



Wildplant Press

Autumn 2020

Newsletter of Katoomba Native Plant Nursery



Opening Hours

Tuesday – Friday
10.00 am to 3.00 pm

Saturday (Sept - May
only)
10.00 am to 1.00 pm

Phone: 02 4782 6233



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A word from the Coordinator.....

The drought and fires took their toll on the nursery just like everyone else. Due to the drought there was a downturn in sales in general. Council is not planting very much during such dry times and neither are general gardeners. Also, during the Ruined Castle fire the roads around the nursery were closed on and off over a few weeks so customers could not get in. The recent rain has allowed things to pick up slightly, particularly for domestic gardeners, but there are no big planting jobs on the horizon.

We have changed the layout of the nursery slightly (please come in and have a look around). Due to the effects of climate change there are now areas of the nursery that are just too severe (weather wise) to continue housing plants. We had to move an old Tree Fern that had done fine since the '80s but could no longer deal with growing where it was! You will be pleased to know that it is now thriving in its new home.

We have had the good fortune to inherit a tunnel which will be good for housing our babies during the cooler months. However, its construction has had to be put off just now due to a lack of funds. We also have the situation where Local Landcare Services will no longer be paying our liability and volunteer insurance as they have done for some years now (Thank you CMA and now LLCs). Things are looking a bit grim but we will muddle through.

We continue to have stalls at Blackheath on the third Friday of each month during the warmer months. These are very successful. Thanks to Anne, Verity, Carol and Leigh!

The Springwood Foundation Day stall is rapidly approaching and we always need help with this. Particularly the transporting of the plants and equipment to and from the stall. We also had another stall in the foyer area of Coles and that was very successful as well. We also went to Threatened Species Day at the Cultural Centre. Always very enlightening.

During 2019 we were fortunate enough to obtain chopped up logs, from a fallen tree, covered in *Pyrrhosia rupestris* and two types of orchid. The person donating these logs very kindly chopped them up for us. We have them for sale in the nursery at the moment. The obtaining of these was very fortuitous as the property they came from is in Mt Wilson and sadly the property was burnt.

Please feel free to come in have a chat, look around, buy some plants!

All the best to everyone particularly those affected by the fires, and now the floods.

Tanya McLean
Nursery Coordinator.



Wildplant nursery Katoomba solves mystery plant identity on Katoomba creek

For years Wildplant has been propagating a pinky- purple *Callistemon* collected from a plant community on the banks of Katoomba creek. Local botanists assured us that it was a natural wild population and not some garden escape and was a pink version of the common *Callistemon citrinus*.

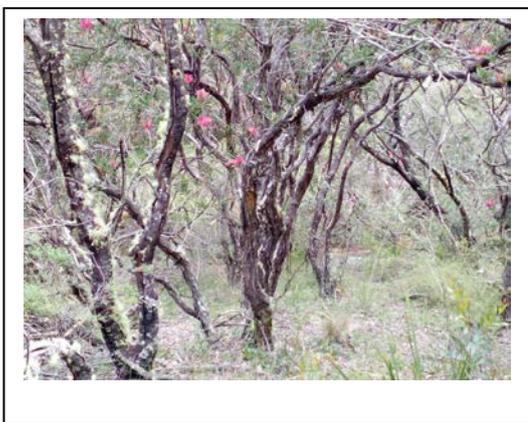
Two years ago one of the volunteers speculated that the *Callistemon* was not a *C. citrinus* at all and from the description of *C. megalongensis* described in 2002 and *C.purpurascens* in 2006 proposed that it may well be one of these, probably the rarer *C. purpurascens*.

Two botanist volunteers from Wildplant went out to the wild population of plants on Thursday Dec 20th 2018 and positively identified the plant as being *Callistemon purpurascens* as it matched all the criteria according to the key that we were using. Within hours we had positive identification confirmation from the botanist who first described the only previously known wild population of *C. purpurascens* (Steve Douglas).

Frances Scarano is very excited that her speculation bore fruit and that Richard Johnstone her experienced field botanist consultant made the identification in the field possible.

The majority of the North Katoomba population is on private land. However, the people who own that property are very happy about having a rare population on their property and they are happy to look after this population.

Frances Scarano



Photographs by Richard Johnstone



Mikla's visit to the Nursery.....

On Friday September 6th I was delighted to walk into the courtyard and find Mikla Lewis and three friends had come from Grenfell to visit us. Mikla is the person who had the vision of the Blue Mountains Wildplant Rescue Service and together with a group of active friends in 1994 commenced rescuing and then selling those native plants from her home in Blackheath. They then were given some facilities at Mount Tomah Botanic Garden. This was followed in 1998 by the move to our present site at Clairvaux Community Centre where we are still a volunteer group and trade as "Katoomba Native Plant Nursery".

The visitors were unexpected and we were frantically working to get ready for "Threatened Species Day". It was with great pleasure that I was available to take Mikla and her friends around the nursery and to show them how we have developed in recent years under the guidance of our co-ordinator Tanya and with the hard work of our volunteers. The visitors were most impressed with the smart presentation of the new paths and watering system and also the wide range of species that we now produce. (We felt that we had passed muster!)

It was good to introduce our new president, Verity Harris, to Mikla and to take a break from work to enjoy a chat with tea/coffee.

Thank you for calling in Mikla, you are always welcome and an inspiration to us.



Tanya, Mikla, Verity, Anne.



What Tree is That?

Eucalyptus ligustrina – Privet leaved stringybark

Shrub, small tree or mallee 2.5 - 6m high.

Grows on sandstone ridgetops in the Blue Mountains and the Illawarra escarpment.

These photographs were taken on Kings Tableland, Wentworth Falls.



Bark: Stringybark on main trunk but falling off in patches on smaller branches

Influorescence: Flowers in Winter. 7-15 sessile flowers

Operculum: hemispherical to conical much shorter than the floral tube



Leaves: Adult leaves, 4-8 cms long and 1-2 cms wide, are dark green and thick. Veins are indistinct.



Some views of the upgraded nursery.....

New drainage and pebbles on walk ways



**Katoomba Native Plant
Nursery**
14 Oak Street
Katoomba NSW 2780

PHONE:
02 4782 2633

Email:
info@wildplantrescue.org.au

ABN: 44 910 994 603

We're on the Web!

Find us at:

www.wildplantrescue.org.au

also



Upcoming stalls and events for 2020

- **Blackheath Stalls**
Friday, 12th April Friday, 17th May
- **Springwood**
Foundation Day - Saturday, 28 March, 2020
- **Katoomba Winter Magic Festival** - Saturday, 22 June,
- **AGM** - 20 August, 2019

Enclosed with

Spotlight on a plant.....



are the
you
help

Wattles
plants
need to
re-

establish after the drought and fires. This lovely genus is a marvellous pioneer plant and also the group which stimulates growth of new or damaged plants. This is because *Acacias* are legumes (pod/pea type), which, unlike most plants, have bacteria in their root nodules that are able to convert atmospheric nitrogen to a form that can be absorbed from the soil by other plants. Their rapid growth provides shade for new or rejuvenating plants

