CORREA

Friends of Eurobodalla Regional Botanic Garden

Newsletter

President's Report

Derek Anderson

Welcome to the second edition of the Correa Newsletter for 2025. Since the last edition I have sent a thank you letter on behalf of the Friends to Trish Richardson who produces the Correa to provide items of interest and updates for the Friends. I would like to take this opportunity to repeat this thank you publicly through this edition of the Correa.

The Friends Committee meet regularly on the second Monday of the month at the Garden. If there is any issue of interest or concern you would like to have discussed by the Committee for the benefit of the Garden at one of our meetings, please send an email to the Committee Secretary Gail Stevens, whose contact details are listed below.

Since the last newsletter, there has been a change in the Committee structure. Treasurer Steve Winslade expressed an interest in organising our events, and so Steve and Vice President Sue have agreed to change roles. Sue is now acting in the role of Treasurer (a position she has held for some time previously), and Steve is now our Vice President. This doesn't change the way the committee operates but enables committee members to take on roles in which they have more extensive experience and expertise.

Garden Manager Michael, then Vice President Sue Cogger, Secretary Gail Stevens and I had a meeting earlier in the year to update the Memorandum of Understanding (M.O.U.) between the Eurobodalla Shire Council and The Friends, and the Partnership Agreement (P.A.) between the Garden Management and The Friends.

After consultation between the interested parties, these agreements have now been agreed to and signed off, and so have now come into effect. There is little change with the two agreements, just updating to accommodate some minor changes. If you would like a copy of these documents, you can contact Committee Secretary Gail.

The only significant change is the renaming of the *Sinking Fund* which has been used to assist the Garden with minor repair and replacement items such as new screen doors at the Banksia Room. This arrangement was agreed to when the new visitors centre was constructed. The Garden through Council is responsible for any major works. The sinking fund has now been renamed the *Repair and Replacement Fund* to better describe its function.

Recently the Garden Staff mounted the *From the Forest Art Exhibition* held in the Banksia Room. I had the privilege of being asked to open the exhibit on the opening night. The variety and quality produced by our local artists is quite amazing. All items were for sale, and I believe many items were purchased.

'Till next time.

Derek Anderson

President Friends of Eurobodalla Regional Botanic Garden

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***Front Page photo**: Nicola Clark: Satin Bowerbird at the Eurobodalla Regional Botanic Garden*

Garden Manager's Report

Dylan Morrisey

It is my pleasure to give you an update on the Garden in Michael's absence and whilst some might have used the opportunity to fit a bit of paid R & R, our teams have been working harder than ever to get some projects completed and keep the Garden looking in tip top shape heading into winter.

The *Wellness Walk* is almost complete, with Russell and the maintenance volunteers working at triple speed to get in the new pathways and finish off the hard landscaping including moving in some large sandstone blocks and the construction of three new bridges – no mean feat!

First section all the Wellness Walk completed

Daniel and the Garden teams busily began planting along the walk to enhance the enclosed nature of the space and match in with some of the sensory activities. With the installation of signage in early June the walk will be complete, and I urge you all to go for a wander and have a look through this wonderful new Garden project.

Other major plantings that have happened recently are establishing well. Despite having a large tree fall through the Garden at the bird hide, the plants are growing and the water feature is being visited by a large range of birds. The back of the visitor centre is coming on nicely and should be a good display in spring – if the wallabies decide to leave it alone.

From the Forest was another great success this year, with 2069 visitors through to look at the art exhibition, and all the workshops and activities well attended. I know Michael was glad to have so many of the artists involved as sitters at the exhibition, and the feedback was that they all enjoyed being able to engage with the public over their works.

While we are on events, I have a mountain (quite literally) of books ready to go for this year's book fair. I hope you are all able to make it along and find some treasures while supporting the Garden and all the great work we do.

At the time of writing, we have just celebrated Volunteer Week with a lunch prepared by the staff for our dedicated volunteers. I think the best way to succinctly demonstrate the huge contribution of our volunteers over the last year is to put it into numbers for you:

> 120 volunteers contributing over 16,000 hours, and almost 100,000 visitors welcomed to the ERBG over the past year.
>
> The nursery has produced over 30,000 plants, around 2,000 of which have been planted out into the Garden, and the rest have been sold through the shop or gone out across the shire to over 25 different projects including Landcare, ESC revegetation projects, schools, golf clubs, Mogo Zoo and Art Central in Moruya, threatened species habitat restoration projects and local land services – just to name a few.

The dedication of our volunteers never ceases to amaze me!

I think that's enough from me for now – feel free to stop and say hello if you see me wandering around the Garden.

Until next time.

Dylan

The Garden Approaching Winter

Geoff McVeigh

At this time of year the birds are much quieter, the Red-bellied Black snakes are rare, there are not so many flowers and the insects are not as visible. But there are still things to see.

Autumn Orchids are appearing and there are many species of fungi. In April the Garden held another successful fungi walk.

To **misquote** Jack Davis from the plaque on the rock near the Amphitheatre:

> The Gardens are a place of magic
> To discover and rediscover
> With the changing of the seasons

Recently I asked for a child's perspective on the Jack Davis quote and the response was something from science fiction or what she had learned that day about fungi.

Stinkhorn fungus

Coral fungus

An upside-down joey having an unusual ride

Lewin's honeyeater

Book review: The Book of Australian Trees

Sally Edsall

The Book of Australian Trees by Inga Simpson, illustrated by Alicia Rogerson, Hachette Australia, Sydney, 2021.

This book is a fantastic introduction to some of the most iconic Australian trees, primarily for children, but great for adults too. Inga Simpson is a Eurobodalla based writer, and many of the trees are local.

She writes:

> "Trees tell stories about places. Australia has some of the tallest, oldest, fattest and most unusual trees in the world…When you first stand in a forest, the trees all seem the same. But if you look more closely, they are each a little different, like people."

It's a large format book with beautiful illustrations by Alicia Rogerson, is very accessible which helps you begin that understanding of the following iconic species, many of which are found locally (botanical names are also given):

Spotted Gum, Red Ironbark, Grey Gum, Brush Box, Rose Gum, Bunga Pine, Coastal She-oak, Queensland Bottle Tree, Illawarra Flame Trees, Moreton Bay Fig, Antarctic Beech, Karri, Old Man Banksia, River Red Gum, Mountain Ash.

Digging into the past

Tricia Kaye

A herbarium is something of a hybrid between a library and a museum: it begins as a resource to help identify and classify plants, but over time it becomes a historical archive—a museum of botanical records. Occasionally, these records resurface in unexpected ways, as happened recently with a specimen of *Baccharis halimifolia* (Groundsel Bush) in our collection.

This particular sample was collected by David Rees at Cullendulla Creek. David, a former Long Beach resident, was once treasurer of the Friends of the Eurobodalla Regional Botanic Garden (ERBG) and the husband of Helen Rees, one of ERBG's founding members. Rees Creek at the ERBG is named in honour of both Helen and David.

Groundsel Bush, native to the marshes of eastern North America, is both an environmental and agricultural pest in Australia, known for forming dense, impenetrable thickets. It's increasingly invasive and a target for weed management programs. The specimen collected by David Rees caught the attention of NSW's weed botanists, headed by Pat Lu-Irving at the NSW Herbarium, via the Australasian Virtual Herbarium.

Initially, there was uncertainty about the plant's identification, since the nearest recorded sighting was near Wollongong. However, a photograph of the specimen confirmed the identification was accurate. Some of the database information, however, was incorrect—something not uncommon in herbarium records.

The mapped location initially pointed to Surf Beach, but a closer look at David's field notes revealed the true coordinates had simply been entered incorrectly into our database. His original notes confirmed the correct location as Cullendulla, accurate to within 50 metres.

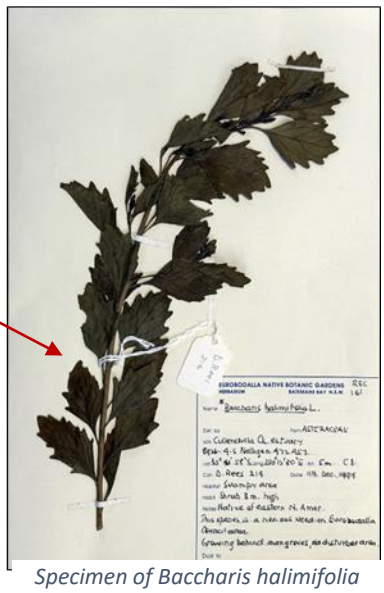
Today, such sightings are typically logged with photos, but that wasn't the standard in 1994 when this specimen was collected. The preserved material can now even be used for DNA analysis—a technique growing more accessible and widely used.

ESC's Invasive Species Officer, Paul Martin, has since learned from the local Landcare group that Groundsel Bush was once widespread around Long Beach, although no formal records were ever kept. However, without David Rees's specimen, this local ecological history might have gone unnoticed.

David probably had no idea his specimen would spark scientific interest over 30 years later. But that's the quiet power of a herbarium collection—small contributions accumulate over time, and you never know which piece of the puzzle will one day prove invaluable.

Distribution of Groundsel Bush – Atlas of Living Australia

Location of specimen collected by David Rees at Cullendulla Ck in 1994



Specimen of Baccharis halimifolia collected by David Rees

Echidna Story

Judy Carpenter

When opening April on the ERBG calendar to Dylan's wonderful echidna photo, and again on reading *The Garden Path* and seeing Daniel's foraging echidna, I was happily reminded of my echidna experience at Long Beach.

One day while busily weeding, a very resolute echidna waddled down our garden path, headlong towards the road, somewhat busy with traffic being holiday time. Quickly I attempted blocking echidna's progress. But to no avail. So grabbing my bucket, carefully captured and relocated my spikey companion to our back garden.

Not five minutes later echidna reappeared, aiming straight for the cars whizzing to and fro. Again using my trusty bucket, and not to be outsmarted, this time I deposited said monotreme in the bushland behind our garden.

Showing unwavering commitment, about ten minutes later and making a beeline for the road, echidna returned!

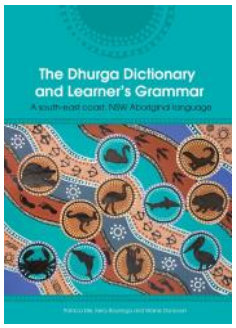
Recognising unbeatable will power, it seemed my only recourse was to shepherd this amazing creature across the road. Risking life and limb – actually everyone was very patient and amused – we made our way through the traffic jam to the beach front. Sitting, gazing out to sea, a gentleman turned to investigate the commotion behind him. Observing the elderly lady and her companion, he smiled and commented, "Well that beats walking the average dog doesn't it?!"

As we'd recently experienced heavy rain, a creek was flooding across the beach and I was most concerned echidna would be swept away. However, unbeknown to me, they're actually very capable in water and are closely related to platypus. Of course my headstrong friend dove into the creek and ably swam to the dunes beyond, en-route to Square Head. I waved farewell.

The following day a visitor to ERBG told me of research regarding echidnas being undertaken at The University of Adelaide – worth Googling or click here

Book Review: The Dhurga Dictionary and Learner's Grammar

Sally Edsall



The Dhurga Dictionary and Learner's Grammar: a southeast coast, NSW Aboriginal language. Aboriginal Studies Press, Canberra, 2022.

This book by authors Patricia Ellis, Kerry Boyenga and Waine Donovan is a treasure trove of local First Nation language and culture. While it is a primary resource for Yuin people learning their language and for the teaching and learning of the Dhurga language, it is also great for anyone interested in local indigenous culture. Language is culture and a repository of local knowledge.

The Dhurga people are part of the Yuin people, and the Dhurga language is used by many Aboriginal communities of the South Coast. It is a great research effort, much of it actively undertaken while staff at Broulee Public School and Vincentia High School were involved in a joint project to teach Dhurga as a community language.

The book has sections on who the Yuin people are, pronunciation and spelling, parts of speech, making sentences and other grammatical concepts. There is a Dhurga to English dictionary, and English to Dhurga word finder by category which is beautifully illustrated. Categories include the human body, plants, birds, clothing and shelter, colours and much more.

Highly recommended for anyone interested in local Aboriginal language and culture.

Ned's Forest

Helen Kay

(Published in Eurobodalla Natural History Society newsletter no. 204, April 2025.)

Ned's Forest, located in Meringo, is a protected area owned by BioDiversity Legacy, an organisation committed to preserving natural habitat for future generations. The property is bordered by many smaller residential properties and is approximately one kilometre from the nearby Eurobodalla National Park.

The forest consists primarily of old-growth eucalyptus trees, which are essential for the survival of various arboreal species. These trees, some over 200 years old, provide hollows that serve as nesting and shelter sites for gliders, owls, and other cavity-dependent species. Additionally, littoral rainforest patches found in the gullies support moisture-loving plants, adding to the ecological complexity of the area.

A notable feature of *Ned's Forest* is its ability to support diverse plant communities despite the absence of a permanent water source. The undergrowth includes native shrubs such as banksias (*Banksia integrifolia*), acacias (*Acacia* spp.), and Casuarinas, which provide food and shelter for a variety of animals. The mixed habitat types create an ideal environment for numerous terrestrial and arboreal species.

Ned's Forest is home to an impressive array of wildlife, including several threatened and endangered species. These include:

- Greater Gliders (*Petauroides volans*). This species, classified as endangered, relies on tree hollows for shelter, and eucalyptus leaves for sustenance
- Powerful Owls (*Ninox strenua*) – These large, nocturnal raptors depend on the forest's old-growth trees for nesting sites
- Glossy Black Cockatoos (*Calyptorhynchus lathami*) – A vulnerable species that feeds on the seeds of she-oaks (*Allocasuarina* spp.)
- Masked Owls (*Tyto novaehollandiae*) – A species that prefers undisturbed forest habitats for breeding.
- Swamp Wallabies (*Wallabia bicolor*) and Echidnas (*Tachyglossus aculeatus*) – Common ground-dwelling mammals that thrive in the protected environment
- Reptiles such as goannas (*Varanus* spp.) and various snake species also inhabit the area, playing a role in maintaining ecological balance.

The protection *of Ned's Forest* is a testament to the power of local action. In 2023, Ned McNaughton a young local naturalist, was out taking photos and discovered that the land was slated for development. Ned arranged to meet renowned Australian ecologist Professor David Lindenmayer, and together they found patches of old-growth habitat with 200+ year-old hollow-bearing trees supporting populations of threatened and critically endangered species. Their advocacy, supported by local community groups, resulted in the purchase of the property by conservation-focused investors and the organisation Biodiversity Legacy Ltd.

Photo P Spurway

Jenny Liney scholarship report

Sally Edsall

Every year the Friends awards one or more scholarships up to $5,000 for students enrolled in TAFE or University courses in the natural sciences.

The 2025 recipient is **Ella Wilden** who completed Year 12 at Moruya High School in 2024. Ella is studying for a Bachelor of Science with a double major of Environmental Science and International Relations at Sydney University. We will hear more from Ella later in the year as she completes her first semester.

In 2024 **Raine Atkinson** from Moruya Heads continued her studies in Bachelor of Animal Science at Charles Sturt University. In April 2024 she was awarded an Executive Dean's Award in recognition of outstanding academic performance.

Raine work placement

Ecology Team of the Forestry Corporation of NSW and reports: "I was privileged to work with a great team of dedicated ecologists and learn about Forestry's contribution to maintaining forest health and ecological function through a variety of educational and valuable experiences." Raine participated in bat surveys, observing a breeding colony's night activities through an infrared camera and utrasonic microphone and gained field experience, data collection and technological skills. She also undertook bandicoot monitoring and greater glider night surveying. She built on local plant and animal knowledge through this, as well as owl call-back surveys and native orchid surveys.

On campus, Raine is a founding executive member of the CSU Wildlife Conservation Society, and worked on establishing environmental conservation and educational activities for the student body. All this has meant a development in leadership and communication skills.

Raine has very exciting news. In late June this year she will be travelling to Namibia, having been accepted into a work placement at an African Wildlife Sanctuary. "I will be undertaking a three week wildlife veterinary and research project with support from the university."

2024 was also a fantastic year for a joint-scholarship holder, **Mattea Kelly** from Broulee, who completed her third year in Bachelor of Science / Bachelor of Advanced Studies (Taronga Wildlife Conservation, in conjunction with Taronga Zoo) at Sydney University. In 2025 she has commenced Honours studies.

Mattea reports that some highlights were ecology and animal ecological physiology. "I enjoyed getting involved in some fieldwork - getting to do vegetation surveys to investigate how olfactory misinformation may be used to influence wallaby browsing. This basically means looking at how we may harness sense of smell to deter wallabies from eating endangered plants. Super cool! … I also really enjoyed animal ecological physiology, exploring things such as animal nutrition and reproduction and metabolism."

Mattea – Quoll project

Mattea has worked with the World Wildlife Fund to investigate the initial post-release period of a reintroduced eastern quoll population and been involved in field trapping sessions and aiding with other projects such as Parma Wallaby translocations.

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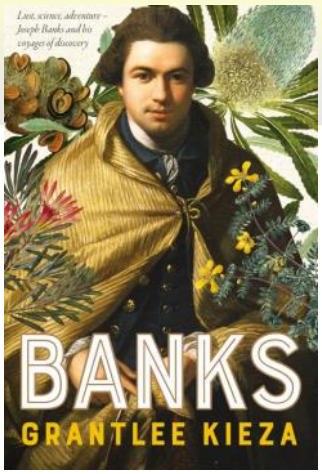
Our third 2024 recipient, **Tye Passlow** from Moruya Heads, had a successful first year at the University of Wollongong. He is studying for a Bachelor of Science.

That means that last year Friends supported students in their first, second and third years at university. We have been proud to see each of them develop progressively.

Tye wrote:

> "Starting my first year at Uni was exciting but also a bit overwhelming. I wasn't entirely sure what to expect, but I was looking forward to studying something I was passionate about and meeting new people.
>
> "Adjusting to the workload took time. At first, I struggled with time management, but I gradually developed a routine that helped me stay on top of assignments. One of my favourite topics was the biology classes because they really opened my eyes to how bacteria work and how important they are to the world.



Banks by Grantlee Kieza

Book Review by Heather Haughton

Grantlee Kieza, *Banks*, HarperCollins *Publishers*, Australia, 2020; ABC Books, 2021.

The only way to review this astonishing biography of an astonishing man, Sir Joseph Banks, is to reach for the thesaurus and look up synonyms for "superlative".

It's a weighty tome, all 562g of it, covering 484 pages, but one's fascination to find out "What will he do next?" is the over-riding reason to keep going. We know about Banks via his place on Cook's voyage, the one that matters most to us here in *Terra Australis*, through naming of Botany Bay and the species that commemorate him.

But how about his behind-the-scenes role in the actual choice and establishment of the convict colony, a personal friendship with King George III ("Farmer George"), exploration of Iceland, support for the establishment of Kew Gardens, success as a sheep breeder in England, his directorship of the East India Company which only added more wealth to his already overflowing coffers, his longevity as President of the Royal Society, and the breadth and depth of his networks with scientists in Europe and America.

Not to mention his love life! All these facets of his experiences and personality are grist to the mill for Grantlee Kieza, and you sense that he revels in delving into his source materials. Kieza maintains objectivity when describing his subject but occasionally there's a small chink: Banks "had tickets on himself" and was "drowning in his own self-importance" (p.243) after returning to England with Cook. The account of that voyage, by the way, takes up the larger proportion of the first half of the book.

I came to the book with the pre-conceived idea that Banks was a thorn in Cook's side: yes, up to a point, but they had a good deal of respect for each other, and Banks was directly responsible for Cook's promotion within the Royal Navy.

It's a big book, as mentioned, partly because Kieza fleshes out contemporaneous events, and partly because he is intent on giving Banks due respect for the totality of his contributions to the age he lived in. Well worth the read.

Friends of ERBG purchased this review copy from the shop at ERBG. It will be placed in the Wallace Herbarium library.

Friends Speaker Series: South Coast Rainforest by Dr Kevin Mills, 15 March 2025

Lesley Vincent

Tricia Kaye and Dr Kevin Mills

Our 2025 talk series kicked off with a fascinating presentation by Dr Kevin Mills, titled *Rainforests of the South Coast*. Speaking to a full house in the Banksia Room, Kevin shared his extensive knowledge of the diverse rainforest ecosystems stretching from Sydney to the Victorian border.

A highly respected botanist, Kevin has authored several books on South Coast flora and is currently working on a new publication focused on rainforests — the subject of this talk.

Kevin's presentation explored what defines a rainforest, where they occur, and which species dominate in different types. While there are six main rainforest types in the region, they are often highly fragmented, typically found in small remnant pockets across a variety of environments — from coastal sand dunes to the highest peaks inland. Despite their diversity in form and composition, rainforests tend to become structurally simpler as one moves further south.

One especially intriguing feature Kevin described was found in Morton National Park, where a geological process known as "block-gliding" causes large sections of sandstone escarpment to shift forward. These movements create sheltered gaps that are protected from fire, forming natural refuges for rainforest pockets.

During the talk, Kevin noted that there are five deciduous native rainforest trees in the region. While he initially recalled four during the Q&A session — Illawarra Flame Tree (*Brachychiton acerifolius*), Koda (*Ehretia acuminata*), White Cedar (*Melia azedarach*), and Red Cedar (*Toona ciliata*) — the fifth, he later confirmed, is the Deciduous Fig (*Ficus henneana*).

Kevin's upcoming book, which is due for release later this year, promises to be a rich resource, covering rainforest ecology, individual species, and bushwalks. It will be available through the ERBG Shop. In the meantime, his existing titles on South Coast Native Trees and Ferns are currently in stock.

Next Friends Talk in National Science Week – 9 August 2025 – *Sexual chemistry of greenhood orchids*

Dr Tobias Hayashi will present research from his PhD on pollination in greenhood orchids (Pterostylis). These orchids attract male fungus gnats by mimicking the sex pheromones of female gnats. He will also discuss pollination strategies in other Australian terrestrial orchids. **Invitations** will be emailed to all FERBG members in late June. There will be a two-week window to secure tickets before releasing to the general public.

On **Easter Sunday**, a group gathered at the Eurobodalla Regional Botanic Garden to take part in the Great Aussie Fungi Hunt—an iNaturalist initiative coordinated by Fungimap Australia. We were joined by Sofia Zvolanek, one of iNaturalist's top fungi identifiers in the country.

The day began with a guided walk through the Garden, followed by a hands-on lab session in the Herbarium to closely examine the finer features of the fungi collected. The session also included discussion of lichens, highlighting their unique characteristics and ecological roles

Thirteen distinct fungi were recorded—though many species are difficult to identify precisely. Australia is estimated to host around 200,000 fungal species, yet fewer than 10% have been formally described.

A highlight of the day was the discovery of a "fungus with teeth"—a bracket fungus spotted on a log along the Children's Walk. Unlike typical gilled mushrooms, these fungi release their spores from tooth-like or spine-like projections, earning them the nickname "tooth fungi."

Sofia Zvolanek in the lab session

samples of fungi and lichen

Chip Cherry fungus on the Children's track

Echidnas

Dylan Morrisey

Photo: Julie Martin

There is a lot to be said for sitting and listening in the bush. In the first instance, it is a wonderful way of acquiring leeches – should you be in the market for any. But apart from that, it is a fantastic way of finding out what is going on without disturbing anything. Too often when we are stomping along, chatting away, the animals hear us coming a mile off and are hunkered down or bounding away long before we catch sight of them.

But when left to go about their business undisturbed, the foraging and fossicking of our native fauna is as distinct in sound as any bird call. Whether it be the shy feeding of the cockatoos in the she-oaks, a consistent cracking drifting through the trees, or the thump, thump, thump of a wallaby through the undergrowth, the soundscape opens a whole other world of understanding to us.

Late in the afternoons, when the volunteers have gone for the day and the public have drifted out and headed home, I will often hear what can only be described as a rambling out in the bush. This is what I have come to learn is the sounds of an echidna. A loud rustle that is moving, although not quickly. They can be hard to find, because as soon as they hear you, they ball up and hide.

If you do come across one, my tip would be to get as close as is safe (for you both) and then stay still. I'm not sure if they have poor eyesight or not, but it certainly seems to be the case that if you are quiet and still, they will totally ignore your presence. That is how Daniel and I have managed to get such close-up photos of them over the last couple of years.

Photo: Daniel Bateman

From May through to September when the males are out looking for females, they are a fairly common sight in the late afternoons around the ERBG – I suspect we have a rather healthy population of them. Being most active in the cooler part of the day, they are nocturnal through the warmer months, but with the early sunsets and cooler afternoons, winter is the perfect time to come to the Garden and see them wandering about.

Daniel getting into position for that perfect shot

Bloodwoods

Helen Kay

Gang Gangs on flowering bloodwoods

As winter approaches, it is difficult to find much colour in our bushland, so it is lovely to see the Red Bloodwoods along Bingie Road flowering so vigorously and for so long. This I gather is because of the warmer weather of late and the copious amount of rain we've had.

I was keen to learn more about these stately trees. As always, I turned to our trusty but ageing edition of Costermans *Native Trees and Shrubs of SE Australia*, revised in 1983, for more information and discovered that the tree was listed as *Eucalyptus gummifera* or Red Bloodwood. It was reclassified in 1995 as *Corymbia gummifera* following research by botanists Ken Hill and Lawrie Johnson, who identified the bloodwoods, ghost gums, and spotted gums as a group distinct from the genus *Eucalyptus*. The reclassification saw about 100 species split off from *Eucalyptus*. According to the Australian Plants Society, this sparked considerable debate and controversy among botanists and is now jokingly referred to as the "Eucalypt wars".

C. Gummifera is the first described or 'type' species for this new group of trees. The name Corymbia is derived from the Latin corymbium and refers to the shape of the flower clusters or 'racemes' – the stalks or 'peduncles' of the lower flowers are longer than those of the upper flowers so that the inflorescence has an overall flat or slightly convex upper surface (like the appearance of a piece of broccoli or cauliflower). Gummifera is from the Latin for "producing gum" which refers to the sap often observed on the trunks of this species.

The tree is found along the entirety of the NSW Coast, into Queensland, north to about Bundaberg. In Victoria it is confined to the far-eastern area around Mallacoota and East Gippsland. It is very common in bushland on sandstone and sandy vegetation but is sometimes found on heavier soils. It forms a co-dominant part of coastal vegetation types such as dry sclerophyll forest and woodlands.

Red Bloodwoods typically reach heights of 15 to 30 metres and can live for over 100 years. The glossy green foliage provides a striking contrast to the reddish bark, which is rough and fibrous, forming a protective layer against harsh environmental conditions. One of the tree's fascinating features is its deep red sap, which is exuded when the bark is damaged. This sap, known as kino, has been used by Indigenous Australians for various purposes, including as a dye and in traditional medicine.

Bloodwood blossom

Photo: Tricia Kaye

The racemes of creamy white flowers appear in late summer and early autumn. Clusters containing seven flowers are typically found at the ends of branches. The fruit makes for easy identification - it is an urn-shaped capsule, up to 20 mm long by 15 mm wide, with a deeply depressed disc and enclosed valves. Commonly called a gumnut, it is the reason the species was first placed in the genus Eucalyptus.

Bloodwoods are a valuable food source for birds, insects and other animals. Their white flowers are attractive to nectar-feeding insects and other animals, including birds such as the Gang Gang Cockatoos seen among the blossoms in Gee Hounsell's photo. The gum nuts are favoured by cockatoos, and the sap can be a food source for some gliders. The trees can provide habitat for various birds, both those that nest in them and those that forage in the surrounding areas. Bees and other insects are important pollinators for bloodwood trees, facilitating cross-pollination and seed production.