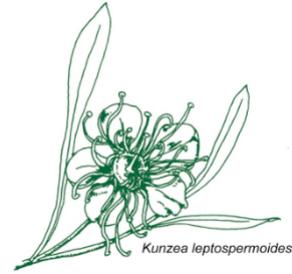




KUNZEA

Australian Plants Society Maroondah
Preservation by Cultivation



May 2020

Newsletter Contributors

Sue Guymer

Our highly-appreciated regular reporters – Diane Hedin (speaker and garden visit writeups) and Bill Aitchison (specimen table writeups) – are having a well-earned rest, while there are no meetings or garden visits to report on.

I am very grateful to those of you who have contributed items for this, and last month's, Kunzea. We need to fill the newsletters with stories from you, especially good news from your gardens. If you don't want to write an article you can still contribute a picture – please include plant name. The more people who contribute, the bigger and more diverse our Kunzea will be.

Please send items to Sue at aitchguy@gmail.com. Photos should be high resolution and sent separately from text (that is, not imbedded) so that Graeme can use them in his layout programme.

Plant and Book Sales

A reminder that Chris Fletcher 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.

A Couple of Queries

Nicky Zanen

Attached is a photo of a *Bulbine bulbosa* which I feel is growing on steroids. The other plants I have in the garden have leaves that are around 8 or 9 inches, but this one has them at about a foot. Maybe I have the wrong name for this one?

The second photo is of banksia cones taken from the same tree. The one of the left looks to have galls. Can anyone explain what has happened?



Bulbine bulbosa ??



banksia cones.

Disappearing House

Michael Cook

I consider planting out a small garden quite magical. Using some structures and murals, but mainly correct height planting, in order to have a good perimeter screen and an open vista in the centre. Aspect is all important. Summer north-west winds have been a challenge but we are getting more protection now from the more mature plantings.

I have used *Viminaria juncea* to allow light to the Lilly Pilly cultivars, which are getting a wriggle on after using white oil and Neem mixture to get rid of a little green leaf chomping bug which has made its way from Queensland unchecked.

Judicious pruning is very important with that useful pole pruner. The hymenosporums and viminarias need regular attention; banksias, *Casuarina glauca* and eucalypts (mainly Mallees) need frequent shaping to make way for the passage of light, and not go disappearing to the sky.

I've still made room for a dry creek bed and ponds to carry water tank overflows as a soak.



Vale Shirley Carn

Nicky Zanen

It is with great sadness that we advise of the passing of one of our most passionate native gardeners, Shirley Carn on the 11th April 2020. She was cared for at home until the end.

She made many firm friends within the native plant fraternity and was well known to our members. It was also likely that members would bump into Shirley at Kuranga Native Nursery.

Shirley opened her gardens on numerous occasions, both for local causes like Oxfam and the CFA and through the Open Garden Schemes. As recently as

November last year Shirley hosted a visit by members of the ANPS Canberra. Cuttings were given out generously and she was quick to hand out tips on growing our trickier native plants.

One of Shirley's favourite plants was the epacris, and she was very careful to protect them. In summer, she would prune back ferns and place the prunings on them to shade them; in winter there would be an odd scarf in her garden to protect them against frost.

We extend our sympathy to Rosemary and Jennifer and the rest of Shirley's family.



Shirley Carn and Angus Stewart

Photo: Gwen Elliot

Gwen and Rodger Elliot took Angus Stewart to visit Shirley in her garden in January 2016. Gwen supplied this photo – very fitting to see the Kangaroo Paw in the background!

There was a lovely tribute in "The Age":

An exceptional Gardener with a passion for Australian native plants. Peace activist, feminist and fearless advocate of human rights for all. A valued and cherished friend of so many.

Our Shirley – a woman who lived her life bravely, with great wisdom and dignity.

Some Gardening Tips from Shirley Carn

Bill, Sue and Deb visited Shirley in 2015 to seek information for the History Book of APS Maroondah covering our first 50 years. During the visit, Shirley gave us these tips from her experience of decades of growing Australian plants:

- If you have heavy clay soils, dig a hole and put some clay breaker at the bottom with pea mulch over the top. Then mix the original soil with potting mix and put the plant in the hole and fill with mixture. This will give the plants a chance to establish the roots before hitting the clay.
- Give a plant two goes, in different spots. If you are still unsuccessful, give up.
- When you stake plants to protect them from wind, use a criss-cross of 2 stakes for support. Shirley only uses ties on eucalypts.
- Put a rock or piece of wood at the base of small plants to give their stems support and protection
- Cut most plants back one third in summer to relieve stress.
- Never walk around the garden without a pair of secateurs in your hand.
- Brachyscomes – cut back to about one inch in summer, put some fertiliser around base, sprinkle with sugar cane to loosely cover plant to protect from summer sun.
- Double *Wahlenbergia stricta* - put them in a flat round pot in autumn, keep the pot in a warm spot and feed it. By summer the plant should have spread, then split and plant out. This method also works with *Wahlenbergia gloriosa*.
- Epacris - make sure they are not in the afternoon sun. They don't like "splendid isolation", so plant with other plants for company. If in sun, cut *E. impressa* back and shade for summer, removing the cover in autumn. Or else you can plant things around them for protection, like grasses or low plants such as *Wahlenbergia communis*, *W. stricta* and brachyscomes.
- Slice a banksia flower into cross-sections and place these discs amongst mulch for decoration and interest.
- Just because you can't swim laps doesn't mean you can't jump in the water.
- Be adventurous.
- Gardens are meant to be shared.

Virus Therapy

Elspeth Jacobs

About a year ago I dismantled my propagation hot house as I decided not to do any more cuttings. They were too much of a tie, and made going away difficult. At least with eucalypt seedlings, it is easier to put them in the car and take them with you.

Then, with the self-isolation, I wasn't going to be going away, and there were many empty spots in the garden that could well do with some more planting.

SO ... time to do some cuttings again!

BUT ... no propagating sand, no mini hothouse, and Bunnings deemed "non-essential" by my daughters. Time to improvise.

I raked up some gravel from the path where it had built up a bit and cleaned it up. To 3 parts of that I added 1 part of peatmoss. Then into pots...but no container!!!

I hunted all around the house...ah..my father's archive box...just perfect (sorry Bardi).

Instead of putting the pots on the upturned lid, I put them in the container, which meant minimal knocking of the cuttings when checking on any dead or mouldy ones. Two other structures from pots and honey containers have been useful too. So far it has proven very effective. Watch this space.



Containers



Inside box

An Apology

Dallas Boulton

In the last Kunzea, I thanked people for helping with the Exhibition held at Karwarra. However, I forgot to mention one very important person – Elspeth Jacobs. Elspeth, please accept my sincere apologies.

At the opening ceremony Elspeth gave each of the speakers a small plant of *Eucalyptus nutans*. These were beautifully presented with an information card attached.

So, thank you Elspeth.

Things to keep in mind ... having enough depth of medium, and that the cuttings are well-drained, and having the container deep enough that cuttings are not hitting the "roof". Also, put the lid on a bit crookedly to allow some air movement.

Motion Detector Cameras

Ray Turner

Our motion detector cameras have taken lots of interesting pictures over the last couple of months.

I mentioned that I thought I had finally got smart and this time put them pointing towards a water source. The camera on the bird bath, that a lot of the small birds use, only caught one bird and that was Eva cleaning and refilling it. (Editor's note: I take no responsibility for this!) I don't know if the other little birds were too small to trigger the camera or what.

Our other camera was pointing towards the concrete ute, and as the tray contained water I was sure it would capture heaps of wildlife having a drink over summer. It ended up taking over 3,500 photos, mostly of pigeons, moving branches and a Jackie Lizard. Most of the pictures are a bit too grainy to reproduce here, but this is a fine one of a bronze-wing pigeon.



Flowering Templetonia

Joe Wilson

My daughter Melinda sent a photo to me from her nature strip garden. It is *Templetonia retusa* (low form) and making such an early display. I was of the impression that templetonias sometimes have a small early flush but the main flush is generally late August, September and October. Other members might like to comment and tell us how their Templetonia plants are performing.

(Editor's note: our low forms of *Templetonia retusa* are now flowering as well, but none of our upright plants.)



Photo: Alan King

... and another

Alison Rogers

Many might grow the regular form of *Templetonia retusa* (Cockies' Tongue), which can grow in a shrub form 1-2 metres in height. This plant usually flowers in Melbourne in late winter or early spring with red, orange or yellow/cream blooms. An attractive addition to any garden. Those of us who have travelled along the South Australian coast and through to Western Australia will have seen them growing quite large in paddocks or bush, but quite small along the weathered limestone coast. These can be readily propagated by seed or cutting.

Over the past few years, a low growing form has been sold in nurseries as *Templetonia retusa* prostrate form. This form flowers slightly earlier which is certainly the case this year. It has a greyish leaf and a slightly paler flower. The form shown in the photos is in full flower at the moment in an Eltham garden. As well as being a beautiful bright spot in the garden, the birds, especially honeyeaters are loving the big open blooms.

Garden Visitors

Diane Hedin

A pair of Gang Gang Cockatoos dropped by my garden in Box Hill. The one in the bush was having a drink from the birdbath. I was so excited to see them here.



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