

Golden

Newsletter of the Australian Plants Society
Latrobe Valley Group
Inc. No. A0045337C

Issue No. 285 - April 2020

Golden Grevillea - *Grevillea chrysophaea*

Warning: No meetings for April and May!

Due to the Corona virus (Covid 19) outbreak, the Governmental response of discouraging or banning meetings, and the age demographic of the majority of our members, a decision has been taken to cancel both the April and May meetings. Events beyond that may still be on the calendar, but are subject to review in the future. The newsletters will keep coming each month to keep you informed and to entertain you. It would be appreciated if YOU, the members, could submit some small articles on how your lives and gardens are faring in these unusual times.

In this issue:

Page

- 2 Leader's Report - Rhonda Fitch
- 3 Editor's Notes - Col Jackson
- 4 - 5 Plants in my Garden - Mike Beamish
- 5 Keeping sane in physical isolation - Meg Byers
- 6 2020 Calendar photo spot - March - Mike Beamish
- 6 Rainfall Registration Charts
- 7 Native Plants for Small Gardens talk - Brian Hetherington
- 8 The Red Man of Mildura - Pamela Cox
- 9 Coming APS events
- 9 APS Latrobe Valley Events Calendar

Hi Everyone, I hope you are all well and surviving reasonably comfortably in these turbulent times. As you were probably expecting, the committee has taken the decision to cancel both our April and May meetings. We hope to re-book Mitch Smith and Royce Raleigh for future meetings when life is able to settle back to some sort of normal again. Several APS Victoria events have already been cancelled and the FJC Rogers 2020 Seminar has had registrations put on hold until the end of May when, a decision will be made regarding whether it will go ahead or not. It would be a good idea to check further before planning to attend any of the remaining listed events.



G. Deua Flame

I recently spent two weeks at my son's house in Darley (near Bacchus Marsh) cat sitting. During that time, we had a few hot days back in Traralgon, so I came home to a few deaths, (fortunately) not Covid-19! A couple of Correas and a *Grevillea lanigera* x *rosemarinifolia*. Fortunately, I had a second Grevillea and it looks like it will survive. They obviously were not as established as they looked. My new *Banksia blechnifolia* ground cover is starting to reach up but is not yet spreading; I do get impatient for these new plants to get going. *Grevillea* 'Deua Flame' has small bunches of red tubular flowers with curls on the end, these have been flowering for some months and brighten up a dark corner. *Correa* Dusky Bells is small but flowering well and a number of *Correas* I purchased at Bob O'Neill's are slowly establishing under an old *Banksia Spinulosa*. My Kangaroo Grass (*Themeda triandra*) is waist high and covered in dry seed, I am hoping butterflies and moths will be attracted to it in the future.

My bush foods are doing ok, with River Mint sparse but healthy in a large pot. Mountain Pepper is planted under other shrubs with a north east aspect and is looking very well, and I have Lemon Myrtle in a similar position. My Finger Limes are still in pots but are looking good. I also left Anise Myrtle in its pot but it is now ready for Autumn planting. My Cootamundra Wattle is going to have a prolific show of flowers this year. I love this tree as it brings back fond memories of one across the road from the Tyers Primary school when I was a kid. It had multiple daffodils growing under and around it which Mrs Christensen used to send bunches of to the school. Nearby is the Strawberry Gum which is sending up new shoots, while the Prickly Currant Bush is yet to get any prickles. My kangaroo Paw flowers are spent and will require cutting off, I believe you have to cover up as they can irritate your skin. *Grevillea* 'Mt Tamboritha' has had constant reddish-pink and cream spider flowers although it has been a slow achiever. *Hakea laurina* is looking very well and I hope I don't regret planting it as it might be too big for my front yard. The Golden Ash is on shaky ground as it has interfered with my TV reception and, being on the west side of the house is stopping the late sun. I am still deciding. Perhaps a nice Flowering Gum would do! We will see. It is a pain not being able to mingle, now I have the time I want to go to the plant nurseries and stock up, but will refrain so we can flatten that sickness curve and be free again.



G. Mt Tamboritha

Stay well, good gardening,

Regards Rhonda

With the restrictions on personal public movement, we can be thankful to have our homes and gardens. With autumn now coming on it's a time to tidy up the garden, prune back the leggy things and sort out those weeds. And, if you have any put aside, plant some new plants. Unfortunately, the opportunity to attend plant sales and buy new plants is not likely to happen for some months now. I consider myself in a lucky position; with a nursery, a large garden and a shed full of projects I shouldn't get too bored being stuck at home. I just need to find the energy to do it all!



I have started the garden maintenance already with some strategic heavy pruning, as usual carried out while the other half wasn't home. With her arrival back there is the normal shocked question "What have you done?" with the standard defensive answer "The mulcher was hungry". The garden will look better for it soon and all will be forgiven. It has been a bountiful summer, with enough rain to keep many plants flowering right through from spring. I have Yellow Buttons planted throughout a rock retaining wall that is still going strong when it would normally fade out and die back halfway through summer.



The Paper Daisies are mostly flowering well and are now releasing their seeds, so that light breezes fill the air with tiny little parachutes. The butterflies and bees are still busy on the remaining flowers, harvesting nectar and pollen on any warm, sunny day. And, while I was out with the camera, I noticed some activity at the Bee Motel.



A native bee was using one of the larger holes, coming and going every couple of minutes. I managed to snap a shot just as it was exiting the larger hole just left of centre. Several of the larger holes have been filled in, as have a number of the hollow *Phragmites* stems. Curiously, the larger hole in the bottom left corner has had a mud tube built within it. Interesting stuff!

Given that we are restricted in what we can do for the next few months, and with no meetings to chat and exchange our ideas, how about we share our gardens with other members through this newsletter. If you are feeling a bit jaded, take a walk in the garden and put together a few words about what is going on. Ideally, take a few photos and send them too. Pamela's 'Red Man' article arrived as a text message with attached photos and Brian's came by email. It can be that simple. Meanwhile, stay safe, stay happy and I'll see you when we can. Cheers, Col.

Plants in my Garden 163

By Mike Beamish

Species: *Arthropodium milleflorum*.

Family: Asparagaceae (formerly part of Liliaceae)

Derivation:

Arthropodium: From the Greek *arthron*, meaning 'joint', and *podion*, meaning 'a small foot', referring to the jointed pedicels (flower stalks) in this genus.

milleflorum; From the Latin words *mille*, meaning 'thousand' and *floris*, meaning 'flower', thus lots of flowers.

Name: Pale Vanilla Lily.

Distribution: Widespread on or near the Great Dividing Range in Queensland, NSW and Victoria, throughout Tasmania and in the far south-east of South Australia, near the Victorian border. It grows in moist, well drained soils, usually on hillsides and rocky situations.

Description: A tufted, perennial herb with tuberous roots and linear, strap-like leaves to 40cm long and 3cm wide. Flower stems are leafless and branched, up to 1m tall and bear multiple flowers from each node, each on a stalk to 1.5cm long, and each up to 2cm in diameter with 6 tepals (3 sepals and 3 petals that look similar) and 6 bearded stamens hanging beneath. They can be white, pale mauve or pink in colour. A more robust form, double the size of the norm, that occurs in the upper Macalister, Tambo and Snowy River catchments, is listed as *Arthropodium* sp. 1 in the Victorian Flora.

Opinion: This is a common plant on the hillsides and in the road cuttings along the Wellington River (Tamboritha Road) north of Licola, right up to the snow plains in the high country, and that is where the seeds for my plants originally came from, back in 2004. I



originally had them in a waterwell tub, which moved around the garden according to my whims at the time and where they sprouted, grew, flowered, seeded and died back each year as part of their normal life cycle. They have dropped seeds in a couple of spots and new plants have introduced themselves into the beds on the western side of the house and into the eastern end of my frog pond

bed. Most of my plants only form small, limp clumps of leaves, but occasionally one will find more sustenance and form a more robust clump that puts up a flower stem. They must be really tasty, because their leaves always show the teeth marks of the many and varied critters that dwell in my garden.

Sources: Sharr – WA Plant Names and their Meanings.
Elliot & Jones – Encyclopaedia of Australian Plants, Volume 2.
Corrick & Fuhrer – Wildflowers of Victoria.
APS Tasmania – Tasmania's Natural Flora.
Online – Floras of Victoria and South Australia.

Keeping sane in physical isolation.

By Meg Byers

[I have reproduced a short note from Meg Byers (with permission) that should bring a smile to your faces and help give you all something to do to fill in the days of isolation. Ed.]

Ah, our gardens! No doubt they will keep us sane. How are all those home unit dwellers coping? I've got a foot problem which is keeping me out of the garden for a period - still 3 weeks before I can go outside except on a concrete path.

Yes, you can tick me off for sufficient loo paper. In fact, it's a wonder you didn't hear me through the week. I went looking for something else in my main bathroom which I never use - it's just for guests. I hit the jackpot - a 10 pack of T paper!!!! I did some whooping! So, unless I have to share it with the family, I have a good supply.

Could I perhaps share something with my fellow members? My friend Ian Fraser OAM from Canberra writes a fortnightly blog of all things naturally Australian or Gondwanan, and especially our native flora. It keeps me sane in the absence of the tours he used to run. It is ianfrasertalkingnaturally.blogspot.com if anyone would like to check it out.

Regards,
Meg.



Morning sun shining through *Corymbia ficifolia* new growth – Jackson garden.

2020 Calendar photo spot - March.

By Mike Beamish

The photo of *Macrozamia fraseri* was taken on September 25, 2018, when we flew over to Perth for 4 weeks to catch up with friends and take part in a Hakea crawl around Albany. We were staying with our friends in Iluka, in Perth's northern suburbs, who were spending a bit of time wandering through their local Beaumaris Park at regular intervals. The Park had been the victim of arsonists in the previous autumn, a relatively small and minor fire, and was in the process of regrowth, with several orchid species and other WA gems flowering in good numbers. The Cycads were re-shooting as well and some had these weirdly contorted shapes in their leaves as they were unfurling - very photogenic!



There are two cycads that grow in this area, the other being *M. riedlei*, and they intergrade with each other in this locality. The main difference between the two is in their trunks; *M. fraseri* usually has a trunk above ground, but *M. riedlei* usually has only a completely subterranean trunk. My photo is of a plant with a trunk above ground, hence I've called it *M. fraseri*, but note the use of the word usually.

For the boffins, the photo was taken on my Nikon D3300 digital SLR with my Nikkor 60mm macro lens, no flash, ISO400, f13 aperture, 1/125s speed, aperture priority mode with -0.3 step exposure compensation to avoid what seems to be a built-in, slight over-exposure in this program mode, which makes itself known mainly in landscape scenery shots.

Rainfall for 2019 (in mm)

		Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Wayne	Tanjil South	21	20	51	42	97	72	127	205	152	80	134	155	1156
John	Traralgon South	16	23	21	37	145	54	111	247	112	34	180	29	1007
Diane	Drouin	8.5	37	57	47	125	63	101	200	114	70	159	32	1010
Mike	Boolarra	9	23	51	43	132	67	106	207	118	52	155	42	1002
Mary	Jeeralang Junction	8	38	49	32	120	59	103	176	93	42	151	37	906
Brian	Drouin	6	29	63	51	125	57	101	197	116	65	177	28	1015
Carolyn	Yarragon	10	22	26	42	138	79	103	226	119	60	172	30	1028
Judy	Moe South	12	22	52	43	152	81	127	118	147	56	167	51	1028

Rainfall for 2020 (in mm)

		Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total	
Wayne	Tanjil South	136												136	
John	Traralgon South	76	55												130
Diane	Drouin	121	147												267
Mike	Boolarra	93	126												219
Mary	Jeeralang Junction	86	134												220
Brian	Drouin	124	136												260
Carolyn	Yarragon	105	171												276
Judy	Moe South	99	95												194

Native plants for small gardens talk.

By Brian Hetherington

On March 3rd, I attended a talk at the Warragul Library on the subject of “Native Plants for Small Gardens”. This was presented by our own Mike Beamish (with support from Cathy) to an audience of 36 people. From the audience comments and questions, it was obvious that there was a lot of interest in native plants. I thought that Mike led his audience through this topic in a grand fashion by using his ‘Plants in my Garden’ articles as an information source. These are articles he has been writing for our newsletter for the last 15 years and I was amazed at the depth and detail he has put into them.

Mike’s approach to his talk was in a unique way; by genus in alphabetical order starting with A, a method that seemed to be well accepted by the audience. There were lots of questions about particular species during the presentation as well as some good feedback from Mike on how well the plants grow in his garden. Myself, I found this practical information very interesting and useful. He talked about his successes and failures and why he thought this happened. The photos were great (as we expect from Mike) and overall, I think the whole presentation was very well received.



There were plenty of questions at the end and some people that I spoke to after were



frustrated that all of these wonderful plants are not readily available to the general public. I thought Mike also did a great job in advising the audience of the goals of APS and the promotion of our chapter.

Thank you, Mike and Cathy!

Below are a couple of excerpts from the thank you email from Helen Wilson, Library Office – Programs, West Gippsland Libraries:

- *Excellent with many remarking on Mike's extensive knowledge and the diversity of plantings and methods used in your own garden*
- *The alphabetical method received mention as well with some fans and some at least acknowledging that it showed the extensive variety of plants to choose from.*

The Red Man of Mildura.

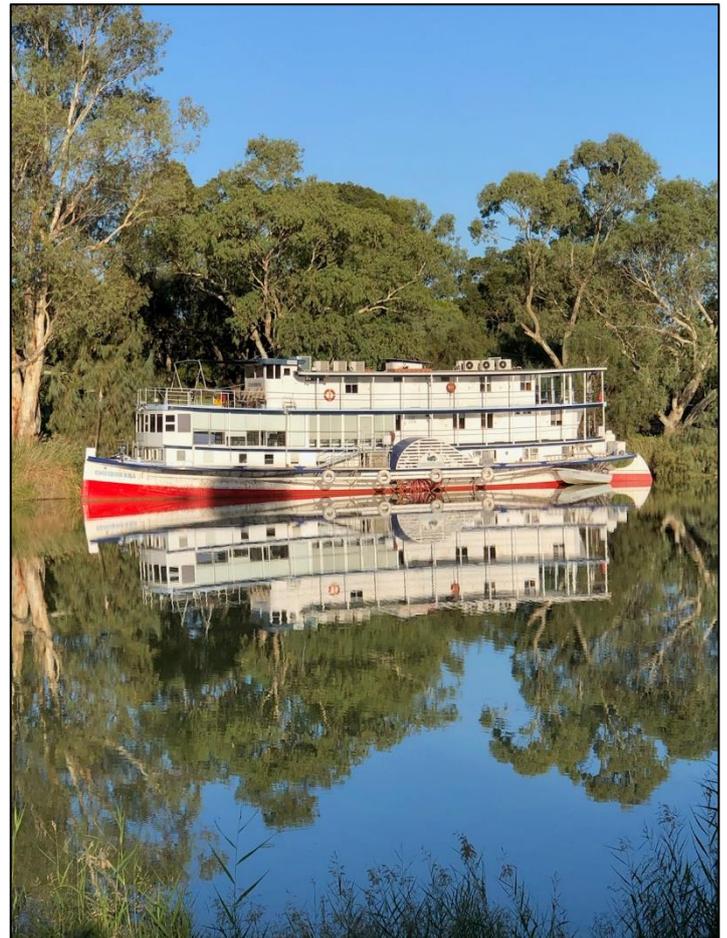
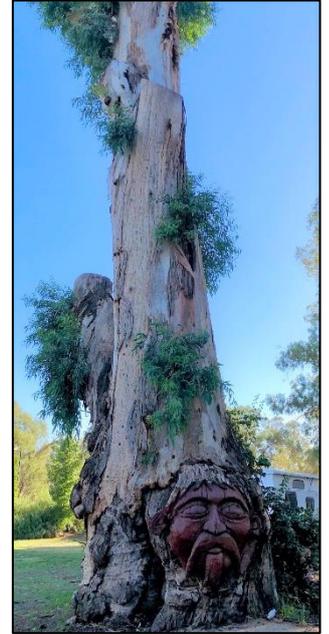
By Pamela Cox

Pamela and Yvonne have been away travelling and have sent this from on the Murray River. The air, or perhaps the water, seem to have got the creative juices flowing and Pamela has come up with the following prose after seeing a face carved into this River Red Gum (*Eucalyptus camaldulensis*).

**The red man gazes out across this ancient land,
And wonders will the river still flow,
And the mighty gums grow,
When the dams, cotton fields and climate change drain its life force,
While people continue to argue the cause.
Red man calls out to take a stand,
And raise your hand,
To save this precious land.**



The possum is from a tree near their caravan, and what can beat this paddle steamer and glassy reflections of Red Gums and blue sky on a morning walk?



Coming events of interest

2 May APS Mornington Plant Sale, Seawinds, Arthurs Seat State Park, Purves Rd, Arthurs Seat. 10 am to 4 pm.

27 & 28 June 2020 - APS Ballarat Winter Flower Show at Robert Clark Centre, Ballarat Botanical Gardens. 10am–4.00 pm.

25 & 26 July - Growing Friends Winter Plant Sale. Australian Gardens, Cranbourne near the Kiosk. 10 am to 4 pm.

5 & 6 September Open Garden Scheme – Bill Aitchison and Sue Guymer - 13 Conos Court, Donvale. Save the date.

12 & 13 September - Australian Plants Expo hosted by APS Yarra Yarra. Eltham Community & Reception Centre, 801 Main Road, Eltham from 10 am to 4 pm.

3 & 4 October - APS Grampians Pomonal Flower Show. Saturday 9 am to 3 pm, Sunday 9 am to 4 pm. Entry \$5, children free. Special feature botanical art and legacy of Banks, Solander & Parkinson. Also talks by guest speakers Jane Edmanson (Gardening Australia), Bianca Friend (Australian Wildlife Conservancy), Mike Bayly and Denis Crawford.

10 October - APS Echuca Moama Native Flower Showcase, Echuca Masonic Lodge Hall, 426 High Street, Echuca. 9.00 am to 4.00 pm. A huge flower display, plant sales, floral art, Native Bonsai, basket weaving and other displays and demonstrations.

17 October - APS Mitchell Plant Expo and Sale. Kilmore Memorial Hall, 14 Sydney Street, Kilmore. From 9 am to 3 pm.

17 & 18 October - APS Ballarat Spring Flower Show at Robert Clark Centre, Ballarat Botanical Gardens. 10am–4.30 pm.

17 & 18 October - Growing Friends Spring Plant Sale. Australian Gardens, Cranbourne near the Kiosk. 10 am to 4 pm.

24 & 25 October 13th FJC Rogers Seminar on Mint Bushes & Allied Genera. Hosted by APS Yarra Yarra in Eltham. Saturday venue Eltham Community & Reception Centre, 801 Main Road, Eltham. First newsletter has just been published 26/2/2020

2019 Latrobe Valley Group Events Calendar				
Month	Day	Date	Activity	Time
Apr			Meeting Cancelled due to Corona virus	
May			Meeting Cancelled due to Corona virus	
Jun	Thursday	11	Calendar photo competition night	7:30PM
Oct		2,3,4	Trip to the Grampians?	

<https://apsvic.org.au/aps-latrobe-valley/>

Leader:	Rhonda Fitch	0459749885	rhonda.1.fitch@aussiebb.com.au
Deputy-leader:	Brian Hetherington	0497000925	heth3818@gmail.com
Secretary:	Judy Hetherington	0497000925	heth76933@gmail.com
Treasurer:	Mike Beamish	0447452755	mcandcjb@gmail.com
Newsletter Editor:	Col Jackson	0429095527	coljackson57@hotmail.com
Website:	John Stephens	0439755013	jsst@aussiebb.com.au
Librarian:	Pamela Cox	0429194733	theroseglen@yahoo.com.au
Publicity	Delma Hodges	0408398385	rj3dh2@aussiebb.com.au

HOMEGROWN NATIVE PLANTS MAYBE SOLD AT EACH MEETING. COPYRIGHT: ARTICLES OR INFORMATION ARE NEEDED FOR EVERY MONTHLY NEWSLETTER. PLEASE ACKNOWLEDGE THE SOURCE AND ORIGINAL AUTHOR. SEND YOUR ARTICLES TO THE NEWSLETTER EDITOR; note SUBMISSION DEADLINE IS THE 25TH OF EACH MONTH. MEMBERSHIP FEES; per ANNUM: TO BE PAID BY 30TH JUNE FOR BOTH LATROBE VALLEY GROUP Inc. AND AUSTRALIAN PLANTS SOCIETY (SGAP Victoria) Inc.

Title page photo: *Grevillea chrysophaea* at Holey Plains State Park by Mike Beamish



Produced with the assistance of Latrobe City Council.