



IPHA Newsletter #27

Autumn 2025 edition

www.indigenousplantsforhealth.com

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Indigenous Plants for Health (IPHA) is a not-for-profit incorporated association, formed with the objectives of raising aware-ness, researching Australian health-promoting plants and supporting protection of their habitats.

We acknowledge that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Peoples are the Traditional Owners of this country, and they retain their relationship and connection to the land, sea, and community.

From the President Jen Stroh

IPHA website upgrade continues 2025. Please peruse our renewing website. Leigh will help us until the end of June. Check Andrew's insightful and detailed Plant Profiles which you can download as required with due acknowledgement. We endeavour to clarify our Resources, Events, Objectives, Projects and Funding so the website is more user friendly and interesting. Our Newsletter backlog appears here too. Please spread the word about IPHA any way you can. Like our FB page.

Please note that as a member you will receive the Newsletter three months before it appears on the website.

New members (and renewing) – welcome to you all. Thank you for supporting our small not-for-profit organisation dedicated to uplifting our planet home through Plant Knowledge and actions.

Through my forays into the world of botanic and fauna surveys around the Fraser Coast, Qld and other places and hearing people's stories, I am so often reminded of the unique and glorious species with whom we cohabitate. And the need for continued recognition and observation and rallying we must do, to be a voice for protection. IPHA is one such contributor. Thanks for being on this journey to explore and uphold the values we hold dear.

Annual Grant funding

See update on our latest Grant funding recipient Yilyapinya Yarning Circle garden later in this newsletter. If you would like a project funded for 2026, please view our Guidelines on our website and apply accordingly or have a chat with someone on our committee.

Vacancies

Please dig deep to support us in any way you can. We need helpers for:

Maintenance of our website

Newsletter (quarterly) editor and contributors

Help with Field Day organising

IPHA Committee Members

President: Jen Stroh

Vice President: Andrew Pengelly

Treasurer: Patricia Collins

Secretary: Reesa Ryan

General members:

Kat Bennett, Felicity Kerslake, Fred Fetherston, Renata Buziak

Webmaster/mistress: *VACANT*

Newsletter editor: *VACANT*

IPHA Field Day Report

Saturday 5th April, 2025 at Somersby, NSW By Pat Collins

We had a group of about 18 people who enjoyed a very informative day. Cassie who supplied the food on the day also organised the speakers and helped to make Reesa and my jobs so much easier.

We started the day with each person introducing themselves—and what a lot of knowledgeable people we had. There were horticulturists, herbalists and gardeners all willing to share their accumulated knowledge.

Our first speaker was Brenden Moore who is a Biripi man and the Aboriginal



Education Officer for the Royal Botanic Garden Sydney. He had a wonderful Acknowledgement of Country where we all participated by repeating his words after him (see Acknowledgment with link to Brenden below).

Brenden had brought a lot of native plants and spoke about the traditional uses of them. Then he surprised us by bringing out his didgeridoo and explaining all the sounds he made on it. He is very talented and entertained and educated us with playing the didge.

After a tasty lunch we went into Jill's garden and listened to Ben Davis-MacAndrew who spoke on wild pollinators. He had his native beehive with him and explained the behaviour, conservation, identification and habitat of these amazing workers and other native pollinators. Ben is passionate about native pollinators, and it is wonderful that he shares his knowledge with so many people—young and old.

Jill File, the owner of the property, showed us black soldier fly larvae and explained their uses and benefits. We were unable to tour EntoPark, which is

an insect farm housed in the large sheds on the property. The larvae break down waste very quickly and become a wonderful resource that is dried and ground up into a meal for feeding pets. Jill also showed us around her natives that she has planted, and they are doing extremely well. Everything grows so well at her place.

We enjoyed an afternoon tea and then did weaving with Astore (Spiralsisters) We learnt to weave with natural and dyed fibres and by the end of an hour we had woven mini baskets and key rings. It was a lot of fun.

Our day was completed with storytelling with Nina Angelo who is a local elder, artist and has just written a book on her family experience fleeing the Holocaust from both Poland and Greece. Nina was 2 years old when she migrated to Sydney in 1949 with her parents. She's a spellbinding storyteller offering empathy and compassion for those suffering the most in the world today. Several people bought her book and it's a great read and looks back to our recent history.

Some of us camped the two nights and others came back Sunday morning for a walk in Jill's garden. Pat Collins led the group and we learnt all about the local weeds, herbs and natives found at the place.

We at IPHA thanks everyone that came along to enjoy the day with special thanks to Cassie our cook and to Jill who allowed us to run the event on her property.

Join Brenden as he walks and talks about the bush along the Georges River with didgeridoo—

"When the full moon meets the sand dune, from the mountain tops, where the trees grow, where the snow melts and our rivers flow, from when the sky touches the ground and the ground hugs the sea, I would like to acknowledge country."

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HF51qNgynFg>



More images from Somersby Field Day



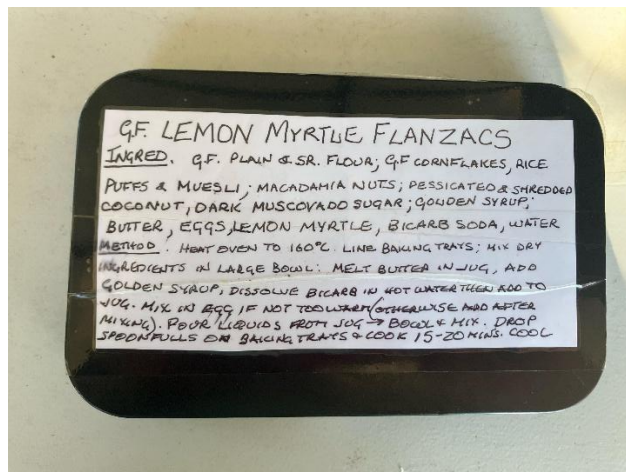
Nina Angelo – the storyteller



Lunch time



Brenden Moore





The Planting Weekend Restored! Woodfordia May 2025

Held at the site of the famous Woodford Folk Festival, The Planting was primarily an environmental event, backed by an entertainment programme at the brand new “Bunya” stage in the evening, along with demonstrations and walks, ceremonies, excellent meals prepared in the new kitchen at the Woodfordia store, music workshops and jam sessions at the Kingfisher Bar. The centrepiece of the event was a series of about 16 environmental projects, many of which involve planting at specific sites, and others that were more focused on maintenance and ecological restoration. Each project was held twice daily over the weekend. One such project involved planting and caring for bushfood plants.



Bushfood planting group – age is no barrier

By the end of the weekend around 2,000 more plants were in the Woodfordia grounds, adding to the 130,000 or so that have been planted in the last 30 years. New additions to the bushfood garden include some classic trees such as aniseed myrtle (*Anetholea anisata*), Davidson’s plum (*Davidsonia jerseyana*), riberry (*Syzygium leuhmanii*) and the white and hard aspens (*Acronychia oblongifolia*, *A. laevis*). Shrubs and climbers planted between the trees include midginberry (*Austromyrtus dulcis*) and limeberry (*Micromelum minutum*). In addition, two species of plum pine were planted, *Podocarpus elatus* and the dwarf species *P. spinulosus*.

Probably the most well known and loved Woodfordian, Costas Georgiadis, was on hand to motivate the attendees to join in the projects, while also combining with Dirt Girl as Costa the Garden Gnome to entertain and educate the children (and a few adults) about the value of soil and compost.



In true Woodford fashion, the rain fell intermittently, causing some temporary stoppages to the environmental projects. For the final session the remaining bushfood team were removing weeds from the old food forest that was planted in the 1990s. Following a couple of rain interruptions, the sun finally shone down on us.



Andrew and other bushfoodies basking in the sunshine

The bushfood pod is active on the last Saturday of every month. These weekends (including camping) are free in exchange for a few hours of volunteering.

Other features of these weekends include free sausage sizzle (and alternative) lunches, the Traditional Music School, Folk Club and bar, swim in Lake Gkula, Treehuggers on Sunday and more. To join in, contact

<https://woodfordia.org/conservation/>



Youth Yarning Garden Project

April Update

Term 1 of the Yili Program has seen some exciting updates for the Youth Yarning Garden. The young people have been busy building the first prototype of the picnic tables, which will be part of the layout of the Youth Yarning Garden. Through this process the young people have learnt practical skills such as measuring, drilling, estimating and more. Additionally, the young people learnt key communication skills as they worked with their peers to construct the tables. During Term 2 we look forward to commencing the planting of native plants, as well as starting the construction of the picnic area, complete with an outdoor barbecue and picnic table. Here young people can enjoy tucker, meditation, engaging in art and more outdoor activities, which connects us all to Yuggera country.

We look forward to updating you on more Youth Yarning Garden progress in Term 2.



This project is sponsored by IPHA

Chocolate Lilies at Amiens

The genus *Arthropodium* consists of several species which, when in flower, emit sweet aromas some of which are very reminiscent of vanilla (vanilla lilies) or chocolate. The two species of chocolate lilies, *A. strictus* and *A. fimbriatus*, develop tubers at the end of their roots, similar in appearance to sweet potatoes. These tubers once formed a significant part of the Aboriginal diet in south-eastern Australia, along with other tuberous plants such as the murnong or yam daisy (*Microseris walteri*) and bulbine lilies (*Bulbine bulbosa*).

A. fimbriatus, also known as the nodding chocolate lily, reaches its northern limit of distribution in the Granite Belt region of south-east Queensland. A significant population of the species has been located at Amiens, adjacent to Goldfields Road on a granite pavement dotted with ephemeral ponds known as gnamma holes. Many of these ponds contain mini gardens, often layered with crusty lichens but also including wildflowers such as chocolate lilies.



Arthropodium fimbriatum flower and tubers

The Granite Belt Sustainable Action Network (GBSAN) based in Stanthorpe includes a bushcare subgroup. Currently the bushcarers are focusing on this site, removing the main weed that invades the ponds, the yellow-flowered Coreopsis (*Coreopsis lanceolata*). Hundreds of these weeds, in addition to scattered clumps of lovegrass are being removed from the ponds and adjacent granite pavement. We are looking forward to seeing the bright blue flowers and enjoying the aroma of dozens of chocolate lilies during the summer, free of weeds, while helping to restore a population of a significant cultural species.

Stanthorpe region bushcare group at the chocolate lily site, Amiens

Images by Andrew Pengelly



Quiet Power

Euphorbia hirta in Art and Story. By Renata Buziak

Exploring the medicinal plant *Euphorbia hirta* through Indigenous knowledge, and biochrome art research on Minjerribah.

Euphorbia hirta, often known as Asthma Weed, is a recognised healing plant with a long tradition of medicinal use. This unassuming and commonly found species carries powerful properties and is featured on one of the Australian Medicinal & Edible Plants Knowledge Cards published by IPHA. The card highlights its antiviral, anti-inflammatory, anti-malarial qualities, as well as its traditional use in treating asthma and fever. It can be taken as a medicinal tea or used topically - demonstrating just how generous native flora can be in supporting human health and well-being.

My connection to *Euphorbia hirta* deepened during my Fine Art PhD research on Minjerribah (North Stradbroke Island), where I focused on medicinal plants of the island. The research was developed in consultation with members of the Quandamooka community, whose guidance helped me respectfully engage with the island's flora and deepen my understanding of its healing landscape.



Renata Buziak, *Euphorbia hirta... anti-fungal*, Archival pigment print on paper, Ed/5 & Ed/7, 2015

Euphorbia hirta was one of the plants that stood out. A story shared by Elder Aunty Evelyn referred to it as "wart weed," as she learned from her mother, it was used for treating warts with its milky white sap. She recalled: "It's got a milky sap . . . and when you break the stalk, the milk comes out and then you dab that on to your wart and within days, before you know it, that wart is gone . . . It is amazing" (Buziak, 2016).

The artwork titled *Euphorbia hirta ... anti-fungal ...* is part of my Medicinal Plants Cycle series, created using the biochrome process - an experimental photographic technique I developed. This method fuses photographic materials with organic matter over time, allowing nature and microbial activity to leave their trace on the image surface. The biochrome process reveals the beauty of organic decay while honouring the cycle of life and the healing potential of plants like *Euphorbia hirta*.

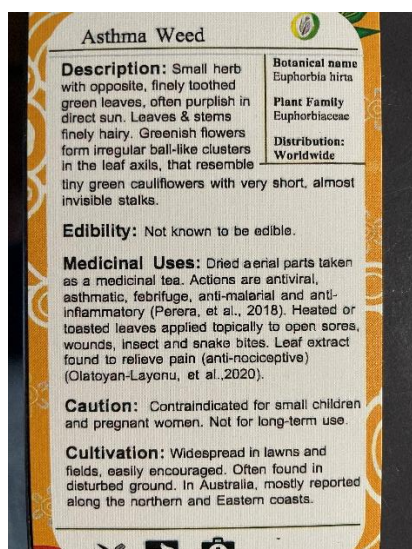
A print of *Euphorbia hirta ... anti-fungal ...* is held in the Redland Art Gallery Collection. The work is available in two small limited editions. Fragments of this piece will also be shared freely through the Bookplate Art Project from June 2025. For this initiative, I cut biochrome images into small postcard-sized tiles, to be placed into library books across the Redlands by the Project Curator. Readers who find them—serendipitously nestled between pages—are invited to keep the artwork, creating quiet moments of connection with native flora, local creativity, and stories.

My practice is grounded in the belief that art can help us reconnect with nature and the wisdom of plants. Through exhibitions, workshops, and community projects, I continue to explore and share the transformative power of flora using photographic materials, organic matter, and the language of decay and renewal.

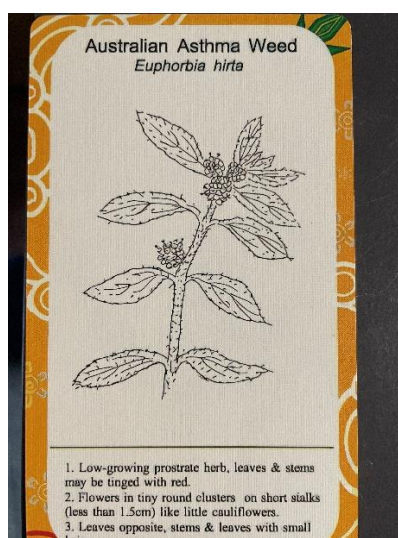
Euphorbia hirta continues to inspire—not only as a medicinal herb, but as a subject of visual storytelling. By sharing this work, I hope to contribute to a wider appreciation of healing plants and the ways they help us feel grounded, nourished, and in harmony with the natural world.

If you'd like to learn more about my creative journey and the Bookplate Project, visit:

<https://renatabuziak.com>



IPHA Plant Knowledge card.



Artwork by K. Dilaj.

Indigenous Plants for Health Association Inc.**MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM**

Set out below are my membership application details for Indigenous Plants for Health Association Inc.

There is a free membership option for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, as well as for pensioners or anyone with low income.

Enclosed/transferred is the sum of \$20 annual membership fee. The amount has been paid by:

- ☐ Cash
- ☐ Bank Transfer (Important flag your name with payment)
- ☐ Paypal, via website www.indigenousplantsforhealth.com
- ☐ Identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander (fee optional)
- ☐ Identify as low income (fee optional)

Post Membership Form and cheque to:

IPHA Treasurer – 196 Bridge St. Muswellbrook NSW 2323, OR if paying by transfer you may scan and email the completed and signed form to IPHA.Secretary@hotmail.com

Bank Details for Payments: BSB 637000

Account 722660722

Name: _____

Address: _____

Postcode _____

Tel: Home _____ Mobile _____

Email: _____

I agree to abide by the Constitution and any policies, rules or regulations established within the association. These are listed on the website www.indigenousplantsforhealth.com

Signed _____ Date _____