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NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 16th April 7:30pm at the Pomonal Hall
Royce Raleigh presents
“Growing Hakeas in my Grampians garden”

Surnames A-K please bring some Supper

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Announcements

Please put the dates for this year's Pomonal Native Flower Show in your diaries.

Saturday 21st and Sunday 22nd September 2024

It is our 40th show and we are featuring edible Australian plants.

Our special guest is Clarence Slockee from 'Gardening Australia'.

16th April Meeting

“Growing Hakeas in my Grampians garden” Royce Raleigh

13th April Working Bee

Come from 10-12 and help make light work of tidying up the Hall Garden and Jane's Garden

Grow for Pomonal

From John King.



Further to our request last month, Neil Marriott selected 214 species from the APS Vic seed-bank list appropriate for us to grow for post-fire Pomonal private gardens. 29 members appropriated their annual seed order from APS Vic to this new propagation project, and 190 packets ended up being delivered. 15 of the 29 members said they would raise the plants themselves, accounting for about 114 packets, the remaining 76 packets can be shared amongst those who are able to grow more over time.

Marj the seedbank curator recently commented she'd only had 12 requests in the previous 4 months! Thankyou Marj. [Ed]

Next Meeting

from Neil Marriott

April Meeting: Royce Raleigh "Growing Hakeas in my Grampians garden"

Royce and Jeanne moved from Melbourne to the Wartook Valley in the early 1970s, purchasing an almost bare, sheep paddock where they built their dream home and began to establish an extensive collection of beautiful Australian native plants. Royce was fortunate to work as a school teacher in Horsham with the late Fred Rogers as his principal. Fred was an expert on Hakeas, and he soon encouraged Royce to establish a large collection of these beautiful natives. Royce and Jeanne undertook a number of trips to the West where they collected seed from many species of Hakea along with other gems. These they propagated themselves, ensuring they had numerous plants of most species to plant out in a variety of sites on their property.

The strange *Hakea amplexicaulis* with stem-clasping leaves

The Raleigh's Wartook property had a range of soils, from deep sands through to gravelly clays, allowing the establishment of a very large range of Hakea species. It was not long before Royce and Jeanne held the official Australian Plant Trust Hakea Collection, with most species growing in their gardens.



***Hakea bucculenta* 'Red Pokers'** – a truly spectacular plant



The beautiful Blue Hakea *Hakea lehmanniana*

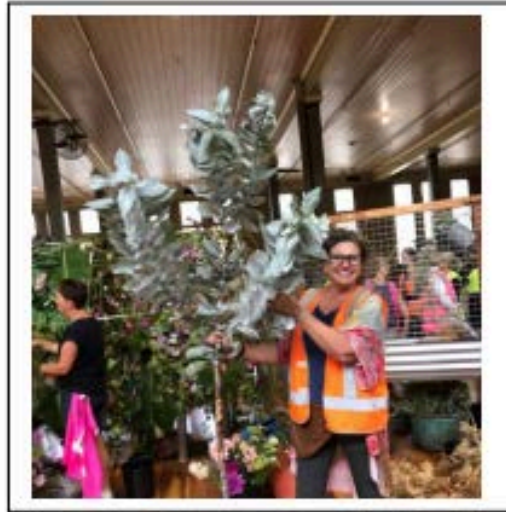
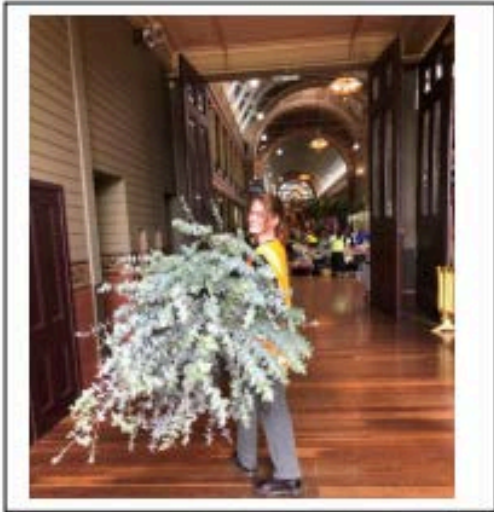
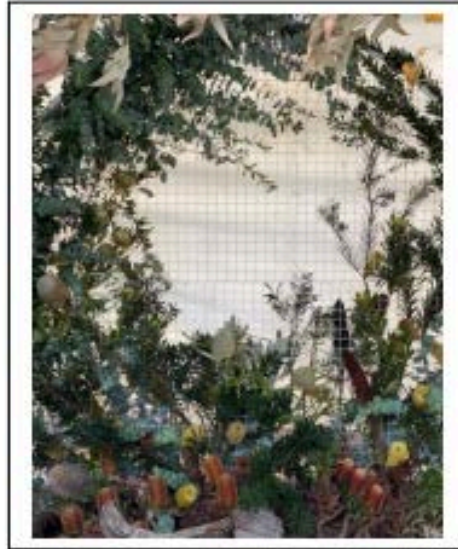


Come along and learn how to grow these beautiful and hardy Australian natives in your garden. Royce will be showing us how to establish your garden beds and how to succeed with the best of the Hakea genus. Wonderful photos from his gardens will illustrate the beauty of these excellent garden plants. Then as a special treat, we will be visiting Royce and Jeanne's garden later in winter, when many of the Hakeas will be at their best.

From the President

Fiona Lucas

*The Melbourne International Flower and Garden Show 2024 is embracing the use of Australian plants and sustainable floristry techniques more than ever. This year I was proud to supply foliage for one of the commissioned installations. The brief provided to the talented designer from NSW, was to provide an interactive experience mimicking an Australian garden. Hence the swing positioned at the entry on the Museum side enabled many patrons the opportunity to enjoy a moment of relaxation amongst 100% Australian plants while embracing the aromas and seeing up-close a variety of plants. Here are some pics of set up, and finished installation. Foliage provided by Woodlands foliage was: *Eucalyptus pulverulenta*, *Banksia marginata* B. *praemorsa* and a thank you to Neil & Wendy for providing the gorgeous *Eucalyptus macrocarpa*, E 'Nullabor Rose' and *B. occidentalis*.*



Also...

- Welcome to our new members. Maja Gajic, Tina Law & Chrissy Mammone. Already we have Chrissy offering to do our social media! I look forward to meeting you all at some time soon.
- Congratulations to APS Vic, and in particular Dallas Boulton & Chris Clarke for the on point, collaborative and interactive display they had at MIFGS. Swings seemed to be a theme this year with another interactive opportunity for visitors to embrace all plants Australian.
- Those of us who made it to our March members meeting were treated to an entertaining talk by Elia Pirtle, community liaison from Project Platypus. Elia spoke on the biodiversity corridor and habitat inland islands. It was an enlightening talk and we congratulate Elia on her beautiful, educational, and entertaining presentation.
- John King has launched and activated a major project - 'Grow for Pomonal'. This is a practical and educational way to support the regrowth of the town's gardens, whilst also creating awareness of our group's purpose and abilities. Join in at any time as the seed planting will be staggered.
- Our April meeting on the 16th is at Pomonal. Our guest speaker is Royce & Jeanne Raleigh titled, 'Discover the beauty of Hakeas'. It will be significant for our group to be back at the Pomonal Hall. (albeit in a shared space to accommodate the recovery centre) However, I extend my apologies as I also will be hiking the Grampians Peaks trail for 4 days. A trip planned since last April! On that particular evening, I will be thinking of you from the 'Duwul' campsite and will be envious of missing out on such a great speaker.

Why grow Australian plants?

- If we want to, we can adapt our gardens to enable us to grow plants from many parts of Australia. From 'Growing Australian' – a resource kit for growing home garden in Victoria.

Written by APS Vic. 2009

Please contact me with any ideas or comments you have for our group.

Fiona Lucas

President APS Grampians Group

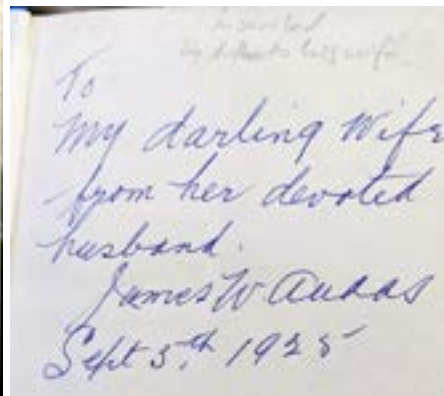
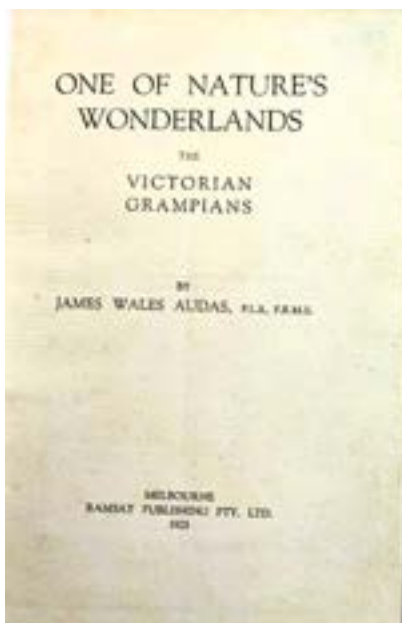
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Historical Notes

One of Nature's Wonderlands – the Grampians 100 years ago. From Clive Carlyle

A visiting friend gave us a copy of J.W. Audas' little book "One of Nature's Wonderlands: The Victorian Grampians", published in 1925. Interestingly, it appears to have been a copy that Audas gave to his wife.



The book describes various trips that Audas made in and around the Grampians prior to 1925 and the plants that he found. Unsurprisingly a lot has changed in almost 100 years. Aspects of the Grampians we now know and love are very different to Audas' descriptions but, comfortingly, some things are the same.

I thought you might be interested in a short selection of snippets from the book. Technology makes this incredibly easy, simply take a photo and ask Google to transcribe the text (with print it is close to 100% accurate, but it even works pretty well with handwriting).

It is very clear that Audas loved the Grampians and was at a loss to understand why it received so few visitors, how things have changed!!!

"I was struck time and again by the remarkable beauty of this practically unknown district. It is in the endeavour to make the Grampians more widely known, and also to enshrine some of my botanical observations in a more permanent and handy form, that this book has been prepared".

"The Grampians, a hitherto neglected tourist resort, stands pre-eminent among Victorian beauty spots, but it is only of late years that a glimmer of understanding of its attractions has begun to reach our tourists. It is no more isolated than many other of our local beauty spots; it can offer panoramic scenery far surpassing anything else in Victoria, and it possesses, in addition, features that are absolutely unique".

"It was astonishing that this beautiful mountain district, replete with every variety of scenery likely to excite the unbounded admiration of tourists, should be so little known. Any literature relating to the scenery of the Grampians which I had previously come across had given me the impression that they were really huge rock masses, of a rugged grandeur undoubtedly, but barren and uninteresting from a scenic point of view. This impression was quickly dispelled when the shaded fern valleys, splashing waterfalls, swift-flowing streams, and green, smooth mountain slopes were beheld. Serried rocks and bold escarpments there were in plenty, towering pinnacles that seemed to pierce the sky, and that offered panoramic views of entrancing loveliness to those travellers who were sufficiently daring and agile to scale their heights. Over and above all, prevailed the natural coloration of the rocks, varying from pale-lemon- yellow through rosy pink and gorgeous chrome to russet red".

Audas was first and foremost a botanist. He deals rather quickly with the Grampians' fauna in a couple of pages towards the end of his book. However, one paragraph is both as poignant as it is interesting.

"From a zoological point of view, the Grampians, though interesting, do not present the student with so much variety as its flora does. In the Victoria and Wartook Valleys, the large Kangaroo, often called the "Forester," attains great size, and may frequently be seen in mobs of from twenty to thirty. They keep away from the settlements, as a rule, but a stray member of the mob will occasionally penetrate close to civilization. Their smaller relative, the Brush Kangaroos, or Scrub Wallabies, are not so shy; they are often seen around settlements, and thrive exceedingly upon the smaller cultivated grasses of the agriculturist. Rock Wallabies, though rare, can always be seen by anyone who wishes to do so. Inquisitiveness is their chief characteristic, and it is only necessary to seat one's self in a prominent position in some rocky section and wait. Patience is soon rewarded, for the monkey-like black face, encircled by light- coloured hair, will be quickly seen peering at the intruder from some adjacent boulder. Native bears or Koalas live in parts far remote from the haunts of men".

So pre-1925

1. large kangaroos (I assume eastern and western greys) were perhaps less common and certainly didn't hang around people, rather different to Halls Gap today!

2. Rock wallabies were “rare” but clearly common enough that they could “always be seen by anyone” wishing to make an effort. Wouldn’t it be nice if we could get back to that state!
3. Koalas only seem to have occurred in remote areas, he doesn’t identify where.

Some things haven’t changed too much on Mt William and the Plateau.

“On top of the Mount”, Mt William and the Plateau, “Pink Swamp Heath (Sprengelia incarnata) a shrub two three feet high grew luxuriantly or along the numerous creeks which take their rise from here. Epacris impressa, commonly known as native heath, formed the largest and most attractive feature along the slopes of the mount, and was observed in colours pink, red, and white”.

Sprengelia still abounds along the small creeks on the Plateau, it was in full flower when we did the Peaks Trail last year.

Those of you from Pomonal may be interested to read

“The agriculturist, even in his quieter tastes, can find relaxation, and possibly enlightenment, in a trip to the Pomonal orchards, which are five or six hundred acres in extent, and yield a rich harvest of 1,000 tons of fruit annually. The crop, mostly apples of keeping quality, is shipped to European markets. This ideal little settlement, nestling in a semi-circle at the foot of Mt. Cassel, has a very prosperous appearance. Many fine residences are surrounded by ornamental trees and handsome shelter belts of olive, hazel and walnut”.

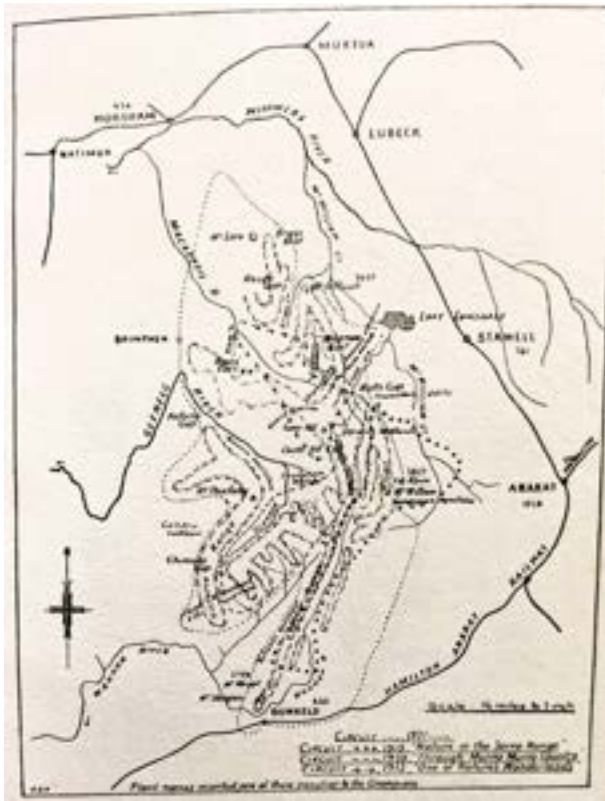
Living at Fyans Creek we were interested to read

“Around Mount Dryden the red gum flats are the scene of quite a lucrative business-that of charcoal-burning. A number of kilns were burning, and I understand the output never catches up with the demand. The mount is of basaltic formation, and of such a hard nature that stone- crushing operations had to be abandoned”

We have a number of locations on our property that were clearly the sites of charcoal burning.

Audas provides a sketch map showing the main features of the Grampians and the routes of various trips that he describes. The map is interesting - next page:

1. It doesn’t show Lake Fyans but does show Lake Lonsdale. Also, I haven’t found mention of Lake Fyans in the text, possibly because Audas undertook his trips before Lake Fyans was constructed (completed in 1916)?
2. Mt Difficult appears to be shown at the location of Briggs Bluff, whereas Briggs Bluff is shown at the far north of the range adjacent to Mt Zero. I don’t know if Audas got it wrong or whether the names have been moved.



Finally, we all know prices move ever upwards. Even so I was amazed by this advertisement at the end of the book, a 15-day wildflower tour including transport to and from Melbourne and “High-class accommodation” for 12pounds 12 shillings!!!!!!

March Meeting

19th March 2024 Dr Elia Pirtle

Inland Islands and Leafy Bridges - Habitat Fragmentation in the Upper Wimmera

From Margot Galletly

The first meeting for the APSGG year was held at Stawell on 19th March. This late start was owing to the devastating Pomonal fire which impacted many families, friends, and members of the group. It was heartening and uplifting to see a large number of people attend and offer support to one another. Plans are being made to get plants growing for the many who lost their gardens when they feel ready to tackle it.

Our guest speaker for the night was Dr Elia Pirtle, the Landcare Facilitator, Communications Officer from Project Platypus. Elia kindly and thoughtfully



modified her original talk, focusing on habitat connectivity, to include discussion of fire impacts and the fire adapted ecology of Gariwerd/Grampians.

Elia explained, using photos and brilliant illustrations (drawn by herself! e.g. see right) the negative effects of fire on plants/animals including direct mortality, loss of food sources, increased predation pressure and competition, debris and damage to waterways. Conversely, fire can act as a trigger for many species to flower and produce seed (banksia, hakea and callitris given as examples). Post - fire areas are opened up to more sunlight and some plants e.g. orchids, like this. In addition, senescing woodlands are likely to rejuvenate.

Unfortunately human modified land sees changes which are different than in natural areas. This includes an increase in exotic predators and invasive species, increased influence of drought, isolation effects resulting in inbreeding depression, and loss of habitat.

Fragmentation and Climate Change

Fragmentation, is defined as “ the process during which a large expanse of habitat is transformed into a number of smaller patches of smaller total area isolated from each other by a matrix of habitats unlike the original (Fahrig 2003)”; from Intermittent Rivers and Ephemeral Streams 2017.

Elia explained that fragmentation is a large threat to already threatened species as it

- Undoes fire renewing effects and
- Can result in local species extinction.

Species cannot reach recovery areas after fire due to the fragmentation, i.e. the patch sizes are too small or distant. An example of this is the Mallee Emu Wren and the Hattah/Little Desert fires.

Some species need mid-late successional stages in vegetation or may have poor translocation ability.

Fragmentation has massively increased since European settlement and farming, meaning increased grazing and land clearing, fertiliser and fencing, pest animals and encroachment of weeds. Racecourse reserves and cemeteries can be the only remaining patches with natural ecosystems in many areas.

Elia asked the question

“If you lose Mt Cole what happens to the species relying on it?”

Elia’s first example of a species under threat in the Upper Wimmera is the Matchstick Grasshopper. Being flightless, a poor hopper and relying on grassland and grassy woodland sites, it has very low dispersal ability. The second example given by Elia is the Squirrel Glider which struggles to disperse if the distance between trees is greater than 20 to 30 metres apart. The Squirrel Glider is the focus of a large Project Platypus project to support the glider where populations, some quite close to Dadswell Bridge, are at risk. The species is scattered across fragmented landscapes (islands) in a sea of modified/cleared land.

The point of Elia’s analogy was the loss of ocean islands seems to generate more concern than isolated land-based habitats. Revegetation, (and protection) of “land bridges” - connecting corridors, become a possible solution. Translocation of species is a last resort.

Elia’s presentation was lively, entertaining, and highly informative. We certainly owe her a large thankyou for her time and effort. It is a reminder to us all that protection of remnants and connecting them to other areas of natural vegetation will help both the survival of that vegetation and the fauna which relies on it.

Grampians Group Calendar

We meet monthly on the 3rd Tuesday 7.30pm, except 3rd Saturday 2pm in June & July, recess January
Even months at PH (Pomonal Hall, Ararat-Halls Gap Rd) or a member's garden.
Odd months at SNH (Stawell Neighbourhood House, 42 Sloane Street Stawell) or a member's garden.
Outings/activities communicated in this newsletter; subject to change - eg with an eye on the weather

April Sat 13th 10am: PH Working Bee

April Tue 16th 7.30pm: PH, Speaker: Royce Raleigh- "Growing Hakeas in my Grampians garden"

May Tue 21st Meeting 7.30pm: SNH, Speaker: Miriam Ford "Marvellous Mint Bushes"

June Sat 15th Meeting 2pm: PH, Marilyn Sprague 'Native Cut Flowers'

July Sat 20th Meeting 2pm:SNH, Speaker Alan Bedggood Grasses and pressing specimens

July, Sat 20th Noon PH Working Bee before meeting

August Tue 20th Meeting 7.30pm: PH, Phil & Monica Coleman 'Bushwalking in the Grampians' TBC

September Sat, 7th Sun 8th Outing: Currency Creek Arboretum

September Tue 17th Meeting 7.30pm: SNH, Show planning, Neil Marriott 'My Top 20 Grevilleas'

September Sat 21st Sun 22nd Event: **40th** Pomonal Native Flower Show with Clarence Slockee

October Tue 15th Meeting 7.30pm: PH, Ben Gunn 'Archaeology of the Grampians/Gariwerd'

November Tue 19th Meeting 7.30pm: SNH, Speaker to be confirmed

December Tue 17th Meeting 7.30pm: Christmas breakup Marriotts

2024 - APSVictoria Committee of Management quarterly meetings all members welcome:

- 11 May 2024 hosted by APS Mornington. Fenton Square a.m. with Seaford Banksia Arboretum p.m..
- 27th and 28th July 2024 full quarterly weekend hosted by APS Bendigo
- TBC 23rd and 24th November 2024, including AGM, hosted by APS Wangaratta.

2024 - September 30th to October 4th at The Round, Nunawading. Gardens for Life
- 32nd ANPSA National Biennial Conference hosted by APS Victoria

2025 - 15th FJC Rogers Seminar: "Epacridaceae" hosted by APS Mornington Peninsula

2026 - South Australia Biennial conference will be held in Alice Springs.

[See also plant shows & sales of other APS Vic district groups](#)

You are encouraged to contribute to future editions of this newsletter,
photos, articles, questions, suggestions all welcome; send to
grampiansnewsletter@apsvic.org.au

Thank you to Clive, Fiona, John, Margot and Neil who contributed to this edition

Grevillea dimorpha painting by Ena Graham



APS Vic Grampians Committee

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