



*Patersonia occidentalis*

## Australian Plants Society – South Gippsland Group Newsletter November 2022

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### The Mine Cafe and Wonthaggi Seedbank outing November 16<sup>th</sup>

In a month that presented fairly typical South Gippsland spring rain and cold temperatures, we were lucky enough to avoid the rain and enjoyed some blue skies over Wonthaggi.

The visit for a cuppa at The Mine Cafe was a well attended part of the outing with 18 participants. We were most likely the noisiest group in the well patronized cafe. It is heartening to see so many friends making connections every month.

Our group adjourned to the small theatre for the presentation by Belinda Brennan. Belinda provided an outline of the South Gippsland Landcare Fund and its purpose. The committee of Australian Plants Society South Gippsland are considering a donation to this program. Belinda has provided some details which are attached to this email.





Belinda Brennan representing South Gippsland Landcare speaking to Australian Plants Society members about the South Gippsland Landcare fund



Graeme Rowe (right) welcoming Australian Plants Society visitors to Wonthaggi Seedbank facility. L to R – President - Jim L, Lyn L, Jenny & Paul S. ,Vicki P. ,Coral H.

The Wonthaggi Seedbank is a short walk from the cafe and we were greeted by Graeme and Margaret Rowe, members of APS South Gippsland and the Wonthaggi Seedbank. The secretary, Margaret Barnard provided an informative presentation about the background and current operation of the Wonthaggi Seedbank, its aims and outcomes.

The integrity of seed source is paramount to the group. They no longer sell seed to landowners to grow the plants, but plant the seeds and manage the seedlings through various stages, eventually selling the tubes for \$1.65 each. Understandably, their order books are closed for 2023, and if you wish to purchase plants for 2024 – you have to be quick!

The journey of a seed from collection, drying, separating, sorting, sieving, storing, cataloguing, planting, pricking out, repotting, watering, uploading to online order system, managing the orders and eventually selling are tasks all completed by volunteers! A mammoth undertaking and a group that sometimes have a wait list for members wishing to join them. An enviable situation for the group.

After the presentation in the shed, our group toured the many growing tunnels, some covered in shade cloth, some in plastic, depending on the purpose of the tunnel in the journey of growing plants.

Some plants propagated are aquatic growing plants – think bogs, wetland plants...spied behind a tunnel were some flowering *Utricularia dichotoma* – fairies aprons.

We were offered free seedlings of *Pomaderris elliptica* which were grown from seed collected at Dinah F. place. Have you planted yours yet? Mine is in our revegetation forest.

Though the weather started well, it quickly deteriorated and we decided not to visit the Rifle Range for a spring walk. With the recent high rainfall, it was decided the visit would be very wet and muddy. We will keep that visit for another date.



L to R: Some of the many tools used to separate seeds from plant material...has anyone lost a knitting needle? Margaret R. giving us a tour of one of the tunnels, look closely there are seeds in those pots.



Left *Utricularia dichotoma* – fairies aprons  
Above an inside view of the cool room used for storing seeds

## **December Christmas twilight meeting at Diane and Ross G. Korumburra South**

**Date:** Wednesday, 14<sup>th</sup> December

**Time:** from 5pm for a walk in the forest  
from 6pm for a walk in the garden

**Place:** Contact : [southgippsland@apsvic.org.au](mailto:southgippsland@apsvic.org.au) for more information

**What to bring:** Gumboots, a warm jumper or coat – we aim to sit outdoors, weather permitting. Chair, food, plate/cutlery.

**Supplied:** A hot water urn will be available with tea, coffee and cups too.

Please be mindful of covid safe practices, if you have a sniffle, sore throat or cough, please get tested. Covid symptoms can be minor with just one of the symptoms. We will be sitting indoors if the weather is not good.

### **Background.**

We purchased this green field block of 6 acres mid 2010. It came with 1 old tree, a leaky dam and no fencing.

The forest areas are all revegetated with the help of friends over 3 separate planting events. The oldest trees were planted in 2010, the weekend after we settled the purchase and are near the entry gate. These trees were funded by a South Gippsland Landcare grant which enabled us to buy the trees and tree guards. The youngest plantings are from around 2014, also a grant from Bass Coast Landcare.

The revegetation planting design is 'islands' of trees for ease of access for weed management. We have named the zones for ease of understanding the area being referenced in conversation amongst ourselves. Friends forest – the first tree planting with friends in 2010. Aerodrome view corner (once with a view of the aerodrome, but no more as the trees are tall), Western Front, the Somme – very boggy and muddy and likely to lose the gumboot in this area, Paddock Patch – initially just a 'patch of trees in the paddock', Picnic Pinnacle – a very slight rise in the paddock, the place we used to picnic in the shade of the single tree before the driveway or house existed.

Mowing of the paddock area is done with a 2m wide mid deck mulching mower. The islands also allow us to wander around and through the plantings which makes for an easy exploration of the forest while listening to the seasonally changing bird calls. We don't seem to have a rabbit problem, as Mr & Mrs Fox are about.

The home is built with north sun orientation, hi-spec, thick building insulation, double glazed windows. We wanted a flat home site and the embankment to the north is due to the excavation of the house site. The embankment is planted with a range of plants with different heights with the intention of obscuring the neighbouring houses, without shading the house. This has worked, but the wind is fierce in this slice of Gippsland and comes from all directions including a regular easterly. We have lost many a garden plant to the winds including the scion of grafted plants separated from the root graft, oh well! A garden in dynamic, never static.

On the west side of the driveway near the house is a Mallee eucalyptus area, but it gets hammered by the northerly and westerly winds and is slowly being converted to anything that can survive these conditions. We had 3 very healthy *Eucalyptus mcquoidii* growing that have all died over a few months this winter. *Eucalyptus erythrocorys* is the most recent dead specimen in this area.

A collection of *Banksia* sits west of the water tank, but equally dispersed amongst the other well drained sloped areas of the garden.

We have planted with a 'picking garden' in mind so a mixture of South African species intersperses with native plants from many dry, arid and varied locations of Australia. Additionally, there is a 'foreign zone' with roses, *Daphne*, *Salvia* and annuals.

A zone of vegetable boxes and fruit orchard makes up other areas of the garden



Some photos of Diane & Ross's garden

## **The new- new APS South Gippsland email address**

Since the last newsletter announcing the new APS South Gippsland email address, more technology connections have been made to raise the profile of APS South Gippsland.

You will notice that your newsletter comes from an email address:

[southgippsland@apsvic.org.au](mailto:southgippsland@apsvic.org.au)

This email address is 'linked' with the Australian Plants Society Victoria group and indicates the connection to this group.

Have you recently looked at the APS Victoria website and the South Gippsland group listing? It's been updated and has the new contact information listed.

### **Meetings 2023**

If you have a suggestion for a meeting idea, please email the committee [southgippsland@apsvic.org.au](mailto:southgippsland@apsvic.org.au) with your ideas. New ideas are always welcome!



### **February 2023 Summer Twilight meeting**

Traditional Twilight meeting

When: Wednesday, 8<sup>th</sup> February 2023

Where: Korumburra Botanic Gardens walk and picnic

Time: from 5pm

Bring the usual items to the twilight picnic your chair, plates, cutlery, drink glasses, food and refreshments etc and warm clothing for sitting outside. Binoculars too!

Located just a few minutes north from the town centre, the Botanic Gardens are a little-known gem of the town. The sprawling 12-acre garden features beautiful wooded areas of established trees – a mix of European trees and natives, some over 100 years old. These provide a stunning background for the Korumburra Tourist Park (caravan park).

There are several walking paths around the park, including between Bridge St and Bourke St. Olsen's Walk follows the banks of Coalition Creek across picturesque foot bridges and wanders through mostly native bush land. It is 700m in length and takes approximately 15 minutes. This walk presently needs some maintenance and may not be accessible in February 2023.

As you stroll, you'll be greeted by and hear a variety of bird life and most likely see some native birds.

Open grassy areas offer visitors a relaxing environment for a picnic and a wonderful place to stroll or rest. There is also an undercover dining area, including two rotundas with tables, but **no public toilets or BBQ.**

The park is dog-friendly with both on-leash and off leash areas. Car parking inside the gates from Bridge St.

PS. The Botanic Park logo was designed and drawn by very talented artist and APS South Gippsland member Vicki Philipson.

### **Meeting 8 March 2023**

When: Wednesday, 8<sup>th</sup> March

Where: Inverloch

Time: Afternoon

The committee is still finalising the speaker, but it is a unexpected 'out of the area' presenter. More information to come

### **A few words from our Treasurer , Coral H....**

*....Just off the South Gippsland Highway, on the Leongatha side of Korumburra is Ritchie's Reserve. It is the only remaining patch, for people to experience, the Damp Forest / Riparian Forest which once covered much of South Gippsland, before clearing started.*

*This makes it a wonderful haven for native wildlife and birds. In recent years the reserve has welcomed back the Strzelecki/South Gippsland Koala*

*The six hectares reserve also contains the remains of many coal mining spots. I believe that it goes down to the edge of Coal Creek.*

*In the last couple of years the Friends of Ritchies Reserve has reformed and now have a working bee there every second Sunday of the month , 10 - 12, to remove weeds and plant suitable understory etc.*

*So... in October APS South Gippsland donated 200 black mesh, recycled plastic, 900cm high tree guards and 400 wooden stakes to assist the workers in preventing the local wildlife from demolishing the plants before they get a chance to fend for themselves.*

*The guards will be able to be removed at a suitable time and then reused. Graeme R., one of our members, expressed his delight in the new tree guards and Ian S. and Dick L. are also part of that team and past/current members of APS.*

If you would like to read a little bit more here are some links I have enjoyed reading, so grab a cuppa...

Trees of Lavers Hill:

[https://www.abc.net.au/news/2022-11-20/gardens-trees-otways-rare-collection-royal-botanic-gardens/101499128?utm\\_campaign=abc\\_news\\_web&utm\\_content=link&utm\\_medium=content\\_shared&utm\\_source=abc\\_news\\_web](https://www.abc.net.au/news/2022-11-20/gardens-trees-otways-rare-collection-royal-botanic-gardens/101499128?utm_campaign=abc_news_web&utm_content=link&utm_medium=content_shared&utm_source=abc_news_web)

...and for something a bit more local:

<https://www.basscoastpost.com/ed-thexton/the-mighty-ayr>

Enjoy!