

NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 16th March

Pomonal Wildflower Nursery 40 Wildflower Drive

Eucalypts: A Closer Look

from 5.00 for byo picnic

6:30 for meeting

After the last minute cancellation of last month's meeting (thanks, Dan!) it is with some trepidation that we're announcing the details of this month's.



An familiar part of our landscape. A Red Gum paddock tree

To mark **National Eucalyptus Day** this month's newsletter and meeting will be all about celebrating this iconic Australian genus. On the day itself, March 23rd we'll be holding a display celebrating eucalypts in Pomonal Store.

Our normal monthly meeting on the 16th will begin with a belated start of year picnic at Pomonal Wildflower Nursery, 40 Wildflower Drive. (Phil Williams' place) The same Covid restrictions apply as for our end of year break up at Banfields'. Please bring everything you need, as food sharing is not allowed. Also important, **bring a chair.**

The topic of the meeting is 'Eucalypts: A Closer Look'

My Introduction to Eucalypts

When I arrived in Australia 1975 with my young family, I'd never seen a eucalypt and had no idea what a profound part they would play in my life. It's a strange experience to go for a walk and not know the names of the most common plants. The first, and one of the best, books we bought was *Trees of Victoria* by L.F. Costermans. It's a tiny book with a huge amount of information in it. Its price tag of \$1.45 is still inside. At the time the book was published, there were 500 species of Eucalytus named, today there are almost 1000, but the techniques and principles of identifying them today are unchanged.

Armed with this book we made tentative journeys to nearby areas like The Dandenongs, Healsville Kinglake etc and slowly began our life long adventure with Australian plants.

Phil Williams

How to Identify a Eucalypt (or not)

When we decided to have an open air meeting, because of Covid restrictions and the difficulties involved in using the hall, I foolishly volunteered to host it and have a session on how to identify eucalypts, particularly local species, because I have most of them growing here. Far better than looking at slides, people would be able to closely examine the living trees and more easily compare them. We then decided to expand the idea and include as many of the eucalypts as possible. To do this successfully of course I had to know what they all were and be able to point out their distinguishing features.

So I started to go round and put labels on them. I didn't get far before I realised how little I actually know about what's growing in my garden. I needed help. Catherine Pye told me that she'd found the App *Euclid* very useful. I've had it for a week and had some success, but if I've learnt one thing it's that **identifying eucalypts is hard!**

Euclid is a brilliant APP, produced by the Centre for Australian National Biodiversity Research and I would definitely recommend it to anyone interested in eucalypts. The fact sheets and illustrations alone would fill a book of over 1000 pages.

It was fascinating to find the step by step approach to identification was just the same as in my old *'Costermans'*

Sometimes it's as simple as looking at the bark: an Ironbark is unmistakable. But usually it's more complicated and any or all of the following features need to be examined:

Occurrence, what is its natural habitat?

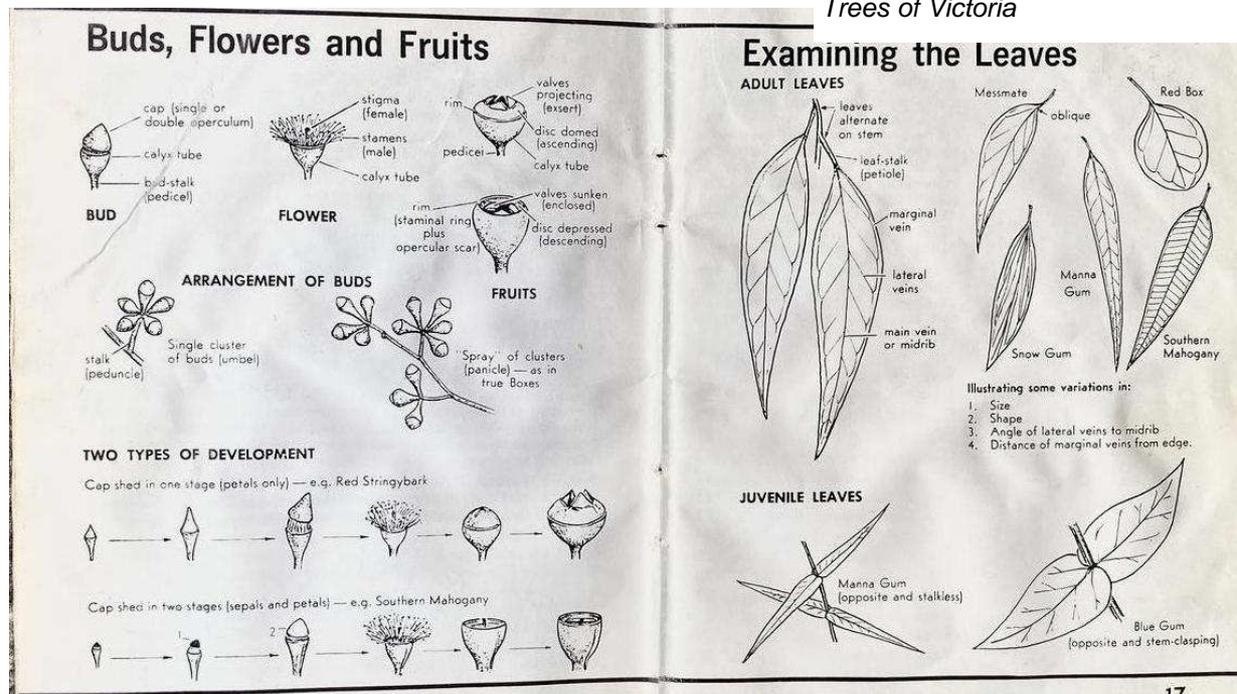
Appearance and size, is it a tree, shrub, mallee.

Leaves (adult and juvenile) size, shape, colour smell.

Flower buds size, shape, arrangement

Fruits, size, shape.

*Copy of page from my original
Trees of Victoria*



When you are dealing with mature trees, many of these items may be 20 or more metres out of reach. Juvenile leaves may be long gone. Flower buds may be out of season. These are

some of the difficulties I found. Fortunately, the hard woody fruits last a long time and can often be found by searching at the base of a tree. A windy day or a flock of cockatoos can deposit leaves buds and flowers around. But in spite of the difficulties and frustration I've managed, with the aid of **Euclid** to identify most of my trees. Once I got the hang of it it was very satisfying to work through the **Euclid** key to a successful result.

Of course you don't need to go through all this in order to appreciate the beauty of eucalypts. Just watch the bright green leaves and brilliant white branches of a Manna Gum swaying in the breeze against a brilliant blue sky. That's what Australia looks like.

Phil Williams

Remembering Stan Kelly

Next month will mark the twentieth anniversary of the death of Stan Kelly, a fondly remembered member of this group and because this is a special eucalypt edition I thought it appropriate to reprint an obituary written by Joan Pitaro which appeared in the June 2001 issue of 'Growing Australian'

Australia lost a great ambassador for natural history in the passing of Stan Kelly O.A.M. on the 30 April 2001, aged 89 years.

Stan received an Order of Australia Medal in 1980 in recognition of his service to the community through his paintings and lectures and the influence they had on the growing and appreciation of Australian plants throughout Australia.



Flower Show 1989

Stan Kelly used to sit all weekend and do quick paintings for visitors for \$10. You took him a flower from the display and he painted for you.



A selection of Stan's watercolours on display at one of our flower shows

In 2009, a selection of his botanical works were used as illustrations in the 'N' series of Australian Passports. Check and see if you have one!

Outside of his, home town of Ararat, Stan Kelly was best known for his painting of botanical subjects particularly the eucalypts through his books. His first book 40 Australian Eucalypts in Colour was published in 1949 and later Eucalypts Volume I & II were published featuring his paintings. The illustrations in these books give an indication of his artistic talent that extended beyond

botanical works. Painting was one of his great loves and he always went home from SGAP (as it was then) meetings armed with specimens to paint and to share with his painting class. People who have attended the Grampians Group flower show may remember seeing Stan's stunning fungi paintings displayed on the walls of the hall. A set of cards featuring his fungi paintings has been produced for sale by Amnesty International.

He was a life member of the APS Grampians Group and the Ararat and District Field Naturalists Club. He was a foundation member of the latter. He was the teacher of a painting class for many years and this class continues to meet weekly although Stan had not been well enough to attend for some time.

Stan had a great enthusiasm for life. He readily admired other peoples' talents and took a keen interest in the world around him. He was a lover of nature, an avid reader, a prospector, a keen fisherman and an articulate teller of stories.

Stan worked for Victorian Railways as an engine driver for many years. If the train was going uphill and he saw an orchid or other interesting plant he would jump out of the engine, pick a specimen to paint, then run up the hill and climb back into the engine.

A walk in the bush with Stan was always a delight! His enthusiasm, his knowledge, his appreciation of simple beauty and his stories - these are the memories that will stay with those of us fortunate enough to have shared trips in the bush with him

Stan Kelly was truly one of nature's gentlemen and will be fondly remembered by all who knew him. He is survived by his wife Bertha, son Anthony, daughter Sherry, 8 grandchildren and 4 great-grand children.

Source: Growing Australian, June 2001, Joan Pitaro, Ararat

Eucalypts For Home Gardens.

References: Past 'Growing Australian' magazines.

There are dozens of books on eucalypts available at all price points. Andrea has put this list together using past issues of 'Growing Australian'

You will also find lots of information on small eucalypts for home gardens in past issues of Gariwerd!

Other peoples gardens are also one of the best sources. A look at the real thing is better than any illustration in a book.



E.erythrocorys Red capped gum



E.tetraptera Four winged mallee



E.macrocarpa Mottlecah



E. lansdowneana Crimson mallee



E. forrestiana Fuschia Gum



E. synandra Jingymia Mallee



E. youngiana Large fruited mallee



E. caesia Silver Princess



E. priessiana Bell-fruited Mallee



E. crucis Southern Cross silver mallee



E. orbifolia Round Leaf mallee



E. pleurocarpa Tallerack

The newsletter will only continue if it has material to include. If you value the newsletter and enjoy reading it please consider making a contribution. Contributions in any form, physical or digital are welcome. Items submitted on paper, for example photos, will be scanned and returned. subject matter need not be limited to native plants, but can also include anything you think members may find interesting.

Email: <mailto:grampiansnewsletter@apsvic.org.au> or by phone: 0438 566 250 or by post to: Phil Williams P.O. Pomonal 3381

Thanks to everyone for their contributions to this issue.

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/APS-Grampians-Group-960723023989990/>

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