



Australian Plants Society

Yarra Yarra

Group Inc

(Incorporation No. A0039676Y)

Newsletter June 2019

General Meeting: June 6 at 8pm

Dr. Zac Walker: *Australia's alpine flora and a new era of alpine grazing*

Synopsis: The Australian Alps is a unique environment with a wonderful range of plant communities and wildflowers. These spectacular landscapes are currently facing a range of threats such as climate change and damage caused by feral animals. An emergent pest in the alpine of mainland Australia is sambar deer (image below), which have become increasingly common above the treeline in recent decades. Zac will talk about the alpine vegetation of mainland Australia and the threat of alpine grazing by sambar deer on alpine biodiversity.



Bio: Zac Walker is a Research Officer at the Research Centre for Applied Alpine Ecology, La Trobe University. Zac has spent the past four years researching the effects of invasive species on rare and threatened plant communities in the Victorian Alps. Zac's main project has focused on the detrimental impacts of Sambar Deer on the Bogong High Plains (Snow patch on rare alpine plant community, Mt Nelse opposite).

Welcome to our new Members:

Julie Hamer; Alicia Polakiewicz and family

Garden Visit: Sunday 9th June, 2pm

Alice and Kevin Ley. In a quiet pocket backing onto Plenty River Reserve, Alice and Kevin have created a natural haven with the yard fronting the street being a diverse informal garden of new and old and the secluded back yard being an indigenous array with a grand ironbark and locals now establishing themselves.

New Newsletter Editor required from July issue onwards. This edition of APS YY news will be my last as Newsletter editor. See page 4 for more details.



More Garden Visits, APS YY matters & Diary Dates

More Speakers:

8 July. John Harris. *Wildlife Experiences P/L*

1 Aug. AGM & APS YY Grand Flower Table

5 Sept. Propagation Night, APS YY Growers

3 Oct. TBA

7 Nov. Grand Flower Table

5 Dec. Members Slide Night & Xmas Party

Dairy Dates - APS YY & APS Vic:

15 June – APS Geelong host Committee of Management meeting.

22-23 June, 10.30 to 3.30 pm, APS Ballarat Native Plant Show, Robert Clark Horticultural Centre, Ballarat Botanic Gardens. \$5- Adults.

27 & 28 July - Cranbourne Friends Winter Plant Sale – 10.00 am to 4.00 pm. (Mel 133 K10)

14 & 15 September - APS Yarra Yarra Australian Plants Expo, Eltham Community & Reception Centre, 801 Main Road, Eltham. 10.00 am to 4.00 pm.

21 & 22 September 50th Anniversary of Anglesea Wildflower Weekend and Art Show. Celebrating the area's remarkable biodiversity and wildflowers. Held at the Anglesea Memorial Hall, 3 McMillan Street, Anglesea 10.00 am to 4.00 pm.

21 & 22 September - APS Bendigo Flower Show. Kangaroo Flat Primary School Gym, Freeman Drive, Kangaroo Flat, Bendigo. 9.30 am to 4.00 pm.

5 & 6 October - APS Grampians Group Pomonal Native Flower Show, Pomonal Hall. 9.30 am to 5.00 pm on Saturday, 10.00 – 4.00 on Sunday.

12th October. APS Echuca Moama Native Flower Showcase, Echuca Masonic Lodge Hall, 426 High Street, Echuca. 9.00 am to 4.00 pm. A huge flower display, plant sales, floral art, Native Bonsai, basket weaving and other displays and demonstrations.

19 October APS Mitchell Plant Expo and Sale. Kilmore Memorial Hall, 14 Sydney Street, Kilmore. From 9 am to 3 pm.

26 & 27 October Cranbourne Friends Spring Plant Sale – 10.00 am to 4.00 pm. (Mel 133 K10)

ANPSA 2019 Conference – Blooming Biodiversity – 30 September to 4 October, hosted by Wildflower Society of Western Australian in Albany, WA. Pre and post conference tours between 21 September to 11 October. Key Speakers include Professor Stephen D Hopper AC – AJ Swaby Address and Gregory John Keighery Keynote Conference Speaker. Details www.bloomingbiodiversity.com.au.

Comprehensive background and conference outline fills the whole edition of Australian Plants, Spring 2018, vol 29, No 236.

October 24 & 25, 2020 13th FJC Rogers Seminar on Mint Bushes and Allied Genera, (aka Lamiaceae, subfamily Prostantheroideae) hosted by APS Yarra Yarra.

Image below: Ptilotus, Ben Eaton.



Meeting Report, May 2 - Lichens by Simone Louwhoff

Prior to beginning her talk, Simone spent some time setting up her “show and tell” table of Lichens & lichen decorated items (image bottom left), many of which needed a bit of re-hydration to plump them up and reveal all. I learnt many things this evening but most of all that lichens are a bit more complex and appealing than I recalled from school biology.

A lichen is two or three organisms wrapped into one parcel. They are a complex community of organisms in fact. They consist of fungus and green and/or blue-green alga (cyanobacterium) which gives them their colour and who live together in what is known as a symbiotic relationship i.e. each one shares what they make with the other such that both may thrive (aka reciprocity – a lesson for us all). The alga part captures sunlight, photosynthesizes the photons of light energy into carbohydrates/starches along with carbon dioxide and water. These carbohydrates are exchanged with thanks to the fungal partner for the protection against dehydration and excessive UV rays.

This mutually beneficial relationship has had enormous consequences for our planet over many eons. Lichens act as a food source and shelter to many invertebrate and vertebrate species & they contribute to soil formation through physical and chemical weathering of rocks and are often pioneer colonisers.

Simone also mentioned how they are good indicators of pollutants in the environment and that they themselves produce an array of chemicals which have long been recognised for their medicinal properties. Some terminology: Lichens can be classified into Crustose (blotch-like, immersed in), Fruiting (3D, shrubby, pendulous or with stalks - see top image, opposite) or Leaf-like Lichen (2 D, leaf-like) based on the form they assume in situ.

Simone showed us many weird and wonderful images of types of lichens and where they grow. She also provided us with a most informative laminated brochure, for taking into the field wherever we may go – A guide to the Lichens of Morwell National Park by Simone Louwhoff, Photos by Ken Harris, published by the Field Naturalists of the LaTrobe Valley & others.

After her talk the “show & tell” table was a real drawcard for members who eventually had to be dragged back for the remainder of the meeting to allow Simone drive back to Traralgon. Mind you she seemed equally keen to remain and convey with great enthusiasm her body of knowledge to the gathered devotees. After she departed, with lichens in tow, we discovered she had left her computer behind. Charles undertook the mission to

rendezvous with her for the handover. Thank you Charles and Simone for a most interesting, dare I say it, fascinating evening. I think the lichen-encrusted nest was my favourite - middle image below. *Text by Miriam Ford, Images: Ben Eaton.*



Something Personal from Me - your departing Newsletter Editor

When Jill asked me to take over as Newsletter editor way back in 2013 (or thereabouts) because she wanted to devote more time to her new grandchild I was happy to do it for her and the group. Jill had been doing the newsletter for a long time in addition to many other important roles within the group which she continues.

I have enjoyed creating the newsletter for APS YY and now it is my time to prioritise other matters in my life which includes visits to family in Queensland. Many of you would not know that while my in-laws reside within this state, mostly on the Mornington Peninsula, all my extended family reside in Queensland – my brother and his children & their children are in the Mackay region, my mother (who turns 90 in 2020) and three sisters and their children are in the Sunshine Coast and Bundaberg region. It is an interesting exercise to organise the scheduling of such visits and new grandchildren, whom I enjoy meeting, are being added to the mix all the while.

Additionally, the private practice that I manage with my husband Michael has also become busier over the last several years and demands more of my time.

I enjoy leading APS Yarra Yarra and I particularly enjoy leading and managing the APS YY Growers which I established in December 2017 with some inaugural, and somewhat chaotic, gatherings at my home in Hurstbridge. We have gone from strength to strength since our humble beginnings and we have our collaboration with La Trobe Wildlife Sanctuary and Indigenous Nursery to thank for that, in addition to the dedication and skill of increasing numbers of members who have joined our group.

You could speak to any of them and they will tell you how much they love the work and how proud they are of the plants we have grown for our General Meetings and other plant Sales. We have accrued considerable funds for APS YY over the last year and while we are still in the process of working out just how much profit we have made there is little doubt that it will be considerable.

We have recently formed an APS YY Growers subcommittee to oversee our finances and other aspects of our work. We are still coming up to speed on what it means to be essentially managing a small nursery of our own and what kind of infrastructure might be needed to further support the work of the growers outside of La Trobe where there is limited space for our plants. Anything beyond Forestry Tube size has to be housed elsewhere & that advanced stock is considerable and becoming more so as we add plants for the 2020 FJC. I detailed in the May issue what was required over the summer to look after the advanced stock here at Hurstbridge.



Most of all, it is the camaraderie created within the growers group, the joy we all experience with growing plants, that enables us to thrive in the way our plants do.

Managing and working with the Growers remains one of the primary joys of my life.

In addition to that & being the President of APS YY I have now added chairing the FJC Rogers Seminar 2020 to the mix of demands. Without a doubt I am now a Minty Tragic (aka obsessed with Mint

Bushes in addition to Verticordias – sigh!) and love working with these plants. However the need to prioritise & draw back to what I love to do is crucial to my ability to continue to lead & live well.

If there is someone within the membership who feels they could take on the newsletter please let me know. This is my last issue as Editor.

Image: Miriam with Flower basket from her garden, Talk to Kew Garden Group, July 2018)

Garden Visit, April 14, Rosanna Park by Peter Smith

On a rather dull, grey Sunday afternoon a good complement of Yarra Yarra members took the time to visit Raimonne and John McCutchan's garden at Lower Plenty. Raimonne and John welcomed us, and John gave us a talk on the development of the garden. From an engineering background he was thorough in his approach to the garden.

He provided us with plant lists and a map of the beds with the dates of planting. Most of the beds were prepared by rotary hoeing and the addition of gypsum - improving the friability of this heavy clay soil. The most recent, raised "Island Garden" was built up with imported topsoil, "supposed dwarf Kangaroo Paws growing taller than the eucalypt." Water is collected from the roof and the driveway and reticulated to some 700 plants, mulching was of redgum chips.

Plants were arranged with lower plants to the fore, a mid storey, and tall to the back. If they overtook they were pruned or removed. The range and diversity was most impressive with each of us admiring different sections, several Grevilleas, Banksias and Correas were in flower. There was much growth in the 2016 "Island" bed, with a

greater depth of soil. John's portable planter boxes are a unique and perhaps adaptable innovation.

We passed down under the three 60 year old *Melaleuca styphelioides*, and were met by some towering stately eucalypts. John had a nest box attached to a "Sydney" blue gum where a family of sugar gliders had taken up residence in 2005 and despite vigorous competition from some rainbow lorikeets, remain to this day.

We checked out the 2010 "Pool Garden" and a rabbit fenced area nearby. We retired then for a hot cuppa, viewing footage of the sugar gliders and other visitors to this wonderful garden to which Raimonne and John had also made us most welcome, sharing the wealth of a lifetime's experience. (Text by Peter Smith, Images Jill Lulham)



May 2nd Flower Table - by Jill Lulham

Thanks to Rob and Ben for photos of flowers, Miriam for presentation and all those who brought in specimens, especially named ones. This is the selection discussed at the meeting.

MYRTACEAE FAMILY

Eucalyptus leucoxylon ssp. rosea (brought by Ben, to 4-5m in 3 years, will get to 6-7 m, not guaranteed to be pink, well-drained moist soils, tolerant of dry once established, roots can cause sewer and drain blockages, good windbreak, shade, for honey, bird attracting)

Grevillea 'RSL Spirit of Anzac' (brought by Barry, Kings Park bred hybrid, 2.5-3m, tolerates light frost, cut flowers, red); *G. 'Peaches & Cream'* (hybrid *G. banksia* x *G. bipinnatifida*, 1.5m high and wide, long flowering, frost tolerant, pink & orange, can cause allergic contact dermatitis for some people)

PROTEACEAE FAMILY

Banksia prionotes (brought by Ben, from Rosebud area, Acorn or Orange banksia, sw WA, 5-10m, well-drained, sandy loam, Summer-Autumn-Winter).

Image below left.

AMARANTHACEAE FAMILY

Ptilotus exaltatus (brought by Charles, Mulla Mulla, 0.5m high and wide, full sun, well-drained, sandy loam, for containers, can be short lived)

FABACEAE FAMILY

Templetonia retusa low form (brought by Ray, Cocky's Tongues, WA, SA, 1.5m high but wide, full/part sun, well-drained, hardy, apricot, Bruce says many colours on Eyre Pen. SA) **Image below right.**



RUTACEAE FAMILY

Crowea saligna (brought by Lee, Willow-leaved Crowea, NSW, 1m, full/part sun, well-drained, moist soils, large flowers, late Summer to mid Winter)

Correa pulchella 'Autumn Blaze' (brought by Lee, 0.3m x 1.5m, full/part sun, well-drained, keep tip pruned and mulched, Autumn-Winter); *C. mannii* (brought by Lee, hybrid prob. *C. pulchella* x *C. reflexa*, <1.5m, open shrub, full/part sun, moist soil, hardy, long flowering, red); *C. 'Jezabell'* PBR (brought by Noel, *C. 'Candy Pink'* x *C. pulchella*, 1m, sandy loam, good container plant, full/part sun, dry, well-drained, fast growing, Autumn-Winter, bright red); *C. 'Nell'* (brought by Noel, <1m, dense growth, full/part sun, sandy loam, well-drained, Autumn – Spring, peach/pink)

Phebalium woombye (brought by Noel, Wallum Phebalium, se Qld, NSW, <2m, part shade, well-drained moist soil, Winter-Spring, pink form, also forms including a prostrate one with cream flowers)

ERICACEAE FAMILY

Rhododendron lochiaie (brought by Ray, in pot, north Qld, <1m, part shade, moist, well-drained, large red, bell flowers)

Report by Jill Lulham



Images from Ben Eaton (Opp & top 4) & Rob Dunlop (lower 2)



Images clockwise from top left - *Correa 'Nell'*, *Grevillea 'RSL Spirit of Anzac'*, *Correa mannii*, *Phebalium woombye*, *Correa pulchella 'Autumn Blaze'* & *Rhodendron lochiaie* Email: apsyarrayarra@gmail.com | 7

A request for Volunteers - FJC 2020 related matters

At a recent meeting of the 2020 FJC Committee we arrived at a couple of items (for now!) that we would appreciate volunteers from our membership to assist with. These are:

Speakers Gifts and Raffle Prizes. Lyhn Barfield has taken on the job of organising these. She would like to request if there are any members out there who are particularly crafty and would love to create something that would make a great raffle prize i.e. hand-made scarf, cushion cover, rug whatever. Also do any of you know of small businesses that might be a willing sponsor for a particular gift or prize. Please let Lyhn or Miriam know.

FJC 2020 Open Garden work: Karen Guifre requires some immediate assistance with planting in her garden which is one of our listed open gardens for the FJC. Karen is finally on the road to recovery after some six months of

serious health issues. Her energy is limited during the convalescent phase but she has lots of ideas and knows where the plants have to go.

She recently purchased some 30 plants for the APS YY Growers, mostly Mint Bushes and Westringia to put in her garden and would appreciate volunteers for one or more of the following dates please - **June 14 and/or 21 Friday afternoon from 1 pm onwards and/or Saturday 22 June, same time.** There will be planting and mulching. Please let Miriam or Karen know.

Maranoa Open Day - 26 May, 2019

APS YY is invited to have a stall at this event each year. This year the APS YY Growers took plants and presented a small flower display to entice buyers. Sonia Gatti and Miriam Ford were in attendance all day. Once again our plants drew an audience and we sold steadily throughout the day. Of the 60 plants we arrived with, 46 were sold, 5 were donated to Maranoa for their garden and 9 were returned home. See page 9 for images of the day.

This year, as for previous, the Boroondara Council offered free coffee and tea and also the most delicious vegetarian lunch from Vegilicious, St Kilda. Sonia and I can testify to the pumpkin soup & the enormous veggie burger to follow. We were full and proud of it! It was chilly but we were warmed to the cockles of our hearts.

In between times I did some tip-cuttings which were of interest to passers by. We now have *Glycocystis beckeri* (a rare plant from WA, the single, highly aromatic & extremely sticky member of its very own Genus within Scrophulariaceae family - where eremophilas reside), *Chamelaucium uncinatum* & *Prostanthera rhombea* to add to our coming selection at Expo.

Maranoa will be the lunch time garden venue for our FJC 2020 seminar and part of my mission there was to chat to the powers that be about what might be possible and how to manage the numbers which are restricted within public gardens. They are very keen to support us so negotiations are underway.

We will need to have a large marquee, possibly 2, erected for shelter and lunch and may need to find a sponsor to cover the considerable cost. The lawn and the surrounding large trees provide the most stunning setting for a lunch notwithstanding the fact that Maranoa is the first fully native garden to be established in Australia, let alone Victoria (circa 1920s).

The two images below are of some recent acquisitions to our FJC 2020 plant selection. Courtesy of Phil Vaughan grafted plants - they are left - *Hemiandra gardneri*, pink form and right - *Hemigenia* sp. WA.



Pictures from an Open Day at Maranoa Garden, 26 May, Balwyn.



Images: clockwise from top left. Sonia and Sue mucking about with plants, image used with their express permission; Sonia shows what's left over at end of day, lunch by Vegilicious, and the marquee amidst the green and venerable old overhanging trees. Sonia and I were beside an ENORMOUS *Acacia binervia* in bud that could have swallowed a house. Mind you it was very old.....



Committee, Newsletter Contributions & General Meeting matters

The APS Yarra Yarra Committee:

- Miriam Ford (President, Newsletter Editor, COM delegate, Propagation Gp) M 0409 600 644
- Mike Ridley (Treasurer & Multi-media Tech guy) 0418 322 969
- Joanne Cairns (Secretary & Co-editor of website & Facebook page, Propagation Gp) 0425 760 325
- Carmen Cooper (Membership Officer, Propagation Gp) 0413 012 045
- Adrian Seckold (Minutes Secretary & meeting plant sales) 0431 071 503
- *Peter Smith (Garden Visits) 0425 798 275.

Some APS YY Committee Meeting Dates:

General APS YY Com Meeting: **11 June, Mike R's**

Next FJC 2020 Com meeting: **16 July, Lyhn's**

Contributions to the 2019 July APS YY News to new editor, TBA by June 21. This is my last issue as Editor. Thank you to all who have contributed and taken the time to read it over the years.

Email: apsyarrayarra@gmail.com OR post to Newsletter editor APS Yarra Yarra PO Box 298, Eltham 3095

Thank you to Peter Smith & Jill Lulham, for articles, Jill for proof reading, Ben Eaton, Rob Dunlop for images. Editor (MF) for all other images & articles .

We wish to acknowledge the major sponsorship of our Expo by Hume Bricks & Pavers Pty Ltd.

Thank you to Vicki Ward's Office for printing

Images: Just in case you needed another Verticordia fix and, courtesy of my new toy, a Sigma 105mm Macro - Verticordia blepherophylla & mirabilis.

That's all folks!



Meeting Particulars: Visitors always welcome

When: 8 pm 1st Thursday each month (except January). Doors open 7.30 pm. Come early for plant sales.

Venue: Orana building, Araluen Centre. 226 Old Eltham Rd, Lower Plenty.

Guest Speaker: Learn more through talks and discussion by expert speakers

Audience etiquette: No interruptions to the speaker during the talk, questions (one only per person) at the end when requested.

Flower Table Specimens: Bring along your flowers, labelled if possible

Plant Sales: Members may buy or sell their own plants, unusual varieties are often available

Chairs: Members please help set up chairs from 7.30 onwards and put away again after the meeting.

