

Eucryphia

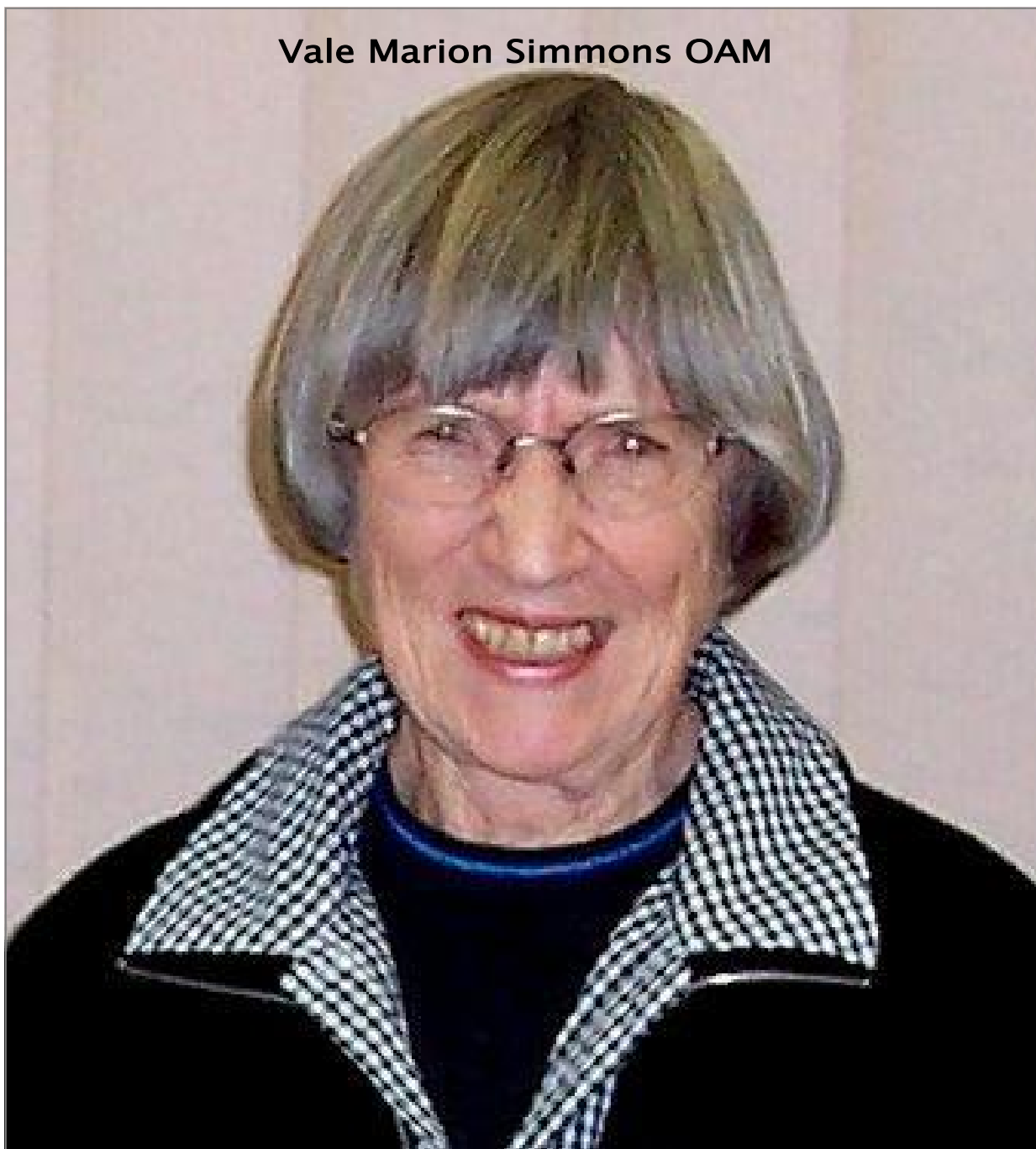
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Journal of the Australian Plants Society Tasmania Inc.



The Acacia named in 2002 for Marion and John Simmons
Acacia simmonsiana



Vale Marion Simmons OAM



Above:

Marion Simmons OAM in 2004

The smile we all remember.

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email:

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Membership subs. & renewals	4
Membership	5
From The President	6
Council Meeting Notes	7
ANPSA News	8
Study Group Highlights	9
APST Involvement in Conservation of our Flora	11
Vale Marion Simmons OAM	13
Memories of Marion and John Simmons	16
A Summer Rave	18
Beetles around the Bush Part One	20
Book Review - <i>Name That Flower</i>	26
New Membership Application	29
From the Editor's Desk	30
Calendar for 2020	31
	26
<u>News from the Groups:</u>	
Northern Group	32
North West Group	32
Hobart Group	30
Group Programmes	31
<u>APST Directory</u>	32



Membership subscriptions

Annual subscription payments may be made by EFT (electronic funds transfer) directly into the Society's Westpac bank account as follows:

Name: **Australian Plants Society Tasmania Inc.** BSB: **037015** Account: **194644**.

Please identify your EFT payment by recording your **Membership Number** and if room your **Surname** into your bank's **Description/Reference** field.

Also, a hard copy and cheque can be forwarded to The APST Inc. Treasurer, PO Box 1205, Gravelly Beach Tasmania 7276.

Membership Type	\$ per annum
Individuals and Organisations	40.00
Individual concession - Student, Pension Concession or Department of Veteran's Affairs Pension	37.00
Household - each additional adult	9.00
Household - each child under 16	1.00
Overseas and Overseas Organisation (banker's draft AUD)	55.00
Additional subscription for the <i>Australian Plants Journal</i> - APJ	14.00

Australian Plants Journal

Please note that a subscription to the APJ entitles members to receive only those issues that are published during the members' subscription period. Back copies of the APJ may be purchased by contacting your Group Secretary.

Membership badges and cards

Membership badges (metal) are supplied to all new members with their new members kit.

Membership name cards are issued to all new members.

Membership Benefits

Some of the benefits that members enjoy are to receive discounts and the following

businesses offer them: *Habitat Plants* at Liffey – 10% discount; *Inverawe Native Gardens* at Margate – half price entry; *Plants of Tasmania Nursery and Gardens* at Ridgeway - 10% discount (non-discounted items).

Substantial discounts are offered on book purchases through your Group Secretary.

Websites

Northern Group
www.apstasnorth.org

APST Inc.
www.apstas.org.au

ANPSA Inc.
www.anpsa.org.au



Membership

Margaret Killen, Membership Officer



New Members

We warmly welcome the following new members to the Australian Plants Society Tasmania Inc:

Fran Mason of Longford
Rachel Lindgren of Carlton River

and

Alan McDonnell of St. Albans UK

New Members Application Form

Please find the form on page 29.

Membership renewals and changes (how you will receive reminders)

Your subscription renewal date is due on the anniversary month of when you joined.

Renewal reminders in the future will be received by email / or hard copies posted out.
Reminders will no longer be included in your Eucryphia envelope.

Please return your completed scanned / photographed form to membership@apstas.org.au or the hard copy to

The **APST Treasurer**, PO Box 1205, Gravelly Beach Tasmania 7276.

Membership Queries

If you have any queries, updates or corrections regarding your membership, or your contact details please contact me.

Margaret Killen

Membership Officer

0409 430 665

membership@apstas.org.au °

Advance Notice

APST Members' Get-together

November 27—29

Maydena



From The President

Jenny Boyer, President.

Hello Members,

While our current COVID-19 restrictions have put serious limitations on our lives, hopefully you are finding ways to enjoy our flora, be it in your own gardens, local bushland you have been able to access and now in our National Parks and Reserves. Maybe you are being surprised by some of the images while revisiting memories and sorting photos or, if you are more organised than our household, enjoying the sorted ones with well-deserved satisfaction.

April fourteenth marked the end of a generous contribution to the knowledge and appreciation of native plants with the death of Life Member Marion Simmons. Marion has been an inspiration to many, especially in the North of the State. Thanks Louise for documenting many aspects of her contribution (see page). We extend our condolences to her family and friends. Marion will be greatly missed.

Thank you to those members who participated in our remote Annual General Meeting in March/April, allowing us to meet our legal requirements as an incorporated organisation. There were no changes of personnel in executive positions but under the new constitution neither the Immediate Past President nor the Membership Officer are members of Council.

The Council meeting that usually follows the Annual General Meeting was held via Zoom in early May with most Councillors participating and the June meeting will happen again in this way. That was part of our pre-COVID plan to avoid the winter drive to Ross.

With the slow progress or apparent lack of a definitive direction for the Mac Point development, a decision was made by Council to not progress anything at this stage and revisit in 2021. For APST to be involved it would need commitment from more southern based members. Thank you to all members who have shown interest in the project. I have spoken with Angus Stewart, who is an APST member and is involved at the site, and he agreed to remain alert to any opportunities and keep us informed about possibilities for involvement.

The Strategic Planning group is continuing its work with David Boyer being the latest recruit to the group. The topics currently in focus are conservation and education. Read the conservation article submitted by Roy Skabo, (page????)

Work is continuing in the move towards an electronic Eucryphia. While this edition is hard copy we hope there will be an electronic with a brand new format with lots of advantages in September. I realise it may take some effort for some to become familiar with the changes but we hope members keep an open mind about the process. All group newsletters are already delivered this way with very few being printed and posted.

Enjoy your plants. The Eastern Spinebills are making the most of the *Epacris impressa* and various *Correas* in my garden as I type.

Regards,

Jenny. •



Council Meeting Notes May 2020

Vice President Dick Burns



Your APST Council had its first video-conference in May. We were planning on running our quarterly meetings this way this year instead of driving to Ross three times a year, but then the corona virus crisis caused the face-to-face AGM to be changed and brought the idea of teleconferencing forward. We hope that the saving in both time and money will encourage more members to consider a role on APST Council.

To take part in the video-conferences, Council Members require access to the internet and a linked-up camera. Unfortunately neither Treasurer Rosemary nor I had the latter by the date of the meeting, so we had to sit this one out. I was loaned the right equipment, but on the day I just couldn't connect – no doubt my inability to understand the computer-speak jargon contributed to my inability to connect with the video-conference.

So much stuff is on hold until the crisis passes, but in the meantime your Council is still active.

Work continues toward producing an attractive *Eucryphia* for distribution online. My thought is that it is possible for the Tasmanian Society to succeed, but only if more members contribute. As well guidelines are being drafted to assist both Groups and Council in deciding when and who to nominate for exceptional work for APST.

Guidelines for each elected and nominated position in the Society have been around for a number of years. These are being looked at and redrawn where necessary, to bring them in line with the new Constitution and current practices.

Council has hardworking Committees working behind the scenes, as Dick has mentioned. Some of the work to the Strategic Planning Committee is doing is mentioned on page 11.

The current Strategic Planning Committee consists of

Convenor: Margaret Killen

Committee members: David Boyer; Joy McIntosh; Drew Thomas; Roy Skabo; Julie Nermut; Mark Geeves; Janet Hallam.

Vale Kerry Rathy

Those who have been to Conferences or been involved at national level will remember Kerry Rathy, who died recently.

Kerry's passion for native plants is well known, particularly the genus *Brachychiton*. His studies in Genetics held him in good stead in his work with *Brachychitons*, producing several cultivars, and producing a book specific to *Brachychitons*. He also co-authored the book 'Mangroves to Mountains', along with his friends Jan Glazebrook, Denis Cox and Glen Leiper.

His work in the Society as Seed Curator, dispensing collected seed through the Society and other "not for profit groups", ensured the propagation of many species, otherwise not available. He leaves a lasting legacy, with his *Brachychitons* and the work undertaken, along with the books.

We'll be seeing the name Kerry Rathie for some time to come.



ANPSA NEWS

Report from Tasmanian Delegate Margaret Killen, June 2020

The ANPSA committee teleconference meeting was held on April 7 and took slightly less than 2 hours.

Items covered were;

Recipients of Australian Plants Awards, along with Study Group Leaders, will be provided with a \$400 subsidy to attend ANPSA Conferences.

The quote from Giraffe has been accepted to develop a replacement website, the project will take about 12 months.

Videoconference meetings are being considered for ANPSA Council meetings.

Banksia book has a direct order option but distribution is on hold due to the COVID-19 situation.

The treasurer John Chalwell expressed thanks to Rosemary Verbeeten for her excellent work as the previous treasurer.

ANPSA could play a significant role in escalating conservation issues by lobbying interested parties.

Bi-monthly meetings of State/Territory conservation officers is to be trialled.

Two national issues are being advocated – Vegetation Management for Bushfires and Myrtle Rust.

The publicity officer job description is being reviewed.

Archivist, Kerry Smith, commented on the wonderful work Dick Burns did on the hard copies of material for archiving.

The next meeting will be on 10 November 2020.

2020 Conference NSW - There is some planning uncertainty due to the unknown duration of the COVID-19 restrictions.

If you would like more detailed information or to receive reports please contact me.⁸

Margaret Killen
ANPSA Delegate*

Advertising Rates in Eucryphia

B/W only, up to a quarter page \$10.00; half page \$20.00;
full page \$40.00

A discount of 10% is available to financial members and
5% discount is offered for four consecutive insertions of the same advertisement
paid in advance.

Fees are payable to:

The Treasurer, Australian Plants Society Tasmania Inc.
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Study Group Highlights

Riitta Boevink, Study Group Liaison



Most Study Groups make their current year's newsletters available to members only, but after 12 months they will be on the ANPSA website freely available for all. They are very interesting reading and contain a wealth of information. I urge you to seek them out. Membership is free for on-line newsletters for nearly all of the Study Groups. Those who want printed and posted copies need to pay to cover the costs. Lawrie Smith, the leader of the Garden Design Study Group has raised the issue of those few who receive mailed copies being subsidised from the funds. The group puts out four newsletters a year, but the \$20 annual membership only covers the cost of one printed and mailed newsletter. He is asking for feedback from members on how to best address this. Peter Bostock, leader of the Fern Study Group announced his intention to resign as leader effective from 30th of June. This may cause the group to go into recess unless a new leader is found. As with other groups, the field trip programme (based in NSW and QLD) has been cancelled because of the COVID 19 restrictions.

<http://anpsa.org.au/study.html>

Pea Flower Study Group

Leader: Shirley Mc Laren, webpage: <http://anpsa.org.au/pea-flowerSG/index.html>

A Study Group has been reactivated to study plants with pea flowers. It has been renamed Australian Pea Flower Study Group. In the past, a group for this purpose has operated under the name Fabaceae Study Group, as pea flowers were previously recognised as a separate family. If you are interested in the identification, classification, cultivation, propagation or conservation of Australian pea flowers, consider joining. Membership for emailed newsletter is free. There is a section on the website that can be completed and submitted on-line for membership.

Banksia Study Group

No 25 Autumn 2020

Leaders: Kevin and Kathy Collins

The current issue is available on the ANPSA website for non-members after twelve months. It features beautiful photos of Banksias from the Albany conference and the tours; an interesting note from a member in Wales UK re germinating *B. saxicola* seeds in the fridge at 3°C over three months; illustrated tales from the Collins' journey in Europe and UK in 1918. There is a comprehensive report on 'Investigation of Dieback disease resistance within *Banksia coccinea*'.

Eremophila Study Group

No 127 April 2020

Leader: Lyndal Thorburn

As always, there is extensive information and photos. The feature species is *E. oppositifolia*, a medium shrub. It can be long lived in right conditions. One illustrated is 59 years old. It flowers in Canberra all winter. There is a discussion on which *Eremophilas* tolerate hard pruning.

Goodenaceae Study Group

No 18 April 2020

Leader: Royce Raleigh

An extensive and informative newsletter with lots of illustrations. An article on work taken in USA on evolutionary trees for Goodeniaceae and *Dampiera*.

**Australian Plants for Containers Study Group** No 35 April 2020

Leaders: Ros and Ben Walcott

This is the second newsletter the Walcotts have produced. It includes contributions from members on their experiences of growing plants in containers ranging from Flannel flowers to Boronias, Banksias and a large tropical fern.

Garden Design Study Group No 111, May 2020

Leader: Lawrie Smith

This Study Group puts out the current newsletter on the website freely available for anyone to look at. Lawrie has started a section of snippets and references of interesting articles from past newsletters. They are all archived on the website. There is a series of descriptions of gardens that Lawrie visited in Victoria. He recommends that GDSG members meet to do garden visits focusing on design aspects. This has been very interesting and beneficial in Melbourne and Brisbane.

Grevillea Study Group No 115, Feb 2020

Leader: Peter Olde for NSW, Neill Marriott for VIC

Discussion on the ravages of the bushfires leading to reminding of the principle of 'preservation by cultivation'. Rare and endangered species can be saved by members growing them in their gardens. Neill Marriott manages the Grevillea living collection that he regards as crucial in preserving the variety. There are some examples of Grevilleas that root suckers when grown on their own roots. Increasingly Grevilleas appear to be grafted, but rootstock used is not always suitable for the growing conditions.*


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APST Involvement in the Conservation of our Flora

Roy Skabo

The Strategic Planning Group (SPG) is now looking at the 'Conservation' section of the Society's strategic (long-term) plan. Many individual APST members are already doing their bit to protect our flora in a variety of ways.

Some members of the Northern Group have participated in surveys of saltmarsh wetlands in and near the Tamar estuary, volunteered as members of 'Friends' groups working in particular parks and reserves and have participated in excursions organized by Threatened Plants Tasmania or Tasmanian Land Conservancy (TLC). The Northern Group has lobbied for the protection of Cheltenham Reserve at Prospect and donated money to the Royal Tasmanian Botanical Gardens (RTBG) and to the Tasmanian Land Conservancy.

Members of the Southern Group are active in restoration work at Coningham, Knocklofty, Peter Murrell and Wingara Gully Reserves, volunteer in Wellington Park, Woodvine, other Reserves and Bruny, Maria, Tasman and Deal Islands. Group Members work hard in and have donated funds for the Tasmanian Bushland Garden near Buckland, and been active in and donated to the TLC. Donations have also been made to the RTBG, especially the Seed Conservation section and members have assisted in seed collecting. Collections have been made for, and members assist at, the Tasmanian Herbarium.

North West Group members have had an active role in the establishment and maintaining of the Tasmanian section of the Arboretum at Eugenana, under the curatorship of Life-Member Dick Burns. They have also been consulted by Central Coast Council during landscaping commencing at Penguin.

All the above activities are worthwhile contributions to conservation of our flora and natural ecosystems. However, at present APST does not have a long term programme to engage in conservation work. Because the conservation of our native flora is one of the Society's primary goals, the Strategic Planning Group has been thinking about some ways that APST, as a whole or through its Groups, might get more formally involved in protecting our native flora in its natural habitat.

Given that many of its members are already devoting a lot of time to APST in other activities we think that our best approach is to form partnerships with other entities already involved in conservation work. There are many of such groups whose work is in line with our own objectives. For example, the Tasmanian Seed Bank located at the RTBG in Hobart conducts seed-collecting excursions around the state but it is difficult to predict exactly when the seeds of a particular species will be ready for collection. If some of our members were willing and able to be called out on short notice it could be of great help to the Seed Bank. The various Group nurseries might also host 'seed orchards', collections of plants grown specifically for seed harvesting, and they might target specific threatened species for propagation and sale.



FoTR revegetating shore of Lake Trevallyn

© R. Skabo

FoKR members working on the Wayleave



© B. Champion



Members may have other ideas about how APST can develop its own program for conservation or join other entities in their conservation work. If so, could you please communicate those ideas to one of the members of the Strategic Planning Group.

At present APST, despite the considerable amount of expertise residing in its members, does not play a prominent role in nature conservation.

Do you think that we should try to develop a higher profile? •



Velleia paradoxa plants
with flowers, Spur Velleia,



Vale Marion Helen Simmons OAM 1927–2020

Louise Skabo

Marion and her late husband John Simmons were inaugural members of the ASGAP Northern Group formed in 1976. Before that, from 1962, although living in Launceston, they were members of the Victorian based SE Region of ASGAP. John will often be referred to in this tribute to Marion, as until John's death, they worked as a compatible team. Both were loved and valued members whose knowledge and enthusiasm for native plants and other naturalist subjects inspired all those with whom they came in contact. Both exuded a warm friendliness, never judged people and were unassuming and modest despite their many botanical achievements. All of the recognition that they received was thoroughly deserved. They were given Life Memberships of SGAP (APST Inc) in 1986.



In those early times there was less academic input into SGAP and members relied upon the knowledge of individual members. John and Marion set the pace by leading field trips, writing articles and through leadership. They willingly shared their knowledge and experience with others and encouraged people who showed an interest in native plants.

John and Marion were active at Group, State and Federal level in the Society holding various positions in the organisation. They actively promoted Australian plants by having their native garden in the Open Garden Scheme, propagating plants (Northern Group nursery was initially run from Marion and John's Legana home), operating a book service: 'Legana Books', giving lectures about native plants to many organisations, running adult education classes and writing many articles for magazines, newspapers and newsletters. Marion was editor of the Northern Group newsletter for many, many years.

A crowning achievement was the publication of four books on Australian Acacias. Gathering the information for these magnificent reference books took many years during which time Marion and John travelled hundreds of thousands of kilometres all over Australia gathering specimens, with Marion sketching and noting location, habit and other details and John applying his special expertise as a photographer. Marion's qualifications as an art teacher were a great asset during these trips where they were often accompanied by Jeanette and Don Closs or Pat and Noel Kerrison (all dec.). Pat also had a love of botanical art. John once said of Marion and Pat that he thanked Acacias for taking the two best mates to the most marvellous places.

These books on Acacias are examples of excellence and show what can be achieved by people driven by a passion and an eye for beauty and who also possess the necessary knowledge, skills and dedication to bring such work to fruition. In 2002, despite Marion and John insisting that plants are best named for their individual characteristics, *Acacia simmonsiana* was named in their honour. This was an apt recognition for their very professional approach to Acacia research over more than thirty years- a labour of love- making a huge contribution in advancing the knowledge of this genus.



Marion made available about four hundred and fifty of her fine line drawings for use in the World Wide Wattle Project and her extensive collections of Acacia flora are in many herbariums around the country. The Simmons' later donated their personal herbarium to the National Herbarium of Victoria including over 20,000 slides of Acacias from John. They discovered, illustrated, documented and collected well over one hundred new species of Acacia. Marion and John were long time members of the Acacia Study Group and Marion was leader for thirteen years (1978 to 1991).

In 2004, Marion and John received two further accolades: At ASGAP (now ANPSA) Biennial Conference in Launceston they won the **Australian Plants Award**, Amateur category and in the Australia Day Honours which is the pre-eminent means of recognising outstanding achievement and contribution by Australians, they received **Medals of the Order of Australia** *'For service to botany, particularly through identification, documentation and promotion of Australian acacias'*.

Appropriately, OAM are decorated with acacia designs.



In the 1960's and 70's Marion, along with fellow Tasmanian botanists and collectors, gathered plant specimens to be sent to Margaret Stones in England who painted them for The Endemic Flora of Tasmania. Lord Talbot de Malahide sought the knowledge and advice of these plant experts to help produce these books of artistic and scientific significance. Marion and John are mentioned in this collection as growing some of these endemic plants. Marion's love of propagating continued until recently with her enjoying attending Northern Group Nursery sessions. Countless plant cuttings have been taken over the years from Marion's beautiful native garden (which she and John started developing in the 1960's) to be grown in our nursery.



The Simmons' were also devoted to the Launceston Field Naturalists Club of which they were both Life Members. They were instrumental in the development of LFNC Field Centre at Skemps and in the initial production of the splendid and popular publication, 'A Guide to the Flowers and Plants of Tasmania'. Marion, involved from the first edition in 1981, provided historical context and applied her patience as an eagle-eyed proof-reader for the latest fifth edition (2019) in her 92nd year.

Farewell to a lovely lady—she will be greatly missed.*



Left: Marion, Kay Geeves and Dr Margaret Stones.

Below: Marion, with members at Northern Group nursery propagation in the John Simmons shade-house.





Memories of Marion and John Simmons

Dick Burns

We've lost one of the quiet but important strengths of our Society with the passing of Marion. I cannot think of Marion without John, her life partner and husband, at her side (and she always wanted the same). Even the book *Acacias of Australia*, which appeared with authorship attributed to Marion, would not have been written without John's contribution.

Marion, Jeanette Closs and I were the Tasmanian delegates to the Adelaide ASGAP conference in the 1980s. It was a fiery meeting that carried over to a second day – the ground rules for the Australian body were still being sorted. It was also my first conference and I was a bit overwhelmed by meeting others whom I had only heard about: authors of books on my shelves, the leader of my study group, etc.



The photo above was taken at a later conference, probably in Brisbane. John presented a paper at the seminar and Marion advised me on the intricacies of ASGAP. It was a different story in the lead-up to the 1990 Hobart conference and seminar. The organising committee met at Marion and John's home in Legana. Jeanette was to become President of the Australian body, Marion was the future Secretary and I was to become the initiating Newsletter Editor. After the conference, the ASGAP Council met regularly at Marion and John's home.

Each time, visitors would have a stroll through the garden which John would always be modifying and expanding. Their garden was mature enough for hybrids to arise. I was always envious of their growth of Flannel Flower, *Actinotus helianthi*, a plant from my NSW days. It self-seeded in the Simmons garden, but I couldn't get plants to establish in Penguin. I'd been told before the first visit that the Simmons garden was purely Australian, so I was surprised on



that visit to see what was to my beginner's eye, a big healthy cotoneaster. No, Marion gently assured me, that is *Spyridium gunnii*.

I stayed overnight a number of times. Marion and John had a special small room for their carefully tended herbarium and, I think, John's slide collection. My eye was always drawn to the bronze-like sculpture on their living room wall which turned out to be a dried pressed branch of *Acacia* sp. with extremely large leaves. I've tried to replicate it at home with a branch of large-leaved *Acacia bancroftiorum*.

There must be others in my Penguin garden, but two plants which have strong ties to John and Marion are the *Westringia* that they gathered from Wollomombi Falls in NSW and the *Baeckea* that they found on the east coast, sold by Plants of Tasmania as *Baeckea imbricata*.

Marion was a brilliant artist – anyone with a copy of one of her *Acacia* books has a permanent reminder of that talent. She wasn't 'precious' about her gift: when the NW Group prepared a series of sheets on plant choice and garden design for handing out at shows, Marion did a wonderful series of sketches to show our recommended stages of planting out. They were always helpful in locations of rare plants as I was gathering for the Australian National Botanic Gardens or with identities of Western Australian plants that I saw on guiding trips.

Marion was the epitome of the quiet achiever, a person who was averse to the spotlight, but just got in and did it.*



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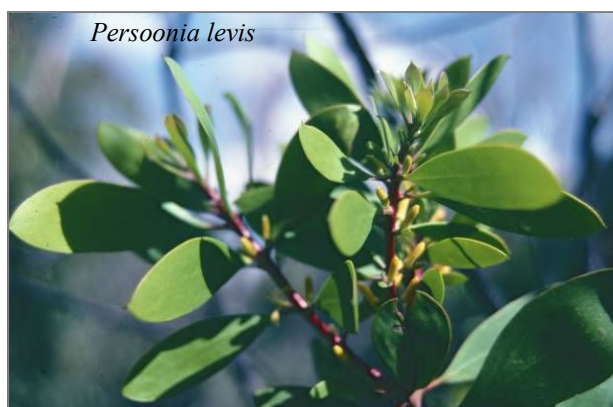
Persoonia pinifolia

Dick Burns

I used to have over twenty different *Persoonias* in the garden, found in Sydney and local nurseries, given to me, and occasionally propagated. The difficulty of propagation from seed or cuttings, old age and competition for space have reduced the number to only four. As an example of these losses - during the time I was collecting for the Australian National Botanic Gardens, they gave me a sample of their special hormone mix that helped me strike one or two cuttings of the rare prostrate Tasmanian species, *Persoonia moscalii*, but foraging blackbirds uprooted the plant when I put it out in the garden. I found the plant on the pathway too late. Another regretful loss was a prostrate species from NSW, *Persoonia chamaepitys*. It was a garden delight, with its dense growth, the soft bright green terete foliage, and masses of bright yellow flowers.



© D. Burns



Persoonia levis

Persoonia chamaepitys

I found my last plant at Penguin market in a small itinerant stall – a local lady had cracked the secret of striking cuttings.

The first *Persoonia* to catch my boyhood eye as I wandered the Sydney bush was *Persoonia levis*, with its broad thick bright green leaves; they seem to glow as the sun shines behind them. It is the different green of the leaves that makes the genus

stand out in the bush or garden. The flowers are typically small tubular and bright yellow – *P. gunnii* of Tasmania is an exception: large cream with an occasional pink flush. Our *P. muelleri* also has larger flowers but in some subspecies the colour returns to the typical yellow. The small flowers are often alone in leaf axils, but occasionally, as with the rave species, *Persoonia pinifolia*, the inflorescence is in a terminal spike-like raceme. Fruits are fleshy green, becoming purplish as they ripen. In mainland species, the ripened fruit typically fall where they are eaten by grazing animals. The fact that Tasmanian species retain the fruits on the plant could be explained by the grazing habits of our wallabies.

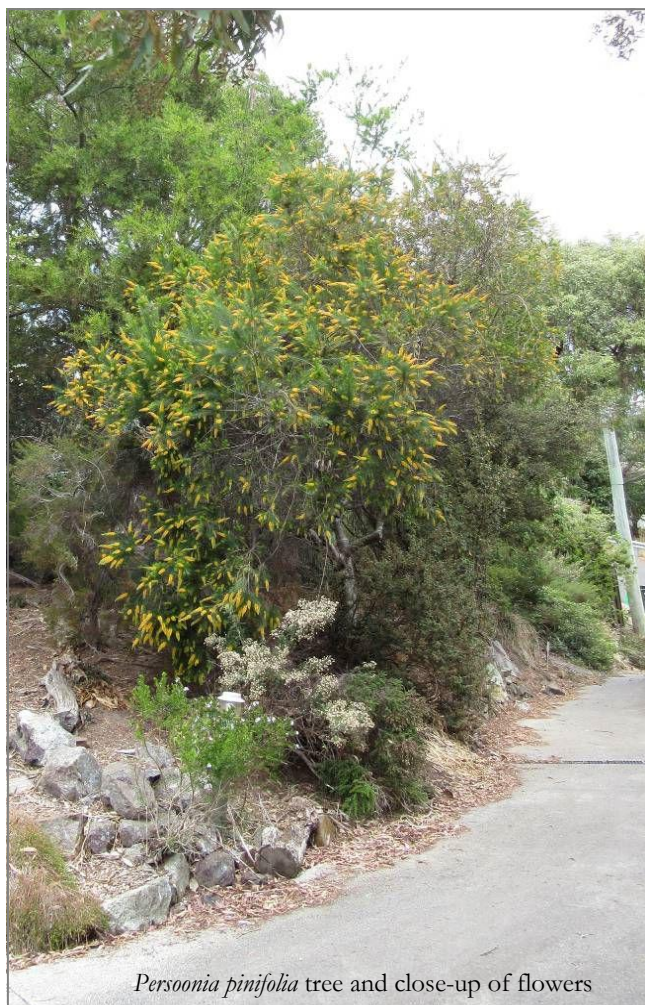


Persoonia pinifolia occurs throughout the Sydney region and I must have seen it in my rambles. It grows as a small tree with smooth grey bark. The foliage is dense, consisting of crowded soft terete leaves on pendulous tips of branches. It is a plant that really should be growing next to a path so that as you walk past, you can run your hands through the soft foliage. Over the life of my garden, I have had three specimens – the first two were short-lived but the third has lived many years. I think I bought it from a now-defunct local nursery.

The species was named and described in 1810 by Robert Brown for its leaves that resemble those of the *Pinus* conifers. He collected the type specimen from around Port Jackson (Sydney). The genus was named by James Edward Smith in 1798, honouring Christiaan Hendrik Persoon, a reclusive botanist born in South Africa but for most of his adult life living in Paris (see *Pathfinders in Tasmanian Botany* pp. 39-42). Christiaan had the rare honour of describing two more species of the genus named for him, *Persoonia hirsuta* and *P. laurina*, both from the Sydney area.

The common name for most species of *Persoonia* is Geebung from the Sydney-region aboriginal word *jibung*. I feel I read somewhere that *jibung* refers to the fruit, which is edible, although the ones I've tried were tasteless and wouldn't have provided much succour because of the large stony seed. A few Western Australian species bear the common name snottygobble, a word of untraceable origin according to Wikipedia.

The four persoonias that still grow at Deviation Rd are all of Sydney sandstone origin. They are *Persoonia pinifolia*, another with terete leaves *P. hirsuta* that was found in a Sydney nursery, the one with the incredible chocolate-coloured paper bark and grown from seed *P. linearis*, and a hybrid *P. pinifolia* x *P. linearis* given to me by Gwyn and Geoff Clarke.*



Persoonia pinifolia tree and close-up of flowers



Persoonia linearis bark



Beetles around the Bush Part 1

Phil Watson

Where have all the insects gone?

Fond memories of family holidays as a youngster generally involved long road trips cramped up in the back of an Austin A40, being entertained with comical games of 'eye spy' to relieve the boredom. When we finally arrived at the shack, us kids would excitedly roll out of the car and wander around stretching our stiff legs. Vivid memories remain of the cacophony of insects splattered over the bonnet, windscreen, chrome grill and bumper bar. Insects of all shapes and sizes were impaled on the car dominated by colourful beetles, butterflies, moths, honey bees, winged ants, wasps and ladybirds. These reflected the vast diversity of insects we would see as we drove through the forested roads. Scientists in those days estimated that there were 300 million insects for every human equating to an average of 12 times a person's weight. Fast forward to an equivalent car trip today there would be very few dead insects on the car. It's easy to empathise with scientists' concerns about the plummeting insect populations, estimated to be dying out many times faster than all other higher order creatures leading to a staggering reduction of 25% in the insect population over the next 10 yearsⁱ. This might seem inconsequential, except that most of the world's agricultural production and native vegetation communities are totally reliant on insect pollination services.

Where have all the beetles gone?

Out of all the world's insects, beetles represent 40 % of the world's population. Even though in the *Coleoptera* Order there are over 200 beetle families (350,000 known species, 28,000 in Australia and 2000 in Tasmania) and new beetles are regularly being discovered the populations of each of these species have diminished significantly.



<https://www.australiangeographic.com.au/topics/wildlife/2016/11/australias-christmas-beetles/>

For many Australians who have noticed big, ornamental-looking Christmas beetles, they have become a happy sign of the start of the silly seasonⁱⁱ. Anecdotal evidence now

suggests that the Australia's endemic Christmas beetle population is on the decline. Entomologist Dr. Chris Reid, from the Australian Museum, attributes the drop in sightings to drier than usual spring weather in eastern coastal areas of Australia.

Christmas beetles have also been victims of urban sprawl, with species disappearing from the city due to development and subsequent habitat loss.



Beetles have distinctive characteristics

This article will now imagine life from a beetle perspective or more specifically a Jewel beetles' perspective!

We justify our reputation as one of the world's most successful creatures as we can live in almost any environment. We are proud to know that we have flourished from our original ancestors that evolved way back 200 million year ago.

We are easily distinguished from other insects first and foremost by our elytra or hardened leathery wings as their first pair of wings. These serve as our rudders and protection for our delicate pair of hind flight wings. We also have compound eyes, chewing mouth parts and a close-fitting suit of armour (exoskeleton or integument) made of tough chiton.

Jewel beetles have interesting life histories.

In Australia our jewel beetle clan consists of over 1200 species from 77 genera with approximately 50 from Tasmania and we happily flourish within a wide range of habitats varying from northern rainforests and deserts to temperate coastal woodlands.

We have a complete metamorphosis life cycle starting out as little eggs, then larval grubs, before moving through a pupal stage from which we emerge as adults. As legless grubs with small heads and antennae we look like tadpoles and feed ravenously in tree's sap wood moulting our hard exoskeletons several time (instars) before pupating within the network of grass filled oval shaped tunnels. One of our local Tasmanian jewel beetle grubs (*Nascioides quadrinotata*) bores into cambial wood of the myrtle (*Nothofagus cunninghamii*) and is treated as a pest by foresters. As an adult beetle it is a real stunner featuring yellow-spotted dark green colourations.

Some other jewel beetle larva are leaf minors which chew plant roots or insides of grass stems or herbs. Since we only have one adult exoskeleton it is an advantage to be well fed as a grub. This gives us a major advantage in our life as an adult beetle because it enables us to metamorphose into larger adult jewel beetles compared to under fed 'runt' cousins. Our jewel beetle life cycle varies from a few months to a few years although we are aware that if we get trapped in dried out building timber it may take tens of years before we emerge as adults. The American golden jewel beetle is our longest living superstar being recorded as emerging from the timber framing of a 51 years old buildingⁱ.

Why Golden jewel beetles look like pure gold



Not only do these golden jewel beetle *Chrysina resplendens* live a long life but they also have uniquely brilliant metallic golden colour making it highly valued by collectors.

University of Exeter physicistsⁱ specialising in colour and light have been exploring the origin of their striking metallic iridescence. They showed that these golden beetles have an exclusive 'optical signature'. The structure of the beetle and



its armour uniquely manipulates the orientation of the reflected light rays (polarisation) to appear like pure gold. This exceptional and wonderfully specialized characteristic sets it completely apart from the hundreds of thousands of other beautiful and brightly coloured animals and plants across the natural world.

Charismatic jewels with brilliant metallic colouring

As one of the colourful jewel beetles (*Buprestidae* family) we eke out our living on many well-known native plants and are easily recognized by our stunning colours and metallic sheen. Most of our jewel beetles are nectar feeders but some survive exclusively on foliage. However, our larvae are usually woodborers, typically feeding on sapwood just under the bark.

Additionally, we have a distinctive bullet-shaped body (1.5 to 6mm long) short antennae and downward pointing heads (hypognanthus). We are considered the 'living jewels' of the insect world being always popular with collectors who use us to decorate trinket boxes, clothing, religious shrines as well as jewellery items such as brooches and ear rings.



Being translucent, our chitin can refract light as it travels through the chiton layers making us look impressive with our metallic greens, blues, reds and purples that change with the viewing angle and amount of light entering our chitin coats. Hence, we can appear to be any of the above colours depending on the incident light angle and amount of light. Unfortunately for collectors who like to pin us onto display boards, they will notice that these refracted colours change permanently becoming dull over time, due to breakdown of fatty tissues in our chitin.

Meeting up with a few of our local Jewels

Some of our Tasmanian jewel beetles have stunning colour variations such as the heath loving jewel beetle (*Castiarina virginea*) that favours native box, *Bursaria spinosa*, dolly bushes *Cassinia aculeata* and teatree *Leptospermum species*. They boast 2 distinct colour forms one with dazzling green and yellow markings whilst the other is distinctly purple and yellow.



Every few years, when conditions are favourable this little fellow and a few of our mates breed up into large populations and feed voraciously on native box flowers. Regrettably for the local apiarists they demolish the honey bees' nectar supplies causing a severe shortage of prized native box honey.

Another one of our dazzling jewel beetles is a local woodland jewel beetle *Melobasis propinqua* which favours bush peas (*Dillwynia* spp., *Pultenaea* spp., and *Bossiaea* spp.). It has a copper coloured Tasmanian cousin that lives on the east coast as well as a green coloured inland form. Similarly, the dune loving jewel beetle (*Castiarina flavopicta*) favours tea trees, everlastingbushes, *Ozothamnus* spp., and paperbarks, *Melaleuca* spp.. They feature bright yellow and blue colours in the warmer north-eastern Tasmania whilst its southern cousins are neatly marked with yellow and green colours^{vi}.

Miena Jewel Beetle – threatened by increase in wildfires due to climate change

Arguably the rarest of our endemic jewel beetles is the vulnerable Miena Jewel Beetle (*Castiarina insculpta*) which features a metallic blue-green colour with bright yellow patches on the grooved wing coverings. This stunning beetle's home is limited to the Great Lake/Lake Augusta area of the Central Plateau persisting in open subalpine woodland and heath where it feeds on scaly everlasting bush, *Ozothamnus hookeri*^{vii}. Unfortunately, enduring dry conditions leading to devastating 2019 summer wildfires across the central plateau have severely impacted its habitat and eliminated a couple of its known populations. Ironically just prior to the wildfire it had been down listed from endangered to vulnerable under the Tasmanian Threatened Species Act. Like the cider gum *Eucalyptus gunnii* it now faces an uncertain future under a changing climate.



Vulnerable Miena Jewel Beetle on scaly everlasting bush

Credit: Examiner.com.au



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Tasmania's forgotten Jewel Beetle

One of our little-known cousins is the orange-red and blue-black coloured jewel beetle *Castiarina bremeri* ranging from 15-20 mm in length. They have been previously recorded in Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia and Tasmaniaⁱ.

Since 2013, 21 specimens of our cousin have been collected by Simon Fearnⁱⁱ in the Tamar River Valley feeding on introduced *Baeckea virgata** (13) and *Leptospermum petersonii* (8) growing in residential properties. Interestingly they have a relatively short adult activity period from mid-January to mid-February at the hottest time of the year in the Tamar Valley region.

Specimens have been observed to aggressively defend individual patches of blossom from other jewel beetles, actively attacking them with mandibles and driving them off the flowers. The males may fight if females are attracted to particularly nectar rich clusters of flowers, whilst the females may fight if defending such a food source for nourishing their ova.

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Castiarina bremeri Credit: David Francis 3441

Summary

Due to the vast diversity of beetles, there are numerous fascinating aspects about beetles and their life histories awaiting to be explored. Surprisingly it has been estimated that there are 8 times as many beetles as there are mammals, amphibians, birds, reptiles and fish put together. **Part 2** of this article will focus on the realities of beetles' ability to deliver pollination services as well as marveling at beetle's defense systems. Additionally, **Part 2** will provide a close look at beetles which exhibit hill topping and clicking behavior along with intriguing story of Simpson's Stag Beetle's reappearance after being considered extinct..*

References:

ⁱ Mercury Newspaper March 2019 *Insects Time maybe up*

ⁱⁱ <https://www.australiangeographic.com.au/topics/wildlife/2016/11/australias-christmas-beetles/>

ⁱⁱⁱ Hangay G. and Zborowski P., *A Guide to Beetles of Australia*

^{iv} <https://www.alwaysresearching.com/natural-sciences/biology/20170616/secret-of-why-jewel-scarab-beetles-look-like-pure-gold-explained-by-physicists/>

^v https://www.brisbaneinsects.com/brisbane_jewelbeetles/index.html

^{vi,vii} Cowie, D. *Jewel Beetles of Tasmania A Field Naturalist's Guide* Published: Tasmanian Field Naturalists Club

^{viii} *Australia's Richest Jewel Beetle Genus*. Australian Biological Resources Study, Canberra

^{ix} Fearn, Simon. *Tasmania's forgotten Jewel: Distribution and ecological notes on the jewel beetle, Castiarina bremeri*.



Book Review – *Name that Flower*

Roy Skabo

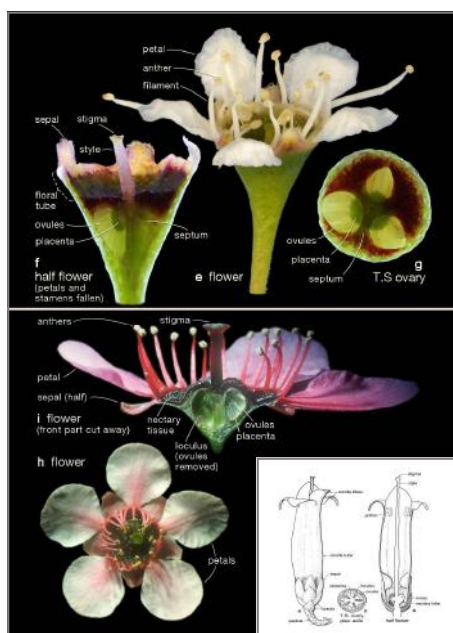
Written by Ian Clarke and Helen Lee, one of the first books I bought after getting interested in native plants was 'Name That Flower', first published in 1987 and reprinted nine times between then and 1998. A second edition, published in 2003, was reprinted three times and finally, another new edition was published last year. I provide this detail to make the point that this book is a real winner. There are 374 pages of text plus 66 pages of colour photos.

The first three chapters of the 2019 edition cover the structure of flowers and inflorescences (arrangement of flowers in a plant) with excellent line drawings accompanying the lucid text.

Chapters four to six cover plant reproduction, structure and function, and classification. A professional botanist may not find anything new in this book but anyone else with an interest in plants will find it a treasure trove of botanical knowledge, clearly and logically expounded.

For people who wish to learn how to identify plants (which was why I bought the book) chapter seven is the one that sets out the process for working out what plant you have in your hands (or under your lens or microscope). This chapter includes a list of simple equipment you will find useful and how to use it and also provides an introduction to the subject of botanical keys.

Having provided the basic knowledge on plants, the rest of the book is made up of descriptions of the important characteristics of forty-six plant families chosen to provide a range of flower structures. For each family line drawings of at least one representative species are provided and in many cases the drawings are supplemented by magnificent colour photographs showing flower detail and plant structure.



Not all of the species used as examples are native plants but this is no disadvantage and the emphasis is certainly on natives.

In each family section there is an introductory note on family characteristics and usually some information on important members of the family and their uses, including uses by aboriginal people. I was fascinated to learn that the saltbush family, Chenopodiaceae, which is not very colourful in Tasmania, contains many very important edible plants such as spinach (*Spinacia*) and beetroot and sugar beet (*Beta* species). Many of Tasmania's Chenopodiaceae species are also edible and quite palatable.

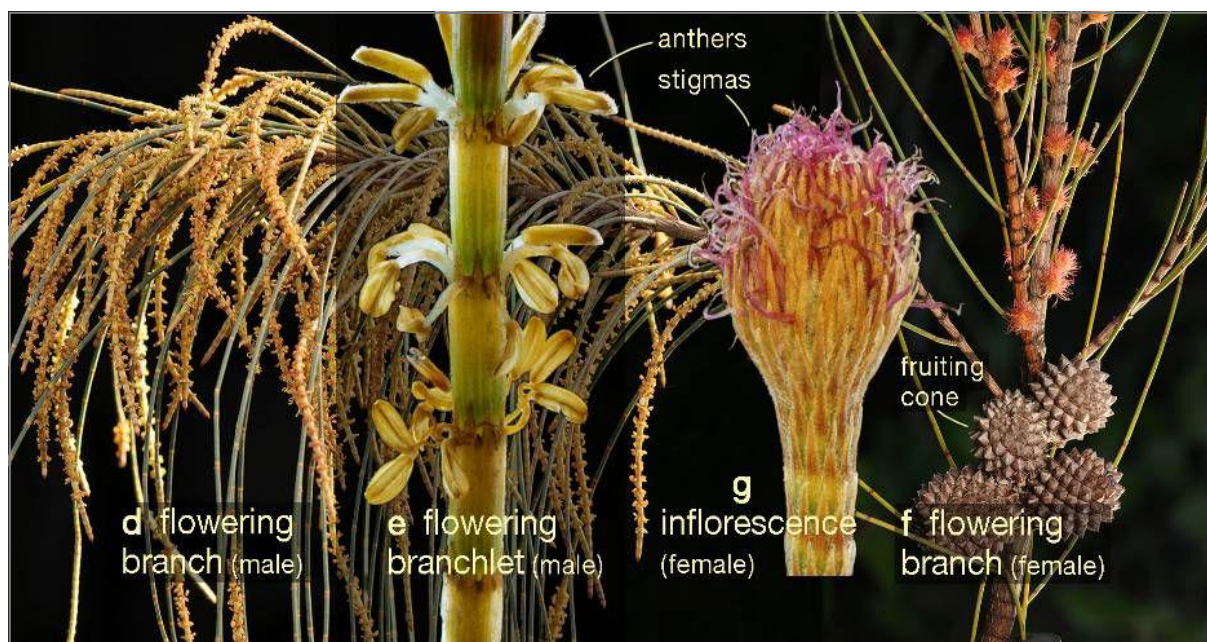
Other excellent features of the book are a comprehensive and useful glossary of botanical terms and a list of very useful references.

In summary, this is a book which should be in the library of anyone who is fascinated by plants and wants to know more about them.

Above: Kunzea and Leptospermum. **Insert:** *Epacris impressa*. Name that flower Plate 20e-i Kunzea + Leptospermum.

Ian Clarke has also published a companion volume, Name those Grasses (2015), which provides an excellent guide to the identification of grasses, sedges and rushes.

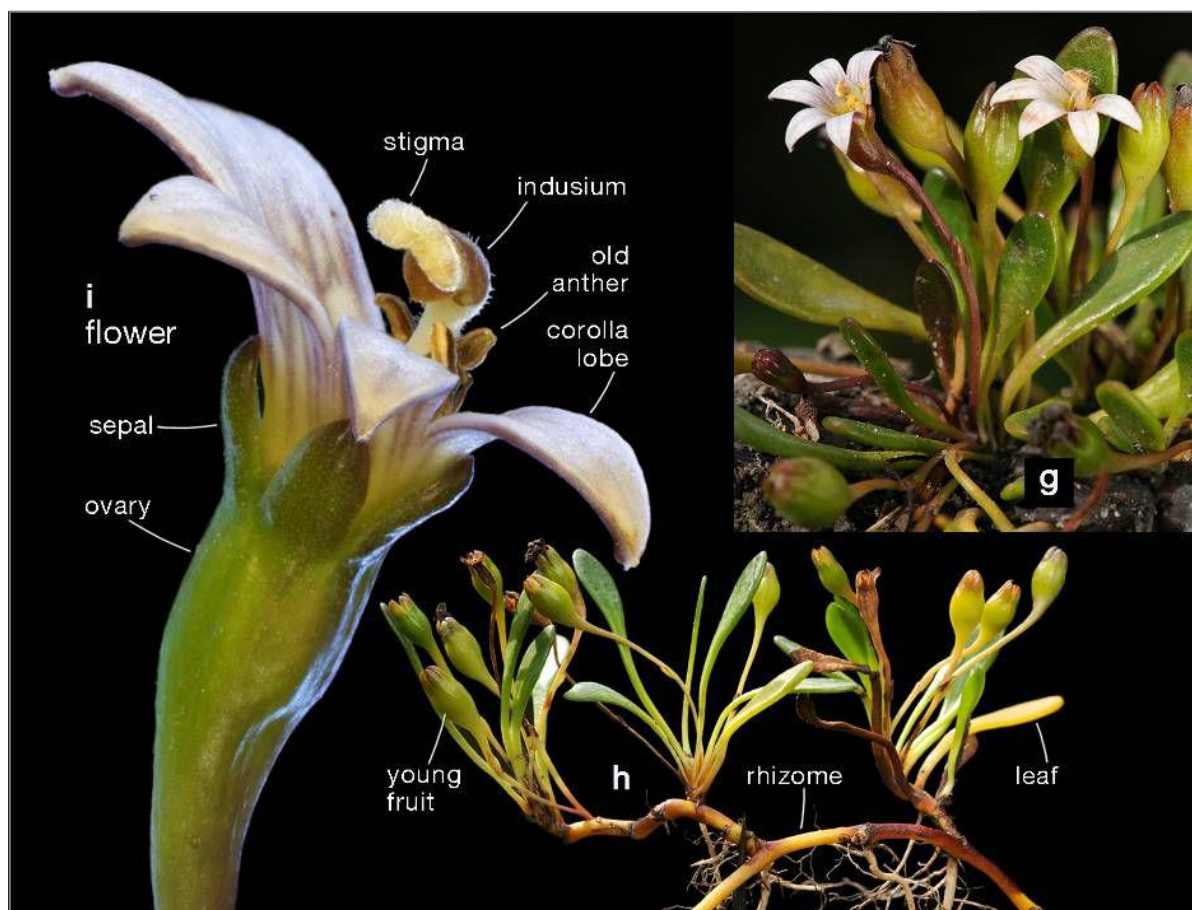
Ian has agreed to speak at the Northern Group's November meeting (assuming that he is able to travel and that we are allowed to hold the meeting!).*



Photos from the book *Name That Flower*, by Ian Clarke and Helen Lee.
See article page 27

Top: *Allocasuarina*.

Bottom: *Selliera*.





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Date confirmed by Council:

June 2019



From the Editor's Desk

A letter to the Editor:

from Philip Sumner, a response to Dick's article in last issue on '*Red-Flowering Gum and the Effect of Light*'

"Thank you once again Dick for another interesting and educational article, this time illuminating us all to the science and mechanisms involved in Fluorescence, Iridescence, Luminescence and Translucence.

I've long been a lover of *Lechenaultia* flowers and their vividness and purity of colour and am of the opinion that a couple of *Lechenaultia* species qualify as fluorescent. The front cover of *Eucryphia* Volume 23 No 7 September 2019 features your beautiful photograph of *Lechenaultia hirsuta* and having seen various colour forms of this species I reckon some of this particular species' variations fall into the category of fluorescent especially the orange forms. I also believe some forms of *Lechenaultia biloba* exhibit the same characteristic. The lovely *Melaleuca fulgens* and *Melaleuca lateritia* can both have striking colour forms and when resplendent in full flower, especially the orange form of *lateritia*, also seem to fluoresce to me.

Perhaps Dick, it is to do with an individuals' cones doing their job at the back of one's eyes that allow us to visualise these observations in some plants different from others? Always enjoy your articles, please continue educating us.'

Philip Sumner ◊

And

from Alan Gray, recent recipient of Honorary Membership:

'Hello Mary,

A couple of months ago I was surprised and delighted to be awarded an Honorary Life Membership of the Society.

Naturally, I owe a great deal of thanks and gratitude to all members who were involved in 'voting' for this award; the motion to present me with this was moved by my very good friend and 'bush-buddy' Bruce Champion.

This letter is a very belated offer of my thanks and gratitude to all involved in this award. Naturally I was unaware that it was to be presented to me.

My daughter suggested that we go for a drive to Cygnet, and when she did not stop there and proceeded to Randalls Bay I was a little mystified. However, when we arrived at a picnic shelter, I naturally assumed she was going to use the BBQ. At first I was a little dismayed at the number of people at the shelter. You can imagine my surprise when it finally 'dawned' on me that these were people I knew; what were they doing here?

To cut a long story short, The President of the Group, Sib Corbett, made a short speech and presented me with the lovely framed award certificate, which now adorns my living room wall.

I was rather tongue-tied and made rather a weak attempt at expressing my surprise and gratitude for the honour.

So, I would be most grateful if you could circulate this letter to all concerned as a token of my gratitude and the honour of the award of Life Membership.

With thanks,

Yours sincerely,

Alan Gray ◊



Calendar for 2020

This Calendar of events is compiled from best available information supplied by Groups and Council but is subject to change. To avoid clashes that may limit opportunities for all members to participate, event organisers are requested to consult this Calendar when finalising arrangements.

Subject to COVID 19 restrictions

Please phone Group Secretary to confirm any activity

June	6	Saturday	Hobart	Propagation
June	16	Tuesday	Northern/North West	General Meeting
June	18	Thursday	North West	Propagation
June	23	Tuesday	Northern	Working Bee HFNG
June	27	Saturday	Council	Council Meeting
July	1	Wednesday	Hobart	KMD
July	4	Saturday	Hobart/Northern	Propagation
July	14	Tuesday	Northern	General Meeting
July	16	Thursday	North West	Propagation
July	28	Tuesday	Northern	Working Bee HFNG
August	1	Saturday	Hobart/Northern	Propagation
August	5	Wednesday	Hobart	KMD
August	16	Sunday	Hobart	Excursion
August	18	Tuesday	Northern/North West	General Meeting
September	2	Wednesday	Hobart	KMD
September	5	Saturday	Hobart/Northern	Propagation
September	15	Tuesday	Northern/North West	General Meeting
September	17	Thursday	North West	Propagation
September	22	Tuesday	Northern	Working Bee HFNG
October	3	Saturday	Hobart/Northern	Propagation
October	7	Wednesday	Hobart	KMD
October	14	Wednesday	Hobart	General Meeting
October	17	Saturday	Hobart	Plant sale
November	21	Saturday	Council	Council Meeting
November	27-29	LWE	All members	Get-together at Maydena

Note that Hobart Group propagation sessions are now held as above from 1pm till 4pm.
There may be other events not listed here after July, as Groups reconvene in the near future.
Keep in contact with your Group, and be sure to read the next *Eucryphia*.



Northern Group News

Kay Pallett

It is not a surprise that much that was planned for the busy autumn months was deferred. Meetings were cancelled along with guest speakers - such a pity. The usual Northern Group activities were restricted as members worked singly at the nursery or in pairs at the Tasmania Native Garden. The Autumn Plant Sale was cancelled as was the April planting day at the Tasmania Native Garden. Nevertheless, at the nursery 1,500 plants have been weeded and fertilised while at the Tasmania Native Garden a few members have persisted in the usual tasks of weeding, pruning and mulching. It is important that the garden remains a show-case for visitors.

April Plant of the Month was *Sarcocornia quinqueflora* described by Jon Hosford in the March newsletter. It is an interesting, and edible, plant found mostly in coastal areas - often in the saltmarshes of Tasmania. It has several common names such as beaded samphire or glasswort. The latter name is thought to have derived from the fact that the plant was burnt to obtain the ashes which were used to make soap and glass.

May Plant of the Month was *Alyogyne huegelii* named after Baron Karl von Hügel, a 19th century German naturalist. It was chosen by Kay Pallett because it is quick growing, amply fills a well-drained garden spot and best of all has large purple flowers for most of the year.

On the website apstasnorth.org.au the programme for the year can be accessed but activities remain postponed ready to be picked up when circumstances allow. The pandemic did not stop all the members' activities. In April the APST Council Meeting went ahead via Zoom which meant streamlining of the meeting but with full coverage of agenda items in a record one and a half hours. This shows that with technology it is possible to keep the Society running and to communicate well with members in other groups.

Sadly in April long-time member Marion Simmons died. Our group owes a lot to her dedication to APST over many years. She has left us much by which to remember her.⁸

North West Group News

While meetings have ceased for the time being, propagation sessions have continued with numbers attending keeping to regulations regarding numbers and social distancing.

The cancelling of the Autumn Plant Sale was a disappointment, but a sensible decision. Many of the plants have since been sold on a 'by appointment, one-on-one' basis, so we did not end up with too many plants to house for the winter.

We are hoping that the July Day Meeting will go ahead, and will be organising this by email. The plans for the Get-together at Maydena sound exciting, we are looking forward to that.◊

**Congratulations to
Glen Leiper**

on his appearance (complete with garden) on
'Gardening Australia'
(series 31 episode 13 May 2020)
talking about his rare Aussie gems.

Glen was the recipient of the amateur category of the Australian Plants Awards in 2019.



APST Directory

COUNCIL

Postal address **P. O. Box 1205,
Gravelly Beach
TASMANIA 7276**

Email: **apstsec@gmail.com**
Website: **www.apstas.org.au**

President	Jenny Boyer	6293 1113	Hobart Councillor	Keith Corbett	6239 1688
Vice-President	Vacant		North West Councillor	Riitta Boevink	64286909
Secretary	Mary Slattery	0402784086	North West Councillor	Drew Thomas	64371802
Treasurer	Rosemary Verbeeten	6394 4600	Northern Councillor	Louise Skabo	0467199602
Hobart Councillor	Sib Corbett	6239 1688	Northern Councillor	Roy Pallet	0438392041
M'ship Officer	Margaret Killen	0409430665	North West Councillor	Riitta Boevink	6428 6909
Public Officer	Mary Slattery	0402784086	North West Councillor	Drew Thomas	64371802

GROUPS

Hobart Group

President	Sib Corbett	6239 1688	General meetings: <u>Kingston Primary School Library</u> Contact Secretary for Covid19 Restrictions .Kingborough Day Meetings: <u>2pm Centacare Units Meeting Room,</u> turn left off Balmoral Rd. Kingston. Contact for 6227 2108 for Covid19
Secretary	Christine Corbett	6239 1904	
Treasurer	Anthony Salt	0412673632	
Contact Officer	Bruce Champion	6294 6970	

Northern Group

President	Peter Dowde	63317761	Postal address: 45 Osborne Avenue, Trevallyn, Tas. 7250 Email: apstasnorth@gmail.com Meeting place /time: <u>Max Fry Hall, Gorge Rd, Trevallyn</u> Contact Secretary for Covid19 Restrictions Website: www.apstasnorth.org
Secretary	Louise Skabo	6334 6787	
Treasurer	Rosemary Verbeeten	6394 4600	
Eucryphia Liaison	Kay Pallett	0400097025	

North West Group

President	John Tabor	6428 6512	Postal address: PO Box 68, Port Sorell, Tas 7307 Email: apstnorthwest@gmail.com Meeting place/time: <u>St Pauls Church Hall, Church St, East Devonport</u> Contact Secretary for Covid19 Restrictions
Vice-President	Joy McIntosh	6426 2657	
Secretary	Drew Thomas	6437 1802	
Treasurer	John Boevink	6428 6909	
Eucryphia Liaison	Mary Slattery	0402784086	