



## **Blue Mountains Conservation Society Inc Annual General Meeting 2020**

### **Nursery Report**

The last year has been a very busy year for the nursery when we initiated 4 major projects in addition to our normal work of growing and selling native plants. The projects were: -

- Upgrading the watering system
- Changing to a different style of air pruning tray
- Improving seed collection practices/storage
- Upgrading the website

Upgrading the nursery watering system to a system that can be configured remotely delivered following benefits: -

1. Ability to modify nursery watering schedules remotely.
2. Stopping over watering when solenoids fail and generating SMS/notification alerts.
3. Stopping under watering when solenoids fail to turn on by generating an SMS/notification alert.
4. Stopping overwatering when there is a cracked/broken pipe
5. Generating SMS/notification alerts when no water is available.

The new watering system proved to invaluable during the recent bush fire season when nursery volunteers were not able to visit the nursery by allowing watering schedules to be changed remotely during the extreme weather conditions.

In the shade house the nursery moved to a new style of air pruning tray. The new air pruning trays allowed the nursery to increase its plant carrying capacity by about 30% as it reduced the amount of dead space on the nursery's benches. As part of this transition we also re-cycled a large volume of old trays and tubes.

When Sue Nicol who previously co-ordinated seed collecting for the nursery had to reduce her involvement, the nursery was lucky to have Kathi Dowds, previously the Herbarium Curator for the National Herbarium of NSW take over this responsibility. In order to support Kathi several nursery volunteers attended a BMCC run seed collecting workshop following the issuance of a BMCC permit for the Society to collect seeds/cuttings on council reserves. In January a fridge was donated to the nursery to store our seed library which should increase the length of time seeds remain viable.

During the year the nursery also worked with our webmaster Alan Page to upgrade the nursery web pages. This included: -

- Making the nursery webpages mobile friendly
- Organising the plant list by size to allow customers to better select which plants were suitable for their gardens

- Providing links to our new style plant labels which have a photograph of the plant and information about the plant plus a link to the PlantNet website

Finally I would like to say thank you to the many volunteers who have continued to support the nursery and enabled the nursery produce all the wonderful plants we have sold in the last year while supporting the many changes that have occurred.

Paul Irwin

Nursery Manager