

TOPIC: "GROWING LOCAL NATIVE PLANTS FOR NATIVE BEES".

GUEST SPEAKER : SPENCER SHAW

MALENY GARDEN CLUB MEETING : 27 AUGUST 2019 AT THE OLD WITTA SCHOOL

Spencer worked in native plants regeneration industry for 25 years. He is not only passionate about preservation of rainforests but all conservation works. He also writes about his activities and experiences

- Over 1500 species of native bees in Australia. Mostly solitary bees e.g. blue banded, resin and leaf cutters, a few stingless (hive bees) in our area – *Austroplebeia* and *Tetragonula*
- Bees obtain all their nutrition and resources from plants e.g. nectar, pollen and resin
- Bees are crucial pollinators for many native plants
- Leafcutter bee uses a round cut out from ginger leaf to plug hole in nest to raise young
- 500ml to 1L of honey per annum produced by native bees depending on hive size
- Native plants and bees have evolved together over millennia and are crucial to each other
- Macadamias are pollinated by native bees more so than by honey bees
- Over 1500 native plants on the Sunshine Coast and over 3000 in South East Queensland
- Native gardens are hotspots of resources for bees - use local native plants for your garden
- Plant range of colours as bees have good colour vision e.g. blue, purple, violet, white, yellow
- Plant range of flower shapes in layers to enhance habitat and resources. Group small species together to provide easy access. Plant diversity of species for year round flowers
- Native *plectranthus* species – very hardy and consistently in flower for bees - ½m high
- Avoid pesticides both synthetic and natural
- Bees need water. Ponds are a good source, also soaks. Put a layer of gravel in a tray and cover with water which is easy for bees to stand in and take refreshment
- Provide homes e.g. solitary bee nests – source a native bee hive
- Flannel flower, striking plant with cups holding nectar, is related to the umbrella tree
- *Astrotricha latifolia* – good underplanting to 3m with eucalypts
- *Acacia* species provide good pollen for bees
- *Carpobrotus gaucenscens* (pigface or sea- fig) good spreading ground cover
- *Acmena* species of the myrtle family related to guava
- *Alectryon coriaceus* (beach bird's eye) fruit has fishy odour
- *Achirhodomirtus beckleri* (small-leaved myrtle or rose myrtle) affected by myrtle rust but shrub has a lot of potential for Maleny
- *Austromyrtus dulcis* (midgen or midyim berry) fruit is very tasty – delicious bush tucker
- *Banksia aemula* commonly known as the wallum banksia
- *Brachychiton bidwillii* called the Little Kurrajong has large clusters of pink/red flowers
- *Coronidium elatum* known as the white paper daisy flower – easy to grow from cutting
- *Crinum pedunculatum* – river lily, swamp lily or mangrove lily

- *Decaspermum humile* silky myrtle/currant myrtle – stunning honey sweet flower and tasty bush tucker fruit. Up to 97% wiped out by myrtle rust. Grows to 3m in garden and 10m in forest and has nice reddish new growth. Can smell fragrance 30 – 40m away
- *Eucalyptus curtisii* – 3 – 6m mallee eucalypt has suckering ability. One in Beerwah has been dated to thousands of years old
- *Hibbertia salicifolia* or Guinea flower has five-petalled flowers in varying shades of yellow
- *Indigofera australis* – pea bush – ornamental shrub, pink to purple flowers - great nectar
- *Leptospermum trinervium* – tea tree – better and more powerful honey than manuka
- *Leptospermum speciosum* – large bees love it and bounce from flower to flower
- *Macadamia* has stunning flowers similar to grevillea flowers
- *Pavetta australiensis* – butterfly bush – flowers attract wide range of beneficial insects besides butterflies and flowers once a year for one month
- *Pultenaea villosa* – bacon and egg pea bush – fast growing, spring flowering
- *Rhodosphaera rhodantha* – deep yellowwood – cabinet timber tree to 15m from drier rain forest. Pink red flowers and brown hard globular fruit in bunches. Cashew nut relative
- *Syzygium* – Blue Lilly Pilly – tucker bush – 3 to 20m dense foliage, white flowers with perfume carrying 30 to 40m. Tasty purple fruit
- *Xerochrysum bracteatum* – commonly known as the golden everlasting or straw flower – yellow paper daisy very popular with bees

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