



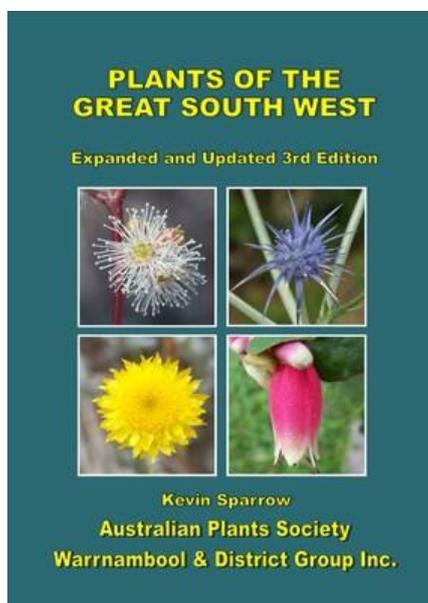
# Correa Mail

Newsletter No 374 - November, 2021

## OCTOBER MEETING

Kevin Sparrow

Our speaker was Kevin Sparrow, the author of a wonderful little book, *'The Plants Of The Great Southwest'*. The book, in its third printing, gives a very comprehensive look at the plants found in south-west Victoria, from Port Campbell to the South Australian border. Kevin has, so far, identified around 1100 species, more than 600 of which are illustrated in the book.



Kevin gave us a very detailed history of the book from its first iteration in 2004 to the current edition, published in 2020.

He acknowledged the assistance of many contributors and the financial support of The Warrnambool APS group, Envirofund, Glenelg Hopkins

CMA, Moyne Shire, Coast Care Victoria and the Victorian State Government.

In this third edition the vast majority of photographs are by Kevin himself, an avid bushwalker who always has his camera at the ready.

The book not only records descriptions, locations and conservation status, but aboriginal use of the plants where appropriate.

A great book and highly recommended for those with an interest in our indigenous plants. A full recording of Kevin's talk is available on our website at .....

<http://apsgeelong.org/webinars.html>

I apologise for the editing. Computer GPU issues !!!

## VIRTUAL PLANT TABLE.

I was a bit slow getting the invitation out this month, so the plant table had fewer contributors than usual. However, there were still some nice photos and interesting specimens to see.

Peter Nuzum kicked us off with photos of *Carpobrotus rossii*, *Hymenosporum flavium*, *Kunzea baxterii*, a *Grevillea*, perhaps 'Superb', *Solanum aviculare* and a lovely *Plectranthus (Coleus)*.



*Plectranthus (Coleus) sp.*

Di Royce contributed photos of *Eucalyptus*, *Callistamon*, *Grevillea* and a wonderful *Prostanthera*. Dianne was unwell and unable to attend the meeting to confirm ID. We wish you a speedy recovery, Di.



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Bruce Mcginness showed us a couple of photos of *Prostanthera lasianthos*, the Victorian Christmas Bush, *Prostanthera 'Poorinda Ballerina'*, and a very attractive *Callistemon* called 'Mr. Foster' which prompted some tongue-in-cheek (some might say unkind) comments as to its need to be controlled, it's attractiveness to birds and its value up against a fence. 😊



**Callistemon 'Mr. Foster'**

Matt Leach showed us a mix of wild and garden flowers from Inverleigh, *Diuris* and *Thelymitra* orchids, *Dillwynia*, *Eucalyptus*, *Grevillea*, *Banksia*, *Phebalium* and *Swainsonia*. His *Telopea 'Shady Lady'* red was particularly attractive.



Matt and Nicole were in Gippsland for a few days and Nicole treated us to a lovely display of some of the

orchids and other wild-flowers they'd found in and around Tarra-Bulga National Park.



**Stackhousia monogyna – Creamy Candles**

We missed our planned excursion to Werribee Zoo, so Ade showed a few photos of the gardens in flower, to perhaps encourage to visit the zoo when restrictions allow.



#### LITTLE RIVER EXCURSION

By Chris Walker-Cook

With all the cancellations because of the COVID restrictions, it felt so good that the planned excursion to Little River went ahead. I often go through Little River on the train, but I have not stopped and looked around the town for many, many years. I was very pleasantly surprised at what we saw.



**Members gather for the first excursion for some time**

From our meeting place at the railway station car-park, we broke into two groups to comply with the COVID guidelines: one taken by Jennie Epstein, the other by Matt Leach.

Those in Jennie's group began the tour by looking at the impressive range of native plants planted over many years on the slope behind the railway platform: *Grevillea*, *Dianella*, *Maireana*, *Eremophila*, *Austrostipa*, to name just a few of the species. There was even a *Nematolepis*, a species which we don't see in the Geelong area very often.



*Nematolepis phebaliooides*

With no sign of vandalism (Little River has a real small-town ambiance), Little River may well showcase the best railway station native plantings in the State.

The best was yet to come as Jennie directed us a short distance to remnant vegetation adjacent to the railway line. This was a real surprise as I think most of us were not even aware of its existence. Under a canopy of Sugar Gums, we found an impressive number of plant species in flower: *Austrostipa* sp., *Convolvulus angustissimus*, *Calocephalus citreus*, *Leptorhynchus squamatus*, *Goodenia paradoxa* (formerly *Velleia paradoxa*), *Linum marginale*, *Minuria leptophylla*, *Vittadinia* sp., *Wahlenbergia communis* (?). We also found several *Pimelea* plants, all of which had finished flowering.



*Minuria leptophylla* – Minnie Daisy

The native plants were found on slightly higher ground. The lower ground, with quite a few puddles still present, was very weedy and dominated by widespread

stands of what looked like Ryegrass (*Lolium* sp.). An emerging infestation of Prickly Pear (*Opuntia* sp.) was evident.

It is amazing that the remnant vegetation has survived at all as the soil looks like it has been heavily compacted, no doubt a legacy of the freight line track that was put in recently.



Little River near Bull Reserve

We then all went to Bull Reserve on the banks of the Little River to explore all the native plants that have been put in over many years. At the same time, we came across some remnant vegetation, especially *Austrostipa* species.

Access to the river is restricted but a couple of us found a great spot downstream, near the historic bluestone Rothwell Bridge, which would make a great spot for launching canoes for a trip upstream.



The historic Rothwell Bridge

*Jennie has given us a brief history of the Station project, and her part in it. Thanks Jennie for a great day.*

This project originally started in 2011 when I decided to plant out the Little River railway embankment adjacent to the car park. The area was totally bare at the time and seemed to be crying out for some TLC. My idea was to plant out the embankment with native and indigenous species to beautify the station precinct, provide habitat for birds, increase the biodiversity, and hopefully to encourage local residents to appreciate native plants for their beauty and habitat values, and perhaps use them more in their gardens.

I encourage residents and visitors to take cuttings and seed to propagate their own plants. As a member

of the local Lions Club at the time, I approached them to see if they could source topsoil, mulch and rocks to landscape the embankment, and also the plants. I also propagated a number of species myself which have been used in the plantings. With the help of the Lions members we started work on a section of the bank, and over the years have expanded the area planted. Working bees have been held several times each year to weed, prune, water and plant out the embankment.



**The embankment today**

I became involved with the Stationeers group several years later. I joined the Landcare group when it commenced in 2018 and with their assistance we have continued working on the site. In 2018, we received a \$700 grant from the Stationeers to finish planting out the site with indigenous plants.

We will be liaising with the Station Revival group to plant out an area between the historic buildings as renovations are carried out. In 2020 and 2021 the Landcare group funded mulch to improve the appearance of the embankment, reduce weed infestation and to protect the plants from excess water loss.



The site has many challenges, including :

**Exposed site:** – we managed to get hold of some good quality top soil which helped the plants establish and they are largely maintained without water after the first year. We received a donation from Bunnings of hoses and tools which have been used on this project. People employed by V-line to undertake weed control have sprayed a number of our indigenous and native plants as they have not recognised them. I now have

contact details for the contractor and will discuss this issue if it continues to be a problem.

**Growth:** Some species have grown much larger than was originally expected and are shading / overgrowing other more useful species, and will have to be removed or heavily pruned to maintain the biodiversity of the landscape.

**Mulching:** as we don't have anyone from Council to remove green waste from the station, I have arranged for prunings etc. to be taken to my place for shredding and have used the resulting mulch on my garden.

Our intention is to continue to maintain the station plantings in to the future and landscape further areas with permission from V-Line and assistance from the local community.

### **WARNAMBOOL WEEKEND AWAY**

November 20 and 21 to visit the gardens we saw at our September meeting. Please let Secretary Peter know if you plan to attend so we can let our hosts know approximate numbers, and give you details of the visit schedule.

### **UPCOMING EVENTS**

#### **NOVEMBER MEETING      Assoc. Prof. John Rayner**

Our speaker for the November meeting will be Associate Professor John Rayner. His topic will be '*Exploring new landscape design applications using Australian Plants*'.



**Associate Professor John Raynor**

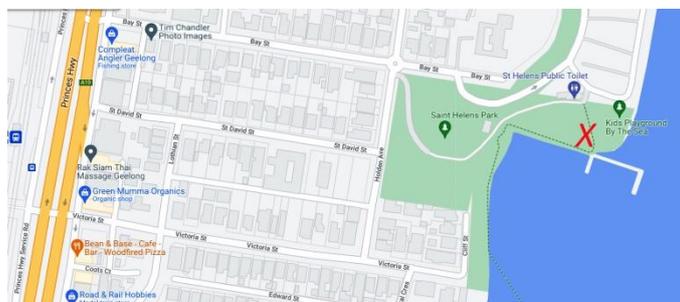
In this presentation John will explore and discuss new approaches to using Australian Plants in urban landscapes. He will draw from examples from the 'naturalistic planting design' movements in Europe and North America; and discuss some of his research and outreach work using Australian plants, including the Woody Meadow Project. John will also examine some of the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead in using Australian Plants more broadly.

John's expertise is in the horticulture of urban landscapes and green infrastructure, where his main interests are focused on the design and use of plants. He is currently Director of Urban Horticulture at the Burnley Campus where he helped establish the Green Infrastructure Research Group. John is a passionate educator, receiving multiple awards for his work, and is responsible for the Burnley Plant Guide, an online database of landscape plants in south-eastern Australia.

He was the lead author of the Growing Green Guide, a collaborative project with the State Government of Victoria and City of Melbourne, that has had more than 533,000 views and 170,00 downloads since its release in 2014 (to January 2020). The Guide was awarded the Premiers Award for Sustainability (Education) from the Victorian Government in 2015.

## CHRISTMAS FUNCTION Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> December

The committee has opted for an outdoor picnic/BBQ style gathering for our Christmas break-up. We will gather at St.Helen's Park in Rippleside at 10.00am. The club will provide meat and bread for the BBQ and red or white wine for those who wish to partake. We ask that you all bring a salad or a dessert to share. Please bring EVERYTHING else you might need, plates, cutlery, glasses, chairs, nibbles, sunscreen, hat, raincoat, kitchen sink. There are BBQs at the park, but, just in case, committee members will bring 4 Webers as back-up. Meet at the BBQs near the pier. **X** marks the spot. Look forward to seeing everyone there!



## NEXT YEAR 2022 (Not far away!)

Planning is well under way for speakers for our (hopefully) face-to-face meetings in 2022. If you have anyone in mind who might be an interesting speaker, or

if you might like to talk to us about your garden, or favourite bush-walk, please let us know.

## PLANT SALE 2022

We have set April 9<sup>th</sup> as the date for our Plant Sale next year. Put the date in your calendars.

## TREE PLANTING AT THE YOU YANGS

By Peter Nuzum

On Saturday 2 October, a small group of us under the auspices of the Lara Care Group headed off to the lower car park in the You Yangs to plant some trees. The trees were kindly supplied via a grant from the Lara branch of the Bendigo Bank.



The plant species involved included Redgum - *E.camaldulensis*, Red Box - *E.polyanthemos*, Grey Box - *E.microcarpa*, Manna Gum - *E.viminalis*, Yellow Box - *E.mellidora*, Golden wattle - *A.pycnantha*, Lightwood - *A.implexa*, Gold dust wattle - *A.acinacea*, Hedge wattle - *A.paradoxa* and Snowy mint bush - *Prostanthera nivea*.



It was planned to plant lots of Red Gums along a couple of creek lines but we are waiting on approval from the traditional owners, the Wadawurrung, as this is part of their sacred land. Once approval is obtained we will be back to plant in these areas. It is also planned to clear an area and plant it with indigenous grasses to replicate what the area would have originally looked like.

In all, we planted about 300 trees. It was great how we all came together, and, by the end of the day, we were working really well as a team. The day was beautiful and the company was marvellous. But the highlight of the day was very definitely Jan's chocolate chip biscuits and her date slices.

### **SLOW WALK THROUGH A BIT OF THE OTWAYS**

by Phil Royce

On Sunday, 3 October, Di & I decided that due to the sunshine we'd go for a walk - but we had to drive to the start. Destination was the eastern edge of the Great Otways National Park; the bit of it that's along the Great Ocean Road, past Bellbrae, but before Anglesea and before the Chocolaterie.

And we are glad we did. We pulled off the road into a smallish car park where many of the cars had bike racks. 'Hmm,' I thought, 'these people won't be doing a lot of stopping to look at the flowers.' Maybe it would be an issue.

We got going along quite a wide track, carefully skirting the puddles. Less than 20m covered and then came stop 1, because we thought we knew what we were looking at. We thought this because we had our trusty colleague with us but not an APS Geelong member - Ian McCann. Ian wasn't with us in person but in hard copy via his book, 'The Coast and Hinterland in Flower.'



*Pimelia linifolia subsp. linifolia*

At Stop 1, we looked at a Pimelea (?), nope because the flowers were hanging upside down, we were looking at a Phebalium(?), nope again because the leaves were too narrow, then on page 60 was a *Monotoca* species, but nope again because flowering was between March - May. Grrr ... 15 minutes gone already, and Di had moved 75m down the track. I decided to check out the identity later, much later!



*Dillwynia hispida*

On we went to not quite a stop but a slow-down and we recognised in quick succession, *Kennedia prostrata* - Running Postman, and a tiny white *Epacris impressa* - Common Heath, and a tallish (almost 1m) yellow, almost gold, and red pea flower which Ian indicated could be *Daviesia* or *Dillwynia* or *Pultenaea*. We settled on *Dillwynia hispida*. And then a family cycled past us.



*Hibbertia sericea var. sericea*

On we went, past small young *Banksia* with no flowers, taking a more narrow track heading left then right before taking a track heading away from Great Ocean Road & toward the Bass Strait. Longer stop at a lovely, yellow flowered *Hibbertia* because we have one growing in the garden - *Hibbertia scandens*. But of the six Guinea-flowers in Ian's book, just two were in the area and neither of these had leaves like ours. Off we went again, saying that there seemed to be tall

Eucalyptus, less tall Acacia and then simply lowish shrubs - although Di had noticed some Sundews.



*Leptospermum lanigerum*

We went around a bend in the track and all of a sudden saw many, many, well a dozen or so, *Xanthorrhoea australis* - the Austral Grass tree, some old and taller & wider than me, others short and narrow. And suddenly, a golden-flowering *Banksia* - had to be *B. marginate* - and Ian agreed. And a little further on, past one of many *Leptospermum lanigerum*, we came upon a stunning, single, green-flowering *Callistemon*-like small bush. We couldn't name it, nor could Ian. I checked my Australian Native Plants 6th edition at home, again without success. But 3-4 days after the walk, I looked at the flowering *Melaleuca fulgens* in my garden and was surprised to see a resemblance to the green flower. So I checked the 6th edition again, and discovered *Melaleuca diosmifolia*. But unless you can confirm the identity of this plant, I may go back and do a Roger.



*Melaleuca diosmifolia* – garden escapee at Anglesea

By now it's been an hour walking through the not so bush and we decided to head back. Not, however, by retracing our steps. We took a very narrow track heading towards Torquay. We shared this with rapidly moving cyclists - going in both directions but luckily not

at the same time. Di & I stepped off the track into safety. Up-hill and down dale we went, passing more Acacias. One, Ian said was Prickly Moses, *A. verticillata*, There were more more 'rough barked gums', *Eucalyptus littoralis*. The track had some great jumps and banked bends for the cyclists although those we saw were all younger than us. We'll stick to walking.

So, after a total of two hours of wonderful enjoyment we arrived back at the car, looked for the thermos, remembered we didn't pack it, and headed off home.

## RAISED GARDEN BEDS

By Phillip Vaughan

I would like to take this opportunity to address the comments and questions of raised garden beds and the impact of the higher than average rainfall this year.

My knowledge behind raised garden beds is to improve the surface drainage, and not to allow water to accumulate around the 'collar' of plants, therefore damaging or killing the plant.

When I speak about factors which increase the range of plants which can be grown in a specific area, these three most important criteria are:-

1. Good Drainage.
2. Good Drainage.
3. Good Drainage.

It's that critical!

Drainage allows water the ability to pass through the soil within a reasonable time, after it has rained.

At Vaughan's Australian Plants we live in a location where our soil is sandy, and although low in nutrients, the soil generally drains well. My garden beds are raised for the sole principle of heavy rainfall where the soil becomes saturated the moisture movement through the soil remains the same.



Raised beds at Phil's Pomonal property

I would advise my customers to raise garden bed levels by about 30cm in height. Raising garden beds stops the accumulation of surface water and maintains correct drainage. Increasing bed heights by more than

30cm is fine when summer irrigation is used, but when supplementary watering is not part of the equation, then warm weather season dryness can be over accentuated.

The sourcing of material to raise beds poses a couple of points:-

1. It is far better to obtain soil from surrounding locations as this prevents the importation of weeds and diseases that are not already present.
2. If soil must be brought in to make the beds, ensure that the 'garden mix' from soil yards is free of any bird manure.
3. All manure from poultry, ie: chicken, turkey, duck, pigeon and goose are all high in phosphate, which does not allow varieties of *grevillea*, *banksia*, *hakea*, *waratah*, *dampiera* to name a few, to be grown in such mixes.



**More raised beds at Pomonal**

Phosphorus does not readily leach from soils, but rather must be used up, so unless you want to plant a corn field before your native garden, no bird poop!! Other manures, if aged, are fine in my view.



**Raised beds working well at Pomonal**

Free draining sandy loam is what I would import to my garden, if a material had to be bought. If this is to be used to raise beds of an existing clay material, it is important to add a small amount to begin with, then

mix the two thoroughly as an intermediate layer, rather than two distinct variations. This stops water from sitting under the loam on top of the clay, and improves root penetration.

One final point is that well drained clay is the best soil you can have, providing the drainage is adequate and the moisture and nutrient holding capacity will always win against sand, which only has drainage in its favour.

Thanks Phil for the article and the hospitality while I took these photos.

## **AROUND THE GROUNDS (Study Groups, really)**

*Once again, Phil Royce has made available articles from the Study Groups that are part of the Australian Plants Society. This time, from the Australian Plants In Containers group. The article, by Donald Mackenzie of South Australia, caught my eye. Donald has a problem that many of us can identify with ... poor soil for Aussie plants. Read on ...*

I live at Moonta Bay in country South Australia, where I am a member of APS Northern Yorke Peninsula, based in Kadina. Our soil is alkaline, at best 8.5 and because of this I grow many plants in pots.



***Leschenaultia Formosa***

I have several *Grevillea*, *Hibbertia*, *Lechenaultia*, *Verticordia*, *Leptospermum*, *Scaevola*, sundry others and some of the larger growing *Eremophila* eg. *E. mirabilis*, and *E. muelleriana*. This is only because they grow too big for my small garden. The plants in pots provide varied colour throughout the year. I love the *Hibbertias*. Their bright yellow flowers add a special "zing" to the garden.

I have about 50 pots scattered about the garden, many growing on my verandahs which face northeast. Great in winter, sheltered from the prevailing south-westerly winds with lovely winter sunshine. Good spot for morning coffee.



***Dampiera diversifolia***

I use standard Australian Native potting mix, fertilise with a top dressing of organic slow release fertiliser 2 times a year and the garden and pots are on a watering system so that we can travel, although Covid-19 has stopped that this year. We had intended to attend the Fred Rogers Seminar but we all know the story there. I really feel for the organisers ... so much preparation, growing of plants for sale and organisation.



***Schoenia cassiniana***

## THE 'DUCK' ORCHIDS

by Ade Foster

In our virtual plant table last month, Nicole Leach showed us a photo of the Flying Duck Orchid, *Caleana major*. It prompted me to go back through my photos of this wonderful little orchid, which led me to browsing my photos of the other orchids in this 'family' and doing a little more reading.

### *Caleana major*

This little orchid is found in all the eastern states from southern Queensland to South Australia and Tasmania. It occurs in eucalyptus woodland, coastal or swampy shrub-land and heathland, mostly near the coast, but occasionally at higher altitudes. It has a small, narrow single leaf, reddish in colour. The flowers appear

on a stalk, usually around 200mm high. Flowers appear in the late spring, and may continue well into the summer in cooler areas.



***Caleana major* – Flying Duck Orchid**

### *Paracaleana minor*

*P. minor* – the Small Duck Orchid is widespread and locally common in eastern Australia. It grows in a wide range of habitats but mostly on ridges and slopes in forest. It has a small, grass-like greenish leaf and flowers appear on short stems, up to 150mm.



***Paracaleana minor* – Little Duck Orchid**

There is a third orchid in this group found locally ... at least, I thought there was. Frank Scheelings and I spent some time hunting down *P. sullivanii* in the Brisbane Ranges, back in 2018. However, those who know say that this little orchid is just a variant of *P. minor*.



***Paracaleana minor (sullivanii)***