

2.

DECEMBER MEETING

5th December 2023

Only a few members were in attendance but we did sell a few of the books from our library and several plants from our annual 'Clear the Decks' table.

John and Mandy provided the photos for our Christmas slide show and we ended with a yummy supper. Some of the slides shown by Mandy included:

Acacia glaucoptera, fine leaf form, with its bronze new growth, *Isopogon Formosa* showing its' purple/pink flower and light new growth, pink and white *Verticordia ovalifolia*, sadly now deceased, *Dochrillia (Dendrobium) teretifolium*, "Bridal Veil orchid", has roots that attach to the wall and white flowers. Another orchid, the "Cucumber orchid", has fascinating leaves and also attaches to walls by its roots. *Thysanotis multiflorus* from WA, has knee high flower spikes and vivid purple fringed flowers. It has fibrous roots, not tuberous. The spots on the flowers of *Thomasia pygmaea* are a special feature. *Verticordia mitchelliana*, not as tall as *V. grandis*, Red flowers of *Brachychiton bidwillii*, bronze new growth on *Davidsonia johnsonii* and the red flowers of *Graptophyllum excelsum* from north Queensland rounded out Mandy's plant selection but she also showed some of the bird life sharing her garden.



3.



Amongst John's collection were:

Chorizema varium which he believes is the best of the chorizemas, *Thomasia grandiflora* which has 'ridiculously' (his word) large flowers larger than a 50c piece, *Grevillea argyrophylla* 'silver leaf' with its fine hairs, growing on its own roots and thriving in hot full sun and little rain, *Gompholobium latifolium* which has the largest flowers of the gompholobiums and features black calices before the flowers open. Sadly it has produced no seeds. Also shown were *Chorilaena quercifolia* which has flowers opening green but they go red as they age – bees love this plant and it is very vigorous once established. John's *Dampiera heracea* (Ivy-leaf Dampiera) is growing in a large pot, comes from the karri forests in WA and has striking blue flowers. *Blandfordia punicea* was next. This is the third or fourth time it has flowered; the flowers are narrower than *B. grandiflora* and are not as bright as that species. John has found it easy to keep alive but harder to flower. A cute brown thornbill was next – a good shot as these little birds won't stay still. Finally, John showed several shots of one of his stained glass projects and its surrounding landscaping. This was at the Ferry Road library next to the Victoria market. On the roof top garden were *Chrysocephalus*, *Dianellas* and *Calocephalus*, and *Pycnosorus globosus*. A glass screen printed with crabs and penguins as well as a carpet showing ants around a pool were highlights. His last slide was taken at home – two ringtail possums making themselves very much at home in a stormwater pipe.

4.



Thanks to Mandy and John for some great slides.

5.

SPECIMEN TABLE

Marj: *Elaeocarpus reticulatus*, the blueberry ash - most of the pink flowers had finished and a few blue berries had formed. These are very hard and can take up to two years to germinate. Marj's tree is in full shade and extends to about 4m x 4m

Trachymene composita, wild parsnip, right - this plant only last for two years – the first year it develops its whorl of leaves, the second year it flowers, seeds then dies. Seeds are best collected and grown in seed-raising mix as they don't seem to do as well if just spread about the garden. When peeled, the root does really taste of parsnip.



Ammobium alatum - another plant that forms a whorl of leaves, this time grey. The poached egg type flowers are held well above the foliage. Readily grown from seed.

Actinotus helianthi - Flannel Flower, right. The velvety 'petals' surround a cushion which eventually forms the seeds. Marj's two plants have plenty of flowers but, so far, the seeds formed are either non-existent or very small. She hasn't tried to propagate them yet – but maybe this season. The seeds don't remain viable for very long.



Mandy: *Angophora costata*, smooth barked apple, right - is related to the eucalypts but has alternate leaves, ridged nuts, no bud caps and the leaves do not smell of eucalyptus when crushed. It forms a large tree and has cream flowers in December. Mandy also brought in a small piece of *Angophora hispida* which is a smaller tree with quite hairy leaves and buds.



Lambertia ericifolia – chosen as plant of the month, is a hardy, summer flowering plant with orange flowers in sevens.

Ricinocarpus "Bridal Star" is a variety of *R. tuberculatus* from WA. It has white starry flowers and responds well to rain.

Lomatia silaifolia – right, has cream flowers which the bees love. It seeds readily, but the foliage of the seedlings is very variable. It is a hardy plant and lignotuberous so can be pruned hard.

Anigozanthos "Yellow Gem". Mandy's has 30 – 40 spikes, the plant having been growing for 20 – 30 years. It receives water so is very healthy. Birds hanging off the flowers can cause damage to the spikes.

Sennantha crenulata or fern leaf Baeckea is growing in a very shady and neglected bed. It has small white flowers and, in the wild, is restricted to the slopes of Mt Buffalo.



6.

Pick of the Bunch December 2023

Lambertia ericifolia R.Br. Heath-leaved Honeysuckle

Specimen grown by Amanda Loudon

Lambertia ericifolia is a tall, slender, non-lignotuberos, large shrub to 5m high x 1 - 1.5m wide from an area in and around the area of the Stirling Range National Park in Western Australia. *L. ericifolia* grows in a range of soil types, sand, laterite, gravelly loam mainly in the foothills, ridges and slopes of the ranges and its surrounds. The

orange-red flowers are in groups of seven and occur terminally on small branchlets. The flowering period is from November to March, with a peak during summer but can occur at any time of the year.

In most *Lambertias* the inflorescences consist of seven flowers (*L. orbifolia* usually in fours, *L. rariflora* and *L. uniflora* with single flowers).

L. ericifolia will grow in most well drained soils in a sunny or partially sunny aspect. Propagation is from seed that requires pretreatment (treatment with smoke or smoked water) or from cuttings.

Lambertia is a member of the Proteaceae family, A family of c.1500 species in c.80 genera occurring mainly in the Southern Hemisphere in tropical and temperate regions with c.900 species in 45 genera in Australia. It includes such genera as *Banksia*, *Conospermum*, *Grevillea*, *Hakea*, *Isopogon*, *Lomatia*, *Persoonia*, *Stenocarpus*, *Telopea* and *Xylomelum*. There are 10 species of *Lambertia*, nine occur in the south west of Western Australia with one species (*L. formosa*) confined to eastern NSW.



The name, *Lambertia*, is after Aylmer Bourke Lambert (1761–1842), English patron of botany, who collected and grew many Australian, species; his herbarium was second only to that of Sir Joseph Banks in size and quality. The specific name, *ericifolia*, means having leaves like an *Erica*, a heath like plant found mainly in Africa but also Madagascar, the Mediterranean and Europe.

Road Works

Jean pointed out that Monash Council is resurfacing the road in Poath Road between Dandenong Road and North Road, and restructuring the nature strips. This may well include re-landscaping the Community Hall garden.

EVENTS DIARY

APS South East Melbourne

22 January - Committee meeting. Marj's, 36 Voumard St, Oakleigh South 7:45pm

2024 program

5 February – Geoff Lay, “South East Queensland Rainforest”

March - TBA

2 April – Ross Shepherd, “Banksia Arboretum”, Seaford

7 May – David de Angeles, “Frogs” TBC

June, July, August – Winter break

7.

APS Victoria

2024

20 – 24 March – MIFGS, Carlton Gardens/Exhibition Buildings

23,24 March – Cranbourne Friends Autumn Plant Sale

13 April - APS Geelong Plant Sale “Wirrawilla”, Lovely Banks, 8:30 - 4

20 April - APS Yarra Yarra Autumn Plant Sale, 801 Main Rd, Eltham 10 - 4

14 & 15 September – APS Yarra Yarra Australian Plants Expo

21, 22 September – APS Grampians Pomonal Native Flower Show

30 Sept – 4 Oct – ANPSA Biennial conference in Melbourne hosted by APS Vic – see below

PROMOTIONS



The venue has changed to “The Round” in Nunawading. Conference topics include Gardens for Wildlife and Habitat, Restoration and Revegetation of Wetlands, Grasslands and Verges, Care for the Rare, Insects and Biodiversity, Garden Design, Indigenous Food Plants and many more.

Tours before and after will go to Victoria’s best wildflower areas and day excursions will feature new botanic gardens, private gardens and wild areas.

Register your interest through the APS Vic website: <https://apsvic.org.au>

PHOTO GALLERY

Look what the rain brought in to Ray’s back door:



8.

Christmas bells and Christmas orchid photos from Mandy's garden:

