



BUSHLAND NEWS

KATANDRA BUSHLAND SANCTUARY NEWSLETTER
Spring 2021

I hope you have been able to stay safe and well during these unusual times. Due to the health restrictions, Katandra has been closed to visitors this season. Unfortunately, the lockdown provisions came into force almost immediately after the Winter edition of the Bushland News was released advertising the beginning of our normal Open Season. Apologies for any confusion.

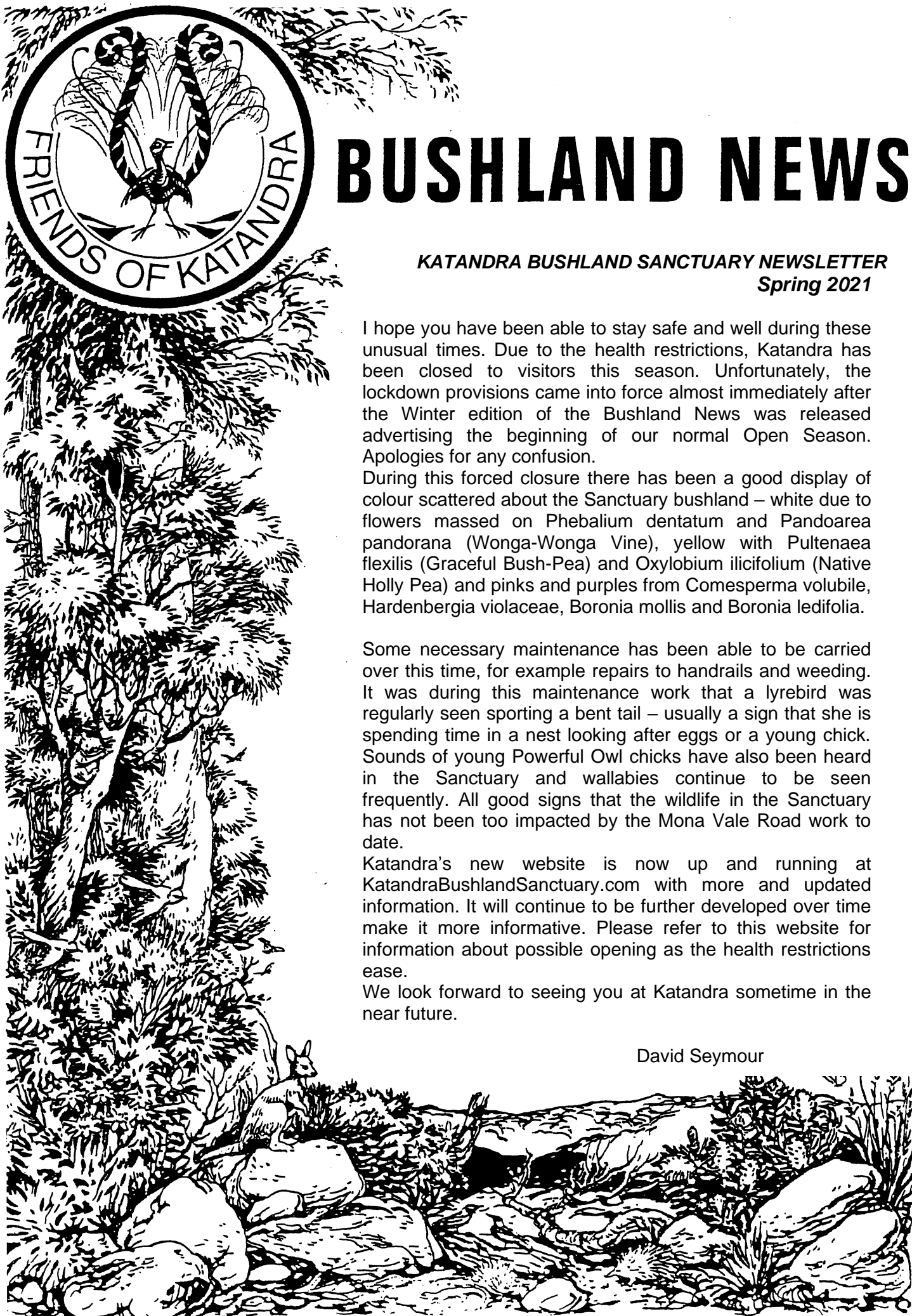
During this forced closure there has been a good display of colour scattered about the Sanctuary bushland – white due to flowers massed on *Phebalium dentatum* and *Pandoarea pandorana* (Wonga-Wonga Vine), yellow with *Pultenaea flexilis* (Graceful Bush-Pea) and *Oxylobium ilicifolium* (Native Holly Pea) and pinks and purples from *Comesperma volubile*, *Hardenbergia violaceae*, *Boronia mollis* and *Boronia ledifolia*.

Some necessary maintenance has been able to be carried over this time, for example repairs to handrails and weeding. It was during this maintenance work that a lyrebird was regularly seen sporting a bent tail – usually a sign that she is spending time in a nest looking after eggs or a young chick. Sounds of young Powerful Owl chicks have also been heard in the Sanctuary and wallabies continue to be seen frequently. All good signs that the wildlife in the Sanctuary has not been too impacted by the Mona Vale Road work to date.

Katandra's new website is now up and running at KatandraBushlandSanctuary.com with more and updated information. It will continue to be further developed over time make it more informative. Please refer to this website for information about possible opening as the health restrictions ease.

We look forward to seeing you at Katandra sometime in the near future.

David Seymour



Milkworts

Milkworts are part of the Polygalaceae family of plants which contains around 900 species spread throughout the warm parts of the world. 40 of these species grow in Australia. Their flowers have some similar features of the well-recognised flowers of the Fabaceae (or Pea) family. Both Polygalaceae and Fabaceae families are part of the Finales order of flowering plants. Over half of the Polygalaceae species are in one genus *Polygala*. This name comes from an ancient Greek word meaning "much milk", as some species were thought to increase milk yields in cattle. There were also many other uses of milkwort, as a tea substitute, to help with respiratory ailments and other medical and religious purposes.

In Australia, the native milkwort (*Polygala linariifolia*), found mainly in northern NSW, is listed as an endangered species. While there are no members of the *Polygala* genus of milkworts in Katandra, the Sanctuary is host to three species of the closely related *Comesperma* genus – *C. ericinum*, *C. sphaerocarpum* and *C. volubile*.



Comesperma ericinum

The *Comesperma* genus of milkworts is endemic to Australia with 24 species distributed across all states but mainly in southern areas. The genus name is derived from the Ancient Greek words *come* ("hair") and *sperms* ("seed"), relating to the seeds bearing tufts of hair.

Comesperma ericinum, commonly known as **Heath Milkwort** or **Pink Matchheads**, is a small, erect shrub that grows to about 1 - 1.5 metres high. It is found in heath and woodland on sandstone along the coast and ranges of all eastern states. The leaves are fairly soft and narrow, about 6 to 20 mm long by 1 to 4 mm wide, with recurved margins. The flowers occur in matchhead-like clusters of buds towards the ends

of the branches. Individually the flowers are small (5 to 10 mm long) and are usually richly pinkish purple although white forms are known. Flowering time is mainly in spring but can occur at other times.

Endemic to New South Wales, ***Comesperma sphaerocarpum*** is also found along the tablelands and coast in sandy soils. Commonly known as **Purple Broom Milkwort**, **Leafless Milkwort** or **Fairies' Wings**, it is an inconspicuous plant unless in flower.



Comesperma sphaerocarpum
(photo – P. Woodward)

The stems are usually leafless, arising from the plant's woody base to a height of 10 to 30 cm. Some leaves may be present as scales towards the base of the shoot. The flowers may be from sky blue to purple-mauve, with two petals displayed like "fairies wings".

***Comesperma volubile* (Love Creeper)** grows as a slender twiner with tangled green stems. It has soft, flat leaves about 3cm long and rich pinkish purple flowers. It's common name of Love Creeper is because the stems tie themselves up in "lover's knots".



Comesperma volubile

Raising Chicks

There are strong signs that there have been a number of chicks successfully raised in Katandra this year.

During the winter months a female lyrebird was seen on many occasions feeding near one of the creeks in the Sanctuary. While a nest was not located, the female was sporting a tail with an obvious kink to one side – a strong sign that she was brooding in a nest. A chick will usually leave the nest sometime in spring.



The lyrebird scratching around with her tail kinked to her right.



(Above) A lyrebird photographed at her nest in Katandra by Don Seymour in the early 2000s.



Photo – L & D Pribee

Powerful owls have successfully bred in Katandra in previous years. The photo of a fledgling chick above was captured by visitors to the Sanctuary last year. This year no chicks have been directly sighted, however the sounds of a chick calling its parents have been heard in the early evening. A recording of these sounds was sent to the coordinators of the Powerful Owl Project who concluded that the calls were from two Powerful Owls chicks in good health.



Images of nesting birds in Katandra captured by Stan Scotchmere in the 1970's. Butcherbird (Above) and Bluewren (below)



Katandra website:
www.KatandraBushlandSanctuary.com

KATANDRA BUSHLAND SANCTUARY

Foley's Hill, Lane Cove Rd, Ingleside NSW
Department of Lands Reserve No 86487
Founder: the late Harold Alfred Seymour
Managed by Katandra Bushland Sanctuary Trust.
Phone: 0431857407

OPEN: Every Sunday: July, August, September,
October

HOURS: 10 am — 4 pm

ADMISSION: \$3 donation

KATANDRA BUSHLAND SANCTUARY TRUST PO Box 365 Mona Vale NSW 1660

President: David Seymour
Vice-President: David James
Secretary: (acting) David Seymour
Treasurer: Peter Hammond
Minutes Secretary: Julie Emerson
Bushland News Editor: Marita Macrae
Trustees: Roberta Conroy, David Malin
(Cover Design by the late Walter Cunningham)

**Enquiries: phone 0431857407 or by email
information@katandra.org**

Volunteers are needed

If you can assist on maintenance days or with
welcoming visitors to Katandra on open days,
please phone 0431857407

DIARY DATES 2021

SAUSAGE SIZZLE (CANCELLED)
~~Sunday 2nd May, 12 noon~~

FOUNDER'S DAY (CANCELLED)
~~Sunday 15th August, 12 noon~~

CHRISTMAS PARTY (CANCELLED)
~~Sunday 5th December, 4.30 pm~~

SANCTUARY MAINTENANCE 2021
(3rd Sunday March–November)

Subject to health restrictions

9 am Sunday 21 March
9 am Sunday 18 April
9 am Sunday 16 May
9 am Sunday 20 June
9 am Sunday 18 July
9 am Sunday 19 September
9 am Sunday 17 October
9 am Sunday 21 November

PUBLIC OPEN DAYS 2021

Subject to health restrictions

Each Sunday of July–October
10 am – 4 pm

Katandra Bushland Sanctuary Trust
PO Box 365 Mona Vale NSW 1660