



**Australian Network for Plant Conservation Inc. (ANPC)**

**President's Report  
To the Annual General meeting, 15 November 2016**

This is the 25th year of the ANPC and it is pleasing to see that we continue to maintain our role as Australia's key plant conservation organisation.

Our submission on the proposed NSW Biodiversity reforms (*Biodiversity Conservation Act Bill 2016* and *Local Land Services Amendment Bill 2016*) highlights one area where the ANPC has been active this year. This submission was coordinated by ANPC Vice President Bob Makinson and I thank him and several of the committee members for their efforts in finalising this document. Following on from the Biosecurity submission Bob also coordinated last year, I recently attended the first environmental biosecurity stakeholder engagement forum in October at the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources where the ANPC was a key stakeholder. The purpose of the forum was to provide an opportunity for relevant stakeholders to discuss environmental biosecurity matters and share ideas, with the focus on better engagement and collaboration on key environmental biosecurity issues, such as Myrtle rust and other plant pathogens.

Last year we entered into a partnership with the Society for Ecological Restoration Australasia (SERA) and assisted in the development of the National Standards for the Practice of Ecological Restoration in Australia which were launched at the National Seed Science Forum in March.

There continues to be a high level of community interest and support for plant conservation and the ANPC continues to enhance its capacity to play a key role in facilitating and communicating plant conservation initiatives throughout Australia. This is reflected in the ongoing participation of land managers, government departments, industry, the volunteer conservation movement and the broader community in ANPC workshops and conferences, and the requests we get from other organisations and government to participate in and comment on various flora conservation initiatives.

While I continue to be greatly impressed by the dedication and breadth of knowledge of ANPC members, we still face significant challenges. We need to ensure that we effectively promote the increased recognition among the broader Australian community of the inherent value and cultural significance of the flora. We also need to ensure that we remain focussed on our core business of facilitating the conservation of a unique flora, the recovery of threatened species, ecological restoration and the management of remnant vegetation.

## **2016 ANPC Conference APCC11**

The ANPC's 11<sup>th</sup> national conference, the 11<sup>th</sup> Australasian Plant Conservation Conference, is being held in Melbourne this week – the ANPC's primary event for this year.

The conference is bringing together a diverse range of participants including botanists, ecologists, land managers, and on-ground plant conservation managers from around Australia to review and highlight plant conservation achievements and challenges. The theme for the conference is "*New Approaches to Plant Conservation Challenges in the Modern World*". Together we will explore existing approaches to plant conservation across Australia, highlighting significant achievements and evaluating the effectiveness of our current approaches. The conference is also providing an important opportunity to explore what are the major challenges Australian plants will be facing in the next few decades, and to identify new directions and approaches that will be required if we are to continue to conserve our unique floral heritage.

Changing climates and ongoing extensive habitat degradation continue to challenge many plant species. Being at the leading edge of this change, we will be held to account by future generations of Australians should we not do everything possible to arrest and reverse species decline. Developing the logistical and technological capacity to ensure that we have sufficient high quality seed for species restoration and understanding how to best use mutualistic organisms will undoubtedly improve our capacity to recover and conserve plant species. Perhaps a more significant challenge is how to reconnect Australians with our many wonderful and unique plants, and developing conservation approaches that maximise the benefits for people and plants are required to do this successfully. By exploring the frontiers of Australian plant conservation through new and emerging ideas we will begin developing adaptive approaches to conservation that will be necessary to respond to future challenges.

I would like to thank the sponsors and the conference organising committee: John Morgan, Ben Zeeman, Susan Hoebee, Trevor Edwards, Susanna Venn, David Cantrill, Paul Gibson-Roy, David Coates, Jo Lynch, Martin Driver and Karina Salmon for their huge effort in coordinating the conference, along with the team of La Trobe University student volunteers. In particular, Jo Lynch and Carly Westbye in the ANPC office have worked tirelessly to ensure that the conference will run smoothly and have dealt with the numerous details and issues that have arisen since preparation began more than a year ago.

## **Workshops, Projects and Outreach**

ANPC Project Manager, Martin Driver, has had a very busy year delivering a total of 13 workshops in NSW. Six Plant Identification workshops were held in the Riverina Local Land Services region: at [Cocoparra National Park](#), [Tarcutta Valley](#), and four [Rangelands Paddock Walks](#) supported by the NSW Environmental Trust and Riverina LLS. More of these workshops are planned for next year. In addition, Plant Identification workshops were held in the Murray LLS region for [Barham Landcare](#) and Corowa Landcare, along with three in the [Western LLS region](#) at Broken Hill and White Cliffs (with a fourth scheduled for Yantabulla in December). [Two Seed Collection Workshops](#) at Broken Hill and Menindee were also held with another scheduled for Corowa in December. ANPC Workshop participants this year have exceeded 250 people across NSW.

Another successful Myrtle rust workshop was held in Darwin in February by ANPC Vice President Bob Makinson, with support from the Bjarne K Dahl Trust, the Royal Botanic Gardens and Domain Trust, and Charles Darwin University.

The Bring Back the Banksias project has continued, with an e-newsletter commencing, and a proposed workshop with Trust for Nature Victoria and North East CMA scheduled for next week, 25 November. There is another workshop scheduled in western Victoria for 24 February 2017 in conjunction with Glenelg Hopkins CMA and the Victorian Volcanic Plains genetic studies progress and other related population research studies.

The ANPC collaborated with the Australian Seedbank Partnership and provided assistance with organisation of the National Seed Science Forum held in March at the Australian Botanic Garden Mt Annan. This important conference brought together researchers from across Australia to improve our collective understanding of seed biology as well as improve germination and long term storage techniques. It was also an important networking opportunity for the ANPC to connect researchers and practitioners with a number of linkage opportunities being pursued.

In July Martin and I presented at the Australian Association of Bush Regenerators (AABR) Restoration Standards Forum where a range of practitioner-oriented talks were presented. This provided an opportunity to highlight the ANPC to a new audience and fostered some new linkages and participants in later ANPC workshops.

Martin participated in a NSW Office of Environment and Heritage run workshop in October which engaged a group of statewide ecological specialists to model and test biometric assumptions for the state Biometric Assessment Modelling.

Over the past 12 months, the ANPC has continued to coordinate the subcontracting of the Orchid Conservation Program to the Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria. Most of the individual projects in this program are now complete, with only one project still continuing with Alcoa Portland, and the Program is now run through the RBGV.

More broadly our outreach efforts continue to expand through a range of social media with the regular sharing of news and events in plant conservation via Twitter, Facebook, Google+, and LinkedIn. The monthly ANPC News email newsletter currently reaches 629 subscribers.

The new ANPC website which was launched last year has continued to improve, with online payment processing for membership applications, renewals, and publication sales introduced this year. New pages were also added including the hosting of the new publication '*Climate-ready revegetation – a guide for natural resource managers*'. A threatened plant slideshow was developed to promote the 12 Flagship APCC11 threatened plants, and this has also now been published as the ANPC's first fund raising calendar. "*Australian Plant Identification – A Resource Bibliography. Using references to help in identifying native and introduced plants*" has been developed and will be published on the website in late 2016. An ANPC blog was also commenced and graphic design software was purchased for the development of educational and promotional material.

The new ANPC Prospectus was published this year highlighting our capabilities, and the many ways both members and non-members can help further promote and improve plant conservation, such as through memberships, sponsorship, donations, bequests, project support, collaboration and volunteering. The prospectus has been sent to relevant companies and organisations throughout the year to seek new funding and sponsorship opportunities.

Our bulletin, *Australasian Plant Conservation*, has continued to publish high-quality articles relevant to a broad range of plant conservation practitioners and managers, under the editorship of Paul Adam. On behalf of the Committee and all members I would like to sincerely thank Paul for his significant effort in ensuring that APC continues to be a quality and well respected publication for the communication of plant conservation issues in Australia. Full colour printing of APC was introduced this year which has greatly improved its appeal and I'd like to thank Carly Westbye and Siobhan Duffy for all their work on this.

### **Staffing**

Many thanks to our office staff Jo Lynch and Carly Westbye who continue to work well beyond the call of duty for the ANPC. Their dedication and the quality of their work make my job and the work of the Committee so much more effective, and ensures that the ANPC continues to function as a highly respected conservation organisation. I would also like thank Merryl Bradley for the many roles she still plays in supporting the ANPC. Merryl has continued in the position of Treasurer and as a volunteer in the office. Her experience and assistance is a great asset to the ANPC.

I am grateful to Committee members for their tremendous support over the year. All of the Committee members have significant commitments outside the ANPC and it is often challenging to devote the time required as active committee members. The involvement in the committee by all Committee members is a clear demonstration of their dedication to the ANPC and its goals in improving plant conservation. I also thank Cathy Offord and Melissa Millar for agreeing to join the ANPC Committee out of session this year. Committee member Helena Mills will be leaving the committee this year and I sincerely thank her for her time and support over the last two years.

### **Funding**

Our financial situation will be reported on in detail separately at the AGM but we continue to broaden our sources of income.

This year we have been successful with a significant number of funding opportunities – in particular \$45,500 over the next two years from the Threatened Species Recovery Hub for updating the ANPC's Translocation Guidelines. I would particularly like to thank David Coates for seeking this funding. Also:

- NSW Environmental Trust's Lead Environmental Community Groups grant for 2016/17 for website development and Plant ID workshops.
- Normal Wettenhall Foundation biodiversity conservation grant for *Bring Back the Banksias Project* – workshop planning.
- Greening Australia for *Revegetating Threatened Riverina Sandhill Woodland Communities* field day funded by NSW Environmental Trust.
- Australian Seed Bank Partnership for assistance with the National Seed Science Forum 14-16 March 2016 – scientific committee, planning and promotion.
- Completed a Communities for Nature Grant in Victoria for *Saving the Federally Listed Metallic Sun-Orchid and Wimmera Spider-Orchid from Weed Invasion*.

- Riverina Local Land Services for four Rangelands Paddock Walks – one day Plant ID field days.
- Western Local Land Services for two seed collection workshops and four plant identification workshops.
- Charles Darwin University for the Myrtle rust workshop.
- One pending Environmental Trust grant application.

I would particularly like to thank Jo Lynch and Martin Driver for the great efforts they have put in with these successful projects and grant applications and acknowledge their efforts with one other unsuccessful Environmental Trust application.

### **The coming year**

Several workshops and projects are already in the planning stage for the coming year. These include:

- More seed collection and plant ID workshops.
- Commence the review of the ANPC's Translocation Guidelines including the employment of Tricia Hogbin as Project Manager (Translocation).
- Complete the introduction of new online financial management software to replace the outdated MYOB software.
- Investigate the adoption of an online membership database to replace outdated Microsoft Access database.
- Ongoing update and improvement of the ANPC website and online membership payment system.
- Investigate potential for an ANPC Forum for late 2017.

This has been my first term as President and it has been a pleasure and a privilege to work with all of you. I have thoroughly enjoyed being part of the executive and working in an organisation that does so much for plant conservation in Australia. I see an important future for the ANPC playing a key role in plant conservation across Australia and the region more broadly.

Linda Broadhurst  
President  
Australian Network for Plant Conservation Inc.  
14 November 2016