



NEXT MEETING
7:30 Tuesday 23rd November
Stawell Neighbourhood House
Paul Kennedy: Hakeas
followed by 10:00am Wednesday 24th November
Marriotts, Panrock Ridge
Hakea Garden and morning tea

At last we can have an actual in person meeting!
Here are the details.

Our next meeting will be at the Stawell Neighbourhood House on Tuesday the 23rd of November at 7:30pm. This will be preceded by tea at the Gift Hotel from 5:45pm, where you'll be able to say hello to Paul Kennedy, who will share his considerable knowledge on hakeas at the meeting. The following morning from 10:00am share a bring-a-plate morning tea, followed by a tour of hakeas at Panrock Ridge with Paul, Neil & Wendy.

We are not sure of the covid regulations yet, but plan for current regulations to still be in place, which means all attendees at SNH must be fully vaccinated as per government regulations for community facilities. Masks must be worn inside and stay away if unwell. Numbers are limited to one person per 4sqm which equates to a maximum attendance of 30 but, based on normal attendance, everyone should get a seat.

Please bring a gold coin donation for SNH, where we hope to hold more meetings next year.

President's Report 2021

Another disappointing year, with meeting after meeting cancelled. A couple of online meetings we tried had poor attendance and we couldn't gather physically for much of the year. A sad year with the tragic loss of Peter Shelley and Terry Burke, and some members having health turns for the worse. A disappointing year with the postponement of our 40th birthday celebrations, the cancellation of our hosting of the APS Vic COMM & AGM and a week of activities leading up to the show, and of course the cancellation of our flower show for the second year in succession.

Despite all this bleakness, almost all members renewed their memberships, demonstrating the importance of belonging to the group, of the important roles such groups play in a community that go beyond native plants or whatever, and the certainty that the covid restrictions will not be permanent. Moreover the following additional people joined our group: Lisa Ashdowne & Darryl Tonkin, Darren McClelland, Sue & Col Macaffer, Margot Galletly, John Geltch, Ruth Marriott, Mick Douglas & Amaara Raheem, Alana Kingston and Mary-Anne Jess. Our membership stands at 67 individuals this year, up from 58 last year.

We thank Chris Clarke for his Zoom presentation last October on 'Plants of Melbourne's Western Plains', Aidan Banfield for generously hosting the group's Xmas gathering last December, Phil Williams' eucalyptus-identification evening in March, Linda & David Handscombe for their excellent April Kangaroo Paw workshop at Barneys, Attila Kapitany on Xerophytes in April and Barb & David Pye on Correas in May (those last two the only hall meetings for the year), then the June picnic lunch at the Halls Gap Botanic Gardens.

I will again commend my wife Jocelyn, with assistance from Fiona Lucas, for all the hours and hours of work put into the arrangement of the not-to-be Pomonal Flower Show. I also thank Neil & Wendy Marriott and Neil Macumber for their organisation of the not-to-be APS Vic quarterly gathering and AGM and a week of activities for those staying on.

With all the cancellations we have had time to stop and smell the roses .. well the native flowers anyway. While we may be restricted in attending meetings, we have a bit more freedom outdoors, and we have had a record number of outings in October: Sundial Peak, Wartook Gardens, 3 Jacks Reserve & the Ironbarks, Troopers Creek, Illawarra State Forest, and the planned next walk at The Nook. These have taken full advantage of our incredibly beautiful environment, especially during the main flowering season. We are fortunate to have many knowledgeable members, only too pleased to share their knowledge with others, and most people attending a walk would have come away having a new or renewed familiarity with one or more species.

With restrictions soon to be eased, and as soon as we feel comfortable to do so, we will resume our monthly meetings and, with half our members closer to Stawell, hold them both in Pomonal and Stawell. We also plan to have more regular outings.

I had to accept the unexpected role of secretary when Andrea Shelley stepped down and am very appreciative of all the support I have had from the committee and ordinary members. I must take this moment once again to express our appreciation of Andrea and Peter's commitment to our group and their untiring efforts to help everything tick over, from month to month and year to year. But as to my ongoing positions as both president and secretary, this is not in the best interests of the group, partly because I find myself more and more constrained for time, and also because the roles on the committee should each be filled by a different person, reflecting different views and ideas and sharing the load of running the group.

Phil Williams has elected not to restand for the committee, although he will continue as newsletter editor. Phil is always available whenever he is needed. When asked by me if he'd join the committee, even though he has filled every role in the 40 years he has been a member, without hesitation he said yes. He comes to every working bee, every meeting that's been held, every outing and he's published our newsletter for goodness knows how long. He is always there for advice, to share his wide-ranging knowledge and experience, and to spare no-one from his dry sense of humour. Thank you Phil from all of us.

We have a strong membership base, an innovative and enthusiastic committee and a healthy bank balance. Our future is bright and I am delighted you all will be part of it.

Best wishes to you all

John King
October '21

Spring flowering Hakeas

Neil Marriott

In the last newsletter I wrote on some of the lovely winter flowering Hakeas in our garden, and in this article I'm writing about some of our spring flowering Hakeas: a difficult thing to do as there are just SO many to choose from! Come along to visit our Hakea Garden on Wednesday 24th November so you can see our lovely plants as Paul Kennedy takes us on a tour to tell us about this amazing genus. Tour starts with a cuppa at 10AM followed by the walk around our garden. Bring a plate to share –we will have tea, coffee and cups and the urn will be boiling.

Let's start with one of the showiest of the eastern Australian Hakeas, ***Hakea purpurea*** which comes from inland Queensland and New South Wales.



Hakea purpurea

I first saw this species when I went to outback Queensland in the 1980s to visit the famous Dave Gordon, who bred Grevillea 'Robyn Gordon' at Myall Park, Glenmorgan. This hakea was in full flower and was widespread in Gurrulmundi forest, and when I first found it I thought at first it was a new Grevillea species. That was until I discovered the hard woody seed capsules and realised it was a Hakea! Amazingly, our illustrious Baron Von Mueller also thought it was a Grevillea, naming it Grevillea trisecta, - that name is now in synonymy!!

I collected some of the seed and soon had lovely young plants coming on at Stawell. We now have plants flowering for the first time at Panrock Ridge in the Black Range. Plants normally grow to around 1-1.5m tall and wide, but can get to 3m, and have simple to divided leaves and masses of large showy red flowers that look just like a Grevillea.



Hakea bucculenta
close up of flowers

One of the showiest of all our Hakeas would have to be ***Hakea bucculenta***. This species is confined to an area north and inland of Geraldton, WA. This is a very hot, dry region, and as a result *Hakea bucculenta* is an excellent choice for a dense screen in a hot dry site. Plants are extremely hardy so long as soils are free-draining and never become water-logged. Grafted plants are available if you want to grow it in a wet site, although around the Grampians I find that plants on their own roots are hardier than grafted plants.



Hakea bucculenta
healthy young plant in full flower

Hakea auriculata is a spectacular low, very prickly shrub from the kwongan sandplains from Perth to Kalbarri, WA. Foliage on this species starts with spatulate (spoon-shaped) grey-green leaves, which get finer and deeply divided as the plants begin to get to flowering age. However some plants retain their original leaves all their lives. Flowers are normally white and are prolific and sweetly perfumed, totally covering the plants during spring. This is a very hardy small plant to 0.6-1m and is ideal for hot dry, well drained sites.

We are very fortunate to also have a very rare yellow flowered form that we were given by a friend from Swan Hill. Amazingly when we were given this plant, the label said “red flowered form”!! This plant retains its original foliage even when flowering, and has the added bonus of having attractive red new foliage. Both forms are hardy in well drained sunny to dappled shade sites.



White flowered form



Hakea auriculata

Yellow flowered form

Hakea psilorrhyncha

Another species from the kwongan sandplains between Perth and Geraldton in WA. It grows as a tall spindly shrub to 4 m tall and only around 1m wide. This unusual habit makes it a very bold and distinctive plant for our gardens where strongly erect plants are needed, either to contrast with low shrubs, or along narrow beds such as next to fences and the like. Flowers are white, large and profuse with a strong sweet perfume that attracts numerous native bees and butterflies. Easy to grow in a sunny well drained site.



Hakea psilorrhyncha - Close up of flowers
Note native wasps and beetles



Hakea psilorrhyncha - habit

Hakea francisiana has been flowering non-stop right through winter and is now still full of flowers. It is an absolute delight in the garden as it makes a large screen at least 3m x 3m with dense, long grey-green non-prickly leaves. When in flower it attracts flocks of honeyeaters and lorikeets so is a winner for attracting wildlife to your garden. It comes from the drier inland areas of WA, making it an ideal large shrub for a hot dry climate. However it must have very good drainage. Given this, it is a very hardy and easy shrub to grow. But if you live in an area with heavy, winter wet soils, then grafted plants are available from specialist native nurseries.



Hakea francisiana –one of our 4 year old plants

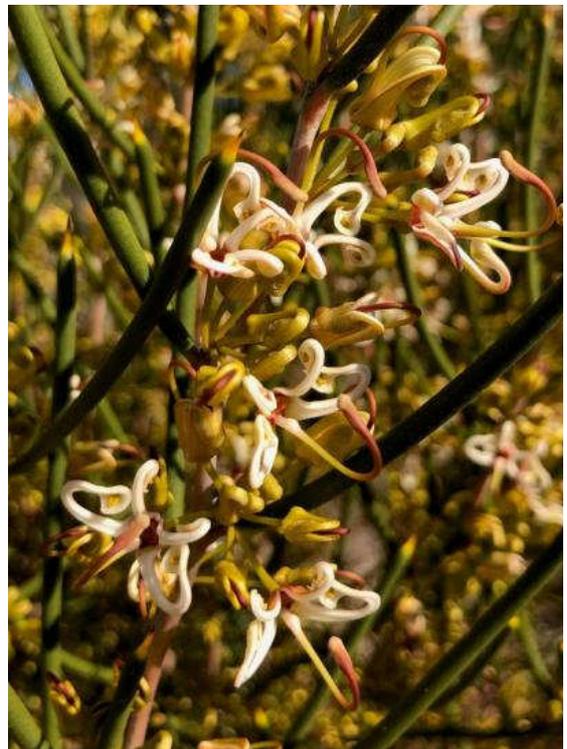


Hakea francisiana - flowers

Hakea platysperma Cricket-ball Hakea is a real novelty for the garden with its huge big “cricket ball” fruits. It also makes a really good dense screen plant, growing to around 2m x 2m with long simple leaves. Flowers, like the fruits are very large, and although not really spectacular, they are still quite attractive as well as being popular with our native honeyeaters and insects. It also comes from drier inland areas of WA so needs a sunny well drained site in the garden. Once established it is drought hardy and reliable.

This is just a small selection of the wonderful Hakeas we can all grow in our gardens for spring colour. Paul Kennedy, Leader of the Hakea Study Group will tell us more about this great genus, and we look forward to good weather at Panrock Ridge the next morning for Paul to lead us on a leisurely walk around our garden and our Hakea collection!

All photos Neil Marriott



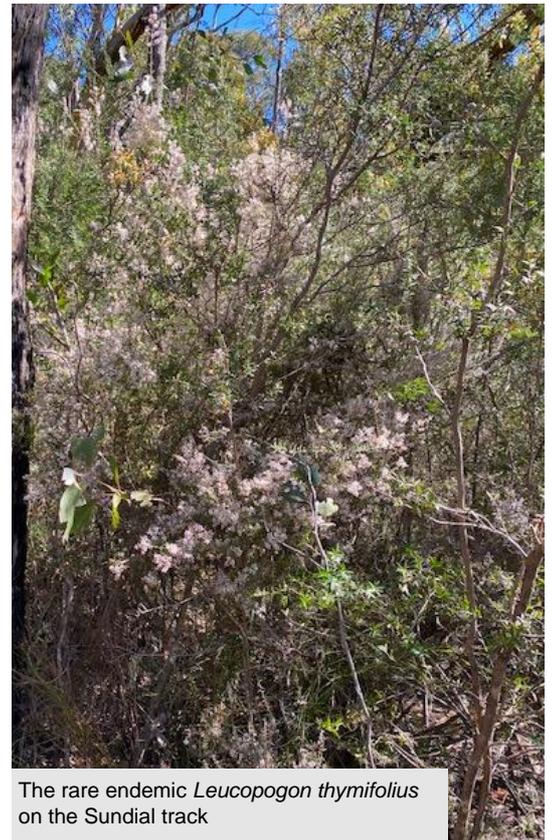
Spring Outings by John King

September & October saw many APS GG outings, as we tried to take advantage of the wonderful spring flower displays this season in the local area. We tried to be flexible and organise around the best weather, which gradually shifted from fine weekends to wet weekends and fine mid-week. For those who couldn't attend, here is a brief overview of the walks:

Sun 26th September: Glorious still spring day. We strolled from the carpark to Sundial Peak, with frequent stops along the way. Excellent examples of Rock Banksia (*B. saxicola*) and Hairy Correa (*C. aemula*). We also saw several rare Grampians endemic plants including *Leucopogon thymifolius* (pictured) and *Pultenaea costata*, not in flower.



Sundial Peak



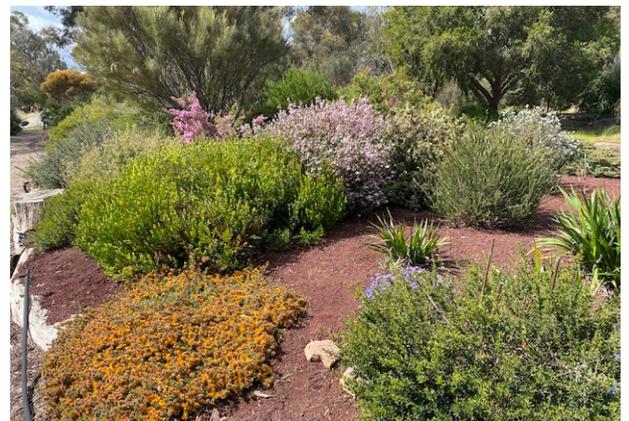
The rare endemic *Leucopogon thymifolius* on the Sundial track



Sat 2nd October:

Wartook Gardens, in which we took advantage of an open garden weekend (raising funds for the Wimmera Healthcare Foundation) hosted by Jeanne & Royce Raleigh. Saturday afternoon was the pick of the weather and as ever their garden was very impressive, as you will know from Royce's regular segment in the APS Vic quarterly magazine, *Growing Australian*.

Pictured: left, two species of *Dampieras* from WA, a highlight of the Raleighs' garden. Right: raised bed with scoria mulch.





Stawell Ironbarks



Euromyrtus ramosissima in the Ironbarks

Tue 5th October: Walk in the Ironbarks, on the NW edge of Stawell. If you couldn't make this outing, hopefully you still managed to get to the Ironbarks to see what has been described as the most spectacular display there for decades. This was a worthy substitute to travelling all the way to WA .. fields of wildflowers in full bloom.

Pultenaea williamsoniana
A rare endemic at Troopers Creek



A tiny patch of biodiversity

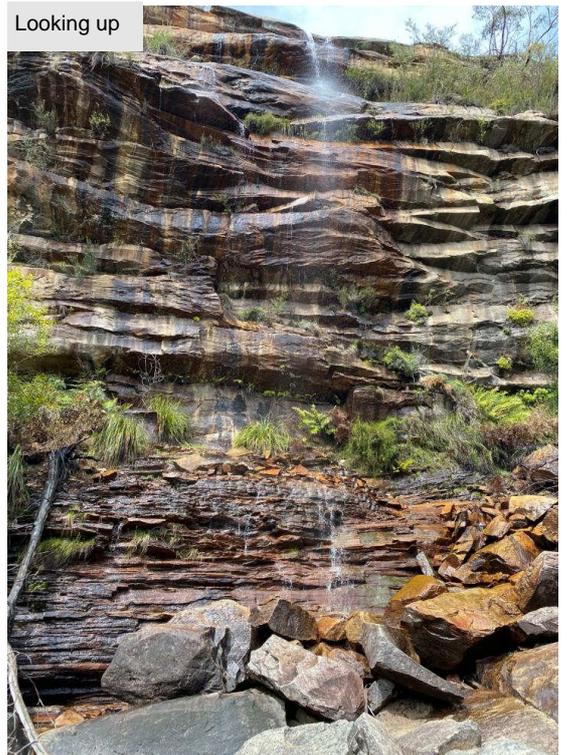


Tue 12th Oct: Troopers Creek to Gar Falls. Good turnout. Initial stretches of Sallow Wattle, which working bees have been attempting to make a dent in the numbers .. a losing battle. Lovely sections of Grampians Bauera, Grampians Grevillea (*G. confertifolia*), Love Creeper off the track (*Comesperma volubile*) and the uncommon Bronze cap orchid (*Caladenia iridescens*) Grampians Rice-Flower (*Pimelea pagophila*) and the rare endemic *Pultenaea williamsoniana* (pictured).

At the base of the falls - looking up



Looking up





Illawarra State Forest
Pultenaea laxiflora

Wed 20th October: Illawarra State Forest on Stawell - Halls Gap Rd. This was an original site for seed collection for the Jallukar Landcare Grasslands sub group, when it set out to build up a seed-bank of grassy woodland species, with the end objective being revegetation of areas which originally supported this vegetation type. Many of those plants from which we had collected seeds all those years ago were again to be seen in flower: Trailing Hop Bush (*Dodonaea procumbens*), milkmaids and spider orchids were out in force, and a field of Billy Buttons (*Craspedia variabilis*) and hundreds of bush peas (*Pultenaea laxiflora*)

Tue 26th October: The Nook, Moyston. A small group took advantage of a fine warm day and, with the Nook Book in hand (plants and birds of the area .. for sale in Moyston store), headed through the bush and saw many spider orchids and Salmon Sun Orchids and some fine tall grasstrees (the southernmost reach of *Xanthorrhoea glauca*).

The Nook. Note fine old specimens of *Xanthorrhoea glauca*



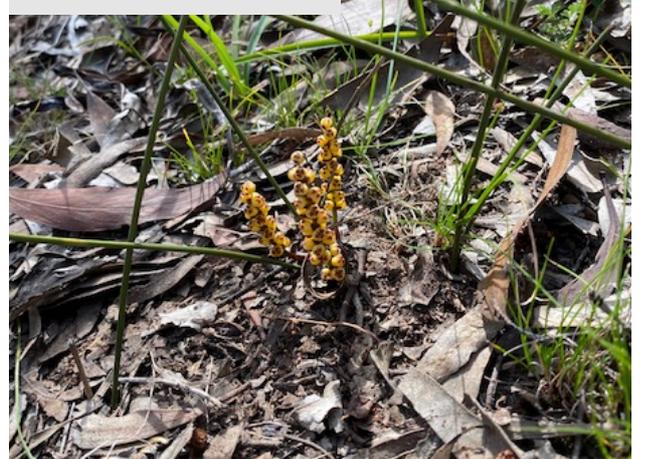
Kunzea parvifolia at The Nook



Neil finds a rare *Lobelia* at The Nook



A tiny unidentified *Lomandra* at The Nook



A Cure For the Covid Blues by Phil Williams

While sometimes it has felt as if the whole world has shut down and everybody is huddling in their houses to escape Covid, the natural world, both bush and garden has burst into life. We have seen spectacular floral displays on our bush walks and my own garden has provided a welcome contrast to the general Covid malaise.

Here are a few examples.

Doryanthes excelsa



A lovely surprise this year as it does not often flower. This plant was grown from a seed about thirty years ago and lived for half that time without producing a single flower. Certainly a striking feature in the garden!

Dampiera linearis



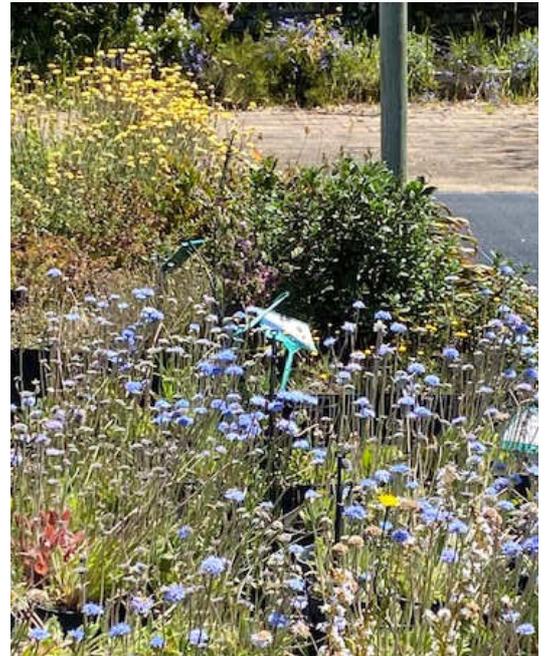
This very vigorous form of dampiera was grown from a cutting from the Raleighs' garden.

Chamelaucium uncinatum
Geraldton Wax



A reliable old favourite, Geraldton Wax is a long lived, well behaved plant. It has a long flowering season and provides excellent cut flowers.

These plants have been grown by the Jallukar Landcare Grassy Woodland seed project. The plants are used to produce seed for future revegetation projects. They have provided a welcome splash of colour in the nursery this year. They include Chocolate Lilies (*Arthropodium strictum*), Blue Pin-cushions (*Brunonia australis*) and Button Everlastings (*Coronidium scorpioides*)



Spending a lot of time in the garden has made me realise what a marvellous memory store plants provide. For example, when I see *Hakea grammatophylla* flowering, it takes me back to the wonderful walk to the summit of Mt. Sonder in the West MacDonnells near Alice Springs where we collected its seeds. Buying plants can be fun, but nothing beats the satisfaction of growing your own from seed or cuttings you have collected yourself. Everywhere I drive around the district I see trees which we grew in the nursery and feel good about the tons of carbon they are safely storing!

Xanthosia rotundifolia
Southern Cross



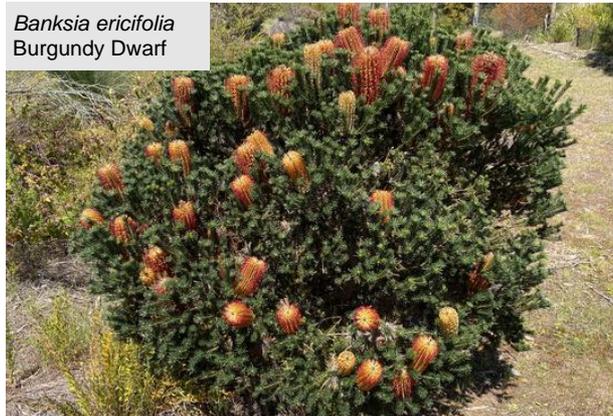
Calytrix glutinosa



Verticordia chrysantha



Banksia ericifolia
Burgundy Dwarf



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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