

Banksia Bytes

Native Plants Sunshine Coast



npscevents@gmail.com

www.npqsuncoast.org

Native Plants Queensland

Newsletter

August 2017 Number 12

OFFICE BEARERS

Anne Windsor	Chair
Marie Livingstone	Hon Secretary
Joan Abercrombie	Hon Treasurer
Marie Livingstone	Events Coordinator
Wendy Johnston	Banksia Bytes Editor
Gretchen Evans	Excursions Coordinator
John Dillon	Webmaster

npsc.chair@gmail.com
npscevents@gmail.com
joan.abercrombie@skymesh.com.au
npscevents@gmail.com
news.npq.suncoast@bigpond.com
pelion4@gmail.com
npqsuncoast.web@gmail.com

From the Editor:

Gardens are wonderful dynamic places. Deb has some interesting critters, Ian has two trees with the same identity that have very different form, and Joan has a war between ground covers.

This really is great gardening weather. Some rain (at night with the same lovely sunny days) would be welcome. Spring has arrived in our garden with Grevillea Golden Yul-lo in full bloom and bringing in the various nectar feeders. The pale-headed rosellas are checking out holes and old termite nests in tree branches, and the topknot pigeons are eating the tree fruits (*Elaeocarpus grandis* and *Vitex lignum-vitae*).



It is with great sadness we note the death of David Hockings. David was the first Chairman of our branch 10 years ago. I remember with pleasure those lovely rambles around the Hockings' garden with David, being given so much information about so many different plants from so many places. May his passion for finding and propagating native plants inspire each of us to get out and grow great native plants.

Wendy

Vale Francis David Hockings by Olive Hockings

David Hockings –10th Aug 1928 to 17th July, 2017 - his life & love of Australian plants.

David Hockings AM, born on Thursday Island in 1928, was fascinated by the plants and insects of his local area and was encouraged to collect specimens at a very early age, by his old relative, Uncle Percy. David still has many of Percy's paintings of the various collected flowers, insects and shells.

His family was evacuated from Thursday Island in 1941 and after World War II, moved from Brisbane to Springbrook in the hinterland of the Gold Coast to begin dairy-farming. There, David met Olive and they married in 1950. In the rainforests and other habitats, David discovered many native orchids and on meeting an orchid enthusiast from the Department of Agriculture & Stock, was encouraged to sit an entrance examination. Thus began his lifelong career in Horticulture in 1960.

With their family of 3 young children, he and Olive moved to Toowoomba for 4 years. While there, he took every opportunity to travel further west to re-visit the places where, in his pre-war years, he visited his maternal grand-parents and loved the native plants of the Western Downs. After four years in Toowoomba on advisory work in fruit and vegetables, he was transferred to Brisbane, to focus on ornamental and amenity horticulture.

While in Toowoomba in 1964, he started a garden show on radio and then became one of the first TV gardeners in Brisbane in the days before colour TV. He wrote a weekly Sunday Truth column for 5 years and had a four month weekly session on 4BH Radio.

Much of his 40 years with the department (latterly the Dept. of Primary Industries), was spent in advisory work for ornamental nurseries, home gardeners and the cut-flower industry. Frequently asked questions regarding pests and diseases led him to write his book, "Friends & Foes of Australian Gardens" and at the same time was very involved in the activities of the Society for Growing Australian Plants and the Qld Naturalists Club.

In the 1990's, he established his cut-flower plantation at Maleny, exploring and proving the cut-flower potential of selected native plants and flowers for the domestic and export trade. He propagated those with most potential for sale to other flower growers to satisfy the exporter's needs. This became a very challenging and rewarding effort for both he and Olive up to 2012.

In 2007, David was awarded an AM in recognition of his contribution to horticulture and particularly the cut-flower industry.

His interest in finding new suitable native plants with cut-flower potential continued to the end of his life, with some selections still in production for nursery and cut-flower trade at the present day.

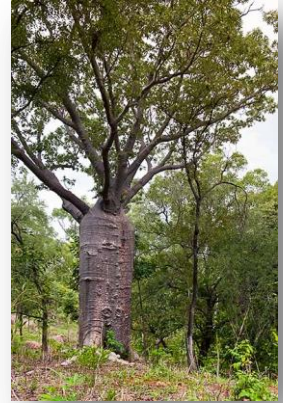
Sadly, ill health in the last 5 years has meant he was unable to actively pursue his love of "going bush" to find some more promising plants for garden and cut-flower use. During this time, through CSIRO Publishing, he has produced another book, rewriting and expanding on the first which is now available for sale under the name Pests, Diseases and Beneficials – Friends & Foes of Australian Gardens.



Boab Tree Update

Since Nita's story of her boab tree seedlings, Australian Geographic has published an article on its top 10 of the "Oldest continuously living things in Australia". *Adansonia gregorii* is in the list with the Derby boab thought to be 500 years old and the Wyndham boab estimated to be 1500 years old! What wonderful life stories they could tell!

We are headed off to Goonderoo Station near Emerald in the near future. The mud map of the accommodation marks a boab tree in the house yard. I wonder how old it might be?



Mooloolah River NP Update

Have you been past the new Caloundra interchange recently and seen the tree felling? I wondered about the fate of those huge blackbutt landmark trees and contacted Stella Wiggins. I thought those of you who went on the April excursion there might like to hear her response.

"According to other members in our group two of the old trees (that were either side of the path) where we entered in to the forest, have been felled this week and they may be used as a memorial to be designed and then set up in Jowarra NP across the road eg a yarning circle or sign with a cross section of the log in a display.

The very large *Eucalyptus pilularis* that we all had our photo taken in front of was not felled and is, as far as we know, to be saved and will have its root area avoided."

It is devastating to contemplate how many years of growth have been felled in the last week or two!



NEWSFLASH - fire ants have been found in Beerwah. An alert property owner spotted them and called in Biosecurity Qld who have eradicated the nest and are sweeping a wider area as a precaution. Thought our members might like to know the ants have reached the Sunshine Coast Council area.



For Information about outings contact....

Chrissie 0408 792 227

Marie 0427 152 022

Anne 0417 733 991

Meeting Dates for your Diary



Sunday 13th August 2017 at 9.00 am: Come and explore the wildflowers in the Bobbie Sattler Reserve near Caloundra with Conor Jenkins from the Sunshine Coast Council. Details of exactly where to meet will be distributed prior to the outing. Members of the Wallum Study group will join us so we will have plenty of expertise to assist with plant ID.



Saturday 9th September 2017: 9.30 – 3.00. Natives Naturally day at the Maroochy Regional Bushland Botanic Gardens, Tanawha. It will be hard to find time for morning tea in such a packed program but 10.30 sounds like a time for NPSC members to gather for a cuppa, if they wish to do so. See you at the GreenWall café. For extra details see the information in the Events section of Banksia Bytes.



Sunday October 8: A morning visit to Witjuti Grub Bushfood Nursery, 84 Falls Creek Rd, Obi Obi. Veronica Cougan will give us a nursery tour, a talk and we can buy bush food plants. Details on directions, possible carpooling, and morning coffee will be sent.



Sunday November 12: 2.00 at Peter and Linda Scharf's, 9 Megan Ct, Witta. Hilary Pearl is giving us a progress report on her PhD studies on the Sunshine Coast Wallum.



Sunday December 10: Looking for inspiration on the best way and best place to celebrate NPSC's 10th birthday. Suggestions welcome.

Plant Local Native Plants for Native Stingless Bees

Barung Landcare wrote up our Native Plants for Native Bees brochure in the local Glasshouse Country and Maleny News, published 5th July. Both Glasshouse News and Barung have given permission for it to be printed in our newsletter.

Plant local native plants for native stingless bees



Melastoma malabathricum (white form)
Blue-banded Bee - Amegilla cingulata
Photo by Allan Carr

Most of us are aware of the importance of native bees: they pollinate our native plant species and have an important role in the pollination of many agricultural crops. With native bees under threat from land clearing, habitat destruction and pesticides, it makes sense to support local populations by planting our gardens with local, native bee-friendly species.

Our friends at Native Plants Sunshine Coast advise to aim for a range of flower colours including blue, purple, white and yellow (bees have good colour vision) and a variety of flower shapes to suit different pollinators. Choose a sunny spot and plant in clusters to provide massed flowers for visiting bees. Plant in layers to provide a variety of heights, from trees down to ground level. An example of a planting to take all these factors into account may include trees – Eucalyptus, Acacia and Corymbia species; shrubs such as *Pavetta australiensis* with its perfumed white flowers; climbers and scramblers like the beautiful purple-flowered Native Sarsaparilla *Hardenbergia violacea* and *Pandorea jasminoides*; and low growers like *Scaevola albida* (fan flower).

A shallow tray of water with pebbles in it provides a

suitable watering-spot: bees have short legs and are not good swimmers!

For more information on our local species, visit Native Plants Sunshine Coast's website www.npqsuncoast.org and look out for their excellent colour brochure 'Native Plants for Native Bees'. Get your bee-friendly plants from Barung Landcare's nursery at 26 Porters Lane, North Maleny. Phone 5302 9900 or visit www.barunglandcare.org.au.



Melaleuca sp.
Native stingless bee

BEING AN EXPLORER IN YOUR OWN BACKYARD By Deb Mooney

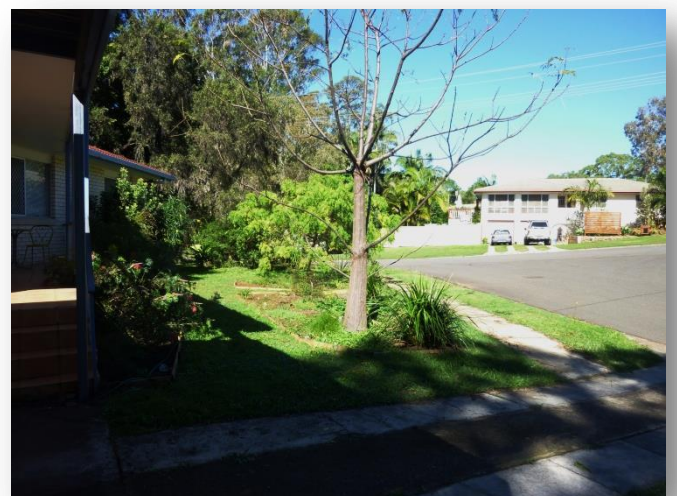
Several years ago we sold our home at Glass House Mountains with its garden of Eden and moved to a North Lakes townhouse for work reasons. Having being used to the fauna including native birds, green tree frogs that we could feed locusts to, and finding a juvenile blue tongue lizard amongst the growing vegetables, we were in a much smaller space that seemed sterile and restrictive. There was a strip down the side of the house planted with Murraya and another section that passed for a backyard which was about 7 x 2 metres. This was planted with rows of society garlic, gardenias and 2 callistemon with pink and yellow flowers. I had two self-watering "Greensmart" pots to grow herbs as I couldn't entirely stop gardening however limited the circumstances. I focussed on looking after the small patch that I had been given.

One morning while checking the high maintenance coriander, I noticed a brown patch on one of the leaves about 3 mm long and thought that it was a dead section of leaf. Moving closer, I noticed that it was *moving*. Being curious, I got my camera to get a better view. With age, my eyes are not as good at close up and it's easier to take a picture and look at an enlarged view on the camera. I couldn't believe it. There was a fantastic creature all angles and weird shapes moving like a looper caterpillar. I had to find out what it was and an internet search led to the name, Wattle Bizarre Looper. This was amazing to me as most of the insects that I had seen in this garden had been exotic pest caterpillars that had eaten my herbs to stumps. It was the start of an enthralling relationship of sorts for about 6 weeks. In that time, this animal grew visibly to 1 cm. I checked the pot daily and was relieved when I saw him hiding under a leaf. Abruptly he disappeared, I hope to pupate, but it was enthralling discovering a new creature and watching him grow.



A Tale of Two White Cedars by Ian Inglis

I moved to Conrad Court in 2013; the next year I decided to plant two white cedars on the western side to provide some summer shade. I bought two plants in 140 mm pots and planted them out. As can be seen in the photo, they are not quite identical!, they are both *Melia azedarachs*. The one in the foreground is acting as it should (deciduous now in winter) but the other is trying to act as a weeping willow. It did put on some flowers in spring, just to show 'yes I am a Melia'.



Groundcovers are really important for protecting the soil, discouraging turkeys, providing low level colour, hiding places for small critters, and the list goes on. Some are better suited than others for shade, full sun, moist areas, dry areas, and again the list of places to grow them is long. I like to experiment.



Goodenia rotundifolia

Goodenia rotundifolia does very well in light shade and quite dry areas, happily competing with native forest grasses. It will also form a dense mat where there is moisture and no competition.

Lobelia trigonocaulis is fussier and died off at the end of summer in the heat and prolonged dry spell. Once the weather changed it came back from seed and rooted pieces beneath the mulch. It is once again lush and healthy.



Lobelia trigonocaulis

The prostrate form of *Goodenia ovata* is a success in dry, sunny conditions as it roots along the stems and can therefore access water and nutrients over a large area. An occasional watering in summer is appreciated, but it will not tolerate shade.



Goodenia ovata

However, all is not necessarily sweetness and light in the groundcover department. A war has broken out in a narrow bed mulched with pine bark and bounded by a gravel path. It receives afternoon shade from two steel water tanks but otherwise gets plenty of sunshine.

Chrysocephalum apiculatum is advancing on a traditional army front but sending out advance scouts (underground of course) to compete with *Mazus pumilio*. *Mazus* adopts the full scale "get every soldier (plant) out into the field" and prevent any attempt at infiltration behind the lines. A grevillea has adopted the aerial bombing approach; go over the top and shade the competitors out.

The *Mazus pumilio* has been attacked by scale. It possibly mistimed its advance for the wrong season but overcrowding can lead to pest/disease outbreaks. A couple of rogue violet species have joined the fray and a clump of *Dianella caerulea* is quietly advancing on one flank.



Summer will bring substantially changed conditions so I await the outcome of the battle with interest. The grevillea which is about to flower can be pruned to keep its sprawling habit in check but the *Mazus* plants will have to be weeded out of the path should they venture there, which they probably will. I suspect the *Chrysocephalum* will prefer some afternoon shade but a few *Brachyscome* daisy plants are definitely in the line of fire and will need to be moved.

Dense planting is really good but some plants do take matters into their own hands (roots) and attempt to take over the world. I think that means "weedy".

Plant Profile – Scentless Rosewood *Synoum glandulosum* subsp. *glandulosum*

By Spencer Shaw



So many of our amazing local rainforest plants are poorly served with the names they are presented with in times gone by and such is the tree we are talking about in this article, *Synoum glandulosum* subsp. *glandulosum* - otherwise known as the Scentless Rosewood. In this case the descriptive word scentless alludes to an inadequacy, as in “there’s the real Rosewood and it smells great and then there’s this other Scentless Rosewood that’s ok, but doesn’t have much of a scent...” which is a bit of an unfair comparison for this rather stunning small

tree. It needs a name all of its own rather than being a poor cousin!

Synoum glandulosum is endemic to the rainforests of east coast Australia and the only representative of this genus this far south. Its family is Meliaceae which sees it related to the more diverse genera *Toona*, *Melia* & *Dysoxylum*. It’s generally the smaller cousin to the much taller canopy emergents that are our local Cedars & Rosewoods, often less than 10 metres on forest edges or in regrowth but can attain a height of close to 20metres when drawn up by the surrounding forest.

Leaves are pinnately compound, alternate, and can vary between 10 - 22cm in length. Foliage is generally very dense and it can retain branches low to the ground, making it a great species for sealing forest edges. Flowers are white to pale pink; they are present in winter and potentially pollinated by moths and flies. The fleshy 3-valved fruit are orange when they ripen in late spring and split to reveal an orange/red aril with a brown skinned, fleshy green seed within. A wide range of birds including the Pigeons, Bowerbirds and Currawongs are attracted to the fruit.

The seed germinates readily when the aril is removed (perhaps even within a fortnight) and it can grow rapidly during the warmer months of the year; a great addition to most rainforest plantings.



Propagation Is Underway!
By Anne Windsor

An opportunity arose for a couple of members to be taken to an area of Rupari Hill where *Grevillea hodgei* grows, to obtain cutting material. This material was to be propagated by the branch, with plants eventually to be replanted at the top of Rupari Hill, to replace those damaged or destroyed by the new NBN tower construction.

Ian McMaster and I were taken there by former NPQ member Roger Callen, now a member of the Coochin Creek Bushland Group, and after a decent hike through dense vegetation we arrived at the grevilleas. The population, although small, was healthy and we were able to obtain enough material for 20 cuttings. Although not the best time for taking cuttings, we have our fingers crossed for a good strike rate.

This is the first venture for the branch propagation group and hopefully next time more of you who expressed interest in joining us will be able to participate. We'll let you know how the grevilleas go.





Garden Wattles

by Joan Dillon

Our many species of Acacia are glorious in spring but not all are suited to home gardens, and many of those that could be, originate in south-east Australia. There are, however, at least three which give us winter and spring colour, all different, and all found naturally in SEQ.

Acacia hubbardiana, common on the Sunshine Coast, has small, simple, grey-green, prickly triangular leaves. It is a winter flowerer with clusters of individual creamy ball flowers mostly towards the ends of arching stems. In exposed places like Emu Mtn. it grows low and dense but as an understorey plant in open forest it is relatively tall and spindly. In the garden, plant in full sun and prune early to achieve compact growth.



Acacia hubbardiana



Acacia amblygona

Acacia amblygona, found a little to our west, disperses its small golden balls right along the stems between simple, green and again prickly, somewhat triangular leaves. This year, flowering has been mostly in July but should extend into early August. Its habit is naturally denser than *A. hubbardiana* but again plant in full sun and tip prune regularly to maximise branching and flowering.

Acacia chinchillensis is larger (0.3-1.5m) with lovely silvery blue-green, fern-like foliage. Masses of small bright yellow balls are borne on terminal racemes. Flowering starts in July and is presently on-going. In its restricted natural habitat (Chinchilla, Tara) it continues through to September. Grow in well-drained soil in full sun.

Bright, cheerful wattles are synonymous with lengthening, warming days. Every garden should have at least one!



Acacia chinchillensis

Meetings and Outings reports

May 2017 – Walking Amongst the Banksias with John Birbeck

text and photos by Eric Anderson



About a dozen people assembled for this outing at 12 noon on the 14th May at Mathew Flinders Park on Steve Irwin Way. Our first foray was to a roadside verge a few kilometres north to view a planting of *Banksia conferta* var. *conferta*. This is one of the rarest Banksias of the eastern States occurring only in the Glass House Mountains, on Lamington Plateau and on Mt Barney. At

the same site the rare *Leptospermum luehmannii* (only grows in the Glass House Mountains area) had also been planted. These plants will be destroyed in the future with the expansion of the adjacent railway line.....that's progress.

Our main destination for the day's Banksia hunt was at the Racemosa Environmental Reserve located around a km southeast of the Landsborough Village. The Sunshine Coast Council purchased this 114 ha site in Dec. 2011 to help protect and enhance the wetlands and scribbly gum (*Eucalyptus racemosa*) forest – hence the Reserve's name. This represents one of the most extensively cleared vegetation communities on the Sunshine Coast. Fauna and flora surveys have identified at least 179 native plant and 84 native fauna species.

Here we found another four Banksias – *aemula*, *oblongifolia*, *robur* and *spinulosa*. All were in flower except for the *B. aemula*. Some of the other plants in

flower that attracted the photographers included



Banksia spinulosa

Billardiera scandens,
Epacris pulchella,
Lomandra filifolia,
Melaleuca quinquenervia,
Persoonia virgata, *Pultenaea paleacea*, and *Xylomelum benthamii*. It was a fairly quiet day for the birds although there was some excitement to discover that the Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoos were breeding in the area. There was



Banksia conferta var. *conferta*



Banksia oblongifolia



Epacris pulchella



Pisolithus marmoratus

also not a lot of joy for the fungiphiles, although they uncovered a puffball that looks like old horse dung – *Pisolithus marmoratus*, while the critter people were rewarded at the last moment with a posing Eastern Bearded Dragon.



Eastern Bearded Dragon

Many thanks to John Birbeck for allowing us to visit and guiding us through this hidden gem which is not generally open to the public.



Persoonia virgata



Xylomelum benthamii

Gardening on the Edge: June 10 – 11

by Marie Livingstone

Maleny Garden Club did a magnificent job organizing this event and plants of every description were available, however very few of them were natives. So it was a great opportunity for both NPSC and Forest Heart nursery to interest the gardeners in native plants. Once again, NPSC relied on fabulous plants supplied by Jacinta Curtis from NativesRUs.

As part of our Native Plants for Native Bees theme, we had Hive Haven’s prototype native bee hive and some native bee honey for tasting. This proved a great drawcard. Thanks to Ann Ross for providing the hive and the honey.

Deb Wagner’s garden was open for the weekend and it was considered a knockout by many people. Deb had set up a shelter for us and Joan Dillon had nurtured about 70 local native plants which we sold at this site.

As always, we had a big team of willing helpers: Joe and Joan Abercrombie, Linda and Peter Scharf, Wendy and Dan Johnston, Eric Anderson and Diana O’Connor, Joan and John Dillon, Jan McArthur and Deb Wagner. NPSC thanks all of you for your contribution and the Events Co-ordinator is eternally grateful.



Our stand at Deb Wagner’s garden (Find Diana among the plants)



Our stand at the Maleny Showgrounds



Our walk in the Maroochy Wetlands at Bli Bli was led by some very informative guides who are passionate about the Wetlands. There was so much to take in. Firstly we visited the remnant rainforest, a small patch with picabeen palms and a large fig. From there we moved on past a huge patch of mangrove fern,



Acrostichum speciosum, all looking very strong and healthy and full of spore. The interest of the afternoon was the mangroves – orange (*Bruguiera gymnorhiza*), grey (*Avicennia marina* subsp. *australasica*),



river (*Aegiceras corniculatum*), and blind-your-eye (*Excoecaria agallocha*). Crabs with one orange claw ran about between the pneumatophores. An old grey mangrove took my fancy – it would certainly have a story to tell.

Other plants seen included mistletoes (specific to mangroves), *Clerodendron inerme*, *Myoporum acuminatum*, *Allocasuarina glauca*, and *Lygodium microphyllum*. We followed the boardwalk to the river where a few small fishing boats bobbed around. It was only one kilometre round trip but it was packed with interest.



old grey mangrove



Myoporum acuminatum



Lygodium microphyllum



Clerodendron inerme



Lysiana maritima



Amyema gymnorhiza

Thursday we set up in magnificent weather but Friday proved more challenging for our workers as the rain drizzled and the gazebo dripped moisture. The crowds remained undaunted and a steady stream of visitors admired our display and sampled the native honey.

Our theme of Native Plants for Native Bees seems to have struck a chord and a large number of our new brochures

were taken by the public. Sunday morning, Joan Dillon

spoke on this theme and the tent was packed. You will get a chance to

hear Joan at Natives Naturally on September 9 at the Maroochy Gardens.

Again, so many to thank: Joan and John Dillon, Joan and Joe Abercrombie, Anne Windsor and Jim Wolz, Ian McMaster, Gretchen Evans and Rose Feely, Joan Horgan and Frank McGreevy, Jackie Hansel and John Birbeck. A

special thanks to Allan Carr from Caboolture Branch who provides nearly all of our wonderful photos, helps in planning and works 2 shifts at the Expo.



The setup team



Allan with the beehive

Again, the Events Co-ordinator is eternally grateful to you all.



Some of the happy workers

Native Gold Honey

“Native Gold” native bee honey was launched at the Regional Flavours event at South Bank in July

Ann Ross from Hive Haven spoke about her new native beehive and launched “Native Gold” with both Channel 10 ‘Master Chef’ George Calombaris and Sunshine Coast celebrity chef Matt Golinski doing a demonstration cook. Ann is a Sunshine Coast local and is very grateful for the support of the Sunshine Coast Council, Visit Sunshine Coast, Food and Agriculture Network Sunshine Coast and Brisbane Marketing.

NPSC have been lucky to have Ann’s hive and honey as part of our displays in 2017. If you would like to learn more come and hear Ann at the Natives Naturally event at the Maroochy Gardens on September 9th. Sample the honey and see the hive.



Ann at Regional Flavours

NPSC Events

August 25-27 Noosa Wallum Festival

Bicentennial Hall Annexe, Sunshine.

Beach. **Display with Wallum Study Group**



September 9: 10.00 – 3.00 Natives Naturally, Maroochy Botanic Gardens.

Natives Naturally is the NPSC outing for September. This is a day for both native plant and native bee enthusiasts.



There is a packed program with walks and talks, a hive making workshop and a great range of native plants for sale. Enjoy the fabulous food from the Green Wall Café – always a treat - and there will be a sausage sizzle at lunch time.

NPSC will have a display promoting Native Plants for Native Bees.

September 16-17 Native Flower Show & Plants sale –Brisbane Botanic Gardens.

The theme of “Where the wild things grow” leaves plenty of room for exciting displays. There is the usual great food from the CWA; incredible numbers of fabulous native plants waiting for a home in your garden; a range of knowledgeable speakers. We will have a static display featuring native plants for native bees.

