

Golden

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

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Grevillea chrysophaea – Golden Grevillea

This Month

- Event A sit-down meal, Annual General Meeting and plant trivia quiz.
Location **Traralgon Bowls Club, 50 Liddiard Rd, Traralgon.**
Date Thursday 8th August.
Time **Starting for the meal at 11 AM.**

We would like to start ordering a meal off the menu shortly after 11 AM. If you can't make the meal, the AGM will be starting around 12:30. After the AGM, our resident plant guru Mike is putting together a plant trivia quiz. This month's raffle plants will be used as quiz prizes so study up your plant knowledge!

In this issue:

Page

- 2 Leader's Report – Jan Workman
2 Latrobe Valley group events calendar
3 Editor's Notes – Col Jackson
4 – 5 Plants in my Garden – Mike Beamish
5 – 6 Biology and Biochemistry – Ray Hodges
6 Unusual Fungus
7 Dandenong Ranges Botanic Garden – Daryl Radnall
8 Coming event of interest
9 Rainfall registration charts
10 Notice of Annual General Meeting

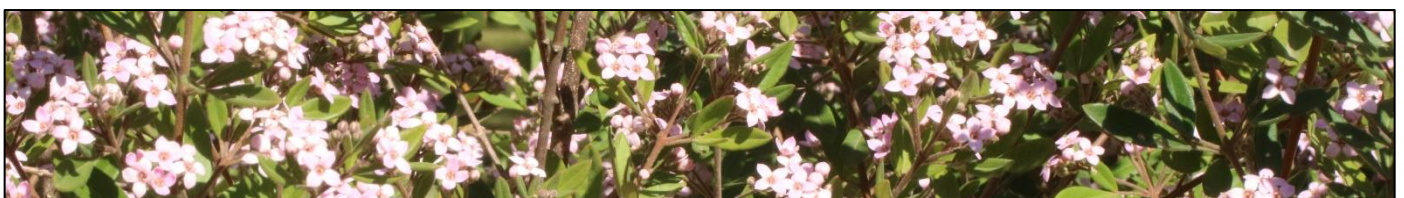
A few days ago, I returned to the 'land of the living' after not feeling too well for the previous three weeks. I noted what news I'd missed. Looks like Trump & Harris will fight it out in the USA elections, the Israelis & Palestinians are still warring; will it lead to an international war? Russia is still intent on crushing Ukraine. Floods & major weather events continue to ravage worldwide locations. Locally 2 cabinet ministers are retiring from federal parliament. The nuclear power debate continues to polarise communities. Sydney remains on top of the AFL ladder & the 2024 Olympics have begun. Tragedy seems to dominate most news headlines including ongoing deaths due to domestic violence.

I needed some positivity & quickly found some....a footballer I know kicked his first goal in the West End Junior Football Club under nines last weekend. What a celebration was had!! Not all bad! Eh?

At the last meeting (which I was unable to attend) the members present sorted out the calendar through to the end of the year. August is the AGM, along with a meal and Mike's quiz. September will be a slide show and talk on Canberra Botanic Garden by Warren at the Morwell Rose Garden meeting room. October is the visit to Buchan with accommodation at the residence 'Homeleigh'. And the decision has been made to finish up with our Christmas breakup in November and a meal at the Warragul Country Club. .

2024 Latrobe Valley Group Events Calendar

Month	Day	Date	Activity	Time
August	Thursday	8	Annual General Meeting. We have the use of a function room at Traralgon Bowls Club. Order of business as follows: Meal ordering 11 ish AGM starting 12:30 ish Trivia quiz starting 1:30 ish	11:00
September	Friday	13	A slide show on Canberra Botanic Garden by Warren Simpson at the Rose Garden meeting rooms in Morwell.	2:00PM
October	Fri-Mon	25-28	A trip to Buchan, staying 3 nights at Homeleigh and exploring the surrounding area.	
November	Thursday	14	Christmas Break-up. We have a booking for the Warragul Country Club for a meal in the Bistro area. We will need to confirm numbers by the 31 st of October.	12 noon



Wildlife is what our garden is all about. We love the interactions with our native critters and the fact that over the years there are more and more of them trusting us enough to get up close and personal. The other day I was weeding not far from the bower bird's bower when the male bird popped out from underneath a bush just a couple of metres from me. I stayed still and observed as it pecked at some of the grass for a couple of minutes then disappeared under the shrubs again. To see that bird up so close was a real delight; the purple sheen on the feathers and the colour of the eyes is so much more intense at that close range.

Lyrebirds, too, have been regular visitors to the garden and the bush nearby. Every day for the past several weeks there has been the calling of Lyrebirds, in the gully, in the bush up the hill and in the garden around the house. It is the plantings over many years that has provided the cover for these magnificent birds to move in so close to us.

Not so welcome are the feral animals. Rabbits have been an eternal problem, but now we can add deer to the list. The signs of feral visits to the garden are always there; rabbit scratchings and droppings, deer droppings and prints, but now we are seeing the deer more and more. The other morning, I was able to take this photo of a fallow deer from our bedroom window. And while doing my bike ride on Jumbuk Rd, I saw a sambar deer on the road adjacent to the National Park. The farmers that released deer into the bush when they were no longer interested in farming them have a lot to answer for.



I have had to focus on getting ready for the ANPSA 2024 Biennial Conference garden visit at the start of October. A garden visit like this



is great for prompting a general tidy-up of the garden, but time seems to be running out. One major project is the building of a deck over the tank in front of the house. This has been an ambition of mine ever since the tank was installed and finally it is happening. Some old steel girders have been laid on the tank as bearers at this stage. Stay tuned for progress...



this maintenance was removing the old flower stem from the Spear Lilly. I cut off 4.2 metres of stem and removed and saved the seed capsules. I am not sure if they are viable but will give them a go at some stage.

There are some bright winter spots in the garden. Some of the wattles are starting to flower, and Hakeas and Grevilleas are building up.

There is still plenty of general garden maintenance needed, the usual removal of dead and dying plant material, and weeding, weeding, weeding. Part of



Species: *Dockrillia linguiformis*.

Family: Orchidaceae.

Derivation:

Dockrillia: Named after eminent Australian orchid botanist Alick William Dockrill (1915-2011).

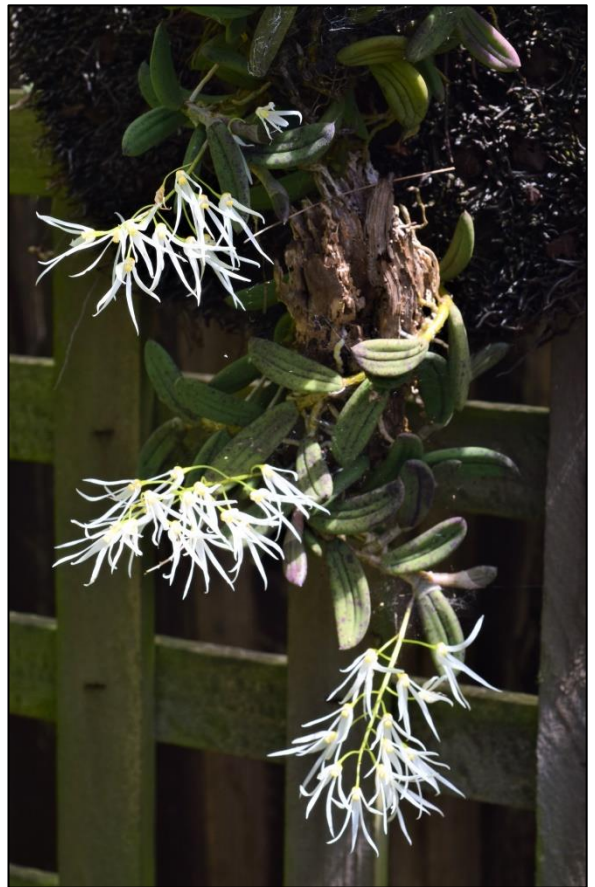
linguiformis: From Latin *lingua*, meaning tongue, and *forma*, meaning shape, referring to the leaves.

Common Name: Tongue, Thumbnail or Tick Orchid.

Distribution: From Gympie in QLD to near Bega in NSW, and in New Caledonia, from sea level to 1100m altitude, widespread and common, growing on rocks and trees in rainforests, gullies, gorges, open forests and woodlands.

Description: An epiphyte/lithophyte with 4mm thick, creeping stems and thick, fleshy, furrowed, tongue-shaped leaves to 40mm long and 15mm wide. Flowers are in racemes up to 150mm long in winter and spring. Individual flowers are white with a yellow labellum callus.

Opinion: I have two of these in my backyard under the pergola, both mounted on tree-fern slabs, one attached directly to the pergola, the other attached to the trunk of a tree-fern. The plant in the photos is the former and was inherited from the in-laws when they sold the family home. It is probably var. *huntiana*, which has longer and narrower leaves than the typical variety. My other plant has shorter, wider leaves, more of the typical 'thumbnail' shape. Despite the constant neglect both plants suffer, they hang in there and



occasionally flower for me. All they get is a splash of water over the drier periods and some weak liquid fertiliser once in a blue moon. I really should make an effort to pamper them a bit more, perhaps put them on better mounts with a supply of leaf litter for them to feed on. ►

As an aside, I should probably mention that some taxonomists still have this species listed as *Dendrobium linguiforme*. Although it was transferred to *Dockrillia* in 1981, some herbariums still haven't accepted this change and continue to use the alternative name. Bureaucracy!

Sources: Jones - A Complete Guide to Native Orchids of Australia, 3rd edition.
Online - Wikipedia (as *Dendrobium linguiforme*).

Biology and Biochemistry

By Ray Hodges

A neighbour gave me a collection of unwanted technical books they were clearing out. One book titled "Biology" was 1200 pages (50 chapters) of closely typeset A4 pages with numerous detailed figures (so heavy, you need a cushion to rest it on your knees). This has been a fascinating read, and at my age not needing to study for exams, I could enjoy reading it as a sort of detective story on how the web of life fits together. The first quarter of the book refreshed my knowledge of basic sciences including light, heat, physics, chemistry, maths and geology which I had studied, whilst the last 10 chapters cover ecology similar to what we cover at Plant Group meetings. The intervening part of the book has extensive detail of the biochemistry of living species with many esoteric terms. For my university chemistry, simple organic chemistry was covered going as far as some natural products but nothing more complex than cholesterol. Scientists say biochemistry is really organic chemistry on steroids. The Bible says "we are fearfully and wonderfully made."

When educating, instructors move from known to unknown one step at a time, thus an essential prerequisite is to find out what the recipient already knows. In my case, education started by simply classifying things as 'animal, vegetable or mineral' and didn't ever get much further during my working life. Totally missing was biochemistry. Mike in his recent native plants talk started by defining five kingdoms, only one being prokaryotic (Monera, single cells like bacteria), with the other four eukaryotic (multicell, Protista, Fungi, Plantae, Animalia). All life depends on energy from the sun, with plant life (chloroplasts) getting its energy absorbing red and blue light by two separate photosynthetic reactions that convert atmospheric CO₂ to sugars and emit O₂. Interestingly, the peak output from the sun is green light, less obvious is green plants look green because they just reflect this colour. Animals get their energy, essential vitamins and amino acids by browsing plants or by preying on browsing animals. Humans do not synthesise some key components needed for health (or have lost that ability), including simple organic molecules such as vitamin C (ascorbic acid) as well as many others. Vegans need to vary plant food to get all 8 essential amino acids, beans miss two (tryptophan and methionine) but corn adds them whilst missing two others (isoleucine and lysine).

It would be difficult to do justice to the book in a short article for the Plant Group, but I can include a few "gee-whiz" extracts to whet your appetite. ►

- All genetic code sequences (genome) are made up of 4 amino acids named A (adenine) which pairs with T (thymine) and G (guanine) which pairs with C (cytosine)... really the language of God. In humans, there are typically 100,000 eukaryotic cells per cubic millimetre with each cell having our entire genome (its extended length is 2½m) folded within. Hard to imagine how it all fits.
- Plants have more or less DNA in their genome ranging for example from 0.6m long for oak trees to 100 m long for a fern (*Tmesipteris oblancoolata*) in nearby New Caledonia.
- A single rye plant in one season of 4 months grows 600 km of roots.
- Each of our kidneys have 80 km of plumbing, and our blood vessels stretch to 100,000 km.
- Enzymes for generating body heat release at 38°C are complex. They contain mostly carbon, oxygen and hydrogen with a range of key elements (namely nitrogen, phosphorus, sodium, potassium, calcium, magnesium, sulfur, iron, cobalt, copper, chromium, manganese, nickel, selenium, molybdenum, iodine, chlorine, boron, fluorine, tin, silicon, vanadium, zinc) essential for life.
- Thermodynamics in chemistry have three laws, and as one lists that entropy (disorder or chaos) universally always increases, how did DNA get to near infinite order?
-

The edition was written by Neil Cambell about 33 years ago at about the start of major advances in deciphering the genetic code for life and was a good introduction for me to the extensive detective work up till then on the complexities of the many reaction loops making up living things. The first complete genome for humans took more than 10 years to sequence, but this can now be done in a week with automated apparatus. I'm encouraged to seek out a more recent book and learn about advances likely this century.

Unusual Fungus

Daryl snapped this unusual fungus at Moe South and sent it to me. A quick look on the internet and Wikipedia gave me the following. It is *Clathrus archeri*, commonly known as octopus stinkhorn or devil's fingers. This species was first described in 1980 in a collection from Tasmania. The young fungus erupts from a suberumpent egg by forming into four to seven elongated slender arms initially erect and attached at the top. The arms then unfold to reveal a pinkish-red interior covered with a dark-olive spore-bearing mass. It feeds on rotting organic material and is commonly found in leaf litter or mulch beneath vegetation. In maturity it smells like putrid flesh. It is no surprise then that due to the rotting stench of stinkhorns, there are no common culinary applications. Charming!



Dandenong Ranges Botanic Garden

By Daryl Radnall

Judy and I went for a look around Philip Johnson's Chelsea Garden Show gold medal winning garden, or the recreation of it, in what was the Rhododendron Gardens in Olinda, but is now known as the Dandenong Ranges Botanic Garden. We found lots of good ideas and inspiration if only we had his access to finances.





Coming events of interest

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

5 September 2024 – Wimmera Biodiversity Seminar - Goroke. 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 by Phillip Johnson - 3:30PM. "Connected Through Nature". As part of the ANPSA 2024 Biennial Conference, this session is open to the public, free of charge, at The Round, Nunawading. Phillip Johnson is a Landscape Designer and 2013 Gold and Best in Show winner at the RHS Chelsea Flower Show in London. "*By healing our environment, we heal ourselves at the same time*".

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

19th October, 2024 – APS Ballarat Spring Flower Show, Robert Clark Horticultural Centre, Ballarat Botanical Gardens, Gillies Street, Ballarat. (Next to the Conservatory). 10am to 4pm. Native Plants for Sale.

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

24 to 30 March 2025 – Melbourne International Flower and Garden Show (MIFGS), Carlton Gardens and Royal Exhibition Building. Website: <https://melbflowershow.com.au>.

16 to 24 August 2025 - A focus on banksias - title to be advised. Royal Botanic Gardens Cranbourne. Includes plant sales, plant walks, exhibitions and displays in the auditorium. ►

August 2025 - 15th FJC Rogers Seminar 2025, On Epacridaceae. Date to be confirmed. Hosted by APS Mornington Peninsula in the Mornington Secondary College.

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	172	40	41							422
Brian	Drouin (east)	121	28	14	173	45	50							431
Warren	Yarragon	97	16	15	153	33	52							365
Wayne	Tanjil South	137	25	38	169									369
Peter	Mirboo North													0
Judy	Moe South	100	6	17	265	35	54							477
Mike	Boolarra	89	12	11	137	35	47							329
Mary	Jeeralang Junction	71	15	14	130	18	75							323

<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

Australian Plants Society Latrobe Valley Group Inc.

Notice of Annual General Meeting

Thursday, August 8, 2024, 12:30pm

Traralgon Bowls Club, 50 Liddiard Rd., Traralgon VIC 3844

Agenda

Attendance:

Apologies:

Confirmation of previous AGM Minutes:

Business arising from previous AGM:

Correspondence:

Business arising from Correspondence:

Reports:

Election of Office Bearers:

General Business:

All committee positions become vacant. Please consider whether you can provide assistance in any of the positions; Leader, Deputy Leader, Secretary, Treasurer, Newsletter Editor, Website Officer and Librarian. Nominations for the positions will be received immediately prior to the election for each position. If you are unable to attend the AGM and wish to nominate for a position, please advise the Leader in writing or by email prior to the AGM.