

# Banksia Bytes

## Native Plants Sunshine Coast



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**Native Plants Queensland**

## Newsletter

November 2018 Number 17

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### *From the Editor*

*Summer is here and after the storms our garden looks refreshed and green. Winged fruits from the booyong, *Argyrodendron* sp. KinKin, are drifting down continuously and the quandong, *Elaeocarpus grandis*, is dropping those wonderful big round blue berries – hundreds of them! We blow them off the road every day and sometimes twice a day. They remind me of Chinese checker pieces. The topknot pigeons were busy up in the tree about a month ago but aren't interested now – they must prefer the fruit green.*

*Isn't it great to see the different and interesting turns of nature.*

*Enjoy Christmas and happy gardening with native plants in the New Year*

*Wendy*



## Dates for your 2018 Diary

**Saturday December 1:** 8.00 to 1.00 at the Community Library grounds, Obi Obi Rd, Mapleton. Buy your Christmas presents away from the shopping madness. NPSC have plants for sale from NativesRUs, Forest Heart and Joan Dillon. The Community Library has bargain books and there are a variety of stalls.

If you want a *Phaius australis* – this is your opportunity. See you at Mapleton.



**Saturday December 1:** 10.00am to 2.30pm NPQ Christmas Gathering in the rare plants section of the Brisbane Botanic Gardens Mt Coot-tha where we will be hosted by Western Suburbs Branch. We are having a BYO morning tea at 10:00am and a bring-a-plate-to-share lunch at noon. We expect to finish our gathering around 2:30pm.

**Sunday December 9:** at Mary Cairncross for an informative morning: 8.00 am if you are one of the lucky ones going walking with Spencer 9.00 am for registration for everyone else with a 12.30 finish. See the flyer with all the details. We will have visitors at this event, so all those NPSC members who are booked can enthuse other locals about native plants and habitat. All places are booked but we will run a waiting list.

Polish up your signature recipes for December 9<sup>th</sup> as NPSC are catering for morning tea. 55 hungry bodies will need sustenance at 10.30 am. Pam Watson is working on the details and a request for goodies will be sent out soon.

See the raffle request on page 4.



## Dates for your 2019 Diary

**Sunday 10 February:** AGM and property tour at the home of Kerrie and Richard Lonn, 922 Bald Knob Rd, Bald Knob. All the details will be sent closer to the time.

**Sunday 10 March:** 9.00 am for a morning of informative talks at the Maroochy Regional Bushland Botanic Gardens, Tanawha in conjunction with the Friends of the Gardens. What are the scientists and citizen scientists up to?

**Sunday 14 April:** a walk in Triunia National Park led by Jacqueline Nolan, SCC Natural Areas officer.



*Triunia robusta*

Photo: G.Miller



**For Information about outings contact....**

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<b>Marie</b>	<b>0427 152 022</b>
<b>Chrissie</b>	<b>0408 792 227</b>



**News:** Sunshine Coast Council are creating a native bee garden in Beerburum - near where we started our walk. Thanks to Ann Ross, the planners contacted NPSC and we have had input into the selected plants.



## A Raffle to Remember in December

We all know about the traditional NP Sunshine Coast raffles and how they work...

You bring a native plant or two, clearing out your propagating bench a little with wonderful plants that you can't use but someone else will love. At the meeting you buy a ticket or three for a dollar or three, win a plant or three and take your plants home to sit on your propagating bench until you find exactly the right spot, with exactly the right amount of sunlight, exactly the right soil, exactly the right moisture and protection. When the planets align, you put the plants into their new homes, they flourish, your bench is a bit clearer and hey presto, you have room to begin the process again.

Now for **The Raffle to Remember in December**:

At the Mary Cairncross 'Creating Habitat in Your Garden' event on Sunday December 9<sup>th</sup>, we're running a raffle, but this one will be open to everyone booked in for the morning of information, including many non-NPSC members. That's 55 bums on seats, possibly \$275 of raffle tickets, providing support for Marie's next exciting plan to enthuse people about growing native plants.

I'm inviting YOU to help make it a Raffle to Remember.

As prizes there will be plants, there will be gardening gloves, there will be small gardening implements, there will be gardening hats, there will be home-made chutneys, jams, relishes and other goodies from native fruit and seeds, there will be water-bottles, sunscreen, restorative hand-cream, tea-towels with Flowers of Bribie Island, a copy of David Hockings' reprinted book, perhaps offshoots from Auntie Flo's *Geodorum densiflorum*, or plants grown from Uncle Harry's *Calostemma purpureum* which has been in the family since 1925. What wonderful hampers there will be. And guess where they'll be coming from? YOU. If it's native-garden related, of interest to home gardeners, and in new, perfect condition, would you please consider purchasing or donating it?

Karen Shaw has kindly offered to collect the donations, so please drop your goodies in to Forest Heart between now and Friday 7<sup>th</sup> December. EXCEPT PLANTS! If you have suitable plants to donate, give me a ring and I'll co-ordinate a drop-off or pick-up with you.

Forest Heart is at 20 Coral St Maleny.

Open from Tuesday-Friday 9-4 and Saturday 8-1.

Thanks Raffleers Extraordinaire.  
(And thanks Karen and Spencer)

Chrissie McMaster                      5494 1149                      0408 792 227

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## ***Rhodomyrtus psidioides* - Native Guava**

With Spencer Shaw

Writing about this species is almost a commemoration. As a result of the introduction of Myrtle Rust *Austropuccinia psidii* into Australia and its arrival in SE QLD seven years ago, the majority of plants I'm familiar with are either dead or suffering drastically, with foliage cover reduced by over ninety percent. Surviving plants are not just stressed but in a critical condition, struggling to put on leaves, let alone flower. Without flowers there's no fruit and without fruit there's no seed and without seed (without the potential for the next generation), survival isn't looking good for *Rhodomyrtus psidioides*. Hopefully I'm wrong and in other areas there are a few plants thriving and reproducing.

*Rhodomyrtus psidioides* is the single representative of the genus *Rhodomyrtus* in South East Queensland and New South Wales. It is nearing its northern-most limit of distribution here on the Sunshine Coast (occurs as far north as Tinana Creek, Maryborough).



In form, it is a shrub to small tree, that suckers readily (which can be great for a hedge) and can form small thickets. It naturally occurs in the ecotone between rainforest and tall eucalypt communities. Foliage is generally dense and the opposite leaves have a light, fruity smell when crushed. The white flowers can be produced en-masse and are one of the larger of our local Myrtaceae flowers, being up to 25mm across. Flowers are followed by a green to yellow fruit, 10-15mm, with a rough-textured skin. The fruit contain many seeds surrounded by a sweet pulp, sought after by bird, bat and bush food connoisseur alike.

If you do find healthy specimens of this plant in your gardens, revegetation, or the wild, they are well worth propagating from to help ensure the ongoing survival of this species. Plants treated with fungicides in nurseries may look great when you buy them, but if they are susceptible to Myrtle Rust, it will catch up with them!



## A Favourite Tree

By Joan Dillon

Years ago, when visiting the Royal Botanic Gardens in Sydney, I noticed a large tree covered in relatively small but hibiscus-like pink flowers. It was essentially a park tree growing in a large expanse of lawn with space to develop a symmetrical spreading crown. A perfect spot to have a picnic in the shade. It was a tree I decided I just had to have! Not local native but at least it was Australian.



It turned out to be a Norfolk Is. Hibiscus, *Lagunaria patersonii*. Remarkably, I located a young tree, possibly at Fairhill, and planted it in the early days on our anything but flat and open ground at Hunchy where the rainforest proceeded to grow around it. Naturally its growth habit is very different. Now a tall and narrow tree, still reaching for the light, it does produce masses of those attractive pink flowers in late spring/early summer. These can be seen where it emerges from amongst the macarangas, decaspermums, oleas and so on, or as a scattered carpet on the ground.

I still love it, but it's certainly a lesson in how location affects growth habit, something those of us undertaking revegetation programs see all the time. If you are serious about having the perfect specimen tree, plant it in the right place!



## The Right Place?

By Wendy Johnston

I purchased a *Phaius australis* many years ago. It sat in the nursery and filled the pot and produced a few flower spikes. So, it was potted up and later divided. This sequence happened several times but this year I decided they were really getting too big for the nursery and, as an experiment, planted one large pot in the vegie garden where I knew it would get watered and get plenty of sun. The result was at least 20 flower spikes!! I don't think too many orchids grow in vegie gardens but they certainly can add a touch of glamour.



## Spring Wildflowers of the Beerwah Forest



Photo: Rose Feely



*Sowerbaea juncea*



*Dillwynia glaberrima*



*Ricinocarpos pinifolius*



*Hakea actites*



*Boronia sp.*



*Gompholobium virgatum*



*Leptospermum sp.*



*Drosera spatulata*



*Patersonia sp.*



## HOVEA by Beth McRobert

*The Hovea was in flower,  
Standing in the dappled shade,  
All misty-blueey-purple –  
Its full colour it displayed.  
A specimen I took along  
To share on meeting night,  
The other members all agreed  
It was a pretty sight.  
I was inspired, so I thought  
A painting I would do.  
I checked my brushes and from some tubes  
Worked out the proper blue.  
I planned the work and then prepared  
A board to do it on,  
And when I finished all of that-  
The flowers were all gone.*



Reprinted from the March 1988 Bulletin

## Native Buzz is the online magazine for all the latest on Native Bees

As part of the initiative for creating diverse habitats, ecosystems in the Parliament House Garden Showcase, this year (2018) Hive Haven – a Sunshine Coast small business - was invited to install one of their Australian Native Stingless Bee Hives in the Speakers Courtyard.

Ann and Jeff Ross – owners of Hive Haven are very excited about the idea of showcasing the native bee hive design that they've been working on for the past few years.

The hive will be in place from September through to April, when it will be moved to warmer locations to keep the bees thriving. Native stingless bees aren't active in cold areas so if kept in cold locations like Canberra they can decline over Winter due to lack of being able to gather resources. Temperature data will be collected daily and sent to Hive Haven once a week. Moving hives for European Honey Bees and also Native Bees is not uncommon to help the bees find the best resources and thrive. Moving hives is also used for crop pollination where farmers will place Native and European hives on their farm to increase crop yields. Using native bees for crop pollination is also an increasing practice. This particular Native bee hive spent the last few years at the Innovation Centre's Butterfly Garden at the University of the Sunshine Coast.

Follow the link to see all the details about Ann and Geoff Ross with their hive at Parliament house.

<http://www.nativebuzz.net/stingless-bees-at-parliament-house-canberra/>



The hive of bees leaving the Innovation Centre Butterfly Garden



## NPSC Outing Reports

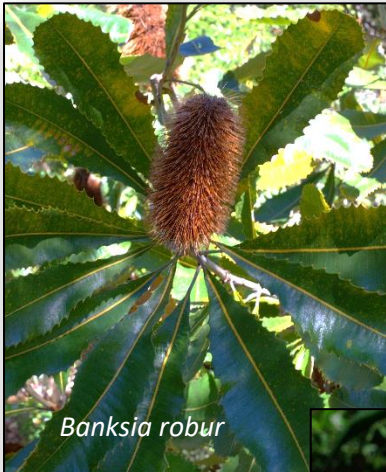
September was a busy month.

**John and Joan Dillon's garden, Hunchy, September, 2018** by Pam Watson.

Photos by Robert Gillingham and Joan Dillon

On a sunny, windless morning ten members and three guests assembled for a tour around this remarkable piece of revegetated eleven acre "garden". Marie first conducted a short and sharp meeting which was followed by a long and chatty morning tea before Joan and John showed us around. They both have an in-depth knowledge of the landscape and hydrology of their piece of the range, readily shared it and

answered many questions with patience and humour. *Banksia robur* are dotted throughout to encourage the cockatoos and nectar-producing beauties (callistemons, leptospermums, melaleucas) were filled with small honeyeaters darting about finding breakfast. Successful groundcovers are *Scaevola albida* (sun, light shade), *Goodenia rotundifolia* (ditto), *Lobelia trigonocaulis* (shade), *Chrysocephalum apiculatum* (sun). Joan's favourite plant is *Hibbertia vestita* because of its tidy mounded habit and large bright yellow flowers appearing in late spring, and then a long flowering season. Joan comments that it also appears to be adaptable re soil type and moisture. A thoroughly satisfying and enjoyable morning. Thank you Dillons





**Natives Naturally** at the Maroochy Botanic Gardens focussed on Birds, Bats, and Bees. This annual event is a joint project between the Friends of the Gardens and NPSC.

Dr Les Hall enthralled the audience with his fascinating talk on the world of bats and their key role in pollinating. Amongst his many wonderful close-up photos was one showing the extended tongue of a small bat. The tongue was 1.5 times the length of the bat's body and it basically concertinas into the bat's body when retracted.

Ryan Nevis explained his research into the wonders of native bees and their potential medicinal properties. If you missed Ryan at Natives Naturally, he will give us an update on his research at our March 10, 2019 event.

The world of bird watchers was entertainingly explained by Ken Cross from Birdlife Sunshine Coast, and Bob Luttrell showcased his constantly evolving native bee hives.



**Spring Wildflower and Plant Show** at the Brisbane Botanic Gardens was on the same weekend as Natives Naturally so thanks to Joan

Abercrombie for setting up the NPSC display and Michael Fox from Pollinator Link who helped man the stand.





## Outing to Butterfly Hill, November 2018

Twelve suncoasters enjoyed a morning at Butterfly Hill getting some insight into the farming of butterflies. Teena gave us a tour of the butterfly house where eggs are laid, larvae emerge and go through their stages, pupae are built and butterflies hatch. We were lucky enough to see a common crow butterfly emerge from its cocoon and gradually pump up its wings. It must be a full-time job keeping up the greenery required. That day

we saw common crow, monarch, orchard, varied eggfly and large grass-yellows active in the butterfly house. Also in the butterfly house were some weird and wonderfully shaped phasmids. After a visit to the shop and watching a video, we settled in for morning tea and a chat.



Varied eggfly butterflies



Orchard swallowtail  
Note the coiled proboscis



Large grass-yellow

## The buzz around bees, November 2018

November 10 saw another over-subscribed Native Bee Workshop at the Maroochy Botanic Gardens, hosted by Sunshine Coast Council. 50 native bee enthusiasts gathered to see how a native bee hive is rescued from a log and how to care for native bees in man-made hives.

Displaying the importance of native plants in providing habitat and preserving native bees, Native Plants Sunshine Coast supplied a stall with books, plants and nest boxes for solitary bees. Dr. Tim Heard from Sugar Bag Bees gave a fascinating talk on native bees and pollination and then Spencer Shaw from Forest Heart EcoNursery (and NPSC) followed up showing a range of native plants suited to local gardens. Keep your eyes out for the next Native Bee Workshop at MRBBG in the new year.



Wasp on *Xerochrysum* sp.



Carpenter bee on *Leptospermum speciosum*





Cross over the lagoon causeway to this open garden area at Maroochy Regional Bushland Botanic Gardens, Tanawha. 13/11/2018

## TALKING GARDENS....

How would you like to walk, talk, enjoy the great outdoors, and learn for free, all at the same time? ...Even know and help our local flora and fauna? **Become a Garden Guide!**

With the Visitor Information Centre at Maroochy Regional Bushland Botanic Gardens now open most days of the week, Garden Guides provide free walks once a week (and booked walks at other times by arrangement) and want to expand their program in 2019. New volunteers become Friends' members before undertaking a free, practical course based on learning about the Gardens, local species, storytelling and more, in collaboration with Sunshine Coast Council.

As a Guide, you meet visitors from all parts of the planet, as well as locals. Many just want to understand why it is such a magic, tranquil place. Others want some information, and sometimes they have special interests, but all visitors share a common appreciation of our stories. If you are a life-long learner and confident speaker with a bit of time to spare, all you really need is passion!

Sunshine Coasters are encouraged to apply to become a Guide in 2019 - we expect to start in February. Simply email [friendsofMRBBG@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofMRBBG@gmail.com) to express your interest in Guiding or enquire about other voluntary work at the Gardens. And if you know someone else who would make an ideal Guide, please encourage them!

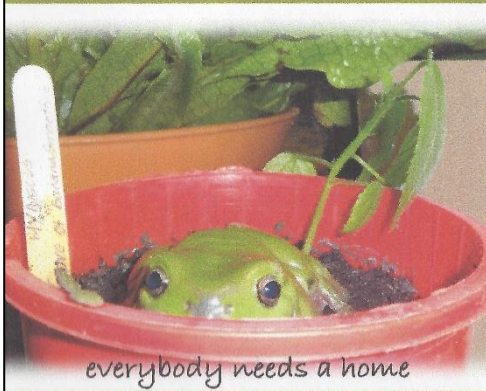


Garden Guide Deb Ducrou double-checks some plant facts in preparation for her next Garden Walk.

Image: G. Miller



## Creating Habitat in your Garden



*everybody needs a home*

Talks on creating habitat for  
our native animals including

## FROGS, REPTILES, BIRDS & BEES

Mary Cairncross theatrette,  
Mt View Rd, Maleny  
Sunday 9 December 2018  
8am - 12.30pm

## Programme

- 8.00 am: Explore the Mary Cairncross rainforest with local expert, Spencer Shaw  
**only 15 places available for walk, so be quick**
- 9.00 am: Registration. Refreshments available on site at the Mountain View Café
- 9.30 am: Habitat in urban gardens: Michael Fox. Pollinator Link presents his vision
- 10.00 am: Creating homes for reptiles with Jill Fechner, Reptile Rehabilitation Qld
- 10.30 am: **Morning tea provided by Native Plants Sunshine Coast - \$5 per head**
- 11.00 am: Frog habitat with Jono Hooper, President, Queensland Frog Society
- 11.30 am: Garden ponds and plants: Wonderful Wildlife Habitat with Anne Windsor, Native Plants Sunshine Coast
- 12.00 pm: Creating a garden pond: demonstration by Anne Windsor

MC for the morning is Ian McMaster

**BOOKINGS: Phone Marie 0427 152 022  
or email [npscevents@gmail.com](mailto:npscevents@gmail.com)**

Native Plants



Sunshine Coast



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