

Region

THE NATIONAL MINT

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Newsletter of the Prostanthera & Westringia Study Group
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Patron



Brian Timmis

STUDY GROUP

Membership

Fees Now

\$10

Due June 30

2004

Visit The Study Group Web Page

It can be viewed at <http://farrer.csu.edu.au/ASGAP/mints/>

Be patient, the front page opens slowly with some browsers—this problem will be remedied, hopefully in the near future!

HERES WISHING ALL MEMBERS A HEALTHY AND MINTY 2004

I trust all members had a pleasant festive season with family and friends, and hope 2004 will be a year of good health and prosperity.

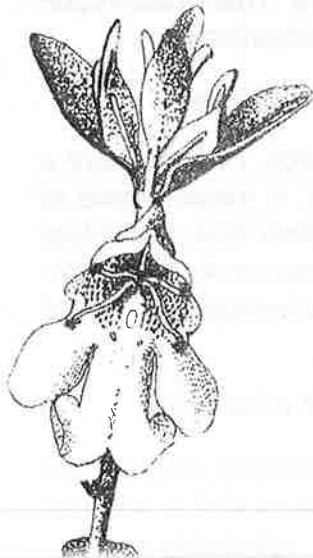
2004 is shaping up to be a very exciting and rewarding year for the Study Group. Brian Timmis and Steve Clemesha have been actively seeking out Mintbush locations on the North Coast and Northern Tablelands, with a great deal of success. Foremost they have been relocating mints recorded by Alex Floyd over his long career. Some of the plants are proving to be very interesting indeed. One species in particular, located by Steve, is not like any other mintbush I have observed and is definitely undescribed. Brian & Steve are also on the trail of a few other 'new' species.

I have been asked to be guest speaker by a number of groups and look forward to giving these presentations.

The year ended on a sad note. Study Group Coordinator Jan Sked has been diagnosed with breast cancer and consequently advised she would be unable to attend ASGAP Conference in Launceston in January 2004.

The good news is Jan has been advised the prognosis is good as the doctors are hopeful that they have caught the cancer at an early stage. Jan is confident she will be back to normal after her radium treatment is over and is looking forward to continuing as Study Group Coordinator for another year!

We all wish Jan a speedy recovery.



BARGAIN SALE—THE CRADLE OF INCENSE JUST \$10

If any member of the Study Group would like a copy please send a cheque/credit card details to:

Leonie Farrugia, Office Convenor PO Box 744, Blacktown NSW 2148,
Phone 9621 3437, Fax 9676 7603 or E-mail: office@austplants-nsw.org.au

ASGAP CONFERENCE

As this newsletter goes to print, the ASGAP conference will discuss a number of motions put forward which directly affect Study Groups. In general terms, the meeting will decide:

- whether or not to make a Study Group Meeting an integral part of all future conferences and if so, whether Study Group Leaders should then be subsidised to attend.

From your leaders perspective, I believe Study Groups are a fundamental aspect of ASGAP! I also know that the main contributing reason I have been unable to attend such conferences is due to the financial constraints. As such I feel that subsidising Study Group leaders to attend would probably see at least one other Study Group Leader attending the conferences and therefore promoting the Growing, Study and Conservation of Australian Plants.

- The other major issue to be addressed is accountability. It is proposed that at the end of each financial year that the Study Group Leader shall arrange for the auditing of the Study Group finances by an independent person or persons.

In principal I agree with this motion. However, I am also concerned about putting it into practice. Income of Study Groups such as ours is meager, only being derived from membership subscriptions or donations. Unless arrangements can be made for freebee auditing the proposal will consume much needed funding.

We look forward to hearing the outcomes of the conference.

TALKS

I was invited to be guest speaker at the **Illawarra branch of APS in November 2004**. The talk and slide show depicted the wide variety of habitat types that the genus *Prostanthera* occupy from cool coastal forests to exposed semi-alpine slopes. What was evident from the slides was that many *Prostanthera* in the wild are found in full sun environs. This observation contradicts the often stated cultivation requirement of the need for shady situations.

12 MARCH 2004 AUSTRALIAN PLANT SOCIETY CENTRAL COAST GROUP at 8 p.m.

The Central Coast Group has kindly invited me to be guest speaker in March. I will present a talk and slide show with an opportunity at the end of the talk for questions. A major theme of the talk will be the need for a census of *Prostanthera* and *Westringia* and how individual APS members can play a small yet significant role in unraveling the taxonomic confusion which exists at present in some taxa. Hopefully some members will be encouraged to record the locations of where they observe *Prostanthera* and *Westringia*.

20 OCTOBER 2004 AUSTRALIAN PLANT SOCIETY COFFS HARBOUR BRANCH

I will be giving a talk in October to the Coffs Harbour Group—the precise subject content yet to be devised. I hope to be able to spend sometime in the general area so as to visit a number of localities and further the great work Brian Timmis and Steve Clemesha are doing.

To book a talk on *Prostanthera* and *Westringia*

Groups can email me at janrob@fishinternet.com.au to arrange a suitable date.

FIELD TRIPS

Brian Timmis and Steve Clemesha have undertaken a number of field trips on the North Coast and Northern Tablelands of NSW over the last six months.

In October Brian had a trip to observe the habitat of a number of *Prostanthera* species. Along the Gwyder Highway he observed two species of mints in the Gibraltar Range National Park. One species, *Prostanthera ovalifolia* sens lat., grew to over 6 metres and the other is closely related to the Victorian taxon *Prostanthera mellissifolia*.

In the Mulligans Hut vicinity of the Gibraltar NP, grow three species of mints: *Prostanthera ovalifolia* sens lat., *P. scutellarioides* sens. lat. and *P. saxicola* var. *major*.

In the nearby Washpool National Park, Brian observed *Prostanthera* unnamed sp. (No.18 UNE) resprouting from the roots after a wildfire swept through the area the previous year.

In the Torrington area, west of Tenterfield, Brian observed *P. staurophylla* and *P. nivea* var. *nivea* growing on granite outcroppings. At Bonoo Bonoo he observed *P. sp B* at two localities along with *P. nivea* var *nivea*.

Mintbushes of Mount Warning— Northern NSW

The following is an extract of a letter by Steve Clemesha December 2003.

I went to the top of Mt Warning. My legs were a bit stiff from a lot of walking the day before so I went up at a fairly leisurely pace . You first pass through an area of subtropical rainforest. Near the half way sign you enter into moist eucalyptus forest. Soon after this zone started I observed a patch of 20-30 Prostanthera ovalifolia sens. lat.

After that there is no more mints until you reach the base of the steep rocky section. This population occurs around the base of the rocky part and all the way up to the top. The steep slopes only have about 5 species of plants (shrubs) including the mintbush. As I walked up a few young guys passed me. When I got to the top one of them said "Oh ! You made it". It was the 5th time I have been up Mount Warning and it was the first time it was clear. I was rather hopeful of something special growing on the steep slopes as it gets a lot of fog (Wollumbin means cloud catcher) but Prostanthera ovalifolia sens lat. was the only mint on the mountain.

The two populations of Prostanthera ovalifolia are probably the same form but the leaves differ because the ones near the halfway mark are in a fairly sheltered habitat while the ones at the top are very exposed but also get a lot of fog.

Share your observations ! More from Brian & Steve next time .

THE PROSTANTHERA & WESTRINGIA IDENTIFICATION & CUTTING EXCHANGE SERVICE

For those of you who do
want to know

"what plant is that?"

Its easy!

For plant identification send as complete a specimen as possible - preferably fresh; including material suitable for cuttings. These can be wrapped loosely, in lightly dampened absorbent paper enclosed within a milk carton. Prior notice by phone is advisable before dispatch via overnight post. Alternatively, a dried specimen can be posted between sheets of stiff card. In both cases, origin details, size and features such as flower colour should be included.

LASIANTHOS

**Contribution to our
publication *Lasianthos* is
always welcome.**

Members can forward articles for publication electronically to my email address janrob@fishinternet.com.au or on disk. Hard copies should be preferably typed, hand written short articles are also accepted.

**Contribute now!
Your observations are
important!**

CORRESPONDENCE

BURRENDONG ARBORETUM - The Mintbush Garden

The following is an extract of a letter received from Hazel Althofer in December 2003.

The area has been a little neglected, I'm keen to get it back on track. It is an important part of the Arboretum as one of George's favourite areas. A working bee, if possible would be a great help.

I will take your offer of cutting material when the weather is cooler, our glasshouse is not the most modern, getting too hot for another month or two. I will contact you before sending or receiving any cutting material.

We would be more than happy to receive any plants people may grow where origin details are known.

This list is what Prostanthera we have, several needing correct identification.

Prostanthera	aspalathoides	Prostanthera	nivea
	caerulea		nivea var. induta
	calycina		ovalifolia
	cruciflora		phylicifolia
	cryptandroides?		porcata
	cuneata		rhombea
	densa		rotundifolia
	denticulata?		rugosa
	discolor		sieberi
	hirtula?		spinosa
	incana		striatiflora
	lasianthos		staurophylla
	lasianthos ssp. subcoriacea		stricta
	linearis		sp. Boonoo Bonnoo
	marifolia		

The Illawarra Grevillea Park

Web site address : <http://www.grevilleapark.org/>

2004 Open Days: April 24 & 25, May 1&2, July 17&18, 24&25, September 25&26 October 2&3

Rejuvenation of the Prostanthera collection is progressing well despite the drought. Donation of plants from various people has been much appreciated.

Working Bees: To assist in the maintenance of the Grevillea Park are held most Mondays. Volunteers are always welcome but should contact **Robert Miller on 42 846768** or **Ray Brown on 42 849216** to confirm, before attending.



**SHARE YOUR
IDEAS, TIPS
&
STORIES**

WRITE TO

Robert Miller

**13 Park Rd
Bulli NSW 2516**

Or email

janrob@fishinternet.com.au

BUT

for written replies

please include a

stamped self

addressed envelope .