In our new garden we kept two existing exotics Beaucarnea recurvata & Dracaena marginata to visually merge with the many added natives!
Comments from the Editor
Hello everyone! One of our members has asked about the value of state or region based ‘branches’ of GDSG and how to go about forming one. Based on our experience in southeast Queensland I believe that local ‘branches’ are invaluable because of the climatic influences on garden design and particularly plants & construction materials are so very different and diverse region by region. It is not all that easy to start a GDSG ‘branch’ given the geographic separation of our members, I know it took several years for our GDSG-Q to form a ‘branch’ in the southeast of the state. Perhaps a better aim might be to form a ‘twig’ of members who live relatively close and can easily get together, perhaps bi-monthly to visit and critique each other’s gardens or analyse the design intent of selected landscapes. Our ‘branch’ grew steadily so much so that our last meeting was attended by 22 members. If anyone wants a list of current members in their locality I can generate a list of names from our membership roll for you. This is a good starting point to check if there is sufficient interest to commence ‘branch’ or a ‘twig’ meetings. Once formed we have found that word of mouth is a great way to increase numbers. We have a one or two page meeting reminder sent out before each meeting and a short description of the garden visited previously.

Getting together to collectively analyse and discuss design attributes in a garden is a very real help in understanding what works and what does not, and by this you gain inspiration for your own design. To ensure optimum success in establishing gardens, as designers we must intimately understand and react to local conditions, constraints and opportunities. That is the magic of garden design! It is obvious when you consider all of the descriptions in the GDSG Newsletter over the years – that our members create unique and differing gardens, but they all exhibit a ‘sense of place’ which is primarily derived from and expresses the local regional character. Nothing is worse, in my opinion, than to slavishly copy a garden (and its plants) from elsewhere – certainly we can gain inspiration and new ideas. However it is much more logical to interpret local natural environments into amenity garden horticulture and although this is a challenge, it can be result in triumphs too!!

Theme: ‘Natives and exotics – mixed together?’
When you think about it the theme for this Newsletter ‘mixing natives and exotics’ directly relates to this ‘sense of place’ concept in garden design. A question: is choosing a species from the opposite climatic conditions, for instance a Kangaroo Paw from WA, for a garden in the wet tropics of Queensland any more illogical or wrong than choosing a plant from the Mediterranean for the same garden? Matching climatic and physical conditions of the origin of the plant with its new location will generally mean success. Our members have provided several approaches to this subject in the following pages, each offering a quite different result but appropriately they are coordinated by a strong aesthetic reasoning and process. Personally my approach in choosing species is to ensure that the physical and functional requirements of the site and the design, drives the species selection. If a native species is available and suitable then that will be chosen; if an exotic will work better than that is chosen.

Extracts from Past Newsletters (Issues 9 to 12)
The GDSG Newsletter index on the ANPSA website is a great way to find out specific ideas and recommendations offered by members in relation to garden design over the years since the first Newsletter in May 1993. There are many gems of inspiration similar to the following excerpts that are worth repeating as they are still as relevant today as they were when first published.

Newsletter #9 - May 1995
Cranbourne Botanic Gardens, Victoria - exciting news!
"An exciting team of consultants’ has been chosen for the new Australian display garden at the Cranbourne Botanic Gardens. Victoria. The team is led by landscape architects Kevin Taylor and Kate Cullity and plant expert and designer Paul Thompson. It includes Marion Blackwell, the renowned Western Australian environmental scientist and landscape designer; Greg Burgess, architect for the award-winning Brambuck Aboriginal cultural centre at the Grampians; and the environmental artist/urban designer Maggie Fookes.”
ED: Twenty three years ago planning for this remarkable garden of native plants commenced!
**Dryandras in Garden Design** - Tony Cavanagh Vic and Margaret Pieroni WA

Perhaps we are biased - but we believe that the genus Dryandra contains the most diverse and attractive foliage in the Australian flora. As well, there are species for almost every place or purpose in the garden. In addition to the foliage, several other features make dryandras worthy of consideration in garden design.

**The Value of Ornamental Ponds** - Paul Thompson Vic

When it moves, reflects, splashes and cools, water changes and positively affects any garden space, from tiny terrace to rural homestead. People can be soothed, absorbed and mesmerised by ripples, bubbles, changes of colour and by the life that water attracts, like little birds and friendly fish. For thousands of years, ancient gardens had water at their centre. **ED it is worthwhile to read the full text of this article and the next six pages all about Water in the Garden.**

**Thoughts from our new NSW leader** - Jo Hambrett

The Newsletters cause me much reflection and philosophizing . . . . . I think it is imperative that we, as a group, address our minds to the thoughts and writings of other gardeners and designers, especially those not of the same opinion and mindset as most of us. Being a native plant gardener/ enthusiast is not, I have learnt, for the faint hearted!! **ED Another 23 year anniversary!! and Jo is writing again for us – welcome back Jo.**

**Design and the longevity of plants** - Geoff Simmons Qld

As a garden is an evolving situation, how long each plant is expected to live is a major consideration in the design of a garden. The length of life may range from the ephemeral period of annuals to the long-time duration of trees. Most gardens will be a mixture of annuals, perennials and 'permanents' and the differences of each may be considered separately. **ED this article gives much food for thought as you select plants for your garden**

**Landscaping with Grevilleas** - Neil Marriott Vic

Grevilleas come in all shapes and sizes, from groundcovers to large trees; something to appeal to everyone and for every requirement. Selections can be made for full sun, full shade, dense screens, “tall skinnies”, heavy or sandy soil and many more. **ED great information still, even with our increased range of cultivars.**

**Native, Exotic, Indigenous** - Jane Marriott Vic

. . . . . Seeing the value (and not always obvious beauty) of planting local flora is a learning process that will slowly change the nature of our gardens. To people who still have their exotics, annuals, manicured lawns and roses the idea of an indigenous garden is, alas, light years away. **ED have we learnt much in the past two decades? The following several pages contain a wealth of comments and information about this subject – worth reading!**

**Designing with success** - Peter Graham Vic

. . . . . The general rule in design is to recreate the environment that the plant thrives in. If you cannot do this, then do not use the plant. Try another genus or species that has the characteristics that suit the situation that has been designed. Do not put a square peg in a round hole; do not try to work against nature, work with it. . . . **ED or in other words Design with Nature**

**Unnatural Acts: The Designed Landscape and Australian Flora** - Jane Shepherd Vic

As Australians in general continue to assess the possibilities and responsibilities offered by the 'post-colonial' potential for the future, contemporary designers will find it increasingly more difficult to support a culture that maintains a long held hostility to Australian plants. . . . . In essence, the amateur movement motivated by conservation and supported by individual designers and organisations like the Society for Growing Australian Plants have created and nurtured a fine tradition in garden design with Australian plants. Hopefully, new generations of designers will be able to connect to this heritage and build a future grounded in the already rich history and traditions of the movement loosely known as the 'Bush Garden'. **ED this discussion paper contains invaluable comment on the principal influences on contemporary Australian garden design.**
The natural - formal spectrum - Diana Snape Vic

When we walk through a natural area - a natural garden - we create a path, leaving footprints or other traces to show where we’ve moved. As more people pass along it, the path becomes more defined. We begin to give the landscape structure in human eyes, to appropriate or ‘own’ the landscape. In our culture we do not live as an integral part of nature, in a sustainable equilibrium with it. Our entry into a natural area is something of an intrusion. . . . . ED read on for some wonderful insights into this question we all wonder about.

Leaving a Garden – Jo Hambrett, Sydney

I left my Heimat (heart’s place) of thirty years in the New Year of 2014, Singapore bound. It was exactly as difficult as I had always known it would be. The garden was the dream, an opus of thirty years, the most peaceful of havens and provided an invaluable and exhilarating learning curve. It was a partnership with a living, breathing ecosystem. I wrote about the many experiences, good and challenging in past GDSG NLs.

In order to do it justice to gain knowledge from others far more insightful and experienced than me - lectures were attended, books read, the Australian Plants Society joined; all with the view of making the place even more beautiful (in a different way) than it was when we bought it - 5 acres of grassy paddock with magnificent stands of turpentines, Angophora, Casuarina and blackbutts. Like a dream, it proved ephemeral. The new owner saw nothing of its wonder and magic. Four years on the garden, the beds, the groves and many of the eucalypts have disappeared. A wooden sign with property’s name still hangs on the front gate. Sadly what lies beyond gives it the lie.

Mixing Natives and Exotics – Jo Hambrett, Sydney

This is topic which has always interested me greatly. Our first garden, consisted of 5 acres of fair through to good acidic soil (typical Hawkesbury sandstone – Wianamatta shale combination of the area), with average rainfall around 268 mm per year. When we purchased the land in the early 80s, the fact that the future garden would be largely an Australian plant garden was a no brainer - genius loci, design and native animal habitat were logical imperatives. It was always about the natives, they were there before us and a few were there before European settlement, courtesy of the best gardener in the world. This gardener could add some species diversity and varying sized understoreys to the large, pre existing eucalypts. Australian plants would form the backbone and were the raison d’etre of the future garden.

There was, also, a yearning to plant from historical memory. Grandmother’s country garden in the same locale had struck a chord since childhood. Mixing the two could potentially add another element of danger but also, handled well, add interest to the design as well as satisfy genius loci, environmental conscience and nostalgia. What follows are some thoughts on the blended garden from my experience, a “what went where and why”, which together with the photographs, may be of help?
**Blended Garden**

A blended garden can have all exotics in one area and all natives in another or mix them together as desired in massed plantings of suitable size. Often the larger one’s garden the easier the choices, as there are more areas, of a larger size, to suggest a planting logic. In our (large) garden exotic varieties of shrubs, perennials, vines and bulbs were used in the cottage beds abutting the house and over the iron pergolas around the house. Between the house and the paddock a grove of trees were planted, picked for their autumnal colour and spring blossoms. *Photinia* hedges (quick growing and hardy) were planted along the southern boundary, both creating a vista and much needed privacy. At the eastern back boundary, as a nod to historical usage in the district *Pinus radiata* were planted along the fence as the old orchardists did years ago; as they died off (with a fungus issue) they were replaced by the far more spectacular *Araucaria cunninghamii* and *A. bidwillii*, certainly not endemic but what magnificent trees to have the privilege to be able to plant and watch grow. Rainforest plantings (endemic, northern NSW /SE Qld) and appropriate for site native plants were used extensively on the sloping northern side under the Turpentines and Grey gums which followed the creek line. A grove of old *Casuarina torulosa* which had been established for years was supplemented with same. As the soil petered out to more sandstone less shale, tall native grasses backlit by the western sun took over.

**Fundamental elements and rules**

The following are important elements in all successful gardens. They become even more fundamental in blended gardens.

The more serene and logical the garden feels as a whole (meaning the amount of garden the eye can take in from a single vantage point) the more the exotic/native combination almost passes unnoticed whilst the overall effect is potentially enriched. It is important the eye can move from one bed to another, from exotic to rainforest to sclerophyll, and find nothing jarring in the overall composition.

It’s a good idea in a blended garden to ensure that the various plants support (complement or highlight) one another via texture, colour or form and that they are connected by negative (unplanted) spaces such as lawn, pebbles/rocks, pathways or water features; and/or by repetition (of colour, form, texture or number).

Another self-imposed rule is, when mixing exotics with natives, use the honest, unfiddled plants. With species of exotics, those with simple forms and flowers - as close as they could be to their wild relatives; resist the garish, overblown and overbred. This plant will mingle far less self-consciously with Australian plants.

When I looked through photos of the garden for this article I realized that the colour palette of the flowers (exotic and native) was mainly in the purple/blues, yellow/orange and white/cream - soothing natural colours, apart from the orange, contributing to an overall serenity and harmony. Orange and deep yellow provide a warming winter splash against a grey
sky and bare branches. Foliage colour combinations such of grey & silver and lime green & bronze look great together as well and bear repetition

The rather sombre and dense foliage of the Syncarpia glomulifera (turpentine trees) provide a perfect backdrop for new leaf growth of the rainforest species, with their yearly topknots of cream through to lime green through to red to deep green – all on the same leaf!

In any garden one should try to be water wise, even if on city water. Therefore the majority of exotics used should not be huge water consumers and be able cope with extended dry periods. Exotics from South Africa, USA and the Mediterranean are generally tough and therefore useful, however beware of anything that could potentially become a garden escapee (as many have). Annuals are a water trap, lots of water for one showing and then replaced, a comparatively expensive use of time, money and water - best avoided.

Some of the Exotic Species used in first garden

*Bulbs*: daffodil, jonquils, snowdrops, autumn crocus, freesias, Japanese Wind flowers

*Groundcovers*: forget me nots, mondo grass

*Strappy plants*: clivea, orchids

*Shrubs/trees*: oak leaf hydrangeas, daphne (love being under eucs.) wintersweet, smoke bush, Lavender, cherry guavas, echium, salvia, nasturtium, roses, heritage and rugosa and banksia, bromeliad, begonia Rex, cordyline

*Vines and climbers*: Chinese gooseberry, heritage roses, wisteria

Some of the Native Species used in first garden

*Indigenous eucalypts*: Angophora costata, Blackbutt, Turpentine, Grey gum

*Indigenous*: Casuarina torulosa,


*Shrubs for the middle storey* (medium and small) – too many to name correctly, and of course most of our members would not to use the specific ones mentioned, so non-specifically, here are a few:


*Strappy Plants*: *Lomandra*, *Dianella*, *Crinum*, Birds nest ferns

*Ground covers*: Native violet,

*Vines*: *Kennedia var.*, *Solya heterophylla*, *Hardenbergia*.

*Grasses*: Kangaroo, Wallaby, *Carex*, *Poa*

*Palms*: Bangalow

New Coastal Garden – Jo Hambrett, Central Coast Sydney

After 5 years of gardening wilderness, there is now another garden to enjoy and learn from; nothing like my *Heimat*, but now, thirty years older this little place ticks a lot of boxes. House and garden are both comparatively small, there is a well-designed garden in situ, and the turpentines and blackbutt have been replaced by the silvery and majestic spotted gums *Eucalyptus maculata*. It is certainly coastal but very sheltered so I cannot complain of excess sun (masses of trees both native and exotic surround the house) or wind (we sit in the lee of a high hill studded with vast rocky outcrops) but sand - well yes, the soil is positively hydrophobic. Where rabbits were once garden enemy number one, now its possums, brush turkeys and wallabies – a most decided improvement ecologically.
Hasten Slowly
I do know that with a newly acquired garden, hastening slowly is the way to go. It’s been over 6 months since we bought the property and quite a few pleasant hours have been spent, simply absorbing it, getting a deeper understanding of the plantings and the design, the layers of history of the garden, the birdlife, the trajectory of the sun etc. The garden shape, like the house, is straightforward. There is a front garden and a back garden connected by a narrow side path. Both are terraced which certainly makes the gardening easier. The stone walls were built by the previous owner and we love them, they are very reminiscent of our previous garden’s stone walls. In both front and back the signature plant, used extensively in the terracing, to good effect, is Pennisetum sp. Purple, one of the fountain grasses. I think the jury is out as to whether this is a native or not, can someone enlighten me? Apparently the owners were sick of the pre-existing native garden being predated upon, and so put in something that would not have meal appeal. This is a conundrum that gardeners of native gardens can have, while wanting to provide habitat (food and shelter) for native species one can grow very tired of continually replacing the target plants.

Challenges in the front garden
The front garden has the more challenges with its robust mix of natives and exotics but I am enjoying (mostly) the fiddle, the intellectual exercise and working with species I haven’t used before from both sides of the divide. Initially I wondered why every second house in the village, including us, has plentiful amounts of bromeliads and succulents, especially the jade plant (Crassula ovata) I put it down to lack of imagination or an “easy gardening” mentality, now I realize both are one of the few plants that somehow escape the interest of the brush turkeys, possums and wallabies who leave them utterly alone! In an initial burst of enthusiasm I planted begonias in clusters of lime green and red behind an enormous Gymea Lily and in front of a cabbage palm. The idea being to repeat the colours in the nearby bromeliad cluster at the foot of the front steps, and because I love the way the light shines through the leaves of the Rex begonias like a stained glass window, lighting up the deep shade. Native violets went in to run rampant around the begonias…well, the only thing that rampaged were the turkeys, with a contemptuous flick of their giant claws, begonias and violets became mulch as they sought the bugs in the newly dug and watered soil! So bromeliads and jade plants have won a begrudging reprieve for now and, who knows, possibly forever.

The Time Constraint
Time, the fourth dimension in gardens and gardening, is becoming an increasingly pertinent consideration for this gardener! The house was built in the early 60s so the previous owners placed massive agaves tastefully about the back garden, and a couple of feature Dracaena sp at the front. Such plants were popular in the 60s and especially suited the pared back minimalism of the architecture of that time, especially in the USA, a country not short of succulent species of all shapes and sizes. Our Australian plants have a form as equally interesting of course so the agaves have gone and one of the dracaenas. The other dracaena is a fine specimen an

On the western side, our neighbours, years ago, lined the boundary area with clusters of the tropical Mexican, Monstera deliciosa, a very 60s plant, under a canopy of blueberry ash, endemic eucalypts and a Gordonia; earlier plantings of camellias and azaleas also abound along our border. How is that for blended! We have two long stands of bamboo acting as a much needed privacy screen on either boundary, put in over 40 years ago. I am channelling my inner Japanese aesthetic in learning to work with it by judicious pruning and it is surprising to me how many of the plants it actually works with.

The back garden is an entirely different kettle of fish. A decision was made quickly that this area should ideally be 100% native and endemic. The tall spotted gums grow in and around huge rock outcrops, tethering them to the landscape. The terraced sloping garden areas are filled with the Pennisetum sp. Purple and Xanthorrhoea minor, the trunkless grass tree which sports beautiful creamy flowering spikes in spring. The thinking at this stage is to replace the Pennisetum sp. with more of the endemic species over time as it ages and needs renewing. Species which occur naturally in the garden; Dianella, Hardenbergia, sedges, Crinum, Banksia ericifolia, Lomandra and grass trees have already been planted in small numbers to gauge aesthetic and practical suitability. There are
three cabbage palms and burrawangs occurring naturally in the garden, both large species so space prevents their repetition.

**Garden Archaeology**

As mentioned earlier, the terrace closest to the house contained several large agaves, their form and a certain glaucous beauty contributed to a strong and successful feature planting. I couldn’t however resolve their proximity to the spotted gums, the genius loci was simply too conflicted. Predictably their removal exposed the previously hidden tree stumps, bits of ex septic tanks, various rusting metal obscurities, oyster shells from a long ago BBQ or maybe a relic of a midden (!) and lots of buried bricks and concrete ...........suddenly the agaves didn’t seem too bad! Of course it looks a lot worse than when they were there, sometimes there is no gain without some pain. The soil in this spot is tricky, essentially sandy however, a variety of excavations made over the years have exposed clay and that is mixed with old piles of sawdust left over from mulched eucs of years gone by. It’s a bit soggy- c loggy at the moment, but also rich and dense and certainly not hydrophobic; a fact appreciated by one of the local kookaburras which takes up a position in a nearby tree when he sees me gardening there - his patience is usually rewarded by at least one plump worm. So far in the experimentation with the ground covers: *Myoporum*, Grevilleas, *Carpobrotus* (my first dealings with pig face) and *Sedum* sp. (to see if anything can manage the soil as it is, look the part and not be eaten) the first and the last are proving the most successful. I have used *Banksia integrifolia* as a backdrop and watching with interest their reaction to the soil here, as well, with more resignation than interest, the possums (or grubs?) eating the new growth.

A veritable potpourri, to work with and whilst enough to make an APS’er/SGAP’er cry, hopefully I’m on another fun learning curve with our coastal garden.

**‘Senzai Bori’ - Transition: Japanese Stroll Garden to Australian Garden Style.**

Olga Blacha, University of Newcastle, Australia  Olga.Blacha@uon.edu.au

‘Senzai bori’ is an historical Japanese gardening technique in which managed ecosystems are applied to formed gardens; this could be used as a method for replacing the accepted plant lists of a traditional Japanese Stroll Garden with lists of appropriate Australian species suitable for Japanese inspired Australian style gardens.

**Symbiotic Nature**

Western visitors to Japanese gardens often comment that except for an occasional azalea or camellia, there are few flowering plants. The Japanese have possessed a tradition to live symbiotically with nature, and their formed gardens include exactly the same vegetation inherent in the surrounding natural landscape. Living symbiotically with nature, experiencing four seasons, and integrating them as part of daily life, is echoed in events such as ‘haruno-asobi’ (spring picnic), ‘senzai bori’ (transplanting of wild plants), ‘mushi-kari’ (catching chirping insects), and ‘momiji-gari’ (excursion for viewing autumn leaves). The use of ‘senzai bori’ offers an opportunity to interpret and apply this historical precedence to an authentic representation in Australia of a Japanese style garden using Australian plants. ‘Putting Plants First’ offers a design approach that derives from an objective review of Japanese gardens from a plant driven basis, where symbiotic species selection before placement in design is the key.

**Translation**

The Japanese Garden emulates a microcosm of Japan, where the garden style embodies the entirety of Japan, from beach to the mountains. This sensory openness to flora is vital to the formation of a ‘sense of place’ which can be fully appreciated when experiencing Japanese gardens not just in one region, but throughout Japan. The philosophical message is that man and nature are transformed and portrayed in harmony. This is evident even when viewing rock placements at Ryoanji, where the ‘Karensansui’ rock grouping is deliberately placed such that no matter where one sits to contemplate the entire scene, one of the rocks is obscured.

**Plant family**

The botanical landscape is quantified through understanding a hierarchy embedded within the derived ‘Plant List’. Work down through the taxonomic hierarchy of each identified major plant group, to find out which Families belong to each; which Genera belong to each; and, which Species belong to each.
For instance, in a Japanese inspired Australian garden, using plant species such as the Black Pine - *Podocarpus elatus* (Australia), instead of *Podocarpus macrophyllus* (Japan), both Podocarpaceae family; and using Wisteria - *Callerya meagasperma* (Australia), instead of *Wisteria sinensis* (Japan), both Fabaceae family; are easy to interchange as they belong to the same family.

In addition comparable leaf shape, texture and colour are important characteristics that determine simple visual selections; such as the linear *Podocarpus* leaf shape - with acuminate leaf tips, texture and colour this species is very similar for most of the trees and small shrubs of this genus.

Plant Ethology, and a regional landscape diaspora can sustainably improve the garden and the immediate surroundings, including the landscape aesthetic, the improved landscape function and the interdependence with local fungi and fauna.

Applying Japanese Garden design principles in Australia or any place outside Japan, should also consider the logic of locality, thereby introducing a selection of native and provenance plants which are resilient, self-sustaining revegetation in an environment that is familiar.

**ED: Given the subject for this Newsletter, ‘Natives and Exotics Mixed Together’ this edited outline of a longer more technical text describes an approach to select and use Australian species with comparable characteristics of traditional exotic species, when designing a garden reflecting another landscape style.**

**GDSG-Q visit Lawrie’s new Garden – Bob Bannon, Brisbane**

Under threatening skies, twenty members of the Garden Design Study Group - Queensland came to North Lakes a major new planned residential community, north of Brisbane. For many, it was their first time at Lawrie’s garden, while for others it was a chance to witness the changes to this work-in-progress garden. (Aren’t they all?)

Certainly a big lifestyle change for Lawrie and Carmel, having been on acreage properties for some forty years, scaling down to an 880 square metre block, of which, the house occupies about half. They chose this property because it overlooks two of the many lakes in the area, and the surrounding natural environment areas. A formal pathway borders the lake, with the new associated landscape adding to the already huge plant diversity. Talk about a “borrowed landscape”! Lawrie has taken on the ‘maintenance’ (read redesign) and further planting of the park border plantings, much to the delight of the Council maintenance crews. This has almost doubled the available planting area and increased the plant palette, visually ‘borrowing’ several mature *Grevillea cultivars* to add to the garden. Lawrie is very pleased about this, as his previous properties had a serious dislike for anything in the Proteaceae family!

Immediately they set foot in the place, a little over twelve months ago, Lawrie prepared site survey plans, sun and shade analysis, and soon had concept plans drawn up - which included the ‘borrowed’ landscape of the adjacent street and park. Plans were soon afoot to immediately remove four pencil pines, several mock orange hedges and forty agave feature plants; then relocate and reconstruct a metal garden shed (blocking the prime view to the lakes and park landscape), and commence planning and planting a native garden.

Much thought has gone into the selection of plants, with some working, while others haven’t performed as expected. (You aren’t alone there Lawrie). The Lilly Pilly hedge outside the fence, has received a substantial ‘sculptural’ trim, improving the views, while maintaining privacy. The new ‘potting pergola’ has *Tecomate hilli* (Fraser Island Creeper) planted, which will eventually cover it with its magnificent flowers showing through underneath. *Tristaniopsis laurina* ‘Luscious’ a new variety with larger leaves and denser foliage was carefully located adjacent to the potting pergola to provide summer shade, along with *Pandanus tectorius*, *Geitonoplesium cymosum*, and *Smilax glyciphyllea* to complete the planting. Nearby, Lawrie has planted a ‘transparent hedge’
using smaller fine leaf plants *Leptospermum, Melaleuca and Acacia* which will be ‘pruned up’ to show off their gnarled trunks to offer filtered views through to the lake, hence the term ‘transparent hedge’.

The shade house along the side of the house is ideally placed on the northside, with the sun controlled initially by shadecloth, which will eventually be covered by assorted vines. It gives great growing conditions, indicated by the healthy specimens of lilies, *Costus potterae, Cordyline, Hoya* and orchids. The front north garden has had a fairly substantial makeover. The Sheena’s, Gold has gone (Yay). The *Murraya paniculata* hedge (“What? I hear you say”), has been severely pruned to sculptural wedges, and I believe will eventually be replaced with a suitable native. The rest of the plants in the front garden are natives, including *Eleacarpus reticulatus, Leptospermum madidum var. madidum, Mallotus philippensis* and a lovely *Myoporum floribundum*, to name but a few. Meanwhile, the street footpath hasn’t missed out with a *Tristaniopsis laurina* and *Brachychiton discolor* the choice to modify the north western sun. The southern side is a narrow corridor, where a lack of sunlight hampers growing conditions but is targeted to be a future verdant ‘green wall’. Once our exploration of the garden was complete, and thankfully the showers held off, we headed along the pathway meandering around the lakes, excited at the variety of plants we came across, both natural and those planted by the Developers. *Acacia leiocalyx* was just beginning its explosion of colour and perfume, and *Banksia robur* was sprouting its beautiful coppery green flower spikes, as our forty minute walk took us to our lunch destination, the North Lakes Golf Club, where most of us (sorry George) enjoyed a lovely, if delayed meal. After overcoming our hunger pains it was time to go back to Lawrie’s, a short ten minute walk. (He took us up the long garden path the first time). On the way back, we ventured off the track to the lake edge, to be rewarded with the sight of a pair of Black Swans with five new cygnets. A lovely way to end what was an exciting, pleasurable day with a great bunch of friends. A big thank you to Lawrie and Carmel for opening their house and garden up for us, and sharing their new found experiences living in suburbia, on a "normal" house block.

**Members Snapshot Contributions**

**The Importance of Water in the Garden** - Pam Yarra, Heathmont, Melbourne

I would like to add my comments to those of Ros Walcott. I have only recently returned from Japan. I completed walking the Nakesendo Way, nine consecutive days from Kyoto to Tokyo. The walk dates back to at least the seventh century in parts & takes the walker through many post towns. The terrain varied with country lanes, gravel tracks & forest paths. Water was always significant in the landscape as we passed by rivers, lakes and waterfalls, ponds in gardens (some with carp), as well as the many rice fields, dependent on access to water. Water was also important for drinking, as there was always a hill to climb, and our guide ensured that none of us became dehydrated. Water from the taps, as well as water from some rivers is safe to drink. At the end of the day, there was always a very welcome soak in an onsen (hot bath).

**Shades of Green** – Wendy Johnston, Sunshine Coast, Queensland

In the windy weather of the past few weeks the trees in our outlook have put on a wonderful show. From the dark green of the *Dysoxylon mollissimum*, the bronze underside of the leaves of the *Grevillea baileyana*, the white backed leaves of the *Alphitonia petriei*, the shiny green of the macadamias, the silver of the *Grevillea Golden yul-lo*, the light green of the *Phaleria clerodendron*, to the grey-green of the eucalypts and silky oak in the background, the trees have responded to the wind in an ever-changing kaleidoscope of colour.
From the Post Box

Back at the keyboard! It feels so good to be writing the odd article for the GDSG after, well, too long! May I add my thanks and praise to Roz and Ben Walcott who took the reins as Leaders of the GDSG when I left and, predictably, have done a sterling job over the last 5 years. As well, a very big welcome to our new Leader, long time member and eminent landscape architect, Lawrie Smith - another coup for the GDSG. As with Ros and Ben, a wealth of knowledge and experience just waiting to be plundered! Jo Hambrett, Sydney

Two Yarra Native Gardens? It was refreshing to read to read about Leanne’s Yarra Native Habitat Garden in the last issue, as it would seem this type of garden, at least in Victoria, in not generally of high interest. A. B. Bishop horticulturist and author, who wrote with Angus Stewart, "The Australian Native Garden", is writing a book on habitat gardens to be published towards the end of the year and in it you will read a case study of, "Pam and Jim Yarra’s Garden". While Jim was not the gardener, he undertook all the labour intensive work. So today, he still remains very much part of the garden. - Pam Yarra, Heathmont, Melbourne

A MATTER OF NATIONAL CONCERN

The Winter Regional Gathering of Native Plants Queensland reinvigorated our members concern in regard to Myrtle Rust by a disturbing presentation by Dr Jarrah Wills of the Queensland Herbarium. We had been lulled into a sense of false security in the last couple of years, as this insidious air borne ‘predator’ of the family Myrtaceae seemed to have reduced impact. But Dr Wills explained that we are very much mistaken because Myrtle Rust has been steadily spreading north and south from its original illegal entry point into Australia in the Gosford area. It is now readily found infecting the natural bushlands as well as the constructed garden and landscape environments along coasts and hinterlands of Victoria, Tasmania, New South Wales, Queensland, across to Kakadu and the Kimberly’s, with South Australia and southwestern Western Australia firmly in its intentions.

It was very disturbing to see recent photographs of the Daintree rainforests where large emergent Myrtaceae tree species were dead and dying across the canopy. Similarly smaller Myrtaceae species were dying right down to the understory. This is also happening throughout the rainforests, forests and wetlands of Queensland. The same was true in the southern states, particularly the coastal heathlands of northern NSW.

This should be of huge concern to all our members as the potential exists with the continuing dieback of the Myrtaceae family to change the face of the Australian landscape, and the dependent fauna in a massive way.

Imagine having no Myrtaceae family plants in your garden! The Australian community needs to be made aware of the situation so that comprehensive public pressure can force national and international involvement from all levels of Government, Botanic Gardens, Commercial Horticulture business, and concerned organizations like ANPSA, APS, NPQ. It is obviously of extreme and urgent importance as outlined below.

Myrtle Rust pathogen in Australia - Linda Broadhurst  ANPC President

On behalf of the Australian Network for Plant Conservation (ANPC), I would like to draw your organisation’s attention to the release in June 2018, of two documents relating to the environmental threat posed by the Myrtle Rust pathogen in Australia.

‘Myrtle Rust in Australia - a draft Action Plan’ is now published in PDF format at www.apbsf.org.au. This document is open for public comment until 31 August 2018.

The intent of the draft Action Plan is to provide a framework for a nationally coordinated environmental response to Myrtle Rust - that is, for the conservation of native biodiversity at risk. Such a response has been lacking to date.

‘Myrtle Rust reviewed: the impacts of the invasive pathogen Austropuccinia psidii on the Australian environment’ is now published in PDF format at www.apbsf.org.au. This is the first overall synthesis of the environmental effects of this pathogen. The intent of the review of impacts is to provide the evidentiary basis for the proposed actions, and to show their urgency.

Uptake of the draft Action Plan, and resourcing of its recommended actions, are not a given. No agencies are yet committed to it. Uptake will depend in part on public and professional feedback during the comment period. Australia has to date lacked any nationally coordinated response to the environmental dimensions of this
pathogen. Some momentum has been established over the last year at Commonwealth level, but needs reinforcement at all levels of government.

The Review and draft Action Plan were co-funded by the National Environmental Science Program (NESP) of the Commonwealth Department of Environment, and the Plant Biosecurity Cooperative Research Centre (PBCRC). As of June 30, the PBCRC sadly no longer exists, but much of its legacy is preserved at the www.apbsf.org.au website.

Myrtle Rust disease, caused by the pathogenic fungus Austropuccinia psidii, is already causing the steep decline of a number of Australian native plant species, at least four of which are now approaching extinction after only a few years of exposure. 45 species are nominated in the draft Action Plan for priority conservation actions. The beginnings of ecosystem-level decline are starting to become apparent in rainforest, coastal heathland, and some Melaleuca wetland communities, and cascade declines of other biota are on the cards in some cases.

I urge your organisation to consider providing comment on the draft Action Plan, to the email address shown on the Draft Action Plan, by August 31. We understand that comments received will be collated and circulated to the government agencies who would need to lead and provide core funding for any environmental response. A strong expression of stakeholder views, whether critical of the draft Action Plan or supportive, will help to demonstrate the seriousness of the issue, and to secure attention to it in both government and non-government circles.

Coming ‘Garden’ Events – check out the ANPSA Website for specific details and other events

Please send information for ‘Garden events’ in your region to promote in the next Newsletter

New South Wales: Illawarra Grevillea Park open days – Sept 1, 2 & 8, 9
Victoria: 12th FJC Rogers Seminar ‘Goodeniaceae Family’ @ Horsham – October 20, 21
South Australia: Spring Regional Gathering on the Fleurieu – September 14 – 16,
Tasmania: Blooming Tasmania, Launceston - Sept 21 - 23
Western Australia: refer to website
Queensland: Spring Wildflower Show & Plants Market @ Brisbane BG Mt Coot-tha - Sept 15 & 16
Biennial NPQ Region ‘Yabba’ @ Warwick - September 21 – 23

Treasurer’s report – June 30, 2018
Cheque account: $ 6,201.06
Term Deposit: $ 26,706.58 incl interest 1/07/17 – 30/06/18 $651.38
TOTAL: $ 32,907.64

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

Welcome to new members
• Native Plants Queensland - Pine Rivers, Q
• Robert Percy – Samford, Q

Membership year July 1 – June 30

Membership dues payable annually as follows:
Email Newsletter FREE
Paper Newsletter $20.00
Concession paper Newsletter $15.00 (for pensioners and full-time students only)

Payment by cheque or EFT to: ANPSA Garden Design Study Group BSB 032-729, Account 285 385

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