



Bendigo Native Plant Group Inc.

P. O. Box 669, Bendigo, Victoria, 3552.

Reg. No. A0014487F

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BNPG is a district group of Australian Plants Society - Victoria and Bendigo membership requires membership of APS - Vic.

February 2018 Newsletter

Greetings,

and happy new year! Been a bit hot me thinks. At least the weather was kinder to the brave souls who met at Crusoe No 7 for our end of year do. Numbers were on the low side but I believe the atmosphere was jolly! Photo shows just some of the happy crew. I was absent at a Victorian Committee meeting in Ballarat so I got to have a squiz at the Ballarat Gardens which were cool and moist!



Please note that **this Tuesday's meeting will be preceded with a bring and share meal at 6.30pm** at our meeting rooms. SAVOURY only for the meal. Any sweet delights will be saved for the end of the meeting with a cuppa. Also, bring along any bits and pieces of foliage plants to help with our discussion.

See you on Tuesday - *Sandy*

November Plant of the Evening

Eric Wilkinson

Graptophyllum excelsum

Scarlet Fuchsia – a great Christmas plant

The species is from the Acanthaceae family and was named by G C Druce in 1917, and the type specimen came from Rockhampton in Queensland. Graptophyllum means marked leaves, which is true for some species, but not this one. Excelsum just means 'tall'. It occurs naturally in east coast ranges from Port Curtis north to Cape York in Queensland, at elevations from 350 m to 650 m and grows on limestone soils and in vine thickets.

A tall, narrow shrub or small tree it can reach 8m, although it is usually more like 2 to 4m and can grow into thickets by suckering. The branches and stems are russet brown, with bright and shiny dark green leaves - lighter green when young - oval and spatulate, in opposite pairs. The curved tubular flowers are about 4 cm long, intensely scarlet, and very profuse in a good season with flowers in almost every axil. Its early summer flowering season includes Christmas. Flowers are followed by brown woody seed capsules.



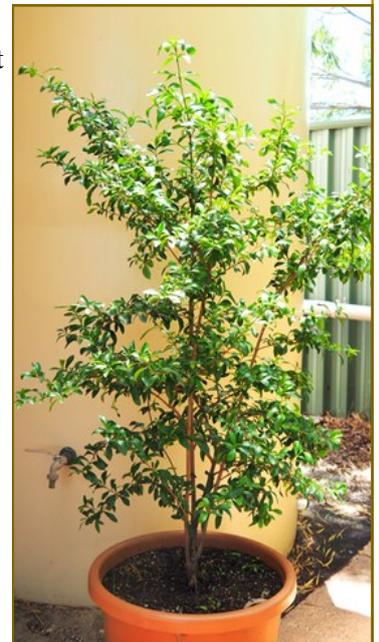
Tuesday 20 February 2018
6.30pm Shared Tea - bring something yummy
7.30pm Group Discussion Foliage Plants
Supper - Jan Waller bringing milk!

NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING
 7.30 pm 28 February 2018, 112 Casey Street Bendigo

Propagation is by cuttings, suckers or seeds. We have managed to get two growing from cuttings, and we will be setting more cuttings soon.

I bought my plant at a Melbourne Flower Show about six years ago, from a NSW nursery stall (name forgotten). The man seemed confident that it would grow in Victoria, so I thought that I would give it a go, as his much larger sample plant looked very attractive, and his photos of the flowers very appealing. I looked up my Wrigley and Fagg, who claimed that it would grow well in sun or shade in well composted soil. I should have taken more notice of the fact that they said it had given good results from Cairns as far south as Sydney, and that frost tolerance had not been tested. I chose a semi-shaded spot, worked compost into the soil and planted it with high hopes. It is a testament to its toughness that it survived its first winter, proving tolerant of frost, and its first summer, when it tolerated high temperatures and low humidity. However, although it survived, and even produced a couple of flowers in its first summer, it certainly did not thrive. I tried it one more year, adding compost and fertiliser in an effort to persuade it to grow, but it went backwards and was lucky to survive its second summer.

In the following autumn I decided to dig it up and grow it the way I should have done to start with, as a container plant. It has not looked back and I've had to progressively pot it on into larger pots. I have used Native Osmocote but when I potted it on a few weeks ago I tried Bush Tucker, which it does seem to be responding to. The plant is currently 1.1 m high, and in a 42 cm pot. Since I made it into a tub plant and kept it on the edge of our verandah, where it gets a fair bit of shade, and some shelter from frost, but it also benefits from rain when it does fall.



Meetings are held at the Golden Square Community Hall, Old High St, Golden Square, on the third Tuesday of each month from February to November. The room is open from 7.10 pm, for viewing of display specimens. Program begins at 7.30 pm.

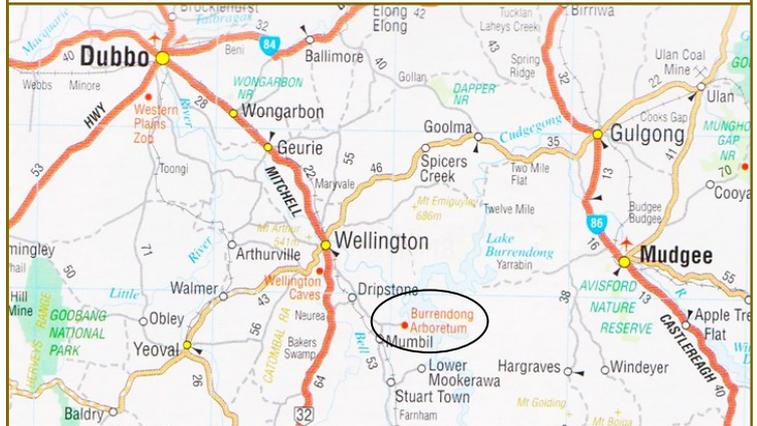


Christmas!

Last December it was obvious that it was going to profusely flower in the lead up to Christmas, and the scarlet flowers and dark green leaves made a very Christmassy combination. We moved it to our front porch, where despite being exposed to hot wind it coped admirably and was turned into a Christmas decoration by adding some tinsel and decorations. It gave us a lot of pleasure for quite a few weeks. In a container it copes with sub-zero temperatures in winter, and 40 plus temperatures in summer, providing water is kept up to it. Unlike so many native plants it does let you know when it wants a drink by drooping its leaves, and recovers quickly when it gets water. On my experience I would say it is a very worthwhile container plant for Bendigo, but it does not like growing in the ground, in our garden at least. - EW

November 2018 Presentation *Burrendong and Beyond* Tony Brown

All photos from Tony's presentation



In July 2017, Carol and I did a two week road trip up through inland NSW to Coonabarabran then across to the coast at Coffs Harbour, then down to Sydney and home along the Hume Hwy. We kept hearing the name 'Burrendong Arboretum' when we looked up plants in reference books about grevilleas, hakeas etc. It was often mentioned in relation to the hardiness of plants in dry and frost (down to -5°) conditions. When we looked up the location we found it was just south of Wellington, near where we were travelling so arranged to stay very nearby at Lake Burrendong.



Fine needle foliage helps this Hakea with the heat



Eucalyptus pleurocarpa



Eucalyptus kruseana



Diamond Firetails

Nurseries Who Support Our Group

A bit of unashamed advertising for our members

The owners of these nurseries are BNPG members and generously support our group so don't forget to support them! More member businesses who support us to come.



230 Tannery Lane, Mandurang
Ph: 5439 5384
www.goldfieldsrevegetation.com.au



Revegetation and Forestry Plants

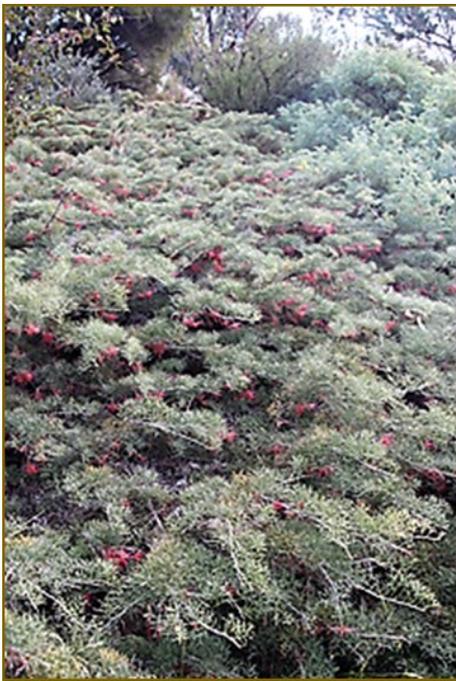
8 McClelland Dr. Eaglehawk
Ph: 5446 9260
www.neangarnursery.com.au



86 Maiden Gully Rd, Maiden Gully Ph: 417544159
www.habitatnativeplantcompany.com.au

Bendigo Field Naturalists Club

7.30 pm second Wednesday of the month
Golden Square Hall, Old High Street, Golden Square



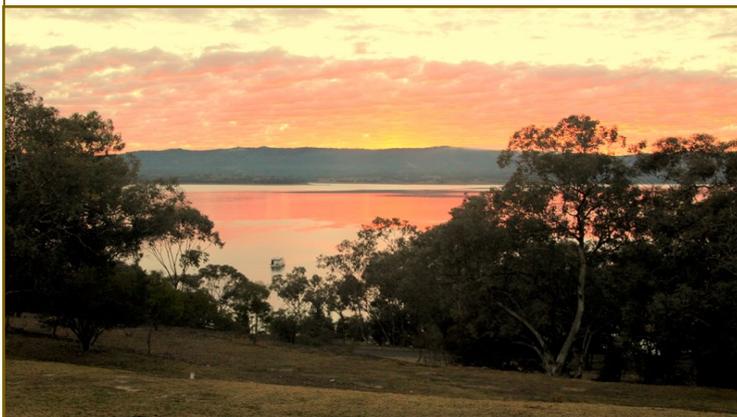
Grevillea maxwellii
tumbling down a
slope.



Euc. Pyriformis 'Pear-fruited Mallee' - both red and yellow.

The arboretum was established in 1964 and covers 167 hectares and is dedicated to the preservation and conservation of Australia's unique and diverse flora, especially from dry areas. It is divided into large drive-through plantations of various plant groups eg eucalyptus, hakeas, grevilleas, prostantheras etc. Entry is by donation. It resulted from the efforts of George and Peter Althofer who sought suitable land and funding to buy it. These days it is managed by one or two permanent employees who live on site, and a 'friends' group who give time and money for maintenance. There is a nursery and propagation area, with some tube-stock for sale.

I didn't plan to be giving a talk about the arboretum when we visited, so my photos don't convey the overall impression of the site - I just photographed plants and flowers that interested me. Much of the garden is quite overgrown and showing its age. But new beds with a watering system have been created near the entrance and are doing well. The soil is quite like ours. The arboretum is well worth a visit and good cabin/caravan accommodation is only one kilometre away at the lake. Photo - our view!



On the rest of our travels at Seal rocks south of port Macquarie we found lots of orchids under power lines where the bush had been slashed. Orchids - Greenhoods, Mosquito. Caladenia, including twins - only mother can tell apart - Wattle, and Billardiera.



Wattle



Billardiera

Then to Umina which is sandstone country near the beach. We were directed to an exposed rugged promontory where we found Isopogon, Patersonia purple flag, Lambertia, Philotheca, Eriostemon, *Epacris longiflora* (long flowers) and *microphylla* (tiny leaves), and Hakea. We did a Flannel Flower walk but only found a couple of plants with flowers. So do go to Burrendong and Beyond and enjoy. - TB



Isopogon



Patersonia



Lambertia



E. longiflora



E. microphylla

The November Specimen Table

Lisa's *Cordyline Stricta* 'Slender Palm Lily' is from north Qld. With deep green strappy leaves and delicate sprays of mauve flowers it keeps branching out and is easily propagated by breaking a bit off, removing the lower leaves and popping it into the ground or pot. It makes for a lush plant in a shaded spot and at Christmas time the bonus is the red berries.



Pileanthus Penduncularis 'Copper Cups' is growing in the ground at Ian E's as a non-grafted cutting. The flowers the same colour as blood orange juice and on Ian's plant are the smaller form. Flowers also come in strong pink and copper.



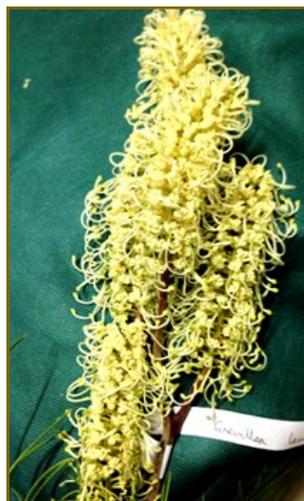
Marilyn reported that Sally Page from WA (guest at our last meeting) has found a hybrid with both hot pink and bright orange flowers on the one plant! The September edition of Growing Australia featured an article on these plants which come from WA.



Ian E's *Eremophila Cuneifolia* is another from the west! It is grafted and grows to about 60cm high by 1m across. It's a bit frost tender but recovers quickly. The flowers are purple and sit within very large soft pinkish-mauve bracts with lime green bases and look rather spectacular.

Still in the west Ian E's melaleuca species is from near Ravensthorpe. He's had it for many years and grew it from seed and it is now a bit less than 1m high and 1.5m across. It doesn't

always flower but is doing well this year. Hot days kill off the flowers which are small puffs of puce. Ian has also grown this plant from cuttings.



Ian again with *Grevillea leucoptervis* 'Old Socks'. It emits strong pong at night which attracts the insect pollinators. Growing to 3m tall the flowers are on the ends of the branches which form big arches. From coastal WA it grows reasonably well in western Vic. The flowers are cream and don't pong too badly before

Ian E's last offering was *Brachycton bidwillii* Southern form which grows 3 - 4 m tall and started flowering this week. The flowers are a dusty red.



Lots of colour at Tony and Carol's! Tony brought in a puce coloured

Chamelaucium uncinatum

'Geraldton Wax' and a green

Callistemon pinifolius. The wax has been growing for a number of years in a slightly raised bed in a hot and open spot and strikes readily from cuttings. The Callistemon comes from northern NSW and is fairly insignificant until the beautiful green flowers bloom and then it is brilliant! The leaves are thin and hard hence the name which reflects pine tree needles. Birds are attracted to the flowers which also come in a rusty and a dull red.



Eremophila maculata was Bev B's offering. It gets covered by flowers then wrecked by birds! Wattle birds mainly at moment but other birds when wattle birds not being so aggressive. It is 1m tall and 20yrs old. They need to be pruned as if too big the stems split. Marilyn's was zapped by the frost! Note - Eremophilas don't usually germinate from seed and some say they need to pass through the gut of an emu. Although some do come up from seed Marilyn has used heat and smoke to get seed to germinate.



BNPG DIARY

Tuesday 20 March - TBA

Friday 23 March - Day Time Meeting

Tuesday 18 April - Native Conifers

April or May - Excursion to Melton Botanic Gardens

Tuesday 15 May - Dryandras

Tuesday 19 June - Grevilleas

Other Diary Dates

17 & 18 March Cranbourne Friends Royal Botanic Gardens Spring Plant Sale - 10.00 am to 4.00 pm. (Mel 133 K10)

21 April APS Geelong Plant Sale at 'Wirrawilla', 40 Lovely Banks Road, Lovely Banks. (Mel 431 D6). 8.30 am to 5.00 pm

28 April APS Yarra Yarra Plant & Book Sale. Eltham Senior Citizens Centre, 903 Main Road, Eltham from 10 am to 4 pm.

21 & 21 October - 12th FJC Rogers Seminar at Horsham. To express interest email fjcrogersseminar2018@gmail.com