



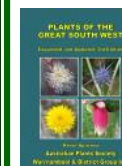
AUSTRALIAN PLANTS SOCIETY (SGAP)
Warrnambool & District Group Inc. Newsletter
MARCH 2023 No 495

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On Eastern Maar Country

EDITORIAL

Hello members,

Thank you all for the cards, messages of support and best wishes since my recent visit to hospital. Thank you to Linda and David for the lovely floral arrangement - See photo on page 3. For those not aware, I was diagnosed with Prostate Cancer late last year and after lots of scans and tests that showed that the cancer had not spread, we decided to have it removed. I was very lucky! (I hope all you guys out there are having your prostate regularly checked, it is a silent killer!) My Urologist operates out of the Epworth Hospital in Melbourne (robotic keyhole surgery) so Joyce and I soon found ourselves on the train to Melbourne. The surgery went extremely well and I was out after three days, home in five days. I have been slowly recovering at home since, although I have to take it easy for a couple of months. (Bosses orders!)

Our speaker for this month is our very own, John Sherwood who will be speaking on his visit to Fraser Island (K'gari) on Friday 24th March at 8.00pm. He recently did the talk to our local Field Naturalists Club and there is a great report on his talk in their recent newsletter. (See attached). Don't forget to bring along something from your garden for the Display Table, I am hoping I will be able to make it.

Thank you everyone for their contributions this month. That's all, hope to see you on the 24th, Cheers, Kevin.

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We acknowledge the Eastern Maar people as the traditional owners of the land on which we meet and pay our respects to their elders past and present.

Next Members Night: March - Friday 24th 8.00pm- John Sherwood - Fraser Island (K'Gari)

Members Activities

March 24th 2023: Members Night 8.00pm - John Sherwood speaking on his trip to K'gari/ Fraser Island.

March 28th : Committee Meeting at Handscombe's 9.30 - 11.00am

April 28th: Members Night 8.00pm - Sue Blood speaking on her experiences with Eco dyeing with Eucalyptus leaves.

April 29th 9.30am : Eco Dyeing demonstration at Ross and Sue' home.

May 2nd: Committee Meeting TBD.



Dining Out With Native Plants - John Sherwood

I was recently out for an evening meal at Proudfoot's Boathouse Restaurant (I have no financial interest, and this is not an ad!). The location on the banks of Hopkins Estuary is hard to beat and it is a favourite with me. Since my last visit the menu had changed and a number of native plants feature in the new ingredients – finger lime, Geraldton wax oil, wattle seed, paperbark smoked steak and lemon myrtle. I am hoping this is a sign that chefs are getting much more interested in the flavours of our native plants. There may be more species of value for modern foods - nice to eat as well as great to admire! No doubt there is still a lot to learn from the first Australians too.



ED: Sounds like a good venue for a group dinner, John.

Please submit your articles for the newsletter by the end of the second week of the month

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Other Committee Members: Dorothy Mattner, Michael Mattner, Linda Handscombe, Ross Dawson.

The APS Warrnambool & District holds meetings on the 4th Friday of each month at the Mozart Hall Warrnambool at 8pm.

APS Warrnambool & District is a District Group of the Australian Plants Society (Vic)

All members are required to also be a member of APS Vic.



ANPSA Biennial Conference 2024 – Melbourne

<https://apsvic.org.au/anpsa-biennial-conference-2024/>

“Gardens for Life”

Hosted by Australian Plants Society Victoria 30th Sep – 4th Oct 2024

Held at the Melbourne Conference and Exhibition Centre, the conference topics include Gardens for Wildlife and Habitat, Restoration and Revegetation of Wetlands, Grasslands and Verges, Care for the Rare, Insects and Biodiversity, Garden Design, Indigenous Food Plants and many more.

Tours before and after will go to Victoria’s best wildflower areas and day excursions will feature new botanic gardens, private gardens and wild areas.

To register your interest go to:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeseytb9Z872EABLHpeWypQ_rqiEGfmbqDA-jG9PRYKhgUPFA/viewform?vc=0&c=0&w=1&flr=0

A promotional video can be viewed at: <https://youtu.be/8ApdryKIIwA>

Read most recent news & information in the March 2023 “Gardens for Life” newsletter:

<https://apsvic.org.au/documents/ANPSA/2024/ANPSA%202024%20Newsletter%2020230301.pdf>



February Display Table - Linda Handscombe

With Kevin absent from the February meeting, we wondered if we'd have enough flowers on the display table. However there was no need to worry... we had a great selection of late summer and early autumn flowers.

Brian kicked it off with a lovely specimen of his multi talented *Melaleuca nesophila* (Photo right) [nesos meaning island and philo meaning to love ie. ideal around the coast of an island]. Commonly called the Showy Honey Myrtle, this medium to large shrub has beautiful purple to pink pompom flowers. It is very adaptable to different soils and attracts insects, butterflies and nectar and insect eating birds. It flowers over a long period and provides a valuable windbreak.



Mike brought several specimens including *Grevillea* 'Peaches and Cream'.

Supposedly arising as a seedling in a Brisbane garden, it has bicoloured flowers that open yellow and develop into pink/orange. It grows 1.5 – 2m x 2m and grows in a wide range of soils and climates. It is very bird attracting and is one of the easier to grow tropical hybrid Grevilleas.

Mike also brought a *Banksia baueri* flower. Commonly called the Woolly, Possum or Teddybear Banksia (Photo left), the flowers can be 30cm high and up to 20cm wide. The shrubs, which hale from southwest WA can be 3m wide [eek] and are good for smaller gardens because they do not grow too tall, reaching only 2m.

In Ross's selection was *Grevillea* 'Sylvia'. A spectacular 3-5m high and wide shrub, it has stunning rosy pink flowers that are excellent in a vase when picked before the stamens unfurl. It is another of the hardier tropical cultivars and survived well in dry sandy Pomonal as well as the damper and richer volcanic soil of Illowa. It can be grown from cutting. The more flowers you pick, the more flowers you get.



February Display Table - Linda Handscombe page 2

Ross also showed a *Leptospermum petersonii* or Lemon Scented Tea Tree. Growing as a large shrub or small tree with bright green lemon scented foliage it is endemic to NSW and Queensland. It is also very useful as a windbreak or hedge and can apparently be harvested for distilled oil. It can possibly be weedy.

Dave finished off with a number of specimens including *Gossypium sturtianum* the Sturt Desert Rose (photo below) and the floral emblem of the Northern Territory. A woody shrub to 3m, it hales from the arid interior of Australia. Individual flowers can be up to 12cm across and are very attractive to



honeyeaters. It occurs naturally along dry creek beds and so requires excellent drainage and warmth. It did not do well in Pomonal because it hated the cold winters and especially frosts. He also brought a *Beaufortia sparsa* or Swamp Bottlebrush (Photo right) . Another one from southwest Western Australia it is very variable [and ornery]. It grows 1-3m high x 1-2m wide often near seasonally wet swamps. Apparently it doesn't like damp humid summers despite originating in a swamp. It did not do well in Pomonal and has been disappointing in damper Illowa but we're prepared to persevere because it makes an excellent and stunning cut flower and is bird and insect attracting.



Emperor Gum Moth By Sue Blood

Ross spotted an Emperor Gum Caterpillar in one of our Eucalypts about 4 months ago so we started to look carefully, and so far we have seen 2 Moths, 12 Caterpillars and 4 cocoons. In our 6 years here we had never seen them before.

Luckily Linda alerted us to a recent video by the expert Denis Crawford and we were educated. The caterpillars we observed were actually Helena Gum Moth Caterpillars – which have slightly different characteristics to the Emperor Gum Moth Caterpillar – but in our defense they do look very similar.

Our Helena Gum Moth Caterpillars are covered with little hairs. (Photo above right)



They were found on *Eucalyptus nichollii*, *Eucalyptus crenulata*, *Eucalyptus gunnii* and *Eucalyptus olida*.

We think that this little fellow (Photo left) is the stage before the big green caterpillar.



Emperor Gum Moth By Sue Blood Page 2.



The Helena Gum Moth is spectacular. They only live for a couple of weeks and have no mouth parts so no eating for them. They only live to mate. This one is a male as he has feathery antennae (Photo above). Thanks Denis.

The cocoon is cemented to a branch and has leaves attached. Here is one that has been vacated (Photo left).

We are quite sure that there are more that we have not seen. We hope that is so. May there be many more!
Sue Blood

George Pentland Botanic Gardens - Frankston by John Sherwood

My youngest daughter (Jennifer) has lived in Frankston for over 10 years. The city is delightfully situated on the eastern shore of Port Phillip Bay. As well as the obvious attractions of its beach and foreshore, Frankston and the surrounding area also have a significant number of bushland reserves and gardens. One of my favourites is the George Pentland Botanic Gardens located behind Frankston Hospital. The park is spread over 7ha and features open grass areas, a children's playground, ponds, pleasant walking tracks and an extensive network of native gardens dotted with attractive information boards and plant names.

I have taken the following information from a sign at the gardens:
'The site of the gardens was previously part of the original Frankston Municipal Golf Course which operated from 1938 to 1974. Many of the present trees were planted during that period but the Gardens also feature older trees, remnants of the original forest'.

In 1975 the Council decided to make it a botanic gardens for native Australian plants. The then Town Clerk, George Pentland retired from Council after 36 year's service and the Gardens were named in his honour.

In 1994 the Council committed to further development of the Gardens and with community input developed a Master Plan to make the Gardens a major feature of the city. It was to *'be a systematically organised Australian Plant collection which will be of particular value to students and specialists in botany, horticulture and landscape design'.*

There is a Friends group for the Gardens and Council's and their efforts have created a beautiful, well presented attraction which certainly lives up to Council's vision.

I take great pleasure in walking the Gardens during the different seasons I find myself visiting Jen. Her two young daughters are always up for a walk and play there "with Grandad". If you are travelling near/through Mornington Peninsula I recommend a detour to enjoy these pleasing gardens.



Photo: <https://www.weekendnotes.com/frankston-botanic-garden/>

The Lemmens Garden - 14 Mountain Ash Drive, Warrnambool.

We bought the original ¼ acre block in 1985 and built our house and started landscaping. But Gail attended a SGAP Native Flower Show in Hyland Street when I was working shift work not long after we began, and that is how we got into Native plants.

She came home all excited about *Kunzea baxteri*, so we started to buy natives when we planted out beds. It was a little while later that we got in contact with the SGAP (now APS) group and joined.

The first garden bed was the front yard and a couple of natives went in, and lawn.

Then we started on the drive and side of the house.

Then about 2 years later the 2 acres out the back and along the side boundary came up for sale. We purchased this and subdivided off a ¼ acre block with street frontage and sold this, getting most of our money back!

Then we (or me) had to landscape the 2 acres, so a rider mower was purchased to start turning the weeds into a lawn, ha!! Then we realized we needed a bit of shelter down the south boundary of the paddock block, as the howling SW winds broke everything off - or the rabbits and hares got them.

So, many trips to the Mortlake Road nursery, and 400 plantation trees and shrubs later, with many family weekends of planting, saw our paddock starting to develop and take shape. The general idea was that nature didn't have straight lines, so our garden didn't have any either. Once the shelterbelts were established, we then sort of !!!! developed a plan for the paddock. (Really it just grew.)

The plan came about by mistake but one garden visit someone said it is just like Nature with pockets opening up as you turn each corner;- that sounded just like my plan!!



The Lemmens Garden - 14 Mountain Ash Drive, Warrnambool. Page 2

A garage was built down on the 2 acres so we had to develop a drive and more garden beds.

I needed edging for the beds and after many trips out to Orford (and a local farmer called Dave), the beds were being defined. Then Ben and Matt came along and the trip out to Orford was used so the boys could fall asleep in the car, while I collected bluestones from paddocks. The garden started to take shape and a few little helpers would tag along.

More plant information was gathered from the SGAP group, and after many trips out to Allansford and Pat Urbonas's plants became a major feature of our garden.

Ken Arthur's plants then featured later, and we discovered Ewan Roberts at Codrington so a few more varieties went in. All along the way making many friendships and learning more from the monthly meetings and working bees.

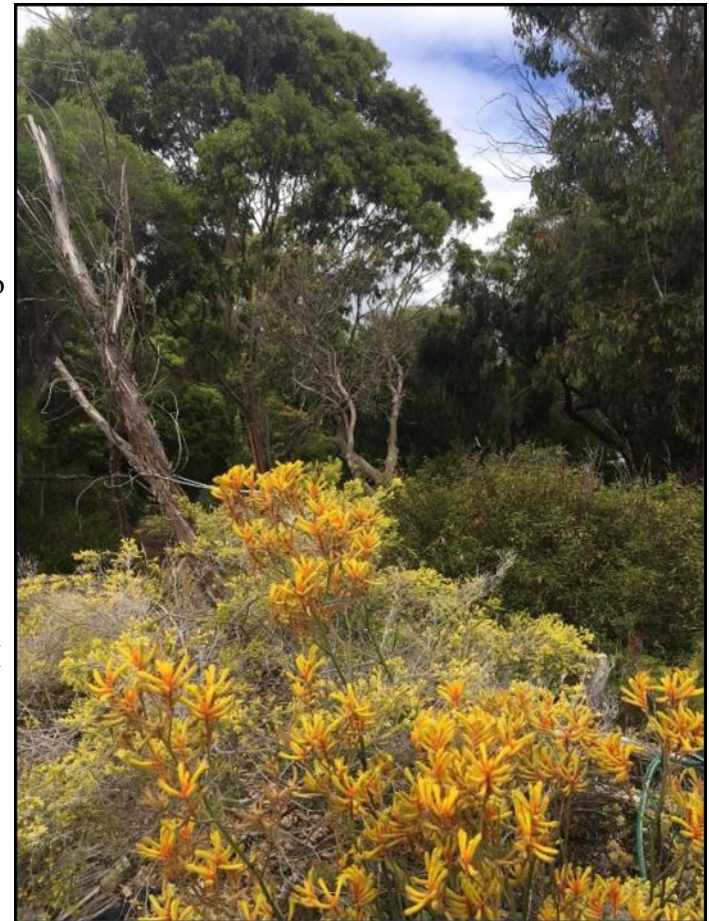
Most of the plants were tube stock because they were cheaper and I was learning what would grow without attention in our garden.

We always looked forward to the SGAP annual Flower Shows where a few native plant nurseries would sell their wares and we always went home with a car boot full; "I always wanted one of those" was repeated over and over.

Today almost 38 years after starting on the garden all plants except Gail's roses are native. The original maps and plant names are not worth the paper they are written on, as most have been replaced – and the names have changed anyway! We have many species of birds and animals returning with the vegetation thickening up, even koalas and wallabies.

Many of the original trees have been removed for fire wood or to make way for extensions to the house or garage. We purchased a big chipper a while ago and now mulch everything back onto our garden, because of too many trips to green waste.

A couple of years ago we purchased a greenhouse and now grow much of what is needed to plug gaps in our paddock. Also borrowing cuttings from many people has enabled us to keep expanding the garden beds.



The Lemmens Garden - 14 Mountain Ash Drive, Warrnambool. Page 3

Recently many of the retaining walls made from old railway sleepers started to collapse, so I was able to source concrete replacements, this is the next big project for the garden - to re-establish the walls and steps, that were used to try and create interesting spots within the beds.

We always liked the Otway Ranges area and the ferns, so we developed an area around the house and under the verandah that was shaded and able to be watered regularly to create the correct microclimate for these.

This is our story of how we established the 2 acres we have.



This year we started to take an interest in the river verge planted out by the GHCMA along the Merri River near Platypus Park, and the overflow of my plants are being used to create a lovely tranquil walk along the river.

The council plans to make a permanent wetland down the back of our land and create a walking track around it.

Everyone is welcome to wander through the garden at any time, pull out a weed or 2 and take as many cuttings as you want.

Regards Greg & Gail.

ED: Sounds like we are long overdue for a group garden visit, Greg.

Plant Profile by Dave Handscombe

Species: *Banksia sphaerocarpa*

Banksia: Named after Joseph Banks, botanist and scientist on several expeditions most notably Cook's expedition to observe the transit of Venus. He later became the President of the Royal Society and remained a key figure in botanical and zoological investigations for over 40 years.

sphaerocarpa: from the Greek sphaera meaning spherical and carpos meaning a fruit, referring to the spherical fruiting cone.

There are 5 variants of the species,
var sphaerocarpa.

var latifolia: from the Latin latus meaning broad and foliosa meaning leaf.

var pumilio: from the Latin pumilio meaning dwarf in reference to the flowers.

var caesia: from the Latin caesius meaning bluey grey in reference to glaucous leaves.

var dolichostyla: from the Greek dolichos meaning long and stulos meaning pillar in reference to the very long pistil.



Common Name: Fox Banksia, Round-fruit Banksia.

Family: Proteaceae

Dimensions: Height: variable depending on variety, anything from 80cm to 4m, width up to 4m.

There are no registered cultivars on the ACRA site and no Plant Breeders Rights current.

Plant Profile by Dave Handscombe

Banksia sphaerocarpa occurs in the south west of WA from mid way between Albany and Bremmer Bay north through to Geraldton.

Banksia sphaerocarpa grows in well-drained predominately sandy to sandy loam soils that are lightly acidic to slightly alkaline. It tolerates full sun to partial shade, is hardy to light frosts, dry conditions and having a lignotuber, can be pruned heavily once established. Of the 5 varieties, *latifolia* is said to be the most ornamental and along with the other smaller variety, *pumilio*, would be suitable for pot culture. Propagation is relatively easy by seed but sourcing a specific variety may prove difficult. It can be grown by cutting although strike rate may be low.

Photo Captions

Photo 1: *Banksia sphaerocarpa* var *latifolia*.

Photo 2-5: Various stages of the development of the inflorescence.

Photo 6: Flowering will continue for many months with the number of various ages of the inflorescences.

Photo 7: The inflorescence in all its glory.



SHOWS, CONFERENCES, PLANT SALES AND OTHER ITEMS OF INTEREST 2023

25 & 26 March 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

29 March to 2 April 2023 – Melbourne International Flower and Garden Show (MIFGS), Carlton Gardens and Royal Exhibition Building. Website: <https://melbflowershow.com.au>.

1 April 2023 – APS Geelong Australian Native Plant Sale, 'Wirrawilla', Lovely Banks. 8.30 am to 4.00 pm.

15 April 2023 – APS Heathcote Plant and Flower Show. Mechanics Institute, 121 High Street, Heathcote.

22 April 2023 - APS Yarra Yarra Autumn Plant Sale, Eltham Community & Reception Centre, Eltham. 10 am – 4 pm.

29 April 2023 - APS Mornington Peninsula Plant Sale. 10 am to 3 pm. The Briars, Mt Martha.

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 TBC.

24 & 25 June 2023 – APS Ballarat Winter Flower Show, plant sales etc. Robert Clark Centre, Ballarat Botanic Gardens, Gilles St, 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.

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 (admin@angair.org.au – Nat Utmar, Admin, 5263 1085

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.

28 & 29 October 2023 (to be confirmed) - 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