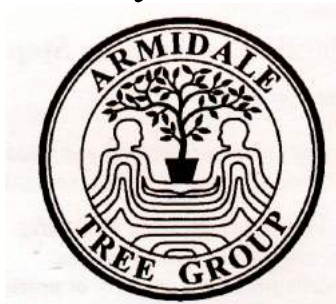


ARMIDALE TREE GROUP NEWSLETTER

Number 109

Autumn Edition

May 2017



EVERY TREE COUNTS

Editor: Kerry Steller

The Armidale Tree Group
80 Mann St, Armidale, 2350
Phone 67711620
www.armidaletreegroup.org

Editor's note: 2017 Autumn Edition

Look at ATG's new initiative **EVERY TREE COUNTS**. You will be amazed and excited about our new initiative to start a landscape-sized project to direct ATG's efforts over the next 30 years. We really want to make a difference and an impact on our landscape but we need your help. Every \$10 donated will result in a tree planted and maintained!! We can do this...with your support. We are keen to work in partnerships, take donations or bequests.

I have inserted our **Every Tree Counts** trifold brochure in the newsletter and also included a full sized brochure in our mailout. We are currently setting up a website www.everytreecounts.com.au to showcase our work. Donations can be made at <http://armidaletreegroup.org.au/support-us/> and all are tax Deductible.

We held a successful public forum in Armidale Town Hall in February as part of the Restore, Regenerate, Revegetate conference. We had three inspiring presentations from Veronica Doerr, Richard Thackway and Paul Gibson-Roy and a musical and photographic presentation from Dave Eddy and Laszlo Szabo. The presentations are available from Dave Carr (dbcarr@bigpond.com) if anyone would like a copy. They will go up on the website eventually. Thanks to Inspiring Australia and EcoArts Australis for the funding for this event. See the *Armidale Declaration* in this newsletter from the 120 delegates. It is being sent to our Prime Minister this week.

The ATG has received two **Stronger Communities Community Grants** Armidale Regional Council. *Education Centre for Biodiversity Education* received \$13, 061 and the Tree Group in conjunction with the Armidale Urban Rivercare Group received \$35,000 for the *Rehabilitation of Dumaresq Creek from Canambe Street to Cookes Road*.

The Armidale Tree Group recently won a \$1,000 Council grant, which we have put towards machinery purchases to better maintain the Mike O'Keeffe Woodland. We would like to acknowledge the support of the Armidale Regional Council in helping us to keep the Woodland an enjoyable and accessible place for the local community.

We have just been awarded another Regional Science Hub grant of \$2000 to run a workshop later on in the year on the value of having logs and timber on the ground. David Hardwick (former ATG manager) will return

to look at how logs encourage water infiltration, build soil carbon and provide shelter for pastures. Thanks to Inspiring Australia.

A summary of the articles in this ATG Summer Newsletter

- *Every Tree Counts* brochure
- *The Launch of Every Tree Counts and School plantings* by Kerry Steller
- *The ATG Bus Tour for Every Tree Counts* by Kerry Steller
- *Autumn in our Garden* by Warren Sheather
- *Woodland Wonderland* by Alicia Cooper
- *Bottlebrushes* by Peter Metcalfe
- *The Armidale Declaration* (by 120 delegates at the RRR Conference)

Kerry Steller (editor)

A Treeful Farewell

Dan Davies, long-time ATG employee, has officially resigned from his position as General Manager. Dan has been associated with the Tree Group since 1987, fulfilling various roles from planter of trees to running our Field Services division and finally stepping into the role of General Manager. Dan often went above and beyond his duties while shouldering the weight of running both Field Services and General Management, and his sunny crotchiness will be missed by us all.

Dan is moving on to spend time with his family and pursue his own many and varied interests, but we hope that he will still be involved with the Tree Group in some fashion.

We here at the ATG would like to wish all the best to our favourite jongleur.

Autumn Opening hours:
Monday – Friday, 9:00am – 5:00pm,
Saturday – Sunday, 9:00am – 1:00pm.

Winter Opening Hours:
Monday – Friday, 9:00am – 4:00pm,
Saturday, 9:00am – 1:00pm.
Sunday, Closed

Volunteers needed!.

Volunteers needed!. We are looking for a member with some experience in marketing. We are hoping to launch our range of landscaping plants called "Hardy New Englanders" and need someone to help develop a marketing plan. Contact Alicia at the nursery if you are interested.

Support Us

Being a community owned, social enterprise we welcome support and rely on the input of members and volunteers.

Join Us or Renew your membership (Due 30th June each year)

Membership is only \$5 a year. Not only will you be helping us continue our mission of sustaining the New England, you will also receive great member benefits, such as tours of private local gardens, free day courses and much more! To become a member simply download the Membership Application Form, fill it in and email it

to manager@armidaletreegroup.org.au

Alternatively, you can post it to 80 Mann St, Armidale, 2350 or simply fill one in when you're at the nursery.

Please ensure you save the form to your desktop before filling it in.

[Membership Form](#)

There is also a membership/renewal form attached at the end of this newsletter if you wish to print it.

Donations over \$2 to the Armidale Tree Group Fund will attract a Tax Deductible Donation. Donations to **Every Tree Counts** will go to this Account and are Tax Deductible.



We have had an interesting season for giant fungi. 30cm high at Banded Bee Farm.
Photo: Dave

Every Tree Counts

What Is Every Tree Counts?

The Every Tree Counts Initiative is an ambitious, large-scale revegetation project developed and managed by the Armidale Tree Group. The main aim of this 30-year project is to address large scale landscape/environmental issues across the New England region by raising funds, building partnerships and managing projects.

Every Tree Counts will be guided by the best science available and will provide a cohesive, targeted project to channel multiple funding sources into landscape repair. We hope to encourage community participation in contributing to the things people love and care about, and to tackle any issues of concern. Our two-year management plan ensures that every tree we plant really will make a difference.

We want to make a real difference to the endangered treescapes of New England and we need all the help we can get!

Who Are We?

The Armidale Tree Group is a community owned, not for profit organisation that has been in operation for over 30 years. We pride ourselves on delivering high quality work and we have grown and established over 1.5 million trees and shrubs since 1983.

We have a long history of implementing environmental projects through government and private funding.

80 Mann St
PH: 026777 11620
E: manager@armidaletreegroup.org.au
W: www.armidaletreegroup.org.au

Proven Methods

Your donation to Every Tree Counts can go a very long way and we are committed to seeing that it has the most effective real-world results as possible.

If we cut out the ground preparation and maintenance, the quality of the trees we plant would severely diminish. Competition from weeds and lack of water/nutrients stunts the growth and produces a less vigorous tree.

It all comes down to quality over quantity. Most, if not all, people would rather know that their donation was being well managed and was helping establish thriving plants to be enjoyed for many decades and generations to come.

Where To From Here?

We are in this for the long haul (and we hope you will be too!). The three initial Every Tree Counts projects include:

- **Saumarez Creek Wildlife Corridor:** Our most ambitious project, where we will work with willing landholders and other participants to create a corridor linking the eastern and western sides of the Northern Tablelands.
- **Gara River / Imbota Area:** Combating dieback and increasing connectivity.
- **Armidale Urban Forest:** This will encourage a symbiotic relationship between wildlife use and passive recreation. A three hectare planting on the Dumaresq Creek floodplain which will encourage a symbiotic relationship between wildlife use and passive recreation.



EVERY TREE COUNTS

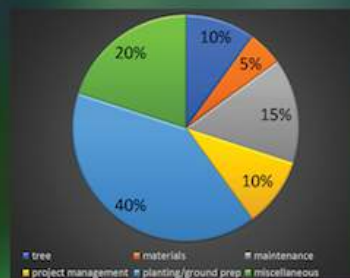


Your Donation

We want you to be comfortable knowing exactly where your dollars will go.

\$10.00 will pay for a tree, all materials, planting and up to 2 years maintenance until establishment.

The Armidale Tree Group will provide \$0.50 per tree as an in-kind contribution for project planning and materials.



Benefits

- Connectivity
- Brings back the birds
- Provides animal habitat
- Beneficial insects
- Reduces soil erosion
- Biodiversity
- Genetic diversity
- Aesthetic enhancement
- Carbon storage
- Livestock growth
- Reduces livestock losses
- Reduces salinity

Supporting ETC & the Future

We can't do this on our own! Local support will be key to the success of this project. There are many ways individuals and organisations can be a part of Every Tree Counts.

We want to work with landholders in the initial site areas to build symbiotic corridors. Together, we can establish a worthwhile, long reaching venture with numerous benefits to both parties. Please contact us if you would like to know more about this initiative.

Donations and/or bequests will enable us to get trees in the ground and ensure that they will be maintained through their crucial first two years. We can target your donation towards a specific project or use, if requested. Your legacy will live on for many decades to come.

We talk about connectivity in the landscape, but what about connectivity between businesses and organisations? Through partnerships, we can help with carbon offsetting, staff giving programs, triple bottom line outcomes and volunteering opportunities.

Together, we can make the future sustainable, productive and beautiful.

If you would like to be a part of Every Tree Counts, please visit www.everytreecounts.com.au and like us on Facebook.

If you would like to donate please visit: <http://armidaletreegroup.org.au/support-us/>

School plantings and the Official Launch of Every Tree Counts at the Urban Forest



The Creeklands in Armidale behind North Soccer Field and up to Cookes Rd were buzzing with activity as around 300 school students planted an Urban Forest on 1st, 2nd and 3rd March. Students from the Waldorf School, Armidale High, O'Connor and NEGS planted over 2,000 trees over the three days.

Supervised by their teachers and the Armidale Tree Group volunteers the students planted, staked, placed milk carton guards and mulched the trees and shrubs. All were watered after planting and luckily received a later drenching from a thunderstorm.

On Saturday 4th March around 50 community volunteers turned up to plant a further 800 trees for the Official Launch by Dave Carr of Every Tree Counts.

This well-designed forest –park has both dense and sparse areas, glades, creeks and tunnels between the trees. It will be a place for unstructured play for kids and a habitat for wildlife whilst providing areas for people to walk, sit, think and meet with others. The landscape design allows for rushes, grasses and sedges near the banks of the floodway. Riparian shrubs are next and beyond these are planted the forest of Mountain Gums, Manna Gums, New England Peppermints, River Oaks, Swamp Gums, Blue Box, Yellow Box, Snow Gums and Rough Barked Apples.



Armidale Urban Forest



School and community plantings



PIC•COLLAGE



David Carr launches
Every Tree Counts



The first tree is
planted in the Urban
Forest



Great community
support

PIC•COLLAGE

ATG Management Committee April Bus Meeting by Kerry Steller

For our April meeting the ATG committee decided to do a Saturday afternoon tour of possible sites along Saumarez creek for the Every Tree Counts landscape –scale project.



We headed off west from the nursery on the McRaes of Uralla mini bus feeling like a group of school students let loose on an excursion. With myself at the wheel we motored to Saumarez Ponds and the start of our project. The Banded Bee Farm owned by

Jane Pickard, Pete Barkley and Ray South is to be revegetated extensively. Perimeter planting has commenced on this biodynamic farm that uses no chemicals for weed control. A drone was used to take aerial shots of the property on Dumaresq Rd and we discussed where best to commence the creek planting where native grasses were abundant in places.



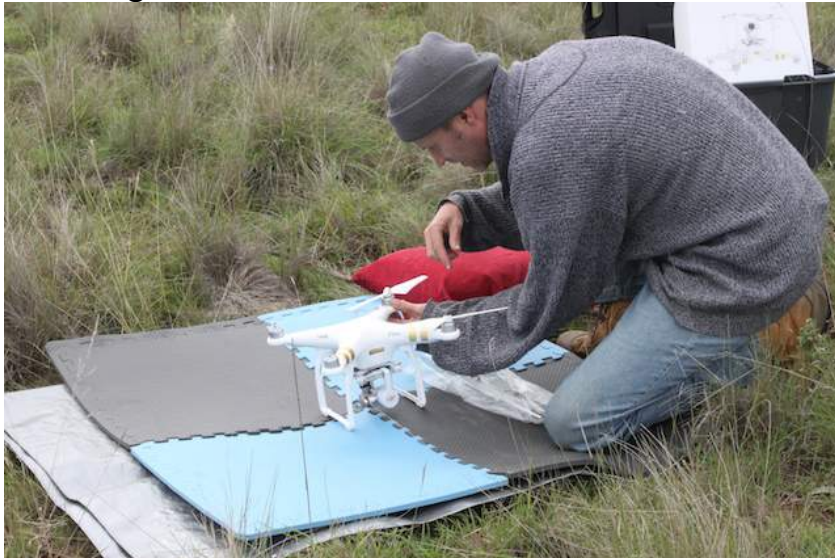
Banded Bee Farm at Saumarez Ponds Photo: Dave Steller

Our next stop was the Saumarez TSR where Saumarez Creek crosses the New England Highway, a barren wind-swept area that is clearly visible to the public.



Saumarez TSR looking south towards Saumarez Creek
Photo: Dave Steller

Again the drone took aerial shots of this area so that we can monitor before and after plantings on this site. It was interesting to note that this site was an early Tree Group planting (1990) under the Eucalyptus Regeneration Programme.



The Drone being set up to take flight over
Saumarez Creek to monitor this TSR.
Photo: Dave Steller



The committee and others looking for the drone at the Saumarez TSR.
Photo: Dave Steller

From the Saumarez TSR we travelled to the place where Saumarez Creek meets Salisbury Waters on Enmore Road. We examined another TSR to be planted and observed many farms along the creek where we can explore the possibility with landholders of providing some connectivity for wildlife.



This is what we are fighting! Help us revegetate the landscape for the future of our land
Photo: Dave Steller

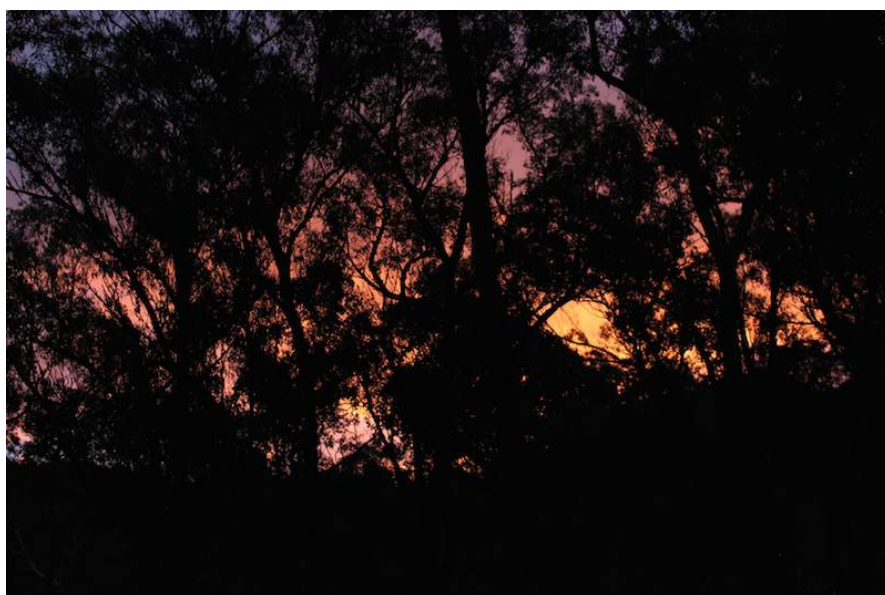
We finally made it to Dangars Falls in the daylight of daylight saving – what a torrent of water there was going over the falls. We had a lovely dinner, watched the sunset then drove home in the slight drizzle that decided to set in. On the whole it was the best meeting ever!!



Salisbury waters flows over Dangars Falls in Oxley Wild River National Park
Photo: Dave Steller



Chris and Michael cook a great BBQ.
It was well worth the wait!
Photo: Dave Steller



We finished on
Sunset and it was
brilliant
Photo: Dave Steller

Woodland Wonderland-2 Years On

by Alicia Cooper

This month marks the close of our two-year project-The *Woodland Wonderland Lend-a-Hand*.

Dreamt up by long-time staff member Rob Johnson, this project sought to raise funds for planting out areas of the Mike O’Keeffe woodland. This popular remnant of a natural grassy woodland offers a tranquil setting for passive recreation activities enjoyed by the wider community. We had a number of objectives that we wished to achieve with this project, including:

- Improving habitat for local wildlife
- Restore and preserve native vegetation
- Enhance visitor’s enjoyment of picnics, rambles and birdwatching



With the generous support of our members and customers, we raised roughly \$12,000.00, for which we were incredibly grateful. This ensured that not only could we grow and plant out a high number of seedlings, but we were also able to implement a 2-year management plan. In March 2015, drawing once more on the goodwill of the community, we had around 75 people helping us to plant out 3,900 seedlings. This was a fantastic effort and we would like to offer our thanks once more to everyone who lent a hand to their woodland.



Successful Woodland Planting

Although this month marks the official end of the project, our management of the Mike O'Keeffe Woodland continues, as does the support of our volunteers! We would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the woodland walkers who often keep the area free from rubbish or donate their time to plant new seedlings. Thank you to all of you from everyone here at the Armidale Tree Group!



Tim & Helen Nelson adding to the future Woodland with the help of Snort.

Autumn in our Garden 2017

By Warren Sheather

Autumn has arrived providing relief from the scorching summer temperatures. Because of the wide range plants in the garden we are assured of having something in flower every season of the year. Autumn is no exception with plenty of flowers to catch the eye.

The Goodenias are in the Goodeniaceae family in company with the Dampieras and Scaevolas.

We have two species in cultivation and both have cheerful yellow flowers that are carried for many months. *Goodenia ovata*, the Hop Goodenia, is a small to medium shrub. Ovate leaves are about ten centimetres long with toothed margins. The flowers are two centimetres across, yellow and very conspicuous. Flowering extends from August to February with sporadic flowering at other times. Light occasional pruning is appreciated. *G. ovata* is a widespread species and is found in all mainland states and territories except Western Australia. In some forested areas the Hop Goodenia may become the dominant understorey shrub.

G. ovata has the distinction of being one of the first Australian plants introduced (1793) into England.

Goodenia decurrens is not well known in cultivation. This is a pity because, like *G. ovata*, it is hardy with a lengthy flowering period. *G. decurrens* is a small, upright shrub with multiple stems. The leaves are oblong with coarsely toothed margins. The flowers are profuse and flowering extends from August to November. Light pruning is also beneficial. This would be a colourful plant to use in the foreground of native garden beds. We first came across this species in the Hunter Valley, many years ago. A few miserable plants were growing on the edge of a bitumen road. Cuttings were collected and since then we have used specimens in most of our gardens. *G. decurrens* also has a long horticultural history being introduced into England in 1825. Both Goodenias propagate readily from cuttings.



Goodenia decurrens. Photo: Warren Sheather

Grevillea x semperflorens is a hybrid that originated in England. The parents are said to be *G. juniperina* and *G. thelemanniana*. A seedling appeared in a Plymouth garden in the 1920's. *G. x semperflorens* is a shrub reaching a height of two metres in our garden. The branches are slightly pendulous. Leaves are divided into small segments and up to 45 millimetres long. Flowers may be terminal or carried in leaf axils. They are orange-yellow and red and attract honeyeaters. Flowering extends over many months. This has proved to be a hardy hybrid that propagates

readily from cuttings.

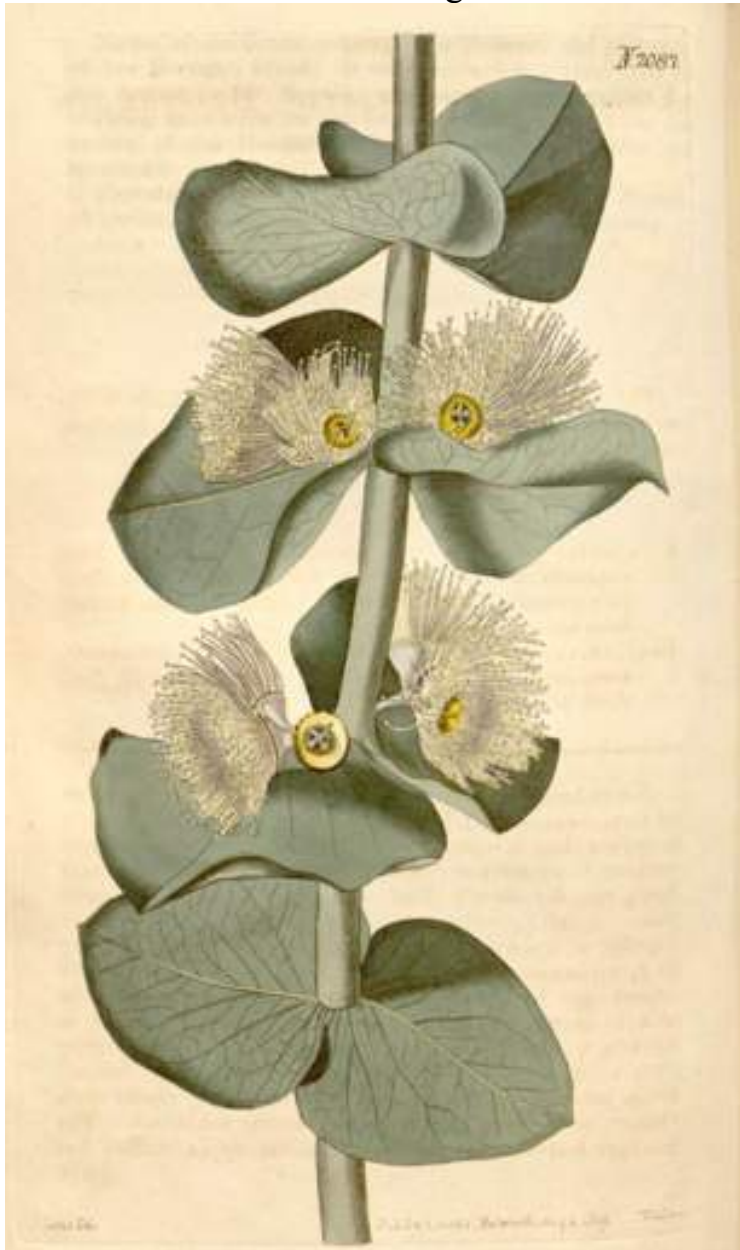


Grevillea x semperflorens: Photo: Warren Sheather

Eucalyptus pulverulenta, the Silver-leaved Mountain Gum, is a small tree that reaches a height of eight metres in our garden. The species develops a multi-stemmed growth habit in the wild. Our trees have a single trunk. Juvenile leaves are held in opposite pairs and rounded with a waxy bloom. Plants rarely produce adult foliage. Buds are held in groups of three at the base of each leaf. Large flowers are white and appear in the cooler months.

E. pulverulenta is best described as having an irregular growth with branches growing in all directions. The species could be grown in groups

or shrubberies where the foliage will contrast with that of other plants.



Eucalyptus pulverulenta

E. pulverulenta is restricted to isolated populations on the Central and Southern Tablelands. The species was named in 1819. The image, accompanying the article, is from the description in the Curtis Botanical Magazine of 1819. The species name means covered with powder referring to the waxy bloom on the branches and foliage.

BOTTLEBRUSHES by Peter Metcalfe

Everybody grows bottlebrushes. They are colourful and hardy plants that are rewarding in the garden. ATG regularly adds bottlebrushes to farm plantings to add to the biodiversity of plantings by providing a rich source of nectar for birds and insects. The honeyeaters are attracted when the bottlebrushes are flowering and the many insect eaters are attracted by the insects that come for the nectar and pollen. Other than a specialised sawfly not many insects eat the leaves of bottlebrushes, probably because they are usually tough and laden with oils typical of other members of the eucalyptus (Myrtaceae) family. Hold a leaf up to the light and you can see the oil glands.



Callistemon pungens (Lana Bottlebrush).

Photo courtesy of Warren Sheather <http://www.yallaroo.com.au/>

In nature bottlebrushes (*Callistemon* species) typically grow in poorly drained and nutrient poor soils. Usually in any genus of Australian plants most species are to be found in WA but the bottlebrushes break the rules by having the vast majority of species native to the eastern states and just 2 from WA. The genus was well named by the excellent botanist Robert Brown. From the Greek kalos- beauty and stemon – thread which describes accurately the stamens which make the flowers beautiful.

There are a huge number of cultivars of bottlebrushes and this can be explained by the simple “open” pollination system of the genus. There are no specialised pollinators for each species to keep them “pure”. The shallow cups that hold nectar at the base of each flower allows a huge range of insects and birds to reach the nectar. The most effective pollinators are honeyeaters which get dusted with pollen as they reach in past the anthers and stigmas to reach the nectar below. Bees and many other insects can roam around below the anthers, collecting nectar without touching the stigmas and anthers above. There are several natural hybrids found in the bush and hundreds of cultivars have been selected from seedlings arising from cross pollination between different species growing in gardens. See Wrigley and Fagg 1993 for an impressive compendium of species and cultivars of *Callistemon* that range from white through cream and green to pinks and salmon through to various shades of crimson and deep red.



Callistemon flavovirens

Photo courtesy of Warren Sheather <http://www.yallaroo.com.au/>

New England is the home of quite a few species; virtually all of them worthy of a place in the garden. They are particularly attractive to honeyeaters such as Eastern Spinebills. Local bottlebrushes grow in poor soils such as coarse granite, trachyte and even serpentinite-derived soils. In cultivation bottlebrushes will grow in a wide range of soils and are fairly drought resistant. Some cultivars are frost tender but ATG does not offer those for sale.

The best known and most widely grown is *C. pungens* which is known as Lana Bottlebrush, Tom's Cabin Bottlebrush and other names as different populations were found scattered across New England. It has purple flowers about 6cm long and 4 cm wide. The species name refers to the pungent (sharp) point to each of the rather stiff leaves. A bright pink form of *C. pityoides* was found locally at "Banalasta" near Bendemeer. *C. flavovirens* is found at Torrington and has green flowers. At least four other bottlebrushes are found at Torrington State Conservation Area.



Callistemon comboynensis (Cliff Bottlebrush)

Photo courtesy of Warren Sheather <http://www.yallaroo.com.au/>

C. comboynensis has been found at Mann River Nature Reserve. It has bright red flowers and the young foliage is soft and furry. The local cultivar of the widespread River Bottlebrush (*C. sieberi*) is a tough little plant with cream flower heads that grows in swamps towards Ebor. There are pink flowering forms available. It is named to honour a Czechoslovakian botanist F. W. Sieber. *Callistemon* "Bakers Creek"

comes from a stream out near Bundarra. It was planted in the Mike O’Keeffe Woodland over towards Kentucky Street and has proven to be a vigorous and showy cultivar with large red flower heads.

Callistemons have evolved with bushfires. This is shown by the way plants hold their woody “gumnut” fruits year after year. The fruits remain green and fire resistant. Once a fire kills the mother plant all the fruits dry out and the tiny thread-like seeds are released into the ash bed. At the ATG nursery bottlebrushes are propagated from seed collected from wild populations. The mature fruit are collected and allowed to dry out and drop their seed. The seeds are then sown into seedling mix to be pricked out later into Hikos. Even though the seeds are very small they remain viable for some years.



Callistemon sieberi (River Bottlebrush)

Photo courtesy of Warren Sheather <http://www.yallaroo.com.au/>

Not only can new plants develop from seeds but the old burnt-off plants can sprout again from the base. This ability to re-sprout means that bottlebrush plants in cultivation can be cut back to quite thick stems. New

shoots will develop to rejuvenate an old plant. Mature plants can be given a “short back and sides” with hedge clippers to stimulate lateral buds and thicken the foliage and ensure prolific flowering next season.

Keep the plants watered during spring as they develop their flower buds. During the last two dry springs many plants aborted their flower buds and flowering was quite poor.

After flowering it is best to “dead-head” the plants. Under each flower head there are lateral buds that will sprout if the old heads are nipped off. There is a weak point just under the flower head that can be snapped with the thumbnail. All cultivars continue to grow on beyond the flower head, most with a single bud but some branch after flowering and so do not need the usual “dead-head” pruning.

ATG always has a good selection of bottlebrushes so you can plant a range of species and cultivars to provide different colours, different foliage and a longer flowering season for the birds and insects. The classification of bottlebrushes is under debate at the moment with some taxonomists combining Callistemons with Melaleuca in the one genus. Just wait and see if the “splitters” or the “clumpers” win.

The Armidale Declaration

This declaration was agreed to by the 120 delegates at the final session of *Restore, Regenerate, Restore: A Conference on Restoring Ecological Processes, Ecosystems and Landscapes in a Changing World*, held at the University of New England, Armidale, NSW, from 5–9 February 2017.

At the conference, some of Australia’s and the world’s leading practitioners, extension agents and scientists shared an impressive body of practical and scientific knowledge of how we are restoring our natural heritage and environmental capital across the continent, acknowledging the good work of the past 30 years.

- Conference delegates celebrate the significant contributions of many communities across Australia to repair their local environments. At the same time, we lament the continuing decline

in the extent and condition of Australia's native terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems and the impact that this will have on the health, prosperity, wellbeing and cultural legacy of future generations.

- We note that we have only just begun to address the vast repair bill that confronts us. We have developed the skills, knowledge and passion to meet this challenge, but lack the government policies and incentives to achieve the scale of response required.
- We therefore recommend development of the means to reverse the ongoing decline in Australia's natural environment, based on stable investment, decoupled from politics and with bipartisan support, that retains and enhances social capital, and that is independently administered in order to support the actions and research required.
- The conference urges your government and those of the states and territories to support Indigenous groups so they can continue to work on country to manage our natural resources through the application of cultural science.
- We recommend ensuring that the principle of 'net gain in biodiversity' underpins all environmental regulation.
- We recommend the establishment of a federal land and water agency as the premier research and development organisation for natural resource management in Australia, in accord with the 2010 recommendations of the Productivity Commission.
- We recommend the support and continued development of stable, long-term government institutions for natural resource management, and the facilitation of strong partnerships between government, community and industry.
- Finally, we recommend commonwealth, state and local governments define and mandate the use of native germplasm in landscaping works associated with publically funded road, rail and other infrastructure programs.

The Armidale Declaration is published at
<http://conferencecompany.com.au/revegconf2017/>.



Professor Nick Reid
Chair, Local Organising Committee,
Restore, Regenerate, Revegetate

Membership Application/Renewal

Name: _____
Address: _____

Telephone: _____
Email: _____

Payment method: cash / cheque / credit card / direct credit

Membership is \$5.00 per year

Donation \$ _____

Please find enclosed my/our cheque for \$ _____

Make cheques payable to Armidale Tree Group Inc.

or

Please debit my credit card for \$ _____

Card type: Visa / Mastercard only
Card number: _____
Expiry date: _____
CCV number: _____
Name on card _____

Signature: _____

To pay by Direct Credit Please remit payment to
BSB: 932000 Account No...620682 (please tag payment as 'subs')

accounts@armidaletreegroup.org.au

Donations over \$2.00 are tax deductible to The Armidale Tree Group Fund

Date processed: _____

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