

Tendrils

Australian Botanical Artists Regional Network (ABARN)



The amazing *Macrozamia macdonnellii*, Blue Cycads from the West MacDonnell Ranges near Alice Springs, in Angkerie (Standley Chasm, pictured) shown here recovering after a recent bush fire.

Editor's note

Tendrils is an online newsletter distributed across Australia. Commenced in 2017 by artists from Bowral, Canberra, the Shoalhaven and Sydney, it aims to share ideas and information in regional and metropolitan locations, among those who share a passion for the botanical art genre.

We welcome news and articles from individuals and groups across the country. You are encouraged to advertise workshops, events and exhibitions free of charge.

Please just send text contributions in a regular email. Images need to be jpegs that are easily emailed.

Enquiries and contributions to Cathryn Coutts, at: cathryn.coutts@gmail.com

Issues are published in March, June, September and November. Deadline for contributions is the first Friday of each month of publication.

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News from Regional Groups

NSW - BDAS Botanical Artists

This year continues to be an exciting one for our group. We recently enjoyed a field trip and also welcomed more new members.

On September 3, some of our members visited the Janet Cosh Herbarium at the University of Wollongong. The visit focused on the plant collections and art works of the late Janet Cosh (1901-1989), who spent a great deal of time collecting and painting plants in and around the NSW Southern Highlands.

Jean Clarke, one of the authors of **Flowering Wonderfully: The Botanical Legacy of Janet Cosh*, assisted by Michael Swire, Resource Collection Officer at the University Library, displayed several of Janet Cosh's original drawings and paintings and talked about her field work, illustrated in notebooks with plant habit drawings, sketches of descriptive details and colour notes.

After she died, substantial funds from her estate were left to the University of Wollongong to establish a regional herbarium, named the Janet Cosh Herbarium.



Jean Clarke (left) with two of our artists beside her, Jane Pye and Joanna Thomas

The art collection, held in the University of Wollongong Library Archives, is fascinating and well worth seeing. Janet Cosh's dedication to the task of collecting and recording our native flora is clearly evident.

(**Flowering Wonderfully: The Botanical Legacy of Janet Cosh*, J. Clarke and A. Haynes, 2012, University of Wollongong NSW).

Our meeting dates for Term 1, 2020 are now available: Monday February 10, Monday March 9, Monday April 20.

We meet at Bowral Art Gallery, 1 Shepherd St. Bowral, in Studio 3, from 10am to 4pm. New members are always welcome. Bring your own work, art materials, and lunch.

Our meetings are generally untutored, but we do organize workshops through the year with leading tutors. More details to follow next year.

Queensland

Botanical Art Society of Queensland

The annual exhibition, *Florescence*, is being held this year from November 16-26. Opening night is Saturday November 16, 5-8pm at Metcalfe Gallery, Brisbane Institute of Art, 41 Grafton Road Brisbane. Our exhibitions and displays enable the wider community to view and purchase botanical art, observe artists at work and learn about the art form.

Workshop - *Spotlight on Graphite and Ink*, with Eva Richards, Sunday 27 October, 9.30-4.30.

For more details see Workshops and Events section of this newsletter, or contact

admin@botanicalartqld.com.au

Tasmania

By Jean Henley

Botaniko's 2019 Exhibition

Botaniko's latest exhibition, *Frederick Mackie – Quaker Plantsman*, opened at the Narryna Heritage Museum in Battery Point, near Hobart, on Friday, 6 September.

Frederick Mackie, a Quaker and nurseryman from Norwich, England, visited Van Diemen's Land three times during 1852-1854 and kept the company of fellow Quakers James Backhouse

and George Washington Walker who, at that time, lived at Narryna.

Frederick kept a daily journal of his travels recording not only religious activities of Quakers but described the flora of the places he visited. He was *highly delighted with the beauty of the plants in the little town gardens* describing, amongst many observations, that *scarlet geraniums thrive extraordinarily*. The Botanic Gardens, described by Frederick as *a delightful spot*, offered a range of plants still growing in the (now) Royal Tasmanian Botanical Gardens.

As a keen botanist Frederick, through his journal *Traveller under Concern*, gave Botaniko members a large variety of plants to illustrate.

This exhibition is on display at Narryna until 22 February 2020.

Wind Song Project

With the completion of works for the *Frederick Mackie – Quaker Plantsman* exhibition comes the beginning of another body of work for our next annual exhibition. Our work for 2019/20 is in collaboration with the Tasmanian Herbarium.

In 2017 the Herbarium surveyed a farming property on Tasmania's east coast, *Wind Song* at Little Swanport. Botaniko will illustrate the plants on this property for an exhibition at the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery in September 2020.

Work commenced recently with a visit to the Herbarium to view the specimens collected by the Herbarium from *Wind Song*.



Members of Botaniko with the Herbarium's Matt Baker viewing specimens from *Wind Song* in the vault at the Herbarium.

Forthcoming workshop

Botaniko is hosting a workshop in Hobart from 28 November – 1 December 2019 inclusive, 'Contemporary Botanical Art - Bigger and Better', led by prominent Sydney art educator Leonie Norton. This unique workshop will allow participants to take a small subject/photo and create a large painting using a grid system.

Exhibitions

Current and Future Exhibitions

Hobart – Narryna Heritage Museum, in Battery Point.

Botaniko's latest exhibition, *Frederick Mackie – Quaker Plantsman*, opened at the Narryna Heritage Museum on Friday, 6 September. This exhibition is on display at Narryna until 22 February 2020.

Love. Tweed Regional Gallery & Margaret Olley Art Centre, 2 Mistral Road Murwillumbah NSW 2484. Includes three embroideries by Deirdre Bean. September 6 to November 17, 2019.

Salient: contemporary artists at the Western Front. Tweed Regional Gallery & Margaret Olley Art Centre, 2 Mistral Road Murwillumbah NSW 2484. Includes work by Deirdre Bean. November 21 2019 to February 16, 2020.

Visitor Centre, Australian National Botanic Gardens, Canberra. Treasures, an exhibition by the Friends Photographic Group. November 21 to December 8, 2019.

Royal Botanic Garden Sydney, Lion Gate Lodge. 2019 Artisans in the Gardens Exhibition. October 19-27, 10am to 4pm daily.

Botanical Art Society of Queensland - Floressence, from November 16-26, 2019. Opening night is Saturday November 16, 5-8pm at Metcalfe Gallery, Brisbane Institute of Art, 41 Grafton Road Brisbane.

At the Table by Charlotte Thodey. An exhibition showcasing arrangements of fruit, vegetable and flowers, Tattersalls Club Hyde Park, Sydney, from Sunday 3 - Friday 29 November.



Looking Back and Looking Forward

By Cathryn Coutts

While visiting Cairns recently I travelled up to nearby Kuranda and spent some time browsing in the galleries there. At the Kuranda Arts Co-op I bought a beautiful image of a plant by Mollie Bosworth, done in the Cyanotype technique.



My Cyanotype by Mollie Bosworth

Seeing Mollie's lovely work reminded me of the much earlier cyanotypes, also images of plants, done in the 1840's and 50's by English artist Anna Atkins.

Through her father and husband, John Pelly Atkins, Anna was friendly with two photographic pioneers: Henry Fox Talbot and the astronomer, Sir John Herschel. Talbot taught her the photogenic drawing techniques he had developed and Herschel taught her to make 'blueprints' using insoluble Prussian Blue dye. Atkins became a pioneer of the cyanotype method – photographing first algae and later

plants. The algae were placed on cyanotype light-sensitive paper and then exposed to light, creating a negative shadow image (from *Plant: Exploring the Botanical World*, Phaidon Press Limited, 2016, p.110).



Delessaria sinuosa, by Anna Atkins from *British Algae: Cyanotype Impressions*, 1853

I have always admired Anna Atkins' beautiful images of plants so I was really excited to find a contemporary artist using the technique today, and in such an inspiring way.

"Mollie Bosworth is best known for her porcelain work, usually wheel thrown and employing many surface techniques including decals and water soluble metallic salts. With more than thirty years of ceramic practice, Mollie now also works with the historic photographic technique of cyanotype. Often her work is driven by the materials and processes. Also, textures and patterns in nature influence her work, often drawn from her love of gardening and the tropical North Queensland environment in which she lives. She makes work for group and solo exhibitions and retail with occasional workshop teaching.

She has won several awards for her work including the Townsville National Ceramic Award, the Siliceous Award for ceramic excellence and an Honourable Mention in the 3rd International Ceramic Competition in Korea."

Information from Kuranda Arts Co-op website:
<https://kurandaartscoop.com/artist-mollie-bosworth/>

In her ceramics, this artist uses botanical images represented on fine porcelain. It is so exciting to see botanical work using such unusual media. I recommend checking out the website above for more information.



Green Ants, Porcelain, Mollie Bosworth 2017

Talking about Botanical Art

By Cathryn Coutts

Say it with Flowers: Plants in our modern world

The recent marches around the world, urging action on climate change, have inspired me to write this article. The news we regularly hear about the stresses on ecosystems and extinctions of our flora and fauna, can easily lead us to feel utterly helpless in the face of such events. Plants face extensive threats, e.g. from extreme weather events, water shortages, drought, pollution, habitat loss or urban expansion. Plants are vital to our very survival on the planet.

What I would encourage you to consider, however, is that as botanical artists we have special contributions we can make through our work. We have the capacity to communicate to a wide audience about the vital role that plants play in our lives. Because, believe it or not, there are still plenty of people out there who don't understand the relationship between human survival and plants!

You may wonder how you can do this. In the March 2019 issue of *Tendrils*, I wrote about Queensland artist Kathleen McArthur (1915-2000) who through the sale of her wildflower postcards and prints raised funds to support a public campaign resulting in the Cooloola National Park in Queensland being gazetted in 1975.

There are, among botanical artists past and present, plenty of examples of artists who have used their skills in this way. Some are well known, other less so.

We don't all have to be leading artists however, to undertake this task. Many of us participate in exhibitions and events in our local area, to which we invite members of the public.

I encourage you to think about which plants are significant in the places near you, and consider incorporating some important messages about them into an exhibition or event you are planning.

Here are some other botanical artists who have been able to convey important messages in their work.

Over a number of years, Mali Moir has been leading a team of artists in the Beckler's Botanical Bounty project, collecting plants and making paintings around the Menindee area in NSW, which so sadly became prominent in the news recently because of water shortages and fish deaths in the Darling River. Their work was exhibited in the Art Gallery of Ballarat in 2018, where I was fortunate enough to see it. It incorporated historical, scientific and cultural information while also showing a series of beautiful paintings.

Deirdre Bean has been working, over a number of years, with Dr Norman Duke, on a series of paintings to show threatened mangrove habitats in Australia. Her exquisite paintings were exhibited a few years ago in Sydney's Royal Botanic Garden. Deirdre told me this year that she is still working on this project.



Lumnitzera x rosea Deirdre Bean 2015. Watercolour and Graphite on Paper. Trinity Beach Far Nth. Queensland

Tanya Hoolihan, in her 2019 exhibition in Leichhardt Library in Sydney, made us aware of plants that were growing around Sydney, Newcastle and other places, when they were collected by the explorer Ludwig Leichhardt in the 1840's. We can only wonder about how many of these plants, or the habitats they once grew in, still occur naturally around our cities today.

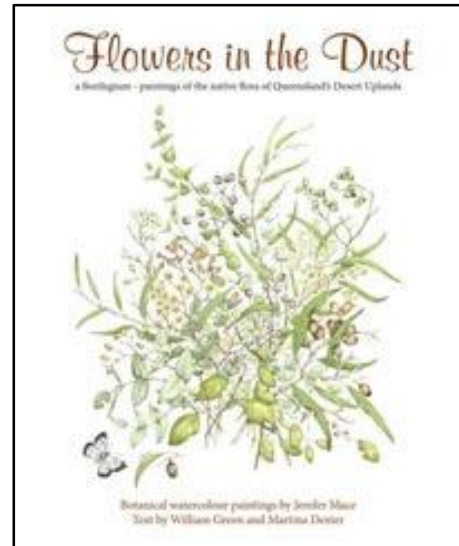


Correa reflexa var. speciosa Native Fuschia
Tanya Hoolihan

Jenny Mace, from Barcaldine in Queensland, has created a magnificent collection of almost 500 paintings to meticulously record the flora of a fragile bioregion in regional Queensland. Her book about the work, *Flowers in the Dust*, can be ordered from Barcaldine Regional Council: www.barcaldinerc.qld.gov.au

The Desert Uplands region in Queensland sits astride the Great Dividing Range and comprises four percent of Queensland's surface. Supporting an abundant diversity of flora, it is a region of eroded sandstone plateaus and extensive sand plains. Jenny Mace's work honours the region's botanical heritage through exquisite watercolour paintings, demonstrating that there is beauty and significance to be found in the flowers that grow in the desert's dust.

(from Barcaldine Regional Council website)



There are many other art groups around the country who are engaged in similar activities. It would be wonderful to hear more about them.

Artists in the cities should not feel left out. There are always plants of significance in habitats somewhere near you, especially now that more local authorities are working to conserve and protect them.

If you prefer to paint edible plants, vegetables for example, think about where they are grown and what the threats to them might be.

In rural areas, what are the crops of significance near you? Grains, food for stock, market gardens, orchards. How threatened are they from changes to our climate. I saw on the news only yesterday about the lack of water for citrus growers along the Darling River. The table grapes from Menindee in NSW are no longer available because of water shortages.

If painting colourful cut flowers is your preference, find out how and where the flowers we buy from florists or garden shops, are grown. How many of them are imported and why? I was surprised to learn recently that a lot of cut flowers sold commercially come from overseas.

But you ask, why can't a botanical painting just be beautiful? Botanical art gives us artists, and the public, a great deal of pleasure. It's reasonable to argue that this should be a good enough reason to make it. I myself would be devastated if I couldn't spend time painting and drawing plants, because I just enjoy it so much.

Of course, a painting can be beautiful, but it can also have a serious message, like the work of the artists I have just mentioned. Beauty and pleasure need not be sacrificed, but next time you decide to paint a beautiful group of mushrooms or the gorgeous colours of a flower, think a little about its story. How does it come to you and how likely is it to be still available in the years to come?

A final suggestion about exhibitions. The major exhibitions of botanical art that are held regularly around the country, could also have a key role to play in raising public awareness about how our survival depends on plants.

I encourage the curators of such exhibitions to take these issues as seriously as have the artists I mentioned. It is possible to put works on show which not only meet high aesthetic, scientific and technical standards, but also have something important to say about plants in our modern world.

Artist's Profile

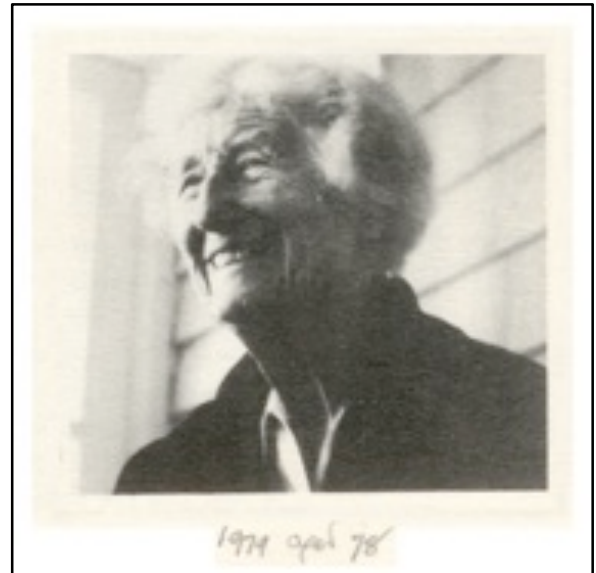
Janet Cosh 1901 - 1989

By Jean Clarke, University of Wollongong

Janet Louise Cosh was born at Ashfield in 1901, the only child of Dr John Cosh and his wife, Louise nee Calvert. Janet attended Normanhurst School for Girls from 1914 – 1918. Considered delicate as a child, she did not matriculate because her father thought that the study of mathematics would lead to overwork. However, she did attend the University of Sydney where she studied English, History and the Classics. She was a successful student and it was suggested that she should become a university lecturer in English, provided that she did a special course in mathematics. Dr Cosh still would not agree. Janet was very fond of her parents and accepted this decision without regret and always spoke of it with amusement. Instead, she taught English and the Classics for a few years at Normanhurst School.

Janet was interested in gaining knowledge for its own sake and her university studies certainly taught her to think for herself. Also, she was part of an interesting and stimulating family. Her maternal Grandmother, Louisa Atkinson wrote

Gertrude the Emigrant (1857), which was the first novel published in this country by an Australian born woman. She was also a botanist and an artist. One plant she collected, *Atkinsonia ligustrina*, was named after her by Baron von Mueller. Janet's father was a prolific painter and both her parents were widely read and interested in local history. With her parents, Janet visited areas of natural beauty in NSW such as Royal National Park, the Snowy Mountains area and the South Coast.



In 1934, Janet's father retired from his medical practice at Ashfield and the family moved to 'Netherby' at Moss Vale. Janet cared for her ageing parents, became the family driver and accompanied her father on his painting trips. She also became a proficient golfer and was very involved with the local golf club. During the second world war, cattle had to be evacuated from the Highlands and the Illawarra so Janet learned to use topographic maps and locate old mountain passes. She could identify geological landmarks from all points of the compass and knew why they were given particular names. Janet had an extraordinary ability to read maps, follow unmarked forest tracks and never get lost!

Janet's father died in 1946 and her mother in 1956, by which time Janet was in her mid-fifties. Left alone, this quiet reserved woman turned her talents to a systematic study of two of her main interests – first local history and later botany. In both, Janet left a permanent record and she was

still actively working in the field of botany right up to her death at the age of 88.

In 1960, the Berrima and District Historical Society was formed. Janet became a foundation member and was the Society's first archivist. Her intent was to provide sound, unbiased information that was meticulously recorded. Janet wrote a short local history that, typically, she did not sign.

In 1964, Janet gave most of her collection of Louisa Atkinson's work to the Mitchell Library and some to the National Herbarium of NSW. In the late 1970s, she gave her historical material to the Berrima District Historical Society so that she could concentrate on her botanical studies.

In the late 1960s, when she was nearly 70 years of age, Janet shifted most of her energies to the study of botany. Janet went about this work systematically. She obtained a collector's licence and with her friend Rachel, she travelled extensively around the southern highlands in a Subaru collecting plants.

She also drew and made extensive notes about the plants. She amassed an excellent collection of books, many of which she annotated with her own comments. She dissected and studied plants under a microscope, made hundreds of botanical illustrations and sometimes sent specimens to the National Herbarium of NSW for identification. She learned to dry and press specimens for a herbarium and made two major collections - a personal collection and a second that she prepared for Fitzroy Falls National Park. Her extensive knowledge of the area assisted many researchers in the location of particular species and populations of rare plants.

In 1970, the NPWS Foundation was established and Janet became a life member. In 1988, the book *Fitzroy Falls and Beyond* was published containing a plant list and some drawings made by Janet. Her collections demonstrate that she was a great recycler! Specimens were mounted on used paper and drawings were made on old Christmas cards, packing materials, old envelopes, in fact whatever came to hand. Her father's paintings were not immune – on the reverse side of many of the specimen sheets one

finds a watercolour by Dr Cosh, often a fine completed work.

Janet Cosh lived simply, indeed frugally, and looked after herself at home until her death on 22 October 1989, aged 88. Her friend Rachel described Janet as being a reserved person with a quiet warmth. Not until after her death was her great generosity to conservation and humanitarian bodies known. She bequeathed substantial funds to the University of Wollongong to provide technical support and resources for a herbarium. She also left the contents of her botanical workroom, collected over 20 years and in perfect order, to the University including most of her library, an herbarium of over 1000 plants, notebooks, drawings, photographs and maps. This bequest made it possible for the Department of Biological Sciences to establish a regional herbarium that provides a centre for botanical research and teaching. The collection has grown to over 5000 specimens, 1000 slides, an extensive library and a variety of maps. A Eucalypt walk has also been created in the University grounds. These resources are available to students and researchers.



Poranthera corymbosa, by Janet Cosh, 1984

Collected from Bargo NSW near the Hume Highway

(from p.61, *Flowering Wonderfully: The Botanical Legacy of Janet Cosh*, J. Clarke and A. Haynes, 2012, University of Wollongong NSW).

Book Review

Chromatopia - David Coles

By Rosie Wade



After the plants themselves, probably the most fascinating aspect of botanical art – for me, at least – is colour. How to replicate the colour gradations of a leaf or a petal, how to create the shape of a flower with just different tones of the native colour, the endless search for the “right” green. So it should come as no surprise that this beautifully illustrated book, written by painter David Coles (Langridge Paints, in Melbourne) was un-put-downable. Coles deals with colour historically, looking at the colours used by pre-historic painters, then the Egyptians, Greeks and Romans, the Middle Ages, and the Industrial Revolution which fundamentally changed the way we saw and used colours. (The catalogue from last years’ Colours of Impressionism exhibition is brilliant for the latter information, too.) This book even looks at the new pigments being made and those which may impact our work far into the future.

You probably know some of the historical detail. A quarter of a million sea snails died to make one ounce of “royal” purple. The production of lead white (by putting warm manure on sheets of lead) poisoned thousands of paint-makers. In fact, anecdotally, the great watercolourist, Turner, used women exclusively to mix his lead white, because females were expendable! The

reason the Virgin Mary was depicted wearing blue in Renaissance paintings? Because the lapis lazuli used to make the colour was so expensive that using blue in paintings was a not-so-subtle way of showing how rich the benefactor who commissioned the work was. Colour is so much more than just a mixture of pigment and vehicle.

The history is fascinating, as is the science and the design elements in this lovely, very readable book. Now, if I could just figure out a way to get exact colour, every time!

Travellers Tales

By Cathryn Coutts

In June this year, I travelled on The Ghan for a wonderful trip from Adelaide to Darwin, stopping on the way for a week in Alice Springs. As always I was on the lookout for interesting plants from the localities I visited. The West MacDonnell Ranges was one place that impressed me greatly. This region has so many natural wonders for visitors to enjoy. As a botanical artist, however, one plant really caught my eye.

The front cover of this issue shows the *Macrozamia macdonnellii*, or Blue Cycad, growing in Angkerie (Standley Chasm). These cycads are amazing because they are very ancient plants which existed before the flowering plants. They are primitive seed plants (Gymnosperms) along with ginkos and conifers.

This rare and endemic species of cycad is known for its unique blue/green appearance and has been isolated for millennia in refuges in the MacDonnell Ranges. Its nearest relatives are 1400km’s away. It is an ancient relic from a cooler and wetter climate that existed in this part of Central Australia when it was part of Gondwanaland, 50 million years ago in the Tertiary period, when temperate rainforests and large inland seas and lakes prevailed.

Once I was aware of this information, I felt truly privileged to be able to see them still growing here and recovering after a recent bush fire swept through the chasm.

I know many botanical artists who love drawing the sculptural forms of plants. They would be

overjoyed to see these cycads and draw them. They have very rough textured bark which would be challenging to draw and flowing fronds which drape into amazing shapes. I strongly recommend visiting this part of Central Australia if you can and seeing the wonderful and ancient flora growing here.



Macrozamia macdonnellii, Blue Cycad

Sketchbook Stories

By Cathryn Coutts

As mentioned above, my trip to Central Australia and Northern Territory this year was a busy one, but as in my past travels, I kept a sketchbook of interesting plants I found in each location I visited.

I do this partly to keep in practice with drawing, because I find that after a break of a couple of months I'm a bit rusty, so the practice is important. As with all drawing done away from the comfort of the studio, one has to learn to adapt to less convenient conditions, sometimes outside in the open, or in the accommodation you have along the way.

I have more than once drawn plants while on a moving train. Quite a challenge – I try to hold the pencil ready and quickly get something on the page between the bumps! It's fun and not to be taken too seriously or I'd get too frustrated to do anything.

As well as keeping up my drawing practice, I learn new things about the plants from the regions I'm travelling through. Each night I draw some of the local flora - and there's so much to learn, that's for sure!

I learnt that Central Australia was once covered with tropical lush vegetation like palms, cycads and ferns. The Olive Pink Botanic Garden in Alice Springs was wonderful. I had never heard of Olive Pink before, but was so impressed with her work and her dedication. She was another remarkable and little known botanical collector and artist.

In the November 2019 issue of *Tendrils*, a more detailed article about Olive Pink will be included in the **Artist's Profile** Section, kindly provided by the Botaniko group, from Tasmania.

Botaniko member Gillian Ward has written an exhaustive biography of Olive Pink published last year – *Olive Pink: Artist, Activist and Gardener – A Life in Flowers* (Hardie Grant Books, 2018).

At Uluru there were many plants of interest, but one that stood out for me was the *Allocasuarina decaisneana*, Desert Oak.



I am pictured here in front of Uluru at dawn, and very, very cold indeed, hence all the clothing. Shown growing in front of Uluru are the juvenile Desert Oak trees, in their 'feather duster' shape.

This is a tall tree to 15m with a stout trunk of thick rough bark. The foliage is in a whorled arrangement on long needle-like pendulous branchlets. There are male and female flowers. The woody cone is oblong 2.5-10cm long and 2.5-4cm wide (pictured on next page). It splits on maturity to release winged seeds.

The juvenile trees have a single erect trunk which make them look a bit like feather dusters. Its usual habitat is the lower slopes and swales between red sand dunes in Central Australia.

Mature trees develop more side branches and are protected from the hottest fires by thick bark. Fires cause massive seed germination in the ground litter and spinifex, which quickly springs up after fire and protects the seedlings. The young seedlings moderate their growth (hence the feather duster look) until they have put down a tap root in search of water. They are long lived we were told, and can survive for centuries. Indigenous people used the hard, dense wood, which is durable and termite resistant, for weapons

Shown here are two of my sketchbook pages with photos and drawings of the *Allocasuarina decasneana*, Desert Oak, foliage and seed pods.



I found it very helpful to photograph a specimen of the plant, placed beside my sketch, so I could refer to it later for a more detailed painting.

Sketchbooks, I believe, are almost an art form in themselves. They make different demands on the artist to those of painting in a studio. Other people enjoy viewing them, and find them a fascinating glimpse into the artist's thinking processes.

Speed is essential. You may have very little time to capture the image, especially if you have to draw it in the field without a specimen to use later. Combining photos with your sketch (so easy today with our mobile phones) is very useful, because it gives you a good record of colour and detail.



Sketchbooks also allow for lots of notes, as we can see, for example, from Janet Cosh's work illustrated earlier in this issue. She would have collected this specimen close to the edge of a major highway. One can imagine that the conditions there were not very conducive to quiet, reflective drawing!

This form of art work forces you to be very observant. The more you observe and record at the time, the better the information you have for later. If this is the one and only time you can see a particular plant, then it's best to look at it very carefully. It's helpful to have a checklist that you can refer to, with some key points to note about the plant, such as its habit, location, growing conditions, foliage, flowers, fruit, seeds, and soil type. If you want to find it again and you have a suitable App on your phone, you can also record the co-ordinates. Remember, sketches are quick records of what you have seen. They're not meant to be finished art works themselves.

Much of the area around Uluru today is restricted access for visitors, with rock climbing to cease in October 2019. So many past photos in front of the rock show lots of patches of red earth dotted with spinifex. Today the vegetation cover around the rock looks much denser and healthier (as my picture shows). There is much to see by travelling around the base, stopping to marvel at the waterholes and cave art. This, in my opinion, is how it should be, left for us and future generations to visit and enjoy, and for the traditional owners to care for and keep at its best.

Workshops and Events

NatureArt Lab

Dianne Sutherland – **Watercolour Techniques from Washes to Dry Brush and Detail** - Two-day workshop (8-9 October, 9.30am – 4.30pm) ANBG Crosbie Morrison Room.

Bookings and further details:

<https://natureartlab.com.au/collections/adult-workshops/products/painting-leaves-watercolour-techniques-from-washes-to-dry-brush-and-detail-with-dianne-sutherland-two-day-workshop>



Dianne Sutherland – **Flowers on Vellum: Traditional techniques for Success** – One-day workshop (10 October, 9.30am – 4.30pm) ANBG Crosbie Morrison Room.

Bookings and further details:

<https://natureartlab.com.au/collections/adult-workshops/products/watercolour-on-vellum-for-botanical-and-nature-artists-with-dianne-sutherland>



Polly Sutherland – **Drawing and Scaling Flower Dissections** – One-day workshop (11 October, 9.30am – 4.30pm) NatureArt Lab Studio, Workspace A, M16 Artspace, 21 Blaxland Crescent, Griffith.

Bookings and further details:

<https://natureartlab.com.au/collections/adult-workshops/products/drawing-and-scaling-flower-dissections-revealing-the-unseen-with-polly-sutherland>



Polly Sutherland – **Painting with Pencils: Flowers in Coloured Pencil** – Two-day workshop (12 – 13 October, 9.30am – 4.30pm) NatureArt Lab Studio, Workspace A, M16 Artspace, 21 Blaxland Crescent, Griffith

Bookings and further details:

<https://natureartlab.com.au/collections/workshops/products/painting-with-pencils-flowers-in-coloured-pencil-with-polly-sutherland-two-day-workshop>

‘Please let me know if you have any questions or if I can help in any other way. I am very happy to bring international and interstate artists to Canberra for art classes and workshops any time – let me know if you or other artists have any particular areas of interest that we can investigate. We have many interesting new courses and programs coming up!’

Julia Langford, Founding Director Canberra NatureArt Lab

Botanical Artists’ Society of Queensland

Workshop - *Spotlight on Graphite and Ink*, with Eva Richards, Sunday 27 October, 9.30-4.30.

Venue: Wynnum Manly Arts, Florence St. Wynnum

Cost: \$90 (member) \$110 (non-member)

Register:

<http://www.botanicalartqld.com.au/node/203>

Contact: admin@botanicalartqld.com.au

Websites

Some thoughts on our artistic ‘failures’

Have you ever looked at your work and agonised over what you perceive as your artistic ‘failures’? Has this caused you to cease painting, maybe for a long time? Do you feel that everything you produce is a disappointment to you? If you have, then take comfort in the fact that you are in exalted company. This is something you share with many other, often very famous, artists.

There are a number of very interesting websites, which discuss this issue for artists, and urge you to look at your ‘failures’ in a more positive way.

Try ‘learning to see’:

<http://www.learning-to-see.co.uk>

This site talks about the idea that your artistic failures are really successes in disguise. It encourages you to reframe your failures and to see your failures differently.

The **Artwork Archive** is another site that explores ways to deal with your perceived failures:

<https://www.artworkarchive.com>

It suggests nine things you can give up to be a successful artist. Some of these include: ‘not enough time’; ‘making comparisons’; ‘making excuses’; ‘taking uninformed advice to heart’; ‘perfectionism’; or ‘needing praise’.

The discussions on these sites and others like them make interesting reading for those who struggle with their work.

I have had to learn many lessons in this struggle myself, but one important lesson is to be forgiving and let yourself make mistakes. I refuse to call them ‘failures’. Instead I think of them as steps along a learning journey. Value your mistakes, cherish them. They will teach you things that can’t be learnt any other way.

Rachel Newling – Gallery of New Work

Rachel Newling has a collection of Limited Edition linocuts, engravings, and unique drawings on her website gallery. The view these works go to her website:

<https://www.rachelnewling.com/australian-birds-linocuts-rachel-newling-gallery-1-1-1>

RACHEL NEWLING ARTIST AND PRINTMAKER



Welcome to my Newsletter presenting a new linocut:
Kookaburra with Giant Spear Lily



Hand-coloured limited edition linocut print on handmade Japanese Washi paper, 75 x 51 cm.



Showing work in progress on the linoblock and black & white print before colouring.

Phone (+61) 403 901 372
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