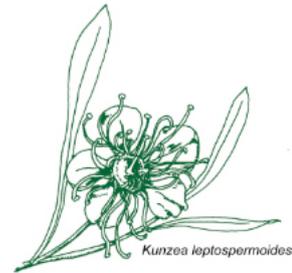




KUNZEA

Australian Plants Society Maroondah
Preservation by Cultivation



April 2020

Hopefully you are by now aware that your APS Maroondah Committee has decided it is prudent to cancel our Friday night member meetings for the time being. We are sorry if we have bombarded you with emails on this subject but think it important to keep you up to date with our decisions.

We had wanted to continue to offer garden visits (but without the afternoon tea which would be usual at the end of the visit), but the tighter restrictions which came into force in late March have made this impossible. Unfortunately, the two exhibitions relating to *Australian Plants Revealed* – at Ringwood Federation Estate and Karwarra Australian Native Botanic Garden – have been closed. The Karwarra Garden has also been closed.

Autumn Plant and Book Sales

The **GOOD** news - Chris Fletcher has let us know that she has plenty of stock and is happy to sell from her home in Yarra Glen. She asks that people ring her before coming, on 0419 331 325.

Also, Sue and Bill are still selling books from home. So, if you want a book, please ring on 9872 3583.

The **BAD** news - unfortunately, the public autumn plant sales (including the APS Yarra Yarra and Geelong sales) have been cancelled due to coronavirus restrictions.

Kunzea Newsletter

We will keep on providing you with a monthly newsletter. There won't be any writeups of speakers, specimen tables or garden visits, but we think it even more important to all keep in touch at the moment.

So rather than just reproduce articles on plants, we would like to fill the newsletters with stories from **you**, especially good news from your gardens. Let's make this a means of 'talking' to each other while we are 'socially distancing'. What have you been doing in your garden while you cannot go out? What is growing well – or badly? Do you have a picture of a plant (include the name), or perhaps a selfie of yourself working in your garden? Maybe you have a question about something. You might be able to write a short article about something that interests you.

Please send items to Sue at aitchguy@gmail.com. If you can't use email, you can write it out and post it to Sue at 13 Conos Ct, Donvale, 3111. Photos should be high resolution and sent separately from text so that they come up well in the newsletter.

Some Special Members of APS Maroondah

Dallas Boulton

I would like to acknowledge some lovely people who helped with the exhibition held at Karwarra.

Jenny and David Williams were absolutely invaluable in setting-up the display and then attending every Friday afternoon to welcome and chat to visitors. They are both artistic and knew just the right places to hang the paintings.

Peter Smith and Diane Hedin used their creative talents to design a children's corner consisting of a quiz where the floral emblem, bird and animal of each State of Australia had to be identified.

Noel and Melva Griffiths spent a day picking bucket loads of banksias and then visited Karwarra twice. The banksias looked fabulous in the entrance.

Lots of people were in awe of the talent of Carlene Gosbell as they looked at her quilt highlighting waratahs and other Australian plants.

You can always rely on Bev Fox to bake and once again she supplied some goodies for the afternoon tea for the opening. Barbara Rooks arrived early and set-up the afternoon tea. Barbara is a "Friend of Karwarra", and that group did such a superb job in hosting the visitors.

Pam Yarra welcomed guests, Nicky Zanen introduced Lawrie Smith to the speakers and Janet Hodgkiss has written an excellent article. Brenda and Tony Moore did some of the jigsaw. Marilyn Bull was set to open her splendid garden on Sunday 29th too.

Thank you to those who attended the opening. It was a very happy event.

There were some special people who helped with the exhibition at Ringwood Federation Estate too. Rodger and Gwen Elliott who were invaluable to Alex Smart, Sue Guymer who handled all the bookings, Peter and Alison Rogers who did gallery duty and Rob Dunlop for also volunteering. Debbie Jerkovic even arranged a raffle.

Both events were very worthwhile (even though they were both cut short) so thanks to everybody who visited and showed to the wider community that Australian Plant enthusiasts are lovely people.

I know others would have liked to help but due to circumstances unable to. If I have missed any helpers – sorry. I believe in these occasions so watch out for future special events! Perhaps YOU could help then.

Exhibition at Ringwood Federation Estate

Sue Guymer

Bill and I were lucky enough to see the *Australian Plants Revealed* exhibition at Ringwood Federation Estate before it was closed early due to Coronavirus restrictions.

The exhibition was subtitled “65,000 years of traditional plant use and 250 years of science”, which really puts the enormity of it into perspective. It was extremely well displayed. Each of the Herbarium Specimens was accompanied by a plate with a photo of the plant, botanical details and plant name and uses for First Nations people.

There were also displays of information and weavings by Auntie Irene Norman, proud Wailwan/Wiradjuri woman and Elder from Mullum Mullum Indigenous Gathering place. These demonstrate the diverse use of native plants by Australia’s First Nations people in everyday life and culture.



It was amazing to see the condition of the Specimens from so long ago. I was particularly surprised to see the colour retained in some of them. For instance, a specimen of *Helichrysum scorpioides* (now called *Coronidium scorpioides*) still have yellow petals in its delicate little flowerheads.

Coronidium scorpioides
Sue Guymer

It was also very interesting to see the “journey” which the names of some plants have undertaken over the years. There are a number of reasons for the changes. In some cases, the material collected was seriously misidentified and hence originally named within the wrong genus or perhaps even family. In recent times, many name changes have arisen through the additional information coming out of DNA analysis, rather than relying only on physical characteristics.

The specimen of *Banksia dentata* shows that it was collected as *Isostylis dentata*, and was called *Sirmullera dentata*, before becoming a banksia.



Banksia dentata
Sue Guymer

To think of the journey these fragile pieces of plant material have endured – collection in the wild, being taken back to the ship from the collection point, and then a very long sea voyage back to Europe. Fortunately, they were then preserved very well for them to still be intact 250 years later!

The Herbarium Specimens were interspersed with fine art prints reproduced from the collection of the National History Museum. For instance, *Epacris longiflora* is a finished watercolour by John Frederick Miller from an original outline drawing by Sydney Parkinson made in 1768-1771.

Now that the exhibition has closed, APS Victoria will donate all the framed images to the Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria. This will enable the Gardens to display the images without risking precious herbarium specimens.



Epacris longiflora

Sue Guymer

Cultivar Project

In 2003 APS Maroondah made a donation of \$5,000 towards a project which involved Michele Adler, Roger Spencer, Burnley Horticultural College students and industry mentors. The purpose was for the students to describe Ornamental Plant Cultivars in Australia (cultivated varieties).

The results were published in “*Australian Horticulture*”. The purpose of the donation was to enable a cultivar website to be published so that people could access the work that had been done over a number of years.

The website was extinguished when the TAFE program shut. But ... Michele has sent us some good news. Her assistant at the time, Jane McMahon, has now found a way to put the results onto PANDORA.

PANDORA, Australia’s Web Archive, was set up by the State Library Victoria in 1996 to enable the archiving and provision of long-term access to online Australian publications. Since then they have been identifying online publications and archiving those that we consider have national significance. The Library has committed to retain the publication in the Archive and to provide public access to it in perpetuity.

Attracting Wildlife to our Gardens

Trevor Blake

On being involved with Cranbourne gardens from when it opened in 2005, I noticed some fascinating changes which reinforced some of the things we naturally do in our native plantings to try to encourage wildlife. The emphasis generally is on bird attraction, but the insect life is absolutely critical to healthy environments.

As Cranbourne was pretty raw in the early stages, I was on the lookout for visitations from any wildlife, apart from the rabbits that were not playing fairly. The Southern Brown Bandicoot was also showing its presence, sometimes annoyingly, but now they are treasured visitors and dwellers.



North end of Escarpment Wall.
Trevor Blake

On following the ephemeral creek down to the natural dam system, which was to be part of Stage 2 of the Australian Garden development, the bridge across the waterway was a must to pause and take in the spillways and fabulous sculptural steel cliffs that boarded the creek. Around the edge of the natural dam, sedges had been planted thickly



Rockpool Waterway.

Trevor Blake

to soften the untouched area. Within a very short time ducks and grebes began setting up home. There were also regular visits from other waterbirds, including a black swan.

At the end of the creek system, which is also the end of the steel cliff sculpture, is a stunning art piece made up of steel tubes of all sizes welded into a sizeable frame – stunning! Almost from the moment it was finished, the spiders moved in – webs were everywhere, then many of the smaller tubes were blocked with clay. Wasps were doing their job parasitising the spiders and laying an egg in the anaesthetised spiders. The next visitors to this living steel wall were the blue wrens and grey fantails who use the webs as a predominant component of their nests.

You create the habitat and the wildlife will follow!

The Art of Log Relocation

The February 2020 edition of Trust for Nature's *Conservation Bulletin* contained this very interesting item.

Logs are essential habitat for small creatures and are breeding grounds for the insects that lizards and other creatures like to eat. If practical, trees or branches are best left where they fall.

If you have a pile of timber on your property think about spreading it out with the following tips in mind:

- put them where there is little other ground cover or bush debris
- put them in areas of revegetation or native habitat where there are few old trees
- put bark and leaves underneath and around logs. This reduces grass from overgrowing the log and rotting material becomes food for insects and animals
- put them in small piles for reptiles to bask and so birds can perch and look out for predators or prey
- for logs or branches with hollows, balance them off the ground. Birds and bats will use hollows that are a metre off the ground.

Grevillea nudiflora

Graeme Nicholls

This was my first experiment with a grafted standard plant. *G. nudiflora* is a prostrate plant that spreads along the ground, but I wanted something to hang down from a 1 m high *G. robusta* that I had.

It now looks good in the garden with cascades of red flowers that hang on for many months.

Unfortunately I later planted a *G. 'Peaches and Cream'* too close to it, and it has overhadowed my standard *G. nudiflora*, but I think it is now too well established to try to move. I will give this matter of placement a bit more thought in future.



Here and There

Grevillea treueriana

Graeme Nicholls

This is a grafted plant about five years old. It is now about 1 m x 1 m, and is probably as big as it gets. The foliage is like sharp needles, great for deterring almost any living creature! It has been without flowers for the past few months, but otherwise it will carry its showy, pendulous red flowers for the rest of the year. This is a stunning plant that needs a prominent position in the garden to show it off.



Kunzea leptospermoides

Michael Cook

It may be of interest to our members that *Kunzea leptospermoides* is the only foliage the swamp wallabies won't eat due to the oils it contains. Because of this, it has become a weed species in the Cranbourne Bushlands.

We volunteers are regularly going on sorties to cut and paste the species. Left unchecked it seriously takes over in the sandbelt habitat.

What is it?

Bruce Schroder

I'm not exactly sure what species this is, but it is a plant from Maureen Schumann which she had labelled as *Wahlenbergia gymnoclada*. I have since obtained a plant of this species from Plants of Tasmania Nursery and it is quite different.

Like *Wahlenbergia stricta* which flowers throughout summer, the plant from Maureen does as well, but it is quite a dense perennial type plant to 50cm tall, not open and wispy like *W. stricta*. The large flowers are 2.5cm across

Unfortunately, the rabbits seem to love my plant and although I have a guard around it, the rabbits control any growth that spreads beyond the limits of the guard. They are also keen on the *Wahlenbergia gloriosa* but don't touch the immediately adjacent *Pelargonium sp.* which continues to happily sucker up with tasty new growth!



Bruce Schroder

The Worm that Turned

Michael Cook

Well! I was tearing up this old pizza box which was littering our street, and putting the pieces into the worm farm which Christine brought to our Friday night meeting over a year ago.

It has been very productive, and the worms love the corrugated cardboard, which is poor quality paper for recycling anyway.



Toilet Paper

Sue Guymer

Andrea Dennis gave us a good tip. Given the current "toilet paper crisis", remember that *Hibiscus heterophyllus* is known by the common name of Toilet Paper Bush. Use this information at your discretion!

Time for a Joke

Alison Rogers

The manager of the garden centre overhears one of his workers talking to a customer: "No, we haven't had any of that in ages," says the employee, "And I don't know when we'll be getting any more."

The customer leaves and the manager walks over to his assistant and gives him a telling off.

"Never tell a customer we can't get them something," he says, "Whatever they want we can always get it on order and deliver it. Do you understand?" The nurseryman nods.

"So what did he want?" asks the manager.

"Rain," replies the worker.

Please help to fill up spaces with bits and pieces of news or activities from you.

Channels for Orchids

Michael Cook

As we have so little growing space in our garden at Botanic Ridge, I looked at our two slimline water tanks which have six welded seams on each tank, necessary to give them structural strength and thought, "I can do something with those hollows".

So I bolted four treated pine upright supports to the tanks' galvanized C-section steel supports. Then I cut regular lawn edging into twelve lengths and painstakingly bolted them together with brackets to form channels to add to the existing hollowed channels. I glued concrete expansion joint material to fill any gaps. The added structure takes up no more space than before.

I used half orchid potting mix as a base in each channel, followed by the same potting mix that Kurunga and Cranbourne Growing Friends use (which I buy in bulk at Dandenong and share with Bob O'Neill) mixed with some perlite.

I am now growing orchids in the channels. Watch this space!



Report from Cranbourne South

Ray Turner

This general shot is taken looking up our drive from near the front gate. The grafted *Grevillea eriostachya* has survived and flowered quite well, especially after Eva pruned it harshly about 3 or 4 years ago. Down at the bottom right is a *Beaufortia sparsa* which has had to put up with a lot over the time, but each year it always manages to put on a good show.



Beaufortia sparsa

I don't know if the delay on the camera is too long or the little birds can't trigger the camera.

The other camera took heaps of photos of bronzing pigeons, rabbits, foxes, the odd dog and one lizard.

Driveway plants



Callistemon Flowering in Autumn

Joe Wilson

Callistemons generally have their peak flowering in spring, often with a lesser flowering in autumn.

We have a *Callistemon sieberi* (also now known as *Melaleuca paludicola*) which has resided by the west end of our house for many years. It treats us to peach-coloured flowers most prolific in spring. However, this year the spring flowering was fairly sparse. But this autumn it has put on its best flowering for some years – both in terms of numbers of flowers and also depth of colour.



We assume that this intensity largely results from its "energy saving" in spring.

Corymbia ficifolia 'Wildfire'

Joe Wilson

How many of us have admired the beautiful so called "Red Flowering Gum". This gum is now a *Corymbia ficifolia*. Corymbias generally have larger fruits than eucalypts with showy terminal flowers arranged in a corymb. There is a wide selection of grafted plants available, so you can select the colour form and size you want.

Corymbia ficifolia is generally a summer flowering tree. But have you noticed that some varieties flower earlier than other? Many have finished their flowering now, whilst others are still flowering, including *Corymbia ficifolia* 'Wildfire'.

Grafting results in a very reliable tree, which makes them more suitable in a large range of soils and environments. Once established they become quite drought-tolerant. They make a good small shade tree and bring wildlife to your garden. *C. 'Wildfire'* is ideal as a street or garden tree. Note that they are very popular in coastal areas. *C. 'Wildfire'* is said to grow 4-6m x 3-4m. I consider it to be the best of the red forms.



Joe Wilson

Flowering at Montrose

Bruce Schroder

'Golden Sunburst'

There isn't much in flower at the moment but this form of *Hibbertia vestita* is at its peak. It never seems to be without one or two flowers dotted throughout the bush.

It is a selected form of the species commercially released a number of years ago with, frustratingly, the original label making no reference at all to the plant's botanical name - it was just marketed as 'Golden Sunburst'. It is a low spreading shrub approximately 30cm tall and about 100cm in diameter. It seems to strike quite readily from firm cuttings and grows well in an open position.



Hibbertia vestita 'Golden Sunburst' Bruce Schroder

Hemiandra pungens

I don't know a lot about this plant – a bushy form of *Hemiandra pungens*. I obtained a couple of tubes from Karwarra Gardens Nursery about 3 years ago and they are establishing well in my garden, now about 30cm tall by 60cm wide.

It looks like it will be a low mounding shrub, unlike the typical forms that have been available for years as flat carpeting ground covers in a couple of leaf forms. The flowers on my shrubby form seem to be larger than the typical ground cover forms as well.



Hemiandra pungens Bruce Schroder

Goodenia macmillanii

Goodenia macmillanii is an unusual species from East Gippsland – unusual in that its flowers are large and pink, not the typical yellow we would expect of a goodenia. I have known of it for many years but it was always one of those difficult to find and rarely available collector's plants. I had one many years ago but it didn't last long in the garden, although I suspect it was drought conditions that did it in! I think it requires a bit of moisture and a cool root run.

That said, plants started becoming commercially available a couple of years ago now, produced initially by Native Plant Wholesalers in Mt Gambier. Perhaps this was a different form to the one I originally grew because this one has gone gangbusters in my garden, suckering over an area of about 2 square metres and still spreading. Flowering branches get about 45cm tall then tend to flop over as they age.

At this point, I tend to cut mine back close to ground level which promotes more new growth. It flowers in late spring and all through summer, and seems to have relished the wetter than normal summer we have had this year. Tubestock plants are regularly available at Karwarra.



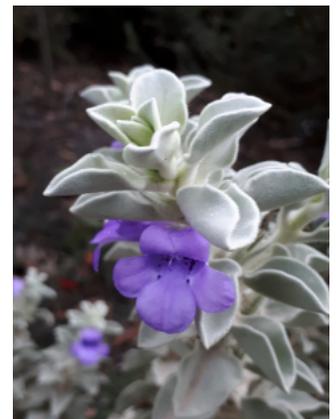
Goodenia macmillanii Bruce Schroder

Eremophila warnesii

This is a small growing species from the arid areas of central western WA, reputedly growing 50cm tall x 75cm wide. Mine is a little taller than this after only 3 years, but perhaps it's a bit more vigorous because it's grafted, although it is certainly not romping away!

It has very furry foliage, which has proven a little problematical with fungal issues in Melbourne's damp, dull winters. To date this has been addressed successfully by simply pruning off the affected branches.

I have not tried grafting it myself but Graeme Nicholls has successfully grafted material from my plant. I strongly recommend growing this one in an open, airy position.



Eremophila warnesii Bruce Schroder

Gardening in the time of Coronavirus

Helen Kennedy

I've just finished reading a novel I really loved called "*Rules for Visiting*", by Jessica Francis Kane. The central character is a gardener, a woman trying to come to terms with her family's past and to reshape her life. Reading it at this particular time of world-wide health alerts has prompted the following random thoughts and observations.....

She says "You can't garden without thinking about the future", and these words really resonate with me as I plant out the last lot of lovely little babies from the Cranbourne Friends Plant Sale. Of course, I will still be around to watch them grow and thrive, despite now being well and truly OBE (you'll work that out if you don't already know its meaning!) – and despite the threat of the new deadly virus.

I count myself lucky to have a (large) garden to work in, especially if I am to be cut off from all the interesting things I normally do in the outside world, thanks to Covid 19. For almost 50 years our garden has been a constant in times of good and bad, an ongoing source of stimulation, pleasure, challenge – and of course frustration, and exhaustion!

As I write, I can count nearly 20 big yellow-crested cockies in our tall trees. They are eating the nuts on the *Angophora costata* and shedding armloads of branchlets in the process. Their beaks are so powerful they can nip off a sizeable branch as well. *The Bursaria spinosa*, aged and gnarled trees, are also covered in clusters of seeds, and the king parrots are feasting on them, knocking plenty of debris onto the drive. And after months of almost no bees in the garden, I see that they are now back in force, gathering nectar from purple plectranthus spikes and elsewhere. So happily it seems that the garden is feeding our critters and they will not go hungry. I, however, rely on a supermarket with increasingly bare shelves.



Cockatoos

The harsh summer just past meant endless leaf drop from our big corymbias – and great plates of bark everywhere. The stringybarks are still shedding their long sheets so there's plenty to rake up. If we didn't, little plants would simply be submerged, and scarce rain would barely penetrate. That's where the exhaustion comes in! But there's real pleasure in seeing paths and plants emerge again. And in uncovering new spaces into which some recently bought little yellow scaevolas will fit perfectly!

A number of other pretty blue-flowered scaevolas are in flower right now, and the velvety white bracts of *Spyridium phlebophyllum* are lighting up the garden. And to my delight, a *Calostemma purpureum* bulb planted in a pot some years ago has finally bloomed, a cluster of pink globes at the end of a long stem. There is always something in flower, whatever the season.



Calostemma purpureum

Lots of time to garden means I'm wearing old – and dirty – clothes for days on end at the moment. Jessica Kane's character recalls a well-known gardener, who "didn't change her clothes because she thought it inappropriate to 'dress down' for the plants". It's a lovely idea, but also too late for me to change the habits of a lifetime – I hope the plants understand! And I wonder who did this gardener's laundry?).

Another quote: "Poetry only exists in a garden if it's tended by the people who live there". I'm not sure that I totally agree with this view, because I have



Spyridium phlebophyllum visited many beautiful gardens over my life which were maintained by outside professionals, but it's true that when I recognise the caring hand of the owner at work, I am always moved, even if it's not a perfectly designed or maintained garden.

Our own garden never fails to move me emotionally – one way or the other! Every window looks out onto it, so we observe all its moods every day, without even going outside. I'm frightened when fierce winds lashing the trees threaten to drop a big branch on the house. I love watching the flights of lorikeets race overhead. Two gang gangs drinking from a waterbowl give me special pleasure. A warm gentle day invariably pulls me outside, seldom to just sit; there is always a weed to remove. I walk around our garden almost every day, noticing the changes, collecting debris, planning what new plants can go where... reading its "poetry"....

So, like many APS Maroondah people, we continue to work in our own space and care for its wellbeing. If we have to stay home for months now, we will never have nothing to do.

Upcoming Events

There are no upcoming events – unfortunately.

While we wait, we need to do all we can to hold together our sense of being a group, rather than becoming isolated from each other. Nobody knows how long this present shut-down will continue so we all need to make an effort to keep in touch as best we can. Telephoning is a great thing to do, or Facetime for those on the internet.

Kunzea magazine is another way we can help each other. In order to keep it going in the absence of the usual regular features, we are totally dependent on **everyone** taking a moment to share something of what they are doing to keep busy and sane! Without your help *Kunzea* will have to shut down too.

Contact Sue Guymer as soon as you can with whatever bits of personal contribution you have. Her email address is aitchguy@gmail.com. Her mailing address is 13 Conos Ct, Donvale 3111. So something for everyone!

We hope to start preparing the next *Kunzea* from 3rd May.

**Meanwhile – Stay home,
Stay safe,
Stay active.**

Marion King on TV

Melissa King has become a presenter on “*Better Homes and Gardens*” which is on Channel 7 at 7pm on Friday nights. Many of you will know that Melissa is the granddaughter of our long-time member Marion King.

In the episode shown on 13th March there was a segment in which Melissa spoke about growing up in Warrandyte, and then they visited Marion at her home.

It was good to see Melissa and Marion doing their bit to promote Australian plants, and let’s hope that there will be more native content on that show in future.

Seed List in March *Growing Australian*

Our eagle-eyed Marilyn Bull has noticed that there is a problem with the Seed List that is in the centre of the *March Growing Australian* which was distributed recently.

There are some species names which are put against the wrong genus (the genus immediately above). For instance, the following entries:

Gompholobium lotifolia, venustum

Goodia sturtianum

Gossypium ‘Candelabra’

These should be:

Gompholobium venustum

Goodia lotifolia

Gossypium sturtianum

Grevillea ‘Candelabra’

So if you are ordering seed, it is recommended to check against another source that you are ordering the right thing.

Australian Plants Society Maroondah Inc.

Postal address: P.O. Box 33, Ringwood 3134

Email: maroondah@apsvic.org.au

Newsletter contributions:

Contributions for the May 2020 Newsletter should be sent to

Sue Guymer at aitchguy@gmail.com no later than

Sunday 3rd May 2020

Maroondah Group website:

australianplantsoc.wix.com/maroondah

APS Vic website:

www.apsvic.org.au



Published by APS Maroondah Inc.

Registration No. A0013122B

Committee

Debbie Jerkovic	President	9885 7276
Bruce Schroder	Vice President	0418 582 924
Peter Rogers	Secretary	9801 6946
Joe Wilson	Treasurer	9812 0209
Jan Nicholls	Membership Secretary	9893 4422
Sue Guymer	Newsletter Editor	9872 3583
Graeme Nicholls	Newsletter production	9893 4422
Bill Aitchison		9872 3583
Alison Rogers		9801 6946
Barry Ellis		0403012109
Dallas Boulton		9729 1538