

# TURNOUT

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF NORTHERN TURNERS INC.

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## FROM THE EDITOR

As this year slowly drags itself towards the end, there are several dates that Northern Turner members should keep in mind.

### NT AGM

November 7th at Para Hills Community Hub starting at 9.30 am. The Community Hub is next to Woolworths at Para Hills Shopping Centre on Wilkinson Road. Members will have to bring their own food and drink. Social distancing will be followed as far as is practicable.

### Sales Exhibition at the Burnside 25th November to Thursday 21st January 2021

ENTRY FORM needs to be emailed, in MS WORD FORMAT (any version), by Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> November to – [nttreas@outlook.com](mailto:nttreas@outlook.com)

Set up Tuesday 24th November

NT committee is planning a Christmas BBQ—date and venue to be announced

## WOODGROUPSA

The AGM is scheduled for Saurday 31st October 2020

Prior to this meeting, a special meeting has been called for the purpose of votong for the dissolution of Woodgroup-SA. Northern Turner will be supporting this motion.

If the motion is successful, plans will be put in place to carry out the dissolution process. The AGM will be cancelled.

If the motion failes, the AGM will go ahead.

George Pastuch

NT Board delegate.

### Northern Turners Committee

President	Tim Smeaton
Secretary	Dale Starr
Treasurer	David Kleinig
Vice President	Bill Elliott
Member	Roger Coulter
Member	Glenn Kutschen
Member	Fred McCann
Member	Nik Surikov,
Member	Graham Reed
Member	Flora Rumbelow

### Send all articles to

[turnout@woodgroupsa.org.au](mailto:turnout@woodgroupsa.org.au)

### Your Northern Turners

- *Seeking Excellence*
- *Encouraging Individualism*
- *Fostering Creativity*
- *Teaching Skills*
- *Providing Support*



Ron Allen

## Trees 'n' Timber

### Outeniqua Yellowwood

#### *Afrocarpus falcatus*

#### Derivation of names.

*Afrocarpus* is a genus of conifers belonging to the podocarp family - Podocarpaceae.

**Other names.** Podo, Yellowwood, East African Yellowwood, Bastard Yellowwood.

Prior to 1989 Outeniqua Yellowwood was known as *Podocarpus falcatus*.

*Podocarpus* is from Greek *podos*, a foot and *carpo*, fruit, referring to the fleshy foot stalk of the fruit, very readily seen with the Illiwarra Plum *Podocarpus elatus*, where the fleshy stem is plum coloured and edible, in fact quite tasty. In the late 1980's several African species formerly classified in the Genus *Podocarpus* were reclassified. The reason for the separation is mainly based on the absence of a fleshy receptacle at the base of the seed. These species are often seen as an enigma. Although they have normal leaves and fruit which look like those of an Olive, they are classified as gymnosperms, and therefore are related to all of the conifers. The botanical reason for this is that they are all said to have naked seeds, unlike the typical fruit of a true flowering plant, which has seeds enclosed within a fruit, eg apple.



Leaves and fruit of Outeniqua Yellowwood



The tree growing in the Waite Arboretum



Bark of Outeniqua Yellowwood

The specific name is from Latin meaning sickle shaped referring to the shape of the leaves. Outeniqua is derived from the region of the Outeniqua Mountain Range in the southern part of South Africa, one of the areas of the trees natural habitat.

#### The Tree.

Both *Podocarpus* and *Afrocarpus* are protected in South Africa.

(Continued on page 3)

(Continued from page 2)

*Afrocarpus falcatus* is a tall evergreen conifer often growing up to about 45 meters tall, but known to have reached 60 meters. At higher elevations and in exposed, coastal habitat it rarely exceeds 25 meters tall. The trunk can be 2 to 3 meters wide. Yellowwood is one of the tallest and largest trees in South Africa, and some have been designated by the Department of Water and Forests as Champion Trees, including the Eastern Monarch at 39 metres. Of interest, the tallest tree in South Africa is a Sydney Blue Gum (*Eucalyptus saligna*) at 79 meters. *Afrocarpus* includes the largest known podocarps outside of New Zealand where Totara (*Podocarpus totara*) is substantially larger. The tree was heavily exploited in earlier days and the 'giants' were felled for timber, thus the lack of large trees and therefore its protected status today.

The tree has a beautiful form. The flush of bluish-grey leaves in spring contrast beautifully against the older, dark green, mature leaves. The leaves are arranged spirally, with parallel veins and smooth margins. The leaf is curved with a tip which is sharply pointed (falcate) thus the specific name *falcatus*. The leaves are arranged in spirals on the branches. They are small and narrow, up to 4.5 centimeters long by about 6 millimeters wide. They are green to yellowish, hairless, and leathery and somewhat waxy in texture.

The bark is interesting, being smooth and ridged on younger stems and peeling off in flakes on the older trees.

Yellowwood is a dioecious species, with male and female flowers on separate plants. The male cone is brown with spiralling scales and measures 5 to 15 millimeters long by 3 millimeters wide. It grows from the leaf axils. The female cone has one scale bearing one seed between one and two centimeters long. The gray-green seed is drupe-like with a woody coat covered in a fleshy, resinous skin. The Waite Arboretum has two female specimens on the eastern boundary of the lake, both of which currently have some fruit. One has some large fruit, more than 20mm in diameter showing the thick fleshy outer covering. This pair of trees is separated by an Australian Podocarp – Illawarra Plum (*Podocarpus elatus*), which easily shows the similarities.

The trees bear fruit irregularly, only every few years. The main agents of seed dispersal are fruit bats, which eat the fleshy covering and discard the woody seed. Many birds, animals and rodents feed on the fruits. These may not be effective seed dispersal agents, because it appears that seeds that have been digested in this manner do not germinate well. In order to propagate new plants it is very important to remove the fleshy part manually as it contains an inhibitor, which seems to suppress germination.

**Natural distribution** This tree occurs from the southern Cape, northwards to the Limpopo (the northern most region of South Africa) and also eastwards to Mozambique. Some of the largest individuals occur in the Knysna-Amatole montane forests, where some specimens are over 1000 years old.

### Uses and economic value

The tree is valued very highly as a garden plant. The wood is very similar in appearance to Australia's Yellowwood (*Flindersia xanthoxyla*). The accompanying photo of the slab of wood is from a piece that Tony Davies (Northern turners) sourced.

The colour is pale yellowish with little difference between the heartwood and the sapwood. The wood has a fine even grain and is of moderate weight – about 670 kgm per cubic meter (c.f. most pines – about 550 to 600 kgm per cub. meter). It was used extensively for furniture, roof beams, floorboards, door and window frames and boat building. Some of the famous yellowwood antiques seen throughout South Africa were made from the wood of this specific tree. The straight stems of these trees were once used for the topmasts of ships.

The bark is used for tanning leather.

### References

A Guide to Useful Woods of the World, Second edition, Edited by James h Flynn, Jun and Charles D Holder, Forest Products Society, 2001

Trees of Southern Africa, Keith Coates Palgrave, C Struik Publishers, Cape Town,1983

Plantzafrica - [www.plantzafrica.com/plantnop/podocarpfalcat.htm](http://www.plantzafrica.com/plantnop/podocarpfalcat.htm)

The Gymnosperm Database. [www.conifers.org/po/Afrocarpus\\_falcatus.php](http://www.conifers.org/po/Afrocarpus_falcatus.php)



Wood of the Outeniqua Yellowwood

**Ron Allen**

## WORLD'S ANCIENT TREES

On a recent trip to the UK, I was fortunate enough to come across several very old trees. I took lots of photographs and was awed at the suggested ages of these trees. This inspired me to conduct some research and write some articles named World's Ancient Trees. I hope you enjoy them.

### The Fortingall Yew.

In the churchyard of Fortingall Church near the east end of the attractive village of Fortingall is the Fortingall Yew, believed to be 5,000 years old and quite possibly the oldest living thing on earth. Fortingall village is located in Perthshire approximately two and a half hours drive north east of Edinburgh in Scotland, UK. Various authors have stated that yew trees were planted at the centre of sacred Druid sites as part of the religious ceremony. These sites in turn were used to build Christian churches.

A sign at the site of the Yew states "Before you stands Europe's and possibly the worlds oldest living thing.

Under the dark veil of needles are two relic trunks of a huge ancient yew tree. Scholars believe the roots of this great survivor coil back some 5000 years. The markers show you the size of the original evergreen giant in 1769 when it had a girth of over 56 feet (17m). Sadly, it attracted souvenir hunters who removed large sections to make souvenir quiches or celebration cups. Children then reportedly lit fires inside the hollow trunk and funeral processions passed through its midst. Eventually a wall had to be built to stop the tree disappearing altogether."

It is of interest that there is also a sign on site that states that the actual age of the tree is unknown, as the core of the tree has long gone, removing the ability to count the growth rings.

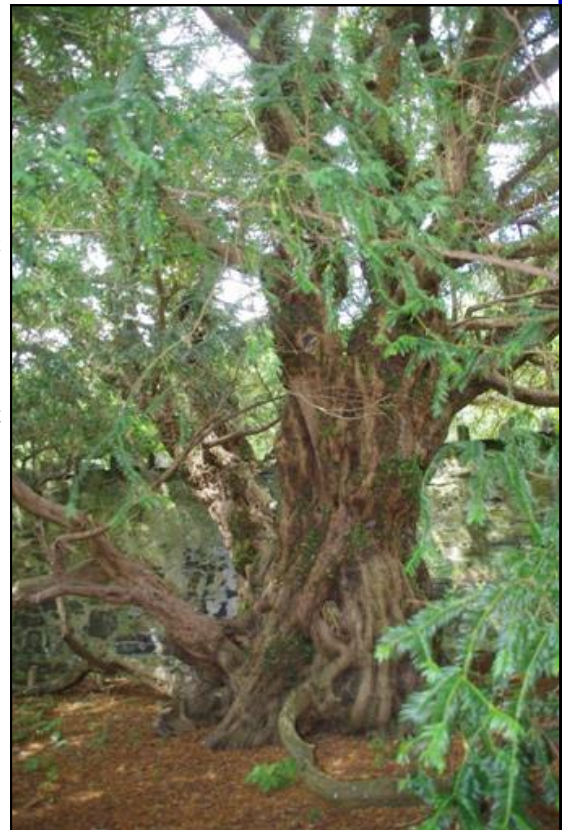
The first effort to protect the tree was the building of a wall around it in 1785, though as already noted this seems to have done little to prevent further damage. The wall was rebuilt with gaps for viewing, protected by railings in 1842, and this is the wall that still surrounds the tree today.

A line of posts in the ground shows the circumference of the yew as it stood in 1769. What remains today bears little resemblance. While the tree miraculously continues to grow, what is left is more like a grove of small individual trees sprouting from the single mighty trunk that once stood here.

In June 2002 the Fortingall Yew was listed in the national trust.

While the Fortingall Yew might only be a shadow of its former self, visiting it remains a deeply impressive experience.

George Pastuch



### WOODFAST SPARE PARTS.

If you own a Woodfast lathe or would like to purchase Woodfast tooling, these may be still available in Adelaide.

Although Woodworking Solutions have stopped trading, Steve (a previous part owner) now runs a wholesale business A1 Sales from his home in Burkenhead and still has all the Woodworking Solutions remaining stock and it is available to our members.

Ring Steve on 0408 840 201