

# Australian Plants Society Ballarat District Newsletter – June 2019

*Themeda triandra*  
Kangaroo Grass  
AUSTRALIAN PLANTS  
SOCIETY  
BALLARAT DISTRICT

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



*Eucalyptus sideroxylon* (Ironbark) shown by Ian Lynch at the May meeting. This specimen, in cultivation, has cream flowers, but many in cultivation have been selected to predominantly have pink flowers. Photo: Fon Ryan

## **COMING EVENTS**

**WEDNESDAY 12<sup>th</sup> June – MONTHLY MEETING \*at 2.00pm (Afternoon Meeting) \***

**Guest Speaker - Helen Lovel**, from Neutrog Biological Fertilizers, with a presentation running for 45-60 minutes including question time. All attendees at the talk will receive free samples of their latest products.      ➡ (Note: Afternoon Meeting) ⬅

**WEDNESDAY 10<sup>th</sup> July – MONTHLY MEETING \*at 2.00pm (Afternoon Meeting) \***

**Guest Speaker – Peter Marquand**, Curator of the Ballarat Botanical Gardens. He will talk about the gardens and how they are coming along, and also, weather permitting, take our group on a short walk before afternoon tea.

### **Guest Speakers and Excursions**

All suggestions for Guest Speakers are welcome. Mention ideas via meetings, members, executive.

## **AUSTRALIAN PLANTS SOCIETY BALLARAT DISTRICT**

### **WINTER 2019 NATIVE PLANT SHOW**

**Sat 22<sup>nd</sup> and Sun 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2019: 10.30am to 3.30pm**

**Robert Clark Horticultural Centre, Ballarat Botanical Gardens.**

Members please note: Set Up from 11am Friday 21<sup>st</sup>. Please Volunteer where you can on any of the 3 days. Thank you.

Also please promote the Show wherever possible. Flyers are available. All and any publicity will benefit. Thanks again.

#### **Second Hand Books are required for the Plant Show**

Please bring any to the June Meeting, or the Friday prior to the Plant Show, or to the Plant Show.

#### **MAY GUEST SPEAKER REPORT: by Liz Bowden**

##### **Guest Speaker:**

##### **Peter Broughton, Ironstone Nursery, Heathcote – State of the Nursery Industry**

When Peter and his wife built a home in the Heathcote district, both being keen on gardening, they decided to focus on growing native plants, and in particular *rare* native plants.

Today their enterprise comprises 85% propagation, mostly via cuttings until about a year ago but now he's moved over to propagation by seed. He uses seed from his own collection of natives, some of which are very rare, as well as from other growers throughout Australia.

The nursery industry is in decline, in particular the specialists, and has been for quite a while.

There are a number of reasons for this and consequently expertise is being lost due to lack of money.

1. The price of water has increased significantly as the climate gets drier and the lack of garden space in new housing estates has led to a lack of customers.
2. Nurseries are on their knees, having to add other features such as cafés, fashionable garden items etc., and therefore: "There is not the land for stock."
3. Bunnings' bulk buying.
4. Myrtle Rust, a devastating disease that occurred a few years ago, is spread by wind. Parks & Gardens, who are responsible for diseases, didn't know how to identify Myrtle Rust initially and when they managed to do so, any nursery where it was discovered was immediately shut down.

Consequently, throughout the industry, a 2¢ levy per pot sold created a slush fund (1) to fight the disease, and (2) to support nurseries when quarantined and losses of stock.

Rare plants are becoming harder to source, due to many specialist nurseries nationwide closing down, for the above reasons as well as to the encroachment of farming into the natural environment.

##### **Some tips for the propagation of native plants**

This is very much a trial and error process:

- Provide heat from the bottom for at least the first month;
- Have overhead misting;
- Use hormone treatment, ensuring the right mixture is used for the right plant;
- Using the right media, the peat moss plug is recommended.

##### **The Future**

The nursery industry is dying out across the nation, mainly because it is not "money oriented" as demanded in the present day. It will be up to garden and plant enthusiasts to care about those plants that are different, that require their own conditions to flourish and that perhaps do not 'fit' in with today's landscaping ideas. But: things change and interest is growing in our environment so there may be hope yet.

Rare plants should be planted and enjoyed by one and all, and this is one way of preserving the plants from extinction. ■

**Note:** Following Peter's talk many members took the opportunity to purchase his great plants and he will be one of the sellers at our June Plant Show.

**SPECIMENS Exhibited at May Meeting:  
from Ruth Marton**

Ian Lynch – *Corymbia ficifolia* 'Summer Beauty', *Eucalyptus sideroxylon* (Red Ironbark), *Chrysopetalum apiculatum* 'Desert Flame', *Correa reflexa x pulchella* 'Skye Bells', *Wahlenbergia stricta* 'Blue Mist', *Pycnosorus globosus* (Billy Buttons), *Plectranthus parviflorus* 'Blue Spires'

Jean Weybury – *Eremophila hygrophana*

The Hasties – *Acacia iteaphylla* (Flinders Ranges/Willow Leaf Wattle), *Eucalyptus lehmannii* (Bushy Yate), *Westringia longifolia* (Coastal Westringia), *Correa lawrenceana* (Tree Correa)



*Eucalyptus lehmannii*, Bushy Yate, shown by John Hastie. This bud cluster is 5cm across Photo: Fon Ryan

**SPEAKER REPORT: by Ruth Marton**

**Guest Speaker at the April meeting of APS GEELONG**

**'Eucalypts' – by Dean Nicolle, proprietor, Currency Creek Arboretum in South Australia**

In April several members attended the monthly Geelong group meeting to hear their guest speaker talking about Eucalypts. The presentation was centred on Dean describing his 20 favourite eucalypts for the normal back-yard garden. He illustrated this with excellent photos of each species.

He first described a few commonly planted eucalypts which are quite inappropriate, these were mainly very popular in the 1970s e.g. *E. globulus* (too big), *E. cladocalyx* (the worst eucalypt for shedding branches), *E. platypus* (does not have a lignotuber so it grows quickly and is blown over), *C. ficifolia* (WA red-flowering gum, requires a lot of water).

Dean explained that in any one site in the wild there are only a handful of indigenous eucalypts growing naturally, some species have quite a small range. He also explained that he is very sceptical of any eucalypts the nursery trade labels as 'dwarf'. He suspects these are sourced from a tree which has naturally not grown to its full size due to environmental factors e.g. high winds, sea side, limited water etc.

Top 20 trees are as follows:

**Mallee types** i.e. grow from a lignotuber and usually have several trunks. When these trees become spindly and ugly in the garden after a number of years they can be cut back to the ground (coppiced) and they re-sprout with attractive healthy new growth. All the stems must be cut back, if some are left, these will grow rather than new growth from the lignotuber. This can be done repeatedly over the years.

1. *E. websteriana* (Heart leafed mallee)
2. *E. erythronema* (Red flowered mallee). Grows better north of the range but worth a try.
3. *E. pressiana* ssp *lobata* (Bell fruited mallee)
4. *E. synandra* (Jingymia mallee). Very wispy small tree, likes sunshine ++.  
*E. lacrimans* (Weeping snowgum) is similar, a very open tree which would grow in Ballarat.
5. *E. pimpiniana* (Pimpin mallee). This is a drier climate species too.
6. *E. macrocarpa* (Rose of the West)  
*E. rhodantha* is similar but the flowers hang down.

7. *E. sinuosa* (Octopus mallee). This is a yate. Yates have spindly flowers all coming from the centre.
8. *E. caesia*
9. *E. kruseana* (Bookleaf mallee)
10. *E. angustissima* (Broombrush mallee). This has a very narrow needle-like leaf, hence the common name.

**Resprouting trees** i.e. grow from the trunk and the branches after a fire as well as from the lignotuber.

11. *E. erythrocorys* (Red capped gum). Grows well in warm dry areas.
12. *E. victrix* (Smooth-barked coolabah). This is a desert species.
13. *Angophora hispida* (Dwarf Apple). Very conspicuous white flowers in summer. This species should grow in Ballarat.
14. *Corymbia torelliana* (Cadaga). This is a big rainforest tree from Qld but does grow in Melbourne.
15. *C. aparrenja*. (Central Australian ghost gum). These are the trees at Yulara at Uluru.

**Non Resprouter trees.** i.e. killed by fire and only regenerate from seed. These are fast growing trees that are often short lived. They are the ones you see sometimes in even-aged stands which date back to the last fire. They all come up at the same time from seed.

16. *E. torquata* (Coral gum)
17. *E. woodwardii* (Lemon-flowered gum). Does best in drier areas.
18. *E. Campaspe* (Silver gimlet). Another for drier areas. Gimlets have a smooth bronze bark so the trunks shine. *E. salubris* is another.
19. *E. stricklandii*. Larger tree for drier areas.
20. *E. magacornuta* (Warty yate). This is a bigger tree.

Dean also had some of his published books for sale, one of which our group bought for our library. 'Smaller Eucalypts for planting in Australia'. This book has excellent photos and very good descriptions of a wide range of attractive eucalypts including most of the above. ▣

Website: [www.dn.com.au](http://www.dn.com.au)

*Eucalyptus caesia*, possibly the ssp. *magna*. This is the form usually found in cultivation and is known as 'Silver Princess'. It is one of Dean Nicolle's 20 favourite eucalypts. He called it a 'Mallee Type'. This one is growing in the garden of Neville and Helen Collier near Avoca. Photo: Fon Ryan



Another favourite of Dean Nicolle, again a 'Mallee Type', is *Eucalyptus kruseana*, the Bookleaf Mallee.

The specimen pictured here was displayed at our Winter Native Plant Show in 2018. Its rounded leaves are only 2cm across.

While Dean would have chosen this species for all of its attributes, a major criteria was that it could fit into the normal back-yard garden.

In recent decades its attractive glaucous leaves and stems have come to the attention of the floristry industry, where it is used as a 'filler'.

Photo: Fon Ryan



**Annual membership renewals are due by 1<sup>st</sup> July  
Membership renewal forms have been emailed to members**

**\*NOTE! OUR GROUP NEEDS A PRESIDENT, SECRETARY, and TREASURER \***

The positions will be vacated by the present incumbents and need to be filled at the AGM in August for the Group to continue. Please nominate! All assistance will be given as necessary. You will be doing your bit to assist the Group to continue. THANK YOU!

**Second Hand Garden Books are required for the Plant Show**

Please bring any to the June Meeting, or the Friday prior to the Plant Show, or to the Plant Show.

**P.S.: Don't forget the Group has a good and readily available Library and a good Librarian in Judith Lewis.**

**Unusual shapes in nature.**

This tiny leaf, from a *Eucalyptus leucoxydon* ssp. *megalocarpa*, has grown into more than one full turn of a coil.

It has died naturally on the tree, then fallen to the ground.

The whole coil is only 2.5cm across.

Photo: Fon Ryan





Seed capsules of *Eucalyptus leucoxylon* ssp. megalocarpa, a eucalypt recommended for back-yard planting by Dean Nicolle (but edged out of his top 20 favourites). This Yellow Gum sub-species has been widely planted in the Ballarat area for many decades. It does very well in most locations. It has been planted as a street tree. Lorikeets love it. Photo: Fon Ryan

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

Deadline for July Newsletter: 26<sup>th</sup> June 2019



**AFTERNOON TEA or SUPPER**

Members please bring a plate of something to share

**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 STREET ENTRANCE – GATE 3 (or from Wendouree Parade, **Afternoon Meetings only**)

**CORRESPONDENCE**

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**NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTIONS**

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