

March 2011

Newsletter of the Friends of Lismore Rainforest Botanic Gardens Inc.

## President's Report

I had recently the opportunity to take some friends for a tour of the Gardens. As we walked along the bitumen path, I noted that there are a number of useful side tracks, mostly developed by the Wednesday work group, which enabled us to see many more aspects of the Gardens. The Gardens are looking very healthy – the wet weather has certainly helped our plants, and the heat doesn't seem to have adversely affected them.

However, the wet conditions have brought some problems with them. Our ground covers, of which we are rightly very proud, have really benefited from the extra rain and sun and are thriving. The trouble is that they don't always stay where we want them, but are beginning to decide that the entire Gardens are for them alone, and they are invading all our plantings. The big trees are not worried, but we are having to clear the groundcovers from our smaller plants, which can be completely hidden. We are working on recycling the excess ground cover material as compost.

The heavy downpours that we get can cause some erosion in our creeks, and we are considering how to deal with this.

We are pleased to have a new Green Jobs Corps group which started on 28 February. We have many jobs lined up for them the first being our first Discovery Trail. This will be a useful and pleasant addition to the Gardens as well as giving us ideas for new developments.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the members of the Wednesday work group. They work very hard, and much of the beauty of the Gardens is due to their hard



In the Useful Plants Garden a selection of sedges, with their distinctive stem - often triangular in section, are coming up all by themselves. They are from left to right *Cyperus eragrostis*, (an introduced species), *Cyperus lucidus*, *Fimbristylis dichotoma*, and *Cyperus polystachyos*. *Cyperus eragrostis*, Umbrella Sedge, is the only one with a common name.

work in mulching and weeding. It is quite a commitment on their part, and the results of their consistent work in the Gardens really shows.

I would also like to thank Rose for all that she does for us. Not only does she organise the Wednesday work group, but she raises numbers of plants in her bush house at home. The Gardens is indeed fortunate in our volunteers.

Jan De Nardi

## Green Jobs Corps on discovery trail

After many months of planning, we have started working on our Discovery Trail 1. Early Wednesday morning a few of us with measuring tapes in hand and trail marking tape plotted out the hidden path. At 9.30 the Envite Green Jobs Corps participants rolled up, and got straight to work, burying the water pipe which crossed the path. They cleared the weeds especially the asparagus fern and, removing all obstacles, flattened out a rather rough route for the track. We left it to them as they all seemed enthusiastic and clear on what needed to be done. It was a pleasure to work with young people who seemed so positive about the job at hand. We hope to do lots more work with this team in the future, and I know they enjoyed the planting they did the day before with Pat.

Rose Hand

## Next Work Morning

Sunday 27 March

Starting 8am

Contact Pat 6629 1435

Wednesday Group

Each Wednesday 8am start till end of March, then 9am.

Contact Rose 6622 6558

Bring hat, gloves and something for morning tea.

## Report from LCC Liason Officer

It's a busy time here at the Recycling and Recovery Centre. Of significance is the process towards getting approval to phytocap the old landfill cells. Council is still waiting on official advice from the Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water. Once approval is received the phytocapping can commence and will hail a significant movement in the way landfills are managed in New South Wales. The phytocapped area will form an important part of the Lismore Rainforest Botanic Gardens in the future.

Budgets for 2011/12 are underway and of significance is the project proposal being submitted to Council to include an education centre in the delivery plan. This environmental education centre is planned for a wide variety of uses, from community education to staff training, but will also offer a base for the FLRBG Group.

*Kevin Trustum, Waste Education and Development Officer*

## Death of Bert Harris

Late November 2010 saw the loss of one of our original members, Bert Harris. He was a true gentleman in the real sense of the word, kindly and always helpful. He was attentive and respectful to newcomers. Folk just liked him. He made them feel comfortable. I came to know him as we worked together at the Gardens site. Together on our knees we got our hands dirty. He worked with us to clear the tangled undergrowth and plan the dream of the possible botanic gardens. To-day there is still a set of earthen cuts in a bank, known as Bert's Steps. It once was our path above The Cliffs. Bert is survived by his wife Mary and three children. The Harris family will always be part of our rainforest garden.

*Geoff Walker*

## Plant Propagation Report...

*from Rose Hand*



Well this year has certainly started out with a bang. With our shade house filled to capacity we decided that a stall at the Lismore car boot market might be the go. We packed up only small growing understorey plants. To our amazement we sold \$500 worth, which equated to 9½ boxes of plants. I'm sure we could have sold more, if we had taken more, but the idea was to get some space in our shade house and this goal was reached. Since then we have been revamping the poor old darling of a shade house. You would hardly recognise the place now, more room to move, more benches, less weeds and all organised thanks to great ideas and hard work from John Langworthy, Mary Harrison and yours truly.

## 39 bird species sighted.... *June Harris*

It was a rather damp day on December 1, but 11 stalwart members of Brunswick Valley Birdwatchers turned up at the Botanic Gardens at 8am to be greeted by Geoff Walker. U3A members Rosemary and Brian Sykes also came along.

Geoff gave us an introductory talk about the Gardens which was very informative and much appreciated. We spotted **39 different species** of birds between and during the showers. Unfortunately the Koalas were a 'no show' this time. The Dollarbird, Varied Triller and Red-backed Fairywrens were notable sightings. The Brush Turkey mound looked fresh and active. We could have made good use of the seats placed throughout the gardens, but alas they were wet! Our members enjoyed coming to this new venue and wished to convey how

impressed they were with all the work and effort the Friends of the Regional Botanical Gardens have put into this fledgling project. I think it would be good to keep the **swampy area** just below the beginning of the car-park track as a wetland habitat with reeds etc. as this would add diversity to the Gardens and also habitat for Reed Warblers, Grassbirds, and rare species such as Bitterns, Crakes and Rails. The bigger the area the better for the birds. The Red-backed Wrens were first spotted here. Frustratingly, I thought I heard a Little Bittern calling just the once in this area, but couldn't confirm the species presence. The Little Bittern is classified a 'vulnerable' species and Birds Australia is monitoring all records of sightings. It hides in the dense reeds and is extremely difficult to observe.



## New Storage Shed... *what an achievement!*

The volunteers' small equipment grant is a wonderful thing. The Friends have benefited in many ways, but the acquisition of the new shed turned into a real saga. By the time of our work day in January however there was a concrete slab in place and the packages had finally been delivered which contained the shed in parts. We were going to assemble it ourselves.



As the components emerged for the two halves of the roof a team formed itself and in no time at all the assembly had begun. It was discovered that each component was numbered and Mary McDermott soon became the custodian of the handbook ensuring that team members chose the correct components as the work progressed.



Meanwhile another team took on the task of assembling the four walls. This team had an advantage because they made use of the cordless electric screw drivers that were available. The roofing team confined themselves to traditional manual screwdrivers, but it was not long before they had the double doors assembled as well the two parts of the roof. It was time now for smoko before



we returned to the final stage of assembly. This is where David De Nardi really began to shine. He was tall, strong, young and fit. Not only could he get down as low as required, he could also get up again!! At first we were amazed that pre-drilled holes did not line up - but measurement of diagonals showed that the shed needed squaring. David was able to deal with this quite quickly. We also found that some of the screws we had already fixed were preventing some components from slotting into place but that was not for long. We had one half of the roof in place when the shower of rain came. It was wonderful to have the shelter that was now available. The rain soon passed and assembly was quickly finished. Then came the task of anchoring the shed to the concrete. Here David shone once more. A masonry bit had been purchased. Power came via a long lead and it was short work for David with the hammer drill to have the supplied brackets bolted to the concrete and to the walls. We could not quite finish the job entirely that morning because we had not brought the pop rivet gun that was needed to attach the locking bolts. But we were very satisfied with the speed and efficiency with which our team had formed and performed. And the locks were fitted within a few days. *Denis Matthews*

## More on Myrtle Rust

Myrtle Rust is a fungal disease first detected on the central coast of NSW in April 2010. However, there are indications that it has been in Australia for at least two years. It belongs to a group of fungi known as the 'guava rust complex'. It can affect any plant belonging to the family Myrtaceae, which includes many Australian native plants including *Eucalyptus* and many species in the following genera : *Acmena*, *Backhousia*, *Callistemon*, *Leptospermum*, *Melaleuca*, *Rhodamnia*, *Syzygium*, *Tristania* and *Xanthostemon*. This is not an exhaustive list.

The fungus causes spots on leaves and stems that develop masses of orange to yellow powdery spores. The disease most often affects young shoots and the growing tips of plants causing leaves to become curled and distorted.



*Image from Dept of Industry & Investment NSW Website*

Any rust infestations that look like Myrtle rust should be reported to the Exotic Plant Pest Hotline on 1800 084 881.

Present control measures includes removal and destruction of infected plants and ongoing suppression activities at known infected properties.

*Extracted from Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service web site*

[www.daff.gov.au/aqis/quarantine/pests-diseases/myrtle-rust/](http://www.daff.gov.au/aqis/quarantine/pests-diseases/myrtle-rust/)

## Open Day

Our last Open Day in December was, at first, a strange one. The weather had been atrocious with wind and rain and the Sunday morning dawned grey with showers threatening. We had just about decided to cancel the day but a few of us decided to go in anyway just in case someone came. We hung around hesitating to set up our displays and food because of the dark grey rain clouds in the south east. There was none of the usual excitement associated with such days. However, soon after 9am people started to arrive and we ended up with as many open day visitors as we have ever had. The rain held off and sun even came out. Our enthusiasm grew and we ended up having a great morning and as usual our visitors were very impressed with what they found.



One extra attraction was a koala sitting in the fork of a small tree near the Gardens' entrance. He seemed quite healthy and only mildly curious about the interest he was creating.

## Australia Day Awards

On Australia Day there was a big turn out of FLRBG members at the Goonellabah swimming pool complex to support our nomination for a Services in Community Award from the Lismore City Council. We didn't win the award but just being nominated was recognition of the work that we do and the large number of our group in their Gardens' shirts made quite a display.

## Organiser's Report... Pat Offord

Damian Butler, our Gardener, has been appointed as a permanent Lismore City Council employee. He will continue to work for us on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. All workers at the Gardens have been busy since late January coping with weeds, planting and mulching. Fortunately we have had so much rainfall that hand watering has been minimal.

Next time you visit the Gardens, you might look at our new labels in the Wilson Park Species Garden above the barbecue area. These labels have a metal instead of wooden post, eliminating the problems we have in Stage 1 where many labels have come unstuck. This large garden is divided into five sections which will be signposted. This will make it easier to locate particular tree species which are listed as occurring in the Wilson Park Dry Rainforest Alliance. This is a good place for people interested in planting local species to learn about suitable plants for their properties. Our new Green Jobs Corps Team is working at the Gardens with leader Garth Kindred. Their first project - assisting the Wednesday team to build a Discovery Trail through Room 3, the Alley and Room 1 - is already underway. They are also doing some planting and completing the path in the Useful Plants Gardens.

If anyone can donate building materials for these projects including fencing, path and small bridge making, please ring Pat 6629 1435. We need railway sleepers, poles, landscaping rocks, bricks and pavers. We are grateful to Council for many of the materials to be used.

Many will know that we use native species for ground cover in a many



parts of the Gardens and we are presently developing guidelines for weeding in these areas. There is an expectation that Botanic Gardens look well cared for and that visitors and workers can explore and work safely in all areas. If you would like a copy of these DRAFT guidelines please contact me on 6629 1435 or [pofford3@bigpond.com](mailto:pofford3@bigpond.com)

**Many hands make light work** so we are still looking for more volunteers. You can join our Wednesday morning group with Rose, monthly Sunday morning group with Pat or let our Secretary Denis know of other skills which you could offer e.g. fundraising, publicity, grant applications or transport of items to the site. **Maybe you would like to start another work group on another day!**  
**Happy Gardening- Pat**

## Long ladder needed

The Wednesday Work Group in our Botanic Gardens would welcome the gift or a long-term loan of an extension ladder in good condition. Rose and her team are placing staghorns, elkhorns and donated native orchids high up in host trees. Such a good ladder would be stored indoors under lock and key. If you have one languishing at home and would like to help us please phone Rose Hand 6622 6558.

Friends of Lismore Botanic Gardens wish to acknowledge and express their gratitude for the ongoing, substantial support they receive from Lismore City Council. Particular thanks must go to the staff at Lismore Recycling and Recovery Centre



## Gardener's Report... *Damian Butler*

The last couple of months have been very productive for the Gardens. Specimen plants, indigenous plants and weeds have all been growing profusely. The beginning of autumn still affords an opportunity to complete some of those summer jobs that have been pushed forward to a later date, such as pruning.

### ...pruning

There is still some time to prune off unhealthy limbs or overly burdensome growth, since healing of collars occurs more rapidly over the warmer months (particularly summer) compared to the usual winter pruning – and that means healthier plants (Varkulevicius 2010). When cutting a large limb remember to cut just above the collar, so the limb can heal over faster. Before this you will have to undercut the limb at least a hand

span distance from the final pruning point. The undercut should reach around halfway through the limb. Remove the limb approximately 75mm from the undercut. Then cut off the branch at the final pruning point. When cutting smaller branches, cut on an angle as to minimise disease susceptibility. And ensure that the bottom of the cut does not go below the bottom of the bud. Leaving a stub above a bud often results in dieback, and so points of entry for diseases.

Here is some more information about pruning from Varkulevicius :

- winter pruning stimulates vegetative growth
- pruning wounds don't heal as well in winter
- summer pruning limits growth but can maximise fruiting wood.

### ...myrtle rust



There is much talk around about Myrtle Rust, and while I have my eye out for any outbreaks, I have not noticed its presence. Due to the widespread distribution and abundance of Myrtaceae at the Gardens immediate management of any outbreaks will be crucial in order to prevent widespread damage. Anybody who comes to the Garden who notices Myrtle Rust - or has found some growing either at home or elsewhere, should contact the Exotic Plant Pest Hotline on 1800 084 881

*"Never move suspected contaminated or infested material unless directed by an officer of the NSW Government."* And follow the advice about good garden/nursery hygiene described on the aforementioned website. (See more information p.4)

### ...wallabies

Swamp Wallabies (*Wallabia bicolor*) can cause damage to some of our saplings' leaves, branches and trunks - sometimes ringbarking large specimens resulting in plant death or grubbing plants so badly that they die. So what alternative is there to placing cages around the vulnerable plants? Other plants of course! Here's a short list of useful companion plants found at the Gardens adapted from Appendix S11 of supplementary resource CD accompanying 'Rainforest Restoration Manual for South-Eastern Australia' by Bill Peel (2010). These are plants that act as either deterrents for herbivory, are unpalatable, or act as camouflage species:

*Carex appressa* Camouflage sp.

*Clerodendrum tomentosum* Unpalatable/Camouflage

*Commersonia* spp. Unpalatable/ camouflage - Brown Kurrajong?

*Dubosia myoporoides* Unpalatable/ camouflage

*Homolanthus populifolius* Unpalatable/camouflage

*Hypolepis* spp. Camouflage sp.

*Imperata cylindrica* Camouflage during first couple of years growth

*Lomandra longifolia* Camouflage/ unpalatable

*Poa queenslandica* probably the same as *P. sieberiana* Unpalatable/ camouflage –

there are a few specimens beside the main entrance road in the 'Gum Forest'

*Pteridium esculentum* Camouflage - may need control due to its rampant growth

*Dendrocnide excelsa* Deterrent

*Rubus moluccanus* Deterrent; may need some control to free up specimen(s)

*Rubus parvifolius* Deterrent - only in older established patches due to its small size on its own

*Rubus rosifolius* Deterrent

*Senecio* spp. Unpalatable/camouflage

*Solanum aviculare* Unpalatable/ camouflage - non-indigenous to original community at the Gardens but a specimen plant nonetheless

*Solanum stelligerum* Unpalatable/deterrent - may require dense plantings to be successful

*Tetragonia tetragonioides* Unpalatable -non-indigenous to original community at the Gardens but a specimen plant nonetheless





## BUTTERFLIES... Peter Gould

Butterflies are amongst the most visible and intriguing members of our fauna. They appear incredibly fragile but are capable of extraordinary feats of endurance. Their highly evocative common names - Fiery Jewel, Speckled Line-blue, Yellow Admiral, Marbled Line-blue and Jezebel Nymph - hint at their unique beauty.

The exquisite colours and patterns we see in many butterflies are a warning to predators of their extreme toxicity. As caterpillars, they consume some of the most toxic plants known and use these toxins for their own defence. This is an example of Aposematism - the warning coloration of certain distasteful or poisonous animals, characterized by bright conspicuous markings, which predators recognize and learn to avoid. Some also have markings resembling eyes, which make them appear to be birds or other predators, while some are effectively camouflaged when at rest but display flashes of brilliant colour in flight.

As adults, they are nectar feeders and act as pollinators for many of our native plants.

With a little planning, it is possible to breed butterflies in your garden. Butterflies have a few, simple needs. They must have both host plants for caterpillars to feed on, and nectar plants for the adults. Generally, if you plant the right food plants they will find them.

They like sunny spots, sheltered from the wind, with flat rocks to rest and sun themselves.

Butterflies obtain water and salts by 'puddling' or sucking them up from moist soil. You can create a puddling site by burying a plastic container filled with coarse sand and topping it up with water from time to time.

[I have prepared a colour coded chart of butterfly attracting plants for this area.](#) It is attached at end of document

This is by no means a complete list of butterfly plants. It deals only with

those local rainforest plants, which are hosts to caterpillars. Some of the larger trees may not be suited to small gardens but most are high value cabinet timbers well suited to farm forestry in this area. Some of the vines (e.g. Zig Zag Vine, Scrambling Caper, and Velvet-leaved Caper) can be pruned and grown as shrubs. Please treat the Bushfoods listed with caution – not all are usable without special preparation and their edibility may vary widely between individual plants. There are many other plants, both exotic and native, which can attract butterflies to feed and breed in your garden.

Thanks to Helen Schwenke and Frank Jordan for their input into this article.

Their book *Create More Butterflies* is available from [www.earthling.com.au](http://www.earthling.com.au) or directly from FLRBG

**Other Ref:** The Noosa Integrated Catchment Association [www.noosanativeplants.com.au](http://www.noosanativeplants.com.au)  
*What Butterfly is that?*  
[http://users.sa.chariot.net.au/~rgrund/but\\_1\\_D1.htm](http://users.sa.chariot.net.au/~rgrund/but_1_D1.htm)

Braby, M.F. 2000, *Butterflies of Australia – their identification, biology and distribution* (2 vol's), CSIRO Publishing, Collingwood Vic. [www.publish.csiro.au](http://www.publish.csiro.au)

Braby, M.F. 2004, *The complete field guide to butterflies of Australia*, CSIRO Publishing, Collingwood Vic.

Clyne, D. 2000, *Attracting butterflies to your garden*, New Holland Publishers, Sydney.  
Common I.F.B. & Waterhouse D.F. 1982, *Butterflies of Australia*, Angus & Robertson, Sydney.

Kooyman, R. M. 1996, *Growing rainforest: rainforest restoration and regeneration*, Greening Australia, Qld.

Moss, J. T. 2005, *Butterfly host plants of south-east Queensland and northern New South Wales*, Butterfly and Other Invertebrates Club, [www.boic.org.au](http://www.boic.org.au)

## Green Jobs Corps Update



Nathan brings in another barrow load of fill while Johnny is on rake duty.

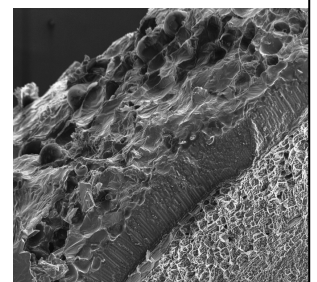
A new EnvITE National Green Jobs Corps (NGJC) team under supervisor Garth Kindred has been assisting volunteers at the gardens with planting and the installation of the discovery trail. They first remove trip hazards which included large rocks and tree roots. The tree roots were filled over with a composite of clay and gravel. A good quantity of large rocks were delivered in recent days and these are lining the edges of the track. The next challenge is to raise the bridge crossing across the gully to make it more easily traversable. The team are looking at a number of options from concrete to timber construction or a combination of both and are treating it as a training exercise in design and costing materials.

**The official launch for this Green Team will be held on Thursday 24 March at Gardens BBQ site, starting at 11am.**

### Rainforest Seed Project Exceeds Target

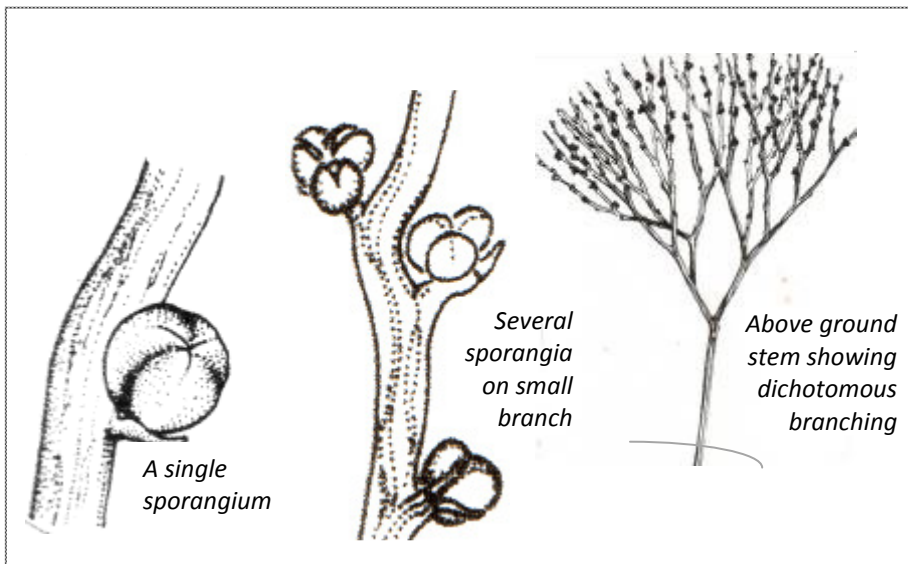
The Rainforest Seed Project at Mount Annan Botanic Gardens has recently exceeded its target of studying the seed storage biology of over 150 eastern Australian rainforest species. This included our work on *Acronychia oblongifolia* (Yellow wood) and many other species from the Lismore Rainforest Botanic Gardens. *A. oblongifolia* seeds are slow to germinate but tolerate drying and so storage in a seedbank at low temperatures (-20°C) can now be tested. Pictured is a scanning electron micrograph of a sectioned seed at x250 magnification.

*Dr Kim Hamilton, Mount Annan Botanic Garden*  
Email: [Kim.Hamilton@rbgsyd.nsw.gov.au](mailto:Kim.Hamilton@rbgsyd.nsw.gov.au)



## Skeleton Fork Fern *Psilotum nudum*

Jan de Nardi



Recently I visited our friend Rose to admire the plants she was propagating in her bush house. Among the many interesting plants she was growing there, she wanted me to see 'this strange plant that was coming up in some of the pots'. I was delighted to see a fine specimen of *Psilotum nudum*. Rose is not the only one to say 'What?' This plant, which grows 20 – 30 cm tall, is one of a group of plants known as Fern Allies. Although they have some features similar to true ferns, such as reproducing by spores, not flowers, these are much simpler plants. Like ferns, they have no true root, but an underground stem, a rhizome, which has small colourless rhizoids (smaller rhizomes) to help keep the plant anchored in the soil, as well as absorbing nutrients. The rhizome branches dichotomously, that is into two equal branches each time (sometimes this branching is described as 'forking'), spreading under the ground. Occasionally the branching of the underground rhizome results in one of the branches becoming an aerial stem. This stem is green or yellow-green, and also branches dichotomously. This stem bears tiny green scale leaves, but unlike the flowering plants these leaves do not have a bud in the axis.

*Psilotum* reproduces by spores borne in tiny yellow spherical structures called sporangia. Sometimes the dichotomous branching results in one ordinary branch and the other branch short and ending in a group of 3 or 4 sporangia which are yellow when mature. When the spore are mature, the sporangia burst open sending the spores around the vicinity. This enables the plants to spread readily in the right conditions. In the wild, *Psilotum* is found in slightly damp places such as rock crevices in open forest or rainforest, in tropical and subtropical areas of the world. We have 2 species in the northern rivers, but *Psilotum nudum* is the one growing in Rose's bush house. When I was working in Sydney, I regularly visited a large glass house which had been built on top of one of the buildings. We had a great deal of pleasure in showing visiting overseas botanists our *Psilotum* while claiming that it was a 'weed in our glass house'. Obviously the watering regime and temperature were just to its liking. Ref.: *Ferns of Queensland*, by S. B. Andrews, pp. 295-6, 1990, Queensland Dept. of Primary Industries. *Flora of New South Wales*, Vol. 1, p.3, 1990, UNSW Press.

## Bird catching flower

These little flowers appeared on a small tree in The Glen, above our top car park, in November last year. The plant is *Pisonia umbellifera*, a Birdlime Tree.



The seeds are very sticky and attractive to birds which can get stuck when trying to eat them. Small birds can actually starve to death if they cannot get free. This tree is quite rare in the sub-tropics but this particular plant was sourced from some trees growing at Ballina.

## *Eupomatia laurina*



**Large Bolwarra** or **Native Guava** was in flower end November. It is an attractive flower – very white and almost waxy in appearance. It can produce a fruit similar to a rose hip in shape. While it is not as rare as its sister plant, *Eupomatia bennettii*, it is still one of only two species of this genus in the world - a special and very ancient plant.

Our social committee is planning further trips this year to other Botanic Gardens in the region. No dates have yet been set but we will advise by email and on the website once arrangements have been finalised.



## FRIENDS COMMITTEE

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**Committee:** Mary McDermott

Annette Deal

Geoff Walker

Website: [www.lismore.nsw.gov.au](http://www.lismore.nsw.gov.au) then

>Council Services>Botanic Gardens

## Raffle

Our fund raising raffle proved to be successful with \$825.10 raised.

GREAT EFFORT. It was drawn on

11<sup>th</sup> December. 1st prize -

Handmade Throw Rug (made & donated by Margaret Lawlor) to N Bellmaine; Ian Murray won 2<sup>nd</sup> prize -

Basket of Brookfarm macadamia products donated by Brookfarm and

homemade jams made, donated by Val Battistuzzi; and Jeanie Dawson

won 3<sup>rd</sup> prize -2 bottles of wine, donated by Beth Minnis. We send a

big thankyou to the people who donated the goods for the raffle and a huge thankyou to our members who sold the raffle tickets.

We have been donated a painting by Gary Holmes to raffle, so we are

now running another raffle which will be drawn Sunday 29 May.

Tickets are \$2 each or 3 for \$5. 1<sup>st</sup> prize Gary Holmes Painting and

Avon products. We need heaps of tickets sold again.

Marg Smith

## Wednesday mornings

It is refreshing to start early at the Wednesday morning work parties at the Gardens. Sometimes, we arrive to find the fairy floss of the morning fogs and we know we are in for a fine day. The air smells good and the bush is full of birdcalls. Many of us get on with weeding while others deliver the black mulch by barrows and buckets. Last month we were mulching up the slope from the barbecue in the Gum Forest. Above, the great stands of hoop pines

shower down their winged seeds and their seedlings are sprouting in the prickly mulch below. Some people are replacing older labels with more permanent signs. Sometimes we work deep in the shade of our established rainforest. There the paths are always shaded and edged with mosses. The wallabies are back so protection is given to the vulnerable plants. It is a while since we have seen the fox cubs, maybe grown up by now!

There is always something new. We would welcome you to our work parties. For insurance purposes, you have to be a Friends' member but that is inexpensive and can be arranged on the day. Or contact Secretary - details are elsewhere in this newsletter. *Geoff Walker*

## Grant Applications

*Our recent grant applications for funds to build a propagation house on site and also a Visitors Centre have not been successful. However, we will keep trying. If there is someone out there with special skills in grant application we would love to hear from you and to use your expertise.*

## Ground Cover Workshop

On our Sunday work morning in December, Damian Butler presented a workshop on native groundcovers in the Gardens. He gave us lots of useful information and helped with identification of the myriad of such plants coming up around our site. We finished the morning, and the year, with a special Christmas morning tea. Thanks to Judy and Margaret for doing the organising and all the people who brought such great food.

## FLRBG is having a stall at the Volunteer Expo

Lismore City Hall

Thursday 12 May 2011

10am – 4pm

Members are encouraged to come and support the committee. Phone Marie 6689 5261 or just turn up.

## FLRBG Membership

Individual membership is \$10 per year, student/pensioner rate is \$5 and there is a family rate of \$20. Contact Denis 6689 5261 for more information

## Where do pelicans go?

The big settling pond near Monaltrie Creek, south of the current Gardens area used to have up to 40 resident pelicans. One cool Wednesday morning, a few months ago, they vanished. Did they visit their 'rellies' at the mouth of the Richmond or was it west to Lake Eyre? Bird-watchers visiting earlier in the year believe the pelicans went inland.



*Our new car stickers have just arrived from the printer. Thanks to Annette Deal for her beautiful design. Stickers are for sale at \$2 each of 3 for \$5.*