set up under a leggy callistemon with a dense, spreading canopy. Our Blue Frog Bowl (a 40cm dishwashing bowl) was popular some years ago with Swamp Frogs, but little interest had been shown in it recently. I moved it to near a pale grey compost bin favoured by Peron's Tree Frogs (they're the same colour, and like to sunbathe on its lid). Within 10 days, there were Peron's calls from there, and then frogspawn.

So, when water has been delivered in the right way, or in the right container in the right location, I've had success with plants and wildlife.

APS Involvement in Community Gardens

by Jan Robilliard, photo by Bob Ross

Several groups of APS members are involved in maintaining gardens across the south east of NSW. The largest of these is the group that also belongs to the Friends of the Eurobodalla Region Botanic Gardens. These people act as guides, gardeners, maintenance officers, plant propagators and administrative assistants (Contact Michael Anelzark 4471 2544)



Another group has planted, and is maintaining, the gardens along the roadside next to the Merimbula airport. (*pictured*)
(Contact Wendy and Bob Ross 6495 0306)

Yet another group, with a Bega Valley Shire Environment grant, has replaced environmental weeds with Australian native plants in the Bega Garden near the swimming pool.

This group is holding a **working bee** to put in wooden edging along the garden on **Thursday 23rd May at 9.30am**.

If you would like to help come along with water and food as well as a mattock, cordless drill, clump hammer, long string lines if you have them. (Contact Jan Robilliard 0400 901 331).

The Australian Plants Society South East group doesn't just sit around and admire our spectacular flora- we do things as well. Come and join us!

IMLAY MALLEE-a critically endangered tree *by Bob Ross*

Last year when I told John Aitken, our NSW Region president, that I was planning to write articles on endangered native plants for the "Native Plants" magazine, John suggested I include 'growing native plants' as one of the strategies for saving native species from extinction.

It does make sense that an organisation like ours would be interested in propagating plants that are endangered – after all, growing Australian plants is really what our Society is best at doing!

But there could be a problem if we just grow an endangered native and stick it in our own garden. When we eventually have to sell our lovely patch of native plants and move to the retirement village, most likely the new owners will convert what was a beautiful garden of native plants (including a few endangered native species) into a kikuyu lawn so the kids can practice footy on the weekend.



(Photo courtesy of Wikipedia)

However there are other reasons for propagating endangered natives, and I don't just mean the example of the mass propagating of Wollemi pines (to help protect the secret location of the original trees in Wollemi NP). An excellent example is the Imlay mallee planting on the top of Mt. Imlay in late September 2011.

The Imlay mallee (*Eucalyptus imlayensis*) was listed as 'critically endangered' in 2009 by the Scientific Committee established under the NSW Threatened Species Conservation Act. At that time the only population of this smooth-barked mallee consisted of 80 mature trees on a steep slope on the top of Mt. Imlay, in Mt. Imlay National Park, in south-eastern NSW. Mt. Imlay is an isolated peak surrounded by much lower hills and the single location of the trees is near the top, at an elevation of 850 metres. How they got there is

a mystery, but they may be a remnant left over from the period when this part of Australia was much cooler.



The problem of protecting the isolated location of Imlay mallees was complicated by the lack of seed on the trees, no young trees coming up, and an infestation of the soil-borne pathogen *Phytophthora cinnamomi* on the top of the mountain that had already killed other native plant species.

The Australian National Botanic Gardens worked with NSW National Parks and Wildlife (NPWS) Ranger Lyn Evans and other NPWS staff to propagate new seedlings of the eucalypt, and in late September 2011 a team of people (including three APS members) planted 23 seedlings of *E imlayensis* on the top of Mt. Imlay as part of a trial. Lyn reports that so far all 23 seedlings are surviving.

June General Meeting-Special guest

We are very fortunate to have John Aitken, President of Australian Plants Society NSW, attending our meeting at ERBG. It will be a great opportunity for him to meet the South East members and to see the work being done at the Gardens.

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MEMBERSHIP

Individual \$50.00 **Concession** \$42.00
Joint Members \$58.00 **Concession** \$50.00

A concession is available to seniors, people on a limited fixed income and full-time students. This applies in joint memberships where one person is entitled to request it. Please contact Jenny John for more information.