

GROWING *Australian*

Australian Plants Society Victoria
No. 267 March 2024 \$5.00



GROWING *Australian*

Epacris impressa
Common Heath
APS Vic logo

Quarterly Newsletter of the
Australian Plants Society Victoria
PO Box 357, Hawthorn Vic 3122
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website: apsvic.org.au



Australian Plants Society Vic. Inc.
(SGAPVictoria) Inc. A0002023D
ABN: 67 395 912 380
ISSN 0814-7701

**Deadline for the
June 2024 issue is
23 April 2024**

Submit articles to the Editor
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newsletter@apsvic.org.au

Articles published in *Growing Australian* reflect the opinion of the author/s and not necessarily that of the Australian Plant Society Victoria.

Contributions – articles and photographs – are welcome. The editor reserves the right without exception to edit all articles and include or omit images as appropriate.

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On the cover

Acacia leprosa 'Scarlet Blaze'

Photo: Nicole Beres



THE SOCIETY

The purposes of the Society are:

- 1. to promote and maintain interest in growing and propagating Australian plants in home gardens and public places*
- 2. to encourage the recognition and development of distinctive landscape styles and forms using Australian plants*
- 3. to improve Australian plants as garden subjects*
- 4. to monitor and encourage the strengthening of the laws for preservation of flora*
- 5. to encourage the nursery industry to propagate and supply Australian plants to the general public*
- 6. to support all information received by the Society on methods of propagation and of the sources of supply of plants and seeds available for distribution and to publish such information from time to time*
- 7. to establish and encourage district groups*
- 8. to encourage and facilitate the conservation and study of Australian plants in the natural environment*
- 9. to further the dissemination of knowledge and to act as a source of informed opinion on relevant issues*

Our purposes aim at ensuring the continued survival of all Australian native flora. The Society recognises the close relationship Australian native flora has with the native fauna in providing habitat, food, protection and a myriad of other benefits. The survival of one assists in the survival of the other.

District Groups operate across Victoria and the metropolitan area. The President, Secretary, and meeting times and places are listed on page 50. Please contact the relevant person if you wish to join in with the meetings and activities of a District Group.

Study Groups exist for many of the more popular groups of Australian plants. As a member of the Society, you can join one or more of these. Contact details can be found on our website.

I would like to welcome Charles Hrubos as our new APS Vic Secretary.

It is going to be an extra busy year for APS Vic as we are hosting the National Biennial Flora Conference (ANPSA 2024). This will be our third time as hosts, the conferences having been held previously in Ballarat (1985) and Geelong (2009). The conference will run from 30 September to 4 October at The Round, Nunawading, a stunning new performing arts and cultural centre funded by the Whitehorse City Council. For more about the conference see page 22.

MIFGS

Another major early event for the year is the Melbourne International Flower and Garden Show (MIFGS) to be held at the Royal Exhibition Building and Carlton Gardens from Wednesday 20 March to Sunday 24 March. We are fortunate to have Chris Clarke stepping up again as lead organiser (with Dallas Boulton) of the APS Vic volunteer effort and contribution to the display. Ben Clark and his team from Kurunga Native Nursery are in charge of the design and plants. It is a great opportunity to promote what we do to such a vast audience. We hope to see you there either as a volunteer for the day or a visitor.

Awards

Each year at our Annual AGM, APS Vic presents awards to members who have made remarkable contributions to APS Vic and to their local District Groups. We are seeking nominations for Honorary Life Membership, Certificates of Commendation and the Impresa Awards within which there are four categories – Outstanding Service to APS Vic, an affiliated District Group, to Australian Native Plants and Conservations and Sustainability. The criteria to be met can be seen in the Members' Section of the APS Vic website, where there is also a list of previous recipients. Nominations must be submitted to the Secretary by 15 April 2024.

Grants

APS Vic has allocated \$10,000 to the Grant Scheme this year. The applications are due in early April. Instructions can be found in the Members' Section of the APS Vic website. I am sure previously successful District Groups could also offer their advice – Bendigo, Grampians, Heathcote, Mornington Peninsula and others.

Out and About

I recently relocated from Hurstbridge to Wonthaggi, South Gippsland. The Wonthaggi area has a truly impressive array of conservation reserves and wetlands, a legacy of the mining history and the extraordinary efforts of local volunteer groups and school students.

There are two reserves in my street: Tank Hill Reserve in the middle and the Rifle Range Wetlands at the end. Both are used by the Wonthaggi Seed Bank crew to collect seeds for their propagation efforts. They have raised hundreds of thousands of plants over the years for the various plantings in the area. Terri Gitsham Allen OAM received her award for services to conservation in the area, and I am most grateful to her for her visits to welcome me to the area, and leading me on a recent seed collecting trip into Tank Hill Reserve.

Tank Hill, courtesy of the local spring was the town water supply (1910–1915) for the Tent Town that housed the miners



Wonthaggi Wetlands.

Miriam Ford

once mining began in the area. Terri has written many publications on the history and restoration efforts in the area. Her *Walking Wonthaggi's Wetlands* is the go-to booklet with maps and details of all the local reserves and wetlands.

Another place worth visiting is the Victorian Desalination Plant on the outskirts of the Wonthaggi Township – for the architectural values of the beautiful building seamlessly embedded in the restored landscape, for the design and diversity of indigenous planting, and the well-designed, fully accessible walking tracks of the large conservation reserve. The amount of growth since 2012, and flow on effects to the wildlife of this area, are remarkable. This site also happens to be one of the first stops on the pre- and post-ANPSA 2024 conference tours to Gippsland and Wilsons Promontory.

I haven't been on the Bass Coast long enough to become sufficiently well-informed but once I am I too will be proud to write 'My Neck of the Woods'. I encourage each District Group to write about their Neck of the Woods for *Growing Australian*.



Miriam Ford

Boardwalk view to Desal plant and plants.

I am due to visit several more District Groups in the first half of 2024 –Mornington Peninsula, Bendigo and Grampians. I enjoy these visits greatly for the people I meet and for learning more through visits to local sites with members about what they do in their local area. Our volunteers make us what we are – thank-you!

We have recently been advised that Chris Clarke has resigned from his Vice-President role in APS Vic. He has also withdrawn from all sub-committees he was involved in. We thank him for his many invaluable contributions to APS Vic. (QA)

CRANBOURNE FRIENDS

Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria



**Growing Friends
Autumn Plant Sale**



Come along and select from a range of plants many of which you will find in the Australian Garden

**Saturday 23 &
Sunday 24
March 2024
10am to 4pm**

Australian Garden - Cranbourne

Grasses, strappy-leaf plants, ground-covers, climbers, border-plants, small & large bushes & trees, plants for wildlife.

Plant-list available
1 week before sale:

Anigozanthos 'Orange Cross'

w rbgfriendscranbourne.org.au
f [rbgfriendscranbourne](https://www.facebook.com/rbgfriendscranbourne)

Australian Plants Society



Heathcote Inc

Plant &
Flower Show

Saturday 6 April
9am to 3pm
Barrack Reserve Heathcote

Not all wattles are golden

Roslyn Nataprawira

We usually associate wattles with the colour yellow, but there are some notable exceptions. In 2021 Australia Post issued three stamps under the title 'Wattle Wonders' featuring three Australian wattles with unusual flower colours – one red, another pinkish-mauve and the third pure white.

Sometimes a plant or animal will be represented by only a single living individual, like the last Thylacine. Such was the case for a red-flowered wattle discovered in 1995 by bushwalkers on a track near the Wilhelmina Falls in the Toolangi State Forest, north-east of Melbourne.

The story of its rescue was told by Esther Brueggemeier in the *Acacia Study Group Newsletter* no.99 December 2007. To recap: a sample was sent to the National Herbarium of Victoria. The botanists there realised that the bushwalkers had stumbled upon a truly unique variant of *Acacia leprosa* (Cinnamon Wattle). They asked one of the walkers to lead the local ranger plus a botanist (David Cameron) and a nurseryman (Bill Molyneux)

to the plant to collect cuttings for cloning. When the four arrived at the site they discovered that the plant had already been stripped, leaving just enough material to take 12 cuttings. From these original cuttings, only three grew roots. These little plants were nurtured by the RBGV Melbourne and provided the foundation for the commercially-grown plants we know today as *Acacia leprosa* 'Scarlet Blaze'.

There is a specimen growing in the border next to the Herbarium in the RBGV Melbourne and another on the University of Melbourne's Parkville Campus, just across from the Botany Building (as seen on this issue's cover). Seek them out when they are in flower from August to September or better still, plant one in your own garden because clones of the original cuttings are now readily available to purchase.

Acacia leprosa 'Scarlet Blaze' is an attractive tall shrub. It grows best in a full sun to part-shade, and is not fussy about soils as long as they are well-drained; most acacias, don't cope well with waterlogged soils. It is a fairly brittle plant so it is advisable to prune it when young to form a bushy structure. Thereafter, leave it alone to achieve its natural form and display its attractive weeping habit.

Like the Wollemi Pine, 'Scarlet Blaze' is an amazing conservation story. It is worthy of a place in our gardens, if only for the story of how it was rescued from the brink.

Acacia purpureopetala (Purple-flowered Wattle) is endemic to the Herberton and Irvinebank region of north-east Queensland. Its natural habitat is eucalypt woodlands on steep, rocky slopes, usually at altitudes of 780–880 m above sea level. It has a low-growing habit, small grey-green phyllodes and unusual pink-mauve ball flowers. Its main flowering period is between May and September.

It looked lovely on the stamp, and





I immediately thought of its garden potential, but the more I investigated, the less that possibility became a reality. *Acacia purpureopetala* is critically endangered. Known locations of this species had been subject to cattle grazing and mining operations in the past, and infrastructure maintenance, such as powerline easements, also posed a threat; road widening prior to 2009 had removed part of the population near Irvinebank.

Hope for the survival of *Acacia purpureopetala* came when it was listed by the Australian government's 2015 Threatened Species Strategy, under which a commitment was made to 'improve the trajectories' of 30 threatened plants by 2020. Thanks to government funding, Bush Heritage Australia, in association with CSIRO, the National Herbarium of NSW and Vegetation Management Science, surveyed and recorded known and previously undocumented wild populations.

At that time, there were only 500 *Acacia purpureopetala* plants remaining in the whole of its known range. In order to offset any impacts of construction of the Mt Emerald Wind Farm, in 2018 an adjacent

property was purchased and established as a nature refuge. Surveys on this property discovered three new *Acacia purpureopetala* populations.

There are now about 700 known plants, but it still faces several threats, including from illegal seed collection, climate change and fires. There is evidence that the species can only regenerate from seed after fire, but if fires are too frequent plants cannot reach maturity to set seed.

Illegal seed collection poses a serious threat because *Acacia purpureopetala* has sparse seed set and limited capacity for seed dispersal. And it is very difficult to grow from seed, so illegally collected seed is likely to fail to germinate. DNA analysis of the acacia's genetic variation across its range was undertaken, plus seed germination trials to assess its propagation requirements.

A 6-month propagation trial under controlled nursery conditions in 2019 produced only one plant. However, the research, plus the land purchased by the wind farm offset, offer hope that *Acacia purpureopetala* may yet become a conservation success story.

The third stamp in the 'Wattle Wonders' series is a variant of *Acacia alata* (Winged Wattle), an interesting Western Australian acacia with flattened phyllodes, giving the stem a winged appearance. Flowers are borne on stalks arising from the phyllode axils. It grows in a variety of habitats along the coastal strip from Kalbarri to Albany, and the Karri forests of south-west Australia.

There are four *Acacia alata* variants with colours ranging from white to cream, lemon and gold. The white variant illustrated on the stamp, *Acacia alata* var. *biglandulosa*, is endemic to the area around Geraldton, and as far as I know, is not endangered. It is a shrub 0.5–1.5 m high with flattened, soft, bright green, spiny phyllodes and masses of white fluffy ball flowers from early to late spring.

It grows in loam and sand on lateritic and sandstone hills, and also in saline clay, usually in heath. It can be grown in gardens in →

well-drained soils but can look a bit scraggly, unless kept pruned. Propagation is from scarified seed or boiling water treatment. However, finding a nursery-grown plant of *Acacia alata* var. *biglandulosa* outside of Western Australia is almost impossible.

Researching the 'Wattle Wonders' stamps has been an interesting exercise, posing some questions for which I couldn't find answers: Why do seeds of *Acacia leprosa* 'Scarlet Blaze' produce yellow-flowering progeny? Is it true that recently some seedlings with orange-red flowers have been cultivated? Did the 2015/16 Threatened Species Plan achieve its objectives by 2020? What happened to the funding for the conservation of the 30 targeted species after 2020? To prevent poaching, is *Acacia purpleopetala* being commercially grown under licence from cuttings or tissue culture?

What I do know is that finding out about the plants pictured on a set of stamps opened a door to a whole new world of interest in acacias and their conservation for me, and maybe for you, too. (GA)



Credit: Images of stamps are reproduced with permission of the Australian Postal Corporation. © Copyright Australian Postal Corporation.



Australian Native Plant Sale

Saturday 27th April 2024

10.00am to 3.30pm

The Briars Nepean Hwy Mt Martha

Josephine's Lawn area 

★Free talks on
Pruning & maintenance & Propagating plants

★Book Sales

★Kids' Corner

Australian Plants Society Mornington Peninsula Inc.
For further details 0428 284 974



Tripladenia cunninghamii (Bush Lily)

Formerly, and probably better known as *Kreysigia multiflora*, Bush Lily is a most attractive small ground-covering plant from the rainforests and adjoining wet sclerophyll forests of northern NSW and south-east Queensland. In the wild it tends to scramble and climb over adjoining shrubs, but under cultivation plants usually sucker to form a good dense clump, flowering heavily in good conditions.

Foliage is attractive spear-shaped, shiny and bright green on interesting, zig-zag stems. Even when not in flower, the foliage is beautiful in the garden. The flowers are showy large mauve-pink lily flowers and arise from every leaf junction during November to February.

In the garden it does best in a dappled shade position in well-drained soils and assured summer moisture. It responds to a good layer of rotted leaves or similar mulch to keep the roots cool and moist.

It is propagated by division of the clump or branches and suckers, ensuring that each clump has several shoots and a good root system. Cut back any long stems and pot up and place divided plants in a shady, moist site protected from drying winds and



Neil Marriott

Tripladenia cunninghamii 'Bush Lily' in our fernery.

direct sun. As plants begin to grow they can be gradually brought out into more open dappled sun sites.

Nan and Hugh Nicholson in their wonderful series of books *Australian Rainforest Plants*, state in Volume 1 that Bush Lily makes a beautiful tub plant, becoming bushier than plants grown in the garden. As an indoor plant it can look even more attractive and flower more heavily than it does outside! I have never tried it inside, but when ours finally finish flowering this summer I will be dividing it up and putting this to the test as an indoor plant. Sounds great!

Rarely available in nurseries in Victoria, but often available from rainforest nurseries in NSW and Qld. Ask at your local nursery and they may be able to get it in for you.

It is a very tough and most beautiful addition to a fernery or similar shaded and moist sites in your garden. Well worth looking out for!



Tripladenia cunninghamii flowers.

A garden seat in the right place

Chris Larkin

Do you already have a seat in the garden? If so, are you using it and if not why not? Is the seat comfortable or uncomfortable? Is it in the right place and if not, can it be shifted? If you don't already have a garden seat, can you incorporate one into the garden's design to expand how you use the garden and interact with all its life forms?

We work hard in our gardens (planting, pruning, weeding etc.), but do we spend time sitting and enjoying the fruits of our labours – the sights, sounds, smells, and activity of wildlife visitors.

Seats in the garden provide an opportunity to rest, contemplate, cogitate, chat with a friend, spend a bit of time reading or pursuing some other interest. You might catch some winter sun, find some shade in summer, although the seasonal movement

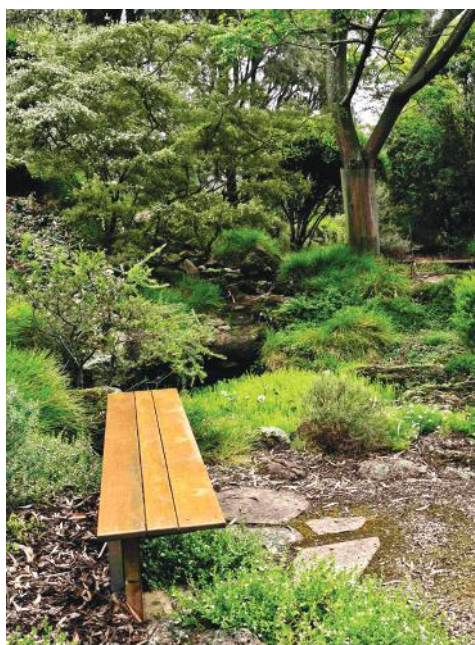
of the sun could make this difficult unless you can move your furniture around or can take advantage of the shifting shade from trees and large shrubs.

Finding the right place for a seat is important because you want to make use of it after all. That said it is not always immediately obvious where the best place is. After many years I moved a seat to its current position. I know it's now in the right place because, unlike previously, I use it often and have been known to call it figuratively, 'the best seat in the house'.

Seats can be made in different styles and colours from a range of materials such as metal, timber, stone, concrete or recycled plastic. Using some materials and finishes, like oiled or painted wood, will require regular maintenance but powder-coated metals are very durable.



View from the 'best seat in the house'.



One of the new 'floating' seats.

Chris Larkin

Chris Larkin

Seats for one, two or three people; seats with or without backrests; seats with or without arm rests; seats that can be moved around or are anchored to the spot. You can buy them off the shelf, have them made to your specifications or make them yourself. Sometimes seating is part of the initial hard structure design of a garden, but if not, it might be possible to introduce them later as you review and renew your garden.

The space you have, your budget and expertise, will be some of the deciding factors. There are plenty of things to think about before arriving at a decision on a seat or two or more that will meet your needs. Choose seats to complement the style of garden you have developed or are in the process of developing.


I have recently replaced four of my retaining wall garden seats achieving quite a different look in the process. Gardens change over time so why not the style of seating! The old, chunky, seriously deteriorated ones made of recycled bridge timbers have been replaced with new lighter more refined looking ones that appear to float away from the sleeper walls they're attached to. Although handily close to the house I rarely sat on the old seats. Because the new ones are more comfortable they are getting plenty of use.

I have seats in a variety of places in the garden. For example, the one called 'the best seat in the house', which is at a crossroads, provides views if you look left or right, but the real interest is in looking straight ahead down a long, curved mulched path bordered on either side by garden beds. The view is quite expansive, not just because this seat is at the top of a steep slope, but because the plants bordering the path are generally low growing allowing views into the garden beds and beyond.

In complete contrast I have a seat,

tucked in a discrete, purpose made spot of its own, at right angles to a path winding its way to the top of the hill. This is an intimate space with limited views. You sit in amongst the plants that closely surround it on three sides under a canopy of trees where you can do some forest bathing.

Most of my garden paths flow, connect and intersect so you can walk around taking different ones, going in different directions. You don't need to stop until you've had enough of exploring. I do, however, have a path that ends after about 20 metres. The only way out is to turn around and head back down the same path. So how to give meaning and a purposeful ending to this path? What could be the enticement to visit this part of the garden? A number of solutions spring to mind. The path could lead to a water feature, cubby house, sculpture etc. but the simplest and most appealing one for me was for the path to open out to a circular space for seating in the round.

Whether you have seats in the garden or not, you might have a place for relaxing or entertaining just outside the front or back door. Many homes with little scope for casual seating in the garden only have outdoor sitting or entertaining spaces. Balconies, courtyards, decks or outdoor rooms, which these days are often roofed and walled on three sides, all provide options for connecting with the world outside, and if big enough, gathering with family and friends. Seating for drinking and eating, with others or on your own. These spaces might adjoin garden beds if at ground level, or provide tree-top views if higher up, but no matter the outlook there is always the opportunity to introduce some potted plants to soften the space, make it your own, invite the wildlife to visit, and make that connection to nature which research has shown is so good for our well-being. 

Text and photos: Royce and Jeanne Raleigh

What an incredible summer, lots of rain, high humidity and here in the Wimmera all the paddocks are green! Unfortunately, some plants do not like hot humid weather. We lost a 40-year-old *Banksia prionotes* (Acorn Banksia) in mid-January that was planted in 1980 on deep sand and had reached over 10 m in height.

However, with the garden kept damp from regular rain, we have continued planting and it has been a great chance to rejuvenate some parts of the garden. Any losses create gaps to be planted. Many plants have flowered beautifully with all the rain and frost-damaged plants from the winter are back flowering.

Kunzea parvifolia

(Violet Kunzea)

A dwarf to medium shrub that has been cultivated for many years. It is a very variable species in that there are shrubby, upright and dwarf forms. All make a great display when in full flower. Grows best in well-drained soils. We have them growing in shady and full sun conditions. Hardy to frost and responds well to pruning.



Scholtzia involocrata

(Spiked Scholtzia)

A dwarf to small spreading shrub which makes a great display when in flower. Hardy to most frosts and dry periods. Our plant is under 1 m and the pink shades in the flower make it a most attractive plant. Flowering stems are excellent as a cut flower. Responds well to pruning. It has been cultivated for many years and should find a spot in any garden.



Calytrix acutifolia

Formerly known as *Lhotskia acutifolia*, this is a small shrub from south-west WA. It is probably our latest flowering of all the calytrix that we grow, but makes a nice display while in flower. It will grow in most situations in well-drained soil. We grow ours in a semi-shaded situation where the flowers and foliage make a pleasing contrast in a plant just over 1.5 m tall.



Eucalyptus rosacea

A few years ago I included a photo of a red-budded *Eucalyptus rosacea*. This one is quite different, as it is most attractive with white buds. It is closely related to *Eucalyptus synandra* but with non-drooping branches and smaller erect leaves, it shares similar flowers that age from cream to pink. For us both plants of *E. rosacea* have grown well but suffered in the winter from frost damage. The warm wet summer has stimulated both to flower again in January. A most attractive and thin stemmed eucalypt which would fit into any garden.



Hakea recurva* ssp. *arida

A prickly shrub to 3 m which grows naturally in the semi-arid and Murchison zone, WA. We have our plant growing under a large *Corymbia citriodora* (Lemon-scented Gum) where it flowers well. The flower colour can vary from white to cream. The leaves as you can see have a very sharp point. We also are growing *Hakea recurva* ssp. *recurva* which has much longer leaves, usually with a downwards curve and also with a very sharp point. *Hakea recurva* ssp. *recurva* has not flowered for us yet.



Corymbia ficifolia

(Red-flowering Gum)

A spreading small to medium tree with dense foliage. One of our best-known eucalypts for its outstanding flowers that can be white, cream, pink, orange and various shades of red, and almost always profuse and conspicuous. We are growing this one, and others that are deep red. Our plants suffered from frost damage when young but now only get tipped by severe frosts. We have grown ours from seed, but to be sure of the colour, select one that has been grafted. A beautiful tree, and it is easy to see why it is so widely cultivated.



Lomatia species

We purchased this plant at a nursery in Newcastle many years ago, and have lost the label. We presume that it is a NSW species. We have two plants, both about 2 m high, growing at the front gate in a shady position which does not get regularly watered. They have proved to be hardy plants, and make a great show when in flower. One interesting aspect is the two forms of foliage on the one plant.

We would appreciate a name if any member recognises the plant.



Melaleuca coccinea (pink) WA

Our plant derives from a plant Rodger Elliot gave us many years ago; the original plant being lost a few years ago. However, this year we had a plant in flower, and we had not realised that it was a cutting Jeanne had taken when the original plant was still alive. Normally a bright red, this is a lovely soft pink form. It grows to 2 m high but can be pruned to keep it as you would like. We are delighted to have it back again. It is so important that we take cuttings or seed and propagate unusual forms of plants because they can be so easily lost.



Angophora costata

(Smooth-barked Apple)

An outstanding ornamental for a larger garden, and will grow in a wide range of climatic conditions. We have a number of trees planted in 1981 which are now all 10–12 m high. Each year they flower profusely and are alive with honeyeaters. A little frost tender when plants were small, but they have proved to be tough in our conditions. The bark is most attractive when shed, and leaves a clean trunk. (GA)



Wanted!

Photos of the 1995 ASGAP Conference held in Ballarat. I remember that it was a great success but I don't have any records at all. Any help would be greatly appreciated. Contact Royce Raleigh, royce@wartookgardens.com

We hope that you had a lovely break over Xmas/New Year. We have had a chance to catch up on some tasks, including replacing our threadbare 35-year-old carpets!

So far (early-February as I write this), the dire threats of a very dry summer have not yet eventuated. We have had some quite heavy falls which the garden is appreciating; some plants are putting on additional flowering. Hopefully the weather in your area has also been kind.

The book reviews in this issue cover Dave Witty's *What the Trees See* and *Kimberley Bush Medicine* by Madison King and John Horsfall.

The other new books this quarter are described below.

Attila Kapitany's latest offering is *Australian Succulents: The Unfriendly Ones*. This book covers 25 species in seven genera and is over 100 pages long. Hence, it is significantly more substantial than other publication in his popular Australian Succulents series. Attila has joined with Dr Jen Silcock for this project.

Wollemi: Saving a Dinosaur Tree is a book for young children written by Samantha Tidy and illustrated by Rachel Gyan. It tells the story of the ancient, critically-endangered tree and what is done to protect its future.

Kevin F. Kenneally AM has written *Kimberley Monsoon Rainforests: Islands in a Sea of Savanna*. The book covers what we do and don't know about Kimberley rainforests, their plant and animal species, and their traditional use and cultural significance to Indigenous peoples.

The Grampians/Gariwerd from the Air is a book from a different perspective! David M Welch describes many features of the ranges in the Grampians National Park. More than 80 features are included in the lists in the book which is crammed with aerial photos of the mountain peaks, prominent rocks, cliff lines, valleys and lakes.

Thea Gardiner brings us *Mab: The World*

of Mab Grimwade. Mab's life spanned a time of cultural and social change in Victoria. She married philanthropist Russell Grimwade and together they provided funding for many organisations. She was also active in fundraising for many organisations including the Native Plants Preservation Society and was a patron of the Society for Growing Australian Plants (former name of Australian Plants Society).

We also have a new, hard-covered edition of *Welcome to Country* by Aunt Joy Murphy and Lisa Kennedy.

Also, a reminder that there are lists of both our new and second-hand titles in the Members' area of the APS Victoria website.

Please contact us on apsvicbooks@gmail.com or phone (03) 9872 3583 with any book queries – so long as it relates to Australian plants or related areas such as native fauna or weeds. To pay by EFT or PayPal, please contact us and we will provide instructions. (GA)

Baton change

Tony Cavanagh has reviewed books for APS Vic for many years and his efforts are widely appreciated. As Tony 'retires' from this role, he has handed the baton on to his daughter, Fiona Murdoch. Fiona's first review for *Growing Australian* (on page 17) has been prepared under Tony's watchful eye. Fiona is a conservation ecologist and is undertaking restoration of a 490-ha property, *Raakajlim*, in the Mallee in north-west Victoria. For more information on the work being undertaken, visit malleeconservation.com.au. Fiona has a PhD, her thesis being on 'The restoration ecology of semi-arid woodlands of northwest Victoria'.

Book Review

What the Trees See: A Wander Through Millennia of Natural History in Australia

By Dave Witty

Published by Monash University Publishing, 2023

288 pages, paperback

Members' price \$22.50 plus postage

Any book about trees is an immediate attraction, especially when the cover wrap has the soft, pastel colours of bark on a gum.

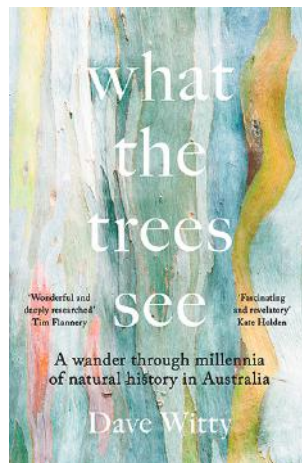
This book begins as a personal journey of wonder for a young man from Britain, excited to discover the trees and natural world in Australia and has continued his travels around the states with great enthusiasm.

There are 17 chapters with an introduction and epilogue. At the beginning of each chapter is a subtle, black and white artistic image of a tree or landscape pertinent to the chapter, which suits the style of the writing beautifully.

Each chapter deals with a species that interests him as well as the many plants in the ecosystem, giving the common name and scientific names for everything he mentions, which I really found helpful. Historical facts about the area have been woven around the species or specific tree, notably the mythology and knowledge of the Aboriginal peoples, often displaying the dark and ugly truth of some of our past.

His wanderings and fascination take in Wadjemup (Rottnest Island); the Palms of the North; the Bunya, Norfolk and Wollemi pines; mangroves, wattles and eucalypts; to the Pilliga and many more places, all interwoven into a thoughtful, sensitive journey, constantly reflecting in expressive prose, the importance of the trees and vegetation and also how they affect the author personally and emotionally.

The lucid descriptions are almost poetic



of the landscape and trees he has chosen, for instance, 'the sheer immensity of the tree's crown lifting our thoughts skyward, our aspirations ascending with every branch.' This is not a descriptive botanical book as such but a loving, beautifully written wander through many different landscapes. He certainly has a way with words.

Clearly, the research has been extraordinary, weaving paintings and art, the connection to the explorers, and many quotes from his wide reading of Australian authors, into the story. Each chapter has a separate reference section, giving the quote and the book, as well as extra notes to the text.

The title of the book reminded me of Bob Beale's book *If Trees Could Speak: Stories of Australia's Greatest Trees*, a quite specific list of important trees.

Dave Witty extensively describes with deeply felt respect for trees and places that 'have seen the past'. The trees are 'the passive observers' and, despite the intrusions of man, he encourages us to value and revere their importance for the future. This is an excellent book with so much information; it will need to be read again.

– Monika Herrmann

Book Review

Kimberley Bush Medicine: Medicinal Plants of the Kimberley Region of Western Australia

By Madison King and John Horsfall

Published by UWA Publishing, 2023

690 pages, soft cover, A5, colour illustrations

Members' price \$37.50 plus postage

Kimberley Bush Medicine is a must-have reference for anyone interested in exploring Australia's vast range of culturally important plants.

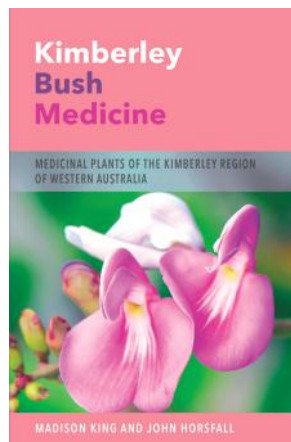
It is a comprehensive account, with over 300 plant species from the Kimberley region of Western Australia reviewed. For each plant:

- clear photographs and 'field notes' are used effectively
- scientific, common and Aboriginal names are referenced
- an extensive collation of medicinal and other uses (including food) is drawn from popular non-fiction books, scientific literature, historical accounts and even anecdotes reported on websites.

The layout is clear and crisp with large page numbers. Useful because this book has you flipping back and forth between the index and the body with high regularity. It is an indispensable reference text.

You will also dip in and out of this book at random, for fun, to learn more about plants, new and familiar. Although these are plants from the Kimberley, we know many well from our gardens like *Senna artemisioides* and *Eremophila bignoniiflora* or marketed 'bush tucker' species like *Ficus racemosa* (Cluster Fig).

The book is arranged according to common names, something I find frustrating. I'd prefer to see, for example, eremophila grouped together because they often share similar properties and uses. However, all scientific names are listed in the index. The index also lists symptoms (e.g. aching joints), properties (e.g. antiseptic), common names and indigenous names. This single-index approach, while remarkably thorough,



does make it a little unwieldy.

The book is not just about plants. The section on Kimberley languages and seasons is particularly fascinating. Different groups recognise between three and seven seasons in their calendar. Further proof that our four European seasons make no sense in Australia! A useful summary is provided of non-plant healing treatments, from red earth to emu oil, and finally, a glossary where I learnt that an 'anodyne' relieves mild pain.

The collation of references cited is impressive, almost a one-stop shop literature review.

The authors both share a lifelong interest in medicinal plants. John Horsfall has previously co-authored two books describing plants important to the Noongar people of south-west Western Australia. Madison King is an Aboriginal woman descended from five Kimberley groups. She learnt on Country to fish, hunt, track and collect bush food and medicine.

The stated purpose of the book is to preserve bush medicine knowledge, as the information could be lost over time with the passing of elders. This is achieved well; however, I look forward to future bush medicine books incorporating a greater recognition the often very specific, place-based knowledge held and owned by individual Traditional Owner language groups.

– Fiona Murdoch

Growing Australian – flower arrangements

A wonderful way to show off our beautiful native flora is with flower arrangements.

Yvonne van der Merwe

I volunteer every weekend to do the flowers for our local church in Mallacoota – St Peters, which is shared by all three denominations – Anglican, Uniting and Catholic (such a good idea, don't you think), and also for other special occasions such as the opening of exhibitions at our art gallery. I use only natives mainly from my garden and occasionally from the bush.

What is flowering at a particular time of the year (and there is always something) dictates my choice of blooms and foliage

and inspires the colour scheme of the arrangement. A dear friend taught me years ago that all flowers are shown to their best advantage putting sympathetic colours together.

For example, pastels look beautiful together, autumnal oranges and yellows complement each other, and who can forget the stunning combination of scarlet Waratahs and white Flannel Flowers displayed on the stage at the ANPSA conference at Kiama!



What inspired my arrangement last November was a perfect 'confection of cream' flowering in the bush – fluffy seed heads of *Clematis aristata* draped over rods of *Kunzea ambigua*, aromatic cassinia and rich cream and pink *Eucalyptus sieberi* blossom.



In August the bold flowers of *Banksia* 'Giant Candles' make a statement in the golden arrangement of *Pomaderris lanigera*, *pehbalium* and apricot *Grevillea juniperina*.



In January a weeping arrangement of foliage alone – *Acacia* 'Lime Magik', variegated *agonis*, *Banksia baueri* and *Eucalyptus caesia* leaves.



In October the delicate tones of *Anigozanthus* 'Lilac Queen' gave rise to a tall arrangement of purples and mauves – *Alyogyne huegelii*, *Cordylone stricta* and silvery *Leptospermum brachyandrum*. →



So much of our flora dries beautifully providing fascinating and dramatic seed heads, cones and foliage. You can make an arrangement that lasts indefinitely. Here I've used spent angophora flower-heads, dried agonis blossom, silver bracken, *Caustis recurvata* (Curly Sedge) and themeda seed heads.



On a walk on one of our many beautiful beaches in Mallacoota, I found this piece of driftwood that immediately suggested a black swan - so the plumage was provided by black gahnia flowers, dried bracken, burnt banksia cones and bulrush fluff! I exhibited the driftwood swan in our gallery and it elicited many admiring questions and compliments!

New high-tech spray holds out hope against Myrtle Rust

In 2010 the fungus Myrtle Rust (*Austropuccinia psidii*) that causes disease in plants in the Myrtaceae was detected in NSW. Since then, it has continued to spread across Australia despite efforts to contain and control the pathogen, and research into its control and elimination.

As explained in *The Conversation* (15 Dec 2023)¹, one research project has 'used RNA technology similar to that in COVID vaccines to create a highly targeted treatment for Myrtle Rust: a spray that can restore even severely infected trees to health in around 6 weeks.'

To ensure the treatment wouldn't accidentally affect anything except the Myrtle Rust fungus, it was designed using 'barcoding genes' which uniquely identify the species.

Such 'barcoding' has lasting impact as it

cannot change by mutation without risking the organism's survival, and if resistance against double-stranded RNA does evolve, the target sequence can be modified to match the rust again in a matter of days.

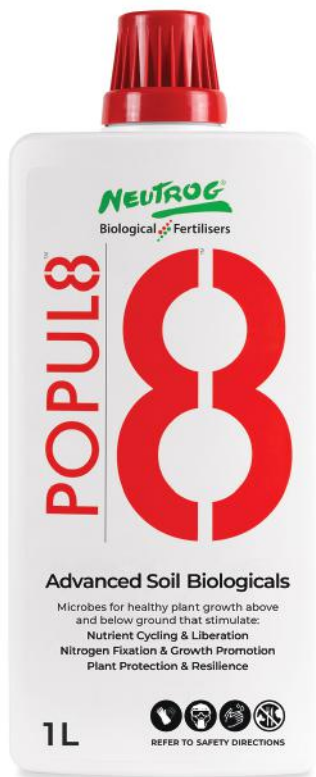
¹ theconversation.com/myrtle-rust-is-devastating-australian-forests-a-new-high-tech-spray-holds-out-hope-for-native-trees-219411



Myrtle Rust on leaves of *Melaleuca quinquenervia* (Broad-leaved Paperbark).

John Tamm (Wikimedia Commons)
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ANPSA 2024 conference update

In less than six months APS Victoria will host the 32nd ANPSA Conference. To date we have had a considerable amount of interest from our members local and interstate, and advice that we have visitors attending from New Zealand, the United Kingdom and the Netherlands.

Website

The ANPSA 2024 Conference website (anpsa2024conference.com) has been up and running since December last year courtesy of our professional conference organisers, ASN Events, and the ANPSA 2024 committee.

Register

Registration for the conference (30 September–4 October) is now open. The early bird rate is \$585, with later entries \$650 for the full 5 days with a variety of other options for shorter attendance.

The pre- and post-conference tours can also be chosen. The prices vary according to the tour and are as follows: Grampians and Wimmera – \$1,800, Gippsland and Wilsons Promontory – \$2,020 and Great Ocean Road and Otways – \$2,380, with an



The Round, Nunawading – venue of the ANPSA 2024 conference.

additional amount for singles.

Program – Speakers

We have a most engaging program of topics and speakers for the 3 days – 30 September, 2 and 4 October. A wide variety of topics around the theme of *Gardens for Life* will be presented by our various speakers who include Dr Megan Hirst (Raising Rarity), Professor Greg Moore (Urban Forests and Design for People and Climate), Nadine Gaskell (Gardens for Wildlife), Dr Dimity Williams (author of *Nature our Medicine: how the natural world sustains us*) and many more.

The Monday (30 September) and Friday (4 October) sessions feature six speakers in the lecture theatre across the day, while the Wednesday (2 October) sessions feature 15 different speakers spread across five separate rooms for morning and early afternoon sessions.

Attendees will have a wide-ranging choice of topics to choose from including: the Pea, Bush Foods and Eremophila study groups; Wetland Gardens; Australian Flowers for Floristry; Grampians/Gariwerd Endemic Botanic Garden; Verge Gardens for Pollinators; and many more.

The AJ Swaby Address given by Phillip Johnson on the creation of the Chelsea Australian Garden at Olinda will conclude this day.

Program – Excursions

Attendees will be able to choose two from six possible excursions on the Tuesday (1 October) and Thursday (3 October). These are to the Dandenong Ranges which include Karwarra, Sherbrooke Forest and

the Chelsea Australian Garden at Olinda; the Australian Garden at Cranbourne (RBGV); Anglesea Heathland; Gardens for Wildlife; Melton Botanic Garden; and grasslands (including Evans Street Native Grassland, Sunbury, and Iramoo Wildflower Grassland Reserve, Carinlea). These excursions are included in the full registration price or can be booked separately.

Publicity

We have already disseminated a tour Issue of *Australian Plants* to those of you who receive this journal. We have since created a second issue on the Conference itself – the speakers and the excursions – which you will receive with this issue of *Growing Australian*. Thank you to all who helped to create this second special issue to accompany our first. And a special thank you to Maree Goods for the compilation and APS NSW for taking the final work to print. Consider yourselves fully informed and able to make decisions accordingly.

Sponsorship

Now that all the above has been sorted we have been working on garnering sponsorship for the conference. We have been considering a variety of potential donors for gold, silver and bronze level donations and what they will receive in return for the privilege. A work in progress you might say, and a most important one



Miriam Ford

The Big Bandicoot, Ian Potter Lawn, RBGV Cranbourne Gardens.

as it enables us to keep our costs for the attendees down. We would appreciate any input from our members in this regard. There will also be the ever-popular raffle.

Volunteering

It is still early days but we seek assistance of members in tasks like marshalling the people between talks on the Wednesday morning, and assistance on the various bus excursions. Please let Miriam or Nicky know if you're interested in these roles.

A visit to the ANPSA 2024 website will provide all the information available to confirm why attendance will be informative, educational and most importantly, fun. We look forward to seeing you.

– Miriam Ford and Nicky Zanen (Convenors) and the ANPSA 2024 Organising Committee

		<p>Latest Titles</p> <p>Native bulbs, succulents, bottle trees and boabs, gymea lilies, ant plants or wierd wattles.</p> <p>Books and magazines on the above topics. Also enthusiastic speaker looking for an audience on these and other topics. Will travel.</p> <p>Contact Attila at kapitany@bigpond.com or visit www.australiansucculents.com.</p>
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Growing your group

Graham and Maree Goods

A few years ago, some members of the Wimmera Growers of Australian Plants were thinking we may have to fold up through lack of anyone taking on a leadership role.

In 2017 Graham and I were asked to go to Rainbow to teach some people how to propagate Australian plants. The idea was that they wanted to learn and to be able to plant their propagated plants in the garden beds surrounding their new community centre. All we had to do was turn up, demonstrate the techniques of propagating and then help with the practical sessions. We learnt quite a bit about that and thought we could do this with our group.

The WGAP organised their first propagation day for the public in November 2019 at a local hall in Horsham. We had 19 people register and from that we gained 10 new members. Some of who are now taking on roles with in the club in leadership and excursion guides.

How do we do it? There is certainly several weeks work to do beforehand to have rooted cuttings and seedlings ready for participants to practise potting on. Closer to the day we collect seed pods and gumnuts etc. to illustrate the difference between mature and immature seeds. We bring plenty of green material on the day for participants to do cuttings and include some with pretty flowers to encourage participants to grow Australian plants in their gardens.

It is a full-day workshop with our members demonstrating and speaking of their techniques on planting seed and potting on in the morning followed by similar format for cuttings, potting on, and after care in the afternoon. It is a hands-on workshop and everyone gets to take home their work. The room is always a buzz of

chatter and laughter as everyone gets to know each other.

We charge \$25 for a materials fee which covers the cost of a propagating kit that they get to take home. The kit comprises seed raising and cutting mixes; appropriate size pots for growing seedlings, cuttings and potting on; plant labels; pencil to write on the labels; a small jar of Clonex; a small stand to hold their Clonex jar and a cutting pot; and notes on cuttings and seed raising. The notes have been taken from the APS Vic website with some changes to complement our climate.



Maree Goods

A propagating kit.

Once the practical session has been completed one of our members then demonstrates how to set up a heat bed cheaply, but at the same time legally. At the end of the day we tell them about the advantages of joining our group and for some they sign up on the spot.

We ran further propagating days in November of 2021 and 2022, again gaining new members. Miriam Ford, APS Vic President, came to the 2022 propagating workshop and did a series of videos covering the day. These can be viewed on youtube. [com/playlist?list=PLr7ovWqAQpBXQsc_zRp5aXwoV5QNc0s-H](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLr7ovWqAQpBXQsc_zRp5aXwoV5QNc0s-H). →



Maree Goods

A native flower arrangement by Anthea Garth.



Maree Goods

A native flower arrangement by Mabel Brouwer.

In March 2022 we also ran an evening session on how to establish an Australian garden covering all aspects from a bare patch to the finished product.

Each year during the second weekend in October the Horsham Spring Garden Festival is held. Wimmera Growers of Australian Plants has always participated in this event. In previous years we had a large tent in which we displayed many named specimens from members gardens in jars. Despite there being some interest, we have never gained very many new members. This year we decided to change our format from individual species in jars to arrangements of native flowers spread over three tables.

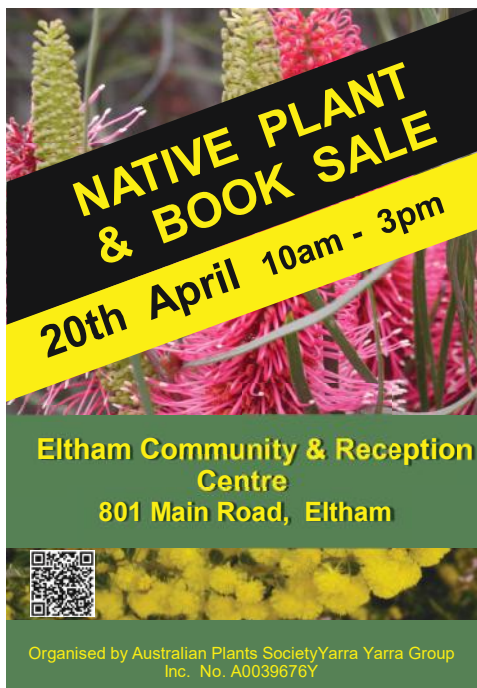
The tent size was 6 x 3 m, relatively small to previous years. The back of the tent (south side – 6 m long) and the east end had clear plastic sides with the west end fully covered in and an open front facing north. This meant there was plenty of light for our floral display.

We blocked off half the entrance with a table for visitors to try their hand at

propagating. Many were asking if they could grow a particular species from one of the bowls. We would take a piece and show them how to propagate with many trying their hand at it. This was a great success as people of all ages, including youngsters were having a go. We would then put their work in a narrow plastic ziplock bag for them to take home.


With the help of John King we were able to set up a half-price membership stand. By the end of the weekend we had 17 new members, including some couples and since then, one or two more have joined. Amongst our new members there is a great age range which is exciting. We look forward to new faces, fresh ideas and blood coming into our group. After the weekend they all received a welcome letter and a copy of our last newsletter.

Where to next? We need to nurture these new members and continue to encourage them along their journey of growing Australian plants. We look forward to seeing what happens next. (GA)



NATIVE PLANT & BOOK SALE
20th April 10am - 3pm

Eltham Community & Reception Centre
801 Main Road, Eltham



Organised by Australian Plants Society Yarra Yarra Group
Inc. No. A0039676Y



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Saturday 11th May 2024
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To Warrnambool and beyond

Kevin Sparrow

In September/October 2024, APS Victoria will host the ANPSA Biennial Conference in Melbourne. Tours to three different locations – both before and after the conference – are being organised: to the Grampians and the Wimmera; to Wilson's Promontory and Gippsland; and one travelling along the Great Ocean Road visiting the Otway Ranges before travelling on to Warrnambool.

The 6-day/5-night Great Ocean Road/Otway Ranges tour will spend two nights in Anglesea, one night in Apollo Bay and two nights in Warrnambool before returning to Melbourne along the Princes Highway. Along the way, there will be stop-offs at local gardens and tourist attractions as well as exploring some of the delights of the Otway Ranges and Great Ocean Road.

As a practice run, Wimmera Growers of Australian Plants members travelled to Warrnambool for a weekend to experience the three gardens and the western end of the Great Ocean Road. On the Saturday, members met at the Swan Reserve Waterwise Garden located almost in the centre of Warrnambool and managed by Friends of Swan Reserve, where Friends President Kevin Sparrow showed them around the native garden. He began with a brief history of the Reserve and explained how the Garden came about and how it came to be what it is today.

Following this, they travelled on to Illowa, near Tower Hill, where they visited the superb garden of Ross Dawson and Sue Blood. After lunch ably provided by their hosts, they travelled a short distance to the home and garden of David and Linda Handscombe. Both of these large gardens are magnificent and will be highlights of the pre- and post-conference tours.

On Sunday, members travelled along

the Great Ocean Road, stopping off along the way at the Bay of Martyrs for a walk to enjoy the views before a picnic lunch in Peterborough. Later, an optional long coastal wildflower walk into Port Campbell gave stunning views along the way. Following this, participants made their own way back home after what had been an amazing and very enjoyable weekend. It was also great to see local Warrnambool members joining in and getting to know their fellow Wimmera members.

Register and book a tour now at anpsa2024conference.com. But be quick to reserve your place.

We'd love to see you in Warrnambool in September/October 2024.

GA



A glimpse of Ross Dawson and Sue Blood's garden ...

Kevin Sparrow



... and a glimpse of David and Linda Handscombe's garden.

Kevin Sparrow

An adventure in native foods

Sharyn Meade
Owner/Manager of Red Rock Wattle

Currently, commercial plantations of edible wattle seeds are limited. To date, wild harvesting has been the norm. This method of collection and harvesting means that the full potential of wattle seed has yet to be explored in terms of sustainability of yield and supply to markets.

Red Rock Wattle developed from the purchase of 17 acres of existing farmland in Coragulac, south-west Victoria, in 2019. Owners Peter Dalton and Sharyn Meade had intended to 'retire' to a small block of land and pursue their interest in native plants. Peter, in particular, has long been interested in native plants and was associated with a native foods manufacturer, including as chair of their foundation, supporting indigenous enterprises.

Understanding what to do with a small acreage, zoned for farming, led to an introduction to Wattle Seeds Australia (wattleseeds.com.au) consultant, Peter Cunningham. Peter provided a site assessment and advice on planting, especially species types. Peter has also provided ongoing advice on implementing the enterprise including site preparation,

silvicultural management, harvest, and post-harvest handling and marketing.

No existing commercial wattle plantations of edible wattle species exist in this area, as previous focus has been in semi-arid and higher rainfall areas. The land is undulating and this topography, plus the weather, has caused some issues with the selected species. Soil testing confirmed good, high fertility for most parameters with a slightly acidic pH.

Our first planting in 2020 trialed nine species:

- *Acacia saligna* (Golden Wreath Wattle)
- *Acacia longifolia* ssp. *longifolia* (Sallow Wattle)
- *Acacia retinodes* (Silver or Swamp Wattle)
- *Acacia provincialis* (Swamp Wattle)
- *Acacia baileyana* (Cootamundra Wattle)
- *Acacia pycnantha* (Golden Wattle)
- *Acacia microbotrya* (Manna Wattle)
- *Acacia daphnifolia* (Northern Manna Wattle)
- *Acacia victoriae* (Elegant Wattle).

Planting was undertaken in August 2020. The area to be planted was netted against

rabbits (an ongoing problem) and the ground was prepared by ripping and spraying to reduce weed competition. No watering has been required, nor fertiliser. The trees progressed well but were significantly impacted by heavy frosts; in particular *A. saligna*, *A. longifolia*, *A. pycnantha* and *A. victoriae*. Plus, heavy rainfall during



Acacia pycnantha (Golden Wattle) replanting after frost.



Acacia baileyana (Cootamundra Wattle) in flower.

winter affected even the Swamp Wattle in the lowest-lying area of the plantation.

Our first harvest was in January 2022, of *A. baileyana*. The harvest was limited given the trees were not yet 24 months old. Some other species were also seeding but we were unable to harvest due to travel restrictions and work commitments.

We had purchased the land with intent to build a home and manage the plantation. However, as our local council denied our building application, we were forced to

purchase an existing property in Colac and commute to our plantation.

In October 2022 we proceeded with planting another 1,500 trees, concentrating on the species *A. retinodes*, *A. provincialis* and *A. baileyana*. Given the challenges presented by wind and frosts, we had chosen to establish *A. saligna* windbreaks entirely around the perimeter of the area in 2021. We've noted now that this species is also impacted by frost and winds in this location, and have decided to use *A. retinodes* as windbreaks for our final planting in 2024. These are progressing exceptionally well and should be averaging a metre in height by the time we plant again in October.

The 2022 planting is progressing well but this time the trees were damaged by hares: notably not *A. baileyana*. Most other growers also reported hare damage in 2023.

We were expecting an extensive harvest this year from our 2020 plantation from almost all the trial species. We →



Acacia retinodes (Silver or Swamp Wattle) planted as windbreaks – September 2023.



Drying wattle seed – December 2023.



Acacia baileyana (Cootamundra Wattle) seed pods.

noticed however, that *A. longifolia*, while flowering profusely, suddenly aborted the flower buds and very limited seed formed. This has happened to other growers with different species. No one has been able to explain why this might happen. Our seed harvesting from this species is less than 25% of what might have been expected.

Harvesting is undertaken by hand; imagine traditional olive harvesting! Seed pods are collected on sheets and then dried until the seed releases. Seed is aggregated with Wattle Seeds Australia at present for further treatment (roasting and grinding).

This year's harvest saw the *A. baileyana* ready for harvest at the beginning of December, whereas last year, we were harvesting a month later in the New Year. We have been affected by the rain and high winds in December blowing the seed from the pods and then the dampness limiting our drying capacity. Some seed was lost to mould forming as a result of the rain, high humidity and occasional high temperatures. The weather has been very changeable this year and managing harvesting and effective storage has been a challenge.

We have commenced preparing for our final stage of wattle tree planting. The *A. retinodes* windbreaks are in. This time we have used covers on every plant. We also have native plant windbreaks to protect the new plantation. Our final planting will commence this year, and is likely to be our three best performing species again: *A. baileyana*, *A. retinodes* and *A. provincialis*. The additional 1,500 trees will make Red Rock Wattle one of the largest private producers of edible wattle seed in Victoria.

The trees have proven very resilient. We do not water seedlings, except at planting, and with vermin control and selection of appropriate species, the trees progress very quickly in our soils. The next major task after this year's harvest is pruning the trees to keep them within a manageable height for harvest and encourage increased seed development.

We have been very pleased to discover that our small acreage has attracted a range of insect and birdlife that was not apparent when we first purchased the property. Working, surrounded by birdsong is a pleasant way to spend the day.

The future of integrating wattle seed into the Australian public consciousness and moving away from public perception of it as a 'niche' or 'exotic' product is highly dependent on harvesting development, research into cultivation and propagation, and raising awareness of the use of Australian native foods in Australian food culture.

There are specific health and environmental benefits from using food sources that are well-suited to our local climate and landscape, particularly those that are capable of adapting to changing climate.

Red Rock Wattle is part of an Agrifutures project on accelerating wattle seed (and other native food) production. To this end, the growers are intent upon forming a co-operative and supporting further research

into use and cultivation of edible wattle seed and marketing the product.

Growers are utilising wattle trees for various reasons: as a primary income; as part of regenerative practices; and/or because of an interest in bringing Australian native foods to the broader public. There are varied skills, experiences and intentions people bring to the group, but we are all keen to promote Australian native food products. We are also engaging in establishing an industry association to support development of the industry.

Red Rock Wattle welcomes visitors as we are slowly establishing the plantation and developing our facilities and farm infrastructure. Please email (sharyn.meade@me.com) to arrange a visit. I can also highly recommend the Otway Harvest Trail (otwayharvesttrail.org.au) to explore what the region has to offer.



Sharyn Meade

Acacia baileyana (Cootamundra Wattle) seed from the first harvest.

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Anita's garden

Anita Carlsson

In the late 1950s, in a suburb of Melbourne, there was a young builder, early in his married life, who built a kindergarden which his eldest daughter attended in its inaugural year. At the conclusion of her kindergarden year, and no doubt, with the first year of primary school precariously on her mind, and to somehow assuage her fears, she asked her father if he would build 'her school'. His answer was, 'not this year, but maybe I'll build a house for you one day...'

So began the dream and, in March 1985 the story and life of 4 Tarhook Road, Warrnambool, when a 2,627 m² block was purchased.

This land had been subdivided earlier from a farm, which embraced a portion of the Merri River. This property was named 'Tarhook, an Aboriginal word meaning 'by the river'.

Our home build was a family venture. My dad, true to his earlier promise, even though recovering from a career-changing back injury, offered to support and assist in building our family home. He said he 'was looking forward to getting his nail bag on again'. My brother drafted

and finalised our building plans, mum was helpful with the paintbrush, and Erik and I enthusiastically committed to being Owner Builders for the next 12 months – we were beyond happy.

Building commenced in April 1985 and was completed in May 1986. We worked continuously for 3 or 4 days every week on our new home. The remaining days of the week we returned to our paid vocations.

A few years after that and, comfortably in our home, we had a visit from our family in Scandinavia, who had an extended stay here, and kindly helped out with building the garage, garden shed, and also internal cabinetry and other finishing touches.

There were many discoveries and adventures along the way. One I recall was when the post hole auger continued to hit bluestone pitchers – it didn't take long to realise there was a bed of bluestone 500 mm or so beneath the soil, probably an old stable floor. The bluestone pitchers were resurrected, split in half, and repurposed to build an internal feature wall in our lounge room. The leftover bluestone has been used in garden beds for edging in the front and back yards.

There was a latent small collection of reasonably established native trees, eucalyptus and casuarina, on the block along the unfenced boundaries. To complement this, I planted out a 10 m deep garden bed from the shared east, west and south boundaries, with a 70/30 combination of native and exotic plants/trees, respectively. The front area had a 20 m setback where many trees, shrubs and groundcovers were planted.



1987 – early plantings.



Before the Agapanthus were removed.



After removal.

Through trial and error, and many lost plants, due to over planting and incompatibility of the soil type and prevailing winds, it was evident there was a range of soil types on the block, from the front being sandy loam falling away to clay loam in the back north-east corner, which becomes waterlogged in the winter months.

I can recall using fallen degraded pine needles from our then neighbour's pine trees as mulch, in an endeavour to break up the clay and to also neutralise the alkaline pH soil, resultant, I suspect, from the residual superphosphate from earlier farming days.

Over the years, the native trees grew beautifully and extremely high, and were becoming a risk in this suburban area, plus costly to maintain, forcing a difficult decision in 2014 to clear many of the compromised larger trees. My beautiful and productive fruit trees were saved and are still enjoyed. There were 20 large native trees left, with most being situated at the front, and an open space to start again, hopefully with the knowledge gathered over the previous years. This task, whilst refreshing, was overwhelming and slow to pick up pace – ahh.

Moving to 2019 – during the COVID pandemic I was blessed with a time of reflection, and many contemplative walks at James Swan Reserve.

It was during this time that I met Kevin and Joyce Sparrow, and learnt more about James Swan Reserve, native plants, propagation, and APS Warrnambool & District. This was a period of consolidation of commitment to re-establish my garden mostly as a native one, with James Swan Reserve as a 'guiding light', along with knowledge gleaned and kindly shared from all at APS Warrnambool – many heartfelt thanks.

Finally, with renewed energy, there was an opportunity to remove the exotics, except for the roses, salvias, and the like, which are in garden beds closest to my house. In no time at all, a bobcat was commissioned and removed seven truckloads of Agapanthus from the front garden, forever (I hope ...) and the, too many to count, *Dietes grandiflora* were removed from the backyard.

A salt creek topping pathway, studded either side with solar light topped posts, was created, starting from the nature strip toward the house front, meandering through the existing front garden →

with pops of correa colour at each turn. This newly open space has encouraged a plethora of plantings at the front over the last three years. Thankfully there is now a wider choice available of beautiful natives with a smaller growth pattern.

Whilst focussing on the front garden, the back garden had become extremely overgrown with all varieties of 'monster-type' weeds seeding late last spring, forcing me to reorganise and sculpt the garden beds, remove weeds, replace with topsoil, and establish a watering system and Corten edging. Now it's time for plenty of nurturing, and endeavouring to keep the recently planted plants surviving during their first forecasted hot summer and beyond.

At this point, I am happy with the progress of my garden, and enjoy the creative energy it nurtures in me. I have made a large dragonfly which has nestled comfortably into the garden. The dragonfly is a symbol for change and transformation, which I thought was fitting for the journey. My favourite tree in the garden is the *Eucalyptus leucoxylon* 'Rosea' (planted in 1985) growing near the front entrance. There is a family of Magpies and other birds that have made claim to that tree, too.

I still have many ideas buzzing around in my head and on 'to-do lists'. Some of



Dragonfly stones

my wishes are to make a stone labyrinth, install a water feature, position a small hot house, make raised wicking garden beds for vegetables, source more rustic and sculptured features to be placed amongst the trees, improve the lawn area, and place a chair here and there.

There are so many more beautiful native plants/trees that I have learnt about in recent times that I would love to grow in my garden, but it is becoming increasingly difficult to find 'just the right spot' without the risk of overcrowding.

In conclusion, I would like to say, that I believe my dad would be very happy and proud to see how my garden has progressed and changed over recent years. (GA)



2023 – a section of the redeveloped garden.

Events Diary

Important: please check APS Vic website for cancellations.

20–24 March – Melbourne International Flower and Garden Show (MIFGS), Carlton Gardens and Royal Exhibition Building. melbflowershow.com.au.

23–24 March – Cranbourne Friends RBGV Autumn Plant Sale. Wide range of plants, plant list available one week before sale. Website: rbgfriendscranbourne.org.au. 10 am–4 pm.

6 & 7 April – APS Wangaratta take part in Off-Grid Living Festival & Campout, providing information about Australian plants – growing, maintenance, suitability and also plant sales. Chiltern Racecourse and Recreation Reserve, Racecourse Rd, Chiltern. Website: offgridevent.com.au. 9 am–5 pm.

13 April – APS Geelong Australian Native Plant Sale, 'Wirrawilla', 40 Lovely Banks Rd, Lovely Banks. 8.30 am–4 pm.

20 April – APS Yarra Yarra Autumn plant sale. Eltham Community and Reception Centre, 801 Main Rd, Eltham. 10 am–3 pm.

27 April – APS Mornington Australian Native Plant Sale, Josephine's Lawn Area, The Briars, Nepean Hwy, Mt Martha. No dogs. Free talks on propagating plants, pruning and maintenance, book sales and kids' corner. 10 am– 3.30 pm.

Early May – Committee of Management meeting. To be advised.

11 May – APS Melton Bacchus Marsh Plant Sale. St Andrews Uniting Church, 18 Gisborne Rd, Bacchus Marsh. 9 am–1 pm.

27 & 28 July – APS Bendigo hosts Committee of Management meeting and full weekend of activities.

5 September – Wimmera Biodiversity Seminar. Further details to follow.

7 September – APS Mitchell Expo and Plant Sale, Wallan Multipurpose Centre, Bentinck St, Wallan.

7 September – APS Cardinia Region Annual Plant Sale. Akoonah Park, Cardinia St, Berwick. 8 am–4 pm.

14 & 15 September – APS Yarra Yarra Australian Plants Expo. Eltham Community and Reception Centre, 801 Main Rd, Eltham. 10 am–3 pm.

21 & 22 September – APS Grampians Group Pomonal Native Flower Show, Pomonal Hall. 9 am–4 pm.

21 & 22 September – Angair Wildflower Show & Art Show, Anglesea Memorial Hall, McMillan St, Anglesea. 10 am–4 pm. Wildflower display, indigenous plant sales, art show and painting sales

30 September–4 October – ANPSA 2024 Biennial Conference in Melbourne hosted by APS Victoria.

5 October – APS Echuca Moama Native Flower Showcase. Details to follow.

19 & 20 October – Cranbourne Friends RBGV Spring Plant Sale. Wide range of plants, plant list available one week before sale. Website: rbgfriendscranbourne.org.au. 10 am–4 pm.

November – APS Wangaratta host Committee of Management meeting and AGM. Details to follow.

2025 – 15th FJC Rogers Seminar 2025 on Epacridaceae hosted by APS Mornington Peninsula.

2026 – ANPSA 2026 Biennial Conference. Planned to be held in Alice Springs.

Adventives for cultivation

David Cheal

Our native gardens are often full of attractive flowering shrubs, and over time we have concentrated on those that grow well in horticulture, flower well and look good in gardens. We have made much less use of the many attractive perennial herbs, but they're often a very welcome variation amongst the shrubs.

Think of the various *Ptilotus* species, many Kangaroo Paws (*Anigozanthos* species, including hybrids), *Goodenia* and *Scaevola* species and others. These may occasionally self-propagate elsewhere in our gardens, but this is rare. Our gardens are dominated by plants growing exactly where they're planted and tended. 'Adventive' herbs (i.e. those that readily self-propagate) are often considered weeds.

But some of us prefer a little less predictability. We enjoy discovering things 'popping up' unexpectedly in locations where we have not planted them. We may enjoy the realisation that our gardens are now so suitable as habitat that some plants self-propagate. A wander through the gardens can provide the added joy of discovering adventives (plants that readily self-propagate).

At my place, on heavy basalt-derived clay loam, species introduced often as seed have sometimes 'felt' so at home that they readily self-propagate around the garden. The adventives list includes:

- *Acaena echinata* (Sheep's Burr) – very popular as food for Crimson Rosellas
- *Bulbine semibarbata* (Leek Lily) – but be careful! I have seen this species, which is an annual, being sold as *Bulbine bulbosa*, which is a bulbous perennial
- *Calotis scapigera* (Tufted Burr-daisy)
- *Cynoglossum australe* (Australian Hound's-tongue)
- *Dichondra repens* (Kidney-weed)

- *Euphorbia dallachyana* – a prostrate spurge
- *Geranium homeanum* (Rainforest Crane's-bill)
- *Geranium retrorsum* (Grassland Crane's-bill)
- *Malva weinmanniana* – a native 'hollyhock' or mallow. It grows very well in the highly manured soil under a tree in which Guinea Fowl perch nightly
- *Mentha australis* (River Mint)
- *Oxalis perennans* – (Grassland Woodsorrel) – this native species is tuberous, unlike the similar introduced weed *Oxalis corniculata*
- *Portulaca oleracea* (Pigweed) – I'm told this fleshy herb is edible and decidedly palatable, but I cannot vouch for this. It's popular food for Red-browed Finches
- *Rumex dumosus* (Wiry Dock) – its seed is another popular food for Crimson Rosellas
- *Solanum laciniatum* (Kangaroo Apple) – not really a herb, a short-lived perennial shrub to 2 m tall. Silvereyes, honeyeaters and chooks relish this one)
- *Wahlenbergia gracilentia* (Annual Bluebell)

Of course, this is not a complete list of all the herbs that have been trialled. Some have been tried and failed as the soil is too dry in summer or too heavy and boggy in winter or poorly drained, or any one of a host of other reasons. But there's been fun in the experimentation and genuine joy in realising that all the above-listed species now have a home in what was formerly exotic pastures. Some of these even become weedy (i.e. growing where they're not wanted). The spiny seeds of Sheep's Burr or Hound's-tongue are not welcome when discovered inadvertently in the bed linen at night, but they're still welcome outside in the garden. (QA)

*Bulbine semibarbata* (Leek Lily)*Malva weinmanniana**Geranium homeanum* (Rainforest Crane's-bill)*Oxalis perennans* (Grassland Wood-sorrel)

Flora of Australia – now with orchids!

Between 1981 and 2015, volumes of the *Flora of Australia* series were published in print.

The *Flora of Australia*, a synthesis of present taxonomic knowledge of the country's flora, has been designed for use by anyone wanting authoritative information on the names, characteristics, distribution and habitat of native and naturalised vascular plants in Australia.

In 2018 the *Flora of Australia* transitioned from a book series to an innovative and dynamic online platform. This move made the information more accessible and user-friendly, with easier navigation through the classification, and enables more rapid updates.

The online version integrates a wide range of botanical information from many sources, such as nomenclature, distribution maps, images, biodiversity data, and identification keys.

Approximately 20,000 plant profiles are now available and thousands of new profiles added and revisions made since publication of the print versions.

The family Orchidaceae has now been added to the *Flora*. This free digital resource covering all of Australia's 1,500 known orchid species can be accessed at profiles.ala.org.au/opus/foa/profile/Orchidaceae. A great resource for those interested in Australian orchids.

Are we in for another drought? What happened to *El Nino*?

After one of the driest springs for many years, and Melbourne's driest September on record, summer arrived, but along with it has come the most amazing rains with generally cool and moist conditions. Sadly this sort of changeable weather can bring extremes, and some of our members across the state have had devastating floods and heavy rain damage! We send our best wishes to all members impacted by these rains.

Sadly, scientists warn that these extremes in our weather are now becoming the norm, with unusual weather events occurring daily around the world. The earth is heating up with clearing occurring of more and more native vegetation; the reduction of trees and other vegetation that previously covered and cooled Earth's land masses, means all that extra heat is trapped on the earth's surface, and has to move somewhere. So, with stronger winds and more evaporation from our warmer seas, the result is the frequent floods, droughts and storms we are seeing all around the world at present.

2023 – the hottest year on record!

All over the world records have been broken, making 2023 the hottest year on record. This has resulted in an average increase of Earth's overall temperature of 1.4°C. Remember that scientists have warned that we must stay under 1.5°C. to prevent a catastrophic tipping of the balance of the world's climate. Sadly, I feel that this is almost inevitable, but we must all keep on striving for recovery. If everyone grows a few more trees every year, the planet will be in a far better place in the future.

Breeding bonanza

With all the summer rains, our wildlife at home has boomed, particularly within

our vermin-free 20 acres around our house and gardens. And since the professional culling of large numbers of feral deer in the range, native plant regeneration all over the property has been spectacular. Nearly all birds have bred twice, some three times so far this summer, and there are rafts of frog spawn in our wetlands, and insects and baby lizards everywhere.

Surprisingly, and thankfully, there have been very few mosquitoes and no snakes! Our Diamond Firetails have bred for a second time, this time using the sheltered roof cavity of a bird feeder on our back pergola instead of the usual dense mistletoe or prickly bush. Imagine our amazement when four beautiful baby finches were fledged, and are now semi-tame regulars at our back courtyard. One of our lovely cottage guests, Ellen O'Connor, recently had a wonderful few days' bird observing around our property, taking some amazing photos of the 27 bird species she saw in three days.



Ellen O'Connor

An adult Diamond Firetail at our bird bath.

Our flora and fauna on the brink

In a recent ABC interview with Professor Hugh Possingham, former Queensland Chief Scientist, the professor declared that our federal Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act (better known as the EPBC Act, designed to protect our rare and endangered plants and animals), has largely failed. His

research has shown that over 7 million hectares of habitat vital for endangered species that are listed under the EPBC Act has been cleared in just the last 12 months. However big commercial developments and mining companies are not the culprits; it is apparently farmers and the agricultural industry that has done practically all of this destruction.

Prof. Possingham's research shows that the Act virtually has no teeth – big companies and mining developments have to undergo rigorous independent assessment and surveys; however, private landholders are allowed to self-assess, hence these alarming figures. Illustrating how the Act is failing, the Professor has shown that ALL endangered birds in Australia have declined in population by at least 2% just in the last 12 months!

There is now an urgent need for a complete review of the EPBC Act, followed by a change to on-ground enforcement and assessment of ALL potential threats to our endangered flora and fauna, particularly now in the face of rapid climate change. And big developers and government agencies such as our VicRoads should not be able to destroy an area of endangered native flora and fauna by buying an offset somewhere else and saying that it is permanently protected. The overall result of this easy option for developers is still net loss of the endangered species. If this loophole continues, eventually there will be no more endangered species left to buy and protect!

Legislate our promised parks

In an open letter to Victorian Premier Jacinta Allan, APS Victoria along with 70 other environmental organisations and over 300,000 individuals, urged her to introduce the legislation to enact the promised major western Victorian national parks. Following a two year expert investigation into the forests of central western Victoria, recommendations were made for large areas of public forests of the Wombat,

Wellsford, Mount Cole and Pyrenees Ranges to become national or regional parks. In June 2021 Daniel Andrews committed to make three big new national parks and a series of permanent reserves. Sadly to this day, these changes have still not been legislated. We wait, with baited breath for Allan's decision!

Serious threat to southern grevilleas

In recent correspondence with officers from DELWP, Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne and several other experts, there is concern that the rare and endangered Mt Cole Grevillea (*Grevillea montis-cole*) may be under threat from Grevillea Leaf-miner (*Peraglyphis atimana*). This small brown moth originated in Silky Oak (*Grevillea robusta*) forests of northern NSW and south-east Queensland. Sadly it was inadvertently brought in to Victoria many years ago when large retail nurseries brought grevilleas grown in Queensland down into the southern states. Here it has slowly and steadily spread into natural stands of nearly all wild grevilleas, and with the combined effects of climate change, it is having a dramatic effect on a large number of species.

At Mt Cole, many plants have been completely skeletonised, and I have seen the same thing in populations of *Grevillea floripendula* in the forests north of Beaufort. The worst affected colonies of this species now no longer exist, having been completely wiped out by this insidious pest. In the home garden it can be controlled annually by spraying all your grevilleas in early autumn with a systemic insecticide, but this is drastic and I am reluctant to do this. Unfortunately, this means that each year I am losing a number of smaller and weaker grevillea specimens from our gardens.

Please contact me with your observations, or if you need any help with your conservation concerns at conservation@apsvic.org.au. GA

New members continue to sign up and pleasingly, these are mostly being done online. When they sign up, new members receive a welcome letter, a gift certificate for plants from a Bendigo nursery, and a pdf copy of the most recent issue of *Growing Australian*. Because of the cost of postage, I do not generally post these any more.

It is hoped that, this year, most members will be confident enough to renew or join online – just remember that you need your membership number (if renewing) and the email which is on our system. If there is any chance that you have changed your email, please let me know so I can change the database, as a different email address when renewing generates a duplicate membership causing problems when we order *Growing Australian*.

Please don't pay your District Group memberships separately to your District Group. If you pay both APS Vic and the District Group fees together online it makes it much easier for both the District Group and me to keep track of who has and who hasn't paid.

The credit card payment system works most of the time – if there is a problem it is usually something I can solve over the phone.

Some members have signed up online using the alternative direct credit system via their bank. This works very well, but only if the member remembers to pay – some haven't, then presumably wonder why they don't receive any issues of *Growing Australian* or acknowledgement.

We welcome the following members who have recently joined us:

- Pramitha Alwis, Spring Gully
- Lynda Ash, Wandong
- Elizabeth Bacon, Pomonal
- Lyndon Barowski, North Bendigo
- Leonie Bartels, Kangaroo Flat
- Glenda Blake, Sedgwick
- Zach Bolton, Long Gully
- Tracey Bradley, Alphington
- Pauline Cahair, Eaglehawk
- Sandra Casey, Horsham
- John & Denise Catchlove, Hastings
- Jan Coles, Olinda
- Nola Cowled, Junortoun
- Julie Deblaquiere, Altona
- Dean Field, Warnambool
- Petah Gaul, Eaglehawk
- Darren Hannah, Gorae
- Emery Hayden, Brookfield
- Kerri Howley, Bendigo
- Dongwha 'DJ' Jang, Tyabb
- Linda & Paul Jones, Strathfieldsaye
- Jess Joy, Ballan



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Ana Murdoch, Brunswick
Lex Nieboer, Berwick
Pamela Oakley, Castlemaine
Nellie Op de Coul, Haven
Gail & Greg Owen, Dinner Plain
Ruth Parker, Strathdale
Janette and Geoff Penny, Terip Terip
Kristy Roche, Warrnambool
Nancy Salinas, Officer

Kate Scarce, Spring Gully
April Scheibl, Millgrove
Glenda Schroeter, Echuca
Jo Searle, Melbourne
Ligia Semmer, Beaumaris
Duncan Sharp, Redesdale
Carlotta Standen, White Hills
Kate Sterrenberg, Eltham
Karen Thomas, Mandurang
Ethan Travis, Hoppers Crossing
Jim U'ren, Omeo
Emily Unt Wan, White Hills
Kim Vipond, Pomonal
Heather Walliker, Pyalong
Margaret White, Ringwood North
Ray & Marg Williams, Kangaroo Flat
Li Gabrielle Zhang, Burnside Heights

Introducing the new APS Vic Secretary

Charles Hrubos took over the role of APS Vic Secretary in December 2023 after rejoining the society as a member of APS Mornington in mid-2023. But he has a much longer tenure as a member, having originally joined APS Wilson Park as a founding member in 1993.

Charles was elected Vice-President of the Society for Growing Australia Plants (SGAP) in 1999, and worked closely in that role with then President Nicky Rose (Zanen) for 2 years. He was a key player in updating the aims of the Society, including the name change to Australian Plants Society. Other highlights included bringing the APS Victoria September plant sale to Wilson Park. This was a very successful event, which in those days ran for the full weekend.

Other initiatives in those early years included the running of Wattle Day celebrations at Wilson Park, and working closely with the Park Superintendent (Lex Nieboer) and Glyn Sago from the Wilson Park group to plant out the carpark area

with Australian native plants.

Charles also had conservation interests outside of APS, and was a foundation member of Friends of Eumemmerring Creek (Doveton locality) which formed in 1999. This group continues to undertake revegetation work in the Creek environs, and also to conduct an annual Clean Up Australia Day activity.

Charles worked for Nylex for many years as an industrial chemist, and then started a small business working in the field of plastics additives and manufacture, and continued in that business until 2020.

Australian plants have been a long-term passion of Charles. As a child he grew up in the Perth hills area, and the bush was his backyard.

He is also keenly interested in solar-efficient home design, and has owner-built two homes (architect designed), the latter one being his present address in Frankston South. And since retirement he has resumed one of his teenage loves – playing chess.

Out and About

Nicky Zanen

– a trip into memory lane

Earlier this year I visited the Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne to look for the stinging tree, *Dendrocnide excelsa*, or Giant Stinging Tree. I am fascinated by its lethal leaves, and remembered the tree was pointed out to me on a guided visit when I first arrived in Melbourne. This tree is indigenous to the rainforests of Queensland and northern New South Wales. The leaves have silicate hairs that, on entering the skin, emit an amazingly toxic poison which can take weeks to recover from. The tree is in the Rainforest Walk area, set back so it doesn't accidentally affect visitors.

In the 1990s I was working on St Kilda Road next to the Shrine of Remembrance, and the Gardens were my refuge. I got to know them very well and find that not much has changed, but not much is the same.

I was thinking, as I walked to the Lake Cafeteria past the Central Lawn, of the time the garden was xeriscaped in response to the

extreme water saving measures during the big drought. Dry landscaping and 'making every drop of water count'. Now the area is planted with Australian rare and threatened species. This will be one of the topics on our program during our upcoming ANPSA Conference in October.

Another vivid memory was the angst the Gardens had when the fern gully was taken over by flying foxes. The damage they caused was significant, and eventually they were moved to Yarra Bend Park. Recently I've seen colonies of the bats in the trees alongside the Eastern Freeway just after the Chandler Highway exit, heading towards the city. Here they are causing significant damage to the eucalypts as well.

Near one of the entrances, 'Botanica – A Village Among the Oak Trees' was created during the recent school holidays where children could construct their own magical



The magic of cubbies made using plant materials.



An area of the RBGV Melbourne planted with Australian rare and threatened species.

cubbies using materials provided by the Botanic Gardens. What a lovely idea, and it wasn't only children who were thoroughly enjoying building, the adults were too. With a bit of string and long branches, my own grandchildren have built cubbies in my garden, although without walls. The blessing of having corymbias dropping their branches regularly.

In writing the above I am reminded of proofreading I have been doing lately, and the kudos that must be afforded our editors and publishers. If one uses corymbias as I have just done, is this upper case C or just plain? Adding 'ficifolia' certainly makes the first word a capital, and then it gets italicized – *Corymbia ficifolia*. There are many rules and many margins for error. Style guides are available but they often doesn't address the different ways one can write about plants. What about red flowering gum, or is this Red Flowering Gum? As I said, full marks to our newsletter editors for wading their way through all this.

As I wandered further through the Gardens I came upon a *Hibiscus insularis*, also known as the Philip Island Hibiscus. It was planted by Sir Keith MacPherson, Chief Executive of the Herald and Weekly Times, to mark the completion of the 'Save the Lake' campaign on 30 October 1983. This Philip Island (with one I) refers to an island south of Norfolk Island, not the Phillip Island (with two I's) in Victoria. Wikipedia states that the entire natural extent of this species is just two small clumps, and each clump apparently consists of multiple separate stems of a single genotype. It has been propagated and planted more widely on Philip Island, but only vegetatively, which does not increase the genetic diversity. Seedlings apparently have not been observed in the wild. This highlights one of the problems of biodiversity; if we are growing plants by propagating them, the gene pool is limited.

It was certainly a pleasure stepping back into the Melbourne Botanic Gardens to relive over 30 years of memories.

GA



Hibiscus insularis (Philip Island Hibiscus).

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How we brought mistletoes back to the trees of Melbourne – while warding off hungry possums

David M Watson

Professor in Ecology, Charles Sturt University

Rodney van der Ree

National Technical Executive in Ecology at WSP Australia Pty Ltd.

Adjunct Associate Professor, School of BioSciences, The University of Melbourne

Reprinted from

THE CONVERSATION

September 12, 2023, theconversation.com/au

Until recently, mistletoes were regarded as problematic pests across Australia. They were seen as having been introduced from elsewhere, exploiting helpless trees and driving their premature demise.

Around the world, arborists and plantation managers used to be trained to remove mistletoes as part of routine maintenance. They went to extraordinary lengths to rid trees of these dense parasitic clumps, using flamethrowers, high-powered rifles, even herbicide-spritzing drones.

But just as we now know that hollows are essential for wildlife, including many threatened species, awareness of the positive side of parasitic plants is growing. Mistletoes have been shown to boost biodiversity and increase resilience of wildlife populations to drought, habitat loss and predators.

However, unlike other plants that can be grown as seedlings and planted out, mistletoes rely on animals to plant their seeds on the branches of host trees. This means they aren't included in revegetation efforts, and it was unclear whether it would even be possible.

We set out on a world-first trial to attempt to reintroduce mistletoe to the trees of Melbourne. As our recently published research¹ shows, we succeeded. Some of the mistletoes are now even bearing fruit.

The only factor that stood in the way of success was the bane of many gardeners' lives – hungry brushtail possums.

Productive parasites

Mistletoes provide many benefits for local biodiversity. Their flowers provide reliable nectar that encourages pollinators to linger longer. They then boost the populations of other plant species they visit.

The nutrients in mistletoe leaves boost soil health and dramatically increase insect numbers when they fall to the forest floor.

The ripples of these interactions spread right through woodland food webs. One study demonstrated the most significant impacts on ground-feeding insect-eating birds, whose numbers have declined across eastern Australia.

Many birds nest in mistletoes. Their dense evergreen foliage provides cover from predators.



Mistletoebirds spread mistletoe seeds.

Mike's Birds (Flickr CC BY-SA 2.0 DEED)

All of Australia's mistletoes are native species. Most hail from ancient lineages dating all the way back to Gondwanaland.

The knowledge we have gained about mistletoes has led to an about-face in natural resource management. Managers are rethinking mistletoe removal and embracing these native plants as ecological keystones.

In some areas where mistletoes no longer occur, restoration practitioners have suggested reintroducing them. It had been unclear if this was feasible.

Making Melbourne even more marvellous

Working closely with City of Melbourne staff, research scientists from the Gulbali Institute undertook a world-first experimental of the reintroduction of a native mistletoe to street trees. Rather than eucalypts or other native trees, we decided to use Plane Trees, a European species that is a feature of city streets the world over. In Australia, very few things interact with Plane Trees — nothing eats them, which is one reason they're popular street trees.

Rather than replace these established trees with more fitting local species and waiting a few decades for them to grow, we tried something a little different. We added a native mistletoe to their canopies to boost the resources available to urban wildlife.

We chose Creeping Mistletoe (*Muellerina eucalyptoides*), which is now scarce in Melbourne, but is just as happy growing on exotic deciduous trees as the evergreen eucalypts this species depends on as hosts in the bush.

Our research paper summarises the outcomes of the trial. Almost 900 seeds were carefully wiped on the branches of 28 Plane Trees. We were replicating the efforts of Mistletoebirds, which usually spread these sticky seeds.

Five years after inoculation, we found mistletoes had established on five trees. Even better, two of these plants were full



MargaretRDonald (Flickr CC BY-SA 4.0)

Creeping Mistletoe (*Muellerina eucalyptoides*).

of fruit. There is now a ready-made seed source in the heart of Melbourne for further expansion of these beneficial native plants.

The problems with possums

Rather than establishment depending on the size of the branch, the age of the tree or which direction it faced, the only factor that emerged as a significant determinant of success was whether or not the tree was fitted with a possum collar. These acrylic or metal sheets wrapped around the trunk are too slippery for possums to climb. The city's tree management team routinely uses these collars to grant a reprieve to trees whose canopies have been badly damaged by these marsupials.

Previous work has found possums love to eat mistletoe foliage. This is likely due to their high concentration of nutrients and lack of chemical defences that eucalypts have.

Our study is the first to provide direct evidence of the effect of common brushtail possums on mistletoe recruitment. Its findings reinforce reports from New →

Zealand, where introduced brushtail possums have devastated three mistletoe species and been implicated in the extinction of a fourth, the only mistletoe known to have gone extinct worldwide.

Beautiful butterflies are returning

Time will tell how the addition of these plants to the urban forest will affect Melbourne wildlife. Already, gorgeous Imperial Jezebel butterflies have been spotted emerging from creeping mistletoes in Princes Park.

Even better, our work has inspired three other urban mistletoe reintroductions elsewhere in Melbourne. In New South Wales, BirdLife Australia and Mindaribba Local Aboriginal Land Council are working together to restore mistletoe to woodlands on Wonnarua Country [Hunter Valley area]. The mistletoe will supply missing nectar resources for the critically endangered Regent Honeyeater.



Mike's Birds (Flickr CC BY-SA 2.0 DEED)

The Imperial Jezebel lays its eggs only on mistletoes.

Collectively, this work is helping to shift the public perception of these native plants – from pernicious parasites to ecological keystones.

Eremophila platycalyx

Granite Poverty Bush

Graeme Nicholls

Eremophila platycalyx is a compact shrub up to 2–3 m high found in stony soils in various desert areas of Western Australia.

Two subspecies have been described – ssp. *platycalyx* and ssp. *pardolota*; a number of others have been discovered but not as yet formally described.

The leaves are a greyish-green, variable depending on the subspecies. The corolla is cream, and ssp. *pardolota* has purple spots. The sepals, often pink, remain for a long time, and deepen in colour as they age. Flowering occurs in late spring to early summer, but is also sporadic.

It is growing well in my clay and alkaline soil in the Melbourne suburb of Blackburn. It obviously prefers full sun, but in my somewhat shady garden it is rather open and straggly – but still well worth growing.

It is reputedly very drought tolerant, but extra summer water may stimulate additional flowering. It is recommended

that pruning be done early in the plant's life because it is not supposed to produce new growth when pruned below the leaves. However, I have pruned mine heavily after its shape became unattractive, and now it's producing new growth all over. One never quite knows!

E. platycalyx is slow growing but long lived, which can sometimes be an advantage. Propagation is best by grafting onto a *Myoporum* species.



Graeme Nicholls

Eremophila platycalyx ssp. *platycalyx*

Study Group Roundup

Australian Pea Flower no.5 (June 2023)

The featured genus is *Bossiaea* with its showy flowers and varied, fascinating foliage. Extensive details of *Bossiaea* are presented.

A visit to Dhillba Guuranda (Innes) National Park, Yorke Peninsula, SA, found of the pea plants in flower, the most spectacular was *Templetonia retusa* (Cockie's Tongues) Two other peas were found to have flowers as well – on exposed headlands and dunes *Eutaxia microphylla* and in the woodlands *Hardenbergia violacea* (Purple Coral Pea).

Acacia no.155 (November 2023)

Acacia armigera is a recently named new species, currently known from only a single location near Mt Dimer, north of Southern Cross, WA. It had previously been referred to as *Acacia* sp. Southern Cross.

Fireblight Leaf Beetles (*Peltoschema orphana*) have been found to be the cause of defoliation of Silver Wattles (*Acacia dealbata*) at Riddells Creek.

Members recount their varied experiences growing *Acacia flagelliformis*.

Banksia no.30 (Summer 2023)

Dave Hunter from Albury discusses and summarises his efforts to graft banksias over the past 20 years for my own garden and as gifts. All his banksia grafting has been undertaken using the 'cotyledon' technique onto *Banksia integrifolia* rootstock.

Research investigating the resistance of plants grown from two *Banksia coccinea* that potentially survived infestation of *Phytophthora cinnamomi* revealed that the progeny were not resistant to *P. cinnamomi*. The parent plants survived in dieback sites probably as disease escapes, but not due to their resistance to the pathogen.

Research at Banksia Farm in Mount Barker, WA, into phosphorous toxicity and

slow-release low phosphorous fertilisers in Proteaceae is described.

The garden at 'Wywurri', located halfway between Inverloch and Wonthaggi, contains over 40 species and varieties of Banksia. A wide variety of Australian natives are also grown; many species are rare and/or endangered including species from the Raising Rarity program at RBGV.

Isopogon & Petrophile no.33 (November 2023)

Study Group members recount their various experiences growing isopogons and petrophiles.

Darren Allen presents his propagation diary from April to October 2023 and the lessons learnt.

The question: can you grow isopogons and petrophiles in alkaline soils? is discussed.

Some Group members have found it difficult to produce cutting grown plants of *I. 'Coaldale Cracker'* from cuttings. A successful method is given.

Isopogon inconspicuus and *Petrophile chrysantha* are the featured species in this issue.

Research has found the bulk of Gang-gang feeding is focused on only 12 main species. *Petrophile pulchella* is the fourth most commonly consumed. →



Isopogon inconspicuus

A wide range of species of isopogons and petrophiles are found in the areas where Honey Possums occur in the south-western Western Australia. This raises the question: do they eat isopogon/petrophile pollen?

The 2023 wildflower season in Western Australia was a great year for isopogons and petrophiles.

Correa no.67 (December 2023)

'News From Our Gardens' features correa Group members are growing or have seen on garden visits.

Braving winter camping in western Victoria, eastern South Australia and South Gippsland paid dividends for Mike Beamish, not least for the various correa species found along the way. These included *Correa reflexa* var. *scabridula*, *C. pulchella* and *Correa reflexa* var. *speciosa*, and in the Grampians *Correa aemula*.

Correa 'Choc Leaf' is a new correa with unique black-brown foliage.

The variations within *Correa reflexa* varieties appear to be endless and quite confusing, particularly when identifying them in the field. The problem is with the red *C. reflexa* varieties. As Paul Wilson's revision states: 'Seven varieties are recognised but these cannot easily be delineated as each grades into one or more of the other varieties and each

hybridises with those *Correa* species with which it comes in contact.' Maria Hitchcock OAM uses photos, illustrations, Paul Wilson's revision and the *Correa* chapter in the *Flora of Australia* v.6 to clarify things.

Ferns No.156 (January 2024)

The Fern Gathering Report details a five-day trip to the Blue Mountains, Minnamurra Falls and Verdigris Fern Nursery. Includes a species list of ferns seen.

The South-East Queensland Meeting in September 2023 visited Wollumbin Palms and Mt Warning for a morning of fern spotting.

Further afield, two Group members describe a visit to the Saxon Switzerland National Park, in eastern Germany near the Czech border, and the ferns seen.

Goodeniaceae no.23 (December 2023)

Study Group Leader Royce Raleigh discusses how dampieras, *Scaevola aemula* and lechenaultias have fared in his garden following a very wet year in 2022 and 2023 having a somewhat different rainfall pattern.

Study Group members Graham and Maree Goods participated in a plant survey around Wells 12 and 13 on the Canning Stock Route in May 2013, where they collected specimens that would be new to science. In 2023 the species was classified as *Goodenia crescentiloba*.

Garden Design no.124 (November 2023)

The theme of this newsletter is 'Microclimate and design'.

Local site conditions dictate the site-specific microclimate pattern, a major factor that influences the physical characteristics, the planning and design, and the ongoing establishment of any garden. Ways to respond to microclimate influences in design have been considered by Study Group members in the descriptions presented of developing and managing their gardens in locations throughout Australia.



Correa reflexa

Doug Beckers (Flickr CC BY 2.0 DEED)

Shayne Leslie, Wyoming, NSW, tells of developing a garden from 2003 where she spent the next 8 years pouring thousands of hours and dollars into her garden with very little to show. As she acknowledges, 'My plan lacked any kind of, well, plan'. Three key aspects led to developments resulting in the garden coming together as it evolves towards a bush stroll garden.

The concept of Tiny Forests, densely packed patches of native bushland the size of a tennis court, right in the heart of our cities, is presented.

The Terra Australis Garden, opened in 2019 as one of the Gallery of Gardens at the National Arboretum in Canberra, was developed as a stylised representation of the Australian geography and its diverse flora. It is now developing maturity.

Grevillea cv. 'Honey Gem', said to be a hybrid between *Grevillea pteridifolia* and *Grevillea banksii* (red form), is featured.

Grevillea no.126 (November 2023)

Grevillea pieroniae has been found to be a pioneer in the Stirling Ranges, WA, after a bushfire.

A new species, related to *Grevillea acropogon*, has been discovered from Kulikup in south-west WA.

An update on the taxonomy of *Grevillea mucronulata*, or should it be *Grevillea podalyriifolia*?



Grevillea mucronulata

A note on the grevilleas at Camden Golf Club, NSW.

The NSW section's grafting project aims to develop a knowledge base to assist those who wish to undertake grafting or further develop their skills. Some of the many issues requiring answers together with general guidelines for grafting are presented.

In the 'In Your Garden' section, members discuss a search for *Grevillea* 'Poorinda' hybrids of the 1960s to 80s; seeking history and information on *Grevillea venusta*, *Grevillea banksii* (prostrate) and *Grevillea dryandra*; is anyone still growing *Grevillea* 'Jessie Cadwell?'; three new grevillea cultivars 'Boorloo Moon', 'Coral Fusion' and 'Webb's Legacy'; and an unusual flower colour seen in *Grevillea tetragonoloba*.

Australian Plants for Containers no.42 (October 2023)

In keeping with the Study Group's goal to share experiences with growing native plants in pots (both positive and negative), Group members share details of growing Australian plants in containers in Ballarat, Vic; *Xanthorrhoea johnsonii* hybrid x 'Supergrass' in Mt Barker, WA; *Hoya australis* in Parramatta Hills, NSW; plants growing in 'pots' at the Australian National Botanic Gardens in Canberra; and plants in pots in the Study Group leaders' garden.

Wanted

The position of Study Group Liaison Officer is currently vacant. If interested in taking on this position, contact the President (president@apsvic.org.au).

A bonus is that you are sent all study group newsletters.

Research Officer, Publicity Officer and Lone Member Officer are also vacant positions. Register your interest now.

District Groups Directory

APS Albury-Wodonga Inc

President: vacant

Secretary: Christine Young
ausplants.aw@gmail.com

11 Topaz Crt, West Wodonga Vic. 3690

apsvic.org.au/aps-albury-wodonga/

Meetings: For more information regarding our meetings email ausplants.aw@gmail.com.

APS Ballarat District Inc

President: Phyllis Wright 0418 303 405

Secretary: Gloria Salt (03) 4310 6080
ballarat@apsvic.org.au

PO Box 123W, Ballarat West Vic. 3350

apsvic.org.au/aps-ballarat-district

Meetings: Robert Clark Horticultural Centre, Ballarat Botanic Gardens, Ballarat. Access from Gate 3, Gillies St. 2nd Wednesday: Oct, Nov, Dec, Feb, Mar at 7.30pm; Apr–Sep at 2 pm.

APS Bendigo Inc

President: Ian Evans

Secretary: Sandra Birch 0400 149 319
bendigo@apsvic.org.au

PO Box 669, Bendigo Vic. 3552

apsvic.org.au/aps-bendigo

Meetings: Forest St. Uniting Church Hall, Forest St. Bendigo. 3rd Tuesday at 7.30 pm. Forest St. Uniting Church Hall, Forest St. Bendigo (Feb–Nov).

APS Cardinia Region Group Inc

President: Alex Smart (03) 9707 5275

Secretary: Wendy Smart 0425 769 125
cardinia@apsvic.org.au

PO Box 278, Berwick Vic. 3806

apsvic.org.au/aps-cardinia-region

Meetings: Deep Creek Reserve, 62 Cameron Way, Pakenham. 2nd Tuesday (Feb–Dec).

APS Colac-Otway Inc

President: Geoff Beilby 0427 358 252

Secretary: Paul Kennedy 0422 813 211
colacotway@apsvic.org.au

210 Aireys St, Elliminyt Vic. 3249

apsvic.org.au/aps-colac-otway

Meetings: Colac Neighbourhood House, 23 Miller St, Colac. 3rd Wednesday at 8 pm (Feb–Jun, Sep–Nov).

ANPS East Gippsland Inc

President: Sam Thomas

Secretary: Gill Jarvis

eastgippsland@apsvic.org.au

PO Box 1036, Bairnsdale Vic. 3875

apsvic.org.au/anps-east-gippsland

Facebook: facebook.com/ANPSEG

Meetings: Bairnsdale Scout Hall, Grant St, Bairnsdale for Feb, March and April. Usually 3rd Wednesday at 1.30 pm. but see Facebook for any change.

Echuca-Moama District APS Inc

President: Sue Robertson 0421 377 429

Secretary: John Morey 0429 238 383
echucamoama@apsvic.org.au

2 Airlie Crt, Echuca Vic. 3564

apsvic.org.au/aps-echuca-moama/

Meetings: Echuca Library, 310 Hare St, Echuca. 4th Thursday (Feb–Nov) at 7.30 pm

APS Foothills Inc

Leader: Chris Larkin (03) 9752 7837

foothills@apsvic.org.au

apsvic.org.au/aps-foothills

Meetings: Knox Park Primary School, Kathryn Rd, Knoxfield. 4th Wednesday at 7.45 pm (except school holidays).

APS Geelong Inc

President: Vacant

Secretary: Peter Nuzum
apsgeelong@gmail.com
apsgeelong.org/index.html

Meetings: The Ballroom – Hamlyn Park, 1 Carey St, Hamlyn Heights. 3rd Tuesday at 7.30 pm (Feb–Nov).

APS Grampians Group Inc

President: Fiona Lucas

Secretary: Margot Galletly

grampians@apsvic.org.au
c/o Pomonal Post Office, Pomonal Vic. 3381
apsvic.org.au/aps-grampians

Meetings: Either Pomonal Hall or Stawell Neighbourhood House. 3rd Tuesday at 7:30 pm, except July & August meetings held in afternoon.

SGAP Hamilton Inc

President: Ainsley Wilson

Secretary: Liz Cummins 0438 741 223
hamiltonsgap@hotmail.com

apsvic.org.au/sgap-hamilton

Meetings: HIRL, North Boundary Rd, Hamilton. 2nd Wednesday at 7.30 pm (Feb, Apr, Jun, Aug, Oct, Dec).

APS Heathcote Inc

President: Allan Tinker
Secretary: Tania Biagioni 0425 707 606
heathcote@apsvic.org.au
apsvic.org.au/aps-heathcote

Meetings: Mechanics Institute, 121 High St,
Heathcote. 2nd Tuesday at 7 pm.

APS Keilor Plains Inc

President: Neil Duncan
Secretary: Linda Jones 0431 945 211
info@apskeilorplains.org.au
PO Box 115, Niddrie Vic. 3042
apskeilorplains.org.au

Meetings: Airport West Uniting Church,
72 Roberts Rd, Airport West.
1st Friday at 8 pm (Feb–Dec).

APS Latrobe Valley Group Inc

Leader: Jan Workman 0429 029 279
Secretary: Cathy Beamish
latrobevalley@apsvic.org.au
PO Box 112, Boolarra Vic. 3870
apsvic.org.au/aps-latrobe-valley

Meetings: various locations, usually around the second
weekend of the month. Please contact us for details.

APS Loddon–Murray Group Inc

President: Andrew Farley 0427 182 394
Secretary: Linda Coote 0447 134 913
loddonmurrayaps@gmail.com
56 Dawe Rd, Murrabit Vic. 3579
apsvic.org.au/aps-loddon-murray

Meetings: Kerang Lions Club Den, Park Rd,
Kerang. 4th Wednesday at 7.30 pm (bimonthly).
Alternate 4th weekend – weekend outing/field trip.

APS Maroondah Inc

President: Alison Rogers (03) 9801 6946
Secretary: Peter Rogers (03) 9801 6946
maroondah@apsvic.org.au
PO Box 33, Ringwood Vic. 3134
apsvic.org.au/aps-maroondah

Meetings: Ringwood East Senior Citizens Hall,
2-8 Laurence Grove, Ringwood East.
4th Friday at 8 pm (Jan–Nov).

APS Melton & Bacchus Marsh Inc

President: Barb Pye
Secretary: Tez Birgin
apsmeltonbacchus@gmail.com
PO Box 946, Bacchus Marsh Vic. 3340
Facebook: facebook.com/APSBMB

Meetings: Botanica Springs Children's &
Community Centre, 249 Clarkes Rd, Brookfield. 4th
Thursday at 7.30 pm (Feb–Jun & Aug–Nov).

APS Mildura Inc

President: Tony Langdon 0428 214 117
Secretary: Peter Lang 0474 155 553
apsmildura@hotmail.com
PO Box 259 MCP, Mildura Vic. 3501
apsvic.org.au/aps-mildura

Meetings: Lutheran Church Hall, cnr 9th St
and Olive Ave, Mildura. 2nd Thursday,
7.30 pm (Feb–Nov).

APS Mitchell Group Inc

President: Norbert Ryan
Secretary: Ian Julian 0438 270 248
apsmitchell@gmail.com
PO Box 541, Kilmore Vic. 3764
apsmitchell.org.au

Meetings: John Taylor Room, Kilmore Library.
3rd Monday at 7.30 pm (Feb–June, Aug–Nov).

APS Mornington Peninsula Inc

President: Robyn Tyson 0409 412 931
Secretary: Jacqui Oldham 0434 354 393
morningtonpeninsula@apsvic.org.au
11 Lesley Ave, Point Leo Vic. 3916
apsvic.org.au/aps-mornington-peninsula

Meetings: Bentons Square Community Centre,
145 Bentons Rd, Mornington. 3rd Tuesday (Feb–
Nov). Most meetings are evenings at 7.30 pm with
several daytime meetings at 2.30 pm. Monthly
outings are organised for the Sunday following the
Tuesday meeting, starting at 1.30 pm.
Contact Secretary for more details.

SGAP Shepparton & District Inc

Leader: Carolyn Edwards 0438 548 677
Secretary: Jenny Polinelli 0428 538 402
shepparton@apsvic.org.au
15 Ross St, Mooroopna Vic. 3629
apsvic.org.au/sgap-shepparton-districts

Meetings: 2nd Tuesday, with excursions May,
June, July, September and December. Contact
leader for details.

APS South East Melbourne Region Inc

Leader: John Thompson (03) 9598 6982
Secretary: Chris Bain 0413 275 756
aps.se.melb@gmail.com
10 Wilgra Ave, Ashburton Vic. 3147
apsvic.org.au/aps-south-east-melbourne-region

Meetings: Hughesdale Community Centre,
cnr Poath & Kangaroo Rds, Hughesdale.
1st Tuesday at 8 pm (Feb–Dec except Cup Day).

APS South Gippsland Group Inc

President: Jim Lyons (03) 5674 2864
Secretary: Geoff Trease
southgippsland@apsvic.org.au



170 Kardella Fairbank Rd, Kardella Vic. 3951
apsvic.org.au/aps-south-gippsland
Facebook: facebook.com/APSVSouthGippsland
Meetings: Check our Facebook page for the latest information for meetings, or contact southgippsland@apsvic.org.au.

APS Strathbogie Ranges Inc

Leader: Val Kneebone 0419 328 731
Secretary: Pete Kelly 0402 882 959
strathbogie_ranges@apsvic.org.au
10 Tuan Lane, Longwood Vic. 3665
apsvic.org.au/aps-strathbogie-ranges
Meetings: (contact leader for details).
4th Saturday at 10.30 am (Feb–Nov).

APS Wangaratta Inc

President: John van Riet 0428 129 007
Secretary: Pina Tiso 0409 602 885
wangeratta@apsvic.org.au
apsvic.org.au/aps-wangaratta
Meetings: Masonic Lodge, 101/99 Appin St, Wangaratta. Fourth Thursday at 7.00 pm (Feb–Jun, Aug–Nov).

APS Warrnambool & District Inc

President: Dave Handscombe 0429 866 862
Secretary: Mike Halls 0476 250 435
127 Rooneys Rd, Warrnambool Vic. 3280
warrnambool@apsvic.org.au
apswarrnambool.org.au
Meetings: Mozart Hall, Gilles St, Warrnambool.

4th Friday at 8 pm (Feb–Nov).

APS Waverley Inc

Leader: Jenny Kelso (03) 9889 1195
Secretary: Virginia Barnett (03) 9803 4502
apswaverley@gmail.com
PO Box 248, Glen Waverley Vic. 3150
apsvic.org.au/aps-waverley
Meetings: Wadham House, 52 Wadham Pde, Mt Waverley. 3rd Thursday at 8 pm (Feb–Nov).

Wimmera Growers of Australian Plants Inc

President: Graham Goods 0491 091 115
Secretary: Mary Donald 0417 059 312
wimmera@apsvic.org.au
PO Box 533, Horsham Vic. 3402
apsvic.org.au/wimmera-growers-of-australian-plants
Meetings: Please phone or email for venue.
1st Thursday of month at 7:30 pm (Feb–Nov) at Horsham, except for May at Warracknabeal.

APS Yarra Yarra Group Inc

Leader: Andrew McCann 0419 553 303
Secretary: Cathy Mann 0409 706 610
yarrayarra@apsvic.org.au
PO Box 298, Eltham Vic. 3095
apsyarrayarra.org.au
Facebook: facebook.com/APSYarraYarra/
Meetings: Mummery Room, Edendale Farm, 30 Gastons Road, Eltham. 1st Thursday at 7.30 pm (Mar–Nov).

Weed Watch

Priority weeds are plants that have the potential to pose a biosecurity risk to human health, the economy and the environment. They may not be known to occur in a state or territory, or are in the very early stages of establishment and would have a significant impact if allowed to spread. Weeds listed as 'high priority weeds' should or must be reported – these are often termed 'notifiable', 'prohibited', 'reportable' or 'alert' weeds.

Identifying many of these weeds can be difficult. This is where the free app WeedScan comes in, bringing AI smarts to identifying and tackling over 450 of Australia's priority weeds and other weeds.

WeedScan is an identification, recording and alert system, backed by the latest management information to support cooperative weeds action Australia-wide.

Local Landcare, Bushcare or regeneration groups can create in-app groups to share records and observations for improved weed control. Plus, using the embedded weed biology and management information relevant to the location, State and local land managers can be alerted of new incursions.

Simply snap a photo of a plant you suspect is a weed and upload it to WeedScan. The AI model assesses the photo against verified images of weeds. Within seconds, the app suggests possible plant identifications, with degrees of confidence for each suggestion.

WeedScan is available as a web or mobile app (Android and iOS). Further details, including a list of weeds can be found at weedsan.org.au.

Note: common garden weeds are not a focus of the WeedScan app.

There have been very few requests for seeds from the Seed Bank. If you want to sow seeds in the hotter months, you just need to make allowances for the wind and heat – water them and keep young plants out of the hot sun.

Quite a lot of the Seed Bank seeds are getting old but this shouldn't worry eucalypts, wattles and peas. Grasses don't stay viable for long – allow 2 or 3 years, and Flannel Flowers are notorious for needing fresh seed. I have grown a couple of Flannel Flower plants this year but the seed seems to be rather small. I am trying to germinate some before adding them to the Bank. I've topped my seed raising mix with a handful of leaves, and given it a short burst with a flame thrower to burn off the fuzzy covering and to provide some smoke.

In the garden, *Chrysocephalum apiculatum* (Common Everlasting, Yellow Buttons) looks well, but heavy rain has washed off some of the seeds. I'll collect what I can.

The listing on the website is generally updated monthly, but some species run out quickly. Please remember to give alternatives when you order.

Thank you to Mandy Loudon for her donation of *Bulbine glauca*. (Note: only a small amount of seed is available.)

I have been remiss in not acknowledging a donation of several species made previously by Robyn Tyson. Apologies Robyn, and thank you.

Additions

Bulbine glauca

Deletions

Bulbine bulbosa

Erodium crinitum

Eucalyptus dolichorhyncha

Gastrolobium dilatatum

Leucochrysum albicans

Waitzia suaveolens

Bulbine glauca

{Rock Lily}

Typical bulbine yellow starry flowers, but this plant does not have tubers, unlike the more well-known *B. bulbosa*, so self-seeding is possible. It grows to about 50 cm tall. The bluish (hence 'glauca') leaves form a tussock and remain throughout the winter. It is frost resistant, coming from areas which are elevated, prefers richer soils and semi-shade, and should be given extra water during hot weather.

Themeda triandra blue form (Kangaroo Grass)

I have grown this form for some years. It is a robust summer-growing grass, best in full sun, which brings out the blue colour of the foliage. In part shade, the blue is not so obvious.

Mine is about 80 cm x 80 cm but the flower stalks can be up to 1.5 m high. (Note: There are other blue forms which are lower growing). It self-seeds occasionally but, like the green form, germination may be only 70–80%. Sow fresh, or leave for a year to overcome any dormancy.

Prune the flowerheads off after they dry out and in autumn/winter pull out any thatch that has formed. A good cut-back during the winter promotes growth next season. If you wish to collect the seed for propagating purposes, wait until the seed awns are black, collect and store in a paper bag for a few weeks in warm weather after which the seeds mostly drop out. Those that don't can be left for six months or you can fill a few tedious hours pricking them out of the seed heads.



Committee of Management

Executive

President: Miriam Ford 0409 600 644
president@apsvic.org.au

Vice President: Robyn Tyson 0409 412 931
vicepresident@apsvic.org.au

Vice President: Vacant

Secretary/Public Officer: Charles Hrubos
secretary@apsvic.org.au

Treasurer: Gordon Barfield 0400 881 805
treasurer@apsvic.org.au

IElected Ordinary Member

Conservation Officer: Neil Marriott
0458 177 989, conservation@apsvic.org.au

Lone Member Officer: vacant

Membership Officer: Marj Seaton, 36 Voumard
St, Oakleigh South Vic 3167, (03) 9570 6293,
membership@apsvic.org.au

Newsletter Editor: Lachlan Garland
(03) 9598 4963, newsletter@apsvic.org.au

Publicity Officer: vacant

Research Officer: vacant

Study Group Liaison Officer: vacant

Appointed Positions

(no voting rights)

Book Sales Officer: Bill Aitchison/Sue Guymmer
(03) 9872 3583, books@apsvic.org.au

Historian: John Walter (03) 5423 9383

Mail Collector: Annie Treasure

Newsletter Post-out Officer:
Linda Jones

Newsletter Production Officer:
Graeme Nicholls 0425 796 337
newsletterproduction@apsvic.org.au

Seed Bank Curator: Marj Seaton, 36 Voumard St,
Oakleigh South Vic 3167, (03) 9570 6293,
seedbank@apsvic.org.au

Web Administrator: John King
webadmin@apsvic.org.au

Sub-committees

Growth and Development Sub-committee
Ross Field (chair), Greg Brown, Jill Lulham, Chris Long,
Miriam Ford (ex officio), Robyn Tyson (ex officio)

Awards Sub-committee
Brendon Stahl (chair), Robyn Tyson, Nicky Zanen,
Miriam Ford (ex officio)

District Group Delegates

APS Albury-Wodonga Inc

APS (SGAP) Ballarat District Inc: Phyllis Wright and
Steph Camera

APS Bendigo Inc: Sandra Birch 0400 149 319

APS Cardinia Region Group Inc: Joy Buck
(03) 5998 7608

APS Colac-Otway Inc: Paul Kennedy
(03) 5231 5569

ANPS East Gippsland Inc

Echuca-Moama District APS Inc

APS Foothills Inc: Janet Hodgkiss

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and furthermore . . .

During a recent visit to Geelong Botanic Gardens, I approached a pair of bollards and wondered what the little box was doing on the back of the woman.

It wasn't a box, it was a flower press. The description explained:

The work by Jan Mitchell depicts 'the first curator of the Geelong Botanic Gardens, Daniel Bunce, and a young lady with a guilty look and hand behind her back.



Daniel Bunce had travelled with the explorer Leichhardt on his second expedition into the interior of Australia where he collected Sturts Desert Pea.

In 1857 he commenced his work at the GBG and successfully cultivated this wildflower. This attracted the attention of the ladies who desired it for their pressed flower collections and yes, this lady has her flower press at the ready!

– Nicky Zanen

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