

North West Group

Newsletter 460

August 2023



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Welcome to the August edition of the APSTNW newsletter. The days have turned and the sun is starting to shine longer each day.

There has been plenty going on with special talks and walks, working bees at the propagation headquarters and plenty more events coming up soon.

Time to come to an upcoming event and meet other group members who share your interest in native plants and how to grow them. There will be another day time meeting, midweek this time in August and the Spring plant sale isn't far away. 2024 calendars are ready to be ordered.

The EXPO of EVERYTHING in Devonport will be a new exposure forum for the Society.

If you have any suggestions for additions to the newsletter or the plant group in general please share them with one of the committee, general members or myself, Simon.

Monthly meeting: The July meeting was held on a Saturday at the Tasmanian Arboretum with the business side of the meeting dealt with quickly. Local plant expert Philip Milner was our special guest speaker. Philip has been a long standing member of the Society and has a high level of plant ID expertise both local and Australia wide.

Philip also has history with planting out the Australian section at the Arboretum so his knowledge and experience meant a fascinating and insightful talk and walk focusing of the history of the plants of the old Super-continent Gondwana in his talk entitled "CONTINENTS ADRIFT".



He spoke about the connections of the Plant Kingdom at the family level across the Southern hemisphere and then discussed the evolution of the Australian flora of today from their early ancestors on Gondwana.

The present Southern hemisphere distribution of these primitive plants helps to support the now well accepted theory of continental drift and plate tectonics.

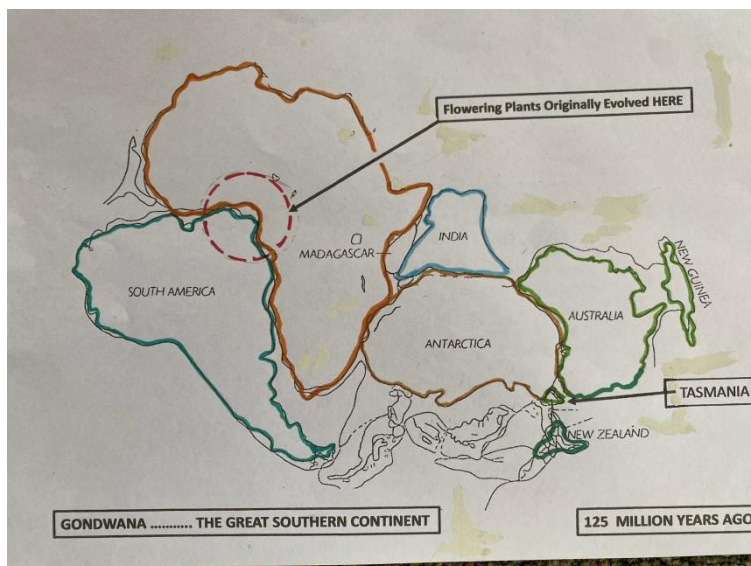
Many of the plants which occur naturally today on each of the Southern continents have evolved and dispersed from common ancestors which first arose many millions of years ago prior to the breakup of Gondwana and the continents going their separate ways.

The diversity in the Australian flora today can be attributed to those ancient and ancestral plants which still occur in the Eastern Australian rainforests and other vegetation communities, such as the alpine areas of Tasmania.

Philip spoke about the plant families which are now prominent within the Australian flora.

The Arboretum has a wealth of trees and plants with ancient lineages dating back to the time when the continents of the Southern hemisphere were joined together in the supercontinent of Gondwana.

After Philip's talk there was a quick lunch break with some tea and treats before we set off to explore the geographical collections of South America, Gondwana, the Australian rainforest and Tasmania sections of the Arboretum to observe the connections and relationships of plants at the family and genus level across the Southern hemisphere.





Lots of questions were asked and answered as the group strolled through the Arboretum with Philip pointing out plants and their key ID features and where they fit into the bigger picture or jigsaw puzzle before, during and after, when the “CONTINENTS became ADRIFT”.

Many thanks from all those present and the APST North West group in general to Philip for putting a lot of work into his talk and for sharing his time and knowledge during the day, especially on the walk. It was appreciated and enjoyed by everyone. Thank you Philip.

Plant table: Big thank you to Riitta and Jan B for the flowers and their written descriptions.



An excellent amount of flowering specimens were on show on the monthly plant table. All the plants came from Riitta and Jan’s garden. There were two different groupings.

Group 1) *Banksia brownii* is flowering for the first time. The feathery foliage is unusual.

Hakea multilineata is a large shrub.

Hakea bucculenta flowers well every year as a grafted specimen.

Hardenbergia violacea, a popular climber that provides a splash of purple colour in winter.

Group 2) Acacias presented at APST NW Arboretum meeting 22nd July by Jan B.

When flowering many acacias are intensely yellow with so many flowers that branches can break in heavy rain or wind. Flowers come typically in balls or roundish shapes and in rods with smaller ball shape individual flowers.

We have many others not currently flowering, but I should have included *Acacia adunca*, a very attractive smallish acacia with reddish new leaves, currently flowering beautifully. Philip Milner commented that the acacias at Hawley are flowering at least a month ahead of his.

Acacia species on the flower table:

aphylla individual ball pompoms, standing out along its bare stems.

boormannii lots of fluff between the leaves

buxifolia elegant fluffy light green flowers in separate heads

covenyi dense lot of pure yellow pompoms in flower stems at end of branches.

floribunda lots of white rods all over

havillandiorum very long lasting rich yellow pompoms all over

imbricata small pompoms mixed with the small phyllodes all over

notabilis big ball pompoms along stems long lasting

pravissima fluffy flowers all over

riceana (very) few white flowers along drooping branches. Grown for weeping shape.

Rigens few small ball flowers widely spread over shrub

spectabilis spectacular light yellow ball clusters

subcaerulea relatively few pin-type flowers in few small flower heads. Grown for bluish leaves

vestita lots of flower fluff all over. Plant presented probably a hybrid: no seed.

All these plants derive from seed mainly provided by the acacia study group of APS.



Plant propagation: Thursday 10am start

As usual there were a dedicated team at the monthly propagation session held at The Tasmanian Arboretum. Cuttings, potting on and liverwort removal and were all tasks being performed. The Spring plant sale isn't too far away and the collection of plants in the right size pots for sale is growing steadily. There will be about 2-3 more propagation sessions before the plant sale so please come on down and join in with all the great work of getting native plants out there into the wider community and gardens.



This is a hands on session helping, learning all about growing native plants from cuttings. It's a BYO lunch/drinks affair at The Tasmanian Arboretum, 'usually' on the Thursday after the Tuesday meeting. If new please contact a committee member for latest information on dates and location.

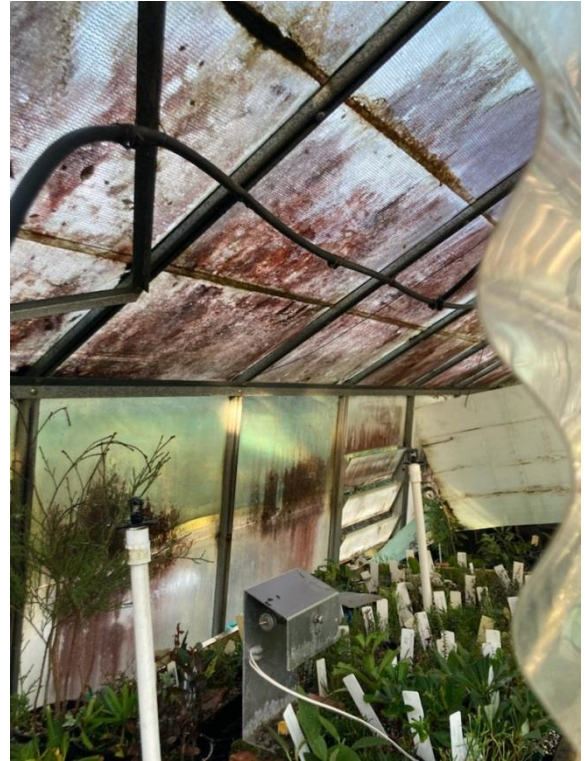
FROM THE PRESIDENT

"I want to thank Marianne and Bradley for a fantastic job they did on Wednesday: They volunteered to clean the glasshouse roof and walls at the Arboretum where we do our propagation sessions! This was a serious job, because over time the glasshouse has become darker and darker from algae and mossy growth on the roof under the netting. Some patches were actually black.

THANK YOU MARIANNE AND BRADLEY!"

Riitta

Before and after photos by Marianne and Brad:



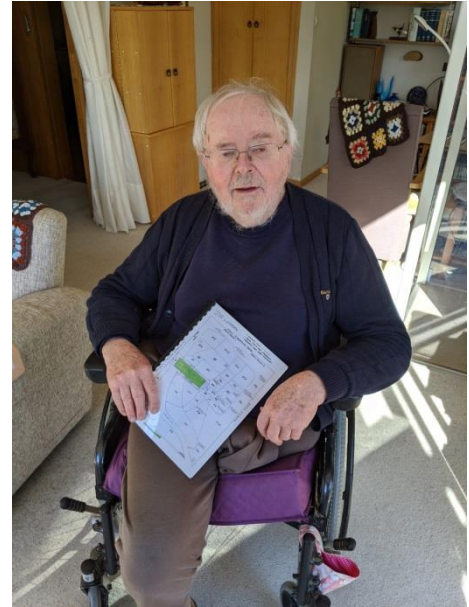
Come and see my garden!

Well what a start to our new section with Riitta and Jan introducing us to their wonderful garden last month with a beautifully written description.

This issue I was very privileged to visit the garden of one of the founding members of what was then in 1978 called the 'Society of Growing Australian Plants' Mr Dick Burns of Penguin. I had a lovely chat with Dick and looked around his garden. This is my write up and photos from July.

The property is a double block roughly facing North West. Apart from the steep'ish driveway and road verge, most of the garden area is pretty flat. Dick has lived there since 1976 when it was all grass. It's been a lifelong passion of Dicks to revegetate the property with native plants from all over Tasmania and Australia.

Over the 46 years Dick has planted in excess of 450 individual plants from well over 250 different species. How do we know these figures? Well Dick was smart enough to document and record his garden with a map. The garden map is broken down into different zones with each plant listed within the individual zones. Special plants are highlighted either listing their rareness, location collected or if it was a gift from a treasured friend or family member.



Dick grew lots of the plants from cuttings and seeds collected 'back in the day'. There is a diverse mix of bush, nursery and natural hybrids as well as self-seeded plants. Variations in growth form, flower colour and a couple of Mainland plants that have never flowered at all, indicating a possible lack of pollinator.

The first plant to take me by surprise was a stunning 45 year old *Angophora costata* commonly known as a Sydney red gum. *Angophora's* look like a Eucalypt but are a close relative. Stunning reds are revealed either when the smooth bark sheds yearly or when kino (sap) flows from wounds staining the trunk like a warrior. I never expected to see this tree growing in Tasmania.



Other 'Sydney sandstone' plants that I'm familiar with were some *Persoonia's*, again with the stunning red bark that peels off like red paper. *Xylomelum pyriforme* Woody pears (pictured left), *Banksia ericifolia* loved by pygmy possums, *Ceratopetalum gummiferum* Sydney Christmas bush so called because people falsely think it flowers at Christmas time. It actually has small white flowers in late Spring and when the flowers fall off it leaves bright red fruiting calyces which look like flowers. Dick says his flowers in Autumn well behind the Mainland species and could be called the Penguin Easter bush.

Tasmanian plants that might be of interest to members of this group were a prostrate form of *Banksia serrata* and *Trochocarpa disticha* an uncommon plant from the far South East of Tassie.

Baeckea imbricata was grown from a cutting John and Marion Simmons found of a single plant growing near Scamander which has never been located again.

Hakea decurrens subsp. *platytaenia* spotted by Burnie Field Nats growing under powerlines near Rocky Cape was grown from seed. And finally *Persoonia linearis* which was grown from seed; it took 12 months and flushing in a toilet cistern for the one seed to germinate.

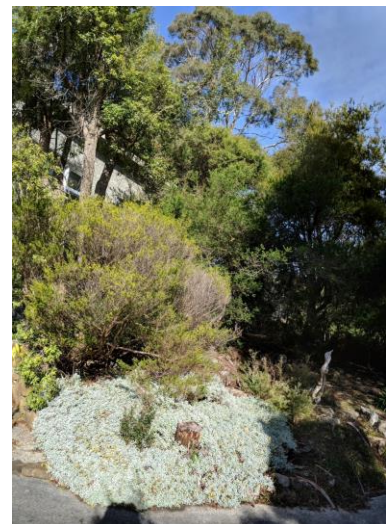
Due to the large amount of Proteaceae plants Dick's garden is a haven for native birds and possibly mammals as well. When I visited there were wattle birds flying around and about three different species of honeyeaters. I'm sure the Eastern spinebills and other nectar feeding birds all have Dick's garden address in their GPS navigation systems. Seed eating birds don't miss out either with huge amounts of hakea nuts and banksia cones spread throughout the garden.



Thankfully Dick has been well attentive to weeds over the years and has kept them at bay through vigilant removal. Blackberry seeds spread from birds and Forget Me Nots from neighbouring properties are the two most common weeds that keep trying to infest the property. The good, thick layer of native leaf litter, mulch does a great job of suppressing unwanted nasties.

When viewed from a satellite image apart from the creek line vegetation across the road Dicks place is easily the most vegetated block in the area. I believe in the past the North West group have visited the property to get cuttings of rare and interesting plants and we may well just be due for another visit to continue building on the great work Dick started 46 years ago. A true labour of love and it shows. Well done Dick, your garden is a 'place of beauty and a joy forever'.

Whose garden will we visit next time??????



APST 2024 CALENDAR ORDER NOW!!

The wonderful APST 2024 calendars are ready to order now. The calendar contains contributions from a few North West group members and purchasing one is a great way to support the Society, your fellow members as well as putting some colour on your walls at home.

They also make wonderful gifts.

Order yours **now** before the 1st September so you don't miss out, LIMITED STOCK AVAILABLE.

Cost is \$17 each (you can order more than one)

It's a simple three step process to order.

1) Pay first.

Payment is preferably done directly to our bank account either electronically or in person at your bank or cash to the treasurer (Jan B) at the August meeting (correct change appreciated).

Details are:

Account name: **APSTNW**

BSB: **633000**

Account number: **152025870**

IMPORTANT Use your Surname and the word 'CALENDAR' as the payment reference.

2) Email our North West group secretary, Drew at

drew.thomas@iinet.net.au

with your full name and how many calendars you have **paid for** and the date of payment.

3) Pick up will be from October onwards either at the Tuesday night meetings, Thursday propagation sessions or at the Port Sorell Spring plant sale or by other arrangements.

Again please make sure you use your Surname and the word 'CALENDAR' as your payment reference and order now to secure your copy.

Thanks for your support of the Society in Tasmania and the members who have put in lots of hard work to make this this wonderful calendar. **Did we mention to order NOW as stock is limited!!**



Upcoming 'not to be missed' events and dates:

Tuesday 15th August: Meeting 11:00am Tasmanian Arboretum in the Education Centre. Guest speaker: Louise Skabo APST President and Margaret Killen APST membership officer. Louise will outline the history of the APST, great for new and existing members alike. Margaret will talk about the aims and goals of the Society.

Thursday 17th August: Propagation session at the Tasmanian Arboretum starting at 10:00am until 2:00pm (or shorter time if that suits you better)

*****Saturday 2nd September:** Expo of Everything. Devonport. See below for details.

Tuesday 19th September: Meeting 7:00pm at **new venue** (details next month).

Thursday 21st September: Propagation session at the Tasmanian Arboretum starting at 10:00am until 2:00pm (or shorter time if that suits you better)

*****Sunday 22nd October:** Port Sorell Spring Fair plant sale. More details to come.

*****Here's something else brand new the Society is trying for the first time.**



EXPO OF EVERYTHING

GREAT OPPORTUNITY!

Yes, not only to see EVERYTHING (!) but to promote our Society, and in particular Port Sorrel Spring Fair sale.

On Saturday 2nd September, Devonport Council will mount an Expo of community activities. The event runs 10.00 am to 3.00 pm, at Paranaple Convention Centre, Devonport.

We have agreed to participate. We'll have a couple of display boards, a couple of tables, some chairs – and hopefully some willing volunteers. i.e. you. We'll have blooms on display as well as photographs and be offering conversations and advice around beautifying and future proofing gardens. Please consider offering your time to this. Full day 5 hour heroes are welcome but every hour people can spare will help.

Please contact Secretary Drew Thomas, drew.thomas@iinet.net.au Or 0488 402 210 with your offer of assistance.

It will be a great opportunity to make contact with an audience we rarely see.

Tid bits and left overs

(or should that be recyclables):

From the 459 July 2023 newsletter

Question) What is the species of tree pictured?

Answer) *Eucalyptus camaldulensis* River red gum. This specimen is Western Australia's version of our Horizontal.



This stunning photo was taken by Brad during the group walk at the Arboretum after the July meeting. It's *Banksia ornata* commonly called the Desert banksia. It is doing remarkably well considering it likes a sandy soil. The near perfect symmetry of the six lower flowers topped off by the higher leader like a candelabra. Thanks for sharing with us Brad.

Best regards, hooroo Simon 😊

