



Australian Plants Society

Loddon-Murray Group

Native Plant Newsletter

APRIL—JUNE

2019 Edition



POLLACK SWAMP REVISITED by Bill Ricketts

Sun 24th Feb 2019

Attended by Ben Hall, Jennifer Fox and Bill Ricketts

A great day with hardly a fly to be irritated by. A semi-cool NE breeze made temperatures quite comfortable. 37 people assembled at Barham Council and many piled into the mini-bus provided. Personal chairs and picnic hampers went into a ute and off we went.

In less than 10km from town we turned off Gonn Rd into 'THE ARK' which borders the swamp. This protected area is not polluted by man however the whole area is rife with damage done by feral pigs, deer, foxes, cats and dogs. And maybe a few lost head of cattle and sheep. Native fauna abound in wallabies, echidnas, goannas and aquatics. The group was shown feral pig 'rootings' which seriously affects the nesting for turtles. We saw an Eastern Long-neck turtle that had been attacked by a fox. It was still alive but bleeding from a small wound on one leg. Foxes tend to dig up turtle nests. Also seen was a deer carcass and one Red-Belly Black Snake.

Capably led by Dan, we meandered from the car park with regular stops to explain specific items of study. One most notable absentee was 'understorey' vegetation. Dan explained the logging leftovers and the new sapling creepers heading skyward. There is little if any ground cover due to over grazing of animals. The next phase of this restoration project is to eliminate or control feral animals, particularly deer and pigs.

The level of the swamp is below that of my first visit, last year, and this is deliberate to get rid of carp. This strategy has been effective in the past so it is being utilised again. Another flow of environmental water will refill the swamp within a few weeks. This is to provide additional flows due to the lack of natural inflows.

Then after an hour we drove on to the Lagoon. This is separated from the swamp by 'The Neck' which is a natural barrier. The remains of Aboriginal habitation become apparent. During the 18,500yrs of dated cooking mounds, aboriginal tribes used the annual floods to trap fish in dug-out ponds. The neck was used to redirect water into these ponds.

The Lagoon itself was a breeding ground for all native fish and the fry would eventually flow into the Wakool, Edward and Murray rivers and seasonally return to spawn. The cycle of life continues. During the meal break, we were entertained by a huge white Sea Eagle. It soared high above us and rested in the top branches of a tree on the opposite bank. Many people with binoculars were gazing in awe at the sight, while those with cameras did their best to get that elusive shot. My attempts are attached on next page. The day ended with a brief accolade to the organizers of the event. In my opinion the credit goes to 'Dan' who manages this project, his superiors and to Roger Knight for his catering and logistical input.

POLLOCK SWAMP REVISTED PHOTOS BY BILL RICKETTS



Note the lack of understorey plants.



Eastern Long Neck Turtle.
Playing at hiding.



Evidence of Pig Rootings.



Small deer carcass. Skeleton is 4m away.



‘THE NECK’. Swamp is behind me, lagoon ahead.



Sea Eagle waiting for us to depart.
Distance more than 100m away.

FLOWERING IN OUR GARDEN IN APRIL by Ann Bienvenu Swan Hill.

***Eucalyptus Erythrocorys* -Red Capped Gum**

Grows to 5 mts and doing well in our clay soil. It has yellow flowers and red caps and is a magnet for Corellas and honeyeaters. It has been planted as a small street tree in Swan Hill.



***Acacia Pendula* - Weeping Myall**

A beautiful grey leaved weeping tree to 12 mts. Good for shade or a windbreak. Small lemon yellow flowers. Good on sand or clay soils.

MAY– We have had some rain at last about 2 inches here and the garden loves it. I have taken out a lot of the plants that died due to heat and no rainfall over summer and replanted while the soil is still warm.

***HAKEA LAURINA* Stock dale form.**

An improved form of Laurina to 5 mts tall, Crimson flowers with cream styles, autumn and winter flowering and bird attracting and grows in clay or sandy soils.



For those of you that have access to Face Book Loddon Murray APS has a page where you can see some of our activities that have or will take place. www.facebook.com/APS Loddon Murray/

Also APS Vic web site has a lot of information. www.apsvic.org.au with the password for members listed on page 2 of March 2019 Growing Australian.

OUTING TO “TULLA NATIVES” - MAY 19th 2019 by Ann Bienvenu

About 12 of us met at Mark and Stacey's Nursery at 7120 Wakool Rd Wakool.

With a large area under drip irrigation where lots of young plants are being grown for future cut flowers and foliage including Eucalypts, Wattles, Banksias, Kangaroo Paws, Hakea etc.

Mark and Stacey also have a nursery area where they grow advanced plants for sale to the public and a hothouse for propagation of seeds and cuttings and another house for growing on plants in small tubes for sale for farm planting and revegetation areas.

They bought Gannawarra Tree Nursery including the stock and infrastructure. The weather was kind to us and we sat outside and had our lunch and a few more plants were purchased for our gardens.

Mark and Stacey have put a lot of hard work into developing their nursery and we thank them for having us for the day, and it would be great to go back in the future to see how the area has grown and matured.



2019 CALENDAR LODDON MURRAY APS

Wednesday June 26th AGM 7.30pm @ Lions Clubrooms

Guest speakers Faye and Andrew Bail on their property at the Terrick Terrick National Park.

Supper Duty Maplestones and Parkers.

Saturday July 6th Garden walk at Andrew Farleys

1784 Murrabit Road Kerang.

From 11am onwards, BYO lunch.

Wednesday July 24th General Meeting 7.30pm @ Lions Clubrooms

Guest speaker MMFNI members

Irene Poyner (also an APS member and David Thompson

Supper Duty M Kostanski & Hall family

Aug/Sept/Oct— Outings to be confirmed

Sat Sept 14th APS Vic Comm and AGM at Australian Garden, Cranbourne

Fri 4th—Sun 6th Oct 14th Annual Friends of the Terricks activities weekend.

Sat 12th Oct—APS Echuca Moama Native Flower Showcase

Details in June Growing Australia.

Wednesday Oct 23rd General Meeting 7.30pm @ Lions Clubrooms

Guest speakers Maree & Graeme Goodes

Supper Duty B Matthews and J Hewitt.

November—APS Bendigo hosts APS Vic Comm. Date and details yet to be confirmed.

November / early December Possible visit Wirra-lo Wetlands in Spring, there will be environmental water flows in autumn taking place.

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Our enjoyable two day outings to the gardens below, written by Lorraine and photos by Elva.

We had an attendance of 9 on Wednesday and 8 on Thursday. Next time I am sure more will want to come and enjoy the friendship that we had over the two days.

How nice to arrive at **Bob and Dot O'Neils**, their long drive is extensively planted out with a myriad of Native plants dominated by many Boab trees doing extremely well. Bob's correas are everywhere in varying leaf forms and flower colours.

Bob did a short talk and then we went inside to watch a video Dot had made of the emergence of the garden over the 8 years. With many loads of soil, compost and rocks they have created a beautiful garden completely surrounding their house, which also led to an orchard, shade houses and a hot house.

We enjoyed our visit and came away very inspired.



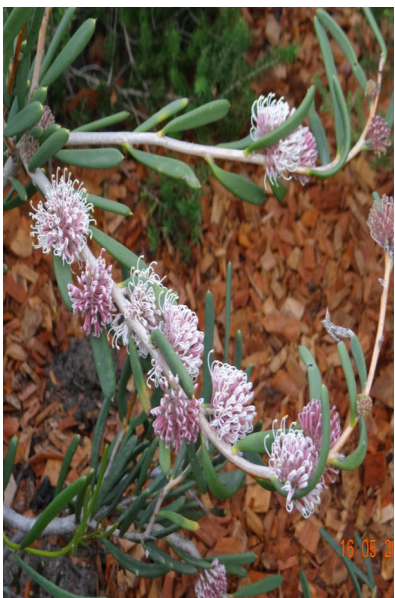
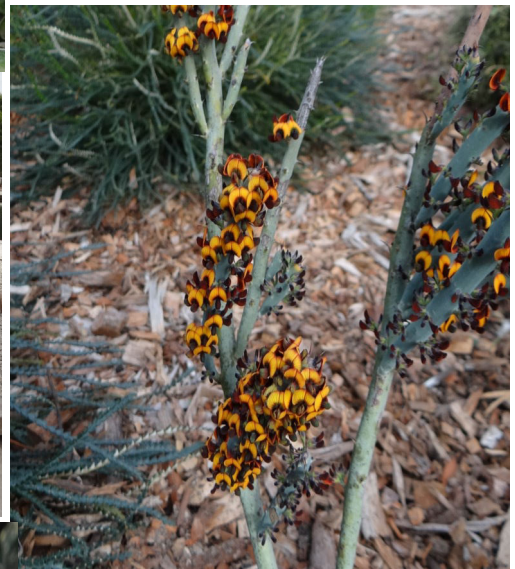
Cranbourne Botanical Gardens.

We were met at the Information centre of the gardens by Mandy our guide for the whole day.

Mandy explained the history and workings of the gardens and the way each area was designed to mimic many of the different areas of Australia from the Deserts, Coastal, Tropical, Alpine and Mallee.

After lunch Mandy took us to the Nursery and Propagation areas, hot houses and to meet the "Friends of the Botanical Gardens" who prick out and prepare plants for planting out or their annual plant sale.

We said our goodbyes and thank you's to Mandy and spent a little more time in the gardens until our feet gave out. We had an amazing day and need to return in Spring.



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