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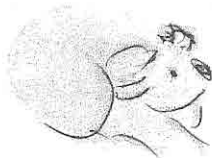
NEWSLETTER

2004

WINTER

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Editor: Anneke Fortuyn



The AGM at Coolart was a success and the setting was superb

Peter thanked, Phil for taking over the presidents job at short notice. And Anneke got thanks for being a hardworking secretary.

The committee stood down, and has been re elected for another year

Brian Thomas gave an interesting talk on migratory birds and the reason why they migrate. Some discussion on the timing of migration and what makes the birds decide to leave on a particular day. Very informative

Peter presented Brian with a small gift of appreciation

Lets hope our new year is a good one with the wanted amount of rain. Planting in the reserve has been done at the working bee of the 30th of May. Thank you all whom attended the planting day.

Autumn rain has come, late but welcome. Let us hope winter rain follows - and spring rain too. Perhaps you have already rediscovered the 'boggy' patch in your garden that has been dry for years? Rather than digging trenches and laying 'agi' pipe to carry the water away to the storm water drain, consider a sustainable solution that will keep the precious water in your property.

This method will also reward you with many birds and small creatures living, singing and feeding in your garden.

First step: poison or in some other ways remove all the introduced grasses, especially the ones that 'run' or they will make maintenance difficult. A jute weed mat (never a plastic one) over the entire bog area will make the job of weed management easier but on areas where indigenous seed is likely to be in the soil, matting is not a good idea.

Next get a hole dug to make a 'soak', if the wet area is large enough - it need not be deep.

Plant the 'soak' with various Rushes and with Tall Sedge - *Carex appressa*.

Plant the edges with Poas, Knobby Club Rush - *Isolepis nodosa*, *Lomandra longifolia* (detailed profile of this plant on the last page of the newsletter) and great patches of Long Purple Flags - *Patersonia occidentalis*.

Swamp Sheoak - *Allocasuarina paludosa* are slow growing but are interesting shapes.

Plant some in groups.

The Dagger Hakea - *Hakea teretifolia* likes a damp spot and is a great nesting place for blue wrens.

Group some of these together.



Golden Spray - *Viminaria juncea* is magnificent, elegant and wonderful when the wind gets into it. Plant lots of them, close together. When they flower they will be a sea of gold and afterwards the Rosellas will be like another crop of red flowers as they eat the seed.

Scavenge some fallen trees or branches and make lizard homes. Let Small-leaf Bramble - *Rubus parvifolius* or Austral Crane's-bill - *Geranium solanderi* grow through and over them.

For ground cover plant *Veronica calycina* - Hairy Speedwell, *Viola heberacea* - Ivy-leaf Violet and *Dichondra repen* - Kidney Weed.

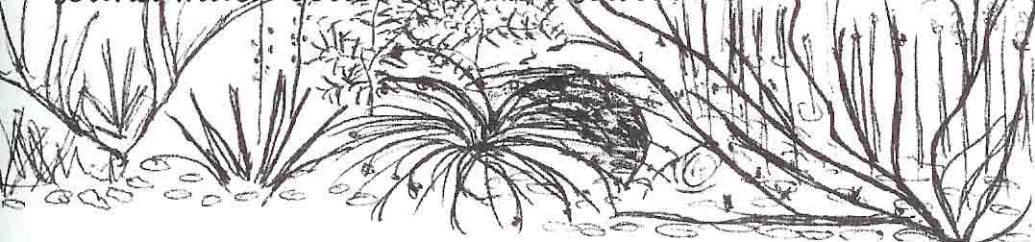
See if you can find *Gahnia sieberiana* - Red-fruited saw sedge - for the butterflies - and try rescuing some Coastal Sword Sedge - *Lepidosperma gladiatum* washed up on the beach - it makes a very handsome display.

Over time seek out indigenous grasses and lilies to add to the display.

If you have lots of room a swamp gum or two would be fantastic for the Koalas.

Your bog will sing with frogs and birds and the plants will suck up the water so you will never again have wet feet.

And if you have no wet area? Talk to your plumber about recycling your shower water. The frogs will sound much better than the sewer!



Lomandra longifolia

Spiny-headed Mat Rush

This rush is identified by its strap-shaped leaves about 1cm wide with ragged tips and by its spiky flower, the flowers are tiny, yellowish and heavily scented. The nectar of the flowers, attracts butterflies

It grows in thick, untidy clumps 1 -2 m tall.

Mat rush is very common and can be grown in a diverse range of soil types and positions.

It prefers well drained soils but will tolerate dry shade. It will grow under trees but also in exposed locations and is very common along streams

It is an excellent garden plant, be it a formal type garden or a bushland garden

USES

Tufts of the leaves can be pulled from the clump and the white inner bases are chewed. These taste like fresh green peas, a refreshing snack.

The scented flowers can be made into a sweet drink.

The tough leaves, of the long-leaf mat rush, were split into strips and woven by Aborigines into sturdy dillies and mats.

