

Hakea fraseri



## Armidale & District Group

PO Box 735 ARMIDALE NSW 2350

<http://www.anps-armidale.org.au>

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### August - September 2009

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#### President's message

Barbara

##### President's Message

An early welcome to spring, officially just around the corner. The number of birds that are in our garden at present are certainly heralding this fact. We were in our family room and heard this almighty raucous outside in a *Banksia spinulosa* hedge that a couple of wattle birds have taken over as their personal kitchen larder. Some parrots had dared to visit for some nectar and the fight was on. They managed to fight off the wattle birds and then some stood guard whilst one or two of them sayed in the Banksias. The parrots have moved onto other sources and now all is quiet as the wattle birds have regained their domain.

Whilst we have not been having general meetings during our colder months we have still been busy. Instead of our June meeting we had our traditional Winter Solstice function on 22 June (isn't it great that the days are lengthening). We visited the Armidale Golf Club where they had recently put in the first stage of a general refurbishment of their course, being an environmentally sustainable wetlands water project (see article on page 5), followed by a lunch at the Services Club. After this we drove up to the Art Gallery to hear Jeremy Bruhl and Ian Telford from the UNE Beadle Herbarium speak about their exhibition inside the gallery. The work that they are doing is quite mind blowing and I am afraid that there will be more names to learn as more plants are discovered.

During July John and I spent a weekend visiting the Pilliga to check out the roads, accommodation and plants ready for our group visit early in August. We found it just bursting at the seams ready for spring and were very excited about our pending visit (see article on page 6).

We now look forward to the starting of our general meetings and have Jeremy Bruhl as our first speaker on 18 August. Our plant for this meeting will be Acacia so I am looking forward to seeing samples of the large array that we have in our area.

I recommend that you all look at our Diary as we have many great events to come and do not forget the plant swap at our Christmas function on 6 December, so get your seeds and cuttings in.

Enjoy your gardening

Barbara

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**Thank you all contributors. The deadline for the next newsletter is Friday 2nd October**  
**Reports, articles, snippets, photos and ideas are all very welcome.**

**Send hard copy to the Editor: Pam Rooney PO Box 807 Armidale 2350 or email [pamrooney@bigpond.com](mailto:pamrooney@bigpond.com)**

# GROUP INFORMATION

(Group commenced 6th August 1977)

We are a very friendly and helpful group who enjoy monthly meetings, garden visits and field trips to help members enjoy the search for knowledge about our native flora. We range from raw beginners to others who have been at the game for many years - all willing to share their knowledge.

**General Meetings** are held at 7.30pm on the third Tuesday of each month (except December, January, June and July) at The Tree Group Woodland Centre where a display of flowers is presented by members. Old and new members and visitors are very welcome to these meetings and to our outings (page 9).

**Business Meetings** are held on the first Monday of the month at 7.30pm – see diary for where - members are welcome to these meetings too.

**Annual General Meeting** is held in February.

**Solstice Function** is held in June.

**Wattle Day Activity** is held on a day closest to 1 September.

**December Meeting** is taken up by an end of year function, usually a BBQ or picnic.

## ALL YOU NEED TO JOIN OUR GROUP IS A GREAT LOVE OF OUR NATIVE PLANTS

*Cover: Background is adapted from a drawing of Hakea fraseri in Forest Flora, NSW*

### Arboretum Working Bees

At our June working bee we continued pruning the New England Flora beds as well as poisoning the suckering *Acacia boormannii*. July saw us complete the pruning of the N.E. flora beds and planting out of five shrubs. At this working bee I was a bit excited to see the male Scarlet Robin which I hadn't seen for many years and never before at the arboretum. Another bird of interest was the female Golden Whistler hunting for insects among the vegetation.

Because of the wonderful subsoil moisture at the arboretum I thought we should turn our attention to planting over the next couple of months. For August and September working bees please bring a spade, trowel, a couple of buckets and watering can as well as pruning equipment. Working bee dates: 8th August and 12th September.

At the August working bee Phil Rose and I did some pruning and planted out 21 tubes and 5 pots. **What happened to our helpers?**

**Pat Laher**

**Arboretum Working Bees** are usually held at 1 pm on the 1st Saturday of the month except where otherwise notified and in November, December and January. Contact Pat to confirm date. If you would like to help but Saturday does not suit you please let Pat know on 0427 327 719.

### Sunday Markets Report

Plant sales have been going really well with 46 pots sold in May, 51 in June and 65 in July. Winter has so far been very mild with few severe frosts below -4C, and with August around the corner, the days are getting longer and warmer. This spring looks like being a corker!!

**Pat Laher**

### Markets in the Mall

Pat (6775 1842 or mob 0427 327 719) would like some help with the plant display and sale at the monthly markets.

You may wish to receive your newsletters by email, a cost effective option for our Society. The bonus for members is that the newsletter is in colour. In general the size of the file is 1MB or less. If you would prefer newsletters by email please contact the editor at [pamrooney@bigpond.com](mailto:pamrooney@bigpond.com)



**Australian Systematic Botany Society 2009 Conference**  
**“Systematic botany: from science to society”**  
including a workshop on  
**“National accreditation of providers of biological identification”**  
1-3 December 2009, University of New England, Armidale, Australia

The theme of the conference 'Systematic botany: from science to society' is broad and inclusive. We hope to see plenty of contributions highlighting discovery, analysis, and synthesis in plant diversity research and its impact on society. Keynote speaker will be Peter Stevens, Professor of Biology, University of Missouri, St Louis; Curator, Missouri Botanical Garden; and author of the Angiosperm Phylogeny Website.

On Wednesday afternoon, included in the conference registration, will be a workshop discussion on “National accreditation of providers of biological identification”. We hope to have representatives from all 'stakeholders' present leading to robust discussion.

Non members are most welcome either for the whole conference or individual days.

Further details can be found at <http://www.une.edu.au/herbarium/asbs/> or contact Phil Rose.

### **2009 Australasian Ornithological Conference to be held in Armidale**

Bringing together the best ornithological minds and the results of the latest bird research, the 2009 Australasian Ornithological Conference (AOC) in Armidale will be one of the most informative yet. Running between 29 November and 4 December at the Armidale Ex-Services Memorial Club, the keynote speaker is Dr Jeremy

Greenwood CBE, from the University of Birmingham's Centre for Ornithology, with John Dengate AO opening the conference on Sunday night. The overall theme of the AOC focuses on the collaboration between volunteers collecting information in the field and scientists analysing such data, to increase our knowledge of birds and their conservation. You can register for the conference ONLINE at the AOC website: [www.birdsaustralia.com.au/whats-on/aoc-2009-armidale.html](http://www.birdsaustralia.com.au/whats-on/aoc-2009-armidale.html) Submissions and early bird registrations must be lodged by 31 August, and the last date for registration is 31 October.



**Birds Australia**  
CONSERVATION THROUGH KNOWLEDGE

### **ANPSA 2009 BIENNIAL CONFERENCE Geelong**

<http://asgap2009.apsvic.org.au/>

Monday 21 - Friday 25 Pre-Conference Tours

Monday 28 SEMINAR DAY 1 : Looking Around

Tuesday 29 ALL DAY TOUR : Royal Botanic Gardens, Cranbourne

Wednesday 30 SEMINAR DAY 2 : Looking Forward

Thursday 1 ALL DAY TOUR : Otway Ranges

Friday 2 SEMINAR DAY 3 : Local Issues

Saturday 3 - Wednesday 7 Post-Conference Tours



From Kath Wray:



## CATS OR WILDLIFE

By Meredith Brownhill

*From: Blue Mountains Conservation Society - Hut News, no.237, June 2007, p3.*

Arriving home from drought stricken NSW, Victoria and South Australia, I rejoiced in my native garden and its wildlife. Then a friend told me she had found a dead possum - a headless possum to be exact - in my driveway while I was away. This summer five birds, a possum and two frogs have been killed in my garden. Neighbours have had birds and a possum killed too. How much wildlife are we losing to predatory domestic animals, namely cats?

Do we have to make a choice between cats and wildlife or are we smart enough to have both?

How can we protect our wildlife?

Keeping cats indoors overnight offers protection to nocturnal animals, such as possums, gliders, micro-bats, bush rats and antechinus marsupials, but birds, reptiles and amphibians have no protection during daylight hours when cats are outdoors and active.

In recent years dog owners have become very responsible for their animals, keeping them on their properties, walking them on leashes etc.

Cat owners can exercise greater responsibility by voluntarily

- \* Keeping their cats in at night
- \* Training them to live indoors.
- \* Building a cat enclosure (eg. put a cat trapdoor in the floor of your deck, place a log so your cat can run down into an enclosed area below the deck).
- \* Building inward sloping fences to inhibit roaming.
- \* Confining cats 24 hours a day on the property
- \* Desexing and micro-chipping all cats.

Help save our wildlife by being a responsible cat owner. The Victorian Dept. of Sustainability and Environment also has information on keeping both your cat and local wildlife safe and happy; [www.dse.vic.gov.au](http://www.dse.vic.gov.au) and search for [cats and wildlife](#) There you will find a useful brochure: "*Keeping your cat happy and safe*"

## Birds in Backyards

Members of APS attended a morning session in Glen Innes on 28<sup>th</sup> May 2009 when GLENRAC (Glen Innes Natural Resources Advisory Committee) launched its new brochure designed to increase biodiversity in urban areas. "Birds in Backyards – creating habitat gardens in Glen Innes" shows



Penelope at the Birds in backyards Forum

how a garden can attract birds, provides design tips, and lists suitable plant species.

Access this at [www.glenrac.org.au](http://www.glenrac.org.au)

Peter Metcalf gave a fascinating talk illustrated with plant specimens, about the different forms of flowers and fruits attractive to a variety of birds and showed how important insects and birds were for the pollination of some flowers. Penelope Sinclair provided containers of foliage and flowers to decorate the meeting room and set out photos of plants and APS literature for the benefit of residents who attended the information morning. She also spoke briefly of her own experiences in establishing a native garden locally.

**Penelope Sinclair**

Editor's note: Birds in Backyards is a research, education and conservation program focusing on the birds that live where people live. You can get involved by becoming a member and taking part in their online surveys. There is a lot of information about creating bird-friendly spaces in your garden and local community including a scientific report about Best Practice Guidelines for Enhancing Urban Bird Habitat: on their website. [www.birdsinbackyards.net/](http://www.birdsinbackyards.net/)



## June Winter Solstice Outing

On a lovely 21 June day some of our members visited the Armidale Golf Course to see the Environmentally Sustainable Wetlands Water Project that they constructed when in 2006 they found that their fairways and greens were turning yellow and dying. On testing the water they found that the pH was very alkaline (over 9) and contained impurities of phosphates, nitrates, bicarbonates and other solid wastes.

The course superintendant, Warren Lawler, and his assistant were our guides and we thank them for giving us their time off.

The course has a ready supply of water for their 100 acres, from a disused former brickworks quarry that they own some distance away and they lease another supply of water from the Boral plant.

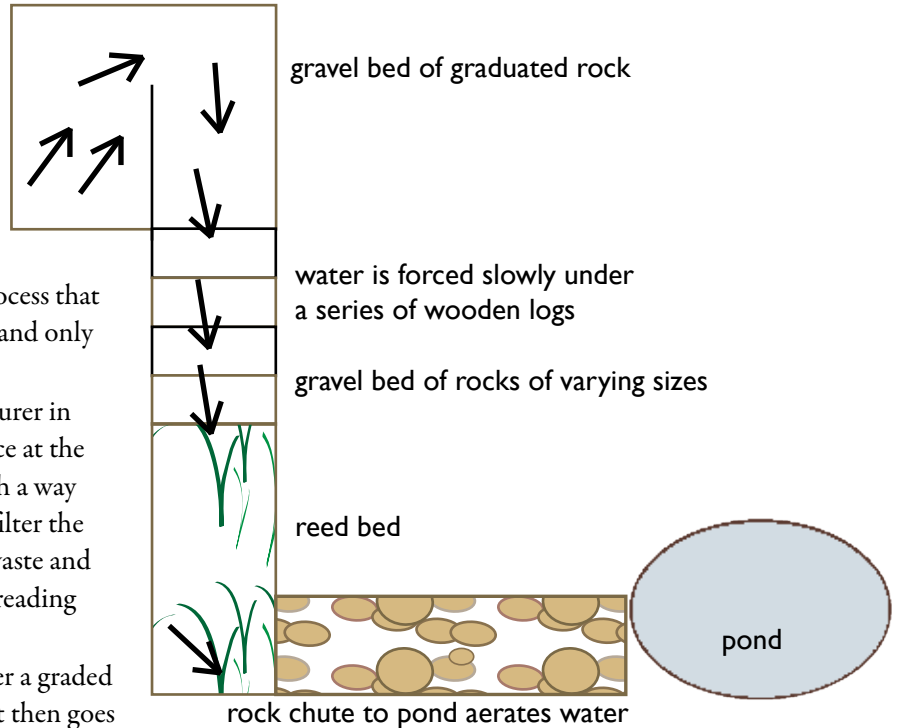
One way to offset alkalinity by injecting acid into the water being used for irrigation was well known but this is a very expensive process that is not environmentally friendly or sustainable and only addresses the alkaline problem with the water.

With the help of Dr Darren Ryder, senior lecturer in the School of Environmental and Rural Science at the University of New England, they came up with a way to utilise natural and sustainable materials to filter the water. This removed the chemicals and solid waste and altered the pH of the water to a more neutral reading without using any chemical additions.

The system starts by pumping water slowly over a graded gravel bed that loosens any foreign material. It then goes under a series of wooden logs that slows the flow, causing the particles to fall to the gravel floor. From here into a reed bed where the reeds remove the nutrients from the water and then when the reeds die they collapse to the bottom of the bed where they decay and eventually form peat mat that reduces the alkalinity of the water. After passing through this wetland the water cascades down a rock slide of various sized

rocks where it is aerated before flowing into the pond.

A large pump runs the fountain in the centre of the pond, which as well as being very decorative helps to further aerate the water and the drops of water on the surface disturbs the surface preventing algae from forming across the pond. They have added fish to the pond to join the birds, frogs and yabbies that are appreciating the 'good water'. They also enjoy the native plants that have been planted around the walls of the pond to help prevent erosion and encourage the native



fauna.

The members of the Golf Club are excited by the increase in the species of birds that have returned and are breeding in the nest boxes that have been erected. Also a family of koalas have moved in. Plans are in place to redesign the course in some areas with native trees and flora and this will greatly increase the fauna in the area.

The Golf Club is quite eager to give out any information on the project to interested people and can be contacted on [armidalegc@bigpond.com](mailto:armidalegc@bigpond.com) or for more technical information Dr Ryder and be contacted on [dryder2@une.edu.au](mailto:dryder2@une.edu.au)

**Barbara Nevin**



Above: Pilliga (p6-8) photo: J Nevin

## A Visit to The Pilliga

Lyn and Wal Chapman from Guyra, Pat Laher, Ray South, Maria Hitchcock, Barbara Colledge and John and Barbara Nevin from Armidale set off on a very cold frosty Armidale morning on 1 August for our journey to The Pilliga. We met Thelma Dennis from Inverell at the Pilliga Pottery where we enjoyed coffee and scones to get over our trip and then had a lovely walk around the workshop and garden. On our journey out from the pottery our appetites were wetted by all the lovely wattles that were out and Maria found the first plant that she wanted to see growing in the Pilliga, *Correa glabra* var *glabra*.

Next up to the Sandstone Caves for lunch and a stroll before



tackling the walk up to and around the caves. How magnificent the caves are and the plants too. We saw many *Zieria aspalathoides*, *Boronia glabra*, *Pimelea linifolia* ssp *collina*, *Styphelia triflora*, *Ricinocarpos*

*bowmanii* and *Westringia cheelii* among others.

On to No 1 Break Road; just at the beginning we were looking forward to seeing the *Pomaderris lanigera* but unfortunately they had been burnt out. There was much regeneration but it will be some time before they are of a good size. Even so some of them had buds that will look better in a couple of months. On to Baradine and down to Binnaway where we stayed at the Railway Barracks. Inexpensive accommodation that is well kept and perfect for a group of like minded people to congregate and discuss their day of botanising. A great dinner, just ask Wal and Lyn about the steak sizes, at the Shiralee Hotel. I do not know its proper name but it was where the movie was shot. The people were very friendly and it was the closest to the Barracks.



Sunday morning we trooped down to the Bilby Blooms Nursery run by Anthony and Annabel O'Halloran, We had only planned to stay until morning



Left above: Lyn and Wal Chapman, Barbara Colledge and John Nevin at the Caves

Left below: A view of O'Halloran's beautiful pond garden (photos Maria Hitchcock)

Above: *Phebalium nottii*

Below: *Prostanthera ringens*

(photos: John Nevin)







Above: *Hardenbergia violacea*

Below: Stuck!

(photos: John & Barbara Nevin)



tea but we were still there for a late lunch. A lovely native garden proudly shown to us by its owners. Of course plants were purchased so we had to turn Ray's car into a travelling nursery until we got back to Armidale. Oh and we lined up Anthony to talk to our group about the Pilliga (the time to be arranged).

Back up the Newell where we stopped at a cutting near the entrance to the Pilliga Pottery Road where we found *Coopernookia barbata* and *Philotheca salsolifolia*.

We were quickly running out of daylight so on to Baradine for the night.

We stayed at the Tattersall's hotel and once more found our accommodation to be great with friendly people; we were the only people staying there.

On Monday morning we did the tourist drive around town and then visited the Pilliga Forest Discovery Centre. It was only opened this year and we were very impressed both with its contents and its staff. Some of the features are a time line of the district around the wall and a display box with lights that show certain things against a map of the Pilliga. The first 3 buttons lit up the last 3 bushfires with the last one being in 2006. The next was a map of Sydney that was totally engulfed by the Pilliga map, next was the explorer Oxley's trip across the forest and the last one was showing the 24 sawmills that have now dwindled to just two.

I was most interested in the bushfires as everywhere we went we came across a very stark landscape with burnt skeletons of the bush. Green foliage was sprouting from the Eucalypts so that they looked like poodles or pom poms, magnificent!

Also looking great were the trunks of the pines with lots of yellow wattle growing amongst them.

Speaking about the wattles, they were everywhere and beautiful against the black trunks. When we were there earlier in July they were in bud and at one place we stopped I had collected over 8 species so was quite excited to see them fully out on our group visit. *Acacia flexifolia*, *Ac. hakeoides*, *Ac. cheelii* and *Ac. conferta* were some of the 43 there.

Anthony had told us to go on The 16 Foot Road as we would find plenty of flowers. John and I had not been on this road before so were not prepared for the very sandy creek crossing in the middle. John drove on and the car was bogged!! Oh dear! Luckily Thelma





had two pieces of carpet in her boot, as you do, and Maria had had a similar experience with Don in South Australia recently. All hands set to digging the car out and by this time it was well past lunch so we turned around and went down Wellyard Road to the Salt Caves for lunch. This is a very new picnic area with toilet, water and shelter that had replaced the old one since the 2006 fires.

From here we drove up Country Line Road where we found *Senecio laetus*, *Clematis microphylla*, *Lomandra leucocephala*, *Boronia rosmarinifolia*, *Phebalium stenophyllum* and *nottii*, *Dampiera adpressa* and

*purpurea*, *Olearia microphylla* and *ramulosa*, *Grevillea floribunda* and *canescens* (red). Up to Schwagers Bore Road to find some more *Phebalium nottii* and out via the Pilliga Forest Way.

Of course I have not included all that we found and most things were widely spread through the forest and if not in flower they would soon be. John had prepared a booklet of the 414 plants of the Pilliga that included photos so we were able to identify nearly everything that was there. Thank you for doing that John.

Anthony had mentioned that the Lane's Mill Flora Reserve on Pilliga Forest Way would be great to visit in September so plenty of reasons for another visit in the future.

A great time and great company!

**Barbara Nevin**

**Friday 4 - Sunday 6 September: Wooli - Diggers Camp - Minnie Waters.**

Further information (see also June-July Newsletter)

- \* There is no power at Jean's house, only gas, mobile phone reception available nearby
- \* Bring your own linen or sleeping bags. There are plenty of blankets and cutlery.
- \* Jean will be on-site from mid-Friday afternoon.
- \* Jean's house is on stilts and is the 2nd last house on the right.
- \* Neville O'Lachlan is the area's local committee spokesman and will arrange accommodation at other houses if required. Phone 66497732 either before 7am or after 6pm.
- \* Saturday 5 September: Neville will take us botanising at Minnie Water. We will meet at Minnie Water Council depot next to the caravan park. Note that there is a caravan park at Wooli also.
- \* Sunday 6 September: Meet Coff's Harbour Group at 10am at the Wooli pub next to the caravan park.

**Would members please let Pat Laher know if you are intending to go on this weekend outing on 6775 1842**

Wooli Caravan park phone: 6649 7671; Minnie Water Caravan Park phone 6649 7693

**Patrick Laher**



## FOR YOUR DIARY, COMING EVENTS: August to October 2009

### August

- Tuesday 18, 7.30 pm** General Meeting at Mann St Tree Nursery. Discussion about SLEX. Plant of the month: **Acacia**. **Guest Speaker is Jeremy Bruhl; "Kew Gardens"**
- Sunday 30** Markets in the Mall and Wattle Day. Help is needed to prepare and hand out wattle sprigs.

### September

- Friday 4 - Sunday 6** **Wooli - Diggers Camp - Minnie Waters.** (see Page 8)
- Saturday 12 1.00 pm** Arboretum Working Bee, contact Pat Laher
- Tuesday 15, 7.30pm** General Meeting. Plant of the month: **Phebalium**. Venue: "Woodland Centre", Mann Street, Armidale. **Speaker: Rob Taber, (New England Solar Power) "Solar Power & Solar Hot Water"**
- Sunday 20, 12.45pm** Outing to two local gardens. We will visit the gardens of Greg Roberts and Jim McGuire. Contact Pat Laher. Meet at 1.30pm at 416 Donald Road, off the Rockvale Rd; go past the pine forest, over the creek and second left.
- Friday 25 - Sunday 27** **SLEX. If you can help please contact Maria Hitchcock or Pat Laher. This will be discussed at the August meeting.**
- Sunday 27, 8am -1.00pm** Markets in the Mall - Plant Sale.

### October

- Saturday 3, 1.00pm** Arboretum Working Bee, contact Pat Laher
- Monday 19, 7.30pm** Business meeting at Nevin's. All welcome
- Tuesday 20, 7.30pm** General Meeting. Genus of the month: **Prostanthera**. Venue: "Woodland Centre", Mann Street, Armidale. Speaker John Nevin et al **"The Pilliga"**
- Saturday 31 - Sunday 1 Nov.** Outing to Mole Station, details next newsletter.

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### MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION / RENEWAL FORM for Australian Plant Society (ABN 87 002 680 408)

**MEMBERSHIP TYPE:** please tick appropriate box

**Single:**

**Joint:** (2 adults at the same address)

**Concession** applied for:

Limited Fixed Income

Full Time Student

**PERSONAL:** Joint members please complete a) and b)

a) Mr Mrs Miss Ms Dr Other.....

b) Mr Mrs Miss Ms Dr Other.....

Given Name (s):.....

Given Name(s):.....

Surname:.....

Surname:.....

Postal Address:.....

..... Postcode:.....

Tel: Home ( )..... Work: ( ).....

Fax: ( ).....

email:.....

**PAYMENT:** Payment of \$..... is enclosed by:

Cheque

Money Order

payable to APS Armidale Branch

**Please return this completed form with your payment to :**

Membership Officer APS Armidale Branch PO Box 735 ARMIDALE NSW 2350