



KUNZEA

Australian Plants Society Maroondah
Preservation by Cultivation



November 2020

Notice of Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) of APS Maroondah Inc.
for the year ending 30th June 2020 will be held on

Friday 27th November 2020 at 7:30pm

It will be held via Zoom.

Unfortunately it is not possible to have a physical meeting due to Corona Virus restrictions. We understand that this is not ideal. If you are unable to do Zoom, you can submit an apology to Peter Rogers (9801 6946).

The relevant AGM documents are attached to this newsletter. If you have any questions or would like to make a comment, please submit them prior to the meeting.

Peter Rogers will also do a short presentation about the 2020 FJC Rogers' Seminar which APS Maroondah is organising on the subject of "Fabulous Peas", during the Zoom meeting.

We hope that many of you will "tune-in". The link that you will need will be emailed to APS Maroondah members a few days prior to the meeting. For those of you who are not on our email list but want to access the Zoom AGM, please contact our Secretary Peter Rogers the day before (Thursday 28th November) on 9801 6946 for login details.

Nomination for Committee

We would love to have new members on the APS Maroondah Committee. New committee members not only provide some relief to the present incumbents, but also bring fresh ideas to our activities as a Group.

Please contact a committee member if you want to offer to serve in this way.

Looking Forward to 2021

2020 hasn't been the best year for most people. At the moment, things are looking brighter with restrictions being reduced.

Hopefully this will continue and when you receive your next newsletter (in January) there will be much to look forward to.

Field of Daisies

Barbara Rooks

A cheerful sight in CoVlidSafe lockdown.

Rhodanthe chlorocephala spp *rosea* seed-sown in the veggie garden in autumn. I have to pull them out as soon as they have finished flowering so Roger can plant some summer veggies, so I am enjoying them while I can.

STOP PRESS

Chris Fletcher still has lots of plants for sale.
Please call her on 0419 331 325



FJC Rogers Seminar 2022

Bill Aitchison



Earlier this year we advised members that our Group had agreed to organise the 14th FJC Rogers Seminar on the subject of Australian Peas, to be held in 2022. These Seminars are held every two years, and focus on a particular group of plants. The first Seminar was held in 1996, on the subject of Hakeas. This is the second time that our Group has organised one of these Seminars, having previously presented the 2006 Seminar “Knowing and Growing Australian Wattles”.

Although it is still two years away, we have established a small Organising Committee that has been busy doing initial planning for the Seminar. This committee comprises Peter and Alison Rogers, Marilyn Bull, Bev Fox, Sue Guymer and Bill Aitchison. Peter is the son of Fred Rogers, to whose memory the Seminars are dedicated, and we are honoured that Peter is directly involved in the 2022 Seminar. Some of the actions and decisions already taken by the committee are listed below.

The Seminar will be held on the weekend of 15th and 16th October 2022. In setting this date, we were careful to avoid clashing with other events, but also to hold the Seminar at a time of year when significant numbers of peas would be flowering.

The venue for the Saturday lecture program and the Saturday night dinner (and also the bus departure point for Sunday garden visits) will be York on Lilydale, in Mt Evelyn (just down the road from Kuranga Nursery). This

venue was selected from a list of 13 possible options that we compiled, and appeared to meet our various criteria e.g. availability on our selected weekend, capacity up to 300 people, availability of catering, accommodation, car parking, suitable location.

Those of you who attended the recent Lamiaceae Seminar (being the 13th FJC Rogers Seminar, hosted by APS Yarra Yarra and held by a webinar over three nights) will have seen a presentation that we prepared which was shown on the final night of the webinar. This presentation invited people to register their interest in attending the 2022 Seminar, and we have already started receiving expressions of interest.

We are calling the Seminar “Fabulous Peas”, and have set up a dedicated email address:

fabulouspeas2022@gmail.com.

If you would like to register your interest in attending the Seminar, please forward an email to that address. Even better, if you would like to offer to help in the planning and organisation of the Seminar, we would love to hear from you.

One item on which we made a decision was in relation to the logo that we will use for the Seminar. The logo that we decided upon appears above, and features chorizemas.

Ricinocarpus pinifolius

Wedding Bush

Graeme Nicholls

Wedding Bush makes a dramatic show in a garden with its masses of very white flowers that almost cover the bush. Our plant is nearly 4 m high by about 2 m wide, but other plants may be smaller. It started flowering back in July and is only now finishing. Birds, bees and other insects love it, which is good because we have beehives close by.

It seems to be very tolerant of soil types and conditions. In nature it tends to be found in sandy, well drained and often coastal situations, but our plant grows in heavy Blackburn clay, and apparently is very happy. It is drought resistant and will tolerate light frosts. Some light shade seems to be helpful. It is a no-fuss plant and has never had any attention at all for over a decade, although looking at it now it would have been in a better shape if I had pruned it regularly.

Our bush was grown many years ago from a cutting from Alan Lacey, then living at Sandy Point. Propagation is not easy as cuttings are slow, and some say that seed propagation is difficult, although I haven't tried that.

The genus name *Ricinocarpus* means having fruit resembling the castor oil plant *Ricinus*. The species name *pinifolius* refers to the foliage which looks like pine leaves. Another very similar species often grown is *R. tuberculatus*, a WA species with slightly blue-ish leaves, where the name refers to the warty swellings on the fruits.



Grevillea williamsonii

Bruce Schroder

There is currently a beautiful specimen of this rare grevillea in flower at Karwarra Native Botanic Garden in Kalorama. Shelly, at Karwarra, advises me that staff from Kuranga Nursery have recently taken cuttings from this plant with a view to make it available to the general public, and this is a good thing! Why? Because it is now extinct in the wild, and this has happened on our watch!

Until recently, this species was known from only 12 plants growing near Cassidy Gap in the Grampians. For approximately 100 years it was known only from herbarium specimens from the original single plant discovered in 1893 at Picaninny Hill, some 7km further south, and sadly destroyed by fire in 1895. The species was presumed extinct until the early 1990's when the Cassidy Gap population was discovered. Sadly, because some botanists considered the plant just an extreme variation of the more common *Grevillea aquifolium*, little credence was given to the need for formal protection of the newly discovered remnant population, although enthusiasts ensured material was distributed for preservation by cultivation – hence the plant at Karwarra.

I was fortunate enough to obtain a grafted specimen in the mid 1990's which I grew in my garden in Montrose



The bush growing well at Karwarra Garden.

for many years, until it gave up the ghost as a result of being smothered by a very large *Grevillea caleyi* (another rare one from the Sydney sandstone area). At the time I wasn't particularly fussed as I simply assumed now that it was in cultivation, and there were plants in the wild, protected inside a National Park, so it would be readily available.

Unfortunately, in recent years the inadvertent introduction of the dreaded Phytophthora fungal disease into the area has wiped out the entire remnant population!

As far as garden shrubs go, *Grevillea williamsonii* is nothing special, but at the same time not unattractive. It forms a dense, somewhat bun-like shrub with a horizontal branching habit to approximately 1m tall by a little wider than this with grey-green foliage, leaves sometimes lobed and sometimes entire. It is very floriferous with small toothbrush type flowers that change from pale yellow through orange to red over late winter through early spring, and of course very bird-attracting.

I'll be putting in an order at Kuranga so I can reintroduce it into my garden, and I urge our readers to do the same.



Grevillea williamsonii flowers.

Zoom Speakers

Some district groups are now using Zoom to meet and include Zoom presentations.

APS Victoria is putting together a list of people who would be willing to give presentations via Zoom.

If you would be willing to do this, please contact our Secretary, Peter Rogers, by phone or email to apsmaroondah@gmail.com.

Peter will pass on a list of presenters to APS Victoria's Secretary Chris Long.

Karwarra is open again

After the Covid lockdown, Karwarra Native Garden at Kalorama is open once more. Shelley and her team have been working through the winter to keep the garden in good condition, and it is now looking really great. It is open from Tuesday to Friday from 10 am to 4 pm.

Weekend openings are also re-commencing, subject to the availability of volunteers. Shelley needs more people to join the roster, opening the garden from 1 pm to 4 pm on Saturdays and Sundays. If you can help, please phone her at 9728 4256.

New Look for Fairies

Jan Nicholls

Recently I observed *Hardenbergia violacea* sprawling about as I walked about Blackburn Lake and *H. comptoniana* as I walked past Elspeth Jacob's fence. They reminded me of my first introduction to Australian plants.

Learning to read, soon after World War II, I was mostly used to black-and-white books, as the publishing of children's books was not a priority. My first book with attractive coloured pictures was "A Bunch of Wildflowers" by Ida Outhwaite. When the artist was growing up in 19th century Australia, the books available to children were largely European. Ida's first illustrations were published in 1903 when she was just 16 years old. Her work appealed to the prevailing vogue of fairies in children's books.

Her drawings showed delicate forms and gracefully

flowing lines, but what was different was that they depicted Australian landscapes. Outhwaite remembered that, as a child, she spent hours by the beach or in the country watching "tiny things that grew and crept there and tried to draw them afterwards".

As a child I loved this book, and later kept it to read to my own children and grandchildren. I have now given it to an imaginative granddaughter, who greatly cherishes it. She loves to go looking for the flowers in the bush that are illustrated in the book. I have discovered that this is one way to encourage our grandchildren to love Australian plants.

The following is one illustration and poem from the book.

WILD PEA

I AM the country cousin of the tame sweet-pea,
I wind myself round anything; it's all the same to me;
I always was a tomboy, and I always mean to be.

I wear a satin bonnet, I toss my wavy hair,
I climb up to the tree-tops and paint my purple there;
Sometimes I creep along the ground and make the bare
earth fair.

If you are in the country, and chance to visit me,
Please don't expect good manners, you'll find me up a
tree;
I always was a tomboy, and I always mean to be.



Hidden danger in some low release fertilisers

Alan Lacey, well known to some of us as a very successfully native plant gardener and a retired industrial chemist, has commented recently on an aspect of some slow release fertiliser products that we may not be aware of, but which he discovered to his surprise – and cost.

After feeding his potted plants with one such product, he was dismayed when over 100 of them suddenly died. The product he was using was advertised as "suitable for native plants", and its analysis label seemed to confirm this.

On further investigation Alan realised that the vast bulk of the nitrogen component was derived from urea, which is a colourless solid, very soluble in water, and

rapidly decomposes in soils to ammonium and bicarbonate ions. The problem was that an excessive quantity of nitrogen was released, and released too quickly, resulting in nitrogen toxicity.

Urea is the cheapest source of nitrogen and therefore much more likely to be used in cheaper products.

So when choosing your fertiliser product, look closely at the analysis label to see where the nitrogen is derived from. Thank you, Alan, for this important advice.

For those who know Alan, he and Margaret have recently sold their large Sandy Point property and downsized to a house in Cowes, where Alan has very rapidly established a lovely new garden, filled with hundreds of plants that he brought with him from Sandy Point.

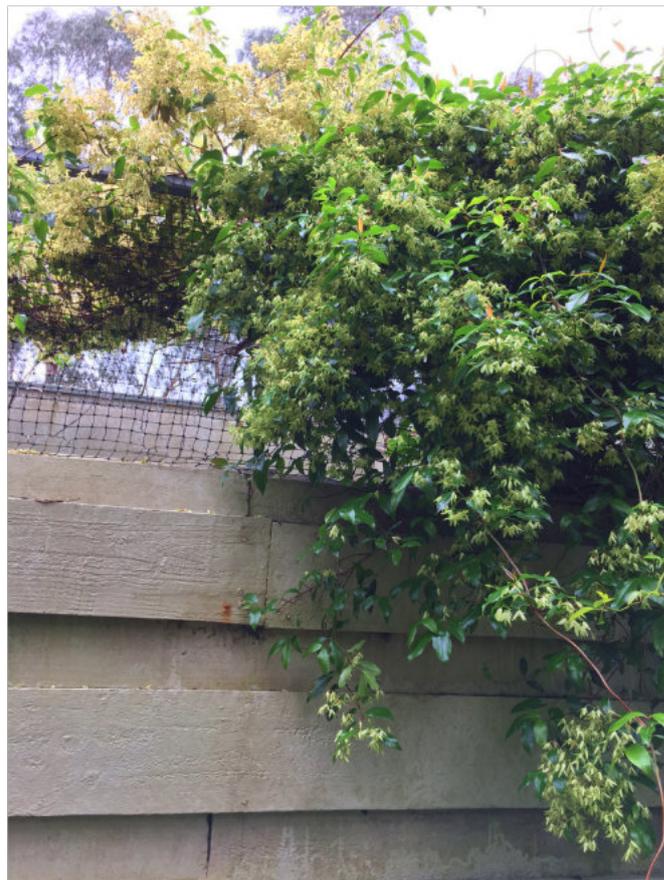
Reaching for the Sky

Sue Guymer

We have been getting into climbers.

Our first venture was several years ago, when we converted our enclosed fernery into a cat-run. We planted *Aphenopetalum resinosum* after seeing how well it performed for Graeme and Jan Nicholls, providing good leaf cover from near ground level to their second-storey balcony.

This is a very vigorous climber without strangling other plants in its path. The first thing that I did was to set up a some strings for it to grow to help it reach the roof of the fernery. BIG mistake – it was so keen to reach the light that this first plant actually pulled itself out of the ground! My subsequent attempts let them settle their roots in and I only provide them with something to grow on when they are well-established. I am now trying to train them to cover the outside of the fernery. They are now doing splendidly and flowering profusely.



Aphenopetalum resinosum



Marianthus ringens

We have planted a few other climbers recently. One of our favourites is *Marianthus ringens* (previously *Billardiera ringens*) by the front door. We have a couple of plants now working their way to a beam across to the garage. (The inspiration for this was a plant that Joe Wilson had on a carport post at his previous home.)

We are have a combination of flower-coloured forms of *Hardenbergia comptoniana* growing over a pool fence. The white form ('White Wash') has been particularly floriferous and combines well with the more common deep purple. I have recently added a "mauve" form which I grew from seed from the APS Victoria Seedbank. I am holding my breath to see whether this turns out to be mauve or whether the seed donor thinks mauve and purple are the same thing.

Moths on Rutaceae

APS Victoria has alerted us to a Citizen Science project studying the interaction of various moths with plants in the Rutaceae family.

This project is being managed by a group calling themselves the Sun Loving Moth Gang – you have to love that! They are looking for photographs of moth associations with any Rutaceae plants – boronias, phebaliums, pilotheas, eriostemons and so forth.

We can thoroughly recommend this project as ANPSA groups have so many excellent photographers, and it will add another level of interest and understanding to the preservation and study of this group of plants.

Post your photos on your own Instagram Account and please include the Gang @sun.loving.moths in your post, and use the hashtags #sunlovingmoths #australiancitrus #rutaceae #heliozelidae.

They will repost pictures (with credit of course) so everyone can share in the discovery.

OR

Share your photos on your own Facebook Account, but please remember to tag them Sun Loving Moths.

OR

Email your photos to Sun.Loving.Moths@gmail.com.

Late Spring flowers in a Blackburn garden

Graeme and Jan Nicholls



Grevillea georgeana is a grafted WA species. Flowers are prominent and very eye-catching. It is one of the very few red flowered species that flowers through the summer months. Foliage is extremely prickly.



Prostanthera nivea var. *induta* (Snowy Mint Bush) is from the Warrumbungle Ranges and Pilliga region of New South Wales, and is fairly rare. It is fast growing and flowers for longer than most prostantheras. Very pretty bush to 1 m or so.



Hymenosporum flavum – a rainforest plant from tropical coastal forests. Our plant has never been pruned and is growing tall and slender, now about 6 m high.



Grevillea fililoba – one of the diverse *G. thelemanniana* group, often sold as *G* 'Ellendale'. Hardy, long flowering, sun or part shade.



Prostanthera 'Poorinda Bride' (or 'Poorinda ballerina'). Absolutely covered in white flowers at present. Cuttings strike readily.



Conostylis pauciflora – at least that what the label said. There are a lot of flowers for something called 'pauciflora'! Great little rockery plant which flowers for many weeks.

Hibbertias

Sue Guymer

It seems to have been a particularly good flowering season so far. This shouldn't be surprising as we have had a lovely amount and distribution of rain over 2020.

Bill and I have especially noticed how well the hibbertias are flowering this spring – both at home and in reserves.

Others on the Committee have also found the same thing. Bruce Schroder reports that he has a number of *Hibbertia vestita* 'Golden Sunburst' dotted through his garden and they provide a brilliant splash of yellow! This plant is a low spreading shrub about 25 x 100cm which flowers for several weeks from September through November. The flowers are 3.5-4cm in diameter.

A selection of other Hibbertias should give us a golden glow.



Bruce Schroder

Hibbertia vestita 'Golden Sunburst'



Graeme Nicholls

Hibbertia aspera



Bruce Schroder

Hibbertia vestita 'Golden Sunburst' flowers.



Graeme Nicholls

Hibbertia serrata



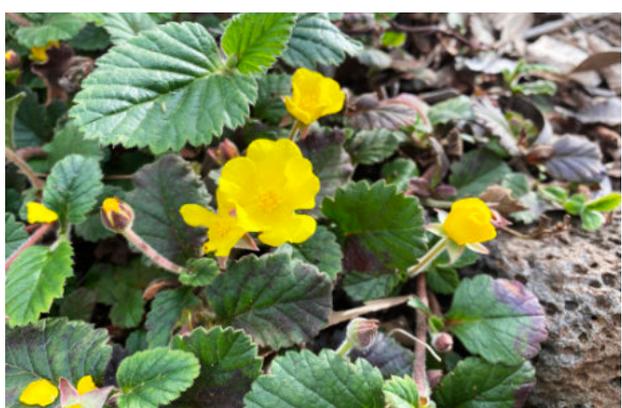
Graeme Nicholls

Hibbertia serpyllifolia



Bill Aitchison

Hibbertia empetrifolia



Graeme Nicholls

Hibbertia grossulariifolia

Ray and Eva's Garden in flower



Acacia glaucoptera dwarf form



Austrostipa elegantissima



Grevillea banksii



Pileanthus peduncularis



Leptospermum rotundifolium 'Lavender Queen'



Pultenaea pedunculata orange and pink forms



Gastrolobium sericium black form



Senna odorata



Mirbelia oxylobioides



Ricinocarpus pinifolius (flowering really well this year)



Grevillea scortechinii ssp *sarmentosa*



Nemcia dilatata



Grevillea 'Moonlight' (reminds us of Jean Galliot)

Bonsai collection



Banksia aemula, *Leptospermum* 'Mesmer Eyes', *Agonis flexuosa* 'Zig Zag', *Allocasuarina littoralis*



Eremophila 'Yana Road'



Pultenaea pedunculata orange and pink forms



Leptospermum hybrid 'Mesmer Eyes'



Leptospermum rotundifolium 'Lavender Queen'

Grevillea longistyla

Graeme Nicholls

I confess to being unable to distinguish between *G. longistyla* and the hybrids with *G. johnsonii* which nurseries market under different names, such as *G.* 'Long John', or *G.* 'Elegance'.

G. longistyla occurs naturally in open forest woodland on the sandstone ridges of the Great Dividing Range in central Queensland. *G. johnsonii* occurs in a restricted area of sandstone hill country in the central tablelands of NSW. Although similar in growth habit, the flower colour of *G. johnsonii* grades from orange to pink while that of *G. longistyla* grades from orange to red.

G. longistyla is a graceful quick-growing, upright shrub with fine, slender, deep green foliage on reddish stems. Our plant is over ten years old, growing happily in our Blackburn clay in a semi-shaded, sheltered position with no attention at all. It is 3 m high by 2 m wide, with red flowers for well over six months.

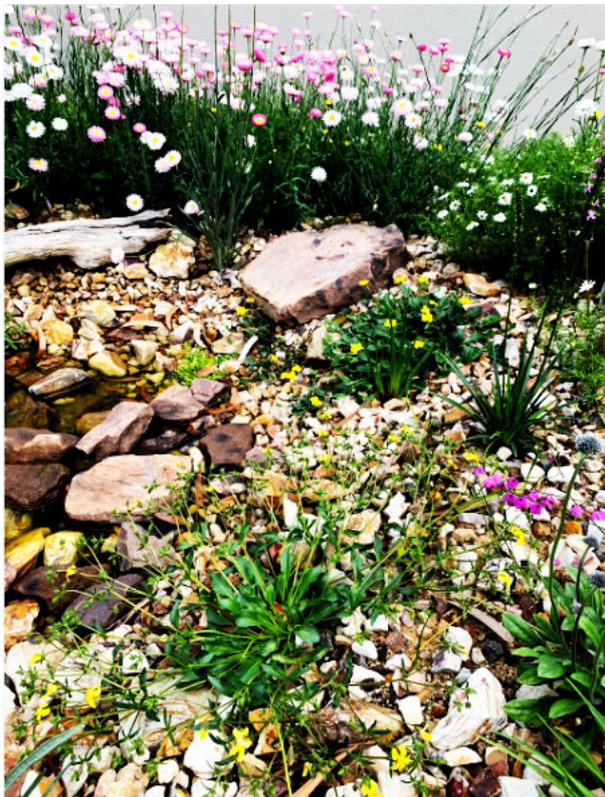
This is a no-fuss plant and the birds love it.

The species name *longistyla* fairly obviously refers to the long styles.



Rooftop Wonderland

David Lightfoot contributed a great article on the development of his rooftop garden in October's Kunzea. He has sent some pictures of how the plants have developed since then.



Eremophila mackinlayi

Graeme Nicholls

This is a great plant to bring contrast into a garden. Its blue-grey leaves stand out amongst other green foliage, much like *E. nivea* does. Large flowers are a deep blue or purple and are borne on the tips of the branches. When grown in full sun, which is the best spot for it, flowering is profuse and eye-catching in spring and summer. In appearance it is similar to *E. hygrophana*.

I grow several of these magnificent plants, and they typically reach 2 m high by about 1 m wide. They are fast growing, and will tolerate heavy pruning – in fact this seems to be very beneficial.

E. mackinlayi is found naturally in central WA, and is very drought hardy and tough in hot dry conditions. The foliage is very susceptible to humidity, like all silvery plants, and care must be taken to give them plenty of sun and air movement to reduce the risk of fungal infection. In such situations it will grow well on its own roots, but in temperate southern areas it will do better grafted on to one of the *Myoporum* species. For anyone



wanting to try their hand at grafting, this is a great one to start with. It will also strike readily from cuttings, best taken in summer. Cuttings should be kept warm and the leaves dry to avoid fungal disease.

Reaching for the Sky

Judy Clark

I was fascinated to read Trevor Blake's article about nature strip planting in Northcote in the September 2020 issue of *Kunzea*.

My sister lives in Northcote and has done for about 25 years. Their front garden has been home to local native plants for maybe 15 years, and several species that I grow here in the UK started out as seeds from their place. But it wasn't until my mother moved into care in 2015 that I started staying with my sister on my trips to Melbourne, and was able to properly explore the neighbourhood.

My impression is that things have changed quite a lot over five years, with native species, along with veggies, becoming more prevalent in gardens and on nature strips, at least along the various routes that I would take to Dennis station and to the shops. *Eucalyptus caesia* ssp *magna* is clearly a favourite of garden designers, and lots of people like grevilleas. I would recall more if I had more photos to jog my memory. But in March this year I did snap a little *wahlenbergia* that had escaped the confines of the nature strip and was growing happily in a small gap between the base of a fence and the footpath. I don't know which species it is.



Australian Plants Society Maroondah Inc.

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Newsletter contributions:

Contributions for the January 2021 Newsletter should be sent to Sue Guymer at aitchguy@gmail.com no later than

Friday 25th December 2020

Maroondah Group website:

australianplantsoc.wix.com/maroondah

APS Vic website:

www.apsvic.org.au

Published by APS Maroondah Inc.

Registration No. A0013122B

