



KUNZEA

Australian Plants Society Maroondah
Preservation by Cultivation



June 2020

A Message from the President

Debbie Jerkovic

It has been several months since we have been able to meet, and there is no sign of when we will be able to in the future. I don't know about you, but this has provided a wonderful opportunity to get stuck into some gardening, especially given the great weather we have been having.

Our Committee recently met via Zoom (which was challenging and fun), and discussed various things including how to best support our membership. Something which many of us have been missing is access to Chris Fletcher's plants at our monthly meetings. This sparked discussion about how best to support various growers, and it was decided to circulate several plant lists (reproduced later in this newsletter).

If there are any plants on Phil's list which interest you, please contact Phil direct on 0412 632 767 or vaughans.plants@jollymac.com.au to discuss ordering and payment. Phil will then deliver the plants to my home in Glen Iris on a designated day, where you

will be welcome to come and collect your orders. I would be happy to show you around my garden and provide tea and coffee, but will have to insist that we maintain social distancing at all times.

Chris Fletcher is nowhere near as far away as Phil, so members are asked to contact Chris on 0419 331 325 to discuss availability of various plants. Once their orders are placed, members are invited to collect their plants from Chris's nursery in Yarra Glen.

Another idea was to encourage members to contact APS Yarra Yarra (Miriam Ford on 0409 600 644) regarding any plants remaining from their recent online sale. Barry Ellis was advised that there are still a lot of prostantheras and some westringias available which might appeal to our Mint Bush aficionados.

We hope that this provides you with some options for the coming months. I have always found this time of year to be ideal for planting as the ground isn't too cold yet, and plants can get settled before spring.

Joe's Corymbia Quiz

Joe Wilson

My quiz is just a short one of 5 questions on the subject of corymbia species. Note that Corymbia is now accepted as a separate genus from Eucalyptus.

1. Corymbias occur mostly in what state of Australia?
2. *Corymbia eximia* is a Yellow Bloodwood. In what state of Australia does it occur naturally?
3. There are 4 main groups of corymbia. What are they?
4. Of the 4 main groups of corymbia do you know how many of each group occur?
5. Which corymbia species drops its seed quickly after maturation, and is partially or completely deciduous in the dry season?

The answers are on page 12 of this newsletter. We suggest that you do not look at these or look up any other information sources until you have had a go.

Early Flowering

Ray Turner

I think our *Bossiaea walkeri* is a little confused. Shouldn't it be flowering in spring? Anyway, it takes a nice photo.

Also, both our *Leptosema aphyllum* and *Astroloma foliosum* are in flower at the moment.



Astroloma foliosum



Bossiaea walkeri

APS Maroondah is Helping East Gippsland

Debbie Jerkovic

Last year Phil Vaughan kindly donated grafted plants from his amazing collection for us to raffle to raise funds for drought relief. That seems like an age ago. Since then, our State has been ravaged by fires and now a pandemic. Many of us in the city are finding it hard, but just think of those in rural areas.

The Committee was tasked with determining what to do with the \$2,000 raised, and by the end of the year we had decided to give it to Blaze Aid. We decided to wait until the fires were finished to establish the worst affected area, and by the time that happened Covid-19 was upon all of us.

Blaze Aid was forced to suspend operations temporarily, and with this money burning a hole in our pocket, I reached out to the President of APS East Gippsland, Cliff Ireland. I asked him how we could help, and he came back to us with a proposal we couldn't resist. We are proud to announce that we have given \$1,000 to Cliff and his Group to help with their work in the region.

Cliff has kindly written an article for our newsletter to explain what this money will be used for, and to thank our Group. I am proud to say that we have made a difference given the magnitude of the drought, fires and now forced isolation. These are terrible times for many in our State, and it is wonderful that we were able to reach out to fellow Australian plant enthusiasts.

Cliff and his team are facing incredible hurdles, and if any of our members can think of things we can do to help please reach out to any member of the Committee with your suggestions.

This is what Cliff wrote:

The East Gippsland area has recently experienced the heart-breaking triple whammy of drought, fire and now the Covid Pandemic. East Gippsland has been suffering through a drought which affected community and environment. It was reported that farmers would lose up to 70% of their income and then the affect flow onto community. Economists suggest that the East Gippsland Shire will be the most financially impacted in the nation, with a decrease of approximately 23% of the GDP.

The fires have had a significant impact on the natural environment, property and on individual gardens throughout the area. The scale of the fires in the East Gippsland Shire is displayed in the map below.

"If you don't need to be in East Gippsland tomorrow, I suggest that you leave — and the Omeo community, I suggest that you leave now." (Premier Dan Andrews). These types of comments were heard on a regular basis over summer. Constantly hearing these type messages and suffering through the dense acrid bushfire smoke played out both in a physical and a mental sense on most Gippslanders in one way or another.

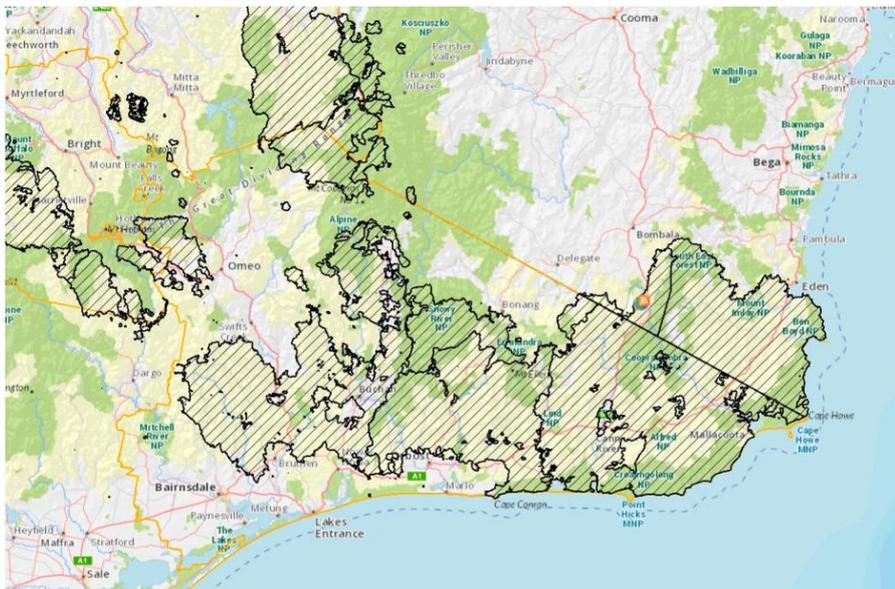
Not only have many people lost their homes, there are significant number of other people who have lost their gardens. The recovery process for locals in Gippsland will be long term. Many are still waiting for their properties to be cleared before they can plan and then look to rebuild, while others are starting the rebuilding and starting the replanting of gardens.

APS East Gippsland has been working with the Lakes Entrance Garden Club on ways to help people who have been impacted by the fires. Currently the two organisations are working together to provide screening and wind break plants to community members. One of our local Native Plant Wholesale Nursery owners (and a member of the APS East Gippsland) has donated tube stock for potting up. The two organisations have so far potted up approximately 2,500 plants. About 1,500 of these have been distributed to the community. Our goal for the next 12 months is another 5,000 plants.

Although the tube stock has been donated, the organisations are buying the potting mix, pots, tags, plastics carry trays and fertiliser. Into the future we are looking at out-sourcing (and paying for) the propagating of plants that we are not able to obtain through donations; this would have the two-fold benefit of a source of income to some of our local native plant nurseries who have suffered severely through the drought and to increase the diversity of plants.

Another option that the East Gippsland Australian Native Plant Society and the Lakes Entrance Garden Club is looking into is providing vouchers to three local retail native nurseries. This would enable community members the opportunity to select smaller garden and other landscape plants, as well as supporting the nurseries.

The current and future plants are being distributed by the Community Recovery Committees (there are approximately ten committees across the East Gippsland Shire). Although current demand for plants has not been great so far, due to a significant number of people still getting to the basics of cleaning up their properties and working out how to or if they want to rebuild. We, however, are expecting the demand to increase over time.



This project has and will help pull the community together and provide a whole range of benefits. The mental wellbeing of working with nature through potting up and planting out of Australian plants, although small there will be some financial relief. During the lock down period it has provided therapy of potting up in the safety of their own homes, now there appears to be opportunity for small numbers of our club members to get together (social distancing) in small numbers for catching and sharing stories.

The support provided by APS Maroondah will enable the APS East Gippsland to continue this great work and make it possible to provide more plants and more options for support to the East Gippsland community. The APS East Gippsland is intensely grateful to APS Maroondah for



East Gippsland plants.

their support. We will continue to provide updates as we progress the projects.

And when the COVID19 restrictions are lifted we look forward to welcoming you to the East Gippsland area.

Phil Vaughan Grafted Plant List

(\$25 each - contact Phil on 0412 632 767 or vaughans.plants@jollymac.com.au)

Grevillea albiflora, *asparagoides*, *asparagoides x treueriana* (Flaming Beauty), *armigera x hookeriana*, *baxteri* (orange; yellow will be available soon), *biformis* ssp *cymbiformis*, 'Billy Bonkers', *bipinnatifida* 'Boystown', *bipinnatifida* 'Boystown' (prostrate red new growth), Bigfoot, *bracteosa*, *petrophiloides* white, *plurijuga* (blue leaf), *pimelioides*, *pterosperma* WA, *pterosperma* VIC, *quercifolia*, *rudis*, *stenomera*, *stenomera* low PBR, *striata*, *suberba*, *thyrsoides* ssp *thyrsoides*, *thyrsoides* ssp *pustulata*, 'Wendy Sunshine', *zygoloba* 'Pink Ice'

Hakea bucculenta, *bucculenta x francisiana*, *erecta*, *francisiana*, *francisiana* Pomonal Pink, *francisiana* (also known as *coriacea*) pink and white, *grammatophylla*, *grammatophylla x Rosie*, *multilineata*, *multilineata* claret and cream, *victoria*

Boronia heterophylla pink, *heterophylla* white, *heterophylla* 'Lipstick', *megastigma* brown, *megastigma* *lutea* (yellow), *megastigma* 'Jack McGuire's Red', *purdieana*, *serrulata x 'Aussie Rose'*

Darwinia collina, *leiostyla x 'Coolamon Pink'*, *macrostegia*, *macrostegia x Stripey*, *meeboldii*, *meeboldii X Crimson Skirt*, *oxylepis*

Diplolaena angustifolia (grey leaf, orange flower, from Jurien Bay), *angustifolia* (red flowers), *angustifolia* (yellow flower), *grandiflora* (grey leaf, dwarf), *grandiflora* (grey leaf, low form), *mollis*

Geleznovia verrucosa 5 forms:

No. 1 1.2 X 1m Cut flower

No. 2 Large bright yellow

No. 3 Compact large yellow flowers

No. 4 Yellow aging to red

No. 5 Compact small flower

Hemiandra gardneri (pink), *gardneri* (red), *linearis* (green leaf), *linearis* (grey leaf)

Hemigenia macrantha, sp W.A (prolific mauve flowers), *sericea*

Pileanthus vernicosus

Prostanthera magnifica, *eckersleyana*

Verticordia albida (white flowers), *bifimbriata* (pink flowers), *chrysostachys* ssp *chrysostachys*, *chrysostachys* ssp *palida*, *dichroma* ssp *syntoma*, *dichroma* ssp *dichroma*, *dichroma* ssp *dichroma* (orange flowers), *etheliana*, *grandis*, *lepidophylla*, *lindleyi* ssp *lindleyi*, *lindleyi* ssp *purpurea*, *mirabilis*, *mittelliana*, *monodelpha* var *calitricha*, *muelleriana*, *ovalifolia*, *pennigera*, *serotina*, *serrata*, *tumida*, *venusta*, 'Wemms Find'

Swainsona formosa

Corymbia ficifolia selections 'Blood Orange', 'Burnt Orange', 'Crimson Blaze', dwarf red, 'Magenta', 'redder than red', 'Salmon Mousse' bicolor - cream ageing to salmon/orange, 'Wildfire', 'Summertime' - compact red

Correa reflexa "fat bastard", *reflexa* "long fellow", hybrid "Big Pink Flowers!!"

Phebalium nottii deep pink flowers, *stenophyllum*, *whitei*

Eremophila glabra 'Silver Flame' PBR, *cuneifolia* small leaf, *cuneifolia* large leaf, *cuneifolia x fraseri*, *foliosissima*, *puniceum* pink, *glandulifera*, *rotundifolia*, *delisseri*, *lachnocalyx*, *phyllopoda*, *warnesii*, *muelleriana*, *platycalyx*, *flaccida*, *conferta*, *abietina*, *mirabilis*, *bowmannii* compact, *calorhabdos*

Plant of the Month

Diplolaena grandiflora

Bruce Schroder

Diplolaena grandiflora is one of approximately 15 species in this Western Australian genus and is recognised as having the largest “flowers” of the genus. Interestingly, there were only 6 species recognised when Volume 3 of the “Encyclopaedia of Australian Plants” (Elliot & Jones) was published in 1984. Diplolaenas are in the Rutaceae family along with the more familiar *Correas*, *Phebaliums*, *Boronias*, *Philothecas* and numerous other genera.

In my early years of collecting and growing Australian plants, members of this genus were much revered, and although considered relatively easy to propagate from cuttings (although susceptible to *Botrytis* mould), were always considered to be very difficult to grow in the eastern states, needing a very open sunny position and excellent drainage. For most of us they were classified as “drop dead” plants, along with a vast number of the collections from the west! Only a few species were ever available, and then only rarely and often incorrectly identified. *Diplolaena grandiflora* was simply not grown. The 1975 *Austraflo* catalogue lists one diplolaena – an unnamed species with “pendant red flowers, comprised of stamens bunched together.” This was possibly *Diplolaena dampieri*, as this was one of the earliest species brought across from the west.

In the mid 1980s, when working weekends at *Austraflo*, we occasionally received deliveries of rare and unusual plants from Pam and David Shiells of Wakiti Nursery in northern Victoria. These were of course destined for the Collector’s Corner bench, and that was the first time I ever saw *Diplolaena grandiflora*. Needless to say, one found its way into my garden, but not for long!

Diplolaena grandiflora is now more readily available as a grafted plant (grafting natives was never even heard of in those early days), grafted onto very hardy *Correa glabra* rootstock. I have two different forms in my Montrose garden, both grafted and now probably close to 15 years old. Each of these, the green elliptic leaf form and the grey oval leaf form, is about 1.5 x 1.5 metres, facing north and flowering for a very long period from autumn through to spring.

Although I am a stickler for regular tip pruning to promote a denser plant and more flowers, they have become a bit leggy in what I would consider their twilight years, and unfortunately don’t appear to respond well to hard cutting back into bare wood. Certainly, the key is to keep them in an open position, uncompromised by surrounding shrubs or overhead canopy, not like I do! In their natural near coast habitat from Geraldton north to Shark Bay and a couple of records in Cape Range National Park near Exmouth, the species grows in open shrublands in coastal dune sands and limestone, where shade is not an option!

The green leaf form tends to have more open reddish inflorescences, whereas the grey leaf form tends to have more pendulous inflorescences of more orange hues. Contrasting delightfully with the rounder grey leaves, it seems to have become the more readily available of the two and is now marketed under the Boutique Natives range of plants developed by Vaughan’s Australian Plants. Vaughan’s also sell a couple of smaller growing grey leaf forms which I have not tried. The best form to grow? Personal choice I suspect, but I couldn’t decide so I bought both that were available at the time!



Bruce Schroder

Diplolaena grandiflora green foliage



Bruce Schroder

Diplolaena grandiflora grey foliage

Melton Botanic Gardens Hakeas List

(supertubes at \$5 each or 5 for \$20 - contact David Pye on 0417 289 369 or apsmeltonbacchus@gmail.com)

Hakea bucculenta, constablei, cristata, erecta, hookeriana, incrassata, multilneata, nodosa, obliqua, obtusa, pritzelii, pycnoneura, rostrata, trifurcata, undulata

Chris Fletcher's Current Autumn Plant List 2020

(tube \$3, 6 inch pot \$7 - contact Chris on 0419 331 325, delivery may be possible)

Actinotus helianthii

Acacia assimilis, glaucoptera, howittii prostrate,
farinosa, maxwellii, merinthophora, restiacea, rupicola,
sessilispica, williamsonii

Adenanthos obovatum

Boronia crenulata, megastigma 'Lutea'

Bossiaea preissii, ornata

Bauera sessiliflora

Chrysocephalum apiculatum, ramosissimum

Correa reflexa (assorted)

Cryptandra scortechinii

Crowea exalata x saligna

Chorizema cordatum, diversifolia

Dampiera dysantha, linearis, heterophylla, trigona

Dodonea filifolia, lapantha, sinualata

Eutaxia cuneata, obovatum, microphylla (shrub)

Eriostemon nudiflora

Eremophila brevifolia, complanata, decipiens, lehmanii,
maculata, veneta x maculata

Grevillea baueri, endlicheriana, 'Forest Rambler', 'Gold
Rush', 'Pryors Hybrid', *juniperina* (yellow and red),
lanigera 'Mt Tamboritha', *lanigera x alpina*, 'Jelly Baby',
sericea, linearifolia prostrate

Goodenia amplexicaulis, macmillanii, pusilla

Hardenbergia violacea pink, white and purple

Helipterum anthemoides double

Hibbertia fascicularis, grossularia, obtusifolia,
penduncularis large flowers, *racemosa*

Hovea elliptica, acutifolia

Isotoma fluviatilis

Jacksonia scoparia

Kennedia eximea, coccinea, microphylla, prorepens

Kunzea micromera, preissiana

Lechenaultia biloba

Leptospermum brevipes

Lambertia formosa, inermis, multiflorus, uniflora

Myoporum floribundum

Olearia phlogopappa, minor, homelepis, tomentosa

Pimelea sylvestris

Phebalium glandulosum

Prostanthera baxteri, denticulata, incisa, aspalathoides,
staurophylla

Rulingia hermannifolia

Scaevola aemula, crassifolia, 'Mauve Clusters',
ramosissima, depauperata

Spyridium obcordatum, vexiliferum fine leaf,
parvifolium

Thryptomene saxicola, denticulata

Templetonia retusa

Veronica arenaria, perfoliata mauve and white

Wahlenbergia stricta double, *gloriosa*

Westringia ericola, glabra

Xerochrysum viscosum

Lilies/Grasses:

Blue *Themeda triandra*, blue *Poa sieberiana*

Libertia paniculata

Patersonia fragilis

Thelionema caespitosum

From Barry Ellis' Garden

Barry provided the following photos of some of his plants. His *Banksia ericifolia* has 15 flower candles!



Banksia ericifolia squat



Banksia spinulosa squat.



Correa pink long john

A Yellow Waratah? - Part 1

Bruce Schroder

For our October 2020 meeting the committee was trying to get Brian Fitzpatrick to present to us on waratahs and their hybrids. Brian originally worked for Proteaflora and was involved in the development of the Shady Lady series of waratah hybrids. Independently, Brian later developed the Wild Brumby series of waratah hybrids including Digger, Mallee Boy, Sugar Plum, Dreaming, Snow Maiden and Georgie Girl. Unfortunately, we have been unable to secure our speaker so I thought it would be worthwhile including some interesting history on the subject in our newsletter. Much of this article is attributable to the late Marcus Harvey, a renowned plantsman from Tasmania and proprietor of Hillview Rare Plants.

Waratahs are red – everyone knows that! Apart from the acacias, the New South Wales Waratah, *Telopea speciosissima*, is probably Australia's most iconic flower. It is the floral emblem of NSW and much sought and sold as a cut flower in early spring. It can be a little demanding when grown in the home garden but given the right conditions and regular attention, can be an extremely rewarding garden subject. But there are other waratahs, in fact there are four more species, all red flowering, occurring in the eastern states of Australia. These include *Telopea mongaensis* and *T. aspera* from NSW, *T. oreades* from Victoria and *T. truncata* from Tasmania.

Now I did say all waratahs were red and I'm sure you've already picked up on that mistake – yes, there is a naturally occurring rare white form of the NSW Waratah with the cultivar name of 'Wirrimbirra White'. White flower forms of otherwise coloured flowers are not that uncommon in the plant world, being a simple genetic mutation where the pigment that gives the flower its colour is simply absent, leaving the flower white. There is also a rare white form of *Telopea oreades* discovered many years ago from far East Gippsland, given the cultivar name of 'Errinundra White', although all indications are that this is now lost to cultivation. But

a yellow waratah? Let me (well Marcus Harvey actually) tell you about Essie Huxley.

Essie Huxley never wanted the limelight. In fact, she steadfastly hid from it in her youth in the 1920s and 1930s at her home south west of Hobart. But all that changed with a few simple plants given as a fatherly gift to a daughter. With that, the botanical world came to her. It brought her a life different to what she might have expected and most importantly it brought her joy and friendships that endured. Essie's father was a bushman. He worked on farms and in the forest, snared, trapped and kept beehives. Even on his days off, he'd take to the mountains nearby and ramble all day long, perhaps to shed the taint of working life and, for a time, be free. From one such trip he returned with a handful of waratah seedlings in his pack and, when handing over to Essie, said that if she looked after them he was sure they'd bring her luck.

The Tasmanian Waratah, *Telopea truncata*, with its rather spidery flowers, is considered the poor relation to its more showy mainland relations, but is much loved for its own quiet elegance and fragile, delicate beauty. It lives in high country, in areas of higher rainfall, usually on sandstones, and flowers in very late spring through early summer. Its flowers are uniformly scarlet to darkish red. They were commonplace on higher ground in the area so Essie was puzzled by his portent, but she indulged him and said nothing. Dads say that sort of thing. These seedlings were duly planted around the family holding and as they grew she noticed one of them coloured differently. Weak maybe? A runt? Diseased? It almost met its end before it began! But Essie, as in life, gave everyone the benefit of the doubt.

"The big ones flowered first, rude vigor showing through. Their flowers a ruby hue, and huge too, like the head dress on a cockatoo. The next couple of years it was a procession of red, and the little runt kept on holding back. Then unannounced, a bud began to form, and it looked like nothing that had gone before. It was pale and sickly, not the usual darkening crown. It opened a cool creamy green, then turned, a bright yellow chrome!"

Yellow waratahs were the stuff of legends and the subject of campfire yarns and academic debate. There'd always been stories, someone knew someone who saw



Telopea speciosissima



Telopea 'Wirrimbirra White'

one near the Overland track, but like the Tassie Tiger, the real thing always stayed just out of reach, hovering like a mirage, that is until this one made a show.

After a bit of local interest, everything went back to pretty much the way it was, but Essie's interest was piqued. She could no longer ask her father where he found it, and why he thought it special enough to bring home, for he had died before the waratah had flowered. But she figured that he had seen a yellow one on that ramble and gathered some of the small seedlings from around its skirts.

So it began as a quest, a search for the father's lost waratah, to solve the puzzle he had left her. For the next few years, each early summer, she'd search the broken ridges and the damp gullies along the Wellington Range looking for that flash of colour among the reds.

At first she tramped the bush tracks and kept to well-worn paths but as her pace quickened, she left these well behind and plunged headlong into the unknown. She slid backside down the rumbly screes, climbed hand over hand through boobialla and ran the mossy banks and while she found no trace of that waratah, she drank in all she saw and all she heard.

She delighted in the fat, squat beads of Climbing Blueberry (*Billardiera longiflora*), threading through the understory and saw the skeins of ice-white Snowy Gentian (*Gentiana* sp), high up upon the plateau's outer rim. As summer quickened, the flames of Honey Richeas (*Richea scoparia*) blaze right across the moors and there's an upwards rush of Christmas Bells (*Blandfordia punicea*) that bring Christmas to the fore. She heard the raucous "Gotto Gos" of the big Black Currawongs, as they stripped Red Rubies (*Cyathodes* sp) from the mountain sides, and the slow whoop, whoop, of cockatoos alighting in the scrub, and the crunch of their great beaks, as they pulled at it for grubs. She stood and watched the moonstone bark of snow gums, slowly kissed by light, as the sun rose meekly on a hoar frost overnight. And this and more she saw, until she knew the bush as her own, and she was one with it and it had helped to make her grow.

One day, a woman arrived, unannounced, and introduced herself as Dr. Curtis from the university in town. She explained that she was producing a work on Tasmanian endemic flora and that the word had got to her of Essie's plant. She asked if she might perhaps describe it so it could be included in the latest volume, which was already set to go to print. The woman was indeed Dr

Winifred Curtis and she had teamed up with the acclaimed Australian artist Margaret Stones, who was then working from Kew Gardens, to undertake this ambitious project, known as "The Endemic Flora of Tasmania" (published 1967-1978). It was conceived and sponsored by Lord Talbot de Malahide, an Irish peer and hereditary baron.

Lord Talbot was an avid collector and gardener who cultivated many Tasmanian plants on his estate in Ireland. Margaret Stones was based at Kew and used fresh flowering and fruiting material. Some of this material came from Talbot's own estate but much of it was flown in from Tasmania. As the stream of air-freighted specimens continued, Stones created 254 drawings to illustrate the six volume work. Sadly, Lord Talbot died when only four of the volumes were completed and the work was seen to its completion by his sister, the Hon Rose Talbot. "The Endemic Flora of Tasmania" proved to be a great success, and increased interest in and knowledge of Tasmania's endemic plants all around the world.

Essie's Waratah was one of those that made the 50 hour flight from Hobart's Llanherne airport to Wisley; its delicately crimped, spidery flowers probably wrapped in a veil of life supporting sphagnum moss. As an aside, this could never happen today given the alarming "fandango" of biosecurity rules, regulations that have sprouted up ad infinitum in a world largely run by lawyers and bureaucrats. (Marcus Harvey's words, not mine!)

It was one of those crazy, wonderful moments in botanical research when all the pieces fell into place. A rare legendary colour form turns up out of nowhere in a rural backyard, no need for epic treks or years of chasing, just in time to be included as a star, next to its ordinary brethren, in a volume that was virtually on the press I can't imagine what Margaret Stones must have felt when she unveiled that flower for the very first time.

Essie had not counted on visitors, but came they did, from right across the world, they beat a path to her door, academics, researchers, nurserymen, the curious and the shysters. Some came in person, others via letters dropped through the slot in the front door. Some of them bore gifts, others promises and a few, bizarre propositions that belonged back in the day of freak shows and midgets. Sir Harold Hillier, one of the giants of modern day horticulture and owner of the most important nurseries in the United Kingdom, made the journey down to her little stony block on Camp Hill, south west of Hobart. Over the ensuing years they ⇨



Telopea truncata yellow.



Telopea truncata red close up.

Ken Gillanders

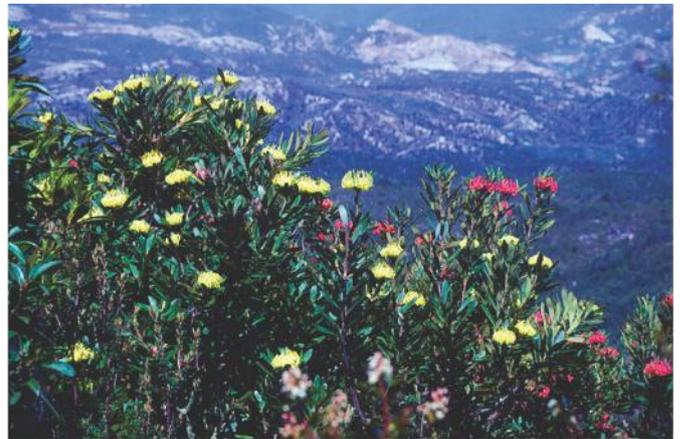
Maria Hitchcock

exchanged seeds and plant material and while Essie's garden was greatly enhanced by this, adding a slew of rock-hugging, flower-studded daphnes, rare pieris and rhododendrons, Hilliers never did list a single yellow waratah on their nursery catalogues!

Like many of her generation, Essie was a royalist and an inveterate "royal watcher" so you can imagine her absolute delight when she was told that her waratah was to be used in part of Tasmania's official wedding present to HRH Crown Princess Mary of Denmark. Its image was used to decorate one of a series of six fine porcelain plates, collectively called, Flora Tasmania. This came to fruition through an artistic collaboration between Lauren Black who painted the images (and who Essie knew from past visits to her garden) and the master ceramicist, Les Blakebrough, who created the plates. They were presented to Mary when she opened their joint exhibition in the Plimsol Gallery at the University of Tasmania. Essie was officially invited, she curtsied before the Princess, got to have a few words and to take home one of the special plates with her waratah on it, as a memento of this very special occasion.

Not bad for a girl who started out wanting to hide away from the world but it wasn't going to be. Fate had other plans and beat a path to her door. Long before all this, Essie had named her little place at Camp Hill in Lower Longley, "Telopea", the taxonomic name for the waratah, meaning "to be noticed from afar".

Part 2 of this article will appear in next month's "Kunzea".



Telopea truncata yellow in the wild.

Ken Gillanders



Telopea truncata red in the wild

Ken Gillanders

What's Doing This?

Debbie Jerkovic

This is a shout out for help. Could someone tell me what is eating my flowers?

I have two forms of *Corymbia ficifolia* – 'Summer Beauty' in the front garden and 'Summer Red' in the back garden. I don't have any problems with 'Summer Beauty', other than it is flowering now (not summer).

'Summer Red', on the other hand, has its flower buds eaten each year by something unknown. At first I thought it was possums, but now I am not so sure. Can this damage be done by birds pecking at the flower buds before they open? This doesn't happen to the one in the front garden, but that is in a very open spot near our front steps.

The photo below shows you open flowers, old flowers and the damaged buds. They are all together on the same branch.

The damaged buds have never formed properly. They are open at the top and hollow inside. Roughly 90% of the buds on this plant are damaged in this way, with very few actually fully developing.

I have contemplated sitting in the back garden with an air rifle, but I think the neighbours might complain. Just once I would love to see this plant in full bloom. Nature is great, but it does have its way of throwing up challenges!



Damaged Buds



Buds and Flowers

Three Plants in our Garden

Bill Aitchison

Myoporum bateae

Sue and I have recently been observing small seedlings of *M. bateae* appearing underneath a plant in our garden. Coincidentally, we recently received an email from a friend who lives in Canberra and who has a small tree of this species in her garden. She advised that she had observed numerous seedlings under her tree, as well as in a lot of other places in her garden. Earlier this year, her property came under threat from bushfires approaching Canberra, and whilst her property was saved, it was subject to a lot of smoke over an extended period. She understands that *M. bateae* reproduces readily after fire, and she believes now that smoke has played a role in the reproduction in her garden. Because the seedlings have appeared in other places in her garden, she assumes that birds have eaten the small fruit and spread the seeds.

Our friend has also noted that both *M. bateae* and the closely related *M. floribundum* have a strong smell, especially with rain, and one smells like salt and vinegar chips. I can't say that I get much of a smell from our *M. bateae*, but I note that Bob Chinnock, in his book "Eremophila and Allied Genera" states:

"*Myoporum floribundum* and the very closely related *M. bateae* both have strongly scented foliage but the odours are very different. *M. bateae* has a sweetly smelling odour while *M. floribundum* has an unpleasant feline one. In both cases the odour is especially strong following rain."

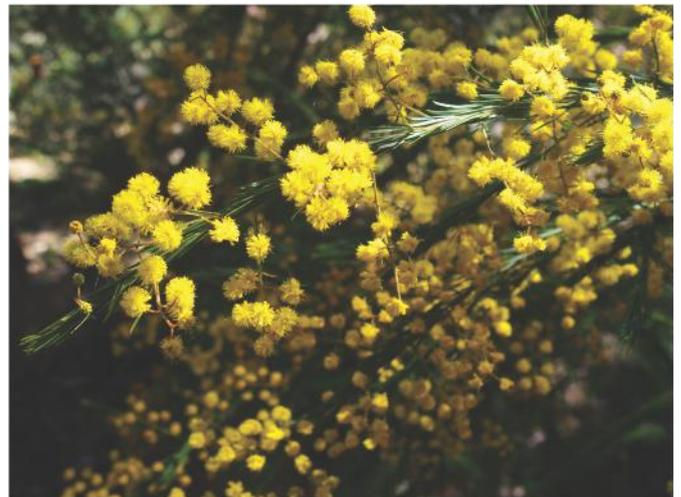
Veronica arenaria

This is a plant that Sue and I are fond of and have a number dotted around our garden. It is a small shrub that is perfect for growing on the edges of paths. It has attractive green foliage and violet blue flowers for many months each year. We recently learned that we are not the only ones who find the plant attractive. We had another visit from a family of satin bowerbirds - mum, dad and 2 or 3 juveniles. (The previous visit from mum and one juvenile was reported in February's *Kunzea*). On looking at one of the photos of the male, we noted that he had some blue veronica flowers in his mouth. We also found a small piece of blue tubing in the garden, maybe a present from the bowerbirds.

Acacia gittinsii

The Blackdown Tableland is located in central Queensland about 180km west of Rockhampton. It is described as being a cool oasis rising abruptly above the surrounding plains. There are a number of plant species endemic to this area, and one of these is *Acacia gittinsii*, a plant described in "Flora of Australia" as being a graceful shrub 1-2m tall. When Volume 2 of the "Encyclopaedia of Australian Plants" was published in 1982, it was noted then that this species was "not known in cultivation". There are now some plants in cultivation in various gardens, including one at Maranoa Gardens (and we have some very small babies in our own garden). The plant at Maranoa is now about 4 years old and has been quite fast-growing, now about 2m tall and has flowered with masses of bright yellow globular flower heads in spring.

Seed of this species is readily available commercially, and the seed I have has germinated very readily, as a result of which I now have more plants in tubes than we can find a spot for in our garden. If you would like to try one of these spare plants in your garden, let me know. Because the species hasn't been cultivated much, there is probably still more to learn about how well it adapts to being grown in gardens.



Acacia gittinsii

Bill Aitchison



Male Satin Bowerbird with veronica.

Bill Aitchison



Graeme Nicholls

Myoporum bateae.

Growing Trees

Bryan Pardon

In the last edition of the *Kunzea*, Elspeth Jacobs' article about dismantling of the propagation setup and the reasons why, have prompted me to send you this item about my recent experiences. I also wondered about the commitment to growing plants after I lost a number of seedlings while away overnight when it was hotter than expected. I have continued, however, and have a large number of plants waiting for the spring weather.

I have a very basic set up for propagating plants and raising seedlings. My equipment consists of a couple of polystyrene boxes with clear plastic covers, and shade cloth when required.

Over the last five years or so I have been growing trees and native plants for our daughter Kate and her husband Trevor to add to those they have already planted. Their property is in Shelbourne, which is near Bendigo on the road to Maryborough. The trees help to create wind breaks and habitat, and the smaller plants go into the home garden.

Central Victoria can be hot and dry in the summer and cold and frosty in the winter, so it provides a challenge to get plants established. Planting times normally revolve around avoiding the frosts and the drier months. Planting is usually best done in autumn and then after the frosts while the ground is still wet in spring. The property of 24 acres is on tank water, and there is a limited amount of dam water for the trees.



Windbreak at Shelbourne.

Originally I tried growing *Eucalyptus microcarpa* (Grey Box), *E. sideroxylon* (Red Iron Bark) and *E. melliodora* (Yellow Box) from seed. I found out later that *E. microcarpa* seeds need 25°C constant temperature to germinate. The other seeds did well and most were eventually planted out. Since then we have planted other species including, *E. citriodora*, *E. nicholii*, *E. maculata* (Spotted Gum) as well as *Acacia implexa* (Lightwood) and *A. retinodes* (Wirilda), both of which do very well in this location. This year I have grown about 150 trees from seeds collected from the original plantings including *E. nicholii*, *E. sideroxylon*, casuarinas and *Hakea petiolaris*. Some of those I have often potted up into 6 inch pots to wait for the appropriate time

to plant. Some plants have been purchased as tube stock.

I also plant trees at a second property owned by our son Daniel and his wife Nicole, who live at Narbethong on 41 acres along the banks of the Acheron River. So we have this contrast of climatic conditions in which to grow trees. There is no shortage of water here and the soils are good. The risks here, though, are from bushfire, cattle, sheep, goats and deer. The property was burnt out in 2009, although the house was saved and the land has recovered well.

With this newer project we have started planting a few shade trees. So far we have planted a range of eucalypts, including *E. obliqua* (Messmate), *E. rubida* (Candlebark), *E. gunnii* (Cider Gum), *E. radiata* (Peppermint Gum) and *E. regnans* (Mountain Ash). I have bought these plants as tubestock from Kurunga Nursery. Whilst at Kurunga I noticed tube stock named as Silver Gum, which, according to its label, was native to the Acheron River. After purchasing a number these plants we looked for a suitable place on the property to plant them. By chance and to our surprise the spot chosen already had a mature Silver Gum which was in flower. We had an interesting learning experience at that moment.

We planted our tubestock and I took a small selection of gumnuts which I dried and collected the seeds. To my surprise those seed produced 30 seedlings which we have since planted in a cluster along the banks of the river.

I had a similar experience recently when a branch fell from a large *E. leucoxylon* (Yellow Gum), at the Whitehorse Art Centre. I collected a small number of gumnuts which I dried and placed in seed raising mix; within a very short time the seeds germinated and I now have 50 seedlings to plant out in the spring.

Collecting seeds and seeing them grow into healthy trees is so addictive and satisfying, the rewards are there to be enjoyed for years to come.



BP Silver Gum along Acheron River.

Preparing for an Open Garden

Sue Guymer

Bill and I had the honour of having our garden selected to be in the Open Gardens Victoria (OGV) programme. The garden was assessed in August last year and the planned opening is for Saturday 5th and Sunday 6th September this year, which gave us a year to prepare.

We have attended a number of open gardens under both OGV and the previous Australian Open Gardens Scheme. This helps us to have confidence to know what to expect. OGV also provided us with an excellent manual and are available for advice as well as doing a lot of the promotion for the opening. Also, we have a number of APS friends who have opened their gardens to the public, and they are very generous with their support.

We were aware of a number of areas of our garden that are underdeveloped or in need of renovation. Early on, we took a tour of the garden, trying to look at it with critical eyes as though we hadn't seen it before. We probably should have been doing this from time to time in the past but the OGV opening focussed our attention! We intend to do this review from time to time in the future and would recommend it to others.

The areas in need of development were mainly the parts of the garden affected by recent structural work –

in particular, when the swimming pool was converted to a billabong, and when our septic system was replaced by connection to sewerage. We had done some planting in these areas but they were still quite sparse.

We have a significant bunny problem so we decided to fence some areas. Bill has put in chicken wire fencing around the area at one end of the billabong (the other end and the mound had already been fenced) and also around the sand filter area of the septic system. We have done a lot of planting since the rains started in March, largely indigenous plants in these areas.

There are many other things to attend to including addressing any potentially dangerous areas in paths, etc. And there are also things that you don't expect – like coming out one day and finding a large eucalypt lying across the billabong!

Fortunately, we know a terrific tree-lopper, recommended to us by Brenda and Tony Moore years ago. So, Des came and did his thing with the chain-saw and Bill used the new chipper to deal with the leaves and smaller branches.

Despite the Covid restrictions, the opening may go ahead, probably using some form of prebooking. If not, the garden will look even better next year.



Bill Aitchison

Bill Aitchison

Tree over the billabong.

Memories of Shirley Carn

Chris Fletcher

I would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to my dear friend Shirley Carn. I knew Shirley over many many years. Shirley was a great mentor to me and she was always so generous in letting me raid her various gardens and bringing many people to my nursery.

Everywhere I look in my garden there are reminders of Shirley whether it be the cuttings in my hot house or plants in the garden. She will be there in my garden always.

- Joe's Quiz Answers**
1. Queensland.
 2. NSW.
 3. Red Bloodwoods, Yellow Bloodwoods, Ghost Gums and Spotted Gums.
 4. Red. 59, Yellow 11, Ghost gums 24, Spotted Gums 3.
 5. Ghost Gum Group.

Gang Gang Cockatoos

Eleanor Hodges

With reference to Diane Hedin's article in the May *Kunzea* on Gang Gangs, I have also had the privilege of having them visit my garden in Glen Iris. Last year for the first time, a large flock of males and females came regularly to feast on the seeds of my *Eucalyptus conferriminata*. This year, a much smaller number came for just a short time – which may or may not be a good sign; good if it means there is sufficient food in their bush habitats and bad if it means the flocks are diminishing in number.

What I find most amazing about these striking birds is their ability to break open the large and seemingly iron-hard fruits of this eucalypt (one of the Bushy Yate

family) to extract the seed, but last year the horrendous mess on my driveway was certainly proof of their skills.

They have only come to this one tree, and their presence was always obvious, not only for the litter underneath it but for their distinctive 'creaky door' call. I did, however, once see a large number of the birds foraging along a nature-strip in my street in the manner of galahs, and last year a neighbour who has a Liquid Amber tree in his garden also had gang gangs attacking the hard seeds.

So it seems the birds are opportunistic in not limiting their food sources to native species.



Eleanor Hodges

Eucalyptus conferriminata seeds mauled by the Gang Gangs.



Graeme Nicholls

Gang Gang feeding off *Persoonia pinifolia*.

Thanks for the Contributions

Sue Guymer

A big thank you to everyone who has contributed material for *Kunzea* this month. As a result, we have a bumper issue! If your item does not appear this month, we will use it next month. Please keep up the good work.

Just a reminder to please send content to me at aitchguy@gmail.com, and photos should be sent separately from the text (it can be difficult to extract them if they are already imbedded in your document). Also, please send the highest resolution version of your photos so that they will reproduce clearly. Don't forget to name the photos, and also indicate who took them.

Best Wishes

We hope that you are all well. In particular, John Hanson had a recent stay in hospital and it is good to know that he is now feeling much better.

Australian Plants Society Maroondah Inc.

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

Email: maroondah@apsvic.org.au

Newsletter contributions:

Contributions for the July 2020 Newsletter should be sent to

Sue Guymer at aitchguy@gmail.com.au no later than

Sunday 28th June 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