

President
Dale Luck 0418 830 995
Business Secretary
Karin Fiedler 0431 247 405
Minutes Secretary
Noel Manning 6344 2277



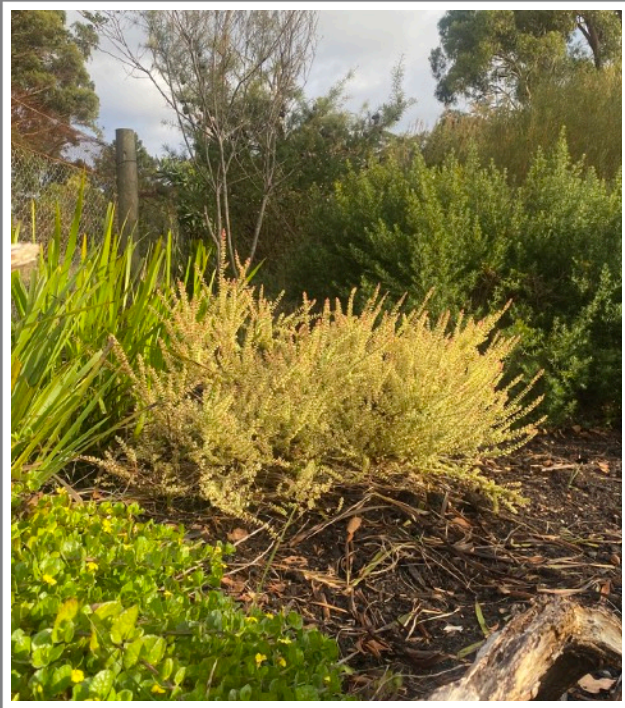
Web: www.apstasnorth.org
Email: apstasnorth@gmail.com
Post: 1 Old Coach Road,
Gravelly Beach 7276

Newsletter

March 2024

Northern Group

Autumn gardens are interesting. The light effect is more pronounced, the flower colours not so dominant, leaving the foliage centre stage.



< *Hypocalymma cordifolium* is a favourite which works well as a filler in vases but in March it is a star in the garden.

The blue grey foliage of *Rhodanthe anthemoides* (at right) contrasts nicely with *Thomasia petalocalyx* in both its foliage and dainty flowers.

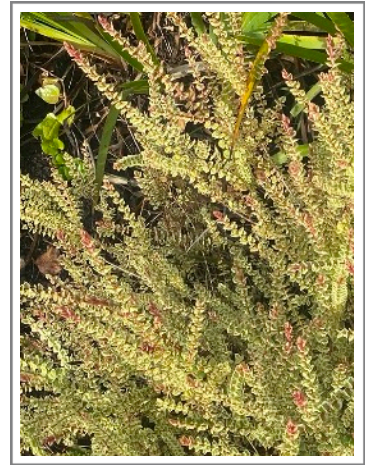


Below *Banksia integrifolia* with its magnificent flowers has especially attractive foliage which in places provides its own contrast of grey green underside leaves against the dark green leaf tops. Behind is *Chrysocephalum apiculatum* - always a feature in the garden whether or not in flower.





- < Self seeded *Euc.* - fresh green with clear red stems.
- < *Leucophyta brownii*'s stark silver foliage.



Ground cover *Goodenia* sp. with rich green foliage. >
 Close-up of *Hypocalymma cordifolium* (far right) creamy variegated, heart-shaped leaves.

NG Activities

The word 'busy' is used a lot to describe NG members but on the first Saturday in this month the word was overworked as members were involved in the **Sustainable Living Festival** - an all day activity with half a dozen members rostered, selling almost ten trays of plants but more importantly showing off our native plants to a wider audience. Thank you to Margaret K. for organising the team to help set up and run the stall at the Sustainable Living Festival. (See photos of the day at the end of this newsletter.)

Saturday 2nd was also the first of the **two working bees at Cambridge Street Reserve** - the second on Thursday 8th. Roy S. reported that weeding had cleared cotoneaster seedlings, gorse, blackberries, broom and ivy. Roy also commented on the public's interest, in particular, from children living in the area. He wondered whether there should be contact / involvement with the school. Another point of interest came from a bird expert who is doing a count in the reserve. A further reason to keep the reserve as natural as possible.

The third activity on this very busy Saturday was the **propagation session at Windsor Park**. Again there were plants to be repotted. (Also those repotted in the previous month were to be admired, having responded amazingly as reported by a very happy Janet!)

Earlier in the week Janet, with others, was also happy to make a selection of about ten trays of plants from the rather large sale stock and relieve the space pressure on the nursery racks.

In addition, members were inside the stables at the benches snipping cuttings, dipping them in hormone solution before placing them into a punnet to begin the journey of the fresh new plant that will be ready for the October sale. In the shade house, and outside, the 'Liverwort Removalists' were in action. In basketball terms the nursery was 'pumping'!

There was a Cambridge Reserve Committee meeting on Tuesday, 12th March which discussed Issues relating to management of the Cambridge St. Reserve for which Jonty is now the manager of planning. The next working bees will mainly be planting grasses as there are around 200 at the nursery waiting to go into the ground. There will be another meeting with Matt Jordan, City of Launceston, to discuss mowing practices. Also because it has been so dry Andrew and his sister-in-law watered some of the new grasses.

The commencement of activities at Carr Villa was also discussed. The goal is to get a 'Friends of Carr Villa' in place. Ian B. will re-approach the council letting them know that we wish to establish a friends group but it was decided to wait until there are names on a list. There is a little hope for this as there was a fair list of people interested at the flower walk. However, after Ian B. sent out an invitation for people to be part of such a group, the response was not encouraging. The committee is still working on this plan.

Ongoing work: The group is working on persuading the council to minimise cemetery expansion and to conserve these valuable areas. Last year there was a letter signed by NG group (and others) sent to the Council which sought to minimise the cemetery expansion into the two well preserved flora rich areas adjacent to the cemetery, and home to several threatened species.

Carr Villa has been described by Roy S. (March meeting) as one of the two really good bushland reserves in Launceston with lots of natural values and lots of variety of flora. He suggests that it is better than Cambridge Street - the other reserve.

Tuesday 19th General Business Meeting

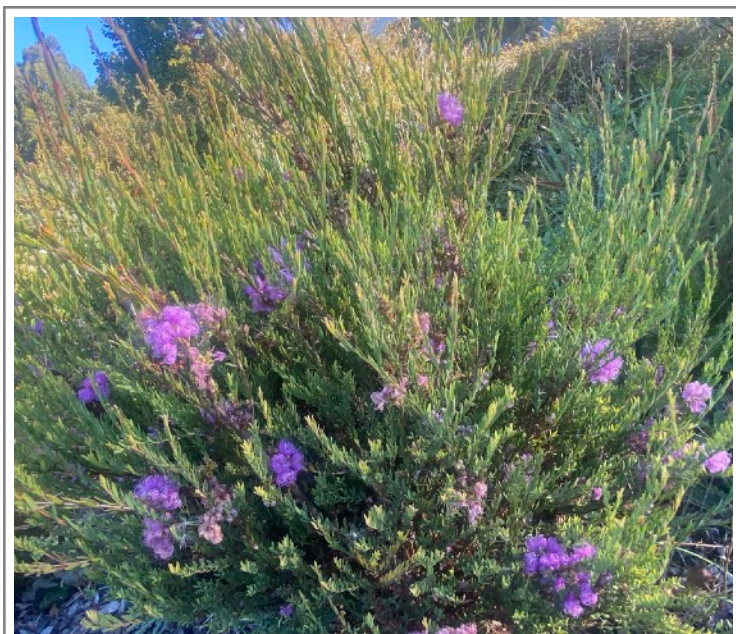
Members were updated on current activities and developments as Dale efficiently moved through items on the agenda. Margaret K. reported on the very successful stall at Tamar NRM Sustainable Living Festival. She wrote a thank you letter to Sandy Astill at the Tamar NRM, congratulating them on an excellent festival and informing her that our NG will be part of the next festival.

Other business matters included a confirmation that the majority of members were happy to maintain the 30 minute business time slot at the beginning of each meeting because it allowed matters to be touched upon/dealt with in a more timely manner. Roy S. told members about the goal of taking over the Carr Villa Flora Reserve in a similar way to the Cambridge Reserve. It needs a few more members to add to the present group (who still have a commitment in Cambridge Street Reserve). Roy suggested that to join the group would probably require participation in one 2 hour monthly working bee plus an occasional meeting at another time e.g. to prepare for a working bee where necessary. About 3-5 members would be a good start to get the working bees underway. If interested please let Andrew, Ian B or Roy know. He also added that it is deteriorating and needs attention asap.

Rosemary V. confirmed that there were enough members to set up a display for the autumn Launceston Horticultural Show at Evandale. Rosemary suggested that perhaps we focus on correas at this display. Roy S. informed us of a visit to Dr. Stefania Ondei's laboratory at Tas Uni in Hobart at a date to be arranged. Stefania is the guest speaker for April and in part is studying the vulnerability of plants to fire. In turn she has requested that our members aid her research by looking in our gardens for the listed native and exotic specimens (emailed to members on 22nd March). If you are able to help would you please contact Roy so that the specimens can be freshly gathered on the Wednesday morning.

To finish there was a reminder from Louise to collect a small poster advertising the autumn plant sale on Saturday, 27th April 2. Members are asked to place them on community display boards. In addition the Launceston Field Naturalist Club is planning a trip to land conservation properties and projects the the Sheffield, Mt Roland area. Please contact Helen Tait if interested.

By meeting's end the numbers had swelled - another big turnout with extra chairs having to be put out as more people arrived to hear the presentation given by Professor Benjamin Richardson.



Before The main presentation Kay P. described **Plant of the Month: *Melaleuca thymifolia*** with its interesting flower structure. The flowers do not 'stand out' (above left) but up close they are most interesting even curious because they have a claw arrangement where the stamens which are joined at the base and free at the tips arc inwards (above right).

It is one of the most cultivated *Melaleuca* specimens and understandably, because it flowers for almost 8 months and tolerates a range of conditions although for a good floral display, it needs a sunny spot.

Speaker: Benjamin Richardson

“How can conservation covenants help Tasmanian landholders to protect nature?”

Introduced by Roy S., Benjamin Richardson is currently in the Tas Uni Faculty of Law. He is a specialist in nature conservation law and is leading a project covered by the Australian Research Council that examines how to encourage landholders to use covenants to protect wildlife on their properties. He is a former covenant holder in the Huon Valley so has had first hand experience in managing a conservation covenant. He has written 14 books. The latest book, *Before Environmental Law: A History of a Vanishing Continent* (Bloomsbury / Hart, 2023) is an excellent book recommended by Roy.

“A conservation covenant is a voluntary agreement made between a landholder and an authorised body (such as a Covenant Scheme Provider) that aims to protect and enhance the natural, cultural and/or scientific values of certain land. The owner continues to own, use and live on the land while the natural values of an area are conserved by the landholder in partnership with the Covenant Scheme Provider.

Covenant Scheme Providers can be not-for-profit organisations, government agencies or local Councils that can enter into conservation covenants with landholders to protect land with conservation values.”

The presentation, “How can conservation covenants help Tasmanian landholders to protect nature?” looked at promoting private conservation as a means of conserving ecological diversity. A scheme called the Conservation Covenant was devised whereby land under private ownership could be set aside and preserved for perpetuity i.e. when a property is relinquished it cannot be undone. The property will remain protected even if the original owner moves on.

Over the years the land conservation focus has been mostly on national parks but these protected areas only cover some of the diverse ecosystems which make up this continent. Many ecological systems remain neglected. Today the goal is to conserve as many ecosystem examples as possible.

Of the entire Australian continent 22% is owned privately and it is in these privately owned areas that are now being recognised as crucial and are the focus for preservation. Here in the midlands for example Benjamin pointed out that it is not possible to declare the vital grassland area as a national park. However, by promoting the Conservation Covenant scheme it is a possible to achieve the same outcome with landholders voluntarily setting aside/relinquishing control of parts of their land which is then protected from commercial activity, development etc.

How the system works was outlined by Benjamin when he described his experience of ownership of covenanted land. He bought 64 acres at Lucaston in the Huon Valley of which 62 acres was under covenant to be preserved in its natural state. Just 2 acres was free of the covenant and contained a residence. It was the only part which could be developed in any way.

The comprehensive presentation was illuminating, informative, and hopeful, showing how you get covenants, describing the details, the advantages and consequences for those who choose to become part of the scheme.

At the **State AGM** which took place in Hobart on Saturday 23rd March Louise Skabo was presented with a well deserved certificate of appreciation and a beautiful bunch of Rosemary Verbeeten flowers for her sterling efforts as president for the past two years. Judith Blayden was elected as the new president and is to be congratulated on her new responsibility. Best wishes in this role, Judith.

March ended with the **Tasmanian Native Garden working bee** on Tuesday 26th. The main task for the day was to weed the back half of the garden, the first part having been done the month before. There was some mulching done - the big, Council-delivered mulch pile is slowly decreasing. A little pruning was done but this needs to be a focus of future working bees as some of the larger, bushier shrubs would benefit from a good pruning.

Progress has been made on replacing the faded information sign. Louise has sent all the updated details such as changed email addresses and photos to Kathryn Pugh (CoL Council) who will organise for a new sign to be made up. There will also be a new logo for the gate. The Council have been asked for support in having the sign replaced. A new sign will certainly be welcome - lifting and freshening the appearance of the garden.

Part of the section to be weeded. The *Myoporum parvifolium* (foreground) is spreading nicely. >



Reminders for April

1. Launceston Horticultural Show at Evandale on Saturday 13th and Sunday 14th. Members to set up NG display on Friday 12th after 1 o'clock. Email Rosemary V. if you have flowers to bring.
2. Stefania Ondei is guest speaker at the April meeting on Tuesday, 16th. Following this there will be an excursion on Thursday 18th to visit her Hobart laboratory to see plants (collected by our members) tested for flammability. Contact Roy Skabo for more details.
3. Invitation to join the North West group who are visiting Windsor Park for a garden tour with Tony Roberts. Meet at the carpark outside the community garden at 10.30 on Saturday 20th April.



POM for July spot remains vacant waiting for a volunteer to share a brief description of an interesting plant. Please tell Margaret Killen if you have a favourite plant to share with fellow members.

Thank you, Margaret for the following photos showing the members busily engaged at the NRM Sustainable Living Festival. Note the new gazebo at work firmly anchored with water-filled feet! Margaret also reported that the backdrop of photos of NG activities was a great reference when talking to people about APST Inc.



^ Not much left at the end of a long, very successful day.

< Earlier in the day - plants plenty!



