

Wildplant Press

Spring/Summer
2011/2012

Newsletter of Katoomba Native Plant Nursery



Nursery Opening Hours

14 Oak Street
Katoomba

Tuesday – Friday
10.00 am to 4.00 pm

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

Phone: 02 4782 6233



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Mikla Lewis awarded OAM

For service to conservation and the environment in New South Wales.
Involved in the formation of WIRES (Wildlife Information, Rescue and Education Service Inc), 1985; Life Member, since 1994; Coordinator, 1985-1994.
Founder and Chairperson, Weddin-Lachlan Branch.
Founder, Blue Mountains Wildplant Rescue Service, 1994; Life Member, since 2001; Project Manager, 1994-2001.
Catchment Officer, Partnerships Training and Advisory Services, Lachlan Catchment Management Authority, NSW.
Founder, Weddin Community Wildplant Nursery, Grenfell, 2010.

Ref The Grenfell Record



Mikla established Blue Mountains Wildplant Rescue in 1994. She made the leap from the concept of rescuing animals to rescuing plants as she was concerned about the loss of plant biodiversity in the Blue Mountains.

The Blue Mountains City Council was opening up many blocks for housing development which were covered with native vegetation. Bulldozers moved in and the entire blocks were stripped of all vegetation. She coined the word 'wildplant' as a link to WIRES and a description of native plants.

With like minded friends Mikla initially operated out of her house in Blackheath but soon found she was running out of space to store the plants. She sought Federal and State funding which enabled the organisation to move into Clairvaux Community Centre.

A glass house was purchased, a part time nursery manager was employed and Mikla was the project manager. The organisation went from strength to strength. Seeds and cuttings were collected up and down the mountains and propagation took place. BMWRS supplied seedlings to domestic gardeners, Blue Mountains City council bush regeneration and to the burgeoning number of bush regeneration contractors.

We now have a successful not-for-profit, incorporated, volunteer organisation which has grown from the foresight and inspiration of Mikla Lewis.

“In October, 2011 there was a bush fire near Scenic World – these photo were taken the same week



Chairperson's report

Happy New Year! Welcome once again to this year's committee members and very best wishes to all our members, both active and supportive.

Important News We are now functioning as **Katoomba Native Plant Nursery**. We still retain our original official name of Blue Mountains Wildplant Rescue Service Inc. The change was voted in at the AGM in December and has taken place with the opinion that the new title will be more understandable and relevant to the public.

Summary of Chairperson's Annual General Meeting Report The time since the last AGM has been short. We are continually working to fulfil the RTA orders as well as trying to keep our regular customers supplied. The goodwill and cheerful nature of our volunteers keeps us going and for that we are very grateful.

Finance BMWRS operates due to the dedication and hard work of our staff and that of our willing volunteers. Our income comes from nursery plant sales, stalls and the RTA project that we are doing in partnership with Blue Mountains Conservation Society. These monies are used to provide for all the needs of the nursery.

Thanks To Judy McLean who is our Public Officer, Office Assistant and treasurer sincere thanks for all your hard work. Nursery Coordinator, Tanya McLean, thank you particularly this year for your efforts in managing orders and request from Conservation Society and from the RTA. Thanks also in sharing your environmental knowledge with us. Management Committee gives time, effort and support and are largely involved in all activities of the Service in some way or other. Our thanks go to all members of the committee. Volunteers are the backbone of our organization and all work very hard in various ways. They all deserve our gratitude and each carries out a variety of tasks. I want to particularly thank Christine without whom this nursery would not survive. As a volunteer she works very hard and she has her finger on the pulse of all that is happening.

Our current membership is 50, of which twelve (12) people are active volunteers at the nursery.

Stalls provided additional income last year, and gave us greater exposure to customers who cannot make it into the nursery. Thank you to everyone who helped at all the stalls during the past year and the volunteers for their hard work and dedication in a variety of tasks, sometimes very repetitive, but always needed.

Looking Ahead BMWRS has an important role to play in maintaining the biodiversity of our World Heritage Area, by supplying local native plants to bushcare groups, domestic gardeners and larger properties. We will strive to attract customers to our nursery and educate them in the ideals of biodiversity.

I hope 2012 will be an enjoyable and successful year for all.

Anne Rickwood (Chairperson)



Coordinator's report

"These were taken in November, 2011 – four weeks after the fire."



Last year saw a concentrated effort to supply plants for the RTA at Wentworth Falls. This is in conjunction with the Conservation Society. Kevin Bell and I have been busy coordinating the growing of all the plants they require. We have supplied approx. 7500 plants so far. A big thank you to all the volunteers who have contributed to this. We still have one more stage to fulfil this order which should be finalised in about March 2012. The two nurseries also tendered for the two sections of highway upgrading at Bullaburra.

The last year also saw a lot of really good work being done around the nursery. Thanks to Tom and Bruce, we now have a really good drain that takes the water run off from the car park away from the general nursery making it much easier to keep the place tidy. They also did some beautiful paving works near the garden shed which makes that area look much neater. Bruce also built a ramp outside the back door that makes moving the wheelbarrows and trolleys much easier.

Some of the events that we had or participated in included a fundraising trivia night which made for good publicity for the nursery, another garage sale. We participated in the second Chocolate and Plant Market at Everglades. We also participated in the Eco-Fair at North Katoomba public school and have continued our relationship with Blue Mountains Grammar School.

Tanya McLean - Coordinator

Rescues

Although there was a bit of a lull in Rescues during winter the last year saw quite a number of small rescues, mainly in Katoomba and a couple at Blackheath. There was a very good ongoing rescue at Wentworth Falls, quite a big one at Hazelbrook (where the owner helped as well) and an ongoing one at Lawson (where we also had help from the owner!). This rescue will keep us busy for quite some time.

A big thank you to the rescue team and those members who avidly buy the rescues particularly Sue Hanslow and Garry Humble!



“These were taken in December – eight weeks after the fire. A small amount of regrowth coming back”

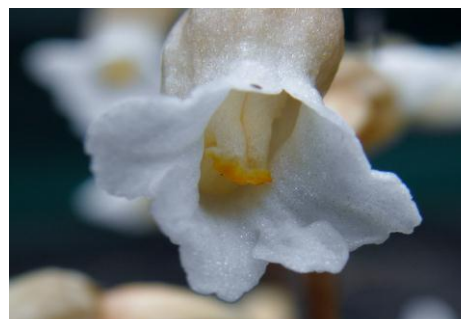


Gastrodia sesamoides – Potato Orchid

We were lucky to have some of these orchids in the Nursery during November/December. These are amongst the taller orchids of Australia, reaching to 1m.

These photos were taken in the Nursery and grounds at Clairvaux. Their brown colouring however make them harder to spot than other brightly coloured ones.

Belonging to a small group of leafless non-green orchids that obtain their nutrients through association of their roots with those of another plant. They seem to have an association with old Pine Trees, and live entirely off fungi growing in decaying plant matter, often growing in high rainfall areas. The name comes from the large tuber growing at the base of the plant.



Rain

*It rained and it rained
and rained and rained*

*The average fall was
well maintained*

*And when the tracks
were simply bogs*

*It started raining cats
and dogs.*

*After a drought of half
an hour*

*We had a most
refreshing shower*

*And then the most
curious thing of all*

*A gentle rain began to
fall.*

*Next day was also fairly
dry*

*Save for the deluge from
the sky*

*Which wetted the party
to the skin*

*And after that the rain
set in.*

After the RTA orders have been filled.....

We will be concentrating on stocking the nursery with plants suitable for the home garden. This will include shrubs, ground covers and other special interest groups. Everyone is welcome to call in and check our progress. You never know what you might find!

Treasurer's report.....

The first six months of this financial year has brought in \$26,597 for plant sales which included a payment from RTA for the first delivery of stock for Wentworth Falls road widening.

There are second and third stages to go before completion which will attract further payments. This is a huge project for Conservation Society in partnership with us but it is environmentally sound that organisations such as the RTA are now using locally provenance native plants for these huge projects.

Judy McLean



BLUE MOUNTAINS



**WILDPLANT
RESCUE INC**

**Katoomba Native Plant
Nursery**

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We're on the Web!

Find us at:

www.wildplantrescue.org.au



**Members receive a 10%
discount on all purchases.**

Upcoming stalls and events

From September we hold our monthly street stalls

- Blackheath – 1st Friday
- Wentworth Falls – 3rd Friday
- Leura 1st Sunday Markets held at Leura Public School
- Springwood Festival – 31st March, 2012
- Winter Magic Festival – Katoomba in June



About the service

Blue Mountains Wildplant Rescue Service is a not-for-profit, volunteer organisation whose aim is to help maintain the biodiversity of the Great Blue Mountains World Heritage Area.

It was founded in 1994. Originally we rescued plants on bush block building sites before the bulldozers arrived. We now also propagate plants by seed and cuttings. We maintain a data base which includes record of the provenance of all our plants.

All donations are Tax Deductible

Spotlight on a plant

Platysace linearifolia

These dainty little white flowers form on slender graceful branches and grow to about 1 m in height. They belong to the Family Apiaceae and like their relations have leaves that smell carrotty when bruised. They like a sandy or rocky substrate and are found in the Upper Mountains.



We are very grateful to the Blue Mountains Gazette for the excellent monthly production of our "Plant of the Month" article in the Review.