



Dianella admixta

AUSTRALIAN PLANTS SOCIETY
SOUTH EAST MELBOURNE REGION INC.

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FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER 2022

Meetings are held on the first Tuesday of each month, February to December except November. **Visitors are always very welcome**

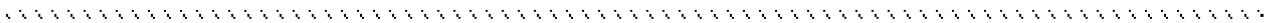
The venue is the Hughesdale Community Hall, Cnr Poath and Kangaroo Roads, Hughesdale (MEL 69 C7)

COMMITTEE:

- PRESIDENT: John Thompson thomme@netspace.net.au
- SECRETARY: Chris Bain aps.se.melb@gmail.com
- TREASURER: Norm Seaton normarjs@bigpond.com
- PUBLIC OFFICER: Chris Bain
- NEWSLETTER EDITOR: Marj Seaton normarjs@bigpond.com
- APS VIC DELEGATE: Marj Seaton
- COMMITTEE: Amanda Loudon amandalouden@icloud.com

Please forward any newsletter contributions, comments or photos to Marj at 36 Voumard Street, Oakleigh South 3167 or to the email address above.

*******Note: Deadline for the March newsletter is February 22nd*******



Meetings
Hughesdale Community Hall
Cnr Poath and Kangaroo Roads
1st February 8pm

Phoenix Wolfe is the Conservation Projects Officer with the City of Greater Dandenong Council, and has a particular interest in wetland projects. His focus will be on some of the revegetation initiatives that the Council have been working on in the Dandenong Creek corridor.

RAINFALL FOR 2022

| | Nov | Dec | Total 2022 | Comparison with 2021 |
|----------------|-------|------|---------------|-------------------------|
| Oakleigh Sth | 132.6 | 40.5 | 904.1 | 795.2 |
| Highett | 82.2. | 46.2 | 723.5 | 621.2 |
| Hampton | | | | 416* |
| Cranbourne Sth | 121 | 56 | 953 | 855 |
| Elsternwick | 88 | | 703.8 | 339.5* |
| Ashburton | 108.5 | | 782 | 668.28 |

**Some Entries missing from 2020*

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DECEMBER MEETING

(All photos taken by the presenters)

Chris started our slide presentations with a wonderful collection of photos taken at his Strathbogie Ranges property near Bonnie Doon. With the wet weather we have experienced this year, it has been an excellent year for orchids and Chris showed us examples of Greenhoods (mountain and nodding), leopard orchids, onion orchid, sun orchids, Glossodia, pink fairies, even a bird orchid. In addition he showed sundews, lilies – bulbine, early nancy, chocolate, vanilla, brunonia and Burchardia. Herbs and small shrubs such as spiranthes, pelargonium, dianella, St. John's wort minor, ajuga and hibbertias featured as well as a couple of larger plants such as an acacia and broad-leafed peppermint. A terrific display thanks Chris.

White chocolate lily



Leopard orchid



Ajuga australis



Nodding Greenhood



Bulbine bulbosa

Marg introduced our next group of photos by describing a visit to Greg and Glenda Lewin's property, 'Grannes', in the Wimmera where Marg and Betty hail from originally. Greg is the chairman of the WAMA project described in our last newsletter. Grannes was well worth a visit as it is a demonstration of Glenda and Greg's vision for WAMA - a place where art meets nature. It is a large garden with art works among Australian native plants. Some of the plants have labels, giving the feel of a Botanic Garden.

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The buildings include a spacious 'studio' in which art can be shown indoors. The surrounding gravelly country was very green at the time they visited.



Marg brought along one of John Wolseley's books - the Lewins are admirers of his work which includes water colours and collages featuring Australian flora, fauna and landscapes. The mozzies were awful though. Some of the slides Marg and Ivan showed featured sculptures and garden scenes from Grannes (above) as well as an array of plants including *Actinodium cunninghamii*, *Banksia blechnifolia* (right), *Prostanthera manifica*, *Pycnosorus globosus*, purple flowering *Melaleuca wimmerensis* (left), *Grevillea magnifica* and *Grevillea leucopteris* ("smelly socks").



Gillian visited Nowa Nowa in June and took several photos in the area including of a vibrant King Parrot and a sulphur crested cockatoo as well as several shots in her garden and a flowering *Xanthorrhoea australis* from the Brisbane Ranges. *Banksia* cones, a pink *Verticordia*, a pea, sun dews and one of the bright blue *Brunonia australis* completed her collection.



Some of Mandy's photos (above) included Nardoo with its four leaf clover appearance, left, the black kangaroo paw *Macropidia fuliginosa*, right, the white orange blossom orchid *Sarcochilus falcatus*, a hybrid kangaroo paw (from Bunnings) with striking red stems, centre, *Wahlenbergia stricta*, dragon and damsel flies and a pair of

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photos of *Isotoma axillaris*. This last was taken in ordinary white light but Mandy also had a UV torch which she shone onto the plant with remarkable results as follows:



John's photos were taken in his garden and as usual featured quite a lot of unusual plants and beasts. Among the peas were *Pultenaea subalpina*, *Pultenaea scabrum*, *Daviesia latifolium*, and the climber *Kennedia lateritia*. The thin palmate leaves of *Brachychiton Ormeau* with its pink new foliage, the edible Atherton raspberry *Rubus probus*, flowers of the Davidson's plum and *Stylidium rhynchocarpum* were some of the plants shown, followed by a blue ring-tailed damsel fly, a cicada shell and finally a video of a raven looking for beetle larvae in John's front lawn, ruining a 2 square metre patch in the process.

Marj visited Swan Hill for the APS Vic quarterly meeting in late September. One of the attractions the light show at the Pioneer Village and she captured some of the slides shown as they were projected onto a curtain of water over the Murray River. These told the history of the Swan Hill area from pre-history to the present. She followed these with scenes from garden visits in the area.



SPECIMEN TABLE

Possibly the most striking specimen on our table was the passionfruit, *passiflora cinnabarina*, brought in by Mandy. She said that the fruits were essentially inedible but quite prolific. Flowers are red, though finished now. Seedlings are coming up everywhere. Unfortunately, it can be weedy - Marj commented that when she volunteered at Braeside Park, a lot of time was spent removing this plant from the heathland there as the birds brought the seeds in and the plants could get very big. Norm had a similar experience with it at the old Kingswood golf course. Mandy also had samples of *Lomatia silaifolia*, right, both a white and a creamy version. The leaf can be quite variable and it self seeds readily. *Veronica derwentiana* and white blueberry ash (*Elaeocarpus reticulatus*) completed her collection.



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Marj too had a blueberry ash, but hers has pink flowers. It is growing to about 6 metres but will get much bigger than that eventually. Flowers are followed by vivid blue berries but these are hard and inedible. The berry needs to be cracked to propagate and even then it is not easy to grow. A variety of colours of the annual *Xerochrysum bracteatum*, left,



make an attractive collection for a vase and her two *Chrysocephalum*s – *C. apiculatum* and *C. semipapposum* add some bright yellow. *Pycnosorus chrysanthes*, right, or golden billy buttons, is only an annual but its drumsticks add structural interest to an area of the garden. *Chamaelaucium uncinata* "Purple Pride" and a cross between *Chamaelaucium* and *Verticordia* give late spring colour. This latter is an excellent garden plant giving good colour and growing to approx 2m x 2m. her final offering was of *Eremophila* "Meringur



Isaac". This is a fine leaved plant with quite a deep purple and white flower with purple spots. Having planted it in a small corner, she is now regretting the fact that VicFlora gives it a classification of small tree/large shrub.

Two quite different looking lasiopetalums introduced John's offerings. *L. bracteatum*, right, rare in its native habitat on the Darling Scarp of WA, had the larger pink/purple flowers, prunes well and appreciates some shade and dryness. The pale flowers of the low growing *L. floribundum* are much more delicate and it too prefers some shade. The river Lomatia, *L. myricoides*, appreciates some moisture as its common name implies. *Homoranthus prolixus* is a low, spreading shrub with yellow flowers, a strong scent and grows in layers which create a Japanese effect. This was chosen as our "Plant of the Month".



Pick of the Bunch - December 2022

Homoranthus prolixus (Craven & S.R. Jones) **Granite Homoranthus**
Specimen grown by John Thompson

Homoranthus prolixus is a small horizontally spreading shrub 0.5 - 0.8 metres tall x 1-2 metres wide. It comes from northern NSW in between Tamworth and Inverell. It grows in woodland and heath on shallow sandy skeletal soil on and around granite rocks and boulders.

It has a spreading growth habit and is not unlike some other *Homoranthus* species with more or less glaucous (dull blue green in colour with whitish bloom) leaves. Flowers are produced in clusters of 1 to 6 at the terminals of the branches, with a tubular shape resembling flowers of the *Darwinia* genus, but rich-gold / yellow to red in colour. The flowers can cover the top of plant and are very showy, strongly aromatic and most conspicuous. Flowering occurs in late September to November.

Photo: John Thompson

In cultivation it grows well in most well drained soils. A full or part sun aspect is preferred. Plants



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are moderately drought hardy once established. Plants can be pruned to control their spread but avoid cutting into older wood as the plant will not reshoot. Propagate from cuttings.

Homoranthus is a member of the **Myrtaceae** family. A large family of c.3500 species in c.150 genera with c.1400 species in c.75 genera occurring in Australia. It includes such genera as *Asteromyrtus*, *Beaufortia*, *Callistemon*, *Eremaea*, *Kunzea*, *Leptospermum*, *Melaleuca*, *Phymatocarpus* and *Regelia*.

The genus *Homoranthus* is an Australian endemic consisting of c.31 species. It is found primarily in Queensland and New South Wales with two species occurring in South Australia.

The name *Homoranthus* is derived from the Greek, *homoros*; neighbouring or bordering on and *anthos*; flower, in reference to the similarity of the flowers to closely related genera such as *Darwinia*. The specific name, *prolixus*, is from the Latin, meaning stretched out or long, a possible reference to the long female styles that protrude from the flowers.

EVENTS DIARY

- January 30th** Committee Meeting 7:45pm, Mandy Loudens, 3 Royal Cres, Highett.
- February 7th** Speaker: Phoenix Wolfe – Dandenong Wetlands
- March 7th** Speaker: Geoff Lay – “Wilson’s Promontory”
- April 4th** “The Tree Project”
- August** AGM and members’ slides
- September** Speaker: Chris Larkin – “Hakeas”
- APS Victoria**
- March 25, 26** Cranbourne Friends Autumn plant sale 10 – 4
- March 29 to April 2** Melbourne International Flower and Garden Show
- April 1** APS Geelong plant sale. Wirrawilla, lovely Banks, 8:30 – 4:00
- April 22** APS Yarra Yarra Autumn Plant Sale, Eltham Community & Reception Centre, Eltham 10 – 4
- April 29** APS Mornington Peninsula Plant Sale, The Briars, Mt. Martha 10 - 3
- September 23,24** COMM hosted by APS Grampians. Week long activities followed by Pomonal Native Flower Show on Sept 30 and Oct 1, Pomonal Hall.