



Wildplant Press

Autumn 2016

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



In this Issue:

- Nursery Coordinator's Report
- From the Nursery
- Christmas Plants
- Blackheath Stall
- What Tree is That
- Upcoming Events and Stalls
- Spotlight on a Plant

A word from the Coordinator.....

General nursery and volunteers

The nursery now sports an orchid house, which is a work in progress. Colin and Peter marvellously modified a small shade house for this purpose. Orchids are generally slow to show themselves but we have had some early successes. Frances is now the orchid 'specialist'. She has also been madly rescuing smaller seedlings into tubes. Species such as Epacris, Goodenia and Dampiera.

Lorelle, one of the newer volunteers has become an expert on *Isopogon fletcheri*! So any minute now we will have yet another rare plant for sale.

Tina, who has been here a year now, has become proficient in doing cuttings and has learnt so much over this year. She is definitely an asset to the organisation. Soon we should have a lot of the harder to propagate species such as *Persoonia mollis*.

We have been participating in a couple of 'work-for-the-dole' schemes so the place is full of younger volunteers.

Stalls and plant of the month

Lomatia silaifolia will be the next plant of the month and we have lots. Keep an eye on the Gazette Review which comes out monthly for our plant of the month.

There will be stalls at Blackheath 1 and 29 April.

Unfortunately, as you are probably aware, there will be no Springwood Foundation Day event this year. This is a great pity generally and a pity for us specifically. This stall event had overtaken Winter Magic Festival as being our best fund raiser during the year. So you know what I am going to ask! We need your custom more than ever!!! Lets hope they get back on track for next year.

Tanya McLean



A selection of local Orchids



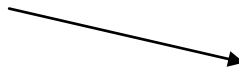
Isopogon fletcheri!



Persoonia mollis



Francis working with her Orchids



Tina at work



From the nursery.....

Another productive year is well underway. In Spring 2015, volunteers were very busy sowing seeds of plants needed for 2015/2016 season. These have now germinated and the volunteers are now busy pricking out the little seedlings into tubes. They are then looked after until they are big enough to move, to the growing-on section and then into the sale area.

We are now overflowing with new stock and have a wide range of our local native plants.

Come in and have a look!

There will be many specials this autumn, as we will be having our Autumn Sale in April and May.

Trees, shrubs, ground covers, ferns, small plants, sedges and grasses will be available, as well as our fabulous 'rescued' plants, where you often get a selection of natives that are not available in tubes.

If you bring this article into the nursery you will receive a further discount.....

Purchase over \$50.00 on pots and receive \$5.00 off

Purchase 10 tubes or more and receive 15% discount

Card facilities will be available soon.



Australian Christmas Plants.....

When Europeans first arrived in Australia they were delighted that they could pick wildflowers resembling bells and bright green foliage covered in red or white flowers to use as Christmas decorations. This was a huge contrast to the bare trees and dormant gardens they had left behind in Europe.

A number of Australian native plants have become significant as 'Christmas plants' in various parts of Australia. This is usually reflected in their local 'common names'.

New South Wales

Ceratopetalum gummiferum or NSW Christmas Bush

Erect shrub to 5 m high by 1.5 m diameter with light green, trifoliolate leaves with lanceolate, toothed leaflets. Terminal sprays of white star-like flowers occur in late spring followed by beautiful reddened, swollen calyces in summer.

Distribution: NSW.

Propagation: From seed or cuttings.

Cultivation: Needs well-drained soil. A sunny position is preferred for good flowering. Propagate from clones, which produce the best colours. A fine feature plant and an excellent cut flower.



Victoria

Prostanthera lasianthos or Victorian Christmas Bush

Variable shrub or small tree, from 2 m to 10 m high. Often has a compact habit when in shrub form. Leaves are lanceolate to ovate, to 10 cm. Flowers in terminal sprays, white, pink or mauve, occur in summer.

Distribution: Qld, NSW, ACT, Vic, Tas.

Propagation: From cuttings.

Cultivation: Probably the most adaptable species. Tolerates heavy shade or full sun. Fast growing. Useful as a screen plant.



South Australia and Tasmania

Bursaria spinosa or Tasmanian/South Australian Christmas Bush

Erect, thorny shrub to 3 m and often taller. Dark green, obovate, shiny leaves to 2.5 cm. Masses of white flowers cover bush in late spring and summer, Often around Christmas time, which is why it is called 'Christmas Bush' in Tasmania and South Australia, the flowers are followed by attractive brown fruits. .

Distribution: all States except WA.

Propagation: From cuttings or seed.

Cultivation: A very hardy plant that will grow in almost any situation. Fruits are useful in floral arrangements. Subject to scale attack in some areas.



Western Australia

Nuytsia floribunda or Western Australian Christmas Tree/Bush

Parasitic tree to 10 m with variable foliage. Brilliant yellow flowers are profuse in summer.

Distribution: WA.

Propagation: From seed or root cuttings.

Cultivation: The WA Christmas tree is very unusual. It has no relatives and is classed in a genus by itself in the mistletoe family. Unlike other mistletoes that grow on the branches of their host trees, the WA Christmas tree grows in the ground. It is partially parasitic which means that its roots make rings round the roots of nearby plants and then extracts water and nutrients from those plants.

The WA Christmas Tree is the only plant in the mistletoe family that has seeds that are wind dispersed. The seeds have wings on them but because the seeds are quite large they often land just a few metres from the parent tree. The majority of seeds are eaten by ants and other creatures, or they are not able to germinate due to the circumstances not being ideal for germination.

During the flowering period, the flowers are a rich source of nectar for the nectar eating birds and insects for the insect eating birds.



Other Christmas Plants.....

Christmas Bells *Blandfordia grandiflora*

A tufted plant with grass-like leaves to 50 cm. Flower spikes to 50 cm with up to 10 large bell-like flowers, which vary from pure yellow to deep red with yellow tips. Flowers usually occur in summer but occasional flowers appear at any time of year.

Distribution: NSW, Qld.

Propagation: From seed.

Cultivation: A sandy soil with high water table is recommended for commercial production of blooms, but plants will flower in a rockery provided that ample water is available at all times. A full-sun position is also important.



Blandfordia nobilis

Similar to former species but generally smaller. Flowers appear in summer; always red with yellow tips and cylindrical rather than funnel-shaped.

Distribution: NSW.

Propagation: From seed, flowers produced in third year.

Cultivation: Needs well-drained position in full sun or part shade.



Calanthe triplicata Or Christmas Orchid

Evergreen terrestrial orchid. Soft, obovate leaves to 90 cm. Showy white flowers borne on erect spike to 150 cm in summer.

Distribution: Qld, NSW, South-east Asia.

Propagation: From seed or by division.

Cultivation: Readily grown in heavily shaded, moist but not badly drained position in sheltered, warm garden. Excellent pot plant.



Blackheath Stalls.....

At the beginning of December Irene and Anne returned to holding a stall on a Friday outside the Friendly Supermarket in Govett's Leap Road.

For various reasons we had not had a stall there for about a year. We have missed a lot of good income! The sales on December 18th were very good.



Many thanks to Geoff Bull (another of our many Blackheath members) who helps us unload and set up the stall and then returns later to help us return unsold plants to the nursery.

Blackheath is a lovely place to sell, people are so friendly and are very interested in Blue Mountains native plants. There must be a lot of beautiful native gardens in the area. We are scheduled to have a stall there once a month whilst the weather is not cold (it might of course be hot, wet or humid!) The dates we have booked so far this year are.....

Friday April 1st

Friday April 29th

Having stalls is a great way to advertise and helps to reach people who are unable to get to our nursery which is vital for maintaining our image and our customers on whom we depend.

If you are a past volunteer or a member who has a good knowledge of native plants and would like to help on one of our stalls, please contact us for further details. You will be enthusiastically welcomed.



What Tree is that.....

Veronica Paul

Eucalyptus rossii

Scribbly Gum, White Gum

This small to medium sized tree occurs in the west of our district. The photographs in this article were taken on Mount Blackheath



Adult leaves are blue green, dull, and the same colour on both sides. They are 8-15 cm long and 1-2cm wide. Flower umbels are axillary and simple with ≤ 11 flowers. *Eucalyptus rossii* flowers in summer.

Flower buds have a rounded operculum (calyptra) which is shorter than the floral tube



The fruit is small 4-7mm in diameter, pedicellate, longer than wide. The disk is < 2 mm wide. The valves of the fruit are enclosed.

The bark is smooth on the trunk with scribbles, white or yellow shedding in short ribbons.



BLUE MOUNTAINS**WILDPLANT
RESCUE INC**

**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

Upcoming stalls and events for 2016

- **Blackheath Stalls**
Friday April 1st
Friday April 29th.
- **Winter Magic Festival** –
Katoomba in June

Spotlight on a plant



Kunzea ambigua

Tick bush

Fine bright green foliage and starry white flowers in spring and summer make this graceful shrub ideal when acting as a backdrop, filler or hedge.

It can grow to 4 metres tall but is easily maintained at much less and with a thicker mode by pruning after flowering.

Found on various soils throughout the Mountains and flourishes in full or part sun.

They are available so why not come into the Nursery and buy one or maybe two.

