

Banksia Bytes

Native Plants Sunshine Coast



npscevents@gmail.com

www.npqsuncoast.org

Native Plants Queensland

Newsletter

February 2018 Number 14

OFFICE BEARERS

Anne Windsor
Marie Livingstone
Joan Abercrombie
Marie Livingstone
Wendy Johnston
Pam Watson
John Dillon

Chair
Hon Secretary
Hon Treasurer
Events Coordinator
Banksia Bytes Editor
Excursions Coordinator
Webmaster

npsc.chair@gmail.com
npscevents@gmail.com
joan.abercrombie@skymesh.com.au
npscevents@gmail.com
news.npq.suncoast@bigpond.com
lpw3@bigpond.com
npqsuncoast.web@gmail.com

From the Editor:

I hope you all had a good break over Christmas and are preparing for a rewarding 2018 (when the heat and humidity abates). This newsletter touches several aspects of plant interests – an inspiration for landscaping, description of a most useful pioneer plant, a management plan for recovering plants hit hard by disease, and a request for advice regarding a pruning job.

The sounds of summer are all around us. The cicadas around our house about 7 pm are deafening; the channel-billed cuckoo and the common koel make their weird cries; the lorikeets in large numbers have noisily enjoyed the flowering of the quandongs; the bats are enjoying the mangoes and the soursoap; and there are young birds begging for food. [I would have liked to include the sound of rain on the iron roof but that is yet to come.]

I'm looking forward to what 2018 will bring. I hope you are too.

Wendy

Recent arrival:
Bunya nut ~5kg,
dropped from 20m



1



Bunya nut kernels



Recent arrival:
brush turkey, climbed
out of mound

Meeting Dates for your Diary

Sunday, February 11: 8.30 am at Russell Family Park, Montville. A walk led by Eric Anderson and Diana O'Connor. Eric and Diana have been leading the revitalization of this beautiful park and it is a tribute to their dedication. Enter the car park at the Information Centre. Morning tea after the walk is an option.



Sunday, March 11: 9.30 am at Deb Wagner's home, 16 Cycad Place, Mapleton. AGM, morning tea, garden explore. If you have not seen Deb's garden make this a "must do" event.



Sunday April 15: 9.30 am at 520 Mt. Mellum Rd Mt Mellum for a propagation session on myrtle rust threatened plants. Detailed directions will be sent closer to the event. BYO morning tea, water bottle. 10.30 Talk by John Birbeck on the parameters of the project followed by 11.00 start on propagating. Help from expert propagators will be available. Propagated plants to be taken home by volunteers.

May meeting is a work in progress.

Sunday June 10: 8.30 am for a walk led by Marc Russell along the first section of the Great Walk, below Baroon Pocket Dam. If you have never experienced a walk with Marc Russell – you are in for a treat. Full details closer to the date.

For Information about outings contact....

Chrissie	0408 792 227
Marie	0427 152 022
Pam	0447 488 673

Welcome to our new Excursions Officer

Thanks and a warm welcome to Pam Watson who has taken up the role of NPSC Excursions Coordinator for 2018.

Gretchen did a wonderful job recruiting her replacement – thank you Gretchen for all the work you do for NPSC.



Do you recognize a couple of these fellows?



Congratulations to John Dillon (Vice President) and Ian McMaster (President) of Barung Landcare.

Focus on Flora – Bleeding Heart *Homalanthus populifolius* by Spencer Shaw

Sometimes a plant can be so common in your field of view that it's easy to miss its significance and importance to ecosystems. It can be so much a part of the landscape and so self-sustaining that it can be forgotten in favour of all the rare and threatened plants and those things that are hard to grow. And so it is with your common run of the mill *Homalanthus populifolius*!

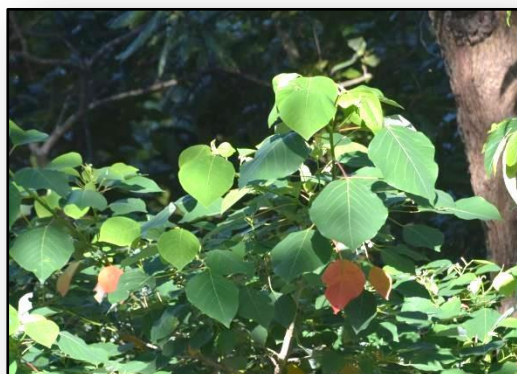
Homalanthus populifolius (syn: *Homalanthus nutans*, *Omalanthus populifolius*) has had a few name changes over the last few decades (just to keep us on our toes) and is a member of the *Euphorbiaceae* family, a very large family of plants spread across the globe. It is dioecious – separate male and female plants.



This species is one of those ridiculously fast growing plants that kicks starts ecosystem change by colonising open ground, whether that be an opening in the forest, along roadsides, disturbed edges (and at our place just about anywhere and everywhere). Favoured germination conditions are open ground with high light levels and reasonable moisture-holding capacity in the soil. From seedling to mature and fruiting could be as little as 18-24 months. In open conditions they become a small tree up to 5-7 metres, but I have seen a few spectacular specimens topping 10 metres in lowland rainforest.

As for kick starting ecosystem change, within 24 months you can have a deep leaf litter providing shelter and habitat for macro invertebrates and all those critters that eat them; they are a tree that is often as wide as tall, providing shade and humidity for secondary rainforest plants to recruit; the fruit of *Homalanthus populifolius* is highly sought after by birds (particularly the Brown Cuckoo Dove *Macropygia amboinensis* on our property), which readily spread seed.

I love Homalanthus. It's hard to imagine a rainforest planting being successful without them. They are our ultimate rainforest pioneer species and well worth planting – that is if they aren't popping up by themselves!



Editor's Query: Does the common name 'bleeding heart' come from the red heart-shaped leaf or the red sap that oozes from the branches when cut?



How hard can you prune *Banksia integrifolia*?

When a team of men with chainsaws and a large chipper, “trimmed” two large specimens on our boundary at Peachester, their idea of trim and mine were not quite the same! I had to watch from a distance as the Banksias were cut off 1 metre above the ground.

This occurred 12 months ago, I thought that would be the end of the trees. The neighbour thought so and offered to use his bobcat to get rid of what was left.

We decided to see what might happen.

The trees have fought back. One appears to be shooting vigorously from the base and the other is sending up shoots from the trunk as well as from the base.

The ground on one side of the trees is mowed by the farmer with his tractor and 12 foot slasher. Nothing new in this - but since the “trimming” event the trees are trying to shoot along the roots which must be close to the surface in the mowed area. They are not shooting on the other side which gets mowed by a smaller machine.

What is your experience? Will these trees ever fully recover? Should I get the bobcat to finish the job?

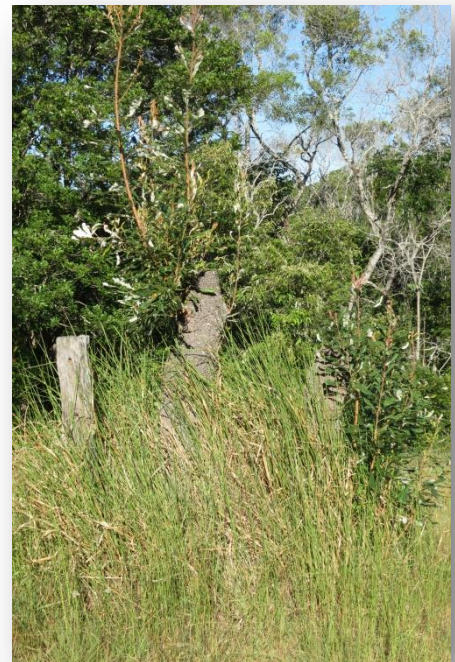
According to on-line “experts”, *Banksia integrifolia* does not cope well with hard pruning.



Marie



Shooting from the base



Shooting from the trunk and the base



Shooting from the roots

THE GREEN WALL

by Joan Dillon

During a recent visit to the Royal Botanic Gardens in Sydney, John and I visited the Calyx Centre, for us a new addition, behind which is a long, high and beautifully designed green wall with associated colour coded garden beds. The RBG website indicates regular design changes but the version we saw was made up of approximately 18,000 plants, each in a small pot, and constantly misted. Water was also provided via narrow, closely spaced, parallel troughs. It was a real work of art.

On this occasion, there were no native plants and many larger flowering specimens in the garden beds, particularly the orchids which determined each colour theme, came from S.E. Asia. Bees provided an added educational theme with a beehive, a huge bee made from steel and coated with plants, plus bees suspended above. Amazing.

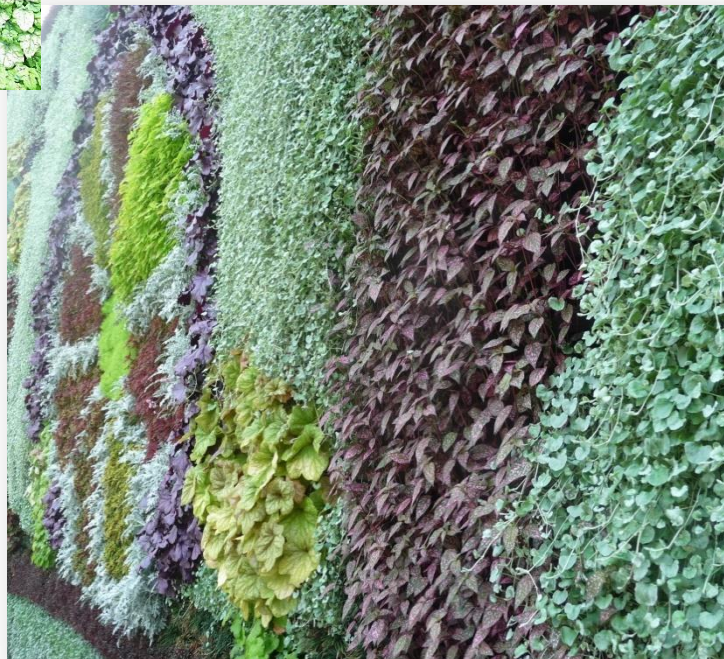
It demonstrated just what can be done with plants given the correct growing conditions for the particular group chosen. This was of course large scale with considerable financial support, but definitely inspirational.



Wall and gardens



Close-up of wall



Wall



Large bee

Myrtle Rust Management Plan

Dear Members,

To follow on from my article in the previous Banskia Bytes Newsletter and Native Plants Qld Journal regarding the impact of myrtle rust, Marie, Joan and I met to discuss an action plan to address this significant environmental issue. This is an appeal to our branch members and others interested to assist in the recovery of myrtaceous species affected by myrtle rust. This would be an item for discussion at a branch meeting in the near future.

The management plan includes:

1. Identify the species to be targeted. For our Native Plants Sunshine Coast branch, we identified two species to target:
 - *Eugenia reinwardtiana*
 - *Lenwebbia* sp. Sunshine Coast and also *Rhodomyrtus psidioides* (an addition of mine).
2. Members and others interested identify specimens of the above species that are not affected or minimally affected by myrtle rust in gardens and in the field
3. Members collect cutting material and/or seeds from these specimens for propagation by members
4. Growing on by members
5. Planting out by members and others interested in supporting this plan
6. Monitoring plants in gardens and in the field to select another generation of more disease resistant plants
7. Track progress using a comprehensive record system
 - a. Who identified the plants? Where did they identify the plants?
 - b. Who collected the cutting material and/or seeds?
 - c. Who is propagating them?
 - d. Who is growing them on?
 - e. Who is planting them on in the field and/or in gardens?
 - f. Who is monitoring the plants?
8. Liaising with other interested parties which could include Sunshine Coast University, Queensland Herbarium, Save our Flora, other branches and groups

In summary, as I have already stated, breeding and selecting disease resistant plants has been part of horticulture for as long as humans have been cultivating plants. We simply can't let these species and many others disappear under our watch.

John Birbeck



Eugenia reinwardtiana

Currently myrtle rust-free

Outings and Events Reports

Sunshine Coast Branch Celebrates 10 Years

The Orangery at Maleny was a lovely venue for our birthday gathering on December 10 last year. We were joined on this special occasion by the branch's inaugural Secretary Wendy Johnston and inaugural Treasurer Olive Hockings, as well as many long-standing members. Many of the attendees had served on the branch's committee over the years. And it was great to see several new members there as well. We were treated to some delicious food, and a trip down memory lane in the form of a slide show, put together by Marie and Wendy, that showcased many of our members and outings over the past 10 years. Happy Birthday NPSC!



Imagine: it's a warm summer's day, you're at the recently-planted Queensland Conservation Collection area of the Mt Coot-tha Botanic Gardens above the Legacy Way Tunnel with sixty other native plant nuts and you're ready to enjoy a tour. The leader is passionate about native plants, is knowledgeable about the design of the garden, about the choice of specimens, in fact about this entire section of the Botanic Gardens. The leader is none other than the Curator of Mt Coot-tha Botanic Gardens, Dale Arvidsson. This was my experience at the NPQ Region Christmas gathering last December.

Did you know that the rainforest tree *Omphalea celata* is the only source of food for the large and spectacular day-flying moth *Alcides metaurus*? That *Banksia conferta*, as well as occurring in the Glass House Mountains, is also found on the Lamington Plateau? That the *Macrozamia moorei* specimen in the Botanic Gardens was transplanted from Injune and is believed to be over 250 years old? That there are just 61 mature, seed bearing trees of the Ormeau Bottle tree left in the wild? Perhaps you knew all this, but gosh, the things I learnt that day!

With Regional Meetings now being held once every three months in a variety of venues around SE Qld, they provide a wonderful opportunity to meet NPQ members from other branches, to learn more about native plants from many perspectives, and to be introduced to fascinating places that we perhaps may not otherwise visit, usually on walks led by people who know and love the area and have a deep knowledge of the vegetation.

A walk through Brisbane Koala Bushland Reserve led by Glenn Leiper; Karrawatha seen through the eyes of someone as knowledgeable as Bill McDonald; a tour of the new Qld Conservation Collection at Mt Coot-tha led by Dale Arvidsson, are all events not to be missed.

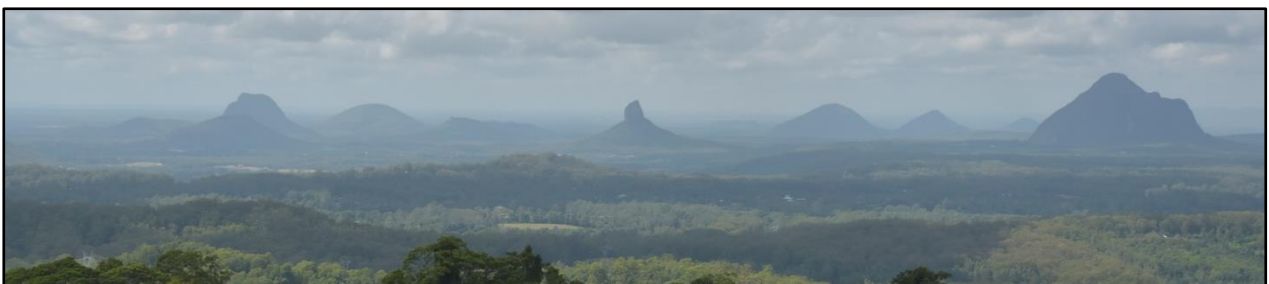
I suggest that you may enjoy the next quarterly NPQ event, as I certainly will.





NPSC Display at Mary Cairncross Jan 2018

On invitation, NPSCC mounted a display at Mary Cairncross. It looked beautiful thanks to Marie, John and Joan D, Deb Wagner, Jan McArthur and Spencer Shaw, and all the volunteers who manned it.



NPQ Events



Sunday, April 8: NPQ gathering and AGM Meet at 9:00am at the Bribie Island Community Arts Centre, 191 Sunderland Drive, Banksia Beach, Bribie Island (UBD Map 53:A4). This gathering will follow the format of previous Regional Gatherings with a morning tea provided by the host branch and a bring-to-share lunch.

Saturday, April 28: Grovely plant sale at Grovely TAFE Campus. Entry via Woking Street, off Casey Street, off Dawson Parade, Keperra (UBD Map 138:1E). 9.00am to 3.00pm. Admission free

August 5-6 Parks Alive, Roma Street

September 15/16 Spring Flower Show at the Brisbane Botanic Gardens, Mt. Coot-tha.



NPSC Events

May 26: *Birds, Community, Conservation.* Bird Conference at Maroochy Botanic Gardens organised by John Birbeck, Birdlife Australia Sunshine Coast Branch.

June 13-15 Queensland Garden Expo at Nambour. NPSC will be participating

September 8 – Natives Naturally at the Maroochy Botanic Gardens. NPSC will be participating.

