



Wildplant Press

Summer 2018

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.....

I am pleased to report that it has been another busy year. We are producing approximately 100,000 tubes and pots of plants a year and our species base is also expanding. We continue to do stalls with Springwood Foundation Day, the monthly Blackheath stalls, and Melrose Park. Sadly this year we were unable to attend Winter Magic. Generally it is left up to a small group of 'usual volunteers'. Most of us had other commitments due to health, family, etc. We have a similar situation looming for 2018 so it would be appreciated if some new people could commit to helping us sell plants and deliver to the stall.

The nursery is now on NBN but, as with many other organisations, changing over was very fraught to say the least. Good luck to any other businesses!

We now have new T-shirts with our logo on them. They are grey which appears to be popular at the moment. We also decided to get some bags printed with a slightly different logo. These will fit into the advertising role. Very exciting!

We continue to have work-for-the-dole participants which is very helpful in keeping the nursery going. We also have been very lucky in attracting some new volunteers with a lot of horticultural and native plant species knowledge. They are bringing new ways of doing things and breathing new life into the nursery.

Once again we are expanding! We have a new small shade house that will be great for keeping some of our plants free of chewing insects! This particularly applies to the Eucalypts and the entire leaved Hakeas. We have always had problems with these two. Changes are under-way for levelling the ground in the main part of the nursery sales area and a new terraced area at the back.

Wishing you all a very good 2018

Tanya McLean
Nursery Coordinator



The Heath family..... Growing ERICACEAE from seed.....

As this is a difficult family of plants to grow either from seed or cutting it is mostly avoided by plant growers as being too hard and not worth the bother or thought absolutely impossible to grow.

I have been experimenting growing these plants from seed as I believe that a plant difficult or impossible to grow has the potential to become extinct in the future. As the world changes and becomes more crowded and more bush gets removed or too degraded these plants may just disappear. Many ERICACEAE species are very bright plants when in flower and small in the most part and some even winter blooming.

My first efforts to grow these plants from seed began in Sydney where I was a volunteer under Ross at the Hornsby Community nursery. He was already growing *Leucopogon lanceolatus* and *Trochocarpa laurina* from seed.

I had rescued some *Leucopogon juniperinus* plants that seeded at the nursery so I collected the seed which took 14 months to germinate. Another volunteer collected the same species from somewhere else but forgot to cover them. Her *Leucopogon juniperinus* seeds germinated in 6 months so that was a happy discovery to grow them uncovered. I also encouraged her to collect and grow *Acrotriche divaricata* from her bush site and they proved even easier to germinate and grow on.

My biggest efforts to grow different species of this plant family were at the Wildplant Rescue nursery in Katoomba. Along with the with short growing season, the cold climate, lack of space for proper staging, to having to move from a warm then to a cold glasshouse and no watering system, to too much watering, I managed to get plants to reach maturity. Because of the less than ideal conditions the results were very slow but still very worthwhile. I got the tiny seedlings through the winter by spraying the seed trays with a very weak solution of Seasol and Charlie carp weekly. The moss also liked the conditions but we found that leaving the moss alone was better for the plants and to just control it rather than removing it altogether. The seedlings often did not survive the transplant from the seed trays but there was such high germination of the species that did germinate we could replace the seedlings. Transplanting to tubes did not always speed up the growing rate of the seedling. We now have lots of Ericrids for sale.

Legend

* Grown in Sydney at Hornsby community nursery

Grown at Wildplant nursery in Katoomba

The plants that are quite easily grown from seed

Leucopogon lanceolatus *#

Leucopogon juniperinus *

Acrotriche divaricata *

Trochocarpa laurina *

More difficult

Dracophyllum secundum *#

Epacris microphylla #

Epacris pulchella #

Epacris reclinata #



Extremely difficult

Epacris obtusiflora germinated well but was hard to keep going especially when the watering system died or it got too wet or some other problem. It was less forgiving than some of the other species.

Sprengelia incarnata #

Impossible to grow (Nothing appeared and still waiting)

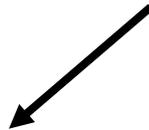
Atroloma humifusum #

Styphelia triflora #

In summary I feel that this is a very worthwhile family of plants to grow from seed especially in ideal conditions. I could not have had worse conditions and still got results so in a warm climate such as Sydney and ideal growing conditions plants can be grown from seed and be grown to planting out stage in a reasonable time frame. It would be a bit slower than for other plants but not very slow as in the three year or so time frame as in Katoomba. Other species should be tried as often some will prove to be easy to grow after all. 21/9/2017 Frances Scarano



Epacris microphylla



Epacris reclinata





What Tree is That?

Eucalyptus mannifera subspecies *gullickii*

Common name Blue Mountain Brittle Gum, Mountain spotted gum

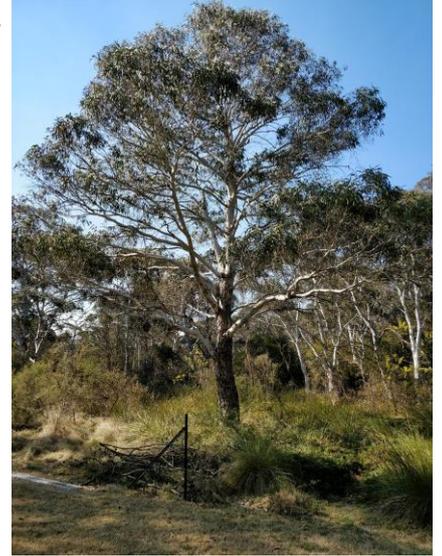
Very attractive small to medium tree up to 20m high with an upright habit.

Grows on shallow sandstone soils near swamps or on damp slopes.

The photographs here were taken at Minnehaha Falls Reserve



Bark smooth, grey or white, but often with quite a lot of rough patches of old bark



Buds acute with thick pedicels



Fruit 6-7mm across, valves exerted, pedicel shorter than the fruit





Our t-shirts for sale again.....

In February 2014 we celebrated 20 years since the foundation of the Blue Mountains Wildplant Rescue Service. At that time we gave Jenny Kee the last one of the T-shirts bearing the logo she had designed in 1996.



Jenny in 1996 with the original T-shirts

During the evening Odessa O'Brien of Landcare Australia very kindly gave us a donation to produce more T-shirts. Eventually we have done it!

We are sorry for the delay but a range of factors have slowed us down.
Thank you Landcare



Jenny in 2016 with the new designs.

Once again Jenny has helped us. She came to the nursery one day and those of us present all enjoyed the friendship and development of ideas. Jenny modified the original logo and created another which we have put on some cotton tote bags.

Thank you Jenny

The new T-shirts are light or medium grey in colour and are available in a variety of sizes.

The shirts look very good, but remembering that their function is also advertising, we are selling them at \$15 each. Thus we get some profit but they are not exorbitant in price. Hopefully, they will sell well and many people will be impressed as we wear them and will be inspired to visit our nursery and find the wonders of Native Blue Mountain Plants.

The bags will be sold for \$5 each at stalls and the nursery. Also, as they are very much for advertising, we will give one to customers who buy over \$100 of plants



Buy now in case we run out quickly!!





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We're on the Web!

Find us at:

www.wildplantrescue.org.au

Upcoming stalls and events for 2018

- **Springwood**
Foundation Day ~ 28 April, 2018
- **Winter Magic Festival** – Katoomba in June

Spotlight on a plant



Pandorea pandorana **Wonga Vine**

The genus *Pandorea pandorana* occurs throughout Australia and this species is common in the Sydney region. This is a wonderful climbing plant with a glorious profusion of flowers in late winter/early spring. The tubular flowers are creamy white and about 2cm long with untidy lobes and in some areas the subspecies *P.p.ssp. pandorana* have reddish colouring. The leaves are compound with two to four pairs of leaflets and one terminal leaflet. The leaflets of young plants are smaller, serrated and up to eight pairs per leaf. This is one of the best plants to cover that fence or old shed! It provides a shield of bright green leaves all year and then a show of flowers in spring. The branches can grow very long so with prudent pruning a large thick effective cover or display can be achieved. Do remember to direct some early branches to grow horizontally so that you have leaves and flowers for the full height and not just woody stems lower down.