



UNIVERSITY OF  
NEWCASTLE

# DON McNAIR HERBARIUM

## Biennial Report 2024–25

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COLLEGE OF SCIENCE



# DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

Our 2024–2025 Biennial Report is an opportunity for us to reflect on the Herbarium's achievements over the past 24 months, and our role within the research landscape at the University. It is also a chance to acknowledge the many staff, volunteers, and students who continue to support the Herbarium's continued contribution.



As we reflect on the past two years of growth and achievement at the Don McNair Herbarium, it is impossible not to acknowledge the extraordinary legacy that underpins our work. Thirty years ago, Dr Don McNair, a local auto-electrician with an unwavering passion for Australian native flora, donated his meticulously curated collection to the University of Newcastle. That gift, comprising nearly 6,000 specimens, laid the foundation for what has become one of the most significant regional herbaria in New South Wales.

Today, the Herbarium houses more than 14,500 specimens, serving as a vital resource for research, teaching, and community engagement. It is a living testament to Don's vision:

*"The Herbarium should be a vibrant working unit supporting the research and teaching of The University and engaging with the community in the areas of Plant Taxonomy, Ecology and Natural History Illustration, and itself continuing to build the collection for perpetuity."*

Over the past two years, we have seen remarkable progress across multiple fronts. Highlights include **improvements to the Herbarium's collections** through continued innovation in digitisation, cataloguing, and expanded reference materials; **building upgrades** that have improved the effective use of space for volunteers, students, and visitors; **increased media engagement** that has strengthened community awareness; and a growing role as a **space for research and learning** that supports student training and collaboration. We also acknowledge Adjunct Lecturer Dr Stephen Bell, whose sustained partnership with the Herbarium continues to foster **industry-aligned training and employment pathways** for University of Newcastle students. Together, these achievements reflect our ongoing commitment to strengthening the Herbarium as a dynamic scientific and educational resource for the University and the wider region.

These achievements are made possible through the dedication of our staff, volunteers, and partners who share Don's commitment to preserving and understanding the flora of the Hunter region. Their efforts ensure that the Herbarium remains both a repository of botanical history and an active hub for scientific discovery and student learning. Looking ahead, our goal is to continue growing the collection, enhancing accessibility, and using our data to inform conservation strategies in an era of unprecedented environmental change.

Thank you for your continued support of the Don McNair Herbarium, whether financial or as one of our highly valued volunteers. Together, we honour Don's legacy and ensure that this invaluable resource thrives for generations to come.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ben Long', written in a cursive style.

**Dr Ben Long**  
Director  
Don McNair Herbarium

# ABOUT THE HERBARIUM

The Herbarium has been built on 60 years of collecting by its founder, Dr Don McNair, and donations from many other community collectors. Today it continues to grow with the lodgement of specimens used in research and donations from organisations and individuals.

## THE COLLECTION

The Don McNair Herbarium houses a collection of over 14,500 specimens, including Angiosperms (flowering plants), Gymnosperms (conifers) and Pteridophytes (ferns). The collection's focus is on the floral diversity of the Mid North Coast and Hunter regions of New South Wales and the arid zone flora of New South Wales, South Australia, Western Australia, Queensland and the Northern Territory.

The collection is made up of the main specimen collection, as well as additional reference collections for use by students and the community. The Herbarium also holds a collection of botanical illustrations and digital flora images. All of the collections are catalogued and digitised, and held on an internal access database platform.

## OUR PURPOSE

The Herbarium collection is a critical resource to assist in our understanding of the human and environmental pressures being placed on the flora of the region.

As well as being a valuable resource for plant identification, student learning, and research, specimen data provide a spatial and temporal map of the changes in flora distribution and loss in the Hunter region. It also provides a historical record and ancient DNA fingerprint of the regional flora.

It can be used for innovative research into the understanding of the environment, its cultural connections and how to ensure its sustainable use and management for future generations.



## DON'S LEGACY

Born in 1920, Don was a Novocastrian auto electrician and had no official training in taxonomy. Driven by his keen interest in Australian flora, Don spent almost 70 years meticulously collecting and pressing plant samples from around the Hunter.

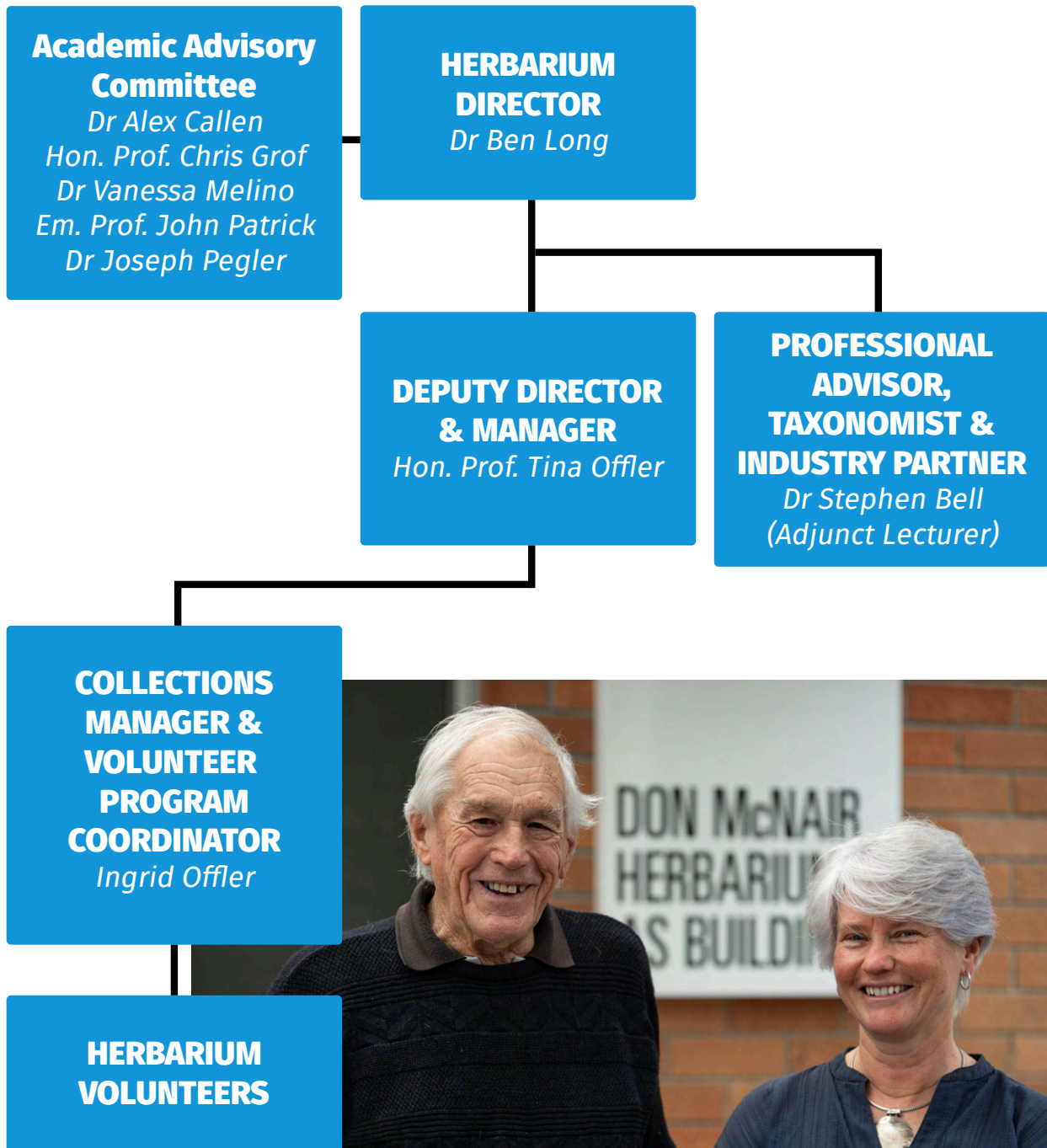
By the time Don donated his collection to the University in 1995, he had amassed around 6,000 pressed plant specimens. This became the basis for the Don McNair Herbarium which was officially opened by the University in 2003 and has since grown to more than 14,500 specimens.

In recognition of his incredible contribution to botany in the Hunter, Don was awarded an Honorary Doctorate by the University of Newcastle in 1996.

Thanks to his passion, forethought and dedication, the Don McNair Herbarium contains a record of the floral diversity of the Hunter Region since the 1950s.

# ORGANISATIONAL CHART

The Don McNair Herbarium is led by Director, Ben Long, who was appointed in 2024. A small executive team comprised of Ben, the Deputy Director & Manager, Tina Ofler and the Collection Manager, Ingrid Ofler who are supported by an Academic Advisory Committee of experts in plant biology and ecology, ensuring oversight aligned with Don's wishes. The executive team manages collections, facilities and volunteers, integrating research, curation and operational functions. The Herbarium is further strengthened by the support of Dr Stephen Bell, who serves as an external adviser and brings extensive expertise as a highly experienced plant taxonomist.



Herbarium volunteer John Sharples with Collections Manager and Volunteer Program Coordinator Ingrid Ofler



# ACHIEVEMENTS 2024 - 2025

# 2024-25 ACHIEVEMENTS

Throughout 2024 and 2025 the Herbarium, its volunteers, Collection Manager and Executive Team have continued to improve the management of the collection and its facilities with an aim to increase accessibility for students and researchers. There have been a number of key achievements over 2024-2025.

## Collection Improvements

Work has continued on the specimen collection throughout 2024-2025, with volunteers working to sort and mount over 295 specimens for inclusion in the Herbarium's reference collection. This collection provides a useful reference resource for students to become familiar with the native species found locally and the key characteristics used to identify them. These will be recorded in the database and photographed in 2026.



**Image:** *Eucalyptus haemastoma* buds photographed by volunteer John Sharples for Dr Stephen Bell's book on Eucalypts of the Hunter region.

The Herbarium volunteers have also undertaken to work with Dr Stephen Bell to mount his vast collection of regional plant species. Over 150 specimens of his 900 plus collection have been completed. Dr Bell's collection is an invaluable regional resource which we hope to maintain within the Herbarium for safe keeping for future generations.

Dr Bell is currently making use of the photographic expertise of volunteer John Sharples to generate images for a book on the Eucalypts of the Hunter region.

Contribution to the collection continues to be made by Barry Collier who donated his 8,000+ digital flora photographs in 2018. Barry updates this valuable catalogue of images twice a year with new additions taken predominately in the Hunter Region. These images have been linked as a reference resource to the main collections database.

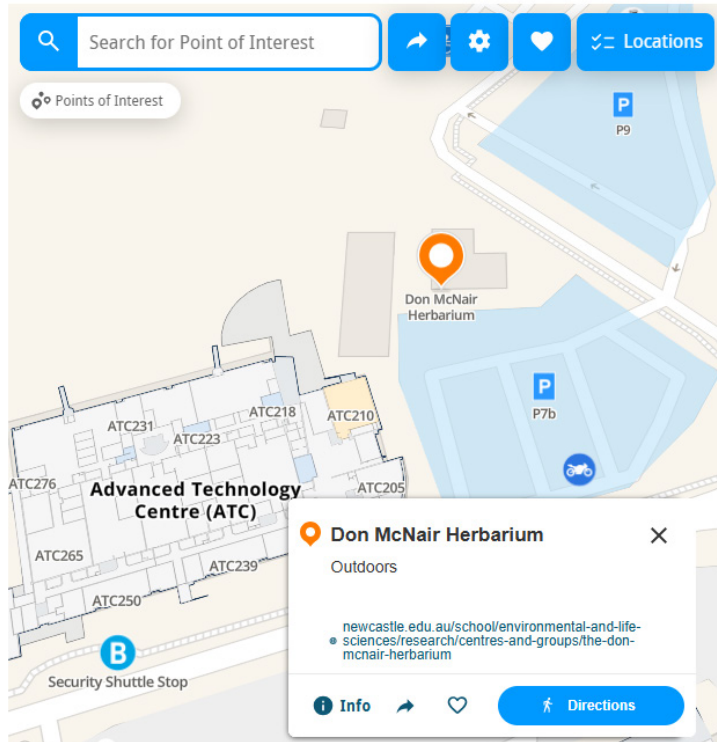
A 3D Model resource of the Herbarium's bulk fruit collection was created by Bill Landenberger in 2022. This resource of 58 highly detailed 3D image models is accessible online through Sketchfab and continues to be worked on by Bill to improve and build the resource. Each of these models provides a unique and detailed electronic reference to aid plant identification. The resource also acts as an important digital record of fruits from Hunter region plants.

**Image:** A 3D image of *Hakea laurina* (Pincushion Hakea) open seed capsules. Part of the 3D image collection on Sketchfab (<https://sketchfab.com>).



# 2024-25 ACHIEVEMENTS

## Campus map



## Don McNair Herbarium - on the map

The Don McNair Herbarium has reached an important milestone with its inclusion as a searchable location on the University of Newcastle campus map. Previously, the Herbarium was difficult for students, staff and visitors to locate, limiting awareness and engagement with this valuable scientific resource. Being clearly visible on the campus map greatly improves accessibility, supports teaching and outreach activities, and reinforces the Herbarium's role as a core research and learning facility. This enhanced visibility strengthens the Herbarium's profile within the University community and ensures it is more readily discovered by visitors, collaborators and future students.

**Image:** University of Newcastle campus map showing the location of the Don McNair Herbarium.

## Building upgrades

**X-ray machine removal and storeroom upgrade.** During University Christmas shutdown in 2024, Michale Pfeiffer (IFS) and Deb Edmunds (WHS) facilitated the removal of an unused X-ray system from the building, providing access to a large, previously unusable room. In addition, a small storage room was upgraded to make the space safe and usable. The large room is being developed as a multi-functional space to be used by the volunteers; to host undergraduate student exercises, research student projects and community group visits and ultimately, to offer micro-credentialling courses to help build life ready graduates and engage with industry to upskill workers in the environmental sector.

The storage room upgrade has improved Herbarium space, generating more room for volunteers and visitors.

**Image:** Herbarium volunteer Sally Gaunson demonstrates specimen mounting to undergraduate students in space previously occupied by the AS Building X-ray machine.



# 2024-25 ACHIEVEMENTS

## Undergraduate student visits

2024 saw the first trial immersive herbarium skills lab undertaken in and around the Herbarium. Students undertaking the University's ENVS2005 (Management of Australian Flora) course, under the guidance of Dr Alex Callen, undertook three key components to building a specimen collection along with a tour of the facility and its resources. The success of the lab now sees it as a mandatory class, with the Herbarium staff & volunteers providing one of the three teaching components. Over 140 students across the two years have been introduced to the important role herbaria play in flora identification, distribution data, as a repository for ancient DNA and as a record of morphological changes over time. This information is now recognised as critical for tracking the impacts of climate change and human impacts on the environment.

**Image:** Undergraduate ENVS2005 students gained hands on experience in preparing herbarium specimens for their own collections.



**Image:** Herbarium collections manager, Ingrid Offler, shows undergraduate ENVS2005 students some of the many mounted and identified specimens in the collection.

# 2024-25 ACHIEVEMENTS



Image: AI-generated

## In the media - Interview with Jennifer Ingall, Producer Mornings, ABC Newcastle News

On Monday 2 September 2024, the Don McNair Herbarium was featured on ABC Newcastle, first on the Morning program with producer and presenter Jennifer Ingall, and later scheduled to air again during the Drive program with Paul Culliver. The second broadcast was interrupted by emergency coverage of the Tomago fires—a timely and ironic reminder of the crucial role herbaria play in documenting and protecting our region’s botanical heritage.

The interview brought together the Herbarium’s Deputy Director and Manager (Hon. Professor Tina Offler), Collection Manager (Ingrid Offler), and Lecturer in Vegetation and Restoration Ecology Dr Alex Callen. Together, they reflected on how the Herbarium was established, its value as a long-term record of local flora, and its ongoing importance as a teaching and research resource for students, academics, and the wider scientific community.

## Loop article celebrating 30 years of the Don McNair Herbarium

As part of the University’s 60 year celebrations, the Don McNair Herbarium commissioned writer Ethan Hamilton to produce a LOOP article marking 30 years since local auto-electrician and plant enthusiast Dr Don McNair donated his extensive specimen collection to the University.

Don spent nearly seven decades collecting and pressing native plants across the Hunter region, contributing almost 6,000 specimens when the Herbarium was established in 1995. Today, the collection has grown to more than 14,000 preserved specimens, recognised as one of the best representations of the region’s native flora.

The article highlights Don’s enduring legacy, the Herbarium’s importance for teaching and research, and the vital work of volunteers who continue to expand and curate this significant botanical resource.



Image: Dr Don McNair mounting and labeling herbarium specimens.



# OUR VOLUNTEERS

# OUR VOLUNTEERS

The Don McNair Herbarium relies on a dedicated group of volunteers whose commitment and expertise keep the collection active, organised, and accessible. Their ongoing contributions support specimen curation, data management, and the preservation of valuable botanical resources, ensuring the Herbarium continues to serve research, teaching, and the wider community.

## Current volunteers

**Anita Chalmers:** Anita an Honorary Lecturer returned to the Herbarium in 2025 to undertake reviewing and identifying the 800+ of the incompletely identified specimens. As a grasses and sedges specialist she has begun to work through the Poaceae family, identifying over 40 specimens thus far.

**Michael Dowling:** Mike a retired Anaesthetist has been with the Herbarium since November 2023. While undertaking to do two Environmental Science flora courses he has contributed more than 240 hours collecting, mounting and helping with organising of the Herbarium's reference collection.

**Sam Fallding:** Sam started volunteering in March 2024 while undertaking a Bachelor of Environmental Science. He has regularly contributed 4 hours each week sorting, mounting and cataloguing specimens for the Herbarium Reference Collection contributing 256 hours of volunteer time.

**Sally Gaunson:** Sally started with the Herbarium in November 2023. A retired doctor she was a close family friend of Don McNair's and wanted to make a contribution to help care for his collection. Sally has spent over 180 hours working on mounting specimens and assisted with demonstrating herbarium mounting techniques for the Environmental students herbarium focused lab.

**John Sharples:** John has been with the Herbarium since June 2017. Over the eight and a half years he has contributed more than 400 days of volunteer time digitising the 14,500+ specimens across the collections and working to improve the database. As an amateur photographer he has produced images for the Environmental science flora course and is now working with Environmental Consultant Dr Stephen Bell (Herbarium Advisor/Taxonomist) to photograph the Hunter regions eucalypts for an identification aid.

**Payten Whishart:** Payten joined the Herbarium in 2025 while undertaking her Bachelor of Science degree at UoN. A keen flora student she wished to provide a contribution while familiarising herself with the Australian Native flora species. Payten has undertaken research into various plant species found on campus.



**Image:** Some of the Don McNair Herbarium volunteers. Left to right - standing; Michael Dowling, John Sharples, Sam Fallding, Ingrid Offler (Collections Manager & Volunteer Program Coordinator), and seated; Hon. Prof. Tina Offler, (Herbarium Deputy Director & Manager) and Sally Gaunson.

# OUR VOLUNTEERS

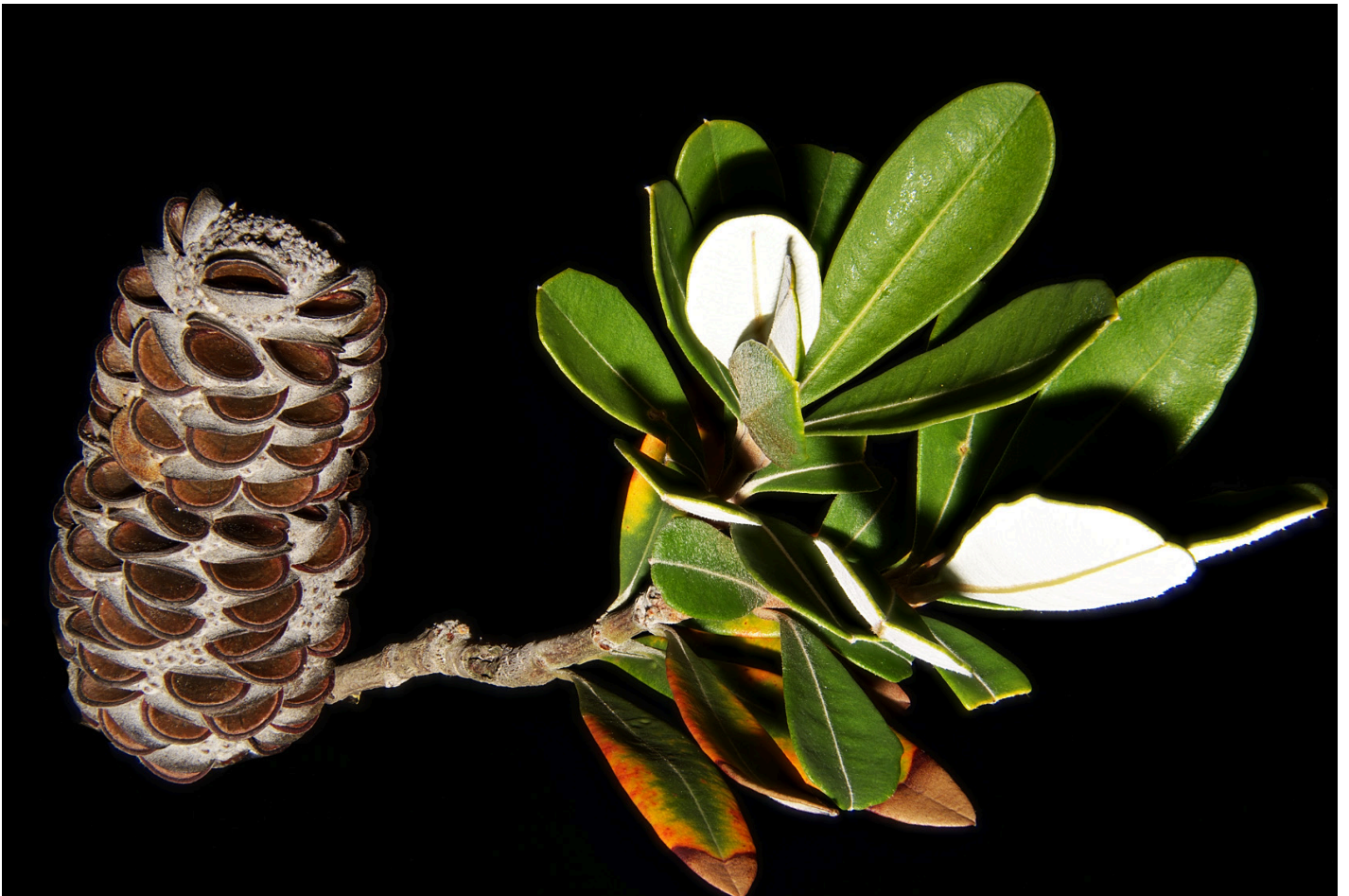
## Past volunteers

The Herbarium has had many past volunteers who have contributed their time because of a love of flora or who as students are looking to gain skills and experience to take into the workforce.

**Ian Brockwell:** Ian, a student studying at UNE, spent 12 months (2024/2025) at the Herbarium collecting specimens and working with the collection to improve his plant identification skills for application in the Environmental sector.

**Lynda McPherson:** Lynda joined the Herbarium in 2016 after completing her Honours in Natural History Illustration with the support of the Don McNair Scholarship. During her time with the Herbarium she contributed over 191 days of volunteer time.

**Jacque Osborne:** Jacque spent 2020-2023 volunteering at the Herbarium while completing her honours in Environmental Science. She spent over 160 hours, collecting, cataloguing and researching plant species for the collection.



**Image:** *Banksia integrifolia*. Don McNair Herbarium photographic collection. Photography: John Sharples.

# OUR STUDENTS

The Don McNair Herbarium continues to provide strong support for students undertaking plant-biology-related research, particularly recipients of the Don McNair Scholarship. Engagement with students has increased in 2024–2025 through the introduction of a herbarium component in the Environment course, alongside a growing number of Environmental Science students completing flora-focused research projects.

## Don McNair Scholarship students

**Lachlan Baumer:** Lachlan was the recipient in 2024 of the Don McNair Scholarship and undertook an honours project guided by Professor Matt Hayward, Dr Alex Callen and Dr Stephen Bell, looking at the two primary food sources, *Allocasuarina torulosa* and *A. littoralis*, of the threatened Glossy Black-Cockatoos (*Calyptorhynchus lathami*). As part of this project Lachlan used the Herbarium's collection to help identify and become familiar with the key features that distinguish the two species to help better identify them prior to field data collection.

**Sam Hayley:** Sam was the 2025 recipient of the Don McNair Scholarship. His honours project looked at the *Acacia* species of the Awabakal region and their uses and management by the Awabakal peoples. The project focussed on the microbial benefits which can be used in medicine and the changes in the management of the Glenrock State Conservation area and Awabakal Reserve over time that may impact on the density and richness of this resource. Sam's specimen collection will be added to the Herbarium building on the body of information on these species in the local area. Sam was supervised by Dr Alex Callen, Dr Stephen Bell, and Dr Joseph Pegler.

## Research Integrated Learning (SCIE3500) students

This course provides third year undergraduate students with an opportunity to undertake a research project alongside Honours and Postgraduate students within research groups of academic staff.

**Sam Fallding:** Sam undertook a project guided by Dr Alex Callen and Dr Joseph Pegler investigating the distribution and genetics of the invasive weed Pampas grass (*Cortaderia* spp.). He worked on establishing the first steps in DNA extraction for *Cortaderia* spp. in the Hunter Valley, NSW testing whether the CTAB gDNA extraction method and amplification of the resulting product with ITS and trnH-psbA primers would be possible. Sam, who was also a volunteer at the Herbarium, accessed the Herbarium database to establish if there had been collections of this species and their locations.

**Christina Swinsburg:** Christina undertook a project guided by Dr Stephen Bell, Dr Alex Callen and Professor Mat Hayward that involved identification of *Eucalyptus paramattensis* during studies mapping its distribution. She accessed the Herbarium collections of this species to become familiar with the characteristics of buds, fruit and leaves that distinguish it from other Eucalypt species.

## Work Integrated Learning (SCIE3002) student

**Sam Fallding:** Sam also undertook a project guided by Dr Alex Callen aimed to provide a historical, visual and ecological interpretation of what the vegetation structure of vegetation of the Wollombi Brook Conservation Area 'could have been' prior to European land clearing and management practices. He used the herbarium to search for records of the vegetation on and around the site.

## Environmental Science Honours Student

**Elise Rourke:** Elise carried out an Honours project investigating detection methods for the plant pathogen *Phytophthora cinnamomi* (see story next page) under the supervision of Dr Alex Callen and Julia Rayment (NPWS).

**Image:** Don McNair scholarship student Sam Hayley made use of the Herbarium to aid his field identification of *Acacia* species of the Awabakal region.



# Phytophthora dogs

*Phytophthora cinnamomi* is a microscopic plant pathogen that threatens biodiversity across Australia, and often goes undetected until plants begin to die. This fungus-like water mould causes dieback disease by infecting plant roots and limiting their ability to absorb water and nutrients. It spreads through the movement of contaminated soil and water, and is recognised as a threat to 236 nationally listed threatened species and 32 threatened ecological communities in Australia.

As there is no cure for infected plants, rapid and reliable detection is essential to prevent further spread. Traditional laboratory testing of soil samples can be costly and time-consuming, so an emerging alternative is being explored: the use of conservation sniffer dogs.



**Image:** Phytophthora dogs Alice (left) and Echo (right) at the Don McNair Herbarium, with soil samples lined up in the background.

Through the NSW Government's Saving our Species program, two spaniels, Alice and Echo, have been trained to detect *P. cinnamomi* in soil. The project is led by the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, in collaboration with Tate Animal Training Enterprises and research partners including the University of Sydney and Botanic Gardens of Sydney.

**Image:** Elise Rourke is passionate about biodiversity conservation and science communication, aiming to make complex ecological topics accessible to wider audiences and inspire appreciation for Australia's native plants and wildlife. She completed a double degree in Science (Biodiversity and Conservation) and Arts (Screen and Cultural Studies) with Distinction from the University of Newcastle in 2025.



**Image:** Elise Rourke (UoN), Ingrid Ofler (Don McNair Herbarium), and Julia Rayment (NPWS) with Echo and Alice at the Don McNair Herbarium.

Honours student Elise Rourke (University of Newcastle) has contributed her own research questions and assisted with the project. The Don McNair Herbarium hosted several controlled detection trials, providing a valuable space for testing the dogs' accuracy.

Preliminary results suggest the dogs can reliably detect the pathogen in both wet and dried soils, supporting their potential use at vehicle checkpoints, plant nurseries and in broader landscape surveys. Elise has expressed her gratitude for the Herbarium staff and volunteers, whose support made these trials possible and helped ensure their success.



# INDUSTRY ENGAGEMENT

The Don McNair Herbarium continues to expand its industry and community engagement through applied research and hands-on training. In 2025, students completed Research Integrated Learning projects supported by herbarium specimens, and the Herbarium contributed expertise and materials to the Vegetation Classification and Ecological Restoration course. Work also began on a pictorial identification guide to Eucalypts of the Hunter Region. These initiatives highlight the Herbarium's growing role in practical training and regional environmental stewardship.

## Eucalypt Identification Guide

Commencing in 2025, work began on the preparation of a pictorial key and guide to the circa 135 eucalypt taxa (gum trees) that occur within the Greater Hunter Region. Currently unfunded, this project co-ordinated by Dr Stephen Bell will enable readers to step through the process of identifying eucalypts using specific diagnostic photographs of relevant eucalypt elements (e.g. bark, buds, fruit, juvenile leaves) and will become an invaluable resource for students and the wider community. There is already considerable interest in the wider community for this resource to become available, and introductory talks and workshops for interested groups have commenced. Much of the photographic material used in this work is being undertaken by Don McNair Herbarium volunteer John Sharples.



**Image:** *Angophora inopina* buds photographed by volunteer John Sharples for Dr Stephen Bell's book on Eucalypts of the Hunter region.

## Vegetation Classification and Ecological Restoration course

For the second year, Dr Stephen Bell has been contributing to the vegetation classification component of this new third year course (SRMT3060) being delivered by Dr Alex Callen. This course teaches students how to classify and map vegetation communities, a skill that will be required of them when they progress to the workforce either in the consulting or research fields. Course content is based entirely on Stephen's PhD thesis and aims to help students understand how vegetation is classified rather than just accepting modeled output produced by others. The Herbarium provides students with access to specimens to assist identification of plants they encounter during field components of this course.

## Research Integrated Learning

In 2025, two students undertook Research Integrated Learning (SCIE3500) projects related to Australian flora. Duncan Couper examined the population dynamics and habitat of *Macrozamia flexuosa*, a rare cycad species endemic to the Hunter Region. Christina Swinsburg investigated the population age structure of Earp's Dirty Gum (*Eucalyptus parramattensis* subsp. *decadens*), a threatened tree species endemic to the Cessnock and Port Stephens local government areas. Dr Stephen Bell was the primary supervisor for both of these projects, and the Herbarium provided access to specimens to assist students.

# DONATIONS

The Herbarium receives substantial support in the form of donated materials and external contributions, which are vital for progressing the cataloguing of specimens and the continued growth of its collections. We are deeply grateful to our donors, whose generosity enables the Herbarium to expand its scientific value, support teaching and research, and safeguard irreplaceable botanical records. These contributions play a crucial role in advancing the Herbarium's mission and ensuring that Don's legacy of botanical discovery and stewardship continues to flourish.

## Recent Donations to the Herbarium

Over the past year, the Don McNair Herbarium has been enriched by several generous donations that have strengthened both its collections and supporting resources:

Books from the **Dr John Turner** Library (2025): Donated by his son Ken, this collection honours Dr John Turner, a respected academic in Physical Geography, and provides valuable reference material to support research and teaching.

Dorothea (Dot) Madden Plant Collection (2024): Donated by **Colleen Dorahy**, this historically significant collection was assembled in 1932 when Dot Madden was a Year 10 student at Gosford Rural School, offering a rare snapshot of early botanical education and regional flora.

**Anita Chalmers** Collection (2025–ongoing): Dr Anita Chalmers has donated an active collection of specimens, which she continues to help identify. These specimens are being mounted and digitised by Herbarium volunteers for permanent inclusion in the collections.

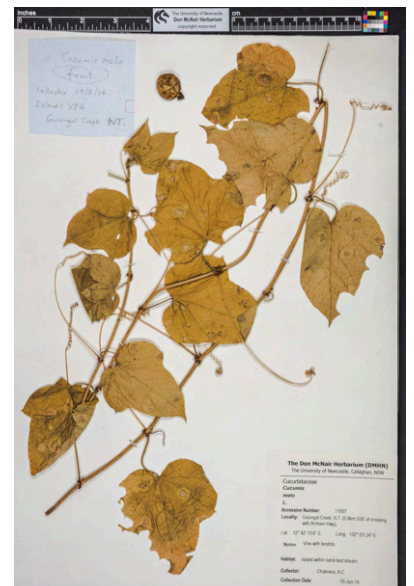


**Image:** *Clematis glycinoides*, from a collection of >40 digital images donated by Bill Landenberger.



**Image:** Colleen Dorahy (left) donated the Dorothea Madden weed and grass collection to the Don McNair Herbarium, happily received by Deputy Director Hon. Prof. Tina Ofler.

**Image:** *Cucumis melo* (bush melon) specimen, collected from the Northern Territory and donated by Dr Anita Chalmers.





# FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

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# FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

In 2024–2025, changes to the rules governing Charitable Trusts affected how the Herbarium can manage donated funds. Previously, the intent was to build Don McNair’s bequest so that the interest accrued could support the ongoing maintenance of the collection. Under the updated rules, this is no longer possible. As a result, since 2019 all new donations to the Herbarium have been directed into the Herbarium’s working account, which supports the Collection Manager’s salary and ongoing material costs.

Historically, the working account did not accrue interest. However, from the 2024 financial year onward, the account will also earn interest, and these funds can be used to support Herbarium activities. In addition to the Year-on-Year Assets/Liabilities and Financial Overview statements below, the Collection Manager position (HEW 5, Step 2, Casual, 10 hours/week) was supported on a 50/50 basis by a personal University grant.

<b>INCOME</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2025</b>
Donations, Scholarships & Prizes	\$15,500	\$15,502
Investment Income	\$0	\$7,031
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>		
<b>SALARY-RELATED</b>		
General Salaries & Oncosts	\$10,805	\$17,806
Total Salary-related	\$10,805	\$17,806
<b>NON SALARY</b>		
Consumables	\$120	\$0
Other Expenditure		
Total Non Salary	\$120	\$0
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>\$10,925</b>	<b>\$17,806</b>
<b>NET ASSET VALUE</b>	<b>\$11,691</b>	<b>\$15,808</b>

Financial statements as at 31 Dec 2024 and 18 Nov 2025



Image: *Chiloglottis formicifera* (common ant orchid). Photography: John Sharples.

# DONORS AND CONTRIBUTORS

Since Don McNair donated his original collection in 1995, it has been supported by volunteers from the community, University of Newcastle staff and students. Both financial and in-kind donations have enabled the Herbarium to continue Don's vision. Don's bequest began supporting Herbarium operations in 2014.

Since 2014

**21**

Individual donors

**\$109,602**

Financial donations

**15**

In-kind donations

**14**

Don McNair  
Scholarships

***"The Herbarium should be a vibrant working unit supporting the research and teaching of The University and engaging with the community in the areas of Plant Taxonomy, Ecology and Natural History Illustration, and itself continuing to build the collection for perpetuity."***

Dr Don McNair



Image: Our benefactor, Dr Don McNair

## Our Impact

With the help of Don's bequest and the generosity of our donors, the Herbarium has supported 14 Don McNair Scholarships and sustained the growth of its collections and research capacity.

## Our Thanks

The Don McNair Herbarium would not be able to continue operating without the contributions of donors and volunteers. We give our thanks to those who have provided their support and recognise their role in helping the Herbarium foster research and conservation of Australian native flora in the Hunter region. We also wish to thank Ethan Hamilton, for his support with creating this biennial report for the Herbarium.

**Image:** *Crotalaria cunninghamii* (Green bird flower). Drawn by Herbarium volunteer Payten Wishart.





*Eucalyptus rossii* (inland scribbly gum)  
Photograph by Barry Collier

## FIND OUT MORE

*If you would like to know more about the Don McNair Herbarium and how you can contribute as a donor or volunteer, please contact the Herbarium team:*



*Don-McNair-Herbarium@newcastle.edu.au*



*newcastle.edu.au*

*→ search: "Don McNair Herbarium"*



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