



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.

September 2018 Newsletter

Greetings -

Last month I asked if you had been anywhere that might interest other members. Well Karin has! She attended a meeting at the RACV club at Cape Schanck and was very impressed that all their plantings are native. Some friends of mine regularly attend the restaurant there and are equally impressed!

On Tuesday it really is Bush Food night and Sharni will be sharing her knowledge. We'll also be doing a bit of pre-flower show preparation so the flower show roster will be there for you to add your name - if not done so already. And if you have a list of the botanical and/or common names of specimens for the show then please bring it along. Also, if you have some flowers for the show but don't know the names then bring some of them so they can be identified. Lots of 'brings'! We also hope to have a couple of cars loaded with specimen vases, signs etc. by the end of the night which will save quite a bit of time and effort on the Friday. Oh, and if you can't get to Tuesday's meeting then ring me with any questions or to put your name on the roster.

Next month as we recover from a wonderful show we will be having our AGM together with a great talk from Ian about his recent North West adventures. Please think about committee nominations. A Notice of AGM with nomination form is attached. And we have cake at committee meetings!

Lastly - for those wondering where the Day Time meetings disappeared all is not lost! Yes, time did fly, but hopefully we'll fit one in before the end of the year and get properly back into the swing of things next year.

See you on Tuesday

- Sandy

7.30 pm Tuesday 18 September 2018

Bush Foods - Sharni Hamilton

Supper - Carol Kramer & Sandy Birch

NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING

7.30 pm 9 October 2018, 35A Murphy St, East Bendigo

August Plant of the Evening

Bev Brooks

Acacias ausfeldii

'Ausfeld's Wattle' 'Whipstick Cinnamon Wattle'

Bev began by observing that as Wattle Day is on September 1 she thought she would talk about one of our local wattles and has chosen *Acacia ausfeldii*, not just because she thinks it is attractive but because it is listed as vulnerable and worth growing for that reason. The seeds were first collected in Bendigo by J.G. Ausfeld and then formerly described in 1867 by the German botanist Eduard August Von Regel.

The flowers which appear in twos or sometimes a cluster of three at the base of each phyllode are only just coming out on this 3m x 2m small to medium shrub. The open form is very elegant and you don't notice it until the globular flowers start appearing in August. Wattles are part of the Fabaceae family (the peas) and the seed pods are light brown, straight and narrow. The branches often arch and branchlets are ribbed and hairy. The foliage is sometimes sticky and is gently curved with a prominent mid vein and covered in tiny gland dots. (Note - the foliage or leaves are really phyllodes which are leaf-like flattened stems.)

You can see these wattles sprinkled through the north central Victorian bush and in parts of NSW. They prefer gravel and part shade and are drought tolerant. They are quick growing in the garden and live 8 to 10 years and seed readily but watch out for hybrids and suckers! One threat is development. Ausfeldii Drive in Spring Gully was named for these plants which were then obliterated by housing!



A. ausfeldii growing in Sparrowhawk Road, Long Gully in 2006
Photo Eric Wilkinson



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.

August 2018 Presentation
Pruning with Ian

Photos - I. Evans

If you are not pruning then you are not getting even close to nature because plants in the bush are pruned by nature every day of the week by bugs, animals and some birds - all of which to much good for the plants. So for some pruning tips ... or should that be tip pruning?

Firstly, when planting trees watch out for bifurcation - where the trunk branches to become two main trunks. As the tree grows there is a risk it will split when hit by high winds and totally die or get infested by insects, or, that leaf matter and other detritus will gather in the fork and cause damage. So when your plant is young, choose which of the trunks you wish to keep and remove the other.



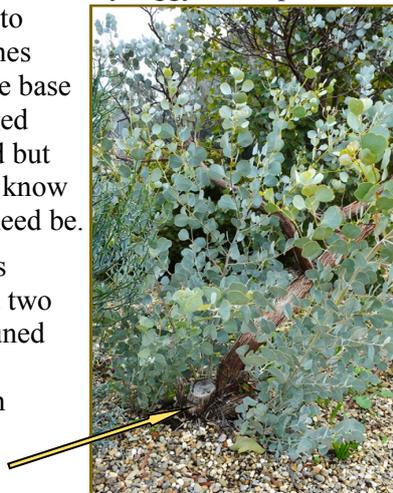
If you have inherited a larger tree with bifurcation or let one of yours 'get away' then all is not lost. Follow these instructions which also apply to removing any large branches. Cut through the bark on the underside of the limb, a little way from the trunk. Then cut from the top side a bit further from the trunk. By doing this the bark will only tear to the underside cut as the limb drops - not down to the trunk and further! Lastly, slice away the



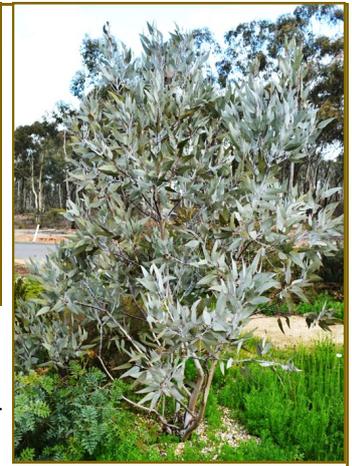
remaining stub very close to the trunk. There is no need to seal the wound as doing so prevents the plant from healing and sealing itself. The photos show the site where the branch was sliced from the trunk and the healthy self-heeled wound some three years later.

Ian's *Euc. burracoppinensis* was very leggy in the pot and after planting it out he tried to shorten the outer two branches instead of cutting it off at the base which would have encouraged new growth. It has now died but at least if we plant some we know to try cutting at the base if need be.

Another plant in trouble was *Euc. minniritchi* which had two very sick branches. Ian pruned them to ground level and it hasn't looked back. You can see one of the stumps at the base of the tree.



And this is what happens if you prune the Mallee *Euc. youngiana* back to ground level. It was in a tube with a 2m tall single trunk. Once pruned to the ground loads more stems shot out and today it is healthy bushy small tall tree.



And another photo clearly showing the new growth after this *Euc. kingsmillii* was cut right back when planted last year. It didn't take long for the new trunks to shoot.



Now for the smaller plants ... After tip pruning *Grevillea dielsiana* 3 or 4 months ago it has shot out numerous shoots. If Ian is lucky it will flower on each leaf axil.

He pruned with the simplest implement - finger nails - nipping off the very soft tip at the end of each stem. If he had not done this it would have been a really long branch by now with less flowering potential. Remember - frost, insects and animals tip prune in the bush. You can see where he 'nipped'.

This *Calothamnus* known for its showy bright red brushes that form on the underside of the branches sadly collapsed after splitting in three - it should have been pruned at an early stage and will now have to be removed. It collapsed because it grew too quickly. The golden rule is that there should be more going on under soil than above. So reduce the weight on the top of the plant when it has finished flowering and hopefully that will avoid 'the splits'.





Look how happy this Eremophila hybrid is! From north central WA it doesn't like the wet so got die back. But! A bit of tip pruning every year in late Sept or Oct has

done wonders. Some eremophilas are very frost tender but the gravel keeps the lower branches 2 - 3 degrees warmer in winter and 8 degrees cooler in summer - except for when there are excessive temperatures.

Ian prunes his *Prostanthera aspalathoides* 'Scarlet Mint Bush' regularly and boy has it responded by forming a dense and healthy habit with lots of flowers. When flowering from August to December the honey eaters hit it hard which also knocks it around - but that's a form of pruning too! This plant is a bit hard on the fingernails so use some secateurs. Pruning Billy Buttons annually also results in dense healthy growth. The Kangaroo Paw next to the 'buttons' has its spikes cut right back each year. And as for the dampiera - Ian just removes the old plant as there are plenty of suckers ready to produce lots of electric blue flowers. (Photo below)

Lastly, *Goodenia gracilis* was purchased as tube stock from Goldfields Reveg and is planted in a drainage line that takes water from road runoff, other garden beds when it rains or he waters and the air conditioner 'drip' on hot days. Ian said it is a much underused plant. He believes councils should use this plant more than Carex and other reedy things that don't have flowers and get removed as a fire hazard.



As this goodenia is herbaceous it doesn't encourage fire. The plant is fairly insignificant until it flowers from September to February when it is a glorious sheet of yellow. All it needs is an annual hair-cut!



Before prune!



Goodenia gracilis 6 weeks after pruning!

Committee of Management Report and APSVIC AGM

Here are a few snippets from the August COM meeting which was in the snowy, haily (I know - that's not a word!) and damp Dandenongs at Karwarra Native Botanic Gardens.

APSVIC are in talks with Neutrog re possible endorsement of Bush Tucker. If this goes ahead then we will be able order product on an ongoing basis and will receive assistance from Neutrog to 'grow' our groups.

Two schemes for promoting the welfare of local wildlife in your garden are available free to anyone. In return for registering you get a sign to put at the front of your property. Some local councils are actively encouraging these schemes and it's easy to get involved. They are 'Habitat Stepping Stones' and 'Gardens for Wildlife Victoria'. Have a look online and sign up!

2020 is the 250th anniversary of the landing of naturalists Sir Joseph Banks and Daniel Solander in Australia. It has been suggested there be a theme throughout the year with groups celebrating this event.

A member from East Gippsland has raised the issue of feral animals. This is a huge concern right across the board for both wildlife (not to mention farm animals) and habitat. If anyone knows how to get a Politician to have an actual look at what is happening then please let me know and I'll pass the details on. (Good news - feral deer are eating the roses at the Bed and Breakfasts in Halls Gap so, nothing against roses, maybe enough people will get upset to notice the problem!)

Regarding the drought situation, yet another suggestion is that groups propagate salt and blue bush to vegetate farms. A lot of homework has to be done before this gets off the ground (or into the ground??) but if seems a good idea. We may be able to get other organizations (Service clubs, schools, Community groups etc.) involved but first the homework!

Lastly, work is being done for a new APSVIC brochure. One idea is to list all the nurseries in Victoria (and maybe just over the border) that specialise in Australian plants. Please send me your suggestions - Name and Address - even if you think we already know.

Re the AGM - if you look at p.54 of the September 2018 Growing Australian then you will see that we have no State Secretary so, for the moment, Vic. President Chris Long is filling the role. There are few other vacancies that you might like to fill! Now there's a suggestion!!

This particular Committee of Management meeting was a two day event with day one consisting of guided tours of local bush reserves and visits to private gardens. There was an optional meal with guest speaker (Dr. Trevor Edwards) on Saturday night. On the Sunday there was the COM meeting followed by tour of Karwarra then lunch and the short AGM. Any member is welcome to attend - there are four per year and most are just one day. Let me know if you are interested. - Sandy Birch, APSVIC Group Delegate

The August Specimen Table



Acacia floribunda will certainly have lots of flowers when all those buds 'burst'! Lisa told us it gets to 6 metres tall and grows really fast - as high as roof in 2 years.

It originates from NSW and is growing along the fence line of Neangar Nursery and gets absolutely no TLC.

Hovea acanthoclada

'Thorny Hovea' is a West Australian and has been growing in Bev C's garden in 'awful soil' for at least 10 years. It is very prickly. After years of no pruning it got woody so she cut right back last year and it's now flowering better than ever. It is now 2 m high x 80 cm wide - was 2m wide - and is easy to grow. *Acanthoclada* means clad with thorns!



Bev also said her *Grevillea dielsiana*

grows in awful soil! It is 2 x 2m but only because she keeps cutting sides back. Every year the flowers are smaller than year before - they started about 15 cm now down to about 10cm. It comes from a fairly sandy area a fair way north of Perth and there are four different forms with different coloured flowers. Despite their size, the blooms last the longest of all the flowers in her garden.



Ian's *Hovea lanceolata* grows to 1.5 m. Note the lance shaped leaves. It develops and dies very quickly but self-seeds everywhere so plants just keep popping up. His are growing in very heavy clay even though they come from rocky sandy areas.

And his light blue *Lechenaultia biloba* is, like all bilobas, a little bit hard to grow. They only live for a few years so he suggests you keep taking cuttings. He grows them in pots and in the ground.



BNPG DIARY

Our Flower Show

Fri 21 (set up) Sat 22 & Sun 23 Sept

Tuesday 16 October - Ian Evans' Great Grevillea Hunt

Tuesday 20 Nov - Marilyn (Bull) Gray's Field Trip to Mt. Augustus WA

No **End Of Year Do!** this year as we working on squeezing in an early November excursion and have planned to start 2019 with a social evening (plant and food based of course!) on **19 February 2019**

Other Diary Dates

6 & 7 October APS Grampians Flower Show, Pomonal Hall 9.30am to 5pm Sat & 10am to 4pm Sunday

13 & 14 October Sth Gippsland Native Plant Sale and Show, Leongatha Reserve, 10am to 4pm

20 October APS Mitchell Plant Expo, Kilmore Memorial Hall 9am to 3pm

20 October ANPS East Gippsland Spring Spectacular, Lucknow Hall, Bairnsdale

20 & 21 October - 12th FJC Rogers Seminar at Horsham. To express interest email fjcrogersseminar2018@gmail.com

27 October APS Echuca Moana Native Flower Showcase, Echuca Masonic Lodge, 426 High St. Echuca 9am to 4 pm

27 & 28 October APS Ballarat Plant Show 10 am to 4.30 pm Robert Clark Horticultural Centre, Ballarat Bot Gardens, Gillies St.

Bendigo Field Naturalists Club

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