

Australian Plants Society

Grampians Group Newsletter

Gari-Word

February 2023

NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 21st February

7:30 Pomonal Hall

Bruce McInnes 'Wetlands'

Supper: L-Z

APSGG Christmas Party

There is no doubt that our members are a hardy lot as they braved the cold, wind and a little moisture to turned out in number for the Christmas Breakup. Fiona and John's home provided a beautiful setting with gardens and views of the mountains all seen from a lovely verandah.

Fiona provided a tour of the gardens, with discussions of the need to protect from marauding herbivores, and an inspection of the recently restored BNB cottage.

As the mist swept across the mountains everyone settled to good food, wine and plenty of cheerful chatter.

In the end some decided snow was imminent and headed for home but not without plants and tubs of bush tucker. Those who stayed retreated indoors for a cuppa and cake, the raffle draw and a quiz. The latter caused general mayhem, google searches and plenty of laughter, while the raffle was extremely well supported with plants for all.

The plants given to Fiona and John (including a magnificent Kangaroo Paw grown by Neil and Wendy) will hopefully serve as a lasting reminder to them of how much their generosity was appreciated and of the happy times had by all.

Margot Galletly



Kevin's Service / & Summer Flowering by John King

Kevin Grace's funeral service was one to remember on several levels - the extremely capable officiating by Gilda McKechnie, who presented an insight into Kevin's private and professional lives, David Hansdscombe's eulogy, chiefly remembering Kevin's APS GG film nights in Kevin's purpose-constructed projector room and the loss of much of Kevin's stores of equipment and film reels in the 2006 fires, and then there were the flowers. January is not the most prolific month for native flowers, but members answered Fiona's call, and vase upon vase of beautiful flowers lined the hall, with Fiona's banksia and foliage casket arrangement a highlight. Banksias and Kangaroo Paws were most in evidence, as well as some bush flowers - Prickly Teatree and Sweet Bursaria amongst them (from yours truly!). Thank you to all those who brought bunches; everyone commented on them and they were something that made one proud to be an APS GG member.

I thought of the flowers at the service whilst heading out for a walk with Nellie, our black lab. Not a lot in the garden, apart from prolific Kangaroo Paw and our lovely, almost-always-in-flower Grevillea "Lady O". We passed the creek (which normally stops flowing in October, but last year ran almost to Xmas), where the Sweet Bursaria (*Bursaria spinosa*) is in beautiful full-cream display, then along the southern fire track with eyes cast down to a single Woolly Everlasting (*Argentipallium blandowskianum*), but lots of yellow *Hibbertia fasciculata*. Prickly Teatree (*Leptospermum continentale*) is absolutely prolific - the summer flowering of this plant is a delight for both the insects and us. Then back into our property and through one of our many stands of Wirilda (*Acacia provincialis*). What a lovely tree - a wattle flowering in the hotter months as opposed to late winter and early spring - with its pale green narrow leaves and pale yellow globular flowers, seen to great advantage under a clear blue summer sky, and to even greater advantage when interspersed with Prickly Teatree and the pale purple Totem-poles (*Melaleuca decussata*). Nearing the open paddock and the brilliant purple of Magenta Stork's-bill (*Pelargonium rodneyanum*) at ground level and Messmates (*Eucalyptus obliqua*) flowering everywhere.



A request from Fiona:



Just sharing a pic of my flowering *Verticordia monadelphina* which has given us a lot of pleasure over the summer months.

Request:

Also asking for a call out to fellow members.

Does someone have a *Thryptomene saxicola* they could propagate or give me some to try?

Also interested to know if any are flowering now? It's terrific as a cut flower and there is so little pink fillers available now.

Thank you.

Fiona

Walking the Grampians Peaks Trail

After the inspiring presentation given by Monica and Phil Coleman in November, Catherine and Clive have walked the whole trail in one go. Here is their report.

Clive and I decided to end the year walking the Grampians Peak Trail (GPT) from north to south. We did this over 12 days (11 nights) camping in the designated camp grounds. Normally the GPT is a 13-day (12 night) adventure, but we thought we would run 2 days together and not stay in Halls Gap.

We had great weather for the entire trip. A bit too hot for a couple of days, but then the temperature dropped to better walking temperature. The only rain we had was at night or in the evening.

The warm weather meant we were seeing reptiles: skinks, dragons and a few snakes. Plus insects everywhere, pollinating flowers, catching mosquitos and generally buzzing around. Echidnas, red neck and swamp wallabies, kangaroos and emus were also out and about.

Part 1 Northern section of GPT.

This is a 4-day walk starting from Mt Zero picnic ground to Halls Gap. We headed up Flat Rock going up Mt Stapylton (side trip) to near Roses Gap where we spent night one at Barigar.

Then Day 2 to Troopers Creek along the Gar waterfalls walk continuing up to the Mt Difficult range to camp at Gar with side trips up Briggs bluff and Mt Difficult (Gar). What a location overlooking the northern Grampians perched high on a cliff. We were able to watch the sunset from our tent.

Day 3. From here we walked south along the Mt Difficult Range looking down onto Heatherlie Quarry and then to Werdug campground which overlooks Lake Wartook (Werdug).

Day 4. The last day was down an old track just north of Boroka Lookout to Chatauqua Peak and into Halls Gap.

What a profusion of wildflowers.

- * Boronia
- * Fringe myrtle
- * Milkmaids
- * Wedge pea
- * Dillwynias
- * Fairies aprons
- * Melaleuca decussata
- * Mitchell wattle not yet in flower.
- * Melaleuca squarrosa



Dwarf Wedge-pea
Gompholobium ecostatium



Common Wedge-pea
Gompholobium huegelii

Part 2

The central section of the GPT goes from Halls Gap to Jimmy Creek Road over 5 days.

Day 1.

After a bit of lunch in Halls Gap we headed up the Pinnacle, deciding to go via the metal steps (our favourite route) and onto the Sundial carpark to camp at Bugiga camp ground. This was one of the original camp grounds and had a different attachment system for tents on the tent platform which meant that rope was needed.

Day 2.

An early start the next day to beat the heat, saw us ascend Mt Rosea (amazing views) and then drop down to Borough Huts, cross the road and an old flume to a new camp ground at Barri Yalug. From here we had views of Lake Bellfield. There was a track heading north from here back to Halls Gap for those doing this short circuit.

Day 3.

A most exhilarating and spectacular walk, past an old flume up the ridge to the Dials. Passing the old flumes was a fascinating glimpse into the past. A wonderful walk up and down along the Dials until you drop down to cross the road and then head up to Redman's Bluff with more spectacular views of Lake Bellfield and the Serra Range and Mt William. From here you drop down to the gully by the road to Mt William and then up to Duwul campground.

Day 4.

From Duwul up Mt William (side trip) and then to Boundary Gap and up onto the Major Mitchell Plateau. This was definitely a highlight - the views were spectacular. Wildflowers were still out on the Plateau that had been and gone at lower elevations. We camped near Stockyard saddle at Durd Durd.

What a day!

- * Melaleuca decussata
- * Boronia
- * Sprengelia
- * Rosy bush pea
- * Grampians Bauera
- * Milkmaids
- * Goodenia
- * Fairy aprons
- * Fringe myrtle

On the plateau pink flowering Sprengelia lined every creek. So much colour. It was here we caught sight of the shy white-lipped snake under the board walk. Down in Boundary Gap we were lucky enough to see an Eyebright



Rosy bush-pea
Pultenaea subalpina



Grampians Bauera
Bauera sessiliflora

flowering. The Rock Banksias here were huge and old.

The wet gullies providing such a contrast.

Banksia Hill, at the southern end of the Plateau, is aptly named.



Pink Swamp-heath
Sprengelia incarnata



White-lipped Snake

Day 5

The walk down from the plateau to Jimmy Creek crossed a wildflower meadow of white daisies. Creamy candles, Pimelea, Chocolate lilies and our first sight of Flame Grevillea.

Part 3 Southern section.

This section can be done as a five day walk from Jimmy creek road to Dunkeld. The GPT took us along newly cut trails almost all the way to Dunkeld. The trail linked in with the pre-existing tracks up Mt Abrupt, Piccaninny and Mt Sturgeon before descending to Dunkeld.

Spending nights at newly developed camp sites Yarram, Wannon, Djardji Djawara and Mud Dadjug.

We went through very interesting country that had previously never been tracked. So this meant rough and rocky going in places. We crossed quartzite cliff bands, saddles and countless knolls.

Day 1

We finished at Yarram camp site which is a natural amphitheatre with tent platforms set up on three levels of terraces giving stunning views across to the Serra range. Definitely a favourite camp site.

Day 2

From here we followed a ridge climbing onto the most southern section of the Mt William range staying up high with views to the east showing farmland and expansive wetlands associated with the Wannon River. We then dropped down to the Wannon camp site which is in a green and lush valley on reclaimed farmland. What a wonderful spot.

Day 3

From Wannon camp ground, we walked across swampy ground to cross the Wannon River and the road into heath/grassland to climb onto the Serra range.

We walked along the Serra range ridge line with an abundance of Shiny tea tree flowering in profusion. Beautiful big white flowers. So many insects buzzing around. Sadly too many introduced European honey bees. But we were lucky enough to see 4 types of Jewel beetles and several other beetles, native bees,



wasps, flies and butterflies everywhere. Including white swallowtails. These native pollinators were hard at work. I have never seen so many flowering tea trees. Large, white blossoms.

- * Grevillea dimorpha
- * Calectasia still partly out
- * Fringe myrtle
- * Hakea
- * Milkwort
- * Blotched sun orchids
- * Duck orchids
- * Horny cone bushes
- * Grevillea aquifolium



Flame Grevillea
Grevillea dimorpha



Tinsel Lily
Calectasia intermedia

This day ended at Djardji djawara camp ground near Cassidy Gap. A very well equipped and large camp ground with a shelter. Day 4.

This was a tough day as we climbed up Signal peak and then Mt Abrupt before descending



over 600 stone steps into Mud Dadjug camp ground at the base of Mt Abrupt. Amazing views here up to the cliffs on Mt Abrupt and a lookout set over the surrounding farmland.

- * Calytrix still flowering.
- * Epacris
- * Bronze hood orchid.
- * Purple daisies
- * White daisies
- * Yellow Goodenias

Day 5

The last day but still more adventure. We followed the ridge down from Mt Abrupt to the road and then up the Piccaninny (side trip). We had not done this before and it was well worth the look. From here we had a tough walk up Mt Sturgeon with more stunning views. The insects; dragonflies, wasps, butterflies up here were just

wonderful to see.

The 4 km descent off Mt Sturgeon had us going around the southern side via 3 newly constructed steel ladders and 2 metal walkways along the cliff edges.

I was very interested to be able to walk through Dunkeld Pastoral Company private land to reach Dunkeld. This took us through pasture and alongside the Wannan River which we crossed on 2 bridges and then walking up Salt creek into Dunkeld. Only one weed orchid in this pastoral land was seen!



Autumn Flowering Grevilleas by Neil Marriott

With well over 500 different species of Grevillea and around 1000 garden hybrids, there is a wealth of Grevilleas that are ideal for cultivation in our home gardens. The vast majority of Grevilleas are medium to large shrubs, many of which tend to be best suited to larger gardens. There are however some absolutely delightful small shrubs and ground covers ideal for the home garden, with the added benefit being their fame for attracting our native wildlife into your garden.

Today there is a wonderful range of species and hybrids that can be purchased at your local nursery, big trade centre nurseries or for the collector wanting something a bit special, from a number of the specialist native nurseries around the state. Let's look at some of those that brighten up our gardens in the autumn months – a time when there is very little in flower in the native world.

***Grevillea beardiana* –Beard's Toothbrush Grevillea**

This beautiful small shrub comes from the southern wheatbelt region of Western Australia. In cultivation it grows to around 1m tall and 1.5m wide, with fine soft green leaves and masses of very showy toothbrush flowers from autumn right through to spring. Flowers can be bright scarlet or showy orange in colour and are very popular with our honey eating birds. Sadly it is not very common in cultivation at present, but can be occasionally available, usually as grafted plants at specialist native nurseries. Phil Vaughan often has it!



Grevillea beardiana

***Grevillea bipinnatifida* 'Grape Grevillea'**

Undoubtedly one of the most beautiful and hardy of all our small Grevilleas, the Grape Grevillea gets its common name from the abundant trusses of spectacular big flowers that hang down from the plant like bunches of grapes. These are full of nectar and flower for many months of the year, bringing a regular supply of native birds into your garden. The large deeply divided leaves range from deep green to silver-grey and are most attractive in their own right. Plants grow from 0.5m to 1m tall and wide but can be readily pruned back to keep low and compact if desired. There is even a wonderful prostrate form that Peter and I discovered a number of years ago. *Grevillea bipinnatifida* is one of the most important species for breeding hybrids with our nurserymen, being one of the parents for a myriad of spectacular hybrids including the famous *Grevillea* 'Robyn Gordon', *Grevillea* 'Superb', *Grevillea* 'Ned Kelly' and *Grevillea* 'Peaches and Cream' to name but a few! Often available from nurseries.



Grevillea bipinnatifida

***Grevillea* 'Bush Lemons'**

There are many showy 'tropical' hybrid Grevilleas with large showy flowers and 'ferny' leaves, however *Grevillea* 'Bush Lemons' has proven to be better suited to the cooler conditions of



Grevillea 'Bush Lemons'

Victoria as well as being a smaller shrub, better suited to the home garden. *Grevillea* 'Bush Lemons' is an open shrub growing 1m tall and 1-1.5m wide with soft deeply divided leaves and masses of spectacular big lemon toothbrush shaped flowers. These continue for many months of the year, so long as there is some subsoil moisture in the soil. It grows best in a warm sunny site, and may need some protection from frosts when young. Plants can be pruned back in late spring if desired to maintain a more compact habit. Occasionally available in nurseries mainly as grafted plants. Phil Vaughan often has this for sale.

Grevillea 'Collaroy Plateau' or 'Little Miss Muffet'

This lovely small Grevillea is a natural hybrid that comes from the Collaroy Plateau area to the north of Sydney, NSW. It has in recent years been re-marketed as Grevillea 'Little Miss Muffet'. It grows to around 1m x 1m and has soft entire oval leaves and masses of showy mauve-pink flowers for many months of the year. These attract native bees into the garden which are so important for our healthy environment. Can be pruned to a taller and narrow border plant if desired. Grevillea 'Collaroy Plateau' grows best in a dappled shade location, and coming from Sydney, it prefers an occasional drink over our long hot summers. This also ensures a continual show of its lovely flowers while there is still some moisture in the soil. It propagates readily by cuttings, and is often available at both specialist and general nurseries, or you can easily strike some cuttings yourself! This is one we should propagate at our group's propagation days.



Grevillea 'Collaroy Plateau'

Grevillea 'Katydid'

Grevillea 'Katydid' is a spectacular, albeit prickly large shrub that I bred in the 1990's when I was breeding *Grevillea bipinnatifida* – Chittering Valley form with a number of other species in my garden. Grevillea 'Katydid' is named after my daughter Katy Marriott, whose nickname with my son Gordon as a kid was Katydid!! The amazing thing about Grevillea 'Katydid' is the fact that it flowers all year round, so is priceless for attracting native birds into your garden. Unfortunately it grows quite large, often getting to 1.5 x 2-3m across! However it responds wonderfully to heavy pruning and can even be cut back to the stump and it will re-shoot to create a lovely low shrub again. Occasionally available at Phil Vaughan's as *G. batrachioides* hybrid.



Grevillea 'Katydid'

Grevillea 'Majestic'

A most beautiful fern leaved 'tropical' Grevillea with lovely soft deep green leaves and masses of spectacular pinky-red and cream bottlebrush flowers. These adorn the plant for many months of the year, flowering beautifully well into autumn so long as there is sufficient moisture in the soil. Plants can get to a fairly large size of around 3-4m tall and wide, making it a wonderful showy screen plant or large feature plant for the garden. Coming from the tropics it prefers a warm sunny site protected from heavy frosts, particularly when young. Occasionally available in nurseries.



Grevillea 'Majestic'

***Grevillea maccutcheonii* Maccutcheon's Grevillea** A listed critically endangered species from south of Busselton in SW WA, where it grows in shallow soil over laterite in winter wet sites. Despite its rarity it has rapidly proven itself to be extremely adaptable and hardy under cultivation, growing readily in most soils on its own roots. Once plants establish in the garden



Grevillea maccutcheonii

they have been observed to drop large amounts of seed, which germinates readily, with numerous seedlings under the parent plant. Fortunately they do not appear to hybridise, with all seedlings growing true to type. Seedling grown plants are extremely hardy, and will flower in their second year after planting. Foliage is most attractive, with stem clasping soft leaves with 3 lobes on the ends. Plants can grow to 2m tall, however under cultivation they tend to be a lot smaller so far, only reaching to around 1m x 1.5m. Flowering is prolific, although not showy, but continues well into the autumn months, attracting numerous honeyeaters into the garden. Occasionally available at specialist native nurseries, but deserves to be more widely available.

***Grevillea nivea* or 'Scarlet King'**

A very large and most beautiful *Grevillea* from limited coastal areas near Bremer Bay on the south coast of WA. This is a wonderful plant for large gardens where it can be allowed to spread to several metres tall and up to 3-4m wide. It flowers for many months of the year, almost continuously when there is sufficient subsoil moisture available. Can readily be pruned to a smaller size if desired. Often available at nurseries.



Grevillea nivea



Grevillea 'New Blood'

***Grevillea* 'New Blood'**

This is an absolutely wonderful groundcover that is ideally suited to small and larger gardens alike. It only grows to around 0.2m tall, spreading with its lovely soft bright green leaves to around 1.5m wide. Flowers are bright red and prolific for many months of the year, making it one of the showiest groundcovers you could want, while attracting native birds into your garden. It looks really nice when a number of plants are put in to create a drift of dramatic colour, especially in front of silver foliaged larger shrubs. Often available in nurseries.

***Grevillea* 'Ochre Pokers'**

A beautiful small spreading shrub that arose as a chance seedling after the 2006 bushfire ran through our gardens. It is clearly a seedling from the nearby *Grevillea* 'Canning Classic' but what is the other parent? Under cultivation it grows slowly and steadily, flowering beautifully throughout summer and autumn with its very large ochre-orange toothbrush flowers. Our oldest plants are now less than 0.3m tall and up to 1m wide, with finely divided soft foliage. Can be struck by cuttings but is best grown as a grafted plant (not on *G. robusta*). Occasionally available at specialist nurseries.



Grevillea 'Ochre Pokers'

Grevillea polybotrya* Caramel *Grevillea

Normally flowering during the months of summer, *Grevillea polybotrya* will often flower beautifully right into the autumn months, particularly when summers are cooler and mild. The massed flowers are typically cream, however



Grevillea polybotrya

rarely plants can be found in the wild that have beautiful pale to deep pink buds, opening to soft pink flowers. Peter and I found several lovely pink forms with attractive ash-grey foliage, on a trip to the West and sent material back to members in the East – the struck plants are the original forbears of nearly all plants now in cultivation. These have the most amazing caramel perfume that fills the garden on warm sunny days with truly delicious caramel perfume. Plants can be propagated by seed or cuttings that strike quite easily, or by grafting on a suitable rootstock. It is not compatible with *G. robusta*!

***Grevillea rhyolitica* 'Deua Flame'**

This is an attractive plant with lovely soft oval leaves and masses of pendulous bright red flowers which cover the plant for most of the year. In the wild *Grevillea rhyolitica* is a rare shrub confined to the mountains around Deua National Park in southern NSW. However under cultivation it is proving to be quite



Grevillea rhyolitica 'Deua Flame'

adaptable, so long as it is given a well-drained site in sun to semi shade. It prefers some subsoil moisture over the dryer months and this keeps the flowers going, attracting lots of wildlife to your garden. Plants can grow from 1.5-2m tall and wide and are naturally compact, but can be pruned lightly if needed. Plants are often available at nurseries.

***Grevillea tenuiloba* 'Golden Glory'**

This is one of the real gems of the West where it is sadly now a listed rare and endangered species. We discovered a small colony of this beauty north of Perth on a Birdwing wildflower tour a number of years ago and everyone was thrilled to see them. The plants were only 0.3-0.5m tall and around 1m wide and covered in spectacular pendant golden toothbrush flowers. Plants are extremely hardy once established in a sunny well drained site, but have proven to be a bit difficult to propagate from cuttings. We have a couple of spectacular plants in our Pomonal Hall garden, and Neville and Helen Collier have several as grafted standards in their wonderful garden. Often available at specialist native nurseries, occasionally as a spectacular standard.



Grevillea tenuiloba 'Golden Glory'

***Grevillea vestita* 'Mulberry Midnight'**

An absolutely spectacular *Grevillea* that normally flowers in early summer, but can also flower during autumn in good years. *Grevillea vestita* normally has white flowers, however this selection has the most amazing deep mulberry-black flower buds opening to soft pink flowers. It was discovered by a nursery friend in a coastal suburb of Perth, and thank goodness, she took some cuttings and struck it, as it was then totally wiped out by property developers! It grows to around 1-1.5m x 1.5m with lovely ash-grey simple to toothed leaves. Cuttings strike well, so long as they are not allowed to get too wet. At present it is not readily available at nurseries, but we are trying to get someone to market it for us.



Grevillea vestita 'Mulberry Midnight'

This is just a brief introduction to this, the most popular genus of Australian plants according to the nursery trade! I could add many more, although sadly few are readily available in our nursery industry without a bit of searching. In future articles I will write about some wonderful *Grevillea* selections for the other seasons. For those who are keen on our beautiful *Grevillea* hybrids, my fellow author Peter Olde from Sydney and I have finished writing the complete book on this group of plants, and the manuscript is finally with the publishers. Keep an eye out for this in your favourite bookshops in the next year.

All pictures by Neil Marriott

Members' Pictures

Some more of Maryanne's from WA



Hakea victoria



Cape la Grande



Kingia australis

Darryl and Lisa have been travelling too.



Darryl and I spent December in Chiang Mai, Northern Thailand and were treated to beautiful tropical gardens and incredible fresh food cooked to Thai perfection.

We visited the Queen Sirikit Botanic Garden which needed a full day to really explore. Two features I loved were the food area that displayed plants used in daily life from medicinal, topical, edible, and aromatherapy. The Thai really value living well. An ethnobotanical section showed many uses of plants across different ethnic groups that live in and near Thailand, including Karan, Karenni, Hmong, and Tai Yuan where plants were used for many purposes including weaving, shelter, adornment, and, again, food and medicine.

A surprise to us was seeing the incredible stand of *Xanthorrhoea johnsonii*, perhaps a gift from Australia at some time. (My Thai reading isn't very good.)

In Chiang Dao, just 20 minutes from the Myanmar border, we stayed in the beautiful Doi Luang National Park with a rugged limestone mountain range with waterfalls you can

walk up and caves you can climb down. There was so much to see including our host's 300+ species of orchids. Although not many were in flower, it was still fascinating to see his very thorough labelling and nursery space.

And finally, some spectacular orchids at the butterfly and orchid garden - and they don't need soil! Now that was new to me.

Chiang Mai and the surrounding areas we visited were as beautiful and welcoming as the people there.

Lisa



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/>

APSVic Grampians Committee Until October 2023

Office Bearers

President: John King

Vice President: Neil Marriott

Secretary: Margot Galletly

Treasurer: Wendy Marriott

Ordinary Members

Ross Simpson

Fiona Lucas

Neil Macumber

Jocelyn King

Lisa Ashdowne