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Cover: *Eucalyptus pauciflora* (Pryor's notable Snow Gum) and weeding by Friends of Black Mountain, April 2015; Photo: Jean Geue

Journal articles

The Journal is a forum for the exchange of members' and others' views and experiences of gardening with, propagating and conserving Australian plants.

All contributions, however short, are welcome and may be accompanied by photographs and drawings.

Submit photographs as either electronic files, such as JPEGs, or prints. Set your digital camera to take high resolution photos. Please send JPEGs separately and not embedded in a document. If photos are too large to email, copy onto a CD or USB drive and send by post. Please enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope if you would like your prints returned. If you have any queries please contact the editor.

The deadline dates for submissions are 1 February (for March edition), 1 May (June), 1 August (September) and 1 November (December). Send articles or photos to:

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From the Editor

I would like to thank Alison Milton for producing the September issue of our journal. I've been on a trip to the Kimberley in Western Australia, travelling over 19,000 kilometres in four months. While I was driving over corrugated dirt roads, visiting numerous gorges and enjoying the wide open skies, it was comforting to know that the journal is no longer one bus event away from disaster.

In this issue you will read Life Member Ros Cornish's final account of the Wednesday Walks. For decades she has provided detailed descriptions of the weekly excursions that members have undertaken both within the ACT and surrounding regions. Without fail Ros has been the longest, most consistent contributor to our Journal. Sadly for us, she and her partner John are moving to northern

climes but we wish them well as they embark on the next phase of their lives. Roger Farrow has kindly offered to take over from Ros.

In another changing of the guard, Lesley Page has handed over the mantle of Study Group Liaison Officer to Brigitta Wimmer. Thank you Lesley for providing regular reporting on the various study groups around Australia — always reliable and often the first to contribute to each edition.

Finally, congratulations to our new Council. You will find details of Council members on the inside back cover of this journal. However one important position remains vacant, that of Treasurer. Please consider taking on this role and if needed you will receive every assistance. You will not be thrown into the deep end.



Brachychiton viscidulus (Kimberley Rose), Manning Gorge, Kimberley WA; Photo: Gail Ritchie Knight

President's Report

2015 has been a busy year, which is no different from previous years. Membership is stable at around 250 (that is 250 memberships, as opposed to members)—and has been maintained over the last several years. This doesn't mean we don't need more members, and I would encourage you all to recruit new members, particularly younger ones. The knowledge our society's members have to share is outstanding, and I see this as the greatest benefit of membership. In fact, it's the reason I joined in the first place.

Regular activities have continued, with Wednesday Walks, Daytime Activities, Field trips, monthly members' meetings with excellent speakers, and members' participation in study groups. Our own journal has been produced throughout the year, once again to a high quality, and we also produced an edition of the ANPSA national journal showcasing our region in the lead-up to the national conference that we are hosting.

We have held two successful plant sales — selling about 20 000 plants. With more advertising being conducted for the sales, there have been results like our last autumn sale having the best clearance rate anyone can remember. While we can

always work through the format of our sale for more improvements, I think we should be proud of getting that many Australian plants out into people's gardens and fulfilling that part of our society's mandate. We also had a good turn-out of volunteers for both the sales, although we could always do with more.

Participation in Weed Swap has also continued, with two opportunities for us to talk to gardeners and nongardeners alike. I really appreciate the opportunity to educate local gardeners about what will escape into the bush, and how to grow their nonweedy Australian plants for best enjoyment. It's surprising at times how little knowledge some people have of gardening, or of gardening in our region (if they have recently moved here). If we can help them in this way we don't lose potential advocates because their Australian plants died.

One major event this year was the launch in March of our 5th edition of *Australian Plants for Canberra Region Gardens and Other Cool Climate Regions*. The book has been extremely successful, with sales of over 1400 books so far. We have also continued the successful running of the memorandum of understanding with the Australian National Botanic Gardens, including

the donations we pay equivalent to the facilities we use for our meetings, and plants sales. The other major event is the 2015 ANPSA conference, 15–20 November, which we are hosting. The conference committee has been working extremely hard, and I wish them every success.

Notable council decisions this year include the:

- purchase of a stockpile (200 000) of blank labels to future proof us for printing plant labels used during sales;
- purchase of more roadside signs for advertising our plant sales;
- drafting of a donations policy for council consideration, to enable us to fairly consider where we donate funds and when; and
- donation of \$2000 to the Australian Network for Plant Conservation orchid conservation program.

In summary, I'd like to thank all of our members for participating in events small and large, and to everyone who volunteered and/or held down a job this year for the society. The society would be less rich without you and there are far too many people to mention individually. I believe the success of our society is based on people's willingness to be involved and their enjoyment of what the society has to offer.

Going forward, I ask that you take some time to reflect on why you joined; for example, was it to learn more about identifying plants or how

to garden, or to meet like-minded friends? We have all made wonderful lasting friendships through this group. There are certainly times where personalities clash, but if we can recall our reasons for joining in the first place, it might help the society to run more smoothly in those times.

Alison Roach, outgoing President, November 2015



President Alison Roach presenting her report at the 2015 AGM; Photo: Neville Page

Winter Walks 2015

Ros Cornish



View from Urambi Hills; Photo: Helen Brewer

Monga Forest Drive

Our trips to Monga Forest are mainly drives with various random stops on the loop from the western side via Granite Bluff Forest Road, Saddleback Road, Milo Road to River Forest Road. There are maps at both the eastern and western entrances to Monga National Park, as well as at the picnic area. There is wet sclerophyll forest as well as some rainforest.

On this very chilly trip in early June, our first stop was at the creek after we entered the National Park from the west where we had morning tea and a look around the creek. We found *Acacia ulicifolia* with a few flowers. We then drove to the

top of the ridge, stopping to admire *Banksia spinulosa* flowering, before turning onto Saddleback Road. We had a little ramble, finding *Acacia obtusifolia*, *Arrhenechthites mixta*, *Helichrysum leucopsidium*, *Pratia purpurascens* and some flowers and fruit on *Persoonia linearis*.

Our next stop was at the correas (*Correa lawrenciana* var. *cordifolia*) which were flowering well. We then descended through fantastic tree ferns to River Forest Road and had lunch at the Waratah Picnic Area. We did the short walk there, seeing some *Telopea mongaensis* beside the river. Some finished off with a visit to Penance Grove, where we did a quick walk of the boardwalk.



Correa lawrenciana var. *cordata*, Monga Forest Drive; Photo: Martin Butterfield



Cyathea australis, Monga Forest Drive; Photo: Martin Butterfield



View of Queanbeyan River, Black Wallaby Loop, Googong; Photo: Brigitta Wimmer

Black Wallaby Loop, Googong

The walk is an easy loop which follows the Queanbeyan River below Googong Dam, giving some good views of the river and gorge before emerging into grassland. There are some remarkable, old trees — *Eucalyptus bridgesiana*, *E. rossii*, *E. melliodora* — and a diverse array of shrubs, forbs and grasses.

The vulnerable *Pomaderris pallida* is there along with several other pomaderris species. There is a good population of *Calytrix tetragona* which is fairly unusual. There was little flowering on this winter visit,

Melichrus urceolatus being the standout, but buds were noticeable on *Cryptandra propinqua*, *Brachyloma daphnoides* and *Pomaderris pallida*.

Eighty-three plants were ticked off the list and a few were added — *Brachychiton populneus*, *Acaena novae-zelandiae*, *Allocasuarina verticillata*, *Daviesia genistifolia*, *Einadia hastata* and *Exocarpos cupressiformis*. Several orchid rosettes were found, possibly both *Pterostylis* sp. and *Diplodium* sp. as well as a very large patch of possibly *Cyrtostylis reniformis* which flowers in September to early November so we will have to go back then to confirm if we were correct.



Pomaderris pallida, Black Wallaby Loop, Googong; Photo Brigitta Wimmer

Wanniassa Hills

The walk was on the western side of Wanniassa Hills with great views to the Murrumbidgee Corridor and beyond. To return, we crossed under Erindale Drive and walked back on Farrer Ridge.

We found great displays of *Leucopogon attenuatus* and *Cryptandra* sp. Floriferous (aka *C. amara* var. *floribunda*) in full flower — hillsides of the *L. attenuatus* in fact. They gave off a lovely honey perfume. There were a few flowers on *Acacia ulicifolia* and *A. gunnii* and we saw the first *Hovea heterophylla* of the season, flowering, as well as *Indigofera australis*.

As always, the trees were amazing — some very old *Eucalyptus polyanthemos*, some supporting big clumps of *Amyema miquelii*, and a couple of *Muellerina eucalyptoides* on one. We added a few new species to our already long list — *Arthropodium minus*, *Carex appressa*, *Glycine tabacina*, *Monotoca scoparia* and *Thelymitra* sp.



Leucopogon attenuatus, Wanniasa Hills; Photo: Jean Geue



Leucopogon attenuatus (detail), Wanniasa Hills;
Photos: Martin Butterfield



Acacia ulicifolia, Wanniasa Hills;
Photo: Martin Butterfield



View of Foggy City, Black Mountain Circuit;
Photo: Martin Butterfield



Phyllanthus hirtellus, Black Mountain Circuit;
Photo: Martin Butterfield

Black Mountain Circuit

We started the walk from the end of Frith Road, taking a steep, newly-renovated path as far as the circuit which goes all the way around Black Mountain at a fairly high point. The vegetation changes around the circuit, as does the view and on this occasion it proved more interesting because of fog lifting.

We saw a good variety of plants and some flowers — *Acacia genistifolia*, *Hardenbergia violacea*, *Hakea decurrens* and a few *Phyllanthus hirtellus*.

There were a lot of things budding up well — *Brachyloma daphnoides*, *Acacia buxifolia*, *Grevillea alpina* — and good new growth on



Grevillea alpina, Black Mountain Circuit;
Photo: Roger Farrow

Coronidium oxylepis ssp. *lanatum* and *Wahlenbergia stricta*. The recently burnt areas had amazing regrowth of *Lomandra longifolia* and *L. filiformis* ssp. *filiformis*. The trunks of *Eucalyptus rossii* were very silvery — some massive ones.

Nadgigomar Nature Reserve (south)

Nadgigomar Nature Reserve (south) is to the north of Braidwood and is accessed by Euradux Road. We parked at the entrance to the Reserve and managed to do a loop walk on fire trails plus a track which linked the two main trails. We were surprised at how sandy it all was and felt as if we were walking on a beach a lot of the time.

We started off in forest of *Eucalyptus sieberi*, *E. viminalis* and a few *E. rubida* and *E. dives* with *Allocasuarina littoralis*. The second half of the walk was in white trunks — *E. mannifera* and *E. rossii* with a few *E. pauciflora* and not many *A. littoralis*.

There was a whole range of “different” plants that we don’t often see and it took a while to recognise them again — *Lomandra glauca*, *Xanthorrhoea*

concava, *Patersonia longifolia*, *P. sericea*, *P. glabrata*, *Daviesia acicularis* and *Kennedia prostrata* to name a few. We were surprised to find a *Calotis cuneifolia* close to the start of the walk where we parked. We were pleasantly surprised by large numbers of *Acacia terminalis* flowering — some very pale ones through to deep golden. Also flowering were *A. ulicifolia*, *Boronia algida* (including a double form) and *Mirbelia platylobioides*.

Interesting finds were populations of *Pomaderris ferruginea* and *P. ledifolia* which we haven’t recorded there before — both in bud. Other additions to our list were *Acacia falciformis*, *Omphacomeria acerba*, *Polyscias sambucifolia* and *Pomax umbellata*. Slightly annoying were some trail bike riders and evidence of high usage, perhaps explaining the amount of sand we found ourselves walking in.



Boronia algida, Nadgigomar NR: Photo: Fran Middleton



Boronia algida (double flower), Nadgigomar NR;
Photo: Martin Butterfield



Examples of differing colour hues of Acacia terminalis flowers — some very pale through to deep golden

Acacia terminalis, Nadgigomar NR;
Photo: Martin Butterfield



Acacia terminalis, Nadgigomar NR; Photo: Fran Middleton

Point Hut Crossing, north

There was a lot of water flowing in the river and some good views of it. We were surprised to find many things flowering and lots of things of interest. There were still a lot of weeds, especially at the beginning of the walk but at this time of year many have died back and are not quite so noticeable.

The best display was from *Leucopogon attenuatus* — with masses of it covering rocky slopes and mainly in full flower with some plants still to flower so the display will be good for a few more weeks. There were also flowers on the large population of *Grevillea lanigera* (some very tall plants) as well as *G. juniperina*.

Most of the wattles were about to burst — *Acacia dealbata* and *A. rubida* — and we eventually found flowers on *Cryptandra speciosa* (formerly *C. propinqua*). *C. amara* (formerly *C. amara* var. *longiflora*) were covered in buds as were *Lissanthe strigosa*, *Pomaderris angustifolia*, *Bertya rosmarinifolia* and *Phebalium squamulosum* ssp. *ozothamnoides*. We also found a few flowers on the mistletoe — *Amyema cambagei* — on the many *Casuarina cunninghamii*.

We reached the Pine Island end of the walk before lunch so decided to have a look for the rare and endangered *Muehlenbeckia tuggeranong*. We eventually found it in a rocky outcrop — all twiggy and sparse but definitely still alive. We then re-traced our steps.



Grevillea lanigera, Point Hut North; Photo: Fran Middleton



Grevillea juniperina, Point Hut North;
Photo: Fran Middleton



Amyema cambagei, Point Hut North;
Photo: Fran Middleton

Urambi Hills

Urambi Hills is part of Canberra Nature Park and is in the suburb of Kambah. This was only our second visit, starting from an entry point on Meredith Circuit. We did the steep climb to the trig point for great views then gradually made our way back along the western side.

There was not a lot flowering but the interesting pea — *Dillwynia* sp. Yetholme — was flowering in a number of locations.

Some extra species were added to our list — *Astroloma humifusum*, *Cheilanthes* sp., *Chrysocephalum semipapposum*, *Daucus glochidiatus*, *Dianella revoluta*, *Drosera* sp. and *Hibbertia obtusifolia*.

You can read a short description of our various walks, look at the list of plants we found and often, the birds and insects we spotted, as well as some photos in the Wednesday Walks section of the ANPS website — <http://nativeplants-canberra.asn.au>.



Dillwynia sp. Yetholme, Urambi Hills; Photo: Fran Middleton



Indigofera adesmiifolia, Urambi Hills; Photo: Fran Middleton

The Handke Garden

Bill and Jenny Handke



This garden [in Kambah] started out in 1976 — a totally bare block, with not even a weed growing. Over the next 39 years there have been many iterations to arrive at its current state: no doubt further iterations will follow.

Initially we developed the garden as a mixture of exotics and natives (utilising, of course, the then allocation of free plants from Yarralumla Nursery for new gardens): perennials and annual exotics with

swales of lawn in the front and back; pergolas with Wisteria and Star Jasmine; deciduous trees for winter sun; gums, wattles, paperbarks, bottlebrushes, grevilleas etc as boundary plantings.

The mixed garden lasted seven to ten years. There are now few exotic remnants of this BE period (Before Enlightenment period): a Ginkgo (30 years old but looks more like five probably due to the cat shredding its trunk by using it as a clawing





post), liquidamber, prunus and *Magnolia grandiflora*. While other early plantings, *Melaleuca armillaris*, *M. decussata*, *M. incana* and *E. nicholii* have given way to new plantings.

The soil in this area is unfriendly to gardeners: white clay which is concrete hard when dry. Nonetheless, with 39 years of accumulated leaf drop and some loam, the soil has improved considerably.

The overarching objective for the subsequent move to near total native plantings was to establish a garden that was enticing to native birds given that we are enthusiastic birdwatchers, and to have a garden with contrasting leaf texture and colour.

That time — late 1970s and early '80s — was the period of general enthusiasm for Australian native gardens. However, the selection of native plants that was available in garden nurseries tended to be focused on well-known genera such as eucalypts, callistemons, acacias, melaleucas, grevilleas, banksias and within those, the common species. As a consequence, the upper structure for the garden was very much set by this.

The mid-storey plantings were initially driven by the theme of contrasting leaf texture and colour, with garden sections with either colour matching (leaves or flowers) or deeply contrasting flowers (eg whites together, or white mixed with



contrasting purples, yellows with purples etc).

Initially, mid and lower storey plantings comprised grevilleas, banksias, baeckeas, boronias, correas, croweas and leptospermums. This led into the phase of periodic "enthusiasms", but ever conscious of the need for bird-attracting plants. There was the period of grasses, lomandras, dianellas; then the hakea phase; then the enthusiasm for olearia, zieria, eriostemon, westringia, prostanthera, thomasia; subsequently eremophila and the peas (swainsonia, pultenaea, daviesia, mirbelia, bossiaea, eutaxia, hovea, chorizema, gastrolobium, hardenbergia, dillwynia). As things died and were replaced the themes

broke down. So now there is no theme at all!

Significant renewal and remake has occurred a few times. The impetus for this has been the loss of some large eucalypts. The annoying habit of an *E. nicholii* (Small-leaved Peppermint) in the front garden to drop large branches onto the house was one. The 2003 bushfires which unsettled a large *E. melliodora* (Yellow Box) in the back garden was another (it eventually toppled). Borer damage leading to subsequent death of another peppermint was a further one, while the recent inexplicable rapid decline of an *E. cinerea* (Argyle Apple) and removal is another. A house extension in 2008 resulted in the loss of some plantings and

the need for another remake. In the last few months various hakeas and acacias along the back fenceline and their understorey of correas declined in vigour and have been replaced.

A major “enthusiasm” over the past seven years has been the growing of eremophilas. In large part this is because of their huge variety in leaf texture, colour and shape and the wide colour range of their flowers. Plus they are highly attractive to birds: honeyeaters for the open trumpet flowers (reds, pinks, greens and yellows) and insectivorous birds for the swat flowers (purples, blues and whites). The Kambah garden is full of them (71 species, 115 plants); and more of them in our Tathra garden (an additional 60 species and 133 plants).



A horticultural approach has been to mulch them with pea gravel — adopting advice from Paul Carmen who has done this at the Australian National Botanic Gardens. The pea gravel is a good mulch, letting every bit of moisture through to the soil (unlike plant mulch which soaks much of it up) and gravel retains heat in the cooler months. Difficult to know which is best — the best growers of eremophilas I know, Ben and Irene Stocks, use deep plant mulch. It works brilliantly for them.

An interesting aspect of the garden has been the amount of plants that have self-sown: acacias, gums, correas, croweas, grevilleas, and even *Exocarpos cupressiformis* and Kurrajong — seed from the latter two coming from, presumably, Mt Taylor. As can be seen from the photos, another horticultural approach is to crowd plants.

This garden is a work in progress. But an extremely enjoyable one.

This article first appeared in the Garden Design Study Group Newsletter No 91, August 2015.



Black Mountain flora boring? Never!

Text and photos by Rosemary Purdie

Background

Black Mountain is located just west of the Civic Centre in Canberra, and forms a prominent local landmark topped by the Telstra Tower. Part of Canberra Nature Park, the Black Mountain reserve is bounded by highways on the north, west and south sides, and abuts the Australian National Botanic Gardens (ANBG) and CSIRO on its eastern lower slopes. The northern and southern annexes of ANBG together with uncultivated buffer areas adjacent to the Gardens' southern and western boundaries complement the native vegetation within the reserve, and with the latter, cover an area of about 5 km².

The highest point on Black Mountain is 812 m above sea level (asl). It drops to around 625 m asl on the north side of the reserve and 560 m asl on the south side. The mountain itself is characterised by steep western and southern slopes, and distinct north and south facing aspects on either side of gullies on the eastern side. To the north-east, Little Black Mountain forms a minor peak 722 m high. Most of the remaining northern parts of the reserve are gentle slopes and undulating topography.

Geology

Black Mountain and Little Black Mountain are comprised predominantly of Black Mountain Sandstone, a quartz sandstone deposited 435–430 million years ago (Ma) in a marine environment. Outcrops of it are especially prominent on the steep slopes of Black Mountain. Shale and siltstone from State Circle Shale (formed c 435 Ma) occur in the south-eastern part of the reserve, and in a narrow south-west / north-east oriented band to the north-west of Black Mountain and Little Black Mountain. The western and northern areas of the reserve are predominantly sandstone, siltstone and shale from the Pittman Formation, deposited 460–445 Ma in a deep marine environment (Abel 2007; Finlayson 2008).

The lower eastern and western slopes of Black Mountain exhibit 2–3 million year old erosional features such as frost-shattered rock accumulations which have formed alluvial fans with deep conglomerate (Finlayson 2008). A feature of these fans is small caves eroded out of the conglomerate in deeply incised creek lines. Distinct scree slopes are also present on the southern steep lower slopes of the mountain.



Dry sclerophyll forest

Vegetation

In the early days of Canberra's settlement, many parts of Black Mountain were a major source of firewood, and gentler slopes on the south-west were partly cleared for grazing. Photos of the south-eastern slopes of the mountain dating from around 1870 and 1920 show much of these slopes to be open grassy or lightly timbered areas. They contrast with current photos of the same area, in which most of the slopes are densely covered in trees. The forest vegetation seen today is thus the result of decades of disturbance followed by natural regeneration.

Apart from two small areas of grassy woodland and grassland derived from it, the majority of the Black Mountain area is covered by dry sclerophyll forest (often also called low open forest).

Dry sclerophyll forest

The dry sclerophyll forest is dominated by a mixture of Red Stringybark (*Eucalyptus macrorhyncha*), Scribbly Gum (*E. rossii*) and Brittle Gum (*E. mannifera*) trees. Although these three species occur in mixed stands, Red Stringybark tends to be more frequent on the cooler, moister southern slopes, while the two gums predominate on the exposed, drier western slopes. Scattered trees of



Eucalyptus mannifera

Broad-leaved Peppermint (*E. dives*) and Red Box (*E. polyanthemos*) are often present with the stringybark and gums, and in some north-facing areas Red Box forms almost pure stands. Three other tree species

are often associated with the eucalypts. Native Cherry (*Exocarpos cupressiformis*) is frequently present as scattered individuals, while Hickory Wattle (*Acacia implexa*) often occurs on the southern

slopes. Scattered groves of Black Cypress Pine (*Callitris endlicheri*) are present in the northern half of the reserve, with isolated trees in southern areas.

The understory of the dry sclerophyll forest varies from being grassy with few shrubs, to having a variable and sometimes dense shrub layer. Long unburnt areas tend to be grassy with scattered shrubs, while shrubs often dominate in the first 10–15 years after fire (especially hot burns).

Red-anther Wallaby grass (*Rytidosperma pallidum*) is generally the dominant grass species, with Snowgrass (*Poa sieberiana*) more common on southern slopes. In some areas, graminoids (ie grass-like plants) replace grass species. They include Long-leaved Matrush (*Lomandra*

longifolia) on lower western slopes and flats of Black Mountain, and Narrow Swordsedge (*Lepidosperma gunnii*) on some northern slopes of Little Black Mountain.

Common shrub species include Box-leaved Wattle (*Acacia buxifolia*), Early Wattle (*Acacia genistifolia*), Cauliflower Bush (*Cassinia longifolia*), Sifton Bush (*Cassinia quinquefaria*), Narrow-leaved Bitterpea (*Daviesia mimodoides*), Small-leaved Parrotpea (*Dillwynia phyllicoides*), Hopbush (*Dodonaea viscosa* subsp. *cuneata* and subsp. *spatulata*), Mountain Grevillea (*Grevillea alpina*), Bushy Needlewood (*Hakea decurrens*), Burgan (*Kunzea ericoides*), Silver Teatree (*Leptospermum multicaule*), Prickly Broom Heath (*Monotoca scoparia*), Rigid Geebung (*Persoonia rigida*) and Heathy Bushpea (*Pultenaea procumbens*).



Lomandra longifolia



Daviesia mimodoides



Acacia genistifolia



Dodonaea viscosa



Hakea decurrens



Monotoca scoparia



Persoonia rigida



Pultenaea procumbens

The abundance of some shrub species is influenced by aspect, for example Cauliflower Bush, Sifton Bush and Burgan are most abundant on the southern slopes of Black Mountain, while the presence and abundance of many species often reflects past fire history. Most shrub species regenerate after fire through a combination of vegetative regrowth and seed germination.

However individual plants of Early Wattle, Hopbush, Small-leaved Parrotpea and Slender Riceflower (*Pimelea linifolia*) are killed by fire and post-fire regeneration relies on the germination of seed stored in the soil. Over time, these four fire-sensitive species can be eliminated from the vegetation if the time between successive fires is less than the time taken for the species' soil seed stores to be replenished. The germination of Hopbush seeds, and the seeds of acacias and pea-flowered plants (eg Bitterpea, Small-leaved Parrotpea and Heathy Bushpea) is stimulated by high intensity fires, and can lead to a very dense shrub layer. Frequent low intensity fires can result in a

sparse shrub layer and favour ground species such as matrushes (*Lomandra* spp) and Spreading Flax Lily (*Dianella revoluta*).

Although the shrubs on Black Mountain tend to visually dominate the vegetation, especially in spring, a diverse array of forbs and subshrubs is also present, including at least 66 species of orchid. Species common during spring include Hornet Orchid (*Diuris sulphurea*), Wax-lipped Orchid (*Glossodia major*), Musky Caps (*Stegostyla moschata*), Ivy Goodenia (*Goodenia hederacea*), Common Raspwort (*Gonocarpus tatragnus*), Guineaflowers (*Hibbertia calycina*, *H. obtusifolia* and *H. riparia*), Thyme Spurge (*Phyllanthus hirtellus*) and Grass Triggerplant (*Stylidium graminifolium*).

Grassy woodland and derived grassland

Small areas of grassy open woodland, and grassland formed where the trees have been cleared through historical use, occur on the south-western lower slopes of Black



Goodenia hederacea



Hibbertia obtusifolia



Stegostyla moschata



Styliidium graminifolium

Mountain and the northern lower slopes of Little Black Mountain. The tree layer is dominated by Yellow Box (*Eucalyptus melliodora*), Apple Box (*E. bridgesiana*) and Blakeley's Red Gum (*E. blakelyi*), with Red Box (*E. polyanthemus*) and Broad-leaved Peppermint (*E. dives*) sometimes also present.

The ground layer has a high species diversity and includes many orchids and forbs with underground organs such as rhizomes, bulbs, corms and tubers that help the plants survive in dry conditions. Prominent herbaceous species that are widespread in this vegetation include Nodding



Chrysocephalum semipapposum



Microseris lanceolata



Thysanotus tuberosus

Chocolate Lily (*Arthropodium fimbriatum*), Bulbine Lily (*Bulbine bulbosa*), Clustered Everlasting (*Chrysocephalum semipapposum*), Australian Bindweed (*Convolvulus angustissima*), Cut-leaved Goodenia (*Goodenia pinnatifida*), Scaly Buttons (*Leptorhynchus squamatus*), Fringed Lily (*Thysanotus tuberosus*), Yellow Rush Lily (*Trichoryne elatior*) and Common Sunray (*Triptilodiscus pygmaeus*). Uncommon species include Lanky Buttons (*Leptorhynchus elongatus*), Wild Flax (*Linum marginale*) and the Yam Daisy (*Microseris lanceolata*).

How well known is the Black Mountain flora?

Based on the records of the Australian National Herbarium (ANH), which includes the collections of the former separate ANBG and CSIRO herbaria, approximately 4000 specimens of flowering plants have been collected on Black Mountain since the earliest record in 1931. This is a very high number for an area only 5 km² in size, and undoubtedly reflects the location of the herbaria on the eastern foot slopes of the mountain. Collecting effort since 1931 has been very variable, with peaks of 150 specimens or more collected in

1949, 1960, 1964, 1969, 1975, and 2014. Staff from ANBG, CSIRO and ANH are responsible for at least 75% of the collections. Major collectors to March 2015 include Roy Pullen (569 specimens from 1960–1983), Max Gray (320 specimens from 1962–1994), Hugh McKee (302 specimens from 1960–1964), Rosemary Purdie (294 specimens from 2006–2015) and Erwin Gauba (290 specimens from 1949–1956).

A total of 683 species has been recorded to March 2015, including those indigenous to the mountain, native weeds (ie native Australian plants not occurring naturally there that have become naturalised), and exotic weed species (see Table 1). This total excludes native species within ANBG and its two annexes that have naturalised from cultivated plants, and native species used for landscaping associated with Black Mountain reserve that have not naturalised.

Table 1. Number of plant species recorded on Black Mountain

Plant group	No. of species
Ferns	18
Gymnosperms	4
Monocotyledons	230
Dicotyledons	431
Total	683
Indigenous to BM (%)	406 (59%)
Total not indigenous (%)	277 (41%)
• Native weeds	38
• Exotic weeds	239

Trees comprise about 5% of the flora, shrubs and subshrubs about 20% of the flora, and herbaceous plants (forbs, grasses and graminoids) almost 75% of species (see Table 2).

Table 2. Life form of plant species on Black Mountain

Life form	No. of species		
	Non-native	Native	Total
Tree	15	18	33 (4.8%)
Shrub/ subshrub	50	83	133 (19.5%)
Mistletoe	0	4	4 (0.6%)
Climber/ twiner	4	4	8 (1.2%)
Forb	140	135	275 (40.3%)
Grass	61	52	113 (16.5%)
Graminoid (grass-like)	7	110	117 (17.1%)
Total	277	406	683 (100%)

How important is the Black Mountain flora?

In 2014 ACT Government ecologists prepared a list of rare plant species present in Canberra Nature Park (CNP). When compared with other CNP component areas, the report said:

“Black Mountain ... stands out as a particularly important rare plant habitat. It supports many plant species with disjunct locations in the ACT; it is the only known location within the ACT of at least

eight plant species and is an ACT stronghold for many other rare plants, and overall contains a very high diversity of rare plant species” (Mulvaney 2014, page 7)

The rare species listed for Black Mountain included eight orchids for which the Mountain is their only known habitat; one species for which Black Mountain is its ACT stronghold; 20 species (including 16 orchids) rare in the ACT with significant populations on Black Mountain; and the habitat of seven other rare species.

In addition, 14 species known from five or fewer locations in the ACT that had not been collected in the Territory for 30 years or more had also been recorded from Black Mountain. Four of these species — *Centrolepis strigosa*, *Stylidium despectum*, *Hypoxis hygrometrica* and *Pellaea falcata* — were re-located in Black Mountain reserve in late 2014/early 2015. The first two species there are now known to occur in restricted habitats where they are abundant after the right environmental conditions.

Enigmatic plants on Black Mountain

The presence and distribution of some plants on Black Mountain is puzzling, as illustrated by the following examples.

Wire Lily (*Laxmannia gracilis*)

The Wire Lily is one of many rare species in the ACT. Two herbarium specimens of it had been collected



Stylidium despectum

in the Black Mountain area in the early 1960s, one from the adjacent suburb of O'Connor in 1960, and the other at the north-eastern base of the mountain in 1962. It was not recollected until 2011, when it was found in several locations on the north-east slopes of Little Black Mountain within and outside the reserve.

In 2015, it was also found growing in two separate areas on the western and south-western slopes of Black Mountain. Despite extensive searches, most of its known locations in the reserve are on road verges or only 1–2 metres away. This raises the question: is the species' distribution on Black Mountain natural, or have its seeds been spread at some stage by vehicles such as graders?



Einadia hastata

Saloop (*Einadia hastata*)

Saloop, another rare species in the ACT, was first collected there in 1949, from the Molonglo River. The first record on Black Mountain was a 1979 specimen from a plant cultivated in ANBG, with the herbarium label noting that the species was spreading. A subsequent ANBG collection in 2007 indicated it was continuing to spread there. Today the species is abundant in many parts of ANBG, usually in highly disturbed areas.

Outside the ANBG, it only occurs in the ANBG Southern Annex and on the upper slopes of a nearby ridge above the Gardens, again mostly

in highly disturbed areas. It thus appears uncertain whether Saloop is indigenous to Black Mountain, or is a native weed there.

Rough Treefern (*Cyathea australis*) and Rasp Fern (*Doodia australis*)

Both these species are known from one location on the south-western upper slopes of Black Mountain, downslope of Black Mountain Drive. There are three plants of Rough Treefern (a rare ACT species), the tallest of which is about 2 m, and one plant of Rasp Fern. The location and habitat is much drier than other occurrences of the species in the Territory. The presence of both species in this location thus raises questions

like: are the species indigenous to Black Mountain? have they been dumped there from garden refuse at some time in the past? or have their spores been transported there from plants cultivated in ANBG?

Lacy Wedge Fern (*Lindsaea microphylla*)

In 2014 a solitary Lacy Wedge Fern plant was collected from a road cutting on the upper side of Black Mountain Drive. According to the online Flora of NSW, the species grows naturally in damp places in woodland, open forest and along rainforest margins in coastal regions of NSW. As the plant found on Black Mountain was growing in a man-made habitat, it is clearly not native to the ACT, but how did it get there? Were spores dispersed from a passing vehicle that had recently been to the coast, or have they been blown there from the ANBG where it has been cultivated in the Sydney Basin garden?

Conclusion

Black Mountain is an often undervalued 'jewel' in the ACT in terms of the plants that grow there. While we may never be able to resolve the questions about the enigmatic species, one thing is certain: Black Mountain's plants may look dull at some times of the year, but its flora is never boring.

References

- Abel, R (2007) *Geology of the Australian Capital Territory, 1:100 000 map*. Geoscience Australia.
- Finlayson, DM (Compiler) (2008) *A geological guide to Canberra Region and Namadgi National Park*. Geological Society of Australia (ACT Division).
- Mulvaney, M (2014) *Rare plant survey of Canberra Nature Park*. Conservation Planning and Research, Environment and Sustainable Development Directorate, ACT Government.



Acacia implexa

Life Membership

Lucinda Royston

As members of the Australian Native Plant Society, Canberra Region (ANPS), Geoff Butler and Bill Willis have great pleasure in nominating Lucinda Royston for Life Member of ANPS.

Lucinda is a very active member of ANPS and has been so since she joined the Society for Growing Australian Plants (SGAP) in 1992. She has, at one time or another during her long membership of SGAP and ANPS, participated in and supported all of the Society's activities and at all levels of the membership, from being an active member of all ANPS groups to the leadership, administration and the changed management of the Society.

Lucinda joined ANPS in February 1992 — at the first meeting of the year. Lucinda 'blames' Barbara Daly whom she met in 1989, who had told her that Geoff Butler, whom Lucinda had known for 10 years, had said to Lucinda many years before 'you should join SGAP as you'd really like it'. Barb motivated Lucinda to go to that fortuitous SGAP meeting. The then president was Geoff Butler.

In 1993 Lucinda was ANPS Secretary when Edwina Barton was then ANPS President. In the subsequent years, Lucinda was on ANPS Council as

Secretary, Membership Secretary, President for two years, and as a council member for the next six years. After a short break she returned as a council member for a further term.

The early 1990s was a crucial time in the development and growth of SGAP and it will be remembered by many as a time not just of growth in the SGAP/ANPS membership, but a time of 'dragging' the Society itself into an era of better financial management and a more professional approach



Geoff Butler and Lucinda Royston on awarding her life membership; Photo: Neville Page

to informing the community on the conservation, the propagation and the better gardening of Australian native plants.

Lucinda was Bulletin Editor for nearly six years until she retired from her professional life and took to travelling alone throughout Australia in her small caravan.

From 1999–2001 Lucinda was the Association of Societies for Growing Australian Plants Inc. (ASGAP) vice-President from 2001–2003. Lucinda was ASGAP President, and from 2003–2005 she was ASGAP's vice-President.

Except when Lucinda has been away from Canberra travelling, since 2005 she has:

- is the current editor of the ANPS Bulletin
- regularly attended monthly meeting
- volunteered at every plant sale since 1992
- been a Bulletin and Journal Collation team member from 1992 until the late 2000s
- been a Plant Sale coordinator for a year (two sales)
- volunteered at every Weed Swap since its inception
- volunteered as an advisor at all the native plant gardens at Floriade
- volunteered at all SGAP/ANPS activities such as: Weed Busters at Floriade, Environment Day ACT Alive (where she ran the very successful kids' quiz) etc
- been a volunteer/participant at all SGAP/ANPS activities such as new Member Days, ANPS/ SGAP Workshops, the launch of Friends Of Grasslands and the Open Gardens Scheme
- organised/led field trips, for example a trip to Kosciuszko National Park,
- given a number of talks at members' meetings using photographs she has taken — she is a fine photographer
- provided photos to the ANPS Bulletin and the ANPS Journal. Lucinda has photographic records of most of SGAP/ANPS activities since 1992
- a good working knowledge of the plants of central Australia, and is always willing to share that knowledge with members of the Society
- been a constant and active participant with Wednesday Walkers with a good working knowledge of the local native plants
- until recent years, been on all the ANPS Field Trips

Never reluctant to take on the roles shirked by others, she has in recent years been conducting the ANPS meeting raffle, with great help from Jean Geue when Lucinda is away. The ANPS meeting raffle is a financially important but thankless task. Lucinda has the ability to approach members for donations with self-confidence and verve and consequently the

meeting raffle has become a very successful activity, and collects a sizeable amount for ANPS donations to support such beneficiaries, as the Australian National Botanic Gardens, the Eurobodalla Region Botanic Garden, Bush Heritage, etc.

Lucinda is undoubtedly one of the great characters of SGAP and of ANPS Canberra Region. Lucinda is a woman with charisma who is undaunted in tackling the common or the difficult. She never shirks from opining her views on a broad range of ANPS issues. While Lucinda is forthright in her views she is focussed

on formulating well considered ideas and suggesting practical solutions on how the Society, at a local and a National level, could be better managed. When giving advice, her warm heart, irrepressible energy and independent voice is always focused on the betterment of the Society. Lucinda's long history and her active participation and experience with the Society justifies her right to be heard and respected.

Lucinda Royston rightfully deserves to be a Life Member of the Australian Native Plant Society.



Brachyscome multifida with butterfly; Photo: Glenn Pure



Pryors Snow Gums, 2001

Text and photos by Jean Geue

Lindsay Pryor's *notable* Snow Gum is still in the land of the living. He deemed it *notable* in his classic book on Canberra trees (pages 82 and 189). It was saved as the key feature of a stand of remnant *Eucalyptus pauciflora* hidden within the spaghetti jungle of Glenloch Interchange. The *notable* tree must be a few centuries old. Pryor and Banks measured it as 3.20 metres in girth sometime between 1968 (*Trees in Canberra* 2nd ed) and 1991 (*Trees and Shrubs* 1st ed).

Pryor's remnant stand of Snow Gums is healthy with many regenerating seedlings and an attractive native understorey. My count on 22 August 2004 was 12 trees and 37 saplings. The seedlings appear the same

age as in Aranda Snow Gums and may have germinated in wet 1998, survived the drought and shot up when rains came again. The huge fallen branch lost from the *notable* tree was a casualty of a wind storm in May 2004 — not activities by Gungahlin Drive Extension road builders. The themeda has flowered well and grazing pressure is much less than that in the adjacent Aranda Snow Gums nature reserve. Apparently, kangaroos do not cross Caswell Drive.

Pryors Snow Gums site is on land *designated* as of national value under the *Territory Plan*. The site includes endangered natural temperate grassland (no BE 11 listed under ACT *Action Plan* 28). There's an aboriginal site in much the same location. We can still read the aboriginal landscape

by ignoring roads and lake, seeing the contour line delimiting the frost hollow edge and knowing where kangaroos graze. The area is worthy of being *nature reserve* and has been long targeted for addition to Canberra Nature Park.

Community activities

Pryors Snow Gums and the endangered grassland were saved within Glenloch Interchange by community advocacy with support from parts of government during the design and construction of Gungahlin Drive Extension.

Community involvement started in 1999 when Peter Ormay and myself looked at the diverse flora in the site and decided 'something must be done'. Friends of Aranda Bushland and Ann Connelly

(Parkcare Coordinator) initiated large weeding parties in Rani Road gully in 2000, 2001 and 2002. Ann co-opted many enthusiastic tertiary student volunteers and provided barbeque feasts. The green parkcare tee shirts were launched at our Weedbusters event in October 2000. In the three years we removed almost all the extensive hawthorn infestation in the gully together with briars, radiata pines and the odd fridge. I was fascinated to revisit recently and see how much we had achieved in the gully, the natural regeneration that had occurred and which weeds had grown since 2002.

Parkcare activity and weed control by government ceased once Gungahlin Drive Extension (GDE) construction got underway. We protested by tying orange ribbons on condemned trees



Weeding in Rani Road gully, 2001



Gungahlin Drive Extension construction, Rani Road, 2004 (above and below)



— to no avail. We watched sugar gliders disturbed by the felling. We mourned loss of enormous Yellow Box, *Eucalyptus melliodora* and almost all the Candlebark, *Eucalyptus rubida*. Black Mountain's endangered Box-Gum Grassy Woodland zone was very narrow and is now mostly bitumen.

Field Naturalists became involved in September 2007 when GDE landscapers hopped the fence and planted eucalypts in Black Mountain reserve grasslands — correct provenance but the wrong place. They'd also dug holes in the lovely themeda beside the remnant Snow Gums. We met with Parks & Conservation, ACT Wildlife Research, Roads ACT and the landscapers. The inappropriate trees were removed. Daniel Iglesias (bless his heart) also asked for the trees to be removed from just outside the fence so the area between fence and bike path could become the fire protection zone.

In January 2014, Friends of Grasslands, Friends of Black Mountain and Ginninderra Catchment Group with Peter Ormay and myself visited to consider the St John's wort explosion. Wort reached the site in 2000 and infestation is now extensive. The area seemed to be *no man's land* with nobody responsible for removing target weeds. Happily, Steve Taylor, our hero from ACT weeds, organised spraying the wort last summer. This proved highly successful in killing it and in avoiding collateral damage. Blackberry had taken over extensive

areas that were previously bare. Contractors sprayed it in 2015 just before the frosts.

Friends of Black Mountain offered a Heritage Festival walk in April 2015 to discover Pryors Snow Gums. A brave decision as the safest route is via a culvert, gabion rocks, blackberry and barbwire. It worked. We attracted a small, but enthusiastic group appropriate for our first foray with a guided walk. In preparation, an extra workparty had cleared blackberry along the route plus woody weeds from under the Snow Gums and just outside the dripline. In June and July, we tackled inappropriate natives and exotic woody weeds in adjoining 1970's landscape plantings.

Saving our Snow Gums

Promoting a very special site is always a dilemma. Leaving it alone and hidden can protect the site. That doesn't always work. There is always the risk that careless spraying will destroy cryptic wildflowers and iconic eucalypts. The small hawthorns beside the *notable* Snow Gum were an invitation for careless sprayers. I was delighted we were able remove them safely using cut and dab with Zero wands.

We need champions like Friends of Black Mountain, Friends of Grasslands and Australian Native Plants Society to ensure our precious places survive.



Eucalyptus pauciflora (Pryors notable Snow Gum), 1991 (above and 2015 (below)



Study Group Notes

*By Brigitta Wimmer, Study Group
Liaison Officer, ANPS Canberra Region*

Acacia Study Group Newsletter

No. 130 September 2015

- From the Leader
- Welcome
- From Members and Readers
- Endemic Wattles of Isla National Park
- *Acacia gordonii*
- Potential Acacia Street Trees
- *Acacia neriifolia*
- *Acacia brownii*
- A jig to assist propagation of hard-coated seeds
- Small Wattles
- Celebrating Wattle Day 2015
- Don't blame the Wattle
- Recent Reports relating to Acacias
- Seed Bank
- Study Group Membership
- Financial Report 2014–15

ANPSA Fern Study Group Newsletter

Number 134 October 2015

- Program for South-east Queensland Region
- Program for the Sydney Region
- Meeting February 2016
- South-East Queensland Meeting Reports
- Jolly's Lookout, 5th July, 2015
- Karawatha Forest Park, 8th September 2015
- Other Articles:
 - Tropical Fern Key Development

- "Australian" *Adiantum* Cultivars
- Rules for naming Cultivars
- Financial Statement 2014–15
- Spore list October 2015

Epacris Study Group

Newsletter No. 40, Spring 2015

- Farewell from Study Group Leader — Group going into recess
- Australia's Open Garden Scheme / Open Gardens Australia
- The importance of Regional and State Botanic Gardens
- The 'Flora of Australia' Volume 9
- The Epacris Study Group 1992–2015
- Epacris Study Group 'Profile Pages' 1998–2015
- Annual Report — June 2015
- Financial Statement for year 2014–15

Eremophila Study Group

Newsletter No. 111 August 2015

- Introduction of new Study Group Leader
- News from the Net
- Tom Jordan and Lyndal Thorburn's garden, Queanbeyan NSW
- Wirranendi Native Plants — small native nursery on Fleurieu Peninsula, SA, and awarded Best Open Garden by Council in 2013
- Stunning Eremophila photos by Sydney-based Charles Farrugia
- Ian Tranter is compiling a list of Eremophila cultivars
- Themes for future newsletters

Garden Design Study Group

Newsletter No 91 August 2015

- Leaders Comments
- Report on Cloudy Hill Garden, high country near Blayney, NSW
- Visit by Japanese member of the GDSG to Sydney
- Changes and plant selection in Jan Hall's garden, Yarrawonga, Vic
- Establishment of the Museum of Gardening at Carrick Hill historic house and garden, Springfield, SA
- Choosing an Australian climbing plant, Angus Stewart
- An extraordinary glasshouse designed by Thomas Heatherwick at the Bombay Sapphire Distillery in Hampshire
- Eucalyptus Seminar — Friends of RBG Cranbourne
- Master Plan for the Australian National Botanic Gardens
- Book Review 'Connected' by Phillip Johnson
- Open Gardens Australia Garden
- Report of Melbourne garden visit on Sunday May 24
- Next meeting
- Bill and Jenny Handke's Garden, Kambah, ACT
- Treasurer's Report

Grevillea Study Group

Newsletter 102, October 2015

- Editorial
- Some unexpected name changes in *Grevillea*
- News from Wilsons Creek
- Grevilleas in Austria
- *Grevillea* 'Scarlet Moon'
- *Grevillea buxifolia* and the Carpenter Bee

- A review of recently published papers on 'Grevillea' bees
- How the white Grevillea was found
- Grevillea species seen in southern water catchment area during Oct–Nov 2014
- Grevilleas and the Blue-Banded Bee
- Obituaries
- Seedbank

Isopogon & Petrophile Study Group

Newsletter No. 17 September 2015

- From the Editor: New Study Group Leaders Catriona Bate & Phil Trickett
- Next issue focus
- About our Study Group
- About our members
- Save a Species Walk — *Isopogon fletcheri*
- Mystery growth
- Cranbourne Botanic Gardens
- Queensland isopogons & petrophiles
- Plant profile — *Isopogon anethifolius* (Salisb.)
- From the archives — *Isopogon anethifolius*
- Plant Profile — *Petrophile pulchella* (Salisb.)
- Catriona & Phil's Little Forest Garden
- Plant of the month *Isopogon cuneatus*, Australian Garden Mt Annan
- Isopogon & petrophile hunting in WA — Aug–Sept 2015
- Logos
- *Isopogon anemonifolius*: a strong plant with plenty of character
- Financial Report

Australian Native Plants Society, Canberra Region Inc.

The aims of the Society are to foster the recognition, conservation and cultivation of Australian native plants.

Meetings are held at 8 pm on the second Thursday of each month, February to December, in Canberra. Visitors are always welcome.

Day and weekend field trips to locations of outstanding botanical interest are organised on a regular basis.

The Society publishes a Bulletin in all months except January, and this quarterly Journal in March, June, September and December.

Website: nativeplants-canberra.asn.au

Membership Fees

Single or family memberships are the same price.

Basic membership including Bulletin and Journal — \$35 (\$18*)

Full membership including Bulletin, Journal and Australian Plants — \$50 (\$33*)

Life member subscribing to Australian Plants — \$15

* Concession rates apply to pensioners (Centrelink), full-time students and unemployed.

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Back cover: *Eucalyptus pauciflora* (Pryors notable Snow Gum), Glenloch Interchange, 2002; Photo: Jean Geue

