

President's Annual Report for 2011

It is with pleasure I present the Annual Report for 2011 of the Australian Plants Society Northern Tasmania Group (APST NORTH).

The Society was formed to develop an appreciation of our native flora. Many of us develop our appreciation from different perspectives – some through observing them in the wild, others through propagation, while others like to landscape and garden with them. The challenge for our group has been to meld these perspectives together. I believe our Group has succeeded in this.

The gardeners among us need to know the natural habitats and of the plants they are using to replicate their natural growing conditions. By observing the gardeners' creative use of native plants our botanists and plant hunters are able to add another dimension to their appreciation of our flora.

I am confident on reading this record of our year's activities you will come to the same conclusion.

Administration:

The Office-bearers for 2011 were:

President: Ken Saunders (until May), Janet Hallam
Secretary: Trevor Yaxley (until June), Roy Skabo (acting)
Treasurer: Trevor Yaxley
Vice-President: Janet Hallam (until June), Rosemary Verbeeten
Delegates to Council: Lynne Mockridge, Maureen Johnstone
Nursery Manager: Sharon Percy
Newsletter editor: Marion Simmonds
Publicity/Examiner: Roy Skabo
Welcoming Officer: Maureen Johnstone
Heritage Forest Garden: Lynne Mockridge
Web master: Trevor Yaxley
Librarian: Beylara Ra

As at December 31st our Group had 54 members, in 37 households.

APST North is proud that in 2011 one of our members, Jill Clark, was elected as Regional (State) Council President.

I would like to thank all the office-bearers for the work they have done, particularly Roy Skabo who stepped in as Acting Secretary mid-year, on top of the many other contributions he makes.

Nursery and Plant Sales

Plant sales are the primary fund-raiser for our Group. Without them our Group could not operate as it does, so it is vital they succeed.

Plant sale success relies on the efficient and effective operation of our nursery at "Grassy Banks", Bridgenorth. Our group is now reaping the rewards of the work undertaken 2 years ago by a few members in establishing the shade house, installing an automatic watering system, work-benches and other infrastructure with John Simmons doing further work in this regard in 2011. I am happy to report that in 2011, in just its second year the nursery produced enough plants to enable a well-stocked plant sale.

The nursery's smooth operation is sustained by monthly propagation sessions where attendance has been good. I commend these sessions to all members. They are industrious, educational, rewarding and fun.

In 2011 the plant Sale was held on October 22nd at the Max Fry Hall. Members who propagate their own plants are also able to sell their plants with a 20% commission charged on their sales. This year 455 plants were sold, 369 of which were APS plants. At the end, takings amounted to \$1475.00.

Over all the year, total nursery sales were \$1901.90 which, less costs of \$980.88, makes a profit of \$921.00.

The group is indebted to the dedication of Sharon Percy our nursery manager, who organizes the sales and oversees the nursery on a daily basis. She organizes rosters for the sales and for watering, orders supplies, calls in extra help, and generally has been central to its success. We are also indebted to Mike Percy who we know has done much work on the nursery, much of it unheralded, even to re-organising his sheds to accommodate us.

Programme

The 2011 meeting night programme has been varied and interesting, with a mix of speakers and club nights where members provide or partake in educational activity. Topics covered by speakers were:

The flora of Tasmania and Patagonia
Early botanists of Tasmania
Planting for pollen and nectar supply
Proteaceae from paleontological times
Weed eradication in the Tamar valley
Domestication of native grasses
The "Land for Wildlife" programme
Assessing wetlands & their rehabilitation: case study from Northern NSW

Each meeting features a "Plant of the Month" segment by members.

Our group's photo competition was held at the 2011 end-of-year dinner. There were many entries in the 3 categories: plants, places and people - with the photos of a high quality.

Thanks are due to Gillie Zacks and Prue Wright for assembling such a successful programme - no easy task.

Field Trips and Garden visits

Throughout the year several field trips and garden visits were organized sometimes jointly with the Launceston Field Naturalists Club or with ASPTNW.

Date Location Notes

April 28 Cradle Mt. Plant hunting and to see *Nothofagus gunnii* in autumn. Lead by Prue Wright

May 7 John Duggin's and Jane Baldry's property, Brady's Lookout, West Tamar

Beautifully landscaped native garden, still a work in progress. Plant material was cut and collected for nursery propagation later that day.

Aug 21 Sarah Lloyd's property, Biralee. Fungi, lichen and moss hunting in a sublime and pristine area of bushland. Lead by Roy Skabo. With APSTNW

Sept 3 Judy & Lloyd Whish Wilson's, Hillwood, East Tamar Extensive landscaped native garden with views over Tamar

Oct 8 Punchbowl, Carr Villa, & Casino Drive, Launceston Visit to 3 urban wildflower reserves. Magnificent displays especially at Punch Bowl and Casino Drive. Various orchids, 2 species of clematis with a possible

hybrid (?). Needs follow-up in 2012. With LFNC

Oct 21 Freycinet State-Get-together. Wildflower walks both North and South of Coles Bay.

Oct 30 York Town Historic site and bushland surrounds Plant hunting. Found at least 6 new plants to add to the list of 200 found in this relatively small area. Lead by Margaret James and Prue Wright.

Nov 5-6 RTBG, Hobart and Snug Tier, West of Margate. Sub-alpine area. Plant hunting and sighting.

Richea dracophylla a highlight. Lead by David Marrison. With LFNC

Nov 6 a.m. East Risdon Nature Reserve

p.m. 1 km further East on Pontville-Ford Road

Endemic *Eucalyptus risdonii*, several orchids and many other plants of interest.

Visited a proposed floral reserve area with large range of interesting species in full flower.

Dec 11 Miena, southern end of Great Lake. Huge range of interesting plants, some endemic, many unfamiliar. Sub-alpine moorland habitat. Comprehensive plant list being compiled. Lead by Roy Skabo.

Publicity

One key to our success as a community group rests with well targetted and well-presented publicity. APST North has performed well on 3 counts:-

1. Monthly articles in the Examiner's gardening columns.

These appear regularly in the Saturday issue prior to our meetings, together with a meeting notice. These articles have been an initiative of Roy Skabo who has written most of the articles and co-ordinated and edited contributions from others. All the articles from 2010 and 2011 are archived on our Web site under the link "Plants of the Month". On re-reading some recently I've been struck by the high quality of the writing and the information they contain, as well as the breadth of topics covered.

APST North thanks Roy for undertaking this on its behalf, producing such high quality over many years.

2. Bi-monthly APST North newsletters.

For many years now our members have been fortunate to reliably receive comprehensive and detailed newsletters to keep members up to date and aware of the activities of our group, and others. These newsletters enhanced the functioning of our group. Marion Simmonds, the newsletter editor, has decided to finish in this role with the February 2012 issue her last. Always delightfully written and informative, Marion's newsletters will be a hard act to follow.

On behalf of APST North I thank her profoundly for her work.

3. APST North Web-site

Our web site, www.apstasnorth.org was developed a few years ago. It receives numerous hits and generates inquiries from both home and abroad. Its presentation is impressive, and it provides an excellent public front for our group as well as being a good resource for our members.

We thank Trevor Yaxley for his work

Heritage Forest Garden

Located in Caswell Street, Mowbray, this garden has been developed by APST North in conjunction with Launceston City Council. Its purpose is to promote the use of Tasmanian native plants in landscaping and gardening. Much headway has been made on this project due largely in recent times to the efforts of Lynne Mockridge. There is much more to be achieved. In 2011 Lynne has formed a Friends of Heritage Forest Group and used the garden to participate in the "Active Launceston" programme of the Launceston City Council.

I would like to acknowledge the faith and persistence of Lynne in keeping this project going. Our Group should endeavour to give her more support in 2012.

I thank you all for your support in my role as President these past 6 months.

Janet Hallam (President)