



Dianella admixta

AUSTRALIAN PLANTS SOCIETY
SOUTH EAST MELBOURNE REGION INC.

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MARCH NEWSLETTER 2024

Meetings are held on the first Tuesday of the month, February to May, then September, October and December.

Visitors are always very welcome

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

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

*******DEADLINE FOR THE APRIL NEWSLETTER IS 22ND MARCH*******

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<p>Tuesday 5th March 2023 Hughesdale Community Hall Cnr Poath and Kangaroo Roads, Hughesdale Speakers: Lyn Allison, Friends President, & Rhodwen Cunningham Topic: Westgate Park -Biodiversity and Bili Nursery & Landcare</p> <p>Lyn will talk to us about the history, biodiversity and challenges of Westgate Park, a 40 ha. bushland park situated in the traditional Country of the Bunurong People, near to the Westgate Bridge and surrounding industrial areas of Melbourne. A dedicated group of volunteers have revegetated this site during its 25-year history which now forms an important sanctuary for diverse flora and fauna species.</p> <p>Rhod is Nursery Manager of Bili Nursery and will share her considerable knowledge of wetland plants and their important role in ecosystems encompassing plant types, habitat function and creation, biological filtration and propagation techniques.</p>	<p>Page 1. March meeting Page 2. 2024 rainfall Page 2-4. February Meeting Page 4. February Specimen Table Page 5. Next Meeting Pick of the Bunch Events Diary Page 6. Promotions Pages 6,7 Photo Gallery</p>

2.

RAINFALL FOR 2024 (mm)

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Oakleigh South	135.5												135.5
Highett	107.5												107.5
Hampton													
Cranbourne South													
Elsterwick	112												112
Ashburton													

FEBRUARY MEETING

Topic: SE Queensland rainforests

Speaker: Geoff Lay

With John recovering at home from a hip operation, Chris Bain welcome Geoff and his wife Jannie.

Geoff, in his working life in Insurance, was sent to Queensland for three years. A keen bushwalker and photographer, he and Jannie explored many of the nearby rainforest areas.

He contrasted the Queensland and Victorian forests firstly by pointing out that in Queensland, there were many more cliffs and that these were heavily covered in vegetation.



In the Dry season, there might be no rain for 67 months although there were clouds, often spilling over mountain tops. Camping didn't require tents. However, in the Wet season, by 4pm, rain fell 'in buckets', there was a lot of lightning, crossings were flooded and de-leeching was a regular occurrence.



Unlike the thin trickles falling over the Talangong Falls in Springbrook NP, and the steep Lamington Falls during the Dry, water poured over Blackfellow (left), Purling and Box Falls in the Wet and at natural Arch, a hole in a cave roof allowed water to tumble through the roof. Most falls had tracks behind them allowing them to be viewed from behind.

Geoff showed the heavily vegetated Purlingbrook Valley. At the bottom, mosses, lichens and fungi grew profusely and hikers felt claustrophobic. Palms and ferns were thick enough that he could not see the sky.

Some of the plants Geoff featured were:

- Horribly prickly, group of three:
 - Calamus (Wait-a-While) which snags and won't let you go
 - Dendrocnide moroides* (stinging tree – effects can last up to six months)
 - Linospadix monostachy* (walking stick palm)
- Strangler fig – can grow very massive. A fig is deposited up high in a tree, then its roots strike downwards and eventually strangle, and kill, the original host.
- Buttress roots on many trees eg *Argyrodendron actinophyllum* (Brown Tulip Tree)
- Vines of many kinds – not good for swinging on Tarzan style – there's no room

3.

5. *Nothofagus moorei* (Antarctic Beech) – trunks usually covered in moss, lichen etc. Some trees could be 1000 years old
6. Bunya Pine (*Araucaria bidwillii*) – monster nuts, usually eaten by animals as soon as they hit the ground.
7. *Araucaria cunninghamii* (Hoop pine)
8. Birds nest ferns, elk ferns, stag ferns spread in profusion along the branches of big trees
9. Smaller ferns eg *Blechnums*
10. Mosses eg *Dawsonia superba* which can get to 30cm high. This one does grow in Victoria too.
11. Mistletoes – we saw four – mostly red flowering
12. *Pandorea pandoreana* – extremely thick stems in the forests
13. *Doryanthes palmeri* – the one that arches over. Big red flowers.
14. Group of: Black Bean (*Castanospermum australe*), Cunjevoi lily (*Alocasia brisbanensis*) and *Solanum corifolium* with its many barbs
15. *Callistemon montanus* and *Melastoma affina*
16. *Callerya megasperma* – the native wisteria. This one growing on Geoff and Jannie's house – can take up to 10 years to flower, has big seeds, right.
17. *Dendrobium speciosum* flowers well on the forest floor. We also saw the Christmas orchid (*Calanthe triplicata*) and *Sarcochilus fitzgeraldii* which grows in canyons
18. Leafless orchids like the climber *Pseudovanilla foliata* below, and



Dendrobium gracilicaule also were shown.

Geoff is particularly fond of fungi so we saw ghost fungi, coral fungi (*Ramaria* sp) and *Hericium coralliodes* (cream fingers), goblets, brackets and a blue fungus *Arrhenia*.

He noted that the death cap fungus, with white gills and a white ring, appears all over the world, its toxicity varying according to the matter it feeds on. The weed fungus,

Favolaschia calocera right, has spread throughout the east coast as far down as Wilson's prom, mostly due to tourist feet carrying it from place to place. Geoff also

commented that fungi needed to be imported for pine trees as they struggled otherwise.



Some of the fauna associated with the rainforests were:

Hand sized snails, blue crayfish, a fish eating spider which is bigger than a human hand, has thin long legs showing stripes, a frog camouflaged as a leaf, a lace monitor and a red triangle slug, brush turkey, regent bower bird (his photo showed some of the



collection of blue objects decorating the bower), butterflies, and a wampoo pigeon.

4.



Geoff finished his presentation with a few photos of massive rocks (Bald Rock left, showing weathering, Pyramids at Girraween NP and Eye of the Needle, a gap between two rocks and showing a boronia.

A really interesting night, thanks Geoff. Let's hope we can get him back soon for another talk.

FEBRUARY SPECIMEN TABLE

Mandy and Marj were our two contributors.

Mandy:

- Blue flowering *Trachymene coerulea*, Blue Lace Flower or Rottneest Daisy, right, has self- seeded through Mandy's garden creating a lovely haze. Her plants grow to 1.5m tall and the seeds flick off readily when ripe.
- *Pelargonium striatellum* "Edna Walling" below left, needs full sun and suckers heavily.



- *Acacia sertiformis* is growing to 2m x 3m, has a weeping canopy, and yellow spherical flowers which appear all summer and sporadically through the year.



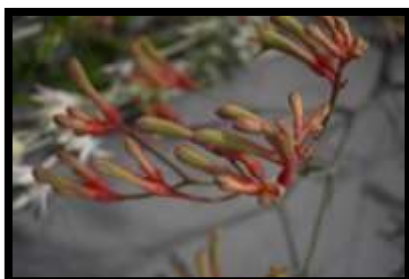
- The weeping snow gum, right, *Eucalyptus lacrimans* from NSW (Tathra?) becomes a big tree, has creamy white flowers and a white trunk – possums live in hers.

Marj:

- Quite a few daisies are still flowering – she has two forms of *Chrysocephalum apiculatum*, a small green form and a larger silver-leaved form, *Xerochrysum bracteatum* in pink and darkish red as well as a large yellow form which she usually grows from cuttings, and brachyscome sp.



- *Actinotus helianthi* – flannel flower. Her two plants are in semi-shade and protected from winds. They have been flowering for over two months but Marj is not sure if she is going to be successful growing from the seed. Cuttings have failed so far.
- Bright pink *Rhododendron lochiaie* has very shallow roots but is growing well in a pot.
- Kangaroo paw, *Anigozanthus flavidus* has hung on well – will need cutting to the ground soon to help in controlling fungus diseases though she didn't have too much this year.



5.

NEXT MEETING

Supper: Jean Staunton (remember some milk please)

Write-up: Gillian Jervis

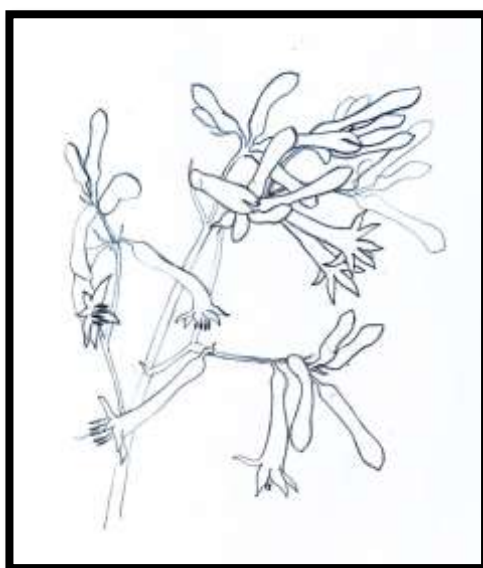
Pick of the Bunch February 2023

Kangaroo paw: *Anigozanthus flavidus*

Anigozanthus flavidus Redoute Tall Kangaroo Paw

Specimen grown by Marj Seaton

Anigozanthus flavidus is a strappy leaved, rhizomatous perennial that can form clumps 350 – 450mm high and up to a metre across. The flower spikes are branched and can be up to two metres tall. The usual flower colour is a pale greenish yellow but other colour variants exist e.g. pink, red. It is found in the lower south west of Western Australia from south of Perth to just east of Albany growing in a wide range of soils types.



A. flavidus is the most widely cultivated of the kangaroo paw species due its robust nature even in humid climates where other members of the genus struggle. It has been used in the hybridization with the other species of the genus to create a wide range of flower colours and growth habits.

In cultivation it will grow in full sun or partial shade in a range of soil types. Propagation is from seed or division of the rhizomes. Hybrid forms of kangaroo paw are propagated commercially using tissue culture.

Anigozanthus is a member of the Haemodoraceae family which contains other genera such as *Blancoa*, *Conostylis*, *Macropidia* (Black kangaroo paw) and *Tribonanthes*. There are eleven species of kangaroo paw, all of which occur in Western Australia. The Western Australian floral emblem is the red and green kangaroo paw *Anigozanthus manglesii*.

The name *Anigozanthos*, from ‘*anisos*’ the Greek for “unequal” and ‘*anthos*’, “flower” with the ‘g’ inserted for euphony. The specific name ‘*flavidus*’ is from the Latin meaning yellow in reference to the usual yellowish flower colour.

EVENTS DIARY

APS South East Melbourne

5 March – Lyn Allison and Rhodwen Cunningham “Westgate Park”

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

7 May – David de Angeles, “Frogs” TBC

June, July, August – Winter break

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

From Mandy’s backyard:



7.

Marj and Norm recently had a short trip to Bombala and Merimbula. The Bombala River has a platypus viewing area in a surrounding natural reserve on the Bombala river. Initially the reserve was planted with a lot of *Themeda triandra* but this has since been over-run with weed grasses and St. John's Wort (*below with Eucalypt*). The Eucalypts in the area include *E. delegatensis*. As the platypus only came to the surface quickly to breathe before diving again, it wasn't possible to get good photographs of any platypus but the scenery was great.

