**December 2020 Plant Cuttings**

**Make your garden a haven for native pollinators to help the bush regenerate – Sharon Kelley, 28 November 2020**

Pollination is a crucial part of revitalising natural bushland following the Black Summer bushfires, and many of Australia’s native plants rely on pollinating insects. Eurobodalla Shire Council is offering residents bush-friendly garden visits to help them make the best choices for native plants for pollinators. <https://aboutregional.com.au/make-your-garden-a-haven-for-native-pollinators-to-help-the-bush-regenerate/>

**Burdekin ecosystem program to better protect the Great Barrier Reef – Jessica Johnston, 3 December 2020**

Coastal ecosystems in North Queensland will be better protected under a new three-year program to be delivered in the Burdekin region. NQ Dry Tropics will work with community partners to improve the health of native vegetation, fish and other animals in a bid to improve the health and resilience of the Great Barrier Reef. <https://www.queenslandcountrylife.com.au/story/7040513/coastal-ecosystems-protected/?cs=4698>

**Eleven hectares of land leased to university for conservation plant-out – Harry Lock, 3 December 2020**
Eleven hectares of land in Wellington's Outer Green Belt has been handed over to a university project to plant native forest. The University expects somewhere between 18,000 and 28,000 trees could be planted on the site. <https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/national/432025/eleven-hectares-of-land-leased-to-university-for-conservation-plant-out>

**Community group needs your help to map native orchids in Macarthur region – Jess Layt, 4 December 2020**The Macarthur Australasian Native Orchid Society (MANOS) is conducting a survey of native orchids in the region, and they need your help to complete the task. MANOS has been awarded community grants from AGL's Camden Gas Project to conduct the survey through to the end of 2021.<https://www.macarthuradvertiser.com.au/story/7039505/community-group-needs-your-help-to-map-native-orchids-in-macarthur-region/>

**Myrtle Rust Update: Mature Native Trees Now Dying – Scoop Independent News, 8 December 2020**The first known case of mature tree death due to myrtle rust infection has been observed in the East Cape of Aotearoa New Zealand, suggesting localized extinction for some native myrtles could become a reality. <https://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/AK2012/S00209/myrtle-rust-update-mature-native-trees-now-dying.htm>

# Human-made materials now outweigh all plants and animals on Earth, says new research – Lara Pearce, 9News, 10 December 2020The year 2020 marks the first time human-made materials have outweighed biomatter such as plants and animals, according to new research. The mass of the world's roads, buildings, machines and other human-made items has doubled every 20 years for the past century, the team of Israeli scientists found. <https://www.9news.com.au/national/human-made-materials-outweigh-biomass-like-plants-animals-for-first-time-in-2020/94e8f96e-c396-42f3-857f-51c62e31990a>

**Addition to list of threatened ecological communities – Australian Government, 15 December 2020**On Tuesday December 15th the Minister for the Environment, the Hon. Sussan Ley MP included the **‘River-flat eucalypt forest on coastal floodplains of southern New South Wales and eastern Victoria’** on the list of threatened ecological communities (TECs) under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999. <http://www.environment.gov.au/cgi-bin/sprat/public/publicshowcommunity.pl?id=154>

## **Fenner Conference on the Environment—‘Exceptional times, exceptional plants’ – Australian Academy of Science media release, 15 December 2020**This conference will focus on ex situ conservation strategies for Australian plants that cannot be conserved by conventional seed banking methods. The conference will provide an opportunity for scientists working on the conservation of Australia’s diverse flora to evaluate methods for conserving plant germplasm (seeds, plants and other plant tissues), adding value to guidelines produced by the Australian Network for Plant Conservation. <https://www.science.org.au/news-and-events/news-and-media-releases/conferences-explore-dynamics-southern-ocean-and-conservation>

**Australia-first research reveals staggering loss of threatened plants over 20 years – The Conversation, 16 December 2020**New Australia-first research shows the population sizes of our threatened plants fell by almost three-quarters, on average, between 1995 and 2017. The findings were drawn from Australia’s 2020 [Threatened Species Index](https://tsx.org.au/), which combines data from almost 600 sites. <https://theconversation.com/australia-first-research-reveals-staggering-loss-of-threatened-plants-over-20-years-151408>

**‘Ugliest orchid in the world’ among 2020's new plant discoveries – Damian Carrington, The Guardian, 17 December 2020**The “ugliest orchid in the world”, a toadstool discovered at Heathrow airport, and a bizarre scaly shrub have topped a list of new species named by scientists at the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew and their collaborators in 2020. <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2020/dec/17/ugliest-orchid-in-the-world-among-2020s-new-plant-discoveries-kew-gardens>

**Weeds at the Early Stage of Invasion Project wins Froggatt award – Invasive Species Council, 17 December 2020
A project that gives land managers the tools to eradicate new weed invasions before the weeds get a stranglehold in sensitive bushland, coastal and alpine environments has won one of this year's national Froggatt awards.** <https://invasives.org.au/media-releases/victorian-project-tackling-high-risk-invasive-weeds-wins-national-froggatt-award/>

# Rising from the ashes - Kangaroo Island's rare and endemic flora – Stan Gordon, The Islander, 18 December 2020Teams of volunteers led by botanists, including local Michelle Haby, have been surveying the bushfire-ravaged western end of Kangaroo Island for rare and threatened plant species. Results so far have been promising, with seedlings or suckers of all of the 17 target plant species already observed within burnt areas. <https://www.theislanderonline.com.au/story/7061358/rising-from-the-ashes-kangaroo-islands-rare-and-endemic-flora/>

**Events & Opportunities**

**2022 Research Grants - The Australian Flora Foundation**

The Australian Flora Foundation is calling for applications to their 2022 research grants. The Foundation will provide between $5000 - $15,000 for original scientific projects on the biology and cultivation of Australian plants. Applications due 15 March 2021.For more information head to the website <http://aff.org.au/grants/grant-criteria/>

**Val Williams scholarship – Australian Plants Society NSW**

The North Shore Group of the Australian Plants Society NSW is offering the 13th Annual Val Williams Scholarship in Botany. The scholarship provides $3000 to a student completing an Honours, Masters or PhD project that contributes to knowledge on the ecology, conservation, or propagation of native plants in Sydney and the surrounding region. Applications close 5 March 2021. For more information please email scholarship@blandfordia.org.au