



## FEBRUARY MEETING

**Wednesday 28 February, 2024**

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

**Christmas and Cocos Islands:  
Shirley Smith, Barbara Lloyd,  
Hazel & Alan Veevers**

Shirley, Barbara, Hazel and Alan are friends who met through the Ringwood Field Naturalists Club. Barbara will provide an overview of both islands and some background history. Alan has some wonderful photos of the birds, Hazel will tell you lots of interesting stuff about crabs, especially the red and robber crabs, and Shirley will show you some plants from both islands. They will also show you some "holiday snaps" of the tropical paradise they visited.



## Summer Working Bee and... Pizzas!

**Monday 12 February, 2024**

Join us for a summer evening working bee at Knox Park Primary School. It's a great way to reconnect with each other after the summer break and we'll have pizzas under the trees afterwards. See the details on page 7 because we'd love to have your company and your help!



## Propagation Morning

**Saturday 24 February, 2024**

Come along and learn a new skill (if you're new to propagating plants by cutting) in a relaxed and informal setting, or simply join us to share plant material and make cuttings in the company of friends.

For more details see page 9.

## Hi Everyone,

We are at the start of another year of 'Growing together with Australian plants', with interesting meetings, some outings, and working bees at Knox Park Primary School. But first a look back at the end of 2023.

Thanks to the generosity of Kerry and Colene we had a wonderful, social get-together for our end of year break-up despite the weather. Their covered outdoor area is just made for entertaining with multiple spaces for eating and relaxing, plus there are dining tables inside for the buffet and seating. I think it rained all afternoon, but we were all contentedly staying dry, chatting away and enjoying a wonderful lunch. Thank you to all members for bringing a great range of food – both savoury and sweet. We never tell anyone what type of dish to bring but somehow it always seems to work out.

I do not have a picture of our gathering, but I did take this picture of the soak at the front of the house which was full, but Colene assured me it would be dry by the next day.



**The soak in Kerry and Colene's garden**  
(Photo: Chris Larkin)

On Thursday 16 November, nine members turned up on a beautiful afternoon for a working bee at Knox Park Primary School. It was a bit of a last-minute call when several of us noticed how weedy the Butterfly Garden was looking when we arrived for our October meeting. Mark, the principal, came by to say hello and generously shouted us pizza as a thank you. Very nice indeed considering we don't pay rent for the use of the facilities. Every time I speak to Mark, he is appreciative of what the group does with regards the gardens. Really though, the lion's share of the work is done by long-time garden guardians Kerry Davis and Shirley Smith. They have a long-standing relationship with the school which their children attended. They have been working in the gardens, weeding and developing them, for many, many years on each and every Tuesday from 9.30 to 11.30. Anyone who has the time is welcome to join them.

Good news! At the last APS Vic Committee of Management meeting, it was decided that APS Vic fees for the next financial year will remain unchanged – \$38 for single membership and \$44 for household. Watch out for reminders as we approach the end of the financial year. APS Vic has also been on the hunt for a secretary to replace Chris Long who has been Acting Secretary but is stepping down due to ill health. Charles Hrubos from APS Mornington Peninsula Group is taking on the role with Nicky Zanen assisting and lightening the load as Minutes Secretary.

You would already be aware the other major news is that the ANPSA Biennial Conference, "Gardens for Life" has been moved from the city venue to the new theatre and conference centre called The Round. The Round replaces the old Whitehorse Theatre in Whitehorse Road, Nunawading. I do hope the shift to such a convenient location, with plenty of parking, will entice more of our Foothills members to attend. Note it will be held from 30 September to 4 October 4. There have been five newsletters put out by the organising committee to date, and each of them has been made available to Foothills members as attachments to either a

Foothills newsletter or notice. If you want to look at these newsletters at any time or register your interest in the conference, then just go to the APS Vic website and click on the link for the conference. If you want the newsletters to go directly to your email address, then you can register your no obligation interest. Here is the link for your convenience:

<https://www.anpsa2024conference.com/>

MIFGS, the Melbourne International Flower & Garden Show, is being held again in the city from Wednesday 20 March to Sunday 24 March in and around the Exhibition Building.

Please read the information in this newsletter with regards to a request for helpers to step forward to assist promoting Australian plants at this event. If you are interested in helping in some way, then please contact Chris Clarke directly as suggested.

My garden looks good for this time of year and I hope yours does as well. How strange is this summer so far! We have luckily dodged the floods, the fires and heatwaves suffered in other part of Australia. I do realise though summer may not have hit its straps yet. Still, it has been wonderful not to spend endless hours watering, and even more hours worrying about the effects of the hot, dry summer we expected from the long-range forecast. I am keeping my ponds full just to make use of the tank water before we get more rain. The relatively mild weather and rain has kept the chrysocephalums, scaevolae, coronidiums, brachyscomes and so many other plants flowering longer than usual.

The next event on our calendar is a summer evening working bee at 5.30 pm to 7.30 pm at Knox Park Primary School with pizzas to follow. Hope to see you there. There are two more things organised for February – a propagation morning at Knox Park PS on Saturday 24 February from 10 am to noon, and an evening meeting on 28 February on Christmas and the Cocos Islands. The year is going to start with a flurry of activity! Please join us.

**Chris Larkin**



**Summer colour in the garden**

(Photo: Chris Larkin)

## **Australian Plants in Bulawayo Zimbabwe**

During the Boer War my grandfather, Sergeant Cecil Davis, entered in his diary a description of Bulawayo.

“Not very large, a bit scattered, but they have some nice buildings - the best is the Grand Hotel which occupies a whole square. The town is all lit up with electric light, a nice park with a lot of Australian shrubs, wattle, eucalyptus, pepper tree and others .....

16 June 1900”

**Kerry Davis**

## From Perth to Broome

This was the journey we took together, (with Geoffroy) for our November meeting. It was not a plant related trip, but I hope members enjoyed what I had put together which did in fact include quite a few plants.



**(L) *Grevillea wickhamii* (R) *Anthrocercis littorea***  
(Photo: Chris Larkin)

Definitely one of the most stunning plants of the Pilbara region is *Grevillea wickhamii* with its very large showy red flowers. Interestingly Bev and I saw a yellow flowering form at Kings Park before we set out on our adventure. A most unusual plant, the ray flower *Anthrocercis littorea*, about 3m tall, was growing at the Pinnacles. *Anthrocercis* is an endemic genus to Australia with around 20 species half of which grow in WA.



**(L) *Acacia adoxa* var. *adoxo*  
(R) *Ptilotus exalatus*** (Photo: Chris Larkin)

Since giving the talk, Bill Aitchison has kindly identified the beautiful and unusual *Acacia adoxa* var. *adoxo* growing in the Pilbara. Bill said it is one of a kind with its grey whorled phyllodes (leaves).

A plant we did see quite often was *Ptilotus exalatus*. A delicate looking plant living in quite a harsh environment!

We didn't actually see the stromatolites because the 'pier' that was constructed out over the site to enable you to view them has been storm damaged, and the beach area is cordoned off. The fragility and rarity of the site might mean this way of viewing these ancient and important life forms might never be reinstated. There was fortunately a lot of information on them at the location and in the museum at Denham.

When giving the talk, I said there are only two places in the world where there are live stromatolites – the hyper-salty Shark Bay Marine Park and somewhere in the Bahamas. Since then, I've become aware of some near Port Lincoln, SA, and there have been recent discoveries of lagoons in the high Andes of Argentina containing stromatolites. We really owe the very existence of life on earth to these strange life forms which 'breathed' oxygen into the atmosphere. Prior to their existence the atmosphere contained a mere 1% of oxygen. Amazing to think about.

I showed a slide of the petroglyphs of the Murujuga National Park near Dampier on the Burrup Peninsula, but I didn't appreciate while I was there that this is the largest and most diverse collection of rock art in the world. There have been many successful battles fought over the years to save the site from mining and there currently exists an ongoing threat from pollution. World heritage listing has been sought. The rock art is in a landscape of rock piles like some gigantic tip truck has dumped huge piles around at random.

The main motivation for taking the trip was to see Karijini National Park. So many people have raved about its beauty but it is a bit out of the way at 80 kilometres or so from the coast. It did not disappoint. The landscape of the Kimberley is stunning, with tufted spinifex type plants and the wonderful white-trunked Snappy Gum or

*Eucalyptus leucophloia*. The gorges of Karajini are gorgeous! I have chosen two pictures to exemplify this.

There were other highlights I'm not covering here. All I can say, is if you can, go and see this wonderful part of Australia for yourself.

### Chris Larkin



(L) Snappy Gum (R) Weano Gorge  
(Photo: Chris Larkin)



Knox Gorge (Photo: Chris Larkin)

## Blackburn Lake Primary School visit

Chris Larkin had a large part in designing and developing the gardens at Blackburn Lake Primary School. We visited the school to see how they have matured since being planted.

All photos: Janet Hodgkiss.



This shaded seating area is one of the first areas that Chris helped design.



Plenty of cubbies around the school encourage play, and places to sit provide great spots to investigate the contents of your lunchbox.



*Cordyline stricta* was chosen for these raised beds in a shady dry undercover area between two buildings. An irrigation system provides supplementary water when needed. Bev and Paul did some speed-weeding to tidy up the dianella before we continued our tour.



Accessibility is key at the school – both a regular path and an accessible path traverse this garden filled with ‘pompoms’ of tough lomandra.



A dry river bed is both aesthetically pleasing and takes care of stormwater.



A recently completed play area with cubbies, wooden sculptures of Australian animals and seating may appear stark, but a couple of eucalypts have been planted and in time will provide welcome shade. Resilient lomandras have also been used to soften the space.



Chris doing some incidental weeding while explaining things to us.



One of the beautiful mosaics at the school.

## APS Victoria Display at MIFGS – call for volunteers

Dear APS Victoria Members,

We are again putting on a display at the **Melbourne International Flower and Garden Show** in partnership with the wonderful Kuranga Native Nursery -

<https://www.kuranga.com.au/>

The display will feature native gardens in containers, plus cut flowers and some colour to bring people in.

I'm calling for volunteers to staff our stand for the five days – starting with those who assisted last time (blind copied) – but open to all members on a first in basis.

**When:** Wednesday 20 March to Sunday 24 March, including Friday until 9pm see here -

<https://melbflowershow.com.au/visitor-information/show-dates-times/>

**Where:** Royal Exhibition Building Carlton Gardens.

For volunteers doing at least three hours (ideally four), we will have 8 colour-coded single full day passes per day and 11 on the Friday. We will happily have people doing extra shifts but at this stage only one day pass per person will be available.

Two Kuranga staff will be on deck most of the time.

The role of volunteers will be:

1. Encouraging people to join the Australian Plants Society via the online membership.
2. Referring people to district groups.
3. Promoting our ANPSA 2024 conference.
4. Answering questions where you can, and just enjoying chatting with people!

\* Please e-mail directly to me, Chris Clarke, at [cclarke@internode.on.net](mailto:cclarke@internode.on.net) if you wish to volunteer. I only need to know if you CAN volunteer.

\* Please give a couple of possible dates and times as slots will fill up quickly.

Once you are on the roster there will be more information about day passes etc.

Any questions, you can phone me on 0439 378 897, but only e-mail will be used to fill the roster so I can keep track.

Thanks, and happy 2024!

Chris Clarke.

## Summer Evening Working Bee

We're having a summer evening working bee at Knox Park Primary School on Monday evening, 12 February, 2024.

For the hard-working helpers, there'll be pizza under the trees afterwards too!

There's usually weeding, and some pruning or planting to be done. You could even help barrow the waste down to the skip, so there are gardening jobs to suit everyone's skills and inclinations. 😊

It's always a pleasure to help out in the gardens, as they are a great advertisement not only for the school, but for Australian plants and the wildlife and insects they bring into a garden.

**Date:** MONDAY, 12 February, 2024

**Time:** 5.30 pm to 7.30 pm

**Venue:** Knox Park Primary School, Kathryn Rd, Knoxfield.

**Food:** Foothills will provide pizza; bring along something to drink.

**Bring:** Secateurs, gloves and weeders/trowels are very useful, but we have access to plenty of gardening equipment at the school as well.

Looking forward to seeing you and doing some gardening with you!

## Pycnosorus species

I have had *Pycnosorus globosus* (*Craspedia globosa*) in the ground for a very long time. It is a clumping plant with grey leaves that likes seasonal moisture. It has large compound flowers heads held aloft on tall stems – hence the name given to this plant is ‘Drumsticks’. It can be found naturally around Melton and Altona.



*Pycnosorus globosus* (Photo: Chris Larkin)

The small relative of this plant is *Pycnosorus chrysanthes* (*Craspedia chrysantha*). This plant is a new one to me – purchased from Friends of Cranbourne and planted last year.

It is a fraction of the size of Drumsticks with green leaves with woolly white undersides. It has formed a reasonable clump in a short amount of time and hasn’t stopped flowering for months. I just love it and hope to get my hands on some more of them this year. It is found growing naturally out Werribee, Sunbury way.



*Pycnosorus chrysanthes* (Photo: Chris Larkin)

Both of these plants would be two of the wonderful array of plants of the grasslands west of Melbourne. What is hard for us now to imagine is how extensive the grasslands and wetlands were around the bay.

Long gone is the Blue Lake which was around about Footscray Road east of the Maribyrnong River, with Albert Park Lake being one of the last remaining large bodies of water which was part of a system of wetlands.

Further around the bay the largest wetland system was in the vicinity of Seaford, Carrum and Paterson Lakes. Now only the Seaford wetlands remains while the Paterson River, or drain, has drained the swamps, which were fed by Dandenong and Eumemmerring Creeks, to make way for an upmarket housing subdivision.

**Chris Larkin**



## Foothills Propagation Day - Saturday 24 February 2024

This is a superb opportunity to learn a new skill from the experts in our group – propagating plants from cuttings.

Making cuttings is a handy skill to have if you'd like to bulk up your favourite plants, you need to replace some old plants, or if you'd like to try grow a plant isn't readily commercially available.

It's an informal and relaxed morning, and for those who already propagate plants, it's an opportunity to get together to share plant material, try out some plants you've not propagated before, and pick up growing tips from the others in the group.

If you'd like to join us then bring along some plant material you'd like to propagate or share with others, and a few other items - see below.

Even if you don't have any plant material to bring along, please do join us because there is always plenty of extra material to go around, and for you to practice your new-found skills on.

We'll finish up as usual with a shared morning tea under the trees.

**Date:** Saturday 24 February, 2023

**Place:** Knox Park Primary School, Kathryn Rd, Knoxfield

**Time:** 10.00 am – 12 noon

**Bring:**

- \* Sharp, clean secateurs.
- \* Clean pots to place your cuttings into.
- \* Container to hold and safely transport your cuttings home.
- \* Plant material to take cuttings from.
- \* Small watering can/spray bottle (if you have one).

**We will provide:** Propagation mix, rooting hormone, and a sheltered under-cover area and tables to work on.

Look forward to seeing you there!

## Nominations sought for APS Victoria awards

APS Victoria is seeking nominations of members for Honorary Life Membership, Certificates of Commendation and the Impresa Awards.

The Impresa Award categories are:

1. Outstanding Service to the Australian Plants Society Victoria Inc.
2. Outstanding Service to an Affiliated District Group of the Society (nominations for this category may only be submitted by a District Group).
3. Outstanding Service to Australian Native Plants.
4. Outstanding Service to Conservation and Sustainability.

The criteria for the awards can be seen in the Members Area of the APS Victoria website ([apsvic.org.au](http://apsvic.org.au)) under the 'Rules & Regs' tab, (By-laws, Supplement 26, page 54).

A list of previous recipients of Honorary Life Members and Certificates of Commendation is on our website, in the membership area, within the Honours Board.

You can find the Honour Board under APS VIC then subheading ABOUT APS VIC.

Nominations must be submitted to the Secretary of APS Victoria by 15 April 2024.

Members are also encouraged to consider nominations for 'Order of Australia Awards', and the Victorian Senior of the Year Awards for 2024.

## APS FOOTHILLS INC.

### CONTACT US:

Email: [foothills@apsvic.org.au](mailto:foothills@apsvic.org.au)

Postal address: Foothills Secretary,  
c/o Unit 9/51 Herbert Street, Boronia, 3155

### Phone Enquiries:

Chris Larkin: 9752 7837

### Find us on Facebook:

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

### Visit our Webpage:

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

## MEETINGS

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

**Date:** 4<sup>th</sup> 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 4th March 2024.

Email: [foothillsnewsletter@apsvic.org.au](mailto:foothillsnewsletter@apsvic.org.au)

## COMMITTEE

**Leader:** Chris Larkin

**Secretary:** vacant

**Treasurer:** Deb McMillan

**Newsletter Editors:** Kerry Davis; Janet Hodgkiss

**Other Members:** Betty Wright; Janet Hodgkiss

**APS Vic Delegate:** Janet Hodgkiss

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*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.*

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**VISITORS WELCOME!**



*Chorizema cordatum*, *Grevillea flexuosa* and  
buds of *Chamelaucium* 'Lemon Drops'  
(Photo: Kerry Davis)



*Pimelia ferruginea* with *Astartea fascicularis*  
climbing through (Photo: Kerry Davis)



*Pultenaea pedunculata* (Photo: Kerry Davis)

APS Foothills Calendar - 2024			
2024	Date		Topic
<b>February</b>	12	Monday	Summer Evening Working Bee: Knox Park Primary School 5.30 pm – 7.30 pm
	24	Saturday	Propagation Morning: Knox Park Primary School 10.00 am – 12 noon
	28	Wednesday	Shirley Smith, Hazel & Alan Veevers, and Barabara Lloyd – Christmas and Cocos Islands
<b>March</b>	27	Wednesday	Jason Caruso – Small Eucalypts
<b>April</b>	20 or 27	Saturday	Autumn Working Bee: Knox Park Primary School 10.00 am – 12 noon <i>(to be confirmed)</i>
	24	Wednesday	Alex Stalder – High Country overview <i>(topic to be confirmed)</i>
<b>May</b>	22	Wednesday	Bill Aitchison – Nature or Nurture
<b>June</b>	26	Wednesday	Member’s Meeting – Five Slides <i>(to be confirmed)</i>



*Ptilotus manglesi* (Photo: Kerry Davis)

## Shows, conferences, plant sales and other items of interest

**NB: Please check APS Victoria website for cancellations**

10 February 2024 – APS Victoria Committee of Management Meeting, 10.00 am via Zoom.

20 to 24 March 2024 – Melbourne International Flower and Garden Show (MIFGS), Carlton Gardens and Royal Exhibition Building.  
Website: <https://melbflowershow.com.au/>

23 & 24 March 2024 – 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](http://rbgfriendscranbourne.org.au)

6 & 7 April 2024 – APS Wangaratta take part in Off-Grid Living Festival & Campout, Chiltern Racecourse & Recreation Reserve, NE Victoria. Will showcase Australian plants and sell plants propagated by the group.

13 April 2024 – APS Geelong Australian Native Plant Sale, 8.30 am to 4.00 pm. 'Wirrawilla', Lovely Banks.

20 April 2024 – APS Yarra Yarra Autumn plant sale. 10 am to 4 pm. Eltham Community and Reception Centre, 801 Main Rd, Eltham.

27 April 2024 – APS Mornington Australian Native Plant Sale, Josephine's Lawn Area, The Briars, Nepean Highway, Mt Martha. 10 am to 3.30 pm. No dogs. Free talks on propagating plants, pruning and maintenance, book sales and kids corner.

Early May 2024 – APS Victoria Committee of Management Meeting. To be advised.

11 May 2024 – APS Melton Bacchus Marsh Plant Sale, at St Andrews Uniting Church, Bacchus Marsh, 9 am to 1 pm. For more details contact David Pye, Ph 0417 289 369.

27 and 28 July 2024 – APS Bendigo host COMM and full weekend of activities.

5 September 2024 – Wimmera Biodiversity Seminar. Further details to follow.

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 4 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.

30 September to 4 October, 2024 – ANPSA 2024 Biennial Conference, Melbourne, hosted by APS Victoria.



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

19 & 20 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](http://rbgfriendscranbourne.org.au)

November 2024 – APS Wangaratta host APS Victoria Committee of Management meeting and AGM. Details to follow.

2025 15<sup>th</sup> FJC Rogers Seminar 2025 on Epacridaceae hosted by APS Mornington Peninsula.

2026 ANPSA 2026 Biennial Conference, planned to be held in Alice Springs.