

Australian Plants Society

Grampians Group Newsletter

Gari-Word

May 2023

NEXT MEETING

7:30 Tuesday 16th May

Stawell Neighbourhood House

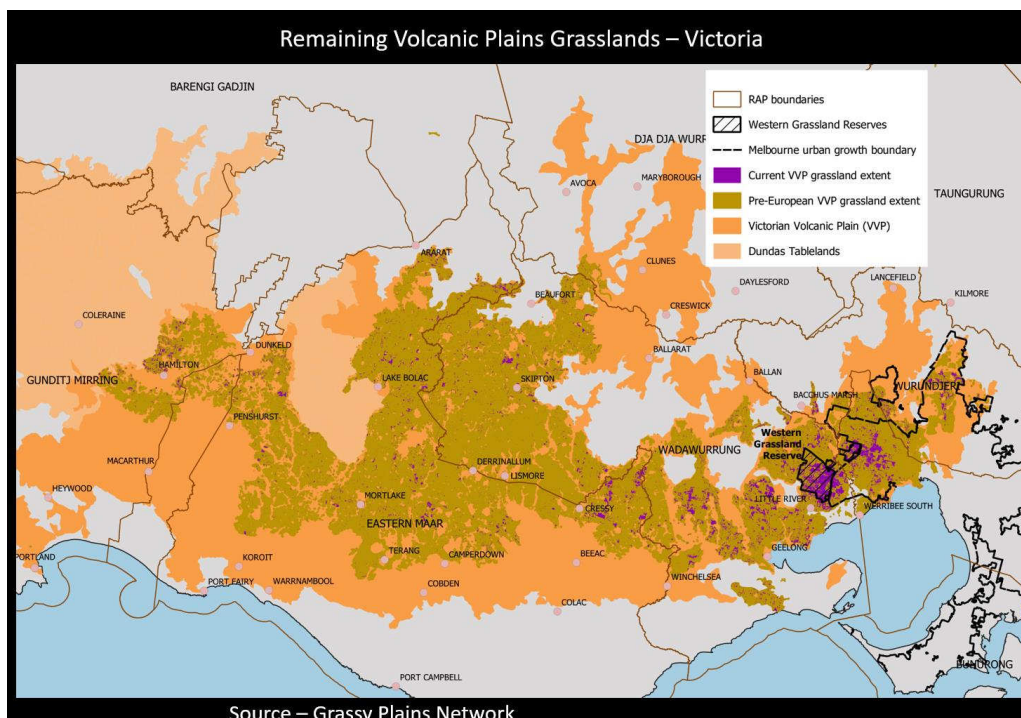
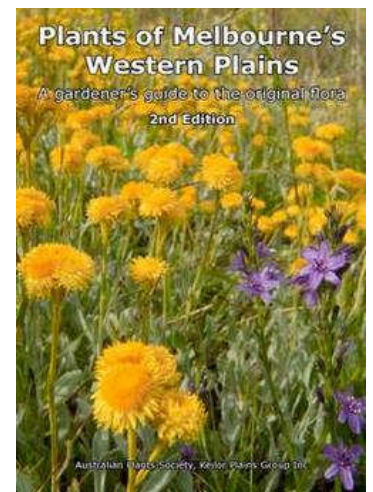
Ian Evans: Landscaping a Native Garden

Supper: A - K

April Meeting - Chris Clarke on Grasslands

I introduced Chris Clarke as being the immediate former APS Vic president and contributor to that excellent book produced by APS Keilor Plains "Plants of Melbourne's Western Plains". Chris had driven up from Melbourne just for us and was warmly welcomed. He also brought some plants for our raffle! The grasslands of the western Victorian volcanic plains consist of herbs, forbs and small shrubs, but typically no trees. Many lava flows over time have resulted in 2-10m deep basalt on the plains; heavy nutrient-rich cracking clay soils, but poorly-drained.

They are also species-rich, supporting as many as 615 species, of which 60 are threatened and of these 42 do not have an action plan! Plants such as Spiny Riceflower *Pimelea spinescens*, Matted Flax Lily *Dianella amoena*, Swamp Everlasting *Xerochrysum palustre* and Sunshine Diuris *Diuris fragrantissima* are critically endangered.





Cuckoo Bee on *Xerochrysum viscosum* photo C Clarke

Starting with the rapid spread of the flocks of the white colonisers over 180 years ago, there are now only 0.2% of the natural grasslands left.

Chris also noted that a fire regime is essential to healthy fire-adapted grasslands, reducing choking overgrowth. For example, Kangaroo Grass can take over if not burned every 3-7 years.

Chris then showed many of his excellent flora and fauna photographs, noting the interrelations between the two, particularly between plants and insects, and the suitability of various plant species to garden planting.

We then shifted focus to the internet, where Chris recommended the Melbourne Uni grasslands app (unfortunately iPhone-only), but can be accessed in any web browser: <https://grasslands.ecolinc.vic.edu.au/fieldguide>



He then walked us through iNaturalist, that portal that feeds uploaded photos into the Atlas of Living Australia. An excellent way of helping document a species' range, and to have species identified by experts. The iNaturalist app runs on both Android & iPhone, and its website is <https://inaturalist.ala.org.au>.

Here is another grasslands site worth a mention: <https://grassyplains.net.au/grasslands/>

John King with thanks to Margot G for her note-taking.

Plant Profile by Dave Handscombe

Information on this plant was obtained from various reference books, the internet and from personal experience

Species: *Grevillea synapheae*

Family: Proteaceae

Grevillea – named after Charles Greville, an algae expert and a founding member of the London Horticultural Society.

Synapheae – named because of the likeness to the Genus *Synaphea*.

Common Name: Catkin *Grevillea*.

Dimensions: Height: variable spreading shrub to 1.5 metres. There are 2 subspecies: *Grevillea synapheae ssp synapheae* and *Grevillea synapheae ssp pachyphylla*.

Cultivar Name: There is no registered cultivars listed on the ACRA website. There are no PBR (Plant Breeders Rights) listed for the species.

Grevillea synapheae occurs inland to the east of Perth, north along the coast and inland to Eneabba.

Both sub species have a lignotuber and tolerate frosts down to -6C.

Grow in full sun or partial shade and regularly prune to maintain shape. Sub species *synapheae* grows in lateritic loam in Eucalypt woodland but should do well in well-drained acidic sandy or loamy soils. Sub species *pachyphylla* grows on rises in laterised loam or sandy loam over laterite in open heathlands and is slightly more adaptable growing in a pH range from slightly alkaline to slightly acidic. Propagate from seed or cuttings which strike readily. Rootstock for grafting includes *Grevillea robusta* and *Grevillea* 'Royal Mantle' although in southern areas it grows quite happily on its own roots.



Grevillea synapheae approx. 1x3m

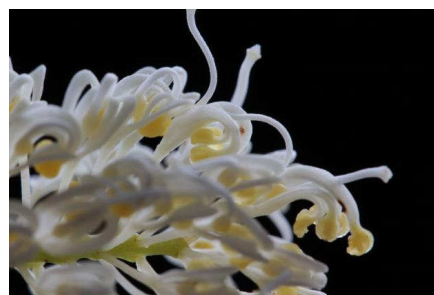
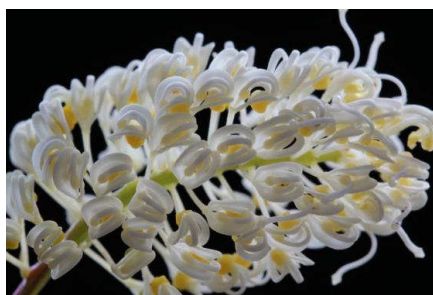
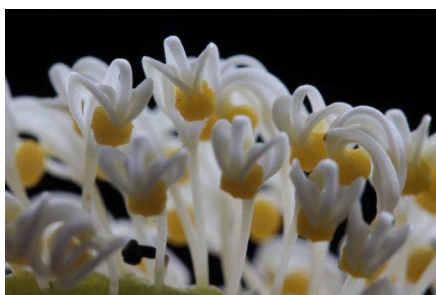


Close up showing prolific flowers

Different stages of the flower buds



A closer look at the flowers showing the typical form of flowers in the Proteaceae family.



The APS Grampians Calendar on your Smart Device

It can be very useful having the APS Grampians calendar on your smartphone. You can see when events occur and any live updates, such as change of venue or cancellation. The event location is normally shown, and you can tap on this to get directions.

1. If you haven't got Google Calendar on your phone, download and install the Google Calendar app from the Android Play Store or iPhone/iPad App Store; open the app & sign in using your Google account.
2. With WiFi or mobile data turned on, point your phone camera at the QR code below .. no need to actually take a photo. If your phone can scan QR codes from the camera app, then a link should appear over the camera image.
3. If no URL appears when using the camera, search for *QR code scanner* on the Play Store and download one of the many free apps.
4. Tap on the URL (web address) that appears
5. Accept adding the calendar to Google Calendar
6. Tap on the menu at the top left of the calendar app and see if APS Grampians is listed, if not, select Settings at the bottom of the menu and see if APS Grampians calendar is listed. Tap on the calendar name and ensure Sync is set to true.



If you find this calendar useful, there are also calendars available for FOGG, Jallukar Landcare, CFA etc. You can also create your own calendars and turn them on and off as you wish e.g. a calendar for organising an upcoming event, a family calendar, a personal calendar etc.

If you like the idea of having this functionality on your smart device, but need a hand, let me know grampians@apsvic.org.au.

Members' Pictures



Could this *Banksia spinulosa* 'Schnapper Point' cram in any more flowers?



Anthea, John and Jocelyn doing some much needed renovation and replanting at Jane's Garden

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@psvic.org.au or by phone: 0438 566 250 or by post to:

Phil Williams P.O. Pomonal

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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

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