

Golden

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

This Month

- Event A talk and slide show on Trigger plants by Mike Beamish.
Location **The Morwell Rose Garden meeting room adjacent to the Senior Citizens Centre at 2-4 Maryvale Crescent, Morwell.**
Date Friday 10th May
Time 1:30PM

Mike has been collecting photos of Trigger plants from around Australia for years, but his collection got a real boost while travelling in Western Australia and the orchids weren't co-operating. Bring a plate of afternoon tea goodies to share. There is ample parking available on the nearby roadsides, please leave the car park adjacent for the people in the retirement village

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Leader's Report

By Jan Workman

The field trip to Glen Nayook was well attended and produced some stunning views of a splendid fern gully and a Mountain Ash forest. After lunch a walk across the Noogee trestle bridge was a beaut end to a great day.

Glen Nayook, a 9-hectare area, was put aside at the time of selection in the year 1900 and eventually became formally gazetted as crown land for public recreation in 1982.

Tramlines, including magnificent trestle bridges, criss-crossed the landscape. They were built in 1919 due to the deteriorating roads, and after the discovery of good quantities of tin in the Noojee area in 1878.

Following are some snaps taken on the day.



With a trip to the Simpson Desert looming in June, and a lot of vehicle preparation as it will be the first trip with this car, I decided I had to get my autumn planting done early. Normally, I approach it more casually and end up doing the autumn planting in June, and July, and August, etc. With that fire lit under my backside, I've been toiling away in the garden pretty much every day. It's not only the planting to be done. There is a lot of general maintenance after a long dry summer: pruning and tidying and garden bed preparation before seriously getting into the decisions of what and where.

I generally find it best to start with the things needing a particular environment, for example. dry and shady - Thomasias or moist, well drained, part shade - Boronias. Then there are the few 'feature plants' that need to be placed in visually pleasing locations. One of my latest acquisitions from the Cranbourne Botanic Gardens plant sale, a Bottle Tree (*Brachychiton rupestris*) is one such case. I parted with \$40 for this plant with no particular plan for its location, just a vague thought that if I can't find a spot this year, I'll pot it up and buy some time. After several circuits of the garden, I finally came to the conclusion that the only place I was going to be happy with is the back garden, halfway up the rocky slope of the original 'cut' of the house site. The main problem with this site is the fact that there is a Eucalyptus stump exactly where it needs to go. So, with pick, mattock, axe, crowbar and winch, the stump has been removed, (I'm sure a couple of glasses of wine and a few Panadol will help the aches). The rock substrate has been broken, and the hole refilled with useable soil. I now have my Bottle Tree in position. I'm not sure how it will cope once the roots reach the rocky substrate; maybe it will thrive or maybe it will self-stunt and become a dwarf. Never mind, the tag said 'slow growing' so I should have time on my side.

I have always designed the garden with the aim of attracting wildlife. The rock walls for instance are designed to make homes for lizards. This of course helps attract snakes. In the past I have taken the approach of trying to scare snakes away by making loud noises and beating the foliage near them with a leaf rake. However, this last summer I have moved to the position that perhaps we can live with them. The snake Mary talks about on page 6 is our first trial of this approach. I believe we sighted it three other times this summer, which is a pretty low sighting rate if it's living in the garden. Our grandchildren are now old enough to learn and understand that, although venomous, they are part of the environment and need to be respected for that.

The Callistemon shown here is about 15 years old, 2.5 metres high by 2.5 metres wide, and flowering beautifully at the moment. I have been trying to strike this from cuttings for a couple of years and finally hit gold. I have several of them in forestry tubes ready to give away, if you want one, please let me know.



Plants in my Garden 207

By Mike Beamish

Species: *Petrophile squamata*.

Family: Proteaceae.

Derivation:

Petrophile: From the Greek *petros*, meaning 'rock', with the suffix *phileo*, meaning 'to love', thus rock lover.

squamata: From the Latin *squama*, meaning a scale (as on a fish or snake). Botanically, *squamate* means having small, scale-like leaves or bracts.

Common Name: None.

Distribution: The south-west of Western Australia, widespread from Perth and Northam south and east to Israelite Bay.

Description: An erect shrub to roughly 1.5m tall and broad with rigid, prickly leaves to 7cm long. The leaves are once or twice ternately (into threes) divided, forming broadly linear and sharply pointed lobes. Small, creamy-yellow flowering cones about 10mm in diameter appear in the leaf axils in spring, with individual hairy, yellow flowers to 10mm long.

Opinion: I always worry about WA plants in my garden, as Boolarra conditions of heavy soils and cold and wet climate are very different from their homelands. This one seems to be coping ok at the moment, it has been in the northern nature-strip bed for 4 years now, has doubled in size and has even flowered for me. I'm expecting it to drop dead every time we have a humid spell or a summer thunderstorm, but so far so good. I selected its position in the hope that it would get sufficient light and warmth from its northern aspect, while its neighbours and some agricultural drains underneath it would prevent wet feet.

Recently I had to take a branch out of the overhead Giant Candles Banksia, letting in even more light and warmth, so now I'm worried that a hot summer will cook it. Hopefully, its advertised characteristics of a liking for sunny sites and hardiness over dry periods will see it through.

Sources: Elliot & Jones - Encyclopaedia of Australian Plants, Volume 7.

Wrigley & Fagg - Banksias, Waratahs & Grevilleas, etc.

Sharr - WA Plant Names and their Meanings.



Our last meeting was a pleasant 1.5 kilometre walk through Glen Nayook, a damp, ferny gully overseen by tall eucalypts. In one section, large granite boulders had caused the Tarago River to disappear underground, and these boulders were literally fully clothed in mosses and small ferns. Coming out of the gully, some steep steps scared a few of the members, however Jadon and Ebony, with the energy of youth, kept scouting ahead and coming back with positive reports that kept the rest of us going. Here are some photos that Mike took of the local flora.



Shiny Film Liverwort *Hymenophyton flabellatum*



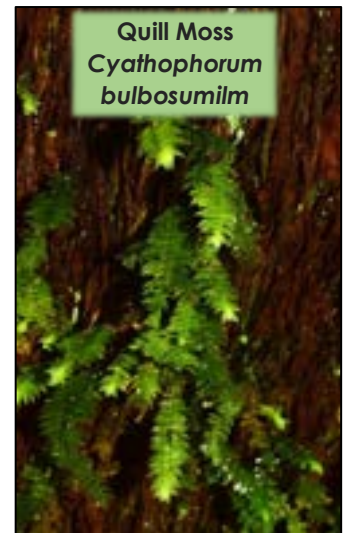
Mycena mulawaestriza



Orange Pore Fungus
Favolaschia claudopus



Hypopterygium didictyon



Quill Moss
Cyathophorum bulbosum



Fieldia australis

Garden wildlife – the good, the bad and the ugly?

By Mary Jackson

At Easter time I was really enjoying my few days home alone. The weather was amazing and the solitude even better. I was sitting enjoying the ambience when the birds suddenly set off with crazy raucous sounds. The alarmist calls continued so I took a closer look. There, only three metres from where I stood was a large, Red-bellied Black snake enjoying the birds' ground level water bowl. He was a beautiful fellow and continued to slither into a large Lomandra where he disappeared. The birds eventually stopped the raucous calls, so I took that as a sign that my UNWELCOME VISITOR had moved on, somewhere in the garden and was now waiting for his next human surprise encounter.

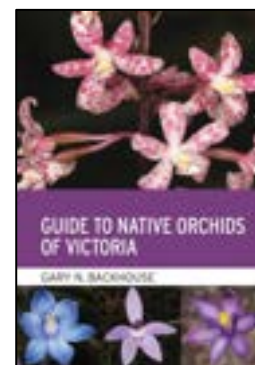


And now with Autumn here, it is becoming a frequent frustration to discover that the lyrebird has made a destructive mess of plants in the garden again! This silent destruction machine is almost too efficient at soil aeration, to the point that it moves into garden redesign. Often Colin reassembles the mess back to normal only to find a new arrangement yet again. He has declared that although he hates plastic collars around his plants, to maintain small plants and give them the ability to become established and flourish, he needs to use them. This is an unusual problem for most gardeners, maybe unique to our bush home.



Guide to Native Orchids of Victoria. Gary N Backhouse.

Gary Backhouse is not making his debut to this review series with this book – early last year I had the pleasure of reviewing his collaboration with Lachlan Copeland in the excellent Guide to Native Orchids of NSW and the ACT. Nor is this his first contribution to demystifying Victorian orchids; I have on my shelf a good solid 1995 hardback copy of The Orchids of Victoria co-authored with Jeffrey Jeanes, and it has accompanied me every time I've travelled in Victoria. He is also the author of an impressive tome on every species of Australian caladenias (the finger and spider orchids). (And while not especially germane to this review, I love it that he lays claim to having photographed more than 5000 species of wild orchid around the world – the places he must have been to in order to achieve that!) The current book however is soft- covered and very much a modern field guide. It follows the style and layout developed for the NSW and ACT guide (also a CSIRO production), which is a good basis for a field guide in my opinion. He covers the 447 known species of Victorian orchids, including some that have not yet been formally named. Each comes with a (very good) photo, or occasionally two where warranted, such as to display the plant form, plus a clear and succinct description eminently accessible to the lay reader, flowering time and a helpful and interesting few lines of Notes, which can involve a bit of conservation status and history, ecology and, importantly, which species not to confuse it with and how not to do so. I'll be putting the book (or me) to the test a couple of times this spring, even if only briefly. I look forward to the test, and have no doubts about the book at least.



Guide to Native Orchids of Victoria. Gary N Backhouse CSIRO Publishing. 328 pages. RRP \$50.

[Ian Fraser is a Canberra-based professional naturalist and writer. In 2012 he launched the natural history blog 'Ian Fraser, Talking Naturally', at <http://ianfrasertalkingnaturally.blogspot.com.au/> This contribution was submitted by Meg Byers, who knows Ian through previous environmental tours in Australia. Editor]

2024 Latrobe Valley Group Events Calendar				
Month	Day	Date	Activity	Time
May	Fri	10	Slide presentation on Trigger Plants (<i>Stylidium</i> spp.) by Mike at The Rose Garden meeting room, Morwell.	1:30 PM
June	sat	15	Visit to Sale Common meeting at Cox's Bridge.	10:30 AM
July				
August			Annual General Meeting	



Coming events of interest

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

11 May 2024 - APS Mornington host the next APS Vic COM Meeting at Fenton Square, and a visit to the Seaford Banksia Arboretum in the afternoon.

11 May 2024 – APS Melton Bacchus Marsh Plant Sale, at St Andrews Uniting Church, Bacchus Marsh, 9 am to 1 pm. For more details from David Pye, Ph 0417 289 369.

27 and 28 July 2024 – APS Bendigo host COM and full weekend of activities.

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

7 September 2024 – APS Cardinia Regional Annual Plant Sale, Akoonah Park, Berwick from 8 am to 4 pm.

7 September 2024 – APS Mitchell Expo and Plant Sale, Wallan Multipurpose Centre, Bentinck Street, Wallan.

14 & 15 September 2024 APS Yarra Yarra Australian Plants Expo. Eltham Community and Reception Centre, 801 Main Rd, Eltham. 10am - 3pm

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.

28 & 29 September 2024 – APS Bendigo Flower Show, Victory Christian College, Kairn Road, Strathdale, Bendigo. 9.30 am to 4.00 pm. \$5 entry, children free. Specialist native plant nurseries, books, garden accessories and more.

30 September to 4 October, 2024 – ANPSA 2024 Biennial Conference in Melbourne hosted by APS Victoria. Visit <https://www.anpsa2024conference.com/>.

2 October 2024 - AJ Swaby Address at 3.30 pm as part of the ANPSA 2024 Biennial Conference. A public event, at The Round, Nunawading. Phillip Johnson speaking on the Chelsea Flower Garden and Garden Design.

5 October 2024 – Echuca Moama Native Flower Showcase. Masonic Lodge Hall, 426 High Street, Echuca.

12 & 13 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

November 2024 – APS Wangaratta host APS Victoria Committee of Management meeting and AGM. Details to follow. ►

2025 15th FJC Rogers Seminar 2025 on Epacridaceae hosted by APS Mornington Peninsula.

2026 ANPSA 2026 Biennial Conference, planned to be held in Alice Springs.

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

Rainfall for 2024 (in mm)

		Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Diane	Drouin (west)	135	21	13										169
Brian	Drouin (east)	121	28	14										163
Warren	Yarragon	97	16	15										127
Wayne	Tanjil South	137	25											162
Peter	Mirboo North													0
Judy	Moe South	100	6	17										123
Mike	Boolarra	89	12	11										111
Mary	Jeeralang Junction	71	15	14										100

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

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