



# Australian Plants Society Ballarat District Newsletter – Sept 2020

**MONTHLY MEETINGS ON THE 2<sup>ND</sup> WEDNESDAY  
at ROBERT CLARK HORTICULTURAL CENTRE  
GILLIES STREET ENTRANCE – GATE 3 or 4  
FURTHER DETAILS SEE INFORMATION BOX**

Meetings,  
activities and  
events  
suspended  
due to  
COVID-19  
until further  
notice



Photo: Ruth Marton

*Grevillea levis* (previously *G. paniculata*) in bud. This prolific grevillea is growing in the Marton garden. Ruth Marton notes: “Much more attractive now than when in full flower”.

## FROM THE PRESIDENT

**With** the imposition of ‘lock-down’ we still have no idea when it will be possible to meet or to have any activities.

**If** restrictions ease it may be possible to have an outdoor AGM during an excursion or garden visit in November.

**Ironstone Nursery** and the Farmgate Shop may combine to have another plant sale, possibly in October.

**At the AGM** all positions are declared vacant. Some of the present office bearers are willing to be re-elected, **but we need a Secretary.**

## SPRING FLOWER SHOW

It has been decided, after consultation with members, that the Spring Flower Show will not be held this year. Thank you to the members who provided input to the decision-making process. It was felt even if the restrictions on assembly are lifted by October, the risks outweigh the benefits.

## ACTIVITIES

Some other APS groups are arranging 'Outdoor activities': Garden visits, excursions, etc. Have you any ideas for activities the Ballarat group could undertake? Please let us know! Gladys Hastie...  
Email: johnhastie37@bigpond.com ... Phone: 5341 5567

## MEMBERSHIP NOTE

Thank you to everyone who has already renewed their membership for 2020-21, and a reminder that if you haven't, memberships are due.

APS Victoria have let us know that for any members who are experiencing financial hardship due to Covid19, APS Vic will waive their component of the 2020-21 subscription (\$35 for individuals and \$40 for families). If you are in this situation and wish to ask for the waiver, please contact me so that I can forward your details to APS Vic. Any request will be strictly confidential.

Ainslie Whyte, Treasurer, APS Ballarat Branch

Email: ainsliewhyte@gmail.com.....Ph: 0419 830765....

## FACEBOOK PAGE

Australian Plants Society Ballarat District – A Facebook page for our group is under consideration. What form it would take and management of a Facebook page is to be discussed.

Please send your input to Warren Hill at wazizhill@gmail.com

Facebook users could be directed (via this link) to our page on the APS VIC website:

<https://apsvic.org.au/aps-ballarat-district> : and to click on 'Newsletters'.

Currently there are 23 newsletters going back to March 2018 on our page.

There is also a well-respected Facebook site – 'Australian Native Plant Enthusiasts Forum'

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/675253642559682/>

It does identification, advice, and good information for Native Plants, and growers.

## THE HASTIE GARDEN AT ELAINE IN AUGUST

**The wattles** continue to come into bloom. *Acacia verniciflua* (Varnish Wattle) (a local species), *A. acinaceae* (Gold Dust Wattle), *A. nitidula*, and *A. boormanii* (Snowy River Wattle) are all in full flower. *Acacia melanoxydon* (Blackwood), *A. pycnantha* (Golden Wattle), *A. glandulicarpa*, and *A. wilhelmiana* (Dwarf Nealie), are just starting to flower.

**Other plants** in flower include *Westringea* 'Morning Light' (a variegated form), *Grevillea olivaceae*, *Melaleuca linarifolia*, *Zieria* 'Pink Crystals', *Olearea rudis* (Azure Daisy), *Guichinotea ledifolia*, *Hakea bucculenta* and *Atriplex cinera*. The white form of *Hardenbergia violacea* is flowering well, as are the pink form and the cultivar 'Free 'n Easy'.

**The few eremophilas** still holding a few flowers are attracting New Holland Honeyeaters, Yellow faced Honeyeaters and Spinebills. ▣



### FROM RUTH MARTON

Roger Thomas brought some 7-year-old *Xanthorrhoea australis* plants to one of our meetings several years ago which were superfluous to the needs of the Indigenous Nursery at the time; which members were welcome to take. I brought one home and put it in the ground. This year it is developing a flower spike which is very exciting. The first photo (far left) was taken late July, the next is a close-up of the young flower spike at that time, and the third photo was taken 3 weeks later showing how much it had grown in that time.



Some of the flowers that were out at the Winter Solstice in the Hastie garden at Elaine.



*Banksia praemorsa* in the garden of Bruce Cadoret and Alison Everingham.

Sue Ring would like to know what species of hakea this one is. "A lovely insect attractor."



# **TEN TEAR FLASHBACK**

From the September 2010 Newsletter

## **AUGUST GUEST SPEAKER**

### **REPORT by John Hastie**

#### **Guest Speaker – Cathy Powers – Fungi; The Good, the Bad and the Ugly.**

Fungi are important in the environment as they are a major part of the decomposition system. They recycle plant components back to organic and inorganic forms – able to be used by other organisms.

Fungi were once considered to be plants, but modern taxonomy has elevated them to a separate kingdom. They are all saprophytic or parasitic; none are autotrophic. The fungus kingdom includes organisms of great ecological and economic importance.

#### **The 'good' fungi include:**

- The mycorrhiza fungi
- Foods, especially mushrooms, which are a great source of phosphorus, magnesium and other minerals (often lacking in processed foods), and fibre
- Yeasts for bread and alcohol
- Moulds used in the production of antibiotics

#### **The 'bad' fungi include:**

- Fungi that cause plant and animal diseases such as 'tinea' and 'ringworm'

**The 'ugly' fungi include** both good and bad, but are often quite revolting in appearance or odour.

A very important group of fungi are those that form a micorrhizal association with vascular plants. The fungal filaments, hyphae, attach to the fine roots and supply water and dissolved salts more effectively than the plant's root-hairs can. A large proportion of plants rely on this association. Some plants require a particular fungus – Epacris and some orchids for example – but most are not very fussy. (The Proteaceae seems to be the only group never to form mycorrhiza.)

The part of the fungus we recognize is usually the 'fruiting body' – the reproductive phase of the organism. Most people recognize mushrooms. These are the fruiting bodies of some members of the Basidiomycota. The spore producing organs are on the surface of radially arranged gills in the Agarics, other groups include coral fungi and tooth fungi. Of the Agarics many are edible but others are extremely toxic.

Another major group are the Ascomycota. Many of these are microscopic (yeasts for example), others, such as the 'vegetable caterpillar', are easily seen. (The vegetable caterpillar is the fruiting body of a fungus that infects the larvae of Ghost moths.) Another group of fungi of importance are those that combine with algae to form lichens. These fungi only occur in association with the algae but the algae may exist independently. The type and shape of the lichen is determined by the fungal partner.

**The large number of photographs Cathy showed indicated the variability of colour and shape of fungi in the wild.**



This upward looking shot shows the delicate beauty of radially arranged gills. This specimen is 6cm in diameter and has an almost black-coloured, domed cap, on a tall stem. The gills are white. Not all fungi have gills. Picture: **Fon Ryan**

## THE BLUE GUM AND THE PINE TREE

Fon Ryan

A very-large Blue Gum (*Eucalyptus globulus*) tree once grew very close to the Lake Learmonth Ski Club building in Foreshore Road, Learmonth. It died many years ago. However, a seed from it had blown across the road and lodged between two large roots, close to the trunk, of a mature pine tree.

The seed germinated and its growth began. But not a good site for a seedling of a large tree species.

The 25+ metres high pine tree is deteriorating in its final years, and will eventually need to be cut down for public safety. The Blue Gum has already grown to be 5 metres high. Its roots, because of their severely restricted

situation, are distorted and structurally unsound. They would not recover sufficient structural integrity to support the tree, even if the pine was carefully cut away from around them. Additionally, Blue Gums are now considered not suitable for public spaces, so the tree would not be permitted to grow to maturity.

Tasmanian Blue Gum is native to Tasmania; it also occurs in the Otway Ranges and Wilson's Promontory in Victoria and on King and Flinders Islands. Blue Gum plantations produce wood that is used in paper manufacture. ▣



Photo: Fon Ryan

Seed capsules, 'Gum Nuts', of the 'Flowering Gum', *Corymbia ficifolia* 'Fairy Floss'.

It has pale pink flowers, and should normally flower in late January to early March.

Photo: Jennifer Johnson





Rhonda & Ross had this impressive Correa Pulchella flowering in their garden at Nintingbool (near Haddon) over the winter.  
Photo: Rhonda Humphries

*Thanks to all those who contributed reports or items for this issue*

**Deadline for October Newsletter: 30<sup>th</sup> September 2020**



**AFTERNOON TEA or SUPPER**

Members please have a cuppa at home for arvo tea or supper

**AUSTRALIAN PLANTS SOCIETY BALLARAT DISTRICT INC. Incorporation No. A0013127M**

President: John Hastie P: 5341 5567  
 Secretary: Position vacant PO Box 123W Ballarat West 3350  
 Treasurer: Ainslie Whyte PO Box 123W Ballarat West 3350  
 Newsletter Editor: Warren Hill wazizhill@gmail.com M: 0400 644 913

**MONTHLY MEETINGS**

The **SECOND WEDNESDAY** in October, November, December, February, March, at 7-30pm  
 The **SECOND WEDNESDAY** in April, May, June, July, August, September at 2-00pm

**MEETING VENUE**

ROBERT CLARK HORTICULTURAL CENTRE, Ballarat Botanical Gardens

**Access:** GILLIES St. ENTRANCE – GATE 3 or 4 (or from Wendouree Parade, **Afternoon Meetings only**)

**CORRESPONDENCE**

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**NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTIONS**

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 suspended  
 due to  
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 until further  
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