



KUNZEA

Australian Plants Society Maroondah
Preservation by Cultivation



March 2021

March Meeting

Friday 19th March
at 8.00pm

*Note: this is an IN PERSON meeting.
Registration is essential from 7:30pm*

Indigenous Flora for Frogs

with David De Angelis

Our March speaker, David De Angelis, has a Bachelor of Biological Science with Honours from La Trobe University. He has experience in flora and fauna survey, bushland management and education through involvement with the Mullum Mullum Festival, La Trobe Wildlife Sanctuary, the Field Naturalists Club of Victoria and the Field Naturalist Society of La Trobe University.

While with Ecological Consulting practice Abzeco, David has worked on a range of restoration projects and written several reports on land management, flora and fauna survey and Biodiveristy Assessments.

He is particularly interested in the conservation management of reptiles and frogs, having surveyed for several threatened species including the Growling Grass Frog, Southern Toadlet, Striped Legless Lizard, Hooded Scaly-foot, Grassland Earless Dragon and Swamp Skink. Much of David's targeted fieldwork has been based in the Mallee and East Gippsland, and he has experience with a range of fauna monitoring techniques including radio tracking, camera trapping and mark-recapture.

It should be a fascinating talk.

NOTE: This meeting is to be held under CoVid-safe conditions. This means that numbers are limited and you will need to REGISTER IN ADVANCE to attend. It is not possible to decide on the night ("walk-ups").

See Bruce Schroder's article on page 6 for what you will need to do to attend the meeting.

Best Wishes

Bev Hanson has had her back operation, which was successfully performed. She now has a period of convalescence and rehab. This operation has been a long time coming, and we hope she is now well on the road to recovery!

Condolences

Ian Haskins let us know of the death of his and Enid's son David in February. It was unexpected and a great shock to the family. Our thoughts are with them.

Sunday Outing

Get-Together at Doongalla Forest, Mt Dandenong

Sunday 21st March
2–4pm

Doongalla Stables Site Picnic Area

(first parking area on Doongalla Forest Access Road driving about 2km east from park entry at end of Simpsons Road, Melway map 66 D5)

It is still problematic to hold visits to private gardens so we will again have a social get-together in March. This time it will be at Doongalla Forest. We will be reverting to our normal garden visit time of 2pm in anticipation of milder weather.

Bring anything that you want to eat and drink for afternoon tea, and a chair. Those who wish to can join in a short walk. There are toilets available at the picnic ground.

We look forward to seeing lots of you there.

Please note that this event will be cancelled in the event of Total Fire Ban.



Doongalla Homestead lower picnic area.

Looking for the Contributions

Just a reminder to please keep the contributions coming for *Kunzea*. Content should be sent to Sue Guymer at aitchguy@gmail.com, with photos sent separately in the highest resolution version so that they will reproduce clearly.

The deadline for the next *Kunzea* is
Friday 26th March.

Plants of Melbourne's Western Plains

Chris Clarke

written up by Sue Guymer

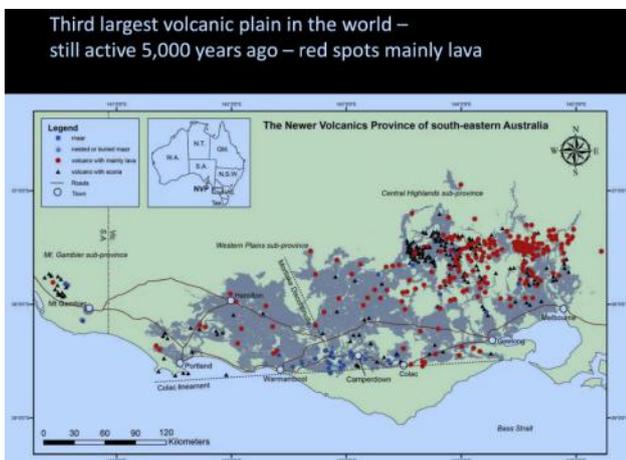
Photos by Chris Clarke



Rare patch of remnant grassland in Evans St, Sunbury.

APS Victoria President Chris Clarke gave an inspirational talk in February at our first member meeting in almost a year, albeit via Zoom. It was wonderful to be able to have a gathering of our members to hear about our flora, even if we could only see each other on our computer screens. Chris is a terrific photographer so we were also treated to some great images.

The Victorian Volcanic Plain covers a broad area of western Victoria. Within that, the Keilor-Werribee Plains area is roughly bounded by Whittlesea, Wallan, Sunbury, Melton, Bacchus Marsh, Balliang and the You Yangs. The first people to live here were the Wurundjeri and Bun Wurrung, for at least 40,000 years. Shield trees and fish traps can still be seen including those at Solomon's Ford. These inhabitants farmed the flora and managed the grasslands with patchwork burning. If the grasses, particularly Kangaroo Grass, *Themeda triandra*, are not burnt regularly they crowd out the other low plants.



This area is one of the largest volcanic plains in the world. Lava flows came into Darebin Creek, sedimentary hills and the flat parts out to the west of Melbourne. The Organ Pipes show the depth of the sediments in the basalt rock formations. There are still natural grasslands in small patches.

The plains have very much less rainfall than on the east of Melbourne, about half as much. Cracking black basaltic clay soils result. There were some forests, particularly along creeks, but the main habitat was grassland. Some of the remnant grasslands are along the railways and Melbourne Metro manage these sites. They used to manage with fire which was great, but unfortunately they now keep the tracks clear by spraying with glyphosphate from specialised cabooses.

Chris' district group, APS Keilor Plains, produced the book "Plants of Melbourne's Western Plains" which focusses on the Basalt Plains plants which will grow in gardens. The book also covers the birds, insects and other indigenous fauna. There are a number of very special plants and animals in the area including *Pimelea spinesces* (critically endangered in the wild) and Button Wrinklewort *Rutidosia leptorrhoides* (nationally endangered). The Growling Grass Frog is also endangered.

There is a Cuckoo Bee which imitates the Blue-Banded Bee and then follows the Blue-Banded Bee to its nest and then uses that bee's nest for its own young. The picture shows the Cuckoo Bee on *Xerochrysum viscosum*.



Werribee Sewerage Treatment Plant is a great place to go to observe the birds of the area. Gisborne Swamp is also a great place to see the indigenous swamp flora and fauna. Evans Street Grassland in Sunbury is also highly recommended.

Trees – there are not many Trees on the plains but they include:

- Weeping Sheoak *Allocasuarina verticillata*
- Buloke *Allocasuarina luehmannii*
- River Red Gum *Eucalyptus camaldulensis*
- Grey Box *Eucalyptus microcarpa* (130 species of birds have been recorded at Eynesbury Forest residential development where these trees have been retained)
- Golden Wattle *Acacia pycnantha*
- Butterfly Bush *Bursaria spinosa* (covered in little wasps and small birds in Chris' garden)
- Moonah *Melaleuca lanceolata*



Brunonia and Chrysocephalum, Sunbury railway line.

Some ferns – including Cheilanthes

Shrubs

- Acacia paradoxa* – great prickly for wildlife
- Grevillea rosmarinifolia* – a Plains form (possibly now *Grevillea latrobei*)
- Leptospermum lanigerum*
- Olearia ramulosa* – attract Darts (butterflies)
- Cassinia aculeata*
- Geranium* sp 1
- Dillwynia cinerascens*

Herbs, Lilies and Orchids

- Stackhousia subterranea*
- Rhodanthe anthemoides*
- Lemon Beautyheads *Calocephalus citreus*
- Chrysocephalum semipapousum* and *C. apiculatum*
- Yam Daisy *Microseris walteri* –has loopy stem with the bud hanging down
- Hollyhock *Malva preissiana*
- Linum marginale*
- Bulbine bulbosa*
- Wurmbea dioica*
- Ptilotus macrocephalus*
- Various dianellas including *Dianella amoena* which is endangered, and *Dianella* sp. aff. *longifolia* (Benambra) which has pale-coloured flowers (pollinated by native bees)
- Pelagonium australe* and *P. rodneyanum*



Blushing Bindweed *Convolvulus angustissimus*

Hardenbergia violacea

Pimelea humilis

Brunonia australis

Myoporum parvifolium – creates great mats which smother weeds and attracts native insects

Themeda triandra

Wallaby Grasses, including Red-Anther Wallaby

Grass *Rytidosperma pallidum*

There are many orchid species including *Diuris fragrantissima* which is endangered. This orchid has been reintroduced into some areas.

Aquatic Plants

Tassel Sedge *Carex fascicularis*

Club Rushes

Native bees perform buzz-pollination by vibrating their thorax so that the plant releases its pollen down the pollen shoot; this is necessary for some of our native plants to be fertilised. Exotic bee species cannot do this. However, Chris mentioned that it has been found that buzz-pollination creates a vibration which is almost identical to a tuning fork at C.

Chris also mentioned the Citizen Science website iNaturalist. It is a great repository for photos and other records of naturally-occurring indigenous flora and fauna. It has records of over 34,000 species Australia-wide. He highly recommends that we take lots of photos and put them on this site.

Many thanks to Chris for giving us such an inspiring and beautiful talk as we start to emerge from our CoVid isolation.



Grey Box
Eucalyptus microcarpa
Eynesbury Forest.
One of Victoria's largest remaining stands of Grey Box. 133 bird species.



Lemon Beauty Heads
Calocephalus citreus
Daisy family, growing 20-50 cm high 30-60 cm wide. It has silver grey foliage and small, yellow button type flower heads in late Spring to Summer.

Chris Clarke's Garden Renovation

Sue Guymer

During his talk, Chris mentioned that he has renovated parts of his own garden over the last few years, including planting out the nature strip and some planting in the school ground across the road. He has also taken over a couple of neighbouring nature strips (with permission) – sounds like Graeme Nicholls and Frank O'Dea!

Six years later the garden is coming along beautifully. Highlight plants include:

Correa reflexa 'Jetty Red'

Dichondra repens fills in lots of gaps

Senna artemisioides



Glorious Sight

Diane Hedin provided this photo of this *Brachychiton acerifolius* that she passes in Springvale Road on her way to and from work.

She says "it is such a beautiful shape. Never before have I seen the whole crown turn such a flaming red. It was an even more stunning sight when its flowers dropped and stayed bright red for about a week".



Myuna Farm

Eva Kowal and Ray Turner

Just recently we had a tour of Casey Council's Myuna Farm which is a community and children's farm in Doveton.

At the rear of the farm are wetlands where Dandenong Creek originates and is home to Melbourne's second colony of about 40,000 grey headed flying foxes.

It was a dusk tour so that we could see the bats take off which was a real experience. The wetlands can be entered at any time free via Floriana Avenue just in case anyone is interested.



Cultivars on Trove

In April's Kunzea in 2020, we told you that the Plant Cultivar project which was supported by APS Maroondah was to be transferred to PANDORA.

Well, CoVid intervened, but Michele Adler advises that the information is now live on TROVE. It's taken a while, COVID and all has held things up, but it's done. Cause for celebration, and a thank you to APS for their patience with us.

The link is:

<https://webarchive.nla.gov.au/awa/20210223044024/>
<http://pandora.nla.gov.au/pan/186685/20210223-1458/index.htm>

Michele advised that she also found it by:

- Googling *TROVE*
- Then *Categories*
- Then *Websites*
- Then the phrase *Ornamental Plant Cultivars in Australia*

And up it came !!

Many thanks to Peter Jetnikoff from the State Library of Victoria for his persistence.

February Picnic at Pound Bend

Diane Hedin



Tim Morrow

The weather this day was uncharacteristically cool for February and very pleasant for a picnic in a lovely open grassy spot in this reserve.

Pound Bend reserve is on traditional Wurundjeri country and has a rich history. As well as the natural attractions, there is a tunnel that had been dug out of rock where the Yarra River was dammed and diverted for gold dredging in the 1870s. There were also stone fruit orchards on the river flats in the late 1800s, and it was the site of the Manningham Council animal pound until the 1960s. The dam collapsed long ago and now the big river keeps on rolling.

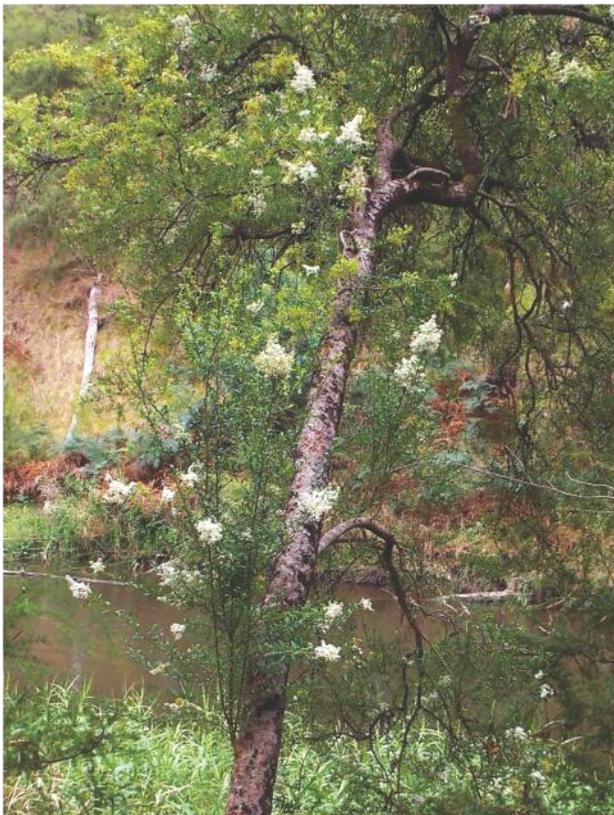
We set out on the track that skirts a section of the river, and I could hear grumbles over the sighting of some not so local ducks and their chicks. Another notable ring-in was the Spear Thistles that were abundant in some areas.

The bush felt very peaceful, consisting of an upper storey of Manna Gum, Swamp Gum and Yellow Box,

Silver and Black Wattles, Black Sheoak, and Muttonwood. The mid-storey consisted of several species of pomaderris, *Spyridium parvifolium*, *Prostanthera lasianthos*, Yarra Burgan (*Kunzea leptospermoides*) and *Bursaria spinosa* in flower. The lower storey included *Goodenia ovata* and *Correa glabra*. Tufty plants included lomandra and lepidosperma.

We leisurely ambled along the path, stopping to enjoy the sight and sound of some rapids before returning to our picnic spot. It was really lovely to catch up and exchange stories, plans, insults and jokes with some people we've missed seeing since a year ago.

Tim Morrow recorded a video during our visit and has posted that on YouTube at the following link: <https://youtu.be/YcdZlq8eTzg>



Bill Aitchison

Bursaria spinosa



Tim Morrow

The Rapids.



Bill Aitchison

Ducks on the river.

A COVID-safe Meeting

Bruce Schroder

our Maroondah CoVid Marshall

Throughout the last 12 months, your Committee has been trying to operate as normally as possible during these highly abnormal times. To this end the committee has been meeting regularly via Zoom, and of course we have continued to publish a monthly newsletter. Unfortunately, during lockdown and whilst limitations have been in place, significantly restricting numbers that can gather indoors, our hands have been tied when it comes to the normality of a third Friday night of the month member meeting.

I am pleased to advise that the committee has recently agreed to reinstate Friday night meetings, subject to a successful trial commencing at our March gathering, albeit in a substantially modified format that ensures we accord with current State Government CoVid Safe Guidelines. The most significant change revolves around the need to ensure suitable social distancing, a term you will all be extremely familiar with now but probably hadn't heard of 12 months ago. With certain provisions in place, under the guidelines, we can currently accommodate a maximum of 40 members at our next meeting, plus the presenter. This number is based on the meeting hall's floor area in the first instance plus the need to ensure 1.5 metres social distancing.

I have been appointed by the Committee to be the group's CoVid Marshall and it is my role to ensure we operate in accordance with a signed-off CoVid-safe Plan. I will be the one on the night with the big (1.5 metre) stick, so watch out anyone who flaunts the rules!

To achieve this number, we have had to rearrange the layout of the meeting space so that, rather than viewing a presentation on the side wall of the hall, the chairs will need to be rearranged to face the kitchenette. This "portrait" layout allows approximately 7 more seats than the traditional "landscape", but socially distanced, layout. It will mean that seeing and hearing from the last couple of rows will not be as easy, but the committee feels that this minor inconvenience is suitably offset by the additional seats that can be accommodated.

Because of the limited capacity, entry to the meeting will be by emailed registration requiring name and phone number of each individual (see info later in this article). A list, up to the maximum number of attendees, will be generated and this list will be placed at the entry registration table to be signed by each attendee, acknowledging a number of precautionary questions re overseas travel, illness symptoms, etc.

Other significant changes that we hope will only be temporary include:

- No plant sales
- No specimen table
- No supper

The principle reason for doing away with these activities is to dissuade members from gathering in close groups, contrary to the need to adequately social distance.

The following additional provisions will be in place:

- Masks will be mandatory inside the building at all times.
- The registration table will be set up in the entry foyer, just inside the door to the hall. You will need to use a shared pen to sign in or if you prefer, bring your own.
- Inside the foyer will be a number of sanitising stations where you will be required to sanitise your hands before entering the main hall and to also ensure sign-in pens are only handled by sanitised hands.
- 1.5 metre distance markings will be provided on the foyer floor to ensure suitable social distancing whilst queueing. Only enter the foyer if social distancing can be suitably accommodated.
- For contact tracing purposes and to allow us to have 40 attendees, we are obliged to collect participant data using a QR code. We acknowledge that a number of members don't have smart phones and won't be able to register using this method. The manual sign-in accommodates this but every member who has the capacity to register using the QR code is encouraged to use this method. It should be noted that you don't need your own phone to register – you can get one of your fellow attendees to use their smart phone to register you. They will just need to enter your name and contact number. A number of QR code points will be mounted outside the building entry and also in the foyer to facilitate this. If we did not offer this method of recording attendance, the number of attendees we would be allowed to accommodate would be substantially reduced.
- No \$2 entry payment required.
- No name badges will be available – you will just have to remember who you are!
- Once inside the hall, please, no milling around for a chat with long-lost friends. Proceed to one of the chairs that will already be set out, suitably distanced and sanitised. Chairs must not be moved from their positions or exchanged for another chair. The only exception is for family groups who can move immediately adjacent chairs together to create a "family bubble".
- At the end of the meeting, please vacate your chair and the building as soon as possible as Committee Members will need to sanitise the building.

REGISTRATION

If you wish to attend the March meeting, please email your desire to do so, stating name(s) and phone numbers to maroondah@apsvic.org.au. If you have no access to email, ring the secretary, Peter Rogers (9801 6946) and advise him.

Please only register if you plan to attend, not if you'd like to leave your options open in case something better turns up! There will be no seats kept spare for walk-ups on the night. It will be first in best-dressed and you will be advised if you are one of the first 40 within a day or two.

Meeting time will remain at 8pm but because of the extra activities necessary both in preparation of the hall by the Committee and in sanitisation and registration by attendees, doors will be open to registered attendees at 7:30pm.

It should be noted that there have been significant changes undertaken to the streetscape outside the building since we last met. The grassed naturestrip and street trees have been removed and replaced with a hard paved bicycle path, providing a substantial gathering space (as long as you keep an eye out for bicycles). So, if you need to chat before or after the meeting, I suggest this space be utilised.

Subject to the success of this trial, the availability of speakers and ever changing CoVid restrictions, we hope to continue face-to-face meetings for the rest of the year.

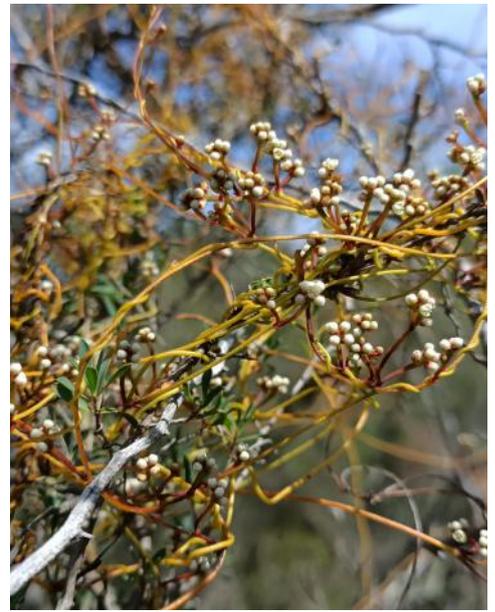
Currently in flower in the Cranbourne garden of Eva Kowal and Ray Turner



Beaufortia aestiva flowers



Lambertia inermis



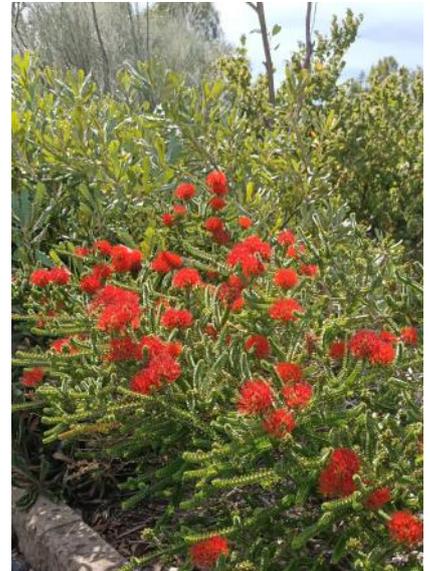
Cassytha glabella (Dodder Laurel)



Rhododendron lochiaie



Cassinia aculeata



Beaufortia aestiva

Looking Forward to 2021 and Beyond

Of course only time will tell what will happen with CoVid in 2021. However, at the moment infection rates seem to be staying low, and there is the prospect of successful vaccination. On this basis, the following are tentatively planned for the early months of the new year.

APS Maroondah Events

19th March

David De Angelis – *Indigenous Flora for Frogs*
(planned for Australian Unity Hall, Blackburn)

21st March

Social gathering at Doongalla Forest,
Mt Dandenong

APS Victoria Events

13th – 14th March

APS Warrnambool hosting APS Victoria
quarterly meeting

FNCV Botany group talks

Third Thursday of the month.

- Live meetings start at 8 pm at FNCV Hall, 1 Gardenia Street, Blackburn (Melway 47 K10)
At this stage it is planned for a live meeting in March but could revert to Zoom if CoVid restrictions demand.
- Zoom meetings: email Max Campbell at mcam7307@bigpond.net.au to receive the link

18th March – “*Forests and Woodlands of the West (Victoria) and the Threats to Them*”, Jordan Crook
(Contact Ken Griffiths at botany@fncv.org.au).
Please register at least three days prior.

Plant sales

17th April – APS Geelong Australian Native Plant Sale, “Wirrawilla”, 40 Lovely Banks Road, Lovely Banks.
8.30am – 4pm.

24th April – APS Yarra Yarra Autumn Plant Sale, Eltham Community & Reception Centre, 801 Main Rd, Eltham. 10am – 4pm.

1st May – APS Mornington Peninsula Plant Sale, Seawinds Gardens, Arthurs Seat Park, Purves Rd, Arthurs Seat. 10 am – 3.30 pm.

8th May – APS Melton and Bacchus Marsh Plant Sale. 9 am – 1 pm. The venue is expected to be St Andrews Uniting Church, Bacchus Marsh, but is yet to be confirmed.

8th–9th May – RBG Cranbourne Friends Spring Sale, Australian Garden, RBG Cranbourne, from 10am to 4pm.

And beyond 2021 ...

Sunday 11th – Friday 16th September 2022

ANPSA Conference, hosted by APS NSW at Kiama.
(NOTE: Deferred from 2021 due to CoVid19 restrictions)

Saturday 15th and Sunday 16th October 2022

14th FJC Rogers Seminar on “*Fabulous Peas*”,
hosted by APS Maroondah at Mt Evelyn.

Hypocalymma xanthopetalum

Graeme Nicholls

When I first saw from a distance this plant growing in a garden, I thought it was a wattle, with lots of small, bright yellow flowers along its stems.

There are about 29 species in this genus, all of which occur naturally in WA. This one is less common than the better-known *Hypocalymma angustifolium* but is fairly readily available, and seems to grow well in Melbourne’s climate. It needs a well-drained soil in full sun or dappled shade.

Our plant has been slow growing, and is only about 12cm tall. It has been flowering now for nearly six months, and shows no sign of stopping. Apparently it can be easily propagated from cuttings, but I haven’t tried this yet.



Australian Plants Society Maroondah Inc.

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Email: maroondah@apsvic.org.au

Newsletter contributions:

Contributions for the April 2021 Newsletter should be sent to

Sue Guymer at aitchguy@gmail.com no later than

Friday 26th March 2021

Maroondah Group website:

australianplantsoc.wix.com/maroondah

APS Vic website:

www.apsvic.org.au

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