

Golden

Newsletter of the Australian Plants Society
Latrobe Valley Group Inc.
No. A0045337C

Issue No. 319 – May 2023

Grevillea chrysophaea – Golden Grevillea

This Month

Event Austplant Nursery and Gardens visit.

Location 249 Purves Road, Arthurs Seat.

Date Friday May 12

Time 11 AM arrival. If carpooling from Morwell – 9 AM start.

Austplant Nursery has been established for over 40 years and has 8 acres of beautiful display gardens with over 600 species of native plants. Here is a chance to visit a well-established native garden and nursery. Take the opportunity to also purchase a few plants for that late Autumn planting. BYO your own prepared lunch, drink and folding chair.

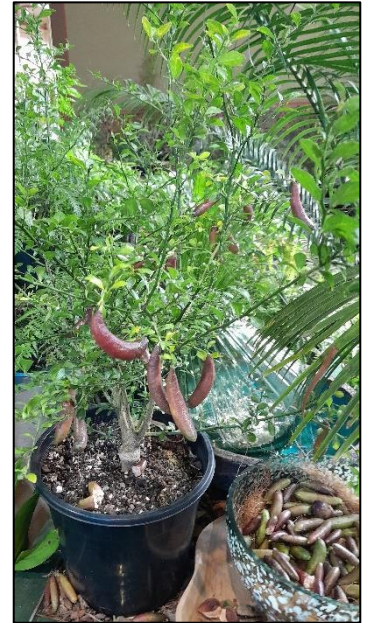
Please consider carpooling with others. As an indicator, I checked the journey time from Morwell, and it is approximately 2 hours.

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I managed a few hours on the APS Vic.-Kurunga stand at Melbourne International Flower and Garden Show (MIFGS). It was the last day and VERY busy. The location was great - just inside the main entrance and designed to direct the crowds right past the display. We were kept on our toes answering questions about the plants and Vic. President Miriam Ford and Nicki Zanen (known to many of you) were on hand to promote APS Vic. and provide details of local groups. Most popular plants I found were the pots of Flannel Flowers (*Actinotus helianthi*) and a thriving Finger Lime (*Microcitrus Australascia*). A bowl of ripe limes was there for tasting. Flowering in Autumn and fruiting in Spring/Summer. It is important to allow the fruit to ripen on the tree, it will fall off readily then. Many people tried the luscious caviar like pearls inside the colourful skins. Needing full sun to ripen and growing to 6m it can, however, be kept to size with judicious pruning and will grow in pots. Being thorny, if planted in the ground, it provides cover for nesting birds. I would like to hear from members who are growing this species.

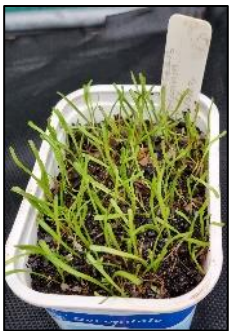


The garden surrounding U3A headquarters at Airlie Bank House in Morwell is showing a distinct APS Latrobe influence. Since I don't have a garden, any raffle winnings or other gifts end up tucked in there, helping the conversion to Australian natives that I started a couple of years ago. The latest planting is replacing the Hellebores which had been a feature for years. They proved very reluctant to be moved with concrete like roots. The Common Everlasting (*Chrysocephalum apiculatum* Yorke Peninsular form) plants were kindly produced by Colin as cuttings from the original, a thriving raffle win from last year.

And for Jill's Odd Spot this month: a recent article from "The Times" newspaper reported a wildlife development from climate change. Scientists say vast numbers of beavers are moving north, enticed by a lack of predators and a thawing permafrost that means more vegetation. They are building dams that alter the flow of streams and create ponds which contain warmer water that hastens the melt. I won't post the full article here, but satellite images of streams, rivers and lakes in the Tundra found 11,000 beaver ponds. Photos from the 1950's show no ponds in Arctic Alaska. It's a new disturbance regime. So "Wildfires moving into the Arctic" is the best analogy to Beavers. How to tackle the problem is still being studied but, when asked to guess, the comment was made "there's very little to be done".

I'm off to Canberra again. Last time I didn't make it to "The Arboretum". This time, I'm determined, so wish me luck.

With an unscheduled Simpson Desert trip looming in late May and a car that has not been prepared for that sort of travel, the last several weeks have been focused on getting the car ready for remote exploring. Extra fuel, water, food all must be carried in the vehicle in a secure and hopefully, easily accessible way. Oh, I am missing the old Toyota Troopy! As a result, I have done none of my Autumn planting preparation. I find Autumn the best time to plant, with a decent water in and with the ground still warm, new plants get a good start before the winter cold and will settle in come spring. This makes it easier to get through the first summer without too much water stress. I guess planting will just have to be a bit late this year. I had been saving the *Doryanthes* story until I knew for certain what it actually was but with the last meeting at our garden the secret is out. What I thought was Gynea Lily has grown so big it must be Spear Lily. It has been growing a flower stem for several months now and I expect it will finally break into flower in the Spring. Mary is very pleased but for me it is just an extra bonus to the lovely, large, strappy leaves.



Mike recently handed out seed he had collected from Yam Daisies he had planted (or had self-sown) in his garden. It was year-old seed with uncertain viability, and I ended up with a large plastic bag of it. I sowed some into two punnets which promptly germinated. I have potted up



these into tubes and now have about 160 plants growing on. It could be a lost cause, my past experience with these in my garden is that everything eats them, and they disappeared fairly rapidly. Maybe saturation planting might be the answer. I am considering just broadcast sowing some of Mike's seed into the wilder areas on the steeper banks of the garden in the hope that they may get some cover from the existing plants. This month's critter photo is not the critter but what it was doing to the garden. It is a seed cone off *Banksia spinulosa*, and there is not a seed remaining on it. The Yellow-tailed Cockatoos were responsible for this bit of minor destruction. Although they do sometimes make a bit of a mess, they are not causing major harm to the shrubs, and I do appreciate their presence in the garden when I see them.



And finally, the Simpson Desert trip could put me out of internet range for newsletter publication by the end of May, so I am anticipating that the June newsletter may be a few days late. The June meeting will be Thursday the 15th so don't panic if the newsletter doesn't hit your inbox until later in the first week of June.

Species: *Dendrobium kingianum*.

Family: Orchidaceae.

Derivation: *Dendrobium*: From the Greek *dendron*, a tree, and *bios*, life, referring to the epiphytic (growing on trees) habit of most species.
kingianum: Named after Captain Philip Parker King (1791-1856), a friend of botanist John Carne Bidwell, who collected the type specimens and suggested the name to John Lindley in 1844.



Common Name: Pink Rock Orchid.

Distribution: From Biggenden to the McPherson Range in Queensland and from the Border Ranges to the Hunter River in NSW.

Description: A spectacular orchid with a variety of forms, with respect to both flowers and leaves. Pseudobulbs are crowded and vary in length from 5cm to 50cm and width from 10mm to 25mm. A number of leathery, dark green leaves to 12cm long and 3cm wide extend from the top of the pseudobulbs. Flower spikes up to 20cm long containing up to 15 flowers develop over winter from the top of the pseudobulbs, to open up in spring in sprays of white, cream, pink, mauve and purple shades. Individual flowers are up to 20mm in diameter.

Opinion: My plant is hanging in the Omeo Gum on the northern side of the house and must be the most mistreated orchid in the area, though it's in competition with all the inherited orchids out under the pergola in the backyard. I've had it for years but can't remember where it came from. Honestly, I didn't pinch it! It flowers every year, some years better than others, and has reached a size where it's overflowing its basket and regularly drops keikies (aerial clones) onto the ground below. These I can pick up and plant into a new location. Regardless of the best intentions, care is very hit and miss, and watering and fertilising happen only when something irrelevant reminds me to do it. The plant has a hard life, being exposed to most of the weather and open to any insect that would like to take a bite. Although reasonably well protected in its location, sometimes leaves show signs of sunburn and frost exposure.

Sources: Sharr - Plant Names and their Meanings.
Jones - A Complete Guide to Native Orchids of Australia (2021).

Coming group events for your consideration.

Mike Beamish

[Mike has done a power of work organising trips for our group. The following is a copy of his email to me. Please read his notes and consider taking up these opportunities. I will attach a copy of the Edski Lodge information pack PDF to the newsletter mailout. Editor.]

I have a confirmed booking for the Edski Lodge on Mt Baw Baw from Monday, January 15th to Friday, January 19th, 2024 (4 nights). The total payment of \$1800 is due by 15/12/2023. There are 10 bedrooms available with various arrangements of double beds (3 rooms) and single bunks, for a capacity of 36 guests per night. Mattresses and pillows are provided, but all bedlinen (sheets, pillowcases, blankets, doonas, etc), towels, toiletries and food must be brought along by guests. Kitchen and living areas are communal and separate male/female ablution blocks are installed.

I suppose now is the best time to start advertising this trip. I suggest we ask for commitments from members first, see how many we get and if we still have vacancies, we can open it up for extended families and friends. It would be helpful if attendees would be willing to share rooms, now that Covid regulations are no longer preventing us from doing so.

I have also enquired about booking the Blackwood School in October (20th to 22nd), but have had no response as yet, probably not surprising due to the school holidays. I'll let you know what happens there.

There is also a Correa Crawl around Melton and Bacchus Marsh over the June long weekend (10th, 11th, 12th) with the Melton Botanic Gardens as one of the destinations, that might fit the bill for a June activity.

Let me know what you think.

Cheers,

Mike

2023 Latrobe Valley Group Events Calendar				
Month	Day	Date	Activity	Time
May	Friday	12	Austplant Nursery and Gardens visit. Please make your own car-pooling arrangements. See blurb on page 1.	11AM
June	Thursday	15	A slide show and talk on Mint Bushes by Miriam Ford at 2PM in the Morwell Bowling Club. Optional lunch off the menu at 12 noon.	12 noon
Oct	Fri - Sun	20 to 22	Possible trip to Blackwood/wombat State Forest/Melton Botanic Gardens to be confirmed.	
Jan	Mon-Fri	15 to 19	Trip to Mt Baw Baw staying at Edski Lodge. Pencil this one into your calendar.	

April activity report.

By Mike Beamish

Cathy and I were the first to arrive about 2pm on the afternoon of the activity and took the opportunity to set up the mothing sheet before the rush began. We did so in plenty of time and were actually beginning to wonder if anyone else was coming before members began to trickle in. Our first mistake was being too sociable to begin with, as we settled in for an afternoon tea and partook of the nibbles and conversation provided. Before we knew it the bright, sunny afternoon was disappearing behind the hill, so we dragged ourselves out into the garden for a quick wander around.

We didn't get far. Our eyes were drawn to the magnificent Spear Lily just opposite the doorway, as a precursor to the other magnificent Spear Lily with a developing flower spike just a few metres further along in the garden bed and a few metres further down the slope. Then we were distracted by the Satin Bower Bird's bower under the nearby bushes, and then by the shiny silver foil balls hanging in the Grevillea around the corner. This was Colin's attempt at air-layering the Grevillea, which he has not yet been able to successfully propagate by cuttings. The tips of the air-layered branches were all looking quite healthy, so fingers crossed he will get a positive result. A short discussion on the welfare of the stunted Cabbage Tree Palm nearby (regularly pruned by the wallabies) was all we had time for before heading up to the shed for our lessons in propagation by division.

Colin butchered a piece of a Kangaroo Paw out of the ground in front of the house on the way and proceeded to explain and demonstrate his approach, finding a piece with a couple of existing leaves that would become mainly redundant with the division. More importantly, the piece had a robust rhizome/bulb with healthy roots and one or two healthy new shoots or growing points to take over from the old leaves. If the roots are too long, they can be pruned back so that they'll fit into the new pot without twisting, crimping or curling up (j-rooting). To reduce the transpiration stress on the roots trying to continue feeding the old leaves, the leaves should be pruned as well, perhaps by a half or even two-thirds. Just enough to keep the plant ticking along until new roots and new shoots develop. Water in, fertilise and label, and the job's done.

Then it was dinner time and a glorious dinner it was too. We had a choice of three soups, two stews, a selection of finger foods and scrumptious desserts to finish with. Nobody went hungry and if they were like me, they ate far more than they needed to. While we were eating, dusk settled, so I ducked out to turn on the mothing lamp and ducked back in again for more tucker. It wasn't long before we could see insects coming to the sheet, so we all began taking turns to wander out, check out the arrivals, and then wander back in again for more food, drink and/or conversation.

Perhaps due to the time of year or maybe the weather (a little bit breezy), we weren't inundated with moths, but there were enough to keep us interested and snapping photos for about 4 hours. I have uploaded all of our observations to iNaturalist and here is the link for our results on the night:

https://inaturalist.ala.org.au/observations?on=2023-04-14&place_id=any&user_id=bootown-beginners&verifiable=any

I uploaded 79 observations and did my best to identify them, but some are not likely to be identified better than family level. We came up with 51 species of moths, mainly because we try to photograph every individual and some species had more than one individual at the sheet. For example, we had four different Grey Moths and four different Tiger Moths, identifiable due to either all being on the sheet at the same time or by having slightly different patterns or tears on their wings. Here is a selection of the moths we attracted. The largest moth that came in was the Southern ►

Moon Moth (or Southern Old Lady Moth) *Dasypodia selenophora* and drew some interest as it initially bombed the sheet, taking a few minutes to settle. Earlier and with a similar entrance was the second largest moth, a male Variable Oxycanus (*O. dirempta*). We know it's male because of



the fringed antennae and it's smaller, about 80% of the size of the female. It's called Variable because it can sport a range of patterns on its wings, but this pattern is pretty common in this area.

Other big moths that visited were the aforementioned Varied Grey Moths *Hypobapta tachyhalotaria* and the Black & White Tiger Moths *Ardices* (previously *Spilosoma*) *glatignyi*. It's pretty



obvious why they have been named so. Interesting that all of the Greys and Tigers were male (fringed antennae), no females made an appearance.

There were some more colourful moths at the sheet as well. The Red Footman *Scoliacma bicolora* can be much more vibrant than this one, but you get the idea. The Tea-tree Emerald *Aeolochroma metarhodata* can also be drab, but our visitor had a terrific colour and pattern. ►





We had 3 other species of bright green Emeralds turn up and some of these can be difficult to separate, particularly if they aren't freshly pupated and are faded or battered. Species are separated on the basis of whether they are the same colour on forewings and hindwings or not, whether they have a stripe down their back or not, the colour of their faces, their fillets (the connection of the bases of their antennae across their heads), their collars, their 'shoulders' and the fringes of their wings. Oh, and the presence of spots or lines on their wings can help too!



The 3 we had were a faded Veined Emerald *Chlorocoma carenaria* (Fore and hindwings same colour and straight lines, yellow stripe on back, pink

face and collar, cream fillet and wing fringes), Neat-angled Emerald *Maxates calaina* (no stripe on back, green all over wings with serrated cream stripes, green face and collar, cream fillet, pale wing fringes and angled hindwing) and Guenee's (or Double-fringed) Emerald *Chlorocoma dichloraria* (yellow stripe on back, green wings with serrated yellow lines, red face, collar and 'shoulders', cream fillet and the wing fringes are yellow with pink tips). ▶



Two moths that were new to Cathy and I (that is, we haven't seen them at our sheet before in the couple of years that we've been frustrating ourselves with this pastime) are shown below. They are a Grey Fraus (*F. griseomaculata*) and an Orange Cup Moth (*Pseudanapaea transvestita*). That latter species name intrigues me, but I'd better remain p.c.! You might know the Cup Moth from those colourful, spiny, stinging caterpillars that you sometimes come across (occasionally painfully) feeding on gumtrees. And yes, they're both male, you know why.



I could go on and on for several more pages, there's only about 40 more species that I haven't mentioned yet, but now that I've bludgeoned you into submission with information about moths that you didn't know you wanted, I'll finish up with my favourite. It's probably quite widespread, but Cathy and I have only seen it in our garden, and now in the Jackson's garden. It's the Banksia Boring Moth *Arotrophora arcuatalis*. We have Banksias in our garden and so do Colin and Mary. We've set up the sheet in lots of places and not attracted this moth: Boolarra Bush - only about 3 *Banksia spinulosa* left that we know of; Morwell NP - there used to be some *Banksia marginata* near the western boundary, but I think all the fires over the years have killed them and they haven't regenerated, a story that is widespread across Victoria; Wellington River upstream from Licola, *Banksia canei* occurs a few kilometres away, but no Banksia near where we usually camp. You know when you pick that Banksia cone and you cook it to get the follicles to open and you attempt



to extract the seed and all you end up with is a little pile of frass? Closer inspection reveals a little hole in the follicle? Well, these moths, or their offspring to be more specific, are probably the culprits. They're only about 10mm long, but well worth the photo.

Thank you to Colin and Mary once again for hosting the activity and allowing us access to their lovely home and garden, and also to all of you who attended and contributed to the wonderful food, conversation and companionship that we experienced.

Coming events of interest

Note: Please check the Vic APS website for cancellations before attending.,

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.

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: rbgfriendscranbourne.org.au

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.

2 September 2023 – APS Cardinia Region Group Plant Sale at Acoonah 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. To be confirmed.

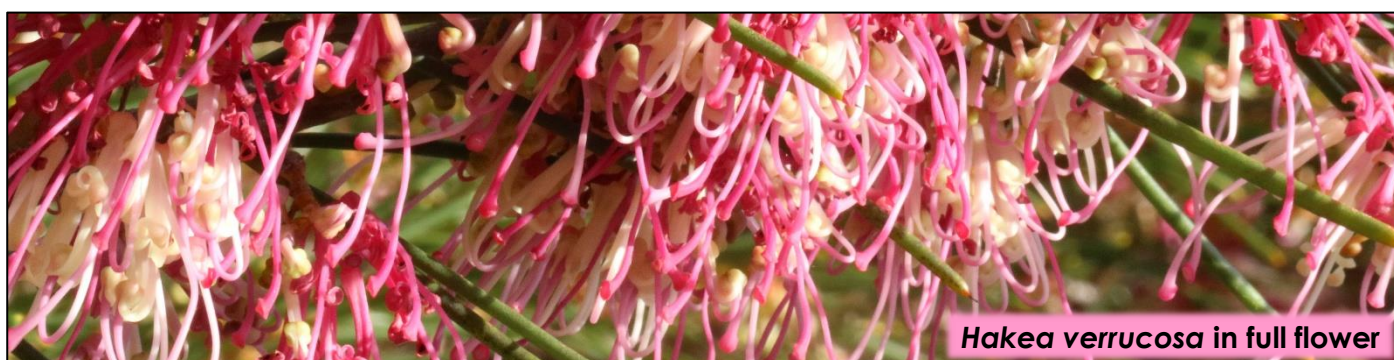
30 September & 1 October 2023 – APS Grampians Group Pomonal Native Flower Show, Pomonal Hall.

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.

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



Rainfall for 2022 (in mm)

		Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Diane	Drouin (west)	67	30	81	94	60	170	90	198	60	172	193	89	1302
Brian	Drouin (east)	74	11	76	86	75	145	77	199	66	199	183	95	1286
Warren	Yarragon	107	5	55	68	58	191	97	163	64	144	196	107	1253
Wayne	Tanjil South	83	15	63	98	107	130	74	161	96	203	138	127	1295
Peter	Mirboo North	62	8	67	68	50	150	88	189	73	136	157	66	1113
Judy	Moe South	73	13	64	55	93	209	72	165	67	128	236	89	1264
Mike	Boolarra	72	6	74	60	54	162	69	166	66	119	168	94	1108
Mary	Jeeralang Junction	68	11	85	75	46	164	72	161	62	133	171	85	1131
John	Traralgon South	88	10	31	56	28	175	50	136	49	126	146	54	949

Rainfall for 2023 (in mm)

		Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Diane	Drouin (west)	21	42	101										164
Brian	Drouin (east)	22	44	110										176
Warren	Yarragon	49	35											84
Wayne	Tanjil South	25	43	100										168
Peter	Mirboo North	35	57											92
Judy	Moe South	26	33	80										139
Mike	Boolarra	20	43	114										177
Mary	Jeeralang Junction	24	36	94										154
John	Traralgon South													0

<https://apsvic.org.au/aps-latrobe-valley/>

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Golden Grevillea
Grevillea chrysophaea

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Title page photo: *Grevillea chrysophaea* at Holey Plains State Park by Mike Beamish