

What's in the latest Study Group newsletters?

A theme across several of the newsletters is that of having to leave a beloved garden and start up elsewhere on a more modest scale. This is the case for Brendon Stahl, Paul Kennedy and several others, who hope their gardens can continue to thrive in new hands.

Acacia No. 117

September is the height of acacia-related activities with the 'Australian Flower Show & Wattle Spectacular' in Bendigo and 'Australian Plant Expo' in Eltham. The book *Life in a Gall: Biology and Ecology of Insects that live in Plant Galls* particularly applies to eucalypts, acacias and figs.

Banksia No. 19

Any banksia enthusiast would do well to join this group. This issue explores *Banksia marginata*, 'a highly variable species, usually ranging from a small shrub around a metre tall to a 12 m high tree. Unusually large trees of 15 to possibly 30 m have been reported near Beeac in Victoria's Western District as well as several locations in Tasmania, while compact shrubs limited to 20 cm high have been recorded on coastal heathland in Tasmania'. A summary of current knowledge of the species is followed by 10 pages of colour photographs.

Brachychiton & Allied Genera No. 39

The flowering times of brachychiton and the extraordinary weather conditions of 2011 – 12 are summarised, together with notes on the leader's new garden where he has 'planted 50 or so brachys about a metre apart, much closer than normal for most species, but OK for small species like megaphyllus which is slow-growing outside the tropics.'

Correa No. 46

The leader suggests maintaining an annual chart of the flowering (light/heavy) of correas by observation on the first day of the month so that eventually annual comparisons can be made.

Phil Hempel is using root stock unaffected by the wet: *Correa backhouseana*, *C. calygina* and *C. glabra* hybrids.

Dryandra No. 63

Kevin Collins and Margaret Pieroni describe the fascinating coastline around Cheyne Beach to the east of Albany WA. When you are used to seeing plants as large shrubs it is almost unbelievable to see them less than 0.5m high. Margaret also provides a map and plant list.

Eucalyptus No. 55

Phil Hempel describes his 1350k trip along the challenging Anne Beadell Highway from Coober Pedy to WA as passing through some of Australia's most pristine regions.

A report on farm conservation trials in box gum grassy woodlands in NSW, to restore soil functioning in depleted native pastures.

Novel eucalypt hybrids are expected to be released within a year, by Humphris Nursery, following a 15-year RIRDC project.

The CSIRO's Australian Tree Seed Centre has source-identified seed of Australia's trees and shrubs with seed also available for purchase.

Garden Design No. 78

A format for recording significant Australian plant gardens in private hands has been completed and trialled by this group.

Ros Walcott bemoans the unreliability of native plant supplies: 'We are only at the very start of using Australian natives in gardens and this is part of both the excitement and the frustration of trying to design with Aussie plants.'

Bev Hanson is working with others to create a memorial to commemorate Ellis Stones. 'In his suburban landscapes he had the creative ability to make something out of nothing by changing levels on a flat block, and planting so that the whole area could not be viewed at once, adding large naturally placed rocks or perhaps a pool.'

Hakea No. 50

For summer and autumn flowering Paul Kennedy recommends the small to medium Mount Rugged form of *Hakea pycnoneura*, *H scoparia* and the hybrids between them.

Hibiscus No 25

This issue commences with fascinating observations about weather affecting the balance of butcher birds, insects, reptiles and spiders in a garden, and also a well-illustrated article about pests and diseases of hibiscus (and other plants).

The achievements of the late Dr Paul Fryxell of the USA are acknowledged.

Wallum and Coastal Heathland No 33

The Wallum group has listed plants in land recently acquired by the Sunshine Coast Regional Council at the Council's request.

The leader, Barbara Henderson, has strong themes of the pressures of 'development' on Wallum areas in Australia and similar pressures on the remarkable 'fynbos' habitat near Table Mountain South Africa.