



Australian Plants Society Yarra Yarra Group Inc

(Incorporation No. A0039676Y)

Newsletter Dec 2021 - Jan 2022

Latest News

Well Christmas & the holiday season are coming and we have reached the vaccination targets hoped for. Some other states and indigenous communities are still catching up but it is underway. What's happening in the rest of the world suggests caution upon opening up and vigilance with regard to observing the COVID SAFE rules. How marvelous it is to see friends again and talk together without masks muffling the sounds and the smiles.

The weather events have continued to be wild, windy and wet. In Hurstbridge we seem to have been cleaning up fallen trees and debris most weekends. The rain has been welcome of course, but the weeds.....let's not talk about the weeds.

The growth of the plants and the flowering season have been wonderful and I have been venturing forth, particularly in the early morning, just on sunrise and after rain, to get some images. There is a series later in this issue. I created a short video called *Nature does Bling* which you can see up on the APS Vic Youtube channel. You will also see a slide show presentation of the *APS YY October Grand Flower table*. I thought members might like to see the incredible diversity and beauty of the Australian plants many of us are growing and some of us propagate and sell. It is set to music. The images are letterboxed as not all images were suitable for widescreen presentation.

In closing for the year, keep gardening and enjoying your family, friends & community now that we can socialise once more. Isn't it great to do Lunch - don't forget that COVID certificate. See you at the Christmas Party. Stay safe and well and enjoy the Holiday Season.



Prostanthera striatiflora (MF)

December & January Events Diary

APS YY CHRISTMAS PARTY

5th December, 2021 – Wycliffe, 70 Graham Rd Kangaroo Ground at 1pm. Please RSVP to Peter 0425 798 275 for numbers before Nov 25. 3 raffles - 1 food, 1 drink and 1 plants. (BYO chairs and lunch)

Please note - it is a requirement that all attending are fully vaccinated and can show the COVID certificate either printed or on your phone.

2022 PLANT SALES

Saturday 19 March, 2022. APS YY Autumn plant sale
Saturday & Sunday 27 & 28 August, 2022. Spring EXPO.

Both will be at the Eltham Community and Reception Centre (ECRC). These dates were chosen to avoid clashes with other APS plant sales and availability of the ECRC.

MEETINGS

The Next Committee Meeting is scheduled for late January. The next General meeting is on February 3rd 2022 at 8pm – hopefully at Araluen!

GARDEN VISIT

The tentative date for garden visit to Jeanine Petts in Pyalong is on 6th February 2022. Details have been in previous news and more details will be forthcoming closer to the date.

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APS VIC Diary Dates

2022 Dates

11 – 16 September 2022, ANPSA Biennial Conference 2022 – Kiama, New South Wales.

Preliminary details of the Conference, pre- and post-Conference tours and (information on) the beautiful town of Kiama can be found on the APS (NSW) website. Expression of Interest for some tours have been requested.

26 to 30 September 2022 - 7th Global Botanic Gardens Congress, Melbourne. Influence and Action: Botanic Gardens as Agents of Change. Includes a youth program for future gardens' leaders aged 18 to 24.

15 & 16 October 2022 – 14th FJC Rogers Seminar. Topic: *Fabulous peas (the typical 'pea-flowered' plants from the sub-family Faboideae)*. York on Lilydale, 138 York Rd, Mount Evelyn VIC 3796. Expressions of interest and queries to fabulouspeas2022@gmail.com



Speakers for 2022

3rd February – Dr. Sapphire McMullan-Fisher, Topic: *What are fungi doing for our bushlands*

3rd March – Bill Aitchison, Topic: *Daviesias* (FJC Rogers Seminar tie in)

7th April – not booked yet.

5th May – Royce Raleigh, Topic: *Lesser known plants for the garden*.

With Thanks to Sue Gwilym for organising our speakers for 2022.



Images: Opposite *Daviesia cordata* (Miriam Ford) & *Daviesia mimosoides* (Mike Williams). Above *Dendrobium speciosa* (Agatha Stavrous). Some of the images from our October Zoom Flower table

APS YY Committee

Peter Smith - President, Garden Visits 0425 798 275.

Mike Williams - Vice-President 0418 372 262

Cathy Mann- Secretary, 0409 706 610

Sue Gwilym - Treasurer 0401 250 331

Carmen Cooper - Membership Officer, APS YY Growers 0413 012 045

Suzie Gordon - General Committee, APS YY Growers 0457 084 467

Anita Bourke - General Committee, APS YY Growers 0403 203 399

**November 4 Zoom
Meeting Report- Botanizing WA by John Harris**

John Harris is an ecologist and wildlife guide and during this talk he showcased the fantastic flora of WA, the major plant families and wildflower locations. Around 11500 plant species are recorded in WA. There are many vegetation communities such as rainforests, kwongan, tall forests, woodland and almost everything in between that contain species (endemics) found only in WA. The wildflower season in WA is a major tourist attraction.

The particular Geology of the WA predisposes to a huge range of endemics – John showed an astonishing table of statistics for the plants in the South-West Province. As an example within the Myrtaceae of the 807 species, 54 % are endemic; Proteaceae 681 species, 73% endemic; Mimosaceae 535 species, 398 endemic; Sterculiaceae 99 species, 65% endemic. Within certain Genera such as Hakea 62 % are only found there, Verticordia 63%, Dryandra 93% and these are the figures for just one of the three botanical provinces (BP) found in WA. With regard to the Fabaceae- the Peas and the wattles, there are over 820 taxa in the SW-BP alone. Many Peas such as *Gastrolobium* & *Isotropis* species have developed a toxic compound known as 1080 to protect themselves from grazing animals – the synthetic version of this is used for widespread fox & rabbit baiting – WA native animals have evolved with it and are tolerant.

Kwongan is Noongar for sand plain and is characterised by low shrubby vegetation with a mosaic of woodlands and mallee in semi-arid country. One of the best places to see the myriad of species that form the Kwongan is at Hi Vallee Farmstead near Badgingarra 250 km north of Perth (see image opposite which shows Don Williams from Hi Vallee on typical Kwongan country). Another wonderful spot is Lesueur National Park, again north of Perth. Then there are so many spots south of Perth. He finished his talk with a mention of the WA Christmas Tree, *Nuytsia floribunda* (see Image top opposite). I vividly recall looking out the plane window as we were on descent into Perth airport several years ago now and seeing a sea of golden yellow below – at the time I didn't know what it was but I lucked out given the season I was flying in and got to see the flowering en masse. Truly AWESOME, a wonderful memory.

John leads a few tours to WA – Wildlife experiences Kwongan Discovery and South-west Fauna. He uses a small minibus with no more than 9 people at time so you get to have an up close and personal experience of the place, stopping wherever and whenever. Give yourself a treat when it becomes possible again, go west!

This was a long and very detailed talk with many pictures of the extraordinary range of flora that abounds in WA, some fauna also. Thank you John. The video can be viewed on the APS Vic Youtube Channel - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51nieyNxdfE&t=265s>



John has co-authored a recently-published book -*Wildlife of the Australian Rainforests* by Peter Rowland, Angus McNab & John Harris -sponsored by Australian Geographic. He wrote a piece for the Victorian Field Naturalists News – Dec/Jan issue about it entitled *Writing a wildlife book: the process, research & knowledge, not to mention the trials and tribulations*. It is an interesting read and the book sounds fascinating. You can contact John at his website if you are interested in purchasing a copy – wildlifeexperiences@gmail.com

Foreign Correspondent

Bel Matthews reports in from WA. She returned there in August this year.

Life has taken a little time to return to normal, however I have returned to the weekly Peel Herbarium visit and we have been out in pre-recorded reserves seeking specific rare flora – some post fire plus others. Orchids are mainly affected by fire and it can be a tedious exercise. The Melaleucas are blooming profusely and the Nuytsia floribunda is budding up ready to display its masses of beautiful golden (Christmas tree) blooms. It's interesting to see it flowering the further south one travels. Also the difference in the size of natives which have been fortunate to receive higher winter rains. The 'Candlestick' (or slender) Banksia blooms are profuse on roadsides all the way down south (Banksia attenuata).

Have also attended the Men of the Trees (MOTT) seeding up on Saturdays with some 15 or so species to fill orders. MOTT seeding season runs from November to February and some years there are 20,000 seedlings on order. Cuttings are a minor part of MOTT activities due to, I guess, a lack of experience. Cuttings are geared more towards garden varieties and sold at their monthly stalls.

I do hope 2022 will see an improvement in movement for you and all across the country. My planned trip to Melbourne in October, obviously did not eventuate but hopefully 2022 will see us all moving about more easily. On your next trip to WA, you may like to save a day in joining the Herbarium team on a field trip. I regularly take photos when searching for specific Priority Genus/species so will forward them as available.

Meanwhile, do stay safe and pass on my regards to Carmen, Jill and the group.

Images from Bel - Below *Calectasia narragara* (Lambkin), Opposite Top *Calectasia grandiflora* & underneath *Pterostylis frenchii*.



Nov 4 Zoom
FT - Chris Krolkowski

Thank you to Chris K for creating a powerpoint presentation of some of the flowering plants at his place. Not just orchids - his white Waratah and Banksia caleyii were stunning - see the images below.

Chris tells us about his flowers:

1. **Dockrillia/Dendrobium banksii** originates from bushland on the southern east coast of New South Wales. It is believed to be a form of Dockrillia striolata which grows right along the east coast of Australia from Queensland all the way down into Tasmania. I have had this plant for nearly 7 years. It was purchased in a small 75mm pot and potted up to the current 200mm basket when needed.

Dockrillias are not fast growers, but this one has grown well and has flowered profusely every year in Spring. I started a flower count but lost count after 100. Last year it put on a similar show of flowers.

2. **The Banksia caleyi** was planted some 8 years ago and has grown to approximately 1.2m in height and 1.4m wide.

3. **The Telopea 'Shady Lady' White** was also planted

some 8 years ago and is currently 3m x 2m in size. Last year was a great flowering year but it managed a good display this year as can be seen from the photo. It probably requires a good prune but I am reluctant to hack it back. It faces West in full sun. I had prepared the bed by adding sandy loam to the rather heavy soil of this area. The Banksia 'Birthday Candles' in the foreground is about 0.8m x 0.8m

4. I have a great number of **Sarcochilus** in my greenhouse. They vary from white, peach and all the way through to pure red/maroon with various combinations of these colours. I am still to get my hands on a true golden yellow. It is around but scarce and at a price. The flower size of Sarcochilus varies depending on the species and range from 8mm to over 25mm. Hybridizers have managed to derive an enormous range of colour forms. In order to get variations of colour they hybridise with other genera to increase size and colour although there isn't much they can do with colour except work on a true yellow or towards a blue.

1



3



2



4



Nature Does
Bling



Becoming magnificent - *Prostanthera magnifica* budding up, *Callistemon citrinus* 'Endeavour' threesome, *Melaleuca nematophylla* buds just opening and *Geleznowia verrucosa* in a hanging basket. This has been flowering for months, such a vivid yellow and it makes a great, long lasting cut flower.



Opposite is a more recent image of *Prostanthera magnifica*, just starting to flower. The brilliant shield-like calyx is what first catches the eye, then the mauve corolla unfolding its petals to reveal the spotted throat.

The APS YY Newsletter

New Editor for 2022 - The job requires a good level of competency with computer-related tasks such as Word & email programs, some facility with images is helpful. You are welcome to discuss with members of committee, Sue Gwilym or myself.

Contributions from the members to the newsletter are always appreciated. Thank you to Bel Matthews and Chris K for their contributions to this issue. Thanks also to Sue Gwilym, Nada Cunningham & Jill Lulham for proof reading.