

Australian Plants Society South East NSW Group

Newsletter 111 September 2015

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Next Meeting SATURDAY 10th October 2015 Annual General Meeting followed our general meeting

These meetings will held at "Thubbul", the property of highly decorated Architect and author Philip Cox, at Bermagui. Details of this exciting program and a map showing how to reach the property begin on Page 3

Note the earlier AGM date, as the committee had planned a distant excursion which has not eventuated. However we cannot pass on the chance to spend time at 'Thubbul'. Thanks to Michele Pymble and Christina Kennedy for arranging this.

Annual General Meeting

Notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of the Australian Plants Society South East NSW Group will be held prior to the general meeting, on Saturday 10th October 2015.

The business of the meeting is to:

- 1. Confirm the minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting
- 2. Receive and approve the annual report of the President
- 3. Receive and approve the annual financial report
- 4. Receive a report by the Membership Secretary
- 5. Determine and approve the number of ordinary committee members for the next year
- 6. Elect office bearers and ordinary members of the committee for the next year

A notice and nomination form is attached to page 12 of this newsletter, and members should consider offering to assist the committee to ensure the Group remains relevant and vibrant. Please, take the time make yourself aware of the contents of the AGM notice.

Immediately following the AGM, members will be treated to presentations by Janet Hawley and Philip Cox.

Yes it is that time again, time to consider putting up your hand to help the Group prosper. The Annual General Meeting is just days away and members need to consider just what they expect of the Group, and how they can help the Group achieve good outcomes for the benefit of all members.

The current committee is well organised and keen, but there is always a need for more help. Why not put up your hand. You might just have the ideas and enthusiasm needed. A call to President Margaret will confirm that all members have something to offer. Being a part of the committee is an opportunity to show that you care about APS, and are keen to share your love of Australian Plants.

As already mentioned, nominations for all committee positions are now called for. Secretary Michele will be pleased to receive nominations from any member interested in assisting the group, prior to the AGM.

Please consider how you could help to keep the group vibrant. Committee contact details are on the last page of this newsletter, and you are invited to discuss options with any of them.

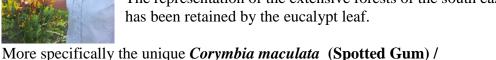
Presidents Message

distinctive bark and leaf respectively.



Spring brings with it renewal, and we have a new logo! The process of change to a more modern logo had been in train during the tenure of previous committees, and the present committee added their ideas to the mix.

The representation of the extensive forests of the south east has been retained by the eucalypt leaf.



The artwork was completed by talented committee member Jillian Peck. We hope you are as pleased with the result as we are!

Macrozamia communis (Burrawang) forests are represented by their

On another note, we have special gardens to visit to finish off this year. We trust you have enjoyed the program offered over the past year and hope to see many members over the next 3 months as we complete our program for this year.

Margaret Lynch





Committee news

Future activities

November 7th A day out in Brogo, visiting the property of Graham and Denise Krake. **December 5**th Picnic at Eurobodalla Regional Botanic Gardens

Your committee meets next on a date to be confirmed after the elections at the AGM If you have any issues or ideas, any of the committee would appreciate your input.

Long time member Jo Benyon is in the wars, recently suffering a fall and sustaining a serious break to her femur. She will be stuck in hospital at Batemans Bay for some time, and would appreciate a visit from members from time to time.

Details of the General Meeting program

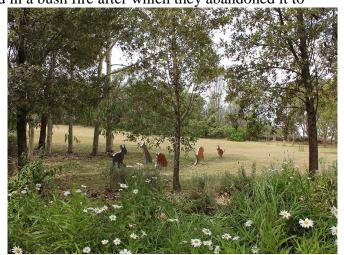
Introduction to Thubbul

Thubbul is situated at the mouth of the Murrah Creek and was first occupied by the Imlay brothers as a sheep run, later being acquired by the Darcy family who attempted farming on the arable parts. They built a slab hut on one of the promontories which was destroyed in a bush fire after which they abandoned it to

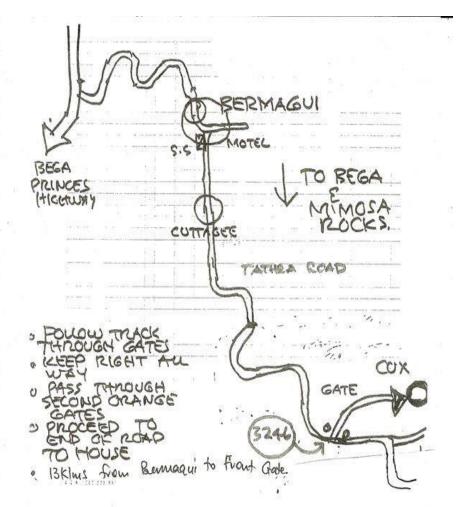
farm in the Bega Valley.

The property has been the coastal retreat of the Cox family since the 1960s. The original garden was planted purely to serve kitchen requirements. The gardens created by Philip Cox now comprise a number of pavilions among gardens, connected by a central walkway, surrounded by open grassland and forest and punctuated by sculptures.

We will hold our AGM in the Pavilion which is a short walk from where we will park our cars. Following the AGM and a talk by Janet Hawley about her new book 'Wendy Whitely and the Secret Garden' we will walk through the property to the house where Philip will speak about his garden.



One of many interesting views of "Thubbul"



Directions DRIVING FROM BERMAGUI

From Bermagui take the Tathra Road. Proceed for approximately 13 kilometres (about 20 minutes) passing Baragoot Lake and Cuttagee Lake and into forest until eventually the road forks.

Take the slight-left lower fork for a very short distance. Pass 3 side streets to the left the last one is Rikkara Avenue.

Shortly after that, on your left is a dirt 45 degree driveway leading to a slatted wooden bush gate. Lot 3246 marked on gate.

Drive down narrow bumpy private dirt road for about 10 minutes past an old orange gate with "Thubbal" written on it. Follow directions for parking.

DRIVING FROM TATHRA

REVERSE DIRECTIONS (Cross Murrah River and around a few bends).

It might be wise to consider car pooling

We will first be introduced to Janet Hawley



Janet Hawley enjoyed a huge readership in her thirty-year career as senior feature writer in Good Weekend Magazine, published in The Sydney Morning Herald and The Age newspapers.

She is renowned for her intimate profiles of artists and creative people, and trusted by her interview subjects to explore their private worlds and the mysteries of their creative processes.

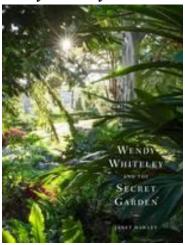
She's published two books on artists, **Artists In Conversation** and **Encounters With Australian Artists**.

Her book **A Place On The Coast**, co-authored with Philip Cox, explores a love of gardens, art and architecture.

Her wide-ranging feature writing for The Sydney Morning Herald, The Age and The Australian has won her numerous major awards, including two Walkley Awards and the Gold Walkley. Janet's long friendship with Brett and Wendy Whiteley led to her writing the story of Wendy's

major opus, the Secret Garden.

Wendy Whiteley and the Secret Garden



For more than twenty years, Wendy Whiteley has worked to create a huge public garden at the foot of her Harbourside home in Sydney's Lavender Bay. The story behind the garden, and the events in Wendy's life that led to its creation, is beautifully portrayed by the highly-respected, award-winning journalist, Janet Hawley, in *Wendy Whiteley and the Secret Garden*.

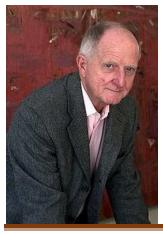
Wendy was artist Brett Whiteley's wife, muse and model. An artist herself, with a finely honed aesthetic sense, she also created the interiors at the heart of Brett's iconic paintings of their Lavender Bay home. When Brett died, Wendy threw her grief and creativity into making an enchanting hidden oasis out of derelict land owned by the New South Wales Government.

Daughter Arkie Whiteley loved the Secret Garden and contributed a thrilling copse of Bangalow palms, but eight years on, Arkie died, compounding Wendy's loss. This glorious guerrilla garden is Wendy's living artwork, designed with daubs of colour, sinuous shapes and shafts of light.

Prior to creating her secret paradise, Wendy had never made a real garden, only a courtyard with pot plants. She knew nothing of horticulture or the Latin names of plants. But, being a highly visual person, her knowledge of colour, shape, texture, design and balance allowed her to treat the garden like a giant painting: structuring, planting, layering, pruning, adding sculptures and quirky mounted objects, and, of course, letting nature work its own magic.

Illustrated with stunning photographs by Jason Busch and artworks by Brett Whiteley, *Wendy Whiteley and the Secret Garden*, by Janet Hawley, is not only an extraordinary story of the living work of art Wendy Whiteley created from the wasteland in front of her harbourside house, but also how a fiercely determined, passionate and deeply creative woman has slowly transformed herself.

Don't forget that this just released book will be available for purchase, signed by the Author, on the day. Price is \$79.95, and is, by request, cash only. What a wonderful Christmas present for you or someone else deserving.



Eminent Australian architect Philip Cox AO, has made a second home in Thubbul

Philip is the founding partner of Cox Architects & Planners, one of the largest architectural practices in Australia. He designed many of the city's iconic buildings including a number of the buildings used for the Sydney Olympics, the Australian National Maritime Museum at Darling Harbour and the Sydney Football Stadium. He also designed the Flinders Park tennis centre in Melbourne and Longitude 131 at Uluru, and was the architect responsible for initially implementing the American Radburn design for public housing in New South Wales.

The following is taken in part from an interview he gave to the Sydney Morning Herald.

For more than 30 years, Philip has been drawn "down the Murrah" beyond Bermagui to a place where spotted gums tower and bellbirds call in the gullies. "Thubbul" enjoys a unique setting, benefiting from the shelter necessary to create a fine garden, but within a short stroll from the ocean.

It is situated at the mouth of the Murrah Creek, where limpid water crawls through a mangrove tangle before emerging between the wind carved rocks of the ocean's edge.

This proximity to the seashore shaped the desire to make a house and garden that was beautiful without being pretentious or imposing - a place that fits its environment. Huge coastal banksias and westringias already grew within a salt-whiff of the ocean and colonies of unpretentious cottage flowers have been introduced. Lavender and cosmos, irises, chamomile and daisies embroider the gravel walks and carpets of orange and scarlet nasturtiums tumble over mellow bricks.

The use of upright pillars to create structure in the garden echoes the towering trunks of the native spotted gums and a further underlying theme is provided by the repeated use of brick paths and walls, tying the garden to the house.

Pear trees and rose hedges strike a brief note of formality and throughout the gardens, sculptures by artist friends create informal vistas.

A vegetable garden brims with fresh herbs and salad greens, artichokes and berries. At the edge of cultivation the coastal bush encroaches, cradling the garden in a skirt of ironbarks and woolly butts that shelter it from the harshest of the elements.

A PLACE ON THE COAST (review in part from Sydney Morning Herald)

By Philip Cox with Janet Hawley; photography by Patrick Bingham-Hall, The Five Mile Press, \$39.95.

Impatient Philip clipping roses, mixing fennel sauce and communing with nature from a kayak on the river?

Don't scoff: dozens of his friends have witnessed scenes like these at the Cox family property, Thubbul, near the Murrah River on the NSW south coast.

In this book, a charming and illuminating one with proceeds going to the National Trust in NSW, Cox calls on first-class photographer Patrick Bingham-Hall to help him capture the environmental and domestic joys of his stretch of Tasman coast. It is written with much understanding of history and geography, perception of detail, appreciation of nature and acute readings of people.



The Pavillion, designed to reflect the strong trunks of surrounding trees, and below a sense of tranquility is reflected in a lake



It is his love of Thubbul that Philip will speak to us.

To be entertained by two such prominent professionals!! This will be a meeting not to be missed.

My Garden

Report on last outing

Peter and Margaret Lynch's Garden at North Narooma (text by Margaret)

Sitting on a sunny verandah overlooking our "new" garden and with the ocean just down the hill, life for us in suburbia is pretty good. Our previous homes have all been on acreages located out of town so for us this is a new experience.

We moved into an established house in North Narooma almost 2 years ago. Changes to the garden were inevitable and began by removing most of the lawns and largely exotic plants. Hedges which provide screening from neighbours were retained as well as a Frangipani (*Plumeria obtusa*) and Smoke Tree (*Cotinus coggygria* "Purpureus") which each give a satisfying sculptural form emphasised by bare branches over winter. Fortunately the sloping site had been terraced with extensive rock walling providing some structure to work with.

The plan was always to have a garden of Australian plants both for our own pleasure and to encourage birds and butterflies (also for our pleasure). The suburban location and a desire for low maintenance determined the garden consist of groundcovers and shrubs no greater in height than 1.5 m apart from screen plantings and the odd feature. A far cry from the free rein I had out of town.

So after mulching new areas and weeding and topping up others the fun of planting into rocky ground began. I had a very large number of plants propagated from material in the previous garden and desperate to be in the ground after 12 months in pots.



Margaret discusses with group members plant choices in her front garden

These were augmented by purchases from nurseries where the range of smaller, compact cultivars for suburban gardens has seen a marked increase. A number of local species from ERBG also added to the mix. It is always pleasing when plants from the local area fit the bill. For example *Acacia cognata*, *Tristaniopsis collina*, *Hakea macreana*, *Elaeocarpus reticularis* and *Ceratapetalum gummiferum* have all formed part of a screen planting. Even though the beds are relatively small I have managed repeat plantings of some species which I think helps with the flow in an area. Plants have also been chosen for foliage and form as well as flowers. The addition of bird baths and old animal ornaments completed the picture.



The echidna on the left.

and ladybeetles on the right,

are some of the animals which adorn Peter and Margaret's garden



Generally plants have thrived apart from some for which conditions over the past 12 months proved too dry, too wet or just unsuitable for the plants chosen. Always there is an element of trial and error, a pleasant surprise when a touchy plant thrives and a challenge or two. That's gardening!



These photos by Amanda Marsh show some of the delightful plants in Peter and Margaret's garden. Mauve flowered Eremophila nivea is a grafted plant, and shows the benefit of this method of propagating difficult plants.

White daisy flowers of Bracteanthea bracteata highlights the other flowers in the garden bed, and Epacris longiflora from the Sydney sandstone has proved a reliable and long flowering plant in some members gardens for many years



A well positioned bird bath is frequented by many smaller birds throughout the day. Planting close by provides refuge, and a range of shrubs offer food not just to honeyeaters but also the smaller insect eating birds. The stone retaining wall is typical of the decorative use of local stone for landscaping much of the garden.

Peter and Jenny John's Garden, (text by Jenny)

When Pete and I bought 1044 Punkalla Tilba Road Narooma in late 1998 we were told that the two small rooms at the west end of the property had originally been the offices for a staging post that provided coaches with fresh horses and that the impression of the stable foundation can still be seen in the garden. We have the original deeds that show a one acre block (part of a declared goldfield) was purchased for eight pounds by Richard Simpson of Moruya in 1890. Nineteen years later he purchased the forty acre block around the original one acre and that is the extent of the property now. Since then various owners, including us, have modified the land and the house for differing purposes.

We bought the property while we were still working in Canberra, as a holiday house that would later serve as a home in our retirement and spent what time we could here introducing native plants into the garden around the house. We anticipated that the temperate coastal climate of Narooma would make for easier gardening than Canberra, being frost free and with a compliant productive soil. We were wrong!

The Punkalla valley collects frost during the winter months and although never as severe as

in Canberra it does put some limitations on our choice of plants. The basic soil is shale with layers of clay which is very productive with the right amount of moisture but is very hard to work if it is too dry or too wet and does not drain well enough for some species.

We have never sat down and drawn up a design for the garden. We bought the old house with its surrounding garden of mainly exotics with a scattering of natives. The Magnolia grandiflora on the lawn is at least 100years old and now acts as host to **Dendrobium kingianum**, **Dendrobium linguiforme**, and the fern, **Pyrrosia rupestris**.



Jenny discusses plant choices with members. She also has a shallow, well used bird bath close to the house, but protected by shrubby plants

The Kurrajong (*Brachychiton populneus*) in front of the old house has a flourishing colony of *Dendrobium linguiforme* which flowers spectacularly in October. As we extended the house we planted all natives in the adjacent areas to give a pleasant outlook and to encourage the birds. The Spear Lily (*Doryanthes palmerii*) has produced its second flower spike in 11 years but three Gymea Lilies (*Doryanthes excelsa*) planted in various spots have never flowered in this time.

Because the property is on the side of a hill several areas are steeply sloping and very difficult to maintain especially by gardeners of advancing age. The slope at the east end of the house has proved so impossible we are now exploring the possibility of making terraces that will provide some flat areas to work from. Pete has put much work into the



sloping bed between the house and the shed, killing the rampant weeds, pruning shrubs and spreading mountains of mulch. We now have a somewhat better understanding of the requirements and potential of various plants to choose more appropriate shrubs for the gaps in that bed. The extent of the garden makes the maintenance required a bit like painting the Harbour Bridge and some parts are badly neglected. We are working to develop a garden that requires less work using large amounts of mulch and less ambitious plantings.

The little hut on the north side of the garden was built by the then owners in the 1930's. It originally had a fireplace and chimney on the south wall but this was removed by the owners before us and the extension added. We use it to

store garden equipment and materials. It is too dark to work in and prone to mosquitos from the water butt, but it provides useful shelter to bats and possums and there is now a large hole at one end where a wombat explored the possibility of a burrow underneath it but found it not really suitable. We built the big shed to bring together storage previously provided by several separate structures round the property. The shed now houses the tractor and its attachments, ride-on mower, two cars, a trailer, a canoe, a workshop and a toilet.

Apart from the geological and topographical restraints we also have to take into account the zoological factors. Part of the enjoyment we derive from the garden comes from the variety of birds and animals that we encounter. With no resident dog, the swamp wallabies particularly enjoy this garden. We have found that they have very broad tastes and will try any shrub they happen across in their wanderings. A limited number of genera seem to be completely unpalatable. These include Philotheca, Leptospermum, Calothamnus, and Zieria, though an aging male wallaby that visits regularly will force down the flowers from some of these while avoiding the foliage. (Interestingly, other members find that their wallabies enjoy especially Philotheca and Leptospermum)

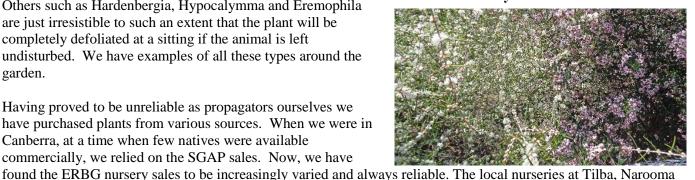
Other genera become unpalatable as they grow so just the growing tips are consumed, severely restricting the growth of the plant. Grevilleas are the main sufferers in this category. Others such as Hardenbergia, Hypocalymma and Eremophila are just irresistible to such an extent that the plant will be completely defoliated at a sitting if the animal is left undisturbed. We have examples of all these types around the garden.

Having proved to be unreliable as propagators ourselves we have purchased plants from various sources. When we were in Canberra, at a time when few natives were available commercially, we relied on the SGAP sales. Now, we have

Part of the older, established plantings. Friendly wallabies use the plants too frequently, and new plantings are protected by the visible wire cages



Some success with a white flowered Hypocalymma angustifolia and mauve Zieria "Pink Crystals"

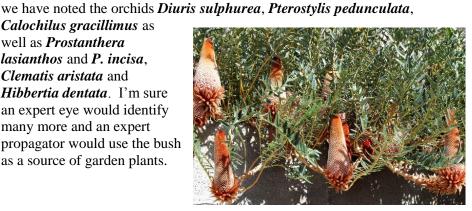


with a delivery, the plants are invariably pot bound. We always call into the Tambo Vale Nursery at Nicholson when we visit our son in Melbourne and come away with a box of plants of species we never see locally. The surrounding area and forest contains a mixture of trees, shrubs, and small plants of which I can identify only a few but at different times

and Dalmeny have varying amounts of natives but the turnover is low and unless you are lucky enough to coincide



Calochilus gracillimus as well as **Prostanthera** lasianthos and P. incisa, Clematis aristata and *Hibbertia dentata*. I'm sure an expert eye would identify many more and an expert propagator would use the bush as a source of garden plants.



It's great to see plants rarely available these days. Jenny has collected many, including Spyridium parvifolium (Dusty Miller) and Banksia blechnifolia

Eucalyptus Anxiety

Recently, I've been spending a fair wad of my gardening time peering skywards, seeking growth on one eucalypt, and buds on another.

Several of our eucalypts are either struggling to grow, or declining to flower. The worst affected eucalypt is a tree I dote on: our original *Eucalyptus leucoxylon ssp megalocarpa*.

This was one of the joys of my gardening life for many years, flowering prolifically for long periods with beautiful, hot pink flowers that the birds adored. It grew from a 6" pot to a handsome 4 or 5m tree. It was continuing to grow taller, something I preferred it didn't do, so I got a friend to cut some of the highest branches back a bit to healthy foliage.

Yuk! The tree tried to shoot but failed. Gradually the foliage died off.

Recently I've been trying to boost it along by running a soaker hose on it for short periods. And this seemed to work well for a while, with the tree producing lovely new leaves all over. But then I found they were being nipped off. All over. I couldn't see what was doing the nipping. Just in case, I removed an almost-certainly innocent case moth. Then, one day, there, sitting in the tree near nipped-off foliage were 4 Rainbow Lorikeets. Looking pleased, and sated.

Now I'm doing my best to keep the nearby *Grevillea* 'Coastal Glow' shrubs (which are very popular with lorikeets) performing at their absolute peak, tip-pruning them often to encourage more flowers which I'm hoping will distract the lorikeets long enough for the eucalypt to recover. It's only a faint hope.

The other major eucalypt issue at the moment (there's always at least one...) is the *Eucalyptus macrandra*'s failure to flower in over 14 years. There hasn't been a single flower. A year or two ago, I began dosing it occasionally with about a third of a bucket of my concoction: a dessertspoon each of Aquasol, sulfate of potash and Epsom salts with a slurp of Seasol. I've been putting this on all my tardy-flowerers and on plants with flowers that look too pale. And it's worked on some of them: the *Grevillea* 'Flamingo' and *G*. 'Misty Pink' flowers are now darker pink, and several *Melaleuca elliptica* flowered for the first time in over 10 years. (The concoction doesn't seem to have harmed any plants.)

Well, year after year, the *Eucalyptus macrandra* failed to flower. It grows well, so a few months ago, I pole-pruned the tips of some branches that were beginning to encroach on a pathway. I picked up the prunings, and let out an anguished shriek. There, on one of the prunings, were several buds. And also on another pruning. I'd cut off 6 buds. It's first buds. And there were no more to be seen.

Week after week, I peered up into that tree. No buds.

by Leigh Murray



Eucalyptus leucoxylon ssp megalocarpa and below Eucalyptus macrandra



Then, two weeks ago, I spotted 3 buds. Wonderful. I'm keeping the pole pruner well clear. And eyes peeled.

MORUYA-BINGIE GEOLOGY EXCURSION

Sunday 8th November 2015

Note that this is the excursion which was postponed from September

This excursion will be led by Geoff, Judy, Marjorie and Philip. It will start at Shelly Beach, South Head, Moruya at 9.00am and finish at Bingie Point, hopefully by 2.00pm at the very latest. Please provide your own transportation.

Bring something to drink and nibbles to fend off starvation.

Excursion notes containing an *Introduction to Basic Geology*, are followed by a description of the five *Excursion Sites* stops. At the end there is a brief description of the main *Rock-Forming Minerals* and *Rock Types in the Moruya-Bingie Region*. You need to read these notes before the excursion and bring a copy of them with you into the field. **A copy of the notes in pdf format is available from Michele via email.** mishpymble@gmail.com

Please if you wish to attend, contact Michele so that your details can be made available to the BRA organisers.

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Bingie Residents Association Inc PO Box 762 MORUYA NSW 2537 http://sites.google.com/site/bingieresidents

Notice of Annual General Meeting

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- 1. Confirm the minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting
- 2. Receive and approve the annual report of the President
- 3. Receive and approve the annual financial report
- 4. Receive the Membership report
- 5. Determine and approve the number of ordinary committee members for the next year
- 6. Elect office bearers and ordinary members of the committee for the next year

All committee positions will become vacant. Nominations for the committee for the next 12 months can be submitted in writing to the Secretary by completing the Nomination Form below. Nominations will also be received prior to the AGM commencing, by completing a Nomination Form on the 10th October 2015. According to the rules governing management of the group, there must be nominations for the positions of President, (or other such title as the members approve as designating the leader of the group), Secretary and Treasurer

Currently serving committee members are eligible to be re-nominated, and most have indicated that they will do so.

We encourage you to seriously consider offering to serve on the committee. The work does not require one to be a plant expert, or indeed an expert in any field in which the group operates, nor are the tasks allotted very onerous. The committee meets as needed to determine the activities of the group. Presently this is planned to be monthly, but has varied when little business is to be undertaken. Committee members determine the frequency, time and place where such meetings are held.

For the group to function and prosper, there needs to be involvement of the membership, so again you are asked to please consider this request.

The AGM is an opportunity for members to ask questions of the committee, or to make suggestions or raise matters of concern.

Any member wishing to propose a motion to be discussed and voted upon at the AGM, must submit such proposals in writing to the Secretary no later than October 5th 2015.

If the proposal has been seconded by another member, the proposal will be presented to the members for discussion. Should the proposal not have been seconded, it will be placed before the membership in such a manner as to call for a seconder prior to being discussed. Should no member present second the motion, it will not be approved for discussion.

COMMITTEE CONTACT DETAILS

President, Secretary, Minute Sec., Treasurer, Membership Publicity	Michele Pymble Amanda Marsh John Knight	Ph 02 4473 8587 Ph 0421 426 366 Ph 0434 674 347 Ph 02 4476 3576	e. yaraan@southerng e. mishpymble@gma e. mohippoly@gmail. e. johnonvista49@ou e. peteandjenny.john e. jcpeck88@gmail.co	il.com com tlook.com @gmail.cor	
Website can accessed by searching the APS NSW website, and access the South East NSW Group. austplants.com.au and follow the link to South East Region					
			ite a member for a		_
have the person you nominate sign as indicated to accept your nomination.					
Send completed forms to The Secretary, (Michele Pymble) at P.O. Box 195 Moruya 2537 Forms may also be lodged with Michele prior to the annual general meeting commencing.					
Australian Plants Society (APS) South East NSW Group					
			for Committee		
I, Group			, being a financia	l member of	APS South East
Nominate					
As a Committee	ee Member or for th	ne Position of			
I accept nomination as a Committee Member or for the position specified					
Signature of I	Nominee			_ Dated	/ / 2015