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Newsletter #10 June 2009 Edition

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## Winter is here!

Time to enjoy all that a native winter garden can provide. Birds are looking for nectar in flowers to sustain them through winter so plants that flower all through winter such as Grevilleas and Correas provide much needed food for the cold months. It is a great time of year to get out into the bush and see all the Banksias, Grevilleas and Lambertia that are flowering everywhere now. In the nursery we have a great range of winter flowering options or ideas for getting started on flowering plants for spring. We are open all June long weekend from 9am to 5pm. See you then,

Dave, Kath, Narelle & Paul

## Attracting Native Birds and Butterflies to Your Garden

There are a huge range of plants to attract native birds such as honeyeaters, rainbow lorikeets and wattlebirds, to your garden. Grevilleas, banksias, callistemon, eucalypts and kangaroo paws to name a few. Birds need suitable shelter to keep away from predators such as cats, so densely planted gardens with a water source will keep them coming back. Lilly Pillies and native grasses will also help encourage seed-eating birds such as galahs, rosellas and bronze-wing pigeons to your garden.



Native Honeyeater

Butterflies feed on various native plants such as everlasting daisys and brachyscomes, pea flowers, pimeleas, hibiscus, callistemon and Stylidium species.



Wanderer Butterfly on a callistemon.

## What's on in Winter!

Did you know that you can join your local group of the **Australian native Plant Society Australia?**

Menai Wildflower Group meets the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of every month at 7.30pm. Illawong Rural Fire Brigade Old Illawarra Rd, Illawong.

Sutherland Group meets every 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of every month at 8pm at GyMEA Community Hall, GyMEA.

If you would like to find out more about the society or your local group, go to: [www.asgap.org.au](http://www.asgap.org.au)

Or why not visit: **Wollongong Botanic Gardens** which have:

Australian open forests and grassland – plants from dry and wet sclerophyll forests

Dry rainforest garden - plants from rainforest communities that have adapted to dry conditions

Dryland garden - plants from arid and semi arid areas of Australia

Illawarra rainforest garden – plants from a variety of the Illawarra's rainforest communities

Subtropical rainforest garden - plants from subtropical rainforest areas of New South Wales and Queensland, Australia

Go to: <http://botanicgarden.wollongong.nsw.gov.au/>

Also open during winter is:

**Wombarra Sculpture garden** which is set in the Illawarra Rainforest at 57 Morrison Ave, Wombarra. It is open the first Saturday and Sunday of each month.

Go to [www.wombarra.com/](http://www.wombarra.com/)

## Wattles.....why do they flower in winter?

Up to a third of Australia's 960 species of wattles will flower in winter.

Wattles are opportunistic pollinators – they make use of any beetle, wasp or bee which lands on them to spread their genes around. Unlike many other plants, most wattles do not rely on a specific type of insect or bird for pollination. Insects land on the blossom and become covered with pollen, carrying it from one plant to the next. Birds which forage for these insects also become incidental pollen carriers in the process. The pollinators are attracted by the pollen of the wattle, a rich source of protein. Mites and thrips feed on the flowers, and beetles and wasps prey on these insects. All of these creatures become inadvertent pollinators.

Honeyeaters may also accidentally collect pollen on their bodies as they move in to take the nectar. There's another advantage to flowering early: sneaking in an early batch of seeds. Seeds take about two months to mature. The seeds of winter flowering plants are mature by late spring. This way, the young germinating plants have less competition from other seedlings, and also benefit from any moisture remaining in the ground from the cooler weather.

Sydney Golden Wattle – *Acacia longifolia* can be seen flowering through the bush on the east coast, from the mid coast of NSW and through the Illawarra region, in winter



Sydney Golden Wattle- *Acacia longifolia*