



SEPTEMBER MEETING

Wednesday, 25 September, 2024

Knox Park Primary School, Kathryn Rd,
Knoxfield. 7.45pm.

A Collector's Garden: Debbie McMillan

Debbie is collector of all plants bright and beautiful and there is something in flower in her garden all year round.

She gardens on a very steep sloping block in outer east Melbourne, so come along and find out how she manages this, what makes an avid plant collector tick, and where she finds space in her garden to showcase all these lovelies.



Debbie McMillan's Front Garden
(Photo: Debbie McMillan)

SPRING WORKING BEE

Saturday, 21 September, 2024

We'd love to have your help at a **spring equinox working bee** at Knox Park Primary School so that we can get the gardens spruced up for the ANPSA excursion garden visit.

Time: 10am to 12 noon

Bring: Secateurs, gloves and weeders/trowels are very useful, but if you have a leaf blower you can bring along that will help make the job of clearing paths and tidying up easier than raking or sweeping. We also have access to other gardening equipment at the school.

As usual we'll have a bring and share picnic under the trees afterwards. See you all there!

Orchid Walk - Invitation

If you're free on Sunday 20 October, you may like to join Robyn Tyson for an orchid walk with ANOS (Australian Native Orchid Society).

See the invitation on page 5 for more details.

Hi Everyone,

It was great that so many members braved the challenging weather conditions on the night of our last meeting. You were rewarded with a most interesting talk with Robyn Tyson giving us an overview of the different habitats and plants of the Mornington Peninsula. See the report in this newsletter for more details.

Next meeting, Deb McMillian is going to give us a talk called 'A Collector's Garden'. Many of us have seen her garden, so we appreciate her passion for the unusual, while also having an eye to creating a beautiful garden. We are sure to see some showy and rare plants. This is Deb's first talk to a group, so make her welcome and lean in with kindness.

At our last AGM we passed a motion to make changes to the recent new model rules. I am pleased to say that they have now been submitted to the CAV for approval.

Membership renewals have been attended to by most of our members, with a few still outstanding. Unfortunately, some members will not be returning but some of those losses are offset by quite a number of new members joining. If you have not yet renewed, then please do so as soon as possible as time is running out for you to remain current on the APS Vic data base.

Chris Larkin



Chorozima cordatum (Photo: Kerry Davis)

Indigenous Flora of the Mornington Peninsula – a talk by Robyn Tyson

Robyn Tyson gave us a very interesting talk at our August meeting on the flora and different vegetation types found on the Mornington Peninsula.

We discovered that the Peninsula is home to more than 700 species of plants and that one fifth of Victoria's flora can be found here in a variety of habitats. These habitats range from forests and their associated fern gullies to an extensive coastal habitat, heathland, salt pans, mangrove forests, wetlands and swamps. There are also approximately 60 recognised EVC's, Environmental Vegetation Classes to be found on the Peninsula.



Open woodland forest at Bunarong Park
(Photo: Janet Hodgkiss)

The **forest** habitats run down the centre of the peninsula where the mountains are. The underlying geology of the area is volcanic and the ancient lava flows can be seen on the Western Port side, while on the Port Phillip Bay side you'll find higher cliffs and granite outcrops underlain by basalt. The geology is what really determines the EVC's of an area.

The forest can be open woodland or more closed communities and Robyn says you'll also find lots of pea flowers in the forested areas. Other species often encountered include a variety of eucalypts such as *E. obliqua*, *E. viminalis*, and the more unusual eucalypts such as the Snow Gum, *E. pauciflora*, and the rare Mt

Martha Bundy, *E. caroliniae* of which there are only 30 specimens to be found. The forests are also home to a number of acacias, allocasuarina, leptospermum, banksia, bursaria (which can be a small spindly shrub or a tall tree), Melaleuca, Olearia, Cherry Ballart, mistletoes and various understorey plants and grasses including a number of orchids and two species of grass tree, *Xanthorrhoea minor* and *X. australis*.



Female flowers and developing seed capsules of Allocasuarina at Bunarong Park
(Photo: Janet Hodgkiss)

There aren't many rivers that cross the Peninsula but there are a few creeks such as Balcombe Creek and Main Creek. **Fern gullies** are found on the hinterland of the Arthur's Seat range in sheltered wet gullies. The canopy is usually tall eucalypts and two tree ferns, *Cyathea australis* and *Dicksonia antarctica* are found in these gullies along with a number of other understorey ferns and mosses.

The **coastal** vegetation may look different but it's usually the same plants that you find inland, they are just more windswept and cropped because of the prevailing winds. Common species in the coastal areas include Melaleuca, Banksia, Acacia, *Myoporum insulare*, *Alyxia buxifolia* (Sea Box), *Correa alba*, *Tetragonia implexicoma*, *Gaudium laevigatum* (previously Leptospermum), a wide range of grasses, and a couple of different Leucopogons. Robyn also showed a photo showing the trailing succulent *Disphyma crassifolium* cascading most beautifully down some basalt rocks.

Heathland is found on the old sand dunes that run down the middle of the Peninsula and can be seen in Langwarrin, Narre Warren and towards the back of Frankston and are quite high, up to a couple of hundred metres in places. Heathland is also found at Crib Point on the Westernport Bay side.



The sandy paths and soils are clear evidence that Bunarong Park is an ancient sand dune
(Photo: Janet Hodgkiss)

This vegetation is comprised of mostly low herbaceous plants and low-growing shrubs such as correa, several different pea flowers, *Hibbertia fascicularis*, epacris, Leucopogon and the Wedding Bush, *Ricinocarpos pinifolius*.



Heathland at Bunarong Park – loads of pea flowers and *Hibbertia fascicularis* var. prostrata with bright golden yellow flowers
(Photo: Janet Hodgkiss)

A couple of species of *Xanthorrhoea* (grass trees) are also found in the heathlands along with some unusual umbelliferous flower such as caraways and celeries. There are also many

orchids, and Robyn says that the Peninsula is actually quite a hotspot for terrestrial orchids – see the invitation to join her on an orchid walk*.



Common Bird Orchid, *Chiloglottis validus*, Tall Greenhood, Twining Fringe Lily *Thysanotis* sp. and Donkey Orchid at Bunarong Park
(Photo: Janet Hodgkiss)

The **wetlands and swamps** support grasses, rushes and plants that will only grow in water or that can tolerate longer periods of being inundated with water.

Wetlands can be found at Tootgarook, but while you can't visit this area as such because it is fenced off, the reeds can be seen from Boneo Rd and Truemans Rd. There are also wetlands and swamps on the Westernport Bay area, and where Balcombe Creek empties into Port Phillip Bay at Mount Martha. Species found here include *Lomandra*, *Apodasmia* and *Gahnia*.



Comesperma volubile*, Love Creeper, twining up *Acacia suaveolens*; Delicate pink *Epacris
(Photo: Janet Hodgkiss)

Salt pans and mangroves can be found on the Westernport Bay side, and Jacks Beach is good place to go for a walk and a good example of this vegetation type. Plants found in these areas will tolerate the presence of either salty water or salt in the soil and the Grey Mangrove, *Avicennia marina* ssp. *australasica* can be found growing here. While this habitat can seem quite inhospitable, if you look more closely (and even lie on your tummy to get a closer look as Robyn did!) you'll find glassworts such as *Tecticornia*, samphire *Sarcocornia quinqueflora*, *Lobelia irrigua* and the tiny-flowered *Mimulus repens*. Other salt-tolerant plants such as *Maireana* and the succulent-leaved *Tetragonia* are also found in these saline environments.

References for vegetation of the Mornington Peninsula that Robyn has found useful include:

- * www.mornpen.vic.gov.au – plant lists
- * www.frankston.vic.gov.au – plant lists
- * Flora of Melbourne 4th edition by Marilyn Bull
- * Foothills to Foreshore by Kathie and Peter Strickland.



Very excited to find our first orchid!
(Photo: Janet Hodgkiss)

Robyn also wrote an excellent article about this area in the September 2023 issue of Growing Australian. If you have mislaid your copy, you can access it via the member's section on the APS Victoria website <https://apsvic.org.au/>

Robyn also mentioned that the Peninsula has many fantastic parks that are well worth visiting. Several of these are listed in her Growing Australian article but they are listed here again for your convenience:

* Mornington Peninsula National Park:
Coastal sections: Cape Shank, Point
Nepean; Inland sections: Greens Bush,
Arthurs Seat.

* Frankston Area: Langwarrin Flora and
Fauna Reserve, The Pines, Frankston
Reservoir, Bunarong Park, the newly
established Seaford Banksia Arboretum.

* Mornington/ Mt Martha Area:
Hopetoun-Norfolk Reserve, Devil Bend
Natural Features Reserve, Mt Martha
Park, The Briars, Balcombe Estuary

* Rosebud Area: Peninsula Gardens
Bushland Reserve, Tootgarook Swamp

* Western Port Area: Warringine Park,
Woolley's Beach Reserve, Crib Point
grasslands, Western Port Coastal
Reserve.

Chris has done a short write up of the walk we
went on with Robyn at Bunarong Park on the
Saturday after our meeting, and because we
saw many of the plants Robyn mentioned in her
talk on our walk, I chose to illustrate the talk
write-up with photos taken on our walk.
It's a small reserve and definitely worth a visit,
especially if you go by how many times we all
ooohed and aaahhed during our walk! 😊

Janet Hodgkiss

*** INVITATION to an ORCHID WALK ***

This is an all-day Orchid Walk on the
Mornington Peninsula with ANOS

Date: Sunday 20 October, 2024.

Time: Meet at 9.30 am

Place: Devil Bend Natural Features Reserve
Picnic Ground on Graydens Rd, Tuerong.

Lunch, and the afternoon will be spent at Crib
Point and several sites in that area.

NB: Please register your intention to attend this
event with Robyn at robynktyson@gmail.com

Robyn Tyson
0409412931

Visit to Bunarong Park, Frankston 31 August, 2024

After Robyn Tyson's talk, which gave us an
overview of the flora of the Mornington
Peninsula at our Wednesday's meeting, she took
us on a guided walk of Bunarong Park,
Frankston, on the following Saturday.

This reasonably intact 9.3-hectare reserve is on
an ancient sand dune surrounded by houses. It
has a wonderful diversity of plants, many of
which were in flower when we visited, although
Robyn assures us for at least nine months of the
year there will be plenty to see of seasonal
interest. We missed the best of *Acacia*
suaveolens in flower with its pale-yellow
flowers, but we did see its lovely blue seed pods
that follow.



Blue-grey pods of *Acacia suaveolens*
(Photo: Chris Larkin)

There is an abundance of clumping plants with
the most dominant being *Lepidosperma laterale*
which has taken over vast areas because of its
freely suckering habit. I grow it around my big
pond and over time have found it more and
more invasive to the surrounding area. Another

lepidosperma, this time growing as a single handsome clump, is possibly *L. gladiatum*.

A plant which had us a bit stumped on the day is *Amperea xiphoclada*. Detective Janet was able to track it down after getting home and doing some research.



Amperea xiphoclada (Photo: Chris Larkin)

We saw too many different showy plants to cover here, including epacris, correas, a range of peas, three different hibbertias, and was it one or two leucopogons? I'm not confident to name most of them.

Notably, there were two small-growing allocasuarinas, showing female and male flowers, which were probably *Allocasuarina paradoxa* although it can be found growing with *A. paludosa*, and due to their similarities, these plants may be confused with one another.

We spent about two hours walking around this small park. So many different, interesting plants looking healthy and happy. I only wish I could name more of them, but nevertheless it was a pleasure to get out and see them. I highly recommend you check this park out and take a walk on the wild side. Thanks Robyn.



Fine detail of the fluffy flowers of Leucopogon
(Photo: Chris Larkin)

Chris Larkin



Wedding Bush, *Ricinocarpus pinifolius*
(Photo: Janet Hodgkiss)

Winded!

The weather has been wild and woolly lately. So much sustained wind over so many days puts me on edge and as I type this, the run of windy days is not quite over yet. In fact, I can't remember having so many windy days one after another. I have lost two significant plants; significant because of their age and dimension.

The loss of the *Acacia pravissima* on the north fence line has left a big area where I am exposed to the not-so-pretty sight of the house in front. Yes, I know, the upside is the opportunity to replant but I could have done without the opportunity presenting itself right now before garden visits as part of the ANSPA Conference.



The toppled *Acacia pravissima*
(Photo: Chris Larkin)

The Age, published on the last day of August, has some interesting and sobering facts about the recent weather. It talks about Melbourne's weather, but I think the broad message applies to us as well. Although Melbourne's rainfall in July was up by around 54%, rainfall figures for winter, which includes June and August, are 40% below average, so it is apparently the driest winter since 2006.

The Age goes on to say the unseasonably warm weather and winds in August could be driven by

the jet stream travelling from west to east, which is associated with an increased chance of heatwaves. Further, 'a study in *Nature Climate Change* last year found the fastest upper-level jet stream winds will accelerate by about 2 per cent for every degree the world warms.' Not good news, you'll agree.

Higher average temperatures in August, combined with the wind will have a drying effect on the soils, but where moisture from July is held in the soils, plants with heavy canopies are vulnerable to uprooting and this has been the cause of my losses. I can only hope you have all weathered these windstorms with little or no damage to your gardens.

P.S. Another large acacia came down across the driveway today, Monday 2 September, blocking me in. Not wet soil but a heavy canopy. The revealed view is not as bad as expected. Clean-up is in progress but a chainsaw is needed.

Chris Larkin



The big acacia that came down after very strong wind gusts buffeted Chris's garden on Monday 2 September, 2024. The tree is blocking the drive down from the garage
(Photo: Chris Larkin)

APS Foothills Calendar 2024			
2024	Date		Topic
September	25	Wednesday	Deb McMillan – A Collector’s Garden
October	23	Wednesday	Jean Bellis – Geraldton to Perth
November	27	Wednesday	Chris Larkin – Melaleucas
December	7	Saturday	End of year get-together (venue to be confirmed)

Shows, conferences, plant sales and other items of interest

5 September 2024 – Wimmera Biodiversity Seminar. Goroke. “Pests, Partnerships and People Power.”

7 September 2024 – APS Cardinia Regional Annual Plant Sale, Akoonah Park, Berwick, 8 am to 4 pm.

7 September 2024 – APS Mitchell Expo and Plant Sale, Wallan Multipurpose Centre, Bentinck Street, Wallan.

14 & 15 September 2024 – APS Yarra Yarra Australian Plants Expo. 10 am to 3 pm. Eltham Community and Reception Centre, 801 Main Rd, Eltham.

21 & 22 September 2024 – APS Grampians Pomonal Native Flower Show, Pomonal Hall.

21 & 22 September 2024 – Angair Wildflower Show & Art Show, Anglesea Memorial Hall, McMillan Street, Anglesea. 10 am to 4 pm. Wildflower display, indigenous plant sales, art show and painting sales.

21 September to 8 October 2024 – Special Banksia Exhibition at Karwarra, featuring over 60 paintings by Ian Wallace, Juet Sculptures and plant display by Kuranga Native Nursery. Karwarra Australian Native Botanic Gardens, 1190 - 1192 Mount Dandenong Tourist Road, Kalorama. 10 am to 4 pm week days, 1 - 4 pm weekends.

28 & 29 September 2022 – APS Bendigo Flower Show, Victory Christian College, Kairn Road, Strathdale, Bendigo. 9.30 am to 4.00 pm. \$5 entry, children free. Specialist native plant nurseries, books, garden accessories and more.



30 September to 4 October, 2024 – ANPSA 2024 Biennial Conference, The Round, Nunawading, Melbourne. Host: APS Victoria. See: <https://www.anpsa2024conference.com/>

2 October 2024 – AJ Swaby Address by Phillip Johnson, 3.30 pm, “Connected Through Nature”. Phillip Johnson is a Landscape Designer and 2013 Gold and Best in Show winner at the RHS Chelsea Flower Show in London. This is part of the ANPSA 2024 Biennial Conference, open to the public, and free of charge. Registrations are required via the website <https://www.anpsa2024conference.com/>

5 October 2024 – Echuca Moama Native Flower Showcase. Details to follow.

12 & 13 October 2024 – Cranbourne Friends RBGV Spring Plant Sale. 10 am to 4 pm. Wide range of plants, plant list available one week before sale. Web: rbgfriendscranbourne.org.au

23 and 24 November 2024 – APS Victoria Committee of Management meeting and APS Victoria AGM. Host: APS Wangaratta. Early Summer in 'The Warbies'. APSV COMM meeting, Uniting Church Hall, Central Wangaratta; AGM, Old Town and Country Tavern, Greta Road. All members welcome to attend the whole weekend – more information in Growing Australian.

2025

22 & 23 March 2025 – Cranbourne Friends RBGV Autumn Plant Sale. 10 am to 4 pm. Wide range of plants, plant list available one week before sale. Website: rbgfriendscranbourne.org.au

24 to 30 March 2025 – Melbourne International Flower and Garden Show (MIFGS), Carlton Gardens and Royal Exhibition Building. Website: <https://melbflowershow.com.au>

12 April 2025 – APS Yarra Yarra Plant & Book Sale.

2 & 3 August 2025 – 15th FJC Rogers Seminar 2025: Epacridaceae. Host: APS Mornington Peninsula, Mornington Secondary College.

16 to 24 August 2025 – Banksia Week, Royal Botanic Gardens Cranbourne. Includes plant sales, plant walks, exhibitions and displays in the auditorium.

13 & 14 September 2025 – APS Yarra Yarra Plants Expo.

11 & 12 October 2025 – Cranbourne Friends RBGV Spring Plant Sale. 10 am to 4 pm both days. Wide range of plants, plant list available one week before sale. Website: rbgfriendscranbourne.org.au

2026

24 to 28 August 2026 – ANPSA 2026 Biennial Conference, Alice Springs. Organised by APS SA and APS Alice Springs. Conference theme is "Amazing Arid Australia".

APS FOOTHILLS INC.

(A0013126K)

CONTACT US:

Email: foothills@apsvic.org.au

Phone Enquiries:

Chris Larkin: 9752 7837

Find us on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/apsfoothills>

Visit our Webpage:

<https://apsvic.org.au/aps-foothills/>

MEETINGS

Venue: Knox Park Primary School, Kathryn Rd, Knoxfield. (Melway 73 C3)

Date: 4th Wednesday of the month (Feb-Nov)

Time: 7.45pm

Newsletter Contributions

Please email contributions for the next newsletter to Kerry Davis by no later than: 8pm Monday 7th October 2024.

Email: foothillsnewsletter@apsvic.org.au

COMMITTEE

Leader: Chris Larkin

Deputy Leader: Janet Hodgkiss

Secretary: Ruth Cauchi

Treasurer: Deb McMillan

Newsletter Editor: Kerry Davis

Other Members: Betty Wright

APS Vic Delegate: Janet Hodgkiss

Asst. Newsletter Editor: Janet Hodgkiss

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we meet. We pay our respects to First Nations People throughout Australia and to Elders, past, present and emerging.

VISITORS WELCOME!