

**ASGAP AUSTRALIAN PLANTS
FOR CONTAINERS STUDY
GROUP**

NEWSLETTER



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Dear Reader,

I am determined to get a Newsletter out before Christmas! A stint in hospital in August, and a long recovery which is still going on means that it won't be a full Newsletter. What I have decided to do is introduce the New members, make a few comments, and concentrate on a questionnaire that I hope you will all fill in and return (this includes Study Group Coordinators in each state too!). It will help me as Leader to know why people are growing Natives in containers, what they are growing, the media they use etc. I hope then to be able to produce Newsletters that can cover your different interests and requirements.

I have received lengthy letters from quite a few members, I will use them in upcoming newsletters, thank you for your welcome contributions.

My own pots have suffered yet again for a second year. Last year I had two bad falls at work, which made working in the garden or with my pots very difficult, I was literally in maintenance mode, watering only, hoping to really get into things this year. Health is unpredictable, as many of you would know, and it was not to be. I had to cancel a visit from one of the SA Regional Groups as I felt the garden and pots weren't up to scratch, which was disappointing. No doubt when I am finally on top of things the really hot weather will have arrived, and all I'll do is water. I am looking forward to a healthy and productive autumn!



Correa reflexa "Fat Fred", flowers late in spring here, a real showstopper!

New Members

Jeanette Devlin from Mt Isa and the Northern Rivers NSW *leads an interesting life, spending nine months of the year in Mt Isa on a mine site, where she is concentrating on container gardening due to “the dreaded white ant”, and also has container plants at her NSW home which are placed under trees during the winter months to look after themselves, then moved back under the verandah when they are home.* “It’s amazing how the atmosphere of the lonely house transforms once the containers and plants are all back in their place after we return.”

Margaret Kerr from Fairymead, Qld., *propagates Callistemons and Grevilleas in pots as they “live in a very windy site on the river and the small natives take at least two years to get going and as I have a very large garden (full of weeds) any news on growing natives in pots is useful”.*

Brenda Galey from Alexandra, Vic, *is an avid grower of natives, I have seen pictures of her garden on the Internet site that we talk on, and hope to print some of those pictures in future newsletters, particularly her plantings in stumps.*

Barry Nilsson from Maraylya, NSW, *sent a detailed letter with his soil type, pH, rainfall and some of the species he is growing “ie Flannel Flowers, Banksia, Brachychiton (plants not native to the area).”*

Pat Ettwell from, Dallas, Vic. *writes “Although I have been a member of APS for twenty odd years I have never joined a Study Group before, but as I’ve run out of garden space and have graduated to containers it’s about time I learned a bit about growing Australian plants in them”.*

Alan Rozen from Alexandria, NSW *writes “Having just moved from a house with a large garden to a converted factory with a terrace at the back – about 20 square metres – my wife and I find we need to find out more about Plants for Containers. We both tend to favour native plants, and we need advice on successfully potting these plants. We brought with us several large pots with palms, camellias and several other small plants. So far they have settled into the new environment, more so than me”.*

Other new members are **Ina Groome**, Joslin SA, **Frances Lakin**, Narooma NSW, **Vincent Churchill**, Strathfield South NSW, **Simone Disney**, Leichhardt NSW and **Grace Hartridge**, Coromandel Valley SA.



As you can see from this list, and the list of new members in the previous newsletter I have had a great response to my letter in each state’s Journal. Some of the questions that I raised in the previous newsletter, ie Darren Vandenberg’s on rejuvenating plants in large containers haven’t elicited any response, so I hope to get some answers to that and other queries from the questionnaires, which I’ll then be able to pass on to the rest of the group.

Thank you to all the members who wrote with such positive feedback on my first newsletter, if I hadn’t been ill your enthusiasm and information would have me producing a huge newsletter in November, just watch out for the next one!

I am going on a big learning curve being leader of this group, I thought I knew a lot about which natives to grow in containers, but some of your letters have had me scurrying for the books to look up unfamiliar species, especially those from Queensland members. I hope I’ll be able to have items of interest for all members in future newsletters, you can see from the remarks from the new members that people grow native plants in containers for many different reasons.

I mentioned in my first newsletter that my husband, John and myself had a small business for a while selling natives in pots. It was called “Potted Australis”, and our logo was the one I am using on the front of these newsletters, it was drawn by my step-daughter. I had a lovely time choosing pots and plants, getting the right combinations, grouping small plants into large containers and in general looking after them. The hard part was selling them, I hated to see them go! We closed the business as it wasn’t financially viable, we were selling from home, and I worked most weekends at the Nursery and couldn’t be here to help customers. We were on too small a scale, and the market wasn’t there to expand.

I learnt a lot, we did some lovely displays at APS Plant Sales, and still continue to do so. We did do one landscaping job of an office balcony in the city, using specially made tubs made of “mini-orb” lined with plastic, and plants such as *Lomandra longifolia*, *L. confertifolia*, *Austromyrtus dulcis*, *Anigozanthos* “Royal Cheer” and *Allocasuarina torulosa* amongst others. The building won a Civic Trust Award, and our landscaping was included in that, which was pretty exciting.

Now I just grow plants in pots because they make our garden look great, and I love it!

Have a safe and Happy Christmas and New Year, and please take the time to complete the questionnaire and return it in January if possible, Happy Potting, Gill Muller.