



AUSTRALIAN PLANTS SOCIETY TASMANIA Inc. NORTHERN GROUP

PRESIDENT
Louise Skabo 0467 199 602

www.apstasnorth.org Email: apstasnorth@gmail.com
Post: 45 Osborne Avenue, Trevallyn. Tas. 7250

President's Annual Report for 2019 - presented at the AGM on 19 February 2020

It is with pleasure I present the Annual Report for 2019 for APST Inc. Northern Group.

The Office-bearers for 2019 were:

President: Louise Skabo

Vice-President: Peter Dowde

Business Secretary: Peter Dowde

Minutes Secretary: Noel Manning

Treasurer: Rosemary Verbeeten

Delegates to Council: Roy Pallett and Louise Skabo

Nursery Manager: Janet Hallam

Programme Coordinators: Roy Skabo, Janet Hallam & Gilly Zacks

Newsletter Editor: Kay Pallett

Membership Liaison: Jill Clark

Tasmanian Native Garden at HFG: Daphne & Peter Longman & Suzanne Talbot

Web master / Social Media: Karen Manning / Louise Skabo

Publicity: Janet Hallam

Librarian: Janet Hallam

Strategic Planning Committee: Margaret Killen, Roy Skabo, Janet Hallam & Julie Nermut

I would like to thank all NG members for their enthusiastic participation in and support of our many activities and commitments but with especial thanks going to the Group leaders as listed above. I am continually impressed by the energy and reliability of these office holders who are so diligent and enthusiastic in their various roles and which makes the job of President a pleasurable one. The elected positions of Treasurer, Business Secretary and Minutes Secretary are essential for our legal obligations to APST Inc and it is reassuring to know these tasks are in the hands of such trustworthy members.

As well as our usual activities, Northern Group was responsible in 2019 for hosting the APST Inc. AGM, the Tasmanian Members Get-together and creating a stage installation of Tasmanian native flora for the Blooming Tasmania Festival along with our usual booth display. There was excellent member participation and contributions in all these events. One notable effort was from Roy Skabo who single-handedly organised an enjoyable **Members Get-together** based at St Helens with excursions to four different areas, a pleasant lunch spot in a member's garden and social evenings. The **Blooming Tasmania** sub-committee, Rosemary Verbeeten, Margaret Hosford, Margaret Killen, Bruce Champion, Louise Skabo, Jill Clark and Daphne Longman, did a fantastic job in overseeing the impressive native flora displays in the booth and on the stage at the Albert Hall which were greatly admired by the public. The sub-committee was ably assisted by many other hard working APST members in the preparation, acquisition, setting up, manning

and dismantling of the installations including Nigel for transport. Special thanks go to Sally and Herbert Staubman whose mural and large plants made the stage installation so striking and to Bruce for his colourful Power Point presentation. It was a big commitment but successful in showcasing native flora and in gaining new members. Congratulations to Margaret Killen who is now the President of Blooming Tasmania.

Another sub-committee was established in 2019 after the deferral of voting for a new **APST Inc. Constitution** at the March AGM. Thanks go to the NG sub-committee of Janet Hallam, Roy Skabo, Margaret Killen and Daphne Longman who advanced thoughtful and intelligent suggestions as well as consulting with a Hobart constitutional sub-committee to assist with producing a fine new constitution which was passed unanimously at the Members' Get-together in November.

The new constitution was a project initiated by the APST Inc. **Strategic Planning Committee** whose aim is to provide guidance so our Society will remain vigorous and progressive. Governance and membership were the two main priorities in 2019 and these will continue to be developed in 2020 along with communications and technology. Margaret Killen is to be lauded for her efforts as Chair while NG members, Janet Hallam, Julie Nermut and Roy Skabo along with delegates from other Groups, continue to conscientiously develop policies and methods to implement the plans. Meetings arrangements have been easier in the last 6 months due to the use of Zoom Tele-conferencing. The latter is also to be arranged for some Council meetings in 2020 to save Councillors travelling to Ross.

In October 2019 the ANPSA Biennial conference was held in Albany WA and was attended by seven of our northern members. It was an outstanding success with excellent lectures and excursions.

Membership

NG had 19 new members join in 2019 largely through our involvement with the community at our two plant sales and the Blooming Tasmania Festival. NG Membership Liaison Officer, Jill Clark, has continued to improve communications with new members and gained knowledge about their needs and interests in order to make them feel welcome and involved. As a result, it has been pleasing to see many new members becoming part of our propagation, native garden, excursions and/or guest speaker meetings. Our total Group membership at the end of December 2019 stood at 107.

Nursery and Plant Sales

The NG Nursery at Windsor Community Precinct has become even more popular- partly due to increasing membership with many interested in propagating and growing native plants but also due to the Nursery Manager's efforts. Janet Hallam makes new attendees feel welcome by showing them around the nursery and allocating an 'old hand' to instruct them in propagating skills, and, the nursery working bees are always well planned, satisfying and fun.

Due to Janet's hard work and thoughtful input and Colin's skills with the automatic watering system, the plants are thriving and diverse in nature.

Plant sale days at Max Fry Hall are well organised and well attended by the public who realize it is a way of buying a range of native plants including Tasmanian endemics which are not readily available at commercial nurseries. The sales are publicised by Janet, in the Examiner thanks to Les and Julie Hodge as well as by Roy Pallet's well placed road signs. A new hardening-off bench for the extra plants was approved in November and will be built early in 2020. This will free up space in the shade-house for the newly propagated cuttings.

The augmented participation at the nursery has led to a bigger workload for the manager and it is pleasing to see other members step up to assist. Sharon Percy and Julie Nermut are now responsible for the delicate job of propagation from seeds and other members have recently volunteered to oversee several small but essential jobs for the efficient running of our nursery.

Donation of Plant Sale funds

This increased attendance at propagation has led to even larger numbers of plants produced for our biannual plant sales resulting in very healthy takings. These funds are more than sufficient to cover the administration costs for our Group and thus enable the membership the pleasurable task of donating excess moneys to other organisations with similar aims for the conservation and promotion of Australian native plants. As 2018 was also an extremely successful and productive year for the NG nursery, early in 2019 members decided between several worthy recipients for our donation. The Royal Tasmanian Botanical Gardens was chosen and they appreciated receiving \$2000 towards new refrigeration equipment for the expanded Seed Bank and \$2000 towards the re-development of the Tasmanian native garden area.

Programme

An impressive line up of guest speakers and diverse topics encouraged large attendance at monthly meetings aided by publicity in the Examiner and word of mouth. The speakers included informative and enjoyable presentations by NG members Jon Hosford, Mick and Helen Statham and Ian Thomas with the latter stepping in for a sick Miguel de Salas at a moment's notice. Thanks go to Roy, Janet and Gilly for their imaginative approach in finding, researching, and enabling our Group to benefit from these quality speakers. Undaunted by the challenge, this team has again engaged a great line up of speakers for 2020.

Members are to be congratulated for the careful consideration they give to choosing and presenting the Plant of the Month and it is remarkable how different and fascinating plants continue to be selected each year.

Roy Skabo put much effort into managing excursions by exploring opportunities, organising details and communicating with attendees in order to pursue our Society's objective of appreciating native plants in their natural environment, Roy's main area of interest. Two excursions had to be postponed to 2020 due to inclement weather- extreme heat in January and cold and rain in October! Highlights included the Louise Gilfedder guided trip to the grasslands restoration at Forico's Surrey Hills and having NW member, Don Abblitt, as a guide on the Arthur River-west coast excursion where he helped us find the distinct flora of this region. Member, Ian Thomas's contributions to our excursions has also been appreciated adding new insight with his paleoecology, geology and aboriginal history knowledge.

All these NG programme events are central activities for furthering the aims of APST.

Addendum attached of guest speakers, plant of the month presenters and excursions 2019.

Tasmanian Native Garden at Heritage Forest, Launceston

Dedicated garden managers, Peter and Daphne Longman and Suzanne Talbot, continue to organise member working bees, develop and replenish with new plantings and ensure the plants are watered during dry weather. They also liaise well with the City of Launceston to ensure they provide plants and mulch, mow nearby areas and remove rubbish. As a result, the TNG is thriving and maturing and was a blaze of colour last spring. Although it is gradually

becoming better known to the Launceston community with even a wedding planned to be held there in 2020, more needs to be done to promote this “special place” showing how Tasmanian native plants can create a delightful urban garden. Monthly maintenance sessions are always pleasant social gatherings with convivial discussion.

Newsletter/Eucryphia Liaison, Website and Facebook

The Northern Group Newsletters published quarterly on www.apstas.org website, are well worth another read and continue to be an excellent way of promoting our Group. Under Kay Pallett's outstanding editorship, the newsletter impresses and informs potential new members about our activities and encourages them to join. In summarising the educational and entertaining talks by guest speakers or members, our activities at the nursery including plant sales, our native garden or out in the field, the newsletter puts on public view that we are an active and involved society. Kay also dependably submits a précis of each newsletter for the quarterly issue of *Eucryphia*.

Karen Manning continued to be a most efficient Webmaster. APST Northern Group website information was promptly updated and she has provided valuable insights into needed improvements. These need to be implemented during 2020.

NG Facebook page was established in late 2018 and we now have over a hundred members, with some quite active posting beautiful native plant photos. Margaret Hosford posted splendid photos of our stage installation at Blooming Tasmania to attract visitors. Social media enables us to promote our plant sales and there are enquiries as to plant identification to which Mark Wapstra often gives prompt and expert replies. However, more work needs to be done in 2020 to promote the Northern Group via social media to appeal to the younger demographic.

Education

Early in 2019, Sharon Percy arranged for NG to be further educated! She organised for a St John Ambulance instructor to teach our members some essential first aid course procedures which will be particularly useful during excursions.

One stated objective in our constitution is “to make ourselves available as a resource group for educationists and the government and to co-operate with other bodies with similar aims”. During the year we were approached by two organisations to assist with projects teaching adults and younger students about native plants. Sharon and Janet gave their time and skills to assist Youth Futures at Launceston Community Gardens with propagation and nursery techniques but a High School session involving propagation and planting skills for students was postponed till 2020. In early 2020 we plan to be partnering with the Under-storey Network and conducting propagation sessions for members of the public at a Bushfire Recovery workshop.

Library

Our collection of beautiful plant books and other documents is in good order thanks to Janet. However, she wishes the Group to consider the future of our book collection as it was far less used in 2019 as members turn to information readily available via home computers.

As a backup to electronic storage, Janet also compiles a hard copy set of our newsletters as they contain so much information about the history of Northern Group.