



APS Foothills Inc. A0013126K

May Newsletter 2023

## MAY MEETING

### Kathleen Ralston: Lichens

Little known but most interesting – come and hear all about lichens at our May meeting.

**Wednesday 24 May 2023**

Knox Park Primary School, Kathryn Rd,  
Knoxfield. 7.45pm.



### Giving plants the hard chop!

A light trim or a hard chop? Get the low down from Chris Larkin on page 5.



### Membership goes online

Find out more about how APS Victoria and District Group membership renewals are changing this year on page 12.

### Find us on Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/apsfoothills>



## Hi Everyone,

It's May already which means we're only six and a bit weeks away from the shortest day of the year. I know we still have winter to contend with, but once we're past the shortest day, it means we can start looking forward to the renewal of life that spring brings.

I mention time because it always fascinates me how it either drags or flies by. And it certainly flew by at our working bee at the school! With eight of us there, we made quick work of weeding out the masses of young grasses that had already started sprouting in the butterfly garden. The weedy grasses flourished during our lockdown years as we couldn't weed as regularly. They dropped seed everywhere, so although we did a great job in summer weeding out the mature plants, it's their offspring that we are now tackling. We cleared a long patch and planted many brachyscomes. They should grow quickly and will hopefully outcompete any newly germinating weed seeds.

Thank you to Kerry, Shirley, Diane, Chris, Bev, Liz and Monika for coming along to help with weeding and planting. It was a lovely morning spent in good company.

You'll find in this newsletter a 'heads up' about the new online membership system that you will use to renew your memberships when they come due in July. The link that you will use to access the system will be published in the June issue of Growing Australian and our newsletter, so keep an eye out for that.

Our speaker in May is Kathleen Ralston who will be talking to us about lichens. I know they're not the kind of things you can 'grow' in your garden but they are the most intriguing organisms. We encounter them everywhere, including some of the most inhospitable environments, so it's bound to be a very interesting talk.

Another 'heads up' is that I will not be carrying on as leader after our July AGM. I have loved being leader of this group but after seven

consecutive years I really need a break, and... you need a bit of a change to keep things fresh and keep you on your toes!

It would be really great if one of you would please put your hand up for the role, even if it's only for one year. This is a very friendly group, so it's not a daunting task at all, and you'll have a supportive committee to help and guide you along the way.

If you are keen to know more about the role, please get in touch with me. You can contact me at [foothills@apsvic.org.au](mailto:foothills@apsvic.org.au), or I'd be more than happy to chat with you at our next meeting.

See you all next time.

**Janet Hodgkiss**

## Next meeting: Wednesday 24 May Kathleen Ralston - Lichens

Kathleen Ralston had always been interested in identifying Australian native plants wherever she lived. In the 1970s she was living in Breamlea, and although she had the name of all the plants there, including salt marsh plants, she didn't know any of the lichens.

A phone call to the Melbourne Herbarium asking for help ended in her being appointed a few years later, as the Herbarium's Honorary Researcher, Lichenologist.

In our April meeting we will hear from Kathleen about these most interesting, although little known, plants ... Lichens.

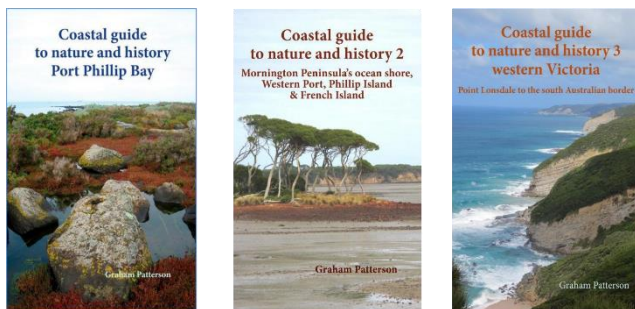


**Lichens on rusting railway carriage**  
(Photo: Janet Hodgkiss)

## April meeting – Graham Patterson: Nature and history on the south- western coast of Victoria

Graham Patterson decided sometime in the 1990s to walk the coastline of Victoria. While he didn't walk the coastline in a single go, over the years he has done many walks that eventually covered the entire area.

His walks have taken him from Cape Howe in the east, on the New South Wales/Victoria border, to the border between Victoria and South Australia in the west. He completed the last stretch, a walk along Ninety Mile Beach, in 2018. Graham has written a series of books about the nature and history he discovered while on his walks, and apart from writing three books, I think setting such a goal for oneself, and then attaining it, is quite an achievement.



In his talk, Graham looked at the section of coastline covered in this third book – the south-western coastline of Victoria, from Point Lonsdale, towards Nelson on the South Australian border.

We looked at the scenery and geology of the area as well the plants that occurs along the coastline. The area includes the Great Ocean walk which runs from Apollo Bay to the Twelve Apostles, the Surf Coast, Cape Otway, Port Campbell, along the west coast to Portland and further to the South Australian border.

The geology of the area is fascinating and includes both volcanic and sedimentary rocks which have resulted in some spectacular landforms. Graham reminded us that about 106mya Australia started moving away from

Gondwana, and when Australia was pulling away from Tasmania, it created a rift between what is now Tasmania and Victoria, and created Bass Strait. All rocks on the coast were formed since that happened.

Rocks on the coast, west of Cape Otway, are the oldest and were formed when a huge river system filled the rift and dropped sediment that slowly built up and eventually solidified. After that, the land was uplifted and created the Otway Range.

Sandstone layers are evident in the cliffs at Point Addis and were formed about 30-40mya. As the Otways were uplifted, the sedimentary rock on either side of it were also uplifted. The rocks around Torquay are younger rocks than those around Cape Otway and were formed from more recent sediments, and are about 10mya.

Volcanic activity around Airey's Inlet resulted in the 29mya basalt and tuff that is found on nearby shores. Sandy sediments that built up on the sea floor have now become the limestone cliffs that we are familiar with on this coastline.



***Isopogon ceratophyllus* Horny cone-bush,  
Point Addis**

The sandstone soils derived from these rocks support a heathland-type vegetation with fewer trees and more flowering plants, and Graham showed us a selection of plants that you will find

along this section of the coast. Plants include *Lasiopetalum baueri* and *Thomasia petalocalyx*, Isopogon, Spyridium, and a couple of Ozothamnus species. *Pimelea serpyllifolia* and the Anglesea Grey Gum, *Eucalyptus litoralis*, are specialists in this limestone area.



**Greyish rock from the rift valley, west of Johanna at the start of The Great Ocean Walk**



**Angled lobelia *Lobelia anceps*  
Shelly Beach**

For safety reasons there are very places where you can get close to the edge when walking along the cliffs, although Goudies Lookout is one place where you need to be very careful indeed.



**Goudies Lookout – 12mya old Port Campbell limestone**

Other fascinating plants that occur on the clifftops are plants that one normally associates with saltmarshes such as *Wilsonia humilis* Silky Wilsonia, and Salt Lawrenzia *Lawrenzia spicata*. These salt tolerant plants do well on the cliff tops where they receive a lot of salt spray that is blown up by the wind.



**Silky Wilsonia *Wilsonia humilis* at Broken Head**

Cape Bridgewater is formed from much younger volcanic rocks and sediments, which date back about 2my. They form the tallest sea cliffs in Victoria and layers of volcanic ash can be seen in the rocks around Cape Bridgewater. The paths along the top form part of the Great South West Walk which takes one along the coast from Cape Bridgewater to the South Australian border.



**Rock layers evident at Cape Bridgewater**

Plants found along the cliff tops along this stretch include *Orthrosanthus multiflorus*, *Stackhousia spathulata* Drooping Velvet-bush, *Lasiopetalum shulzenii* which is critically endangered, Soap Mallee *Eucalyptus diversifolia*, *Senecio pinnatifolius*, *Exocarpos syrticola* Coast Ballart, Austral Trefoil *Lotus australis*, *Ixodia achillaeoides*, and Muntries *Kunzea pomifera*.

Graham also included some of the weed species he encountered on this part of his walk. Some are becoming a serious problem such as the Sicilian sea-lavender *Limonium hyblaenum* in the Port Fairy area which is spreading to other parts, and others such as the pink-flowered Common Centaury *Centaureum erythraea*, which doesn't seem to be too much of a problem yet.

Graham ended his talk by saying that although Wilson's Prom is his favourite part of the whole Victorian coastline, along this particular section his favourite parts are the headlands; Cape Otway, Cape Bridgewater, and Cape Nelson – the places where the rock formations and cliffs are spectacular.

*All photos supplied by Graham Patterson.*

**Reference:** Patterson, G. 2022. *Coastal guide to nature and history 3, western Victoria, Point Lonsdale to the South Australian border*. Coastal Guide Books.

**Janet Hodgkiss**

## Cutting back – HARD!

Quite a number of Australian plants need a very hard prune or cutting back annually.

I started quite early at the end of summer with cutting back scaevolae and chrysocephalums, (formerly helichrysums).

Scaevola 'Mauve Clusters' is at the top of the picture, and a broad leaf form of *Chrysocephalum apiculatum* at the bottom. They are both great plants if managed well.



**Scaevola 'Mauve Clusters' and *Chrysocephalum apiculatum* after being cut back hard**  
(Photo: Chris Larkin)

They are tough suckering plants, and in the case of the scaevola seeding freely at my place. This doesn't need to present a problem because it is easy to pull out unwanted seedlings, shift them to another part of the garden when conditions are right to do so, or give them away. I have used them together for quick, not necessarily permanent, groundcover fill in renewing a bed to protect the soil and give a great show of colour over a very long period. The colour combination of purple and yellow work so well

together. I have also used these plants as permanent features. In the case of the scaevola this has mainly been along the edge of the driveway, whereas chrysocephalums have been repeated within a garden bed as colourful groundcover.

Brachyscomes and *Coronidium scorpioides* forms (formerly *Helichrysum scorpioides* or *H. rutidolepis*) need to be cut back too. With coronidiums I tend to wait until the new growth is evident before cutting away the old foliage and flowers. They are the most vigorous suckering plant I grow so it is not always just cutting back, it is ripping out to a containment line!



**Coronidium showing vigorous new growth**  
(Photo: Chris Larkin)

I know I keep repeatedly saying that Kangaroo Paws should be cut back to ground level at Easter. It took me such a long time to learn this lesson myself. It can take real guts to trust what you are told sometimes. Thanks Ngaire, I listened to you many years ago now. You can see in the picture the great response after about a month. You can also see this is the time to

remove any of the roots you don't want, to reduce the size of the plant or refresh it.



**Kangaroo Paw sprouting new growth after being cut back hard** (Photo: Chris Larkin)

The plants I have mentioned all have a great capacity for renewal and this process is only assisted by cutting back – HARD. Enjoy this time of year, which may not be the most flowery, but what it lacks in flowers it more than makes up for with the wonderful magic of the angled light on foliage.

**Chris Larkin**

## From the Secretary

A very warm welcome back to Colin Addison and Judy Barnes who have recently rejoined APS Foothills. We look forward to seeing you both once again.

## Out and About

What does one do if you're on a day trip being a tourist in your home town when you get a text reminder that the Foothills newsletter deadline is the same evening?

Work to Plan B and write about the places you are visiting. In this case it was the Otway Temperate Rainforest and Loch Ard Gorge. We arrived at Maits Rest just after lunch and conditions were perfect for photographs.



***Eucalyptus viminalis* Manna Gum – hollowed out tree trunk** (Photo: Nicky Zanen)

For a newby fungi enthusiast there was so much to record, but I'm going to concentrate on

observations from the paths as taken by hundreds of tourists.

Firstly, a significant part of the path has metal boardwalks to reduce the impact of all these tourists. Ferns were piggy backing other ferns. Several ferns, and these were enormous, had toppled over. Was that because there has been too much rain and the ferns top heavy? I haven't seen this happen in the Dandenongs.



**Toppled over tree fern** (Photo: Nicky Zanen)

The new growth of *Blechnum wattsii* is always a call for a photograph, as also the hollowed out tree trunk of manna gums, *Eucalyptus viminalis*. This was of particular interest to our overseas visitors. I also noticed a large number of kangaroo apple seedlings, *Solanum aviculare*, with their distinctive leaf shape. As we headed back to the bus it started raining – a reminder we were visiting a temperate RAIN forest.



***Blechnum wattsii*** (Photo: Nicky Zanen)

We then stopped at the Port Campbell National Park. I was feeling grumpy about a lot of things here, and thought the area should be renamed the 'Port Campbell National Tourist Park'. A noisy helicopter was taking sightseers up, a huge crane was being used for 'Project Saddle Lookout' which is being built to add viewing areas to cater for the increase in visitor numbers, and tourists were just wandering around aimlessly without actually observing anything except for the spectacular coastal scenery.



**'Project Saddle Lookout' viewing platform being built at the Twelve Apostles**

(Photo: Nicky Zanen)

A couple of plants were flowering and there was also lichen which I hope will be identified by our May speaker. The plants included two different types of correas, a spectacular banksia which I saw too late to photograph, and the delicious looking red seeds of Sea Box, *Alyxia buxifolia*. These seeds, though, aren't edible.



***Alyxia buxifolia* (L) – seeds are not edible**  
**Orange lichen(R) – hoping to get an id at our next meeting** (Photo: Nicky Zanen)

In our last newsletter Kerry included a photograph of a possum banksia, *Banksia baueri*. People who know me well know that I love going to Dandenong Market, which I do every two or three weeks. Imagine my surprise when I realized the other day that I have been walking past an huge possum banksia without even seeing the flowers. In fairness, the flowers are tucked behind the foliage, and my attention has always been drawn to some spectacular grevilleas alongside.



**Possum banksia near Danenong market**  
 (Photo: Nicky Zanen)

At our meeting in March I purchased all three books written by Graham Patterson. This has been money well spent as each book is filled with interesting and quirky information, and I can't wait to explore further around Victoria using his books as my guide.

**Nicky Zanen**



## Urban birds, books and gardens

Recently I read *Curlews on Vulture St: Cities, Birds, People and Me* by Darryl Jones, a Professor of Ecology at Griffith University in Brisbane, a thoroughly enjoyable book with much insight, humour and knowledge.

I had requested this book from the library months ago and when it finally came through, I wasn't sure why this book had interested me at the time, but not for long. We know that birds and plants are interdependent and so, of course this book resonated. Darryl Jones has been studying for thirty years, how people and birds interact, especially species that are very successful in our urban landscapes, the ones we usually refer to as unwanted or pests, and deals with the inevitable problems.

Humans like interacting with wildlife as it makes us feel good. In Europe and around the world feeding birds is a given with much thought and money going to this activity yet in Australia it has been, until recently, frowned upon. They found that at least a third of households feed birds. Surveys found that people felt guilty, thinking that they made birds reliant on their food. Not true. Magpies for instance, feed their young only worms, etc and not any given meat. Birds obviously know that you don't feed 'junk food'. The researchers found that birds only use extra feeding as a snack.

He has written several other books, including – *The Birds at my Table* and *Feeding the Birds at your Table: A Guide for Australia*. It was great to see an article in the magazine *Earth Garden* Sept-Nov 2021 (from the library again!) written by Dr Barry Traill that presented Professor Jones' findings ..... "Some specific don'ts: ...Don't feed magpies and kookaburras mince....it doesn't have much calcium and they can get fatal deficiencies. And don't feed anything bread" Instead fruit, wild seed mix, lean meat or commercial pet food for the meat eaters.

When my copy of *Birdlife Australia* arrived, the editor gave an impressive review of this book, a book that has changed my attitude and the way I think about our 'nuisance' birds in our gardens. On one of these magnificent autumn days we were prompted to walk the circuit at Grants Picnic Ground, where we hadn't been for ages.



**Grants Picnic Ground Walk**  
(Photo: Monika Herrmann)

This is always a pleasant walk surrounded by forest and fern gullies and takes about one and half hours (about 7km) although we both thought that the sustained inclines had become steeper!! It was good to see a yellow robin, and a lyrebird was impersonating the currowongs although he didn't show himself.

Wicks Reserve in The Basin was another enjoyable wander - areas in the middle section have white *Epacris impressa* starting to flower. We thought that there might be lots of fungi; however, we only saw two patches of *Russala* mushrooms and another unknown species.

There was one hakea in full flower, which I think is *Hakea nodosa* or Yellow Hakea. On the home garden front, the banksias are starting to show themselves and my *Acacia beckleri* is flowering – it's one of my favourites. The 1cm globular, lemon flower heads make this a stunning 2-3m species. The other plant is in a much shadier spot and is only in bud.

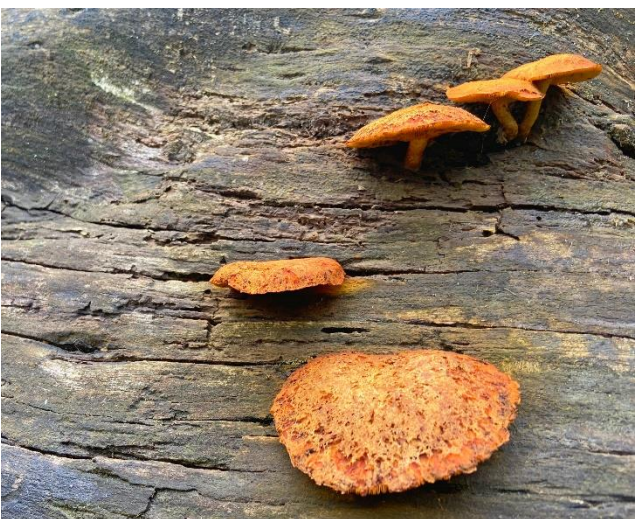
And the deer are having parties! (I think it's mating time) The worked patches where I had

just replanted my kangaroo paws, look like they have been 'ploughed' and most of it needs replanting. Oh well, that's not the worst that can happen.

**Monika Herrmann**



**Russula mushrooms** (Photo: Monika Herrmann)



**Wood Rotting Fungi** (Photo: Monika Herrmann)



**Hakea nodosa** (Photo: Monika Herrmann)



**Acacia beckleri** (Photo: Monika Herrmann)

## Shows, conferences, plant sales and other items of interest 2023

### Important please check APS Victorian website for cancellations

**13 May 2023** – APS Melton and Bacchus Marsh Plant Sale. 9am to 1pm.  
The venue is expected to be St Andrews Uniting Church at Bacchus Marsh, to be confirmed.

**3 June 2023** – APS Victoria Committee of Management Meeting at 10am at Deep Creek Reserve Function Room, 62 Cameron Way, Pakenham.

**24 & 25 June 2023** – APS Ballarat Winter Flower Show. Flower show, plant sales etc. Robert Clark Centre, Ballarat Botanic Gardens, Gilles Street, Ballarat. 10 am – 4 pm.

**22 & 23 July 2023** – Cranbourne Friends RBGV Autumn Plant Sale. 10 am to 4 pm. Wide range of plants, plant list available one week before sale. Website: [rbgfrienscranbourne.org.au](http://rbgfrienscranbourne.org.au)

**2 September 2023** – APS Cardinia Region Group Plant Sale at Akoonah Park, Princes Hwy, Berwick, from 9 am to 3 pm. To be located in the undercover fruit and vegetable market area.

**9 & 10 September 2023** - APS Yarra Yarra Australian Plants Expo, Eltham Community & Reception Centre, 801 Main Road Eltham. 10.00 am - 4.00 pm both days.

**16 & 17 September 2023** – Angair Wildflower Show & Art Show, Anglesea Memorial Hall, McMillan Street, Anglesea. 10 am to 4 pm. Wildflower display, indigenous plant sales, art show and painting sales.

**23 & 24 September 2023** – APS Bendigo Flower Show, Victory College, Kairn Road, Strathdale (Bendigo).

**23 & 24 September 2023** – APS Grampians host APS Vic September COMM.

**30 September & 1 October 2023** – APS Grampians Group Pomonal Native Flower Show, Pomonal Hall.

**7 October 2023** – APS Echuca Moama Native Flower Showcase, Echuca Masonic Lodge Hall, 426 High Street, Echuca. 9 am to 4 pm. Flower show, native plant sales, basket weaving display, floral art and painting sales.

**14 October 2023** – APS Mitchell Plant Expo and Sale. Wallan Community Centre, Bentinck Street, Wallan. From 9 am to 3 pm.

**21 & 22 October 2023** - APS Ballarat Spring Flower Show. Flower show, plant sales etc. Robert Clark Centre, Ballarat Botanic Gardens, Gilles Street, Ballarat. 10 am – 4 pm.

**21 & 22 October 2023** - Cranbourne Friends RBGV Autumn Plant Sale. 10 am to 4 pm. Wide range of plants, plant list available one week before sale. Website: [rbgfrienscranbourne.org.au](http://rbgfrienscranbourne.org.au)

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



### Overseas – United Kingdom

**3 – 9 July 2023** - The Australasian Plant Society based in the UK is putting on a joint display with the Hebe Society in the Floral Marquee at the 2023 RHS Hampton Court Flower Festival, on the theme of 'Australasian plants for a Changing Climate.'

## APS FOOTHILLS INC.

### CONTACT US:

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### Phone Enquiries:

**Nicky Zanen:** 040 197 5191  
**Chris Larkin:** 9752 7837

### Find us on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/apsoothills>

### Visit our Webpage:

<https://apsvic.org.au/apsoothills/>

## MEETINGS

**Venue:** Knox Park Primary School, Kathryn Rd,  
Knoxfield. (Melway 73 C3)

**Date:** 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of the month (Feb-Nov)

**Time:** 7.45pm

## Newsletter Contributions

Please email contributions for the next newsletter to Kerry Davis by no later than:  
8pm Monday 29th May 2023.

**Email:** [foothillsnewsletter@apsvic.org.au](mailto:foothillsnewsletter@apsvic.org.au)

## COMMITTEE

**Leader:** Janet Hodgkiss

**Secretary:** Nicky Zanen

**Treasurer:** Chris Larkin

**Newsletter Editor:** Kerry Davis

**Other Members:** Betty Wright

**APS Vic Delegate:** Janet Hodgkiss

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*We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we meet. We pay our respects to First Nations People throughout Australia and to Elders, past, present and emerging.*

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## VISITORS WELCOME!

## Online Memberships

APS Victoria has been working hard over the past couple of years to develop an online membership payment system. Apart from streamlining the work our membership officers do, it is a more efficient way of renewing your membership, and will also be an easy process for people who are joining as new members.

We are changing from the old system of filling in paper forms and paying your APS membership via your district group – you will now go online to renew your membership.

Instructions on how to renew will be printed in the June issue of Growing Australian and our Foothills Newsletter. You will follow an easy set of on-screen instructions, log in using your email address and membership number, choose your subscription and any optional extras, i.e. APS Victoria, district group membership, and the optional ANPSA Australian Plants magazine, update your details as necessary, choose your method of payment, and submit the form. APS Victoria will send the district group portion of your payment to your district group.

It is important that you *keep your yellow Growing Australian envelope* so that you have your membership number available when you are ready to renew. You can also contact Chris Larkin to get your membership number if you forget to save your envelope or have forgotten your membership number.

If you don't have internet access and can't renew online, then your district group membership officer will be able to login and do it for you. We expect that most members will be able complete their renewals by themselves.

Membership renewals are due on 1st July 2023, so please renew your membership promptly once you get the renewal instructions in June.

<b>APS Foothills Calendar 2023</b>			
<b>2023</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Day</b>	<b>Topic</b>
<b>May</b>	24	Wednesday	Kathleen Ralston – Lichens
<b>June</b>	28	Wednesday	Member’s evening – Five Slides
<b>July</b>	26	Wednesday	AGM & Quiz
<b>August</b>	23	Wednesday	<i>(topic to be confirmed)</i>
<b>September</b>	27	Wednesday	Janet Hodgkiss – Antonio Park / Bateman St Reserve
	30	Saturday	Antonio Park walk <i>(to be confirmed)</i>
<b>October</b>	25	Wednesday	<i>(topic to be confirmed)</i>
<b>November</b>	22	Wednesday	Chris Larkin - Melaleucas
<b>December</b>	2	Saturday	Foothills End of Year Breakup At Kerry Davis’s house

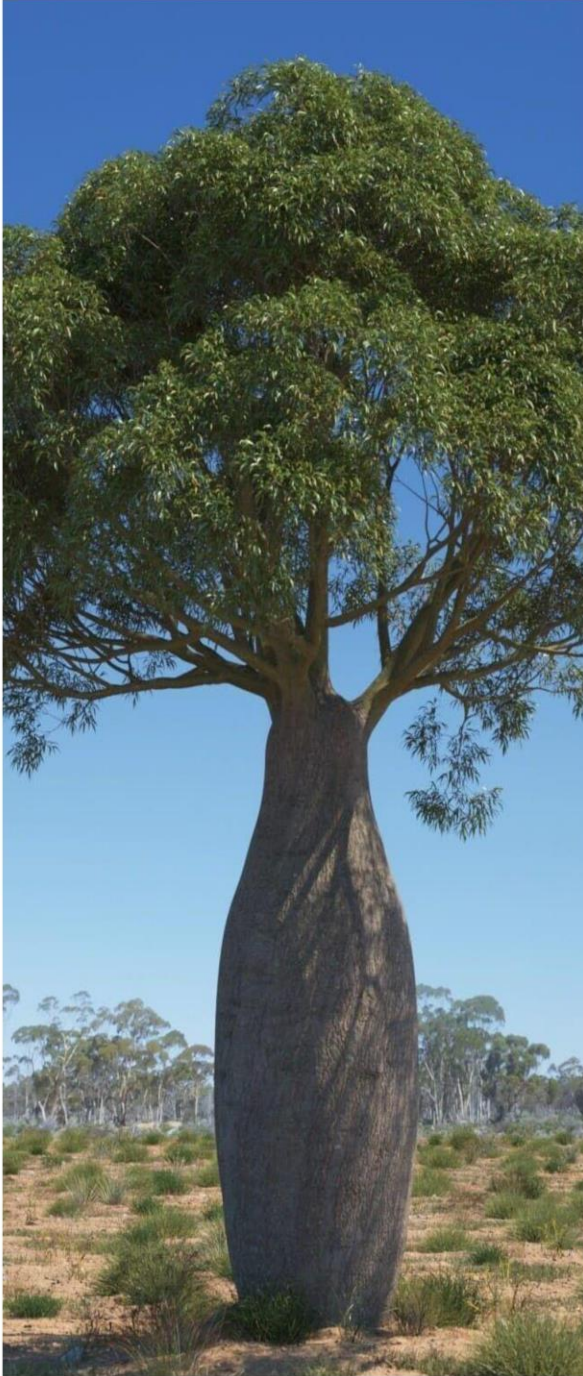


**Dampiera trigona** (Photo: Kerry Davis)

## CRANBOURNE FRIENDS

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Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria



*Brachychiton rupestris*



# Winter Plantsale

**Saturday 22 &  
Sunday 23**

**July 2023**

**10am to 4pm**

**Australian Garden -  
Cranbourne**

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

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Climbers & groundcovers; grasses; strappy-leaf plants; small and large bushes & trees; plants for wildlife and more

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Plant-list available 1 week before sale:

[rbgfrienscranbourne.org.au](http://rbgfrienscranbourne.org.au)

f [rbgfrienscranbourne.org.au](http://rbgfrienscranbourne.org.au)