



Wildplant Press

Autumn/Winter 2011

Newsletter of Blue Mountains Wildplant Rescue Service Inc



Opening Hours

Tuesday – Friday
10.00 am to 4.00 pm

Saturday (Summer only)
10.00 am to 1.00 pm

Phone: 02 4782 6233



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New Management Committee Members

The Annual General Meeting was held on 12 March, 2011 and the following were elected for the coming year.

Chairperson	Anne Rickwood
Vice Chair	Christine Belshaw
Secretary	Stephen Brady
Treasurer	Judy Mclean

Management Committee

Anne Rickwood
Christine Belshaw
Irene Domes
Judy Mclean
Veronica Paul
Stephen Brady
Olga Rumble
Alison Cooper

Chairperson's report

Sincere thanks to Alison Hadfield for her enthusiasm and guidance whilst Chairperson over the last few years. We still hope to see you at the Nursery sometimes.

At our AGM for 2009/2010 the above members were elected to form the Management Committee for this year. As a committee we will do our best to help the Service run smoothly and as Chairperson I will try to not let the monthly meetings go on for too long!

Welcome to our new committee members.

*Alison Cooper who never misses coming to Clairvaux every week and beavers away. .

*Stephen Brady who has kindly taken on the demanding task of Secretary. This is a change in our organization from having just a Minutes Secretary. It means that our hardworking Public Officer and Administrator, Judy McLean, will now have a lighter load as Treasurer without the secretarial part and hopefully have some chance to get out of the office more and enjoy the time in the nursery.

Our Nursery Coordinator, Tanya McLean, is always a "visitor" at our meetings and submits a report for the minutes. Tanya has been working very hard, especially so in the last few months when (together with the Conservation Society) we have had the big order from the RTA.

Here I would like to acknowledge and thank both Judy and Tanya for all the extra time they put into Wildplant Rescue, particularly by weekend watering, Saturday selling and by tending the trays of plants at their house.

We are grateful for the support of our members who are unable to be active at the nursery and hope they will continue to come to Oak Street to buy their plants.



“Cleaning the bricks and our new shed.”



Chairperson's report continued.....

The active volunteers work very hard. They all have main areas but also are multitasked.

The people who have worked at the nursery this year are:

Christine Belshaw, Alison Cooper, Irene Domes, Drago Heler, Leone Holly, Sue Jarzabkoska, Tom Kennedy, Carol Laxton, Andrew Logan, Guy McIlraith, Bruce Monson, Katrina Nippard, Veronica Paul, Olga Rumble, Anne Rickwood and Lyn Smith.

All these people work one or two days a week and give their time and energy because they believe in our mission and in volunteering.

Christine keeps the plants organized and works extremely hard. She also cares for trays of plants that overwinter in the warmth of her yard in the Lower Mountains. (Oh for the land at Lawson that after 10 years still sits unused but Council cannot see fit to let us use.)

Our IT expert is Veronica and over the past two years she has developed a data base which enables us to trace the progress of our plants from seed collection until ready for sale.

She gives a lot of time to this and works very diligently, at this sometimes boring work, when she would like to be active in the nursery. Veronica also organizes our Website. (www.wildplantrescue.org.au) We are very grateful for Veronica's expertise and dedication.

During the year we have raised funds by having two garage sales and a sausage sizzle (Thanks to help from Bunnings, Todarello's Fruit Market and Blackheath Butchery). We have had stalls at Springwood Foundation Day, Winter Magic and The Rhododendron Festival and also monthly stalls at Blackheath, Wentworth Falls and at Leura Markets. Thanks to Irene, Veronica and Judy. We have had a generous donation from a member and we are very grateful.

We have purchased new fridges for our seed bank and the garden shed for equipment.

It is very satisfying that since getting the water tanks installed in 2009 we have used no mains water. (The tanks were obtained in the 2nd round of Community Water Grants.)

All the money we earn from selling our plants goes into salaries, nursery requirements and running costs. We have not been successful at obtaining grants as we apparently never fit the criteria even though we grow the seedlings for others to plant for which they get grants!!! However we shall continue to apply in the hope that one day someone sees the light and acknowledges our essential role in caring for the Blue Mountains ecosystem. Maybe then we can have benches to work on and to raise our seedlings away from the rabbits and snails. An **overhead automatic watering system** is next on our wish list.

Good wishes to all our members; may your gardens grow beautifully and give you great pleasure.

Anne Rickwood (Chairperson)



Coordinator's report

"Pricking out in the courtyard and plants ready for RTA "



The last year has been a really good one for active volunteers – a big thank you to everyone who has helped, and continue to, over the last year. A special thank you to Tom and Bruce for all their fabulous work building drains, paving, putting up our lovely new garden shed and some well needed ramps. Also a big thank you to the Family Hotel (Katoomba Hotel) who very kindly donated some outside tables which we will use as stands for our trays of plants once they are sealed.

We are still on the hunt for money for stands. We costed this out for 50 stands and came up with a price of roughly \$13,000 which doesn't really seem like a lot. We applied for a grant for this but as usual we did not 'fit the criteria', as they think we make a profit – which we do not. One day our ship will come in!

Last year there was a plague of rabbits at the nursery which took a toll on the plants. We have had to keep a lot of the plants in the courtyard and at other people's houses to protect them.

We continue to be involved with some of the schools in the Blue Mountains and the various garden clubs around the mountains.

The last two talks we gave were at the Lawson seniors group and the Springwood Garden Club.

Anne has already mentioned the big RTA order for Wentworth Falls is coming along nicely. This has been very taxing on people's time as it has added to the already quite big workload at the nursery. But all will be rewarding in the long run.

When you drive past the hospital you may notice all the Eucalyptus oreades saplings. They were supplied by BMWRS. There was a bit of an issue at first, (not enough water and then too much water). They are now seem to be surviving well .

Another contract with the RTA for the Highway upgrade at Bullaburra is on offer. This will also be in conjunction with the Conservation Society.

Apropos of this we have been experimenting with a new potting mix for those difficult to grow Proteaceae such as Telopea, Isopogon, Petrophile and some of the Banksias. Lots of these were ordered by the RTA and we are hoping to have a greater survival rate. It seems to be working so far.

Things were looking a bit touch and go financially over the spring and summer but have really picked up this autumn. This may reflect a change in planting habits or due to the milder weather.

Unfortunately we are starting to sell less plants to the Council. I believe it is because they have less money for environmental works.





Understanding Eucalypts

Olga and Christine attended a Eucalypt identification workshop at Windsor recently organised by Hawkesbury-Nepean Catchment Management Authority and Hawkesbury City Council and given by Van Klaphake.

Eucalypts belong to the Myrtaceae family, and are a difficult group to identify, as there are many similar species.

To identify Eucalypts you need to look at the habit and appearance of the tree, the bark, leaves, buds and fruit. They grow with associated species according to soil type, climate and elevation.

Upper Blue Mountains species grow on sandstone soil while the lower Blue Mountains species grow in shale/sandstone/clay transition soils.

- ✿ Angophora species have smooth and rough bark (eg *Angophora costata*- smooth and *Angophora floribunda* – rough) but both species have opposite leaves and ridges on the fruit
- ✿ Corymbia species have rough and smooth bark and urn shaped fruit, alternate leaves and terminal flower heads.
- ✿ Eucalypt species are more complicated. They have alternate leaves, but there are different bark types, smooth, rough, stringybark and ironbark.

To start identifying these, the colour and shape of the leaves and the arrangement of the buds and fruit capsules are a key to accurate identification. The soil type then needs to be studied which will help to eliminate similar confusing species. The buds are arranged in clusters or umbels in leaf axils, and a common stalk (peduncle).

Some common species in the Lower Blue Mountains are~

- ✿ Smooth barks ~ *Angophora costata*, *Eucalyptus punctata*, *E. sclerophylla*
- ✿ Bloodwoods ~ *Corymbia eximia*, *Corymbia gummifera*
- ✿ Stringy bark/rough –*E. eugenoides*, *E. piperita*
- ✿ Ironbarks – *E. crebra*, *E. fibrosa*

Common species in the Upper Blue Mountains are~

- ✿ Smooth bark ~ *E. oreades*, *E. mannifera*, *E. sclerophylla*, *E. oreades*, *E. stricta* (mallee)
- ✿ Rough/stringybark – *E. Piperita*, *E. radiata*, *E. blaxlandii*, *E. sieberi*



Tubes! Tubes! Tubes! Tubes!

*Once upon a time
In a mountainous place
Lived a woman in a stone cottage
Who decided to save the native flora
From blocks of land
Cleared for development*

*The Government saw this was a good thing
And the two good fairies, Bob and Bob
Bestowed golden coins upon her*

*With these gifts, she found a new place
To continue her good work
And it came to pass
She found true love and happiness
In a far off land she went
To begin a new plant rescue*

*Since then many folk have come and gone
Many hands make light work
The jobs do not change*

*Tubes to be emptied, cleaned, stocked reused
Seeds to be found, cleaned, sown, pricked out*

*Autumn is now upon us
Pricking out is slowing down
Soon it will be time to go inside
Lots of seed to clean*

Tubes! Tubes! Tubes! Tubes!

Coordinator's report continued.....

The rescues have not been so wonderful. Whilst we had a really good on going rescue at Wentworth Ralls and on in Katoomba there has really been nothing else. I notice that in the Gazette most Development Applications are not for new developments so there is not much happening for us on this front.

If anyone hears of a building going up on a bush block, anywhere in the Mountains, please, please tell us about it.

Tanya McLean, Nursery Coordinator

Treasurer's report

This financial year has been most productive in terms of plant propagation which in turn translates to income. Retail sales from the nursery have been sporadic, depending on the weather. The sun shines and domestic gardeners are busy, it rains and they wisely decide to engage in other leisure pursuits. We still have local gardeners visiting the nursery for the first time. These customers are always pleasantly surprised that we have been in existence since 1994 and that we have such a flourishing organisation and why weren't they told!

Irene, Anne and Veronica are maintaining street and market stalls. Retail sales and market stalls for the first nine months of this financial year brought in \$16,400.00.

Other fund raising activities e.g. garage sales have brought in substantial monies which enabled us to purchase two refrigerators for our seed bank. Our regular account customers e.g. schools, council, other organisations have placed orders for approximately \$10,000.00.

The joint project between Conservation Society and us in which we have produced and still are producing plants for the restoration works for the highway widening at Wentworth Falls and mid mountains, continues. The first major delivery of tubestock has occurred so our first major payment is about to take place. This will put us in an excellent financial position. We hope to use some of this income to purchase much needed equipment for the nursery, such as plant stands. Getting the tubestock and rescued plants off the ground will be a major contribution to occupational health and safety conditions.

The organisation has been operational for some 17 years and whilst at times it has been hard financially it is a credit to the volunteers and the nursery manager that we are heading for a future which appears to be rosy.

Judy McLean, Treasurer





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We're on the Web!

Find us at:

www.wildplantrescue.org.au

Upcoming stalls and events

From September the monthly stalls held at Wentworth Falls, Leura School and Blackheath will recommence.

Wildplant will have a stall at the Winter Magic Festival Katoomba in June and Rhododendron Festival at Blackheath in November.



Membership renewal time

Enclosed you will find your membership renewal form. The membership is due on 1 July, 2011.

Great News!

Payment can now be made by internet banking.....

Account Name: Blue Mountains Wildplant
Rescue Service Inc

BSB No: 062 507

Account No: 1012 1466

Commonwealth Bank Katoomba

Please add you last name as the reference

All donations are Tax Deductible

Spotlight on a plant

Bauera rubioides : River or Dog Rose

These beautiful nodding pink flowers are to be found in damp shady or sunny situations throughout the Mountains. Commonly known as the River or Dog Rose (although not really a rose at all) it flowers mainly during July to December. The plant may grow to as much as 2m tall but is usually less.

Tube stock is now available at our nursery at 14 Oak St., Katoomba.

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.



Members receive a 10% discount on all purchases.

