

# Golden

Newsletter of the Australian Plants Society  
Latrobe Valley Group Inc.  
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*Grevillea chrysophaea* – Golden Grevillea

## This Month

Event	A day trip to Tarra-Bulga National Park.
Location	Meeting at the Tarra Valley picnic area, Tarra Valley Road.
Date	Sunday 11 <sup>th</sup> February
Time	10:30 AM

Tarra-Bulga NP is always a pleasant respite from summer heat with its shady, ferny valley and trickling water so we have settled on that as our February destination. We will start at the Tarra Valley picnic area with a walk, followed by a picnic lunch. If people are interested, later we can travel around to the Tarra-Bulga Visitor Centre. *BYO* picnic lunch and drinks and maybe toss in a camp chair as well.

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## Leader's Report

By Jan Workman

Hello and a happy new year to all APS Latrobe Valley Members

The first meeting for 2024, an excursion to Mt Baw Baw, was really terrific and enjoyed by all. Thank you to all who attended including some friends and relatives. The young people really added to the atmosphere and enjoyment of it all.

The weather kept us on our toes clothing wise as it ranged from warm and sunny on the first day progressing to living in the clouds surrounded by thick mist and poor visibility. We even had some very heavy rain at times and those of us who guessed wrongly re suitable clothing, came back from walks quite drenched. However, the solid fuel heater ensured we had a warm place to settle back in.

The Edski lodge was very comfortable with each person and family having their own room. A water leak in the men's shower created a major issue with water constantly dripping through into the centre of the kitchen. The men rallied organising a roster and taking shifts day and night to empty buckets of water that were constantly filling. Phone alarms were set every few hours waking sleepy eyed men, bracing themselves against the cold as they emptied the near to overflowing buckets of water. Marilyn was caught up in this when she was woken by Peter's alarm clock at 2am and was not a happy girl the next morning.

The men repaired the leak with some timely plumbing and the owner was very grateful for their efforts in looking after his property. Everyone present were also very grateful as well for looking after us...and keeping the lodge dry.

During the wet days there were plenty of board games to amuse ourselves, tennis, and cricket too on the TV.

There are resident Dingos in the Alpine village. Warragul, a pale female, and Rowdy, a male, are 5<sup>th</sup> generation dingos bred in captivity. Their caretakers report a family of wild dingos living nearby in the valley but are seldom seen.

Trivial pursuit was a winner with a game lasting from after dinner to midnight. The alcohol was flowing; we were all laughing and had a really great time.



Thank you to those who made and shared cakes, biscuits and other foods.

Those present felt Mt Baw Baw could become an annual field trip in February each year.

The last two photos show some of the crew at the kiosk on the last day and Warren and Judy watching the snow machine test, maybe hoping for a bit of skiing.





As Jan outlined above, the January trip to Mt Baw Baw went very well. It didn't matter that our fine weather was limited; rain and fog created a lovely atmosphere. We wore coats and carried umbrellas (mostly, though some chose to tough it out) and when we got back to the lodge it was easy to dry out and relax in warm surroundings. When it wasn't raining, there was a surprising amount of insect life visiting the flowers: I guess the opportunity to breed is short in the high country, so every break of fine weather is taken advantage of. One butterfly we saw a lot of was a beautiful Swallowtail. These, although quite numerous, were extremely difficult to photograph as they were constantly moving, fluttering even when feeding on the Trigger Plant flowers. After going through what seemed like a hundred shots, I finally found a couple that were not too blurred. A native bee was also feeding on the Trigger Plants, and a small butterfly was making a meal of a Snow Daisy. A Paper Daisy remained closed with all the moisture but still provided a sharp pattern in orange.



Back home we were lucky enough to see a group of what we think are Imperial Jezebel butterflies emerging from their chrysalis stage. They were hanging from some Mistletoe on a Peppermint Gum near my plant propagating area. We watched them over two days as they emerged and slowly unfolded their cramped bodies and wings. Some were clearly mating while still hanging on their nursery tree before they gradually spread their wings and ventured out into the world to start the cycle of life again.



**Species:** *Hakea verrucosa*.

**Family:** Proteaceae.

**Derivation:**

*Hakea*: Named after Baron Christian Ludwig von Hake (pronounced 'hark', 1745-1818), a German patron of botany.

*verrucosa*: From Latin, *verrucosus*, meaning covered with warts, referring to the lumps on the fruit capsules, which aren't particularly warty compared with other *Hakea* species and is probably an error of confusion with another species.



**Common Name:** Usually none, but if any, Warty(-fruited) Hakea.

**Distribution:** South coast of Western Australia, mainly around Ravensthorpe, but with a couple of records further west towards the Stirling Ranges and east towards Esperance.

**Description:** A dense, prickly shrub up to 2.5m tall and 3m broad, with linear, terete leaves to 5cm long and 2mm wide ending in a sharp point. Red/pink and cream flowers occur in winter, in clusters in the leaf axils, very showy when in full flower, followed by woody capsules to 3cm long and 1cm wide, with a long neck and two horns. The literature is contradictory with regard to the presence of a lignotuber, in my opinion this species doesn't have one.

**Opinion:** Like a lot of Hakeas, this species is not a friendly plant if you want to get close and personal! Thus, it needs a position where it's not going to take your eye out, but where it can catch your eye when it's in flower. Mine is on the western nature strip where it is fully exposed to the elements and all things that come its way from that direction, including the occasional vandalistic schoolkid/passersby who likes to leave a record of their passage around the neighbourhood. Maybe this plant will fight back! I hope it doesn't blow over in the next south-westerly buster, like a lot of WA plants have done in my garden over the years. They just don't seem to be able to get a good grip on our heavier soils in this part of the world. I'm not sure which rendition this particular specimen is - I know I have attempted to grow this species from seed before, they're easy to germinate, but not so easy to keep alive in outdoor pots over the colder months, and I've also had a couple of plants in 6" ►



pots given to me, but my poor record keeping has failed me on this occasion and I don't know its heritage. It's currently about a metre tall and broad and has been pruned back on the side growing out towards the road so it doesn't take pieces off me while mowing the grass that I optimistically call lawn. It has flowered lightly for two years in a row now, so I'm looking forward to it really getting going.

**Sources:** Elliot & Jones - Encyclopaedia of Australian Plants, Volume 5.  
Holliday - Hakeas: A Field and Garden Guide.  
Sharr - WA Plant Names and their Meanings.  
Online - WA FloraBase.

## *Boolarra weather 2023*

**By Mike Beamish**

Here's the 2023 Boolarra weather report.

Starting with rainfall, our total for the year was 946mm, falling on 162 days, which was about 10mm more than our 30-year average, but much less than the previous year by over 150mm. Keep in mind these figures are an educated guess, as we were away for more than 25% of the year, so the numbers are based on what was extracted from the rain gauges in comparison with the Bureau of Meteorology figures for Latrobe Valley Airport and the Farm Online rainfall records for Boolarra South. Our wettest day was October 4 with 44mm falling between midnights, with the previous day next best with 43mm. These dates were also our wettest week, with 95mm falling over 4 days. Next best was the end of March, when 70mm fell over 5 days. Our wettest month was also October, it rained on 16 days out of 31 for a total of 182.5mm. Our driest month was January, only 20mm on 7 days, so basically none that was effective. As for averages, January, February, April, July, August, September and November were all down, with the others higher enough to even the year out. Over 30 years, October remains our wettest month on average, over 100mm, where August and September are both around 95mm average.

Our hottest day in 2023 was on February 17 at 34°C. No plus 30° days occurred in the second half of the year! Our coldest day was June 19 at 8°C. Our warmest night, 19°C, occurred five times on January 14, 17, 18 & 29 and February 17, coinciding with the hottest day. Our coldest night was 0°C only twice on July 18 and August 16. Keep in mind that my outdoor thermometer was hanging in the tree at the top of my driveway (it's now been replaced by a new one on my front veranda) and the surrounding garden could influence the readings, perhaps a couple of degrees cooler on hot days and warmer on cool nights than out on the road 20m away. I know we didn't have a frost in the garden last winter, but any cars on the street overnight were iced over several times.

I haven't set up year by year averages for temperatures on my spreadsheet, but I do calculate the monthly averages that I can then compare with previous years. So, for January to May, both day and night, it was cooler in 2023 than in 2022, sometimes up to two degrees. The winters for both years were about the same and then the spring was warmer in 2023 than in 2022. The trend reversed in December, probably due to the lack of temperatures over 30°C and the average temperatures were lower in 2023 than in 2022.



## Spectacular at Loch Sport

By Daryl Radnall

Judy and I went to Loch Sport recently to watch the new year's fireworks (which was rather spectacular). Another spectacular sight was the *Corymbia ficifolias* in the street that obviously like the current weather. The coastal banksias also seem to be enjoying the season. We were very taken by the epicormic regrowth on the Eucalypts, and the banksias resprouting from their lignotubers, and distributing their seed after the fairly recent fire that went through part of the Park. Nature is fighting back!





## Coming events of interest

**Note: Please check the Vic APS website for cancellations before attending.,**

**23 & 24 March 2024** - Cranbourne Friends RBGV Autumn Plant Sale. 10 am to 4 pm. Wide range of plants, plant list available one week before sale. Website: [rbgfriendscranbourne.org.au](http://rbgfriendscranbourne.org.au)

**6 & 7 April 2024** – APS Wangaratta take part in Off-Grid Living Festival & Campout, Chiltern Racecourse & Recreation Reserve, NE Victoria. Providing information about Australian plants – growing, maintenance, suitability and also selling plants which we have propagated ourselves.

**13 April 2024** – APS Geelong Australian Native Plant Sale, 'Wirrawilla', Lovely Banks. 8.30 am to 4.00 pm.

**20th April 2024** - APS Yarra Yarra Autumn plant sale. Eltham Community and Reception Centre, 801 Main Rd, Eltham. 10am-4pm

**14 & 15 September 2024** APS Yarra Yarra Australian Plants Expo. Eltham Community and Reception Centre, 801 Main Rd, Eltham. 10am - 4pm

**5 September 2024** – Wimmera Biodiversity Seminar. Further details to follow.

**21 & 22 September 2024** – APS Grampians Group Pomonal Native Flower Show, Pomonal Hall.

**21 & 22 September 2024** – Angair Wildflower Show & Art Show, Anglesea Memorial Hall, McMillan Street, Anglesea. 10 am to 4 pm. Wildflower display, indigenous plant sales, art show and painting sales.

**30 September to 4 October, 2024** – ANPSA 2024 Biennial Conference hosted by APS Victoria in Melbourne



**19 & 20 October 2024** - Cranbourne Friends RBGV Spring Plant Sale. 10 am to 4 pm. Wide range of plants, plant list available one week before sale. Website: [rbgfriendscranbourne.org.au](http://rbgfriendscranbourne.org.au)



## 2024 Latrobe Valley Group Events Calendar

Month	Day	Date	Activity	Time
Feb	Sun	11	Day trip to Tarra Bulga National Park	10:30
Mar	Sat	23	Day trip to Cranbourne Botanic Garden and CBG Friends' plant sale.	Sale 10:00 Meet 11:00
April	Sat	20	Day trip to Glen Nayook	10:00
May	Thu	9	Slide presentation by Mike at The Rose Garden meeting room, Morwell.	1:30 PM

### Rainfall for 2022 (in mm)

		Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Diane	Drouin (west)	67	30	81	94	60	170	90	198	60	172	193	89	1302
Brian	Drouin (east)	74	11	76	86	75	145	77	199	66	199	183	95	1286
Warren	Yarragon	107	5	55	68	58	191	97	163	64	144	196	107	1253
Wayne	Tanjil South	83	15	63	98	107	130	74	161	96	203	138	127	1295
Peter	Mirboo North	62	8	67	68	50	150	88	189	73	136	157	66	1113
Judy	Moe South	73	13	64	55	93	209	72	165	67	128	236	89	1264
Mike	Boolarra	72	6	74	60	54	162	69	166	66	119	168	94	1108
Mary	Jeeralang Junction	68	11	85	75	46	164	72	161	62	133	171	85	1131

### Rainfall for 2023 (in mm)

		Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Diane	Drouin (west)	21	42	101	112	114	102	41	66	66	177	80	157	1078
Brian	Drouin (east)	22	44	110	93	118	101	38	70	68	184	83	136	1067
Warren	Yarragon	49	35	80	69	119	138	36	71	78	184	74	85	1018
Wayne	Tanjil South	25	43	100	77	131	126	55	74	59	195	106	136	1127
Peter	Mirboo North	35	57	113	96	132	94	32	59	57	205	110	86	1076
Judy	Moe South	26	33	80	66	126	101	86	83	78	193	90	124	1086
Mike	Boolarra	20	43	114	61	113	101	44	62	55	182	60	92	946
Mary	Jeeralang Junction	24	36	94	65	122	91	26	51	58	200	94	105	964

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

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Golden Grevillea  
*Grevillea chrysophaea*

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