



# Australian Plants Society Ballarat District Newsletter – February 2022

**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**

## COMING EVENTS

### **WEDNESDAY 9<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY – MONTHLY MEETING**

**NOTE: Evening Meeting at 7.30pm**

**Everyone MUST check in with QR CODE or on APS TABLET – MASKS MUST BE WORN – VACCINATION CERTIFICATE SHOWN**

**Scheduled Guest Speaker, Fon Ryan, is unavailable for this meeting.**

### **SUNDAY 13<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY EXCURSION**

**Annual Bird and Plant Walk with Roger Thomas  
Venue – Ponds in Victoria Park Ballarat &  
Olympic Rings precinct at Lake Wendouree  
9:00am to 11:45am.**

We have never been to the ponds in Victoria Park previously. Enter Victoria Park from Russell Street, 40 metres north of the Eyre Street roundabout. Travel 200 metres, turn left and drive the 100 metres to the car park for the southern of the two ponds. After looking at both ponds we will pause for a cuppa, then drive to the **Olympic Rings precinct**. Directions will be given at that time. It is some years since we have looked at this part of the lake. Find a parking spot near the rings. Public toilets are not far from this location. Bring a hat, drink, morning tea, **BINOCULARS**, and maybe a camera as well. Any queries on finding your way ring Fon Ryan on mob 0422 696 285.

### **From The President**

The informal planning meeting held on Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> January at Smythes Creek at the home of the Secretary was converted into a formal meeting. This was because decisions needed to be made in response to the Biosecurity Guidelines and the confusion about the date of the Spring Flower Show. We thank Janine for the excellent Afternoon Tea and the tour of her developing garden. The changes in COVID rules at the Robert Clark Horticultural Centre mean we are now allowed to have supper/afternoon tea at our meetings. We have bought a copy of Russell Wait's 'Growing eremophila' for the library. Russell and his co- authors are congratulated on an impressive production.

### **End of Year Gathering – December 2021**

The group had a convivial gathering, with about 23 people attending and enjoying. Thanks to the coordinator and InExterior cafe.



*Eleocarpus reticulatus* – Blueberry Ash  
Purchased Austraflo nursery at Montrose (Melbourne) and planted out at Paddy's Patch (Paddy Marshall's garden) 1989. 14 years later it flowered for the first time, inspiring me to record the event with a note in our APS newsletter of January 2003. I referred to the event as a miracle, but Ruth tells me that her *Eleocarpus reticulatus* has taken 14 years for its first flowering. Being a rainforest tree, it likes wet conditions so the winter and spring just gone, have been ideal for it. Mine, now aged 32, almost reaches the sky and would be almost as wide if we stopped trimming it. Photo: Ruth Marton

### **Biosecurity in the Ballarat Botanical Gardens.**

The Gardens now have new biosecurity guidelines. These have been made necessary by the greater scientific activity in the Gardens, and to protect the many valuable plant collections, rare begonias, endangered trees, and the Care for the Rare program (Rare native plants of the local region). The involvement in plant conservation further necessitates strengthening of the Biosecurity Guidelines.

The Guidelines apply to all groups bringing plants into the total Gardens area. The Friends of the Gardens nursery and the Ballarat Farmers Market are already complying with them. Plants brought into the Gardens for sale must be in commercial potting mix in new pots and from a safe, reliable source.

Despite the information above we are allowed to bring potted plants for a raffle if we follow the rules. Any plants or plant material, whether specimens or raffle prizes, must be free of any signs of disease. If the potting soil is at all loose, please wrap the pot in a bag or clingwrap to the stem of the plant. We must remove all plant material from the Robert Clark Horticultural Centre after meetings or shows. No plant material is to go into rubbish bins. Any spilled soil must be cleaned up and taken away.



### **The Garden at Elaine in December**

The dominant flowers this month are the xerochrysums, or Paper daisies. Bottlebrushes continue to bloom: both *Melaleucas* and *Callistemons*. The King's Park Special callistemon has just started, it is usually in flower at Christmas. Many of the *Acacias* have set seed, it will be weeks or months before it is ripe. *Hibbertias* continue to flower well, particularly *H. scandens*, the Snake Vine, with its large flowers (5-8cm).

### **The Garden at Elaine in January**

There are some *Melaleucas* still flowering. The most prominent one is *M. nesophylla*, a 'dwarf' cultivar called Little Nessie, with masses of pink/purple pom-pom flowers. The fine white flowers of *bracteatum* are attracting butterflies as are the xerochrysums. *Prostanthera saxicola* 'Pigeon Blue' and *P. serpyfolia*, the Yellow Mint Bush, are two late-flowering mintbushes.

The white Victorian Mint Bush *Prostanthera lasianthos* flowered just after Christmas and was in full bloom by New Year. The pink flowered and variegated forms flowered in the second week of January. *Melaleuca thymifolia* is a small shrub which is flowering well, its flowers are similar to those of the Claw Flower, *M. pulchella*.

A ground cover flowering well in full sun is *Hemiandra pungens*. The small *Westringia rigida* always has a few white flowers. *Alyogyne heugeli* and *A. hakeafolia* are both well covered with flowers.

We have few *Banksias* here. The local *Banksia marginata* now flower regularly and are starting to set seed. The Saw *Banksia* has finally produced two flower heads.

The climbers on the garden sheds, *Pandorea jasminoides*, are covered with masses of pink flowers. Another climber, the Common Apple Berry, *Billardiera scandens*, we have grown on a wire frame to form a 'hedge'. It is covered with yellow/green fruit. When ripe the 2cm-long fruit are vaguely apple flavoured. (Common name is Snotty-gobble.)

## From Paddy Marshall

*Heliochrysum* 'Neil Marriott's Mum' - I think I have been told to call it *Heliochrysum* (or something) *apiculatum* (Wrigley & Fagg). However, I like to call it N.M.M. because it is such a friend and so prolific. I originally planted the first cutting so long ago that I cannot remember being without it at Paddy's Patch.

Photo: Ruth Marton

## *Hakea prostrata* - Harsh Hakea

Story & Photo: Ruth Marton



This plant would be about 6-7 years old and this year is the first that I have noticed flowers on it. They are hidden inside so may have been there in earlier times, just I haven't seen them.

Despite its name, the shrub is about 2 metres tall and growing. Ivan Holliday in his book 'Hakeas a field and garden guide' describes the plant as normally wide spreading prostrate to semi prostrate shrub covering a large area.

Also produces more upright branches to 4m high or more, forming a very large upright shrub. I obviously have the latter.

This photo was taken on 1st December inside the bush, showcasing the flowers complete with abandoned bird's nest.



*Leptospermum* 'Rudolph', true to its name, flowers at Christmas at Paddy's Patch and is reliable in doing so.

Photo: Ruth Marton



*Jennifer Johnson*  
CULINGIA FLORA ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTANCY

A close-up photographic study of *Olearia homolepis* by Jennifer Johnson

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

Deadline for March Newsletter: 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2022



Members, please have a cuppa for afternoon tea or supper

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

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**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**))

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**WEB:** (APS Vic): www.apsvic.org.au Then go to APS Ballarat District page



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