



# NEWSLETTER

March 2019

P.O. Box 111, GLEN FORREST, WA 6071

Meet: Octagonal Hall, 52, McGlew Rd., Glen Forrest.  
4<sup>th</sup> Friday of the month. [Doors open 7.30pm for 8.00pm](#)

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## Committee 2019

**President:** Alasdair Adam  
**Vice President:** Pam Riordan  
**Treasurer:** Robert Atkins  
[ehbtreasurer@inet.net.au](mailto:ehbtreasurer@inet.net.au)  
**Secretary:** Sandy Stone  
**Minutes Secretary:** Penny Hussey  
**Committee Members:** John Bates, Lee Roberts, Fran Kininmonth

### Email:

For all email contact to individual Committee Members (except the Treasurer) please use the WSWA's generic email:  
[eastern.hills.branch@wildflowersocietywa.org.au](mailto:eastern.hills.branch@wildflowersocietywa.org.au)

### Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/easternhillswildflowersoc/>

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## Coming Events March

### Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> March

Committee Meeting  
4.00pm: Octagonal Hall

### Monday 11<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> March

Propagation Group  
12 noon to 3pm, Octagonal Hall.  
Bring your lunch

### Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> March

Seed Cleaning Group  
9am Octagonal Hall  
Nb: WE NEED FRESH MELALEUCA SEED!

### Plant Learners' Group

Same time and place as the Propagation Group.

### Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> March

#### Evening meeting

Arpad Kalotis

**“Puffballs of the West and beyond – A natural and cultural journey around the world”**

Puffballs are a fascinating and poorly understood group of fungi. Often enough when encountered they provide great enjoyment for children who love to give them a good kick and relish in the spore masses that are produced!

Puffballs, though, have much-valued roles in ecosystem health, and have also provided various cultures with sources of food, medicinals, decorations and dyes, and in some cases are of religious significance.

This presentation will examine the classification of puffballs today and then look at the role of select species in ecosystem function, and their use and significance in cultures around the world.

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## Future Events April

### Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> April

Committee Meeting  
4.00pm: Octagonal Hall

### Monday 8<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> April

Propagation Group  
12 noon to 3pm, Octagonal Hall.  
Bring your lunch

### Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> April

Seed Cleaning Group  
9am Octagonal Hall

### Plant Learners' Group

Same time and place as the Propagation group.

**Friday 26 April**  
**Evening meeting**  
**“Native Bees”**

Terry Houston

Terry Houston comes from Adelaide, where he first studied bees at the Waite Agricultural Research Institute, later taking a PhD in entomology at the University of Queensland. He then returned to Adelaide as Curator of Reptiles at the SA Museum. He came to the WA Museum as Curator of Insects, a position he held for 34 years.

Although now retired, Terry continues his research interests and has recently published a book on Native Bees. He is also interested in Sandgropers (not the two-legged kind!), pollen wasps and spoon-winged lacewings.

In this talk he will outline the diversity and importance of native bees, which promises to be a fascinating revelation, illustrated by clear photographs.

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## COMING UP - LATER

### BLUE SKY FESTIVAL MUNDARING

17<sup>th</sup> March 2019

EHB will once again be having a stall at this event, held at Sculpture Park, Mundaring. The theme will be related to plants used by black cockatoos. It is also suggested that there may be children's activities organised by the WSWA Education Sub-committee.

Please put the date in your diary and consider how you can help.

### Excursion

To the Herbarium to visit the Seed Centre and the Reference Herbarium.

Date to be arranged – in May

### Plant Sale 2019

Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> May (9.00am -2.00pm)

Octagonal Hall

Please put this date in your diary. Our enthusiastic band of growers has been busy all summer tending to their charges. It can be a bit of an obsession!

Are there any new growers out there that we have yet to hear from?? You do not need large quantities of plants. Last year we ran a 'Specials' table for species with very small numbers. It seemed to work well so we will continue with it again this year.

### All Members

- **Friday 10<sup>th</sup> May – Set Up Day**

8.00am -10.00am – Setting out benches and last minute yard tidy up

10.00am -3.00pm – Grower delivery of plants

3.00pm –dark- Sorting of plants on benches

- **Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> May – Sale Day**

8.00am-9.00am –final placement signage and tidy-up

9.00am-2.00pm SALE

2.00pm onwards –clean up

If you would like to be involved please contact Janet on 92952954 or [atkinsrj@iinet.net.au](mailto:atkinsrj@iinet.net.au) . I am about to set up rosters. There are tasks for everyone. We need plant sellers, cashiers, caterers, manual labourers and signage sorters etc. This is the main fundraiser for our Branch of the WFSoc with 40% of the earnings going to the Branch

It is a fun couple of days and a good opportunity to get to know other members and learn a lot about our wonderful WA flora.

Janet Atkins

*Janet Atkins*

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### CORRECTION: Attendance at Perth Hills Artisans' Market

Unfortunately, EHB will not be having a stall at these markets.

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## REPORTS

Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2019

."Mistletoes in South-western WA"

Tony Start gave a fascinating talk about mistletoes, first explaining that they are 'hemiparasites', living on and taking some materials from the host, but they also photosynthesise and produce their own food.

There are two mistletoe families in Australia, Santalaceae and Loranthaceae. They are a worldwide group of Gondwanan origin. Australia's species probably arrived here from India, migrating through Asia, as there is more variety in the north than the south.

In Santalaceae in SWWA there are 2 inconspicuous Dwarf Mistletoes, *Korthasella* spp and in the Kimberley 3 *Viscum* sp., related to the European mistletoe of “kissing under” fame. *K. leucotherix* is unusual in that its tiny seeds are dispersed by water pressure.

Loranthaceae has 2 mistletoe genera in SWWA, one *Lysiana casuarinae*, found on sheoaks, and 8 species of *Amyema*. Their soft foliage is important food for the caterpillars of blue and jezebel butterflies, as well as possums. The brilliant red flowers in summer attract nectar-feeding animals, especially birds and are probably an important food source in the driest months. Later in the year, birds disperse the seeds.



*Amyema preissii*

Tony noted that mistletoes are becoming threatened in WA, as European farming methods remove habitat trees and huge fires devastate large areas of the landscape. Mistletoes have no means of surviving fire.

One of the many questions afterwards asked whether you can take the squishy seeds and put them onto branches yourself. The answer was yes, but the branch must not be thicker than a finger.

*Penny Hussey*

## PLANT LEARNERS' GROUP

During 2018 a new group was formed to encourage members with limited knowledge of our wildflowers to improve their knowledge. It is very much a self-learning group, where you bring along a specimen, perhaps from your garden, and we try to identify it together. We use Florabase, our library books, the hall herbarium and anything else that might help. It has led us to learning plant anatomy and terminology.



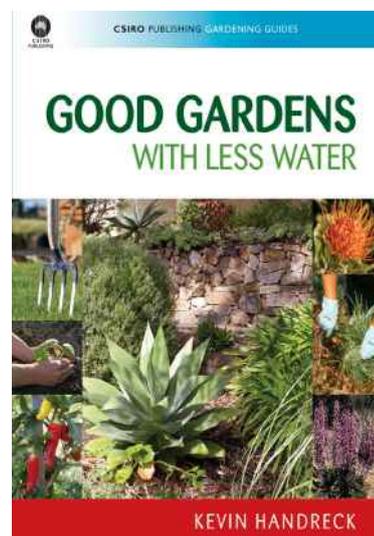
Of course the Plant ID workshops were a great boost and, armed with our increasing knowledge, we set out to revamp the labels in the hall garden. Have you noticed? We have well over a hundred species in our garden and we have attempted to replace worn labels, remove ones where the plant no longer exists and to add labels where they were missing. However we have no illusions that we have got it 100% correct! Please let us know if you spot an incorrect label, a spelling mistake or you can add a name to one we haven't.

The group meets at the hall on the same days as the prop group. Please come and join us.

*Pam Riordan*

## BOOK REVIEW

***Good Gardens with Less Water.***  
Handreck Kevin, (2008)  
CSIRO Publishing



There is often a lot of discussion on social media sites that have an interest in growing Australian plants regarding the use / misuse

of mulches and their confusion with 'soil improvers'. This book published a bit over a decade ago has an excellent chapter 'Mulches: the facts' which has a very comprehensive look at mulches and their function in the garden. The information applies to all gardens but there is much that is targeted towards Australian Plant gardens. The chapter sets out to 'bust' quite a few long held myths regarding the ways in which different mulching materials work. Emphasis is placed on looking at the sorts of outcomes you want from their use.

There are many other chapters covering a range of topics regarding gardening in a dry climate. A particularly useful early chapter looks at plant features/ structures and their resultant likely demand for water. Other chapters look at soil types and their abilities to deliver water to plants.

This book is written for Australian conditions by a soil scientist who has spent his working life in Australia and is obviously an Australian Plant enthusiast.

*Janet Atkins*

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## **GST**

### **and the Eastern Hills Branch**

The Wildflower Society (WSWA) has reached the point where it needs to be registered for GST. This commenced on 1 February 2019. This means the Eastern Hills Branch, as part of the WSWA, is now required to manage the GST component on all financial transactions.

All revenues into the Branch, including sales at the Plant Sale, will require GST to be paid by the Branch. Therefore the committee has resolved to add GST to the sale of plants at the point of sale. That is, GST will be added to the total purchase at the cashiers' tent. Members supplying plants for the plant sale are nearly all hobbyists and will be exempt from GST so will not be affected. Information will be provided directly to growers about this. Members purchasing items for the Branch and seeking reimbursement will also not be affected.

*Robert Atkins*  
*Treasurer*

## **PLANT OF THE MONTH**

**Old Man Saltbush**  
*Atriplex nummularia*



This is an upright shrub to about 1.5m high and 1.5m wide, with attractive silver-coloured leaves that add a pleasing colour contrast in gardens. The small, star-shaped flowers are pale red and occur throughout the year depending on conditions, especially rainfall. It tolerates hot, dry and salty conditions and prefers full sun.

The fruits are up to 6mm across, nearly round and ripen in late summer. The species does not readily self-sow. Before sowing, fruits should be washed under running water for two to four hours to leach out the materials that inhibit germination.

Old Man Saltbush is widespread across the semi-arid portion of southern and central Australia. It prefers clay-loam soils but can tolerate some salinity and has been widely planted on farms as forage. It can also be planted as a hedge. In South Africa it has escaped from farm plantations and has become a weed.

The plant has been used as bush tucker. A decoction of the leaves can be used as a skin cleanser and to bathe sores.

All in all, a useful plant.

*Robyn Rudeforth*

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The views and opinions expressed in the articles in this Newsletter are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the Wildflower Society of Western Australia