

# Australian Plants Society Wangaratta Inc.

## April 2023 Newsletter

Meetings are held in the Masonic Lodge Hall, 101 Appin Street, Wangaratta, @ 7pm on the 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of months February to November, except for the month of July.

Outings are held on a Saturday or Sunday following each meeting. Refer to the Calendar of Events for details.

Visitors are always welcome.



Our guest speaker for April will be Adrian Wells. His topic is the Wetlands of the Murray-Darling River system.

The rivers and creeks of the Murray-Darling Basin flow through Queensland, New South Wales, the Australian Capital Territory, Victoria and South Australia. The 77000km of waterways that make up the Basin link 23 catchments over an area of 1 million km<sup>2</sup>.

### Outing for Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> April 2023.

TIME – FROM 12 NOON.

310 SESSIONS ROAD, KILLAWARRA.

We will be visiting the lovely and unique garden of Glen and Heather Miles. The garden, like all 'real' gardens, is a work in progress .... There are re-vamped Australian plants garden areas, mature plantings, a rose garden, a wonderful veggie garden and an even more amazing herb garden, a water feature, a fruit orchard, a fantastic straw-bale residence, breath-taking views, and much more.

**Locality map is included in this newsletter.**

**BRING:** Folding chair, your own lunch & afternoon tea to share.  
Heather and Glen will provide tea, coffee, etc.

# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

DATE	EVENT	DETAILS
<b>APRIL 2023</b>		
Thursday 27 <sup>th</sup>	Club Meeting	7pm. Guest Speaker, Adrian Wells. Wetlands of the Murray Darling River System.
Sunday 30 <sup>th</sup>	Outing	12 noon Visit to garden of Glen & Heather Miles.
<b>MAY</b>		
Thursday 27 <sup>th</sup>	Club Meeting	7pm. Books that have inspired us with gardening. Leader: Janice Jones.
Sunday 28 <sup>th</sup>	Outing	10.30 for 11am To the garden of Gillian Anderson and Paul Derezycki at Hamilton Park.
<b>JUNE</b>		
Thursday 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Club meeting	7pm. John van Riet. .The History and Art of Botanical Illustration.
Sunday 25 <sup>th</sup>	Outing	10.30 for 11am. Warby Ranges Arboretum .Details TBC.
<b>JULY</b>		
<b>For the month of July there will not be a Club meeting.</b>		
There will be an exhibition of Botanical Embroidery, Fabric Art and Botanical illustration created by our past and present members in the Bainz Gallery in the Wangaratta Library , Docker Street, Wangaratta.		
Wednesday 19 <sup>th</sup>	Committee Meeting	5pm. Freemasons Hall meeting room.
<b>AUGUST</b>		
Thursday 24 <sup>th</sup>	AGM & Dutch Auction	7pm Freemasons Hall.
Sunday 27 <sup>th</sup>	Outing	Kaluna Park , Wangaratta. TBC.
<b>SEPTEMBER</b>		
Wednesday 20 <sup>th</sup>	Committee Meeting	5pm Freemasons Hall meeting room.
Thursday 28 <sup>th</sup>	Club Meeting	Details TBC
<b>OCTOBER</b>		
Sunday 1 <sup>st</sup>	Outing	10.30 for 11am. Mary Reid's garden.
Thursday 26 <sup>th</sup>	Club Meeting	Details TBC
Sunday 29 <sup>th</sup>	Outing	10.30 for 11am. Waratah time @ Malcolm and Mirella McKinnon's Garden.
<b>NOVEMBER</b>		
Wednesday 15 <sup>th</sup>	Committee meeting	5pm Freemasons Hall meeting room.
Thursday 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Club meeting	Details TBC
Sunday 26 <sup>th</sup>	Outing	Christmas Party . Details TBC
<b>DECEMBER</b>		
Saturday 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Propagating Day	Details TBC

## FROM THE EDITOR – Helen van Riet.

We give our sincere thanks to Glenda Datson, who, for personal reasons, has retired from the position of Editor of our Wangaratta Australian Plants Society newsletter. Our membership is widely scattered across north-east Victoria, and the timely and detailed information that our newsletter provides is a vital link to the continuing vitality of our club.

This edition of your newsletter is focused particularly on the vital role of citizen science in disseminating knowledge, advancing scientific study and the wholesome appreciation of all things living. Pina Tiso gave us a fascinating presentation on the citizen science website iNaturalist, in March. In this newsletter she has provided further info and encouragement for us all to download the app. and get clicking and posting. Thank you Pina!

Our outing in April was to Helen Wrigley's garden and our special guest was Karen Retra, native bee specialist. We were enthralled by her enthusiastic presentation, and, charged up with inspiration, ventured forth into Helen's garden to discover, click and post numerous photos of native bees, insects and other crawlly or buzzy things. I've included an article from Western Sydney University on Aussie Pollinators which are essential for food crops.



Recently John and I had a brief trip to South Australia for a family celebration. En route we stayed with Pat and Mary Ward in Portland. Pat and Mary were strong supporters of our Wangaratta APS group for many years. Mary's fruit cake was famous for entertaining Wangaratta APS members on the many occasions that we enjoyed their generous hospitality and Australian garden at Peechelba.

With Pat and Mary we visited what is called "Nuns' Bush" – a unique patch of bushland close to Portland, originally intended as the site for a Catholic School, but now being cared for by Friends of Nun's Bush. The Great Southcoast Walk traverses this patch of bushland.

In South Australia, we stayed with family at Victor Harbour, and travelled via the Coorong, skirting Lake Alexandrina, crossing the Murray River by ferry at Wellington.

Near Wellington is the wonderful Pangarinda Botanic Gardens, situated on 30 hectares of Crown Land just ½ km east of the ferry. The gardens have an extensive network of trails throughout the property. We stopped to enjoy the gardens both on the way to Victor Harbour and on our return journey. We strongly recommend a visit if you are travelling in the area.



We stopped in Horsham with friends Graeme and Maree Goods. Graeme's photographs of Australian Birds are beautiful. They have recently retired from their farm and retired into Horsham. Their new garden is progressing well, featuring – unsurprisingly – eremophilas.

They have been instrumental in designing and planting an extensive garden around the new Horsham Church of Christ, and we were privileged to have a guided tour and, inevitably, brought back a bag full of special cuttings and a tray of newly propagated plants for our garden.



Our group has been active over the past two months –firstly with an information session on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> March at the Wangaratta Library which was organised by President Janice, and very well attended. On Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> April our group held a plant stall at the Eldorado Off-Grid Living Festival. We made a tidy profit from the sale of plants and were kept busy with providing information and chatting to enquirers. Our thanks to all the volunteers, propagators and supporters of these events which continue to 'fly the flag' for 'Growing Australian'.

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## iNaturalist – from Pina Tiso



Following on from my introductory talk on iNaturalist at the last Wangaratta APS meeting, I hope that members have had a chance to explore the iNaturalist App and perhaps even posted some observations for identification. As I indicated in my talk, there are many more observations of animals than there are of plants, so I encourage people to contribute observations of plants, especially in the natural environment.

Some of you may be wondering what the connection between iNaturalist and the APS is. I think there are numerous connections, however for me personally the most important one ties in with the aim of the APS to conserve native plants in their original environments. In reviewing the plant species records in the Atlas of Living Australia (ALA) for the Alpine National Park and some smaller conservation reserves in Northeast Victoria, I have often

found them to be data deficient, when it comes to plant species. I therefore like to use iNaturalist to help identify plants when I go on bushwalks and post my observations to add to the records. I have also found identifying weeds with iNaturalist very helpful, so that when looking to regenerate a particular area, it helps to assess which plants are in fact weeds and should be removed. Other members of APS help to identify observations made by other users, and in so doing help build up the research quality records which are then uploaded to ALA. Lastly, some APS members have set up projects to collate observations in particular areas or interest, such as the APS Keilor Plains Alpine Trip – Mt Buller 2023.

For anyone who may be interested in exploring iNaturalist further there are some interesting projects which you can view by typing in the project title in the search function on the iNaturalist web page (<https://inaturalist.ala.org.au/>). A few “local” projects which may be of interest are listed here but there are many hundreds of projects on the go. The first is “Wild pollinator Count”, established by Karen Retra in 2019. Although not currently active, it is a great place to view the 502 wild pollinator species identified to date. Another project, created in late March 2023 is “Weeds of Victoria” which as the title suggests aims to create a compendium of weeds found in the state of Victoria. The last project I will mention is called ‘Parks Victoria’. This project is aimed at capturing all taxa located within the areas that Parks Victoria manage, to reflect their biodiversity.

Lastly, it is fungi season and there are many new observations being posted daily of these weird and wonderful taxa.

Editor's note --- Pina provided the following 'how to get started' with iNaturalist after her presentation at our March meeting.

Website for registration <https://inaturalist.ala.org.au/>

Alternatively, you can download the iNaturalist app (the icon is the green bird) on a white background) and register on the app. Any observations you upload on your phone are readily seen when you log into the website and vice-versa (i.e. you do not need to synchronize them).

You will be asked to accept certain terms and conditions. However, you need to be aware that depending on your choice of copyright, other people can use your photos – if this is of concern, you can choose to retain all copyright.

Thomas Mesaglio is an iNaturalist curator, (username thebeahcomber) that has a number of YouTube videos that introduce iNaturalist and share how to make the most of the App. I have chosen two, to get you started.

The first is an introductory one -you can start at the 3-minute and go through to the 40 minute mark – then there is a question/answer for the remainder of the video – some basic and some more advanced.

[https://www.google.com/search?q=youtube+inaturalist+australia+channel&sxsrf=AJOqlzVOE-Q5PsliY4PQ35O6IL\\_nweusQw%3A1679610925055&ei=LdQcZM](https://www.google.com/search?q=youtube+inaturalist+australia+channel&sxsrf=AJOqlzVOE-Q5PsliY4PQ35O6IL_nweusQw%3A1679610925055&ei=LdQcZM)

Thomas is also one of the drivers of the Great Southern Bioblitz in Australia – This second video focuses on using the website version of iNaturalist and is based on a question/answer format. It is extremely helpful, full of tips on how to get the most out of it.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=zSsrQrbbs8I>

## Australia's 2023 Eucalypt of the Year is *Angophora costata*:

**Sydney Red Gum** – This is an edited version contributed by Therese Graham.

It was originally published by [www.eucalyptaustralia.org.au/eucalyptoftheyear](http://www.eucalyptaustralia.org.au/eucalyptoftheyear)

Eucalypt of the Year is an annual competition announced on National Eucalypt Day, 23 March, with voting managed externally by media partner Remember The Wild. National Eucalypt Day is Australia's biggest annual celebration of eucalypts held annually to celebrate and promote Australia's eucalypts and what they mean to our lives and hearts.



Australia's favourite eucalypt for 2023 has been chosen on the tenth anniversary of National Eucalypt Day. With competition even closer than previous years, the 2023 Eucalypt of the Year is revealed to be *Angophora costata*: Sydney Red Gum.

"*Angophora costata* is an absolute stunner with its profusion of showy white flowers, evocative red, orange and salmon hues that capture the changing light and outstretched, contorted limbs. These limbs appear to be welcoming you with open arms. It is known by the Dharawal people of the Sydney region as kajimbourra.

The Sydney Red Gum's presence is synonymous with greater Sydney's coastal sandstone landscape, as well as stretching inland to the Blue Mountains, further south to the NSW South Coast and further north to Coffs Harbour. It typically flowers from October to January.

"This year's favourites are amongst our most widely recognised and commonly planted species. They are part of the Australian psyche, with many planted in suburban parklands and streets in the 70s and 80s.



"In second place is the Lemon-scented Gum: *Corymbia citriodora*. In third place is the Red-flowering Gum: *Corymbia ficifolia* native to the Albany region of WA. It placed second last year



after a battle for recognition from the passionate online Ficifolia fan club.

Last year, *Eucalyptus regnans*: Mountain Ash took out the award.

**EXPLAINER RE: EUCLYPTUS VS EUCLYPTS**-- Quotes attributable to Linda Baird:

"What is fascinating about eucalypts is that they encompass three distinct groups (genera) of eucalyptus (~750), corymbia (~100) and angophora (~10). The three are related and considered under the umbrella "eucalypts" due to a range of similarities. The most obvious difference between the Angophoras and the other two genera is the lack of protective bud cap (the hat on a gumnut baby!) in the former."

"This is the first time a non-Eucalyptus has won in the six years of the competition."

"Angophora are commonly referred to as "Apples", and Corymbia are commonly referred to as "Bloodwoods". Eucalyptus species are often known colloquially by names that allude to their bark-type (e.g. Ironbark, Box, Stringybark). All are known colloquially as 'gumtrees' – a name derived from the sap exuded by many eucalypt species – but most people tend to use that term to refer to eucalypt tree species, rather than mallee or shrub species."

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## **SHOWS, CONFERENCES, PLANT SALES AND OTHER ITEMS OF INTEREST 2023**

Provided by Nicky Zanen, APS Victoria

### **IMPORTANT-- PLEASE CHECK APS VICTORIA WEBSITE FOR CANCELLATIONS**

**13 May 2023** – APS Melton and Bacchus Marsh Plant Sale. 9am to 1pm.

The venue is expected to be St Andrews Uniting Church at Bacchus Marsh, to be confirmed.

**3 June 2023** – APS Victoria Committee of Management Meeting at 10am at Deep Creek Reserve Function Room, 62 Cameron Way, Pakenham.

**24 & 25 June 2023** – APS Ballarat Winter Flower Show. Flower show, plant sales etc. Robert Clark Centre, Ballarat Botanic Gardens, Gilles Street, Ballarat. 10 am – 4 pm.

**22 & 23 July 2023** – Cranbourne Friends RBGV Autumn Plant Sale. 10 am to 4 pm. Wide range of plants, plant list available one week before sale. Website: [rbgfriencscranbourne.org.au](http://rbgfriencscranbourne.org.au)

**2 September 2023** – APS Cardinia Region Group Plant Sale at Akoonah Park, Princes Hwy, Berwick, from 9 am to 3 pm. To be located in the undercover fruit and vegetable market area.

**9 & 10 September 2023** - APS Yarra Yarra Australian Plants Expo, Eltham Community & Reception Centre, 801 Main Road Eltham. 10.00 am - 4.00 pm both days.

**16 & 17 September 2023** – Angair Wildflower Show & Art Show, Anglesea Memorial Hall, McMillan Street, Anglesea. 10 am to 4 pm. Wildflower display, indigenous plant sales, art show and painting sales.

**23 & 24 September 2023** – APS Bendigo Flower Show, Victory College, Kairn Road, Strathdale (Bendigo).

**23 & 24 September 2023** – APS Grampians host APS Vic September COMM.

**30 September & 1 October 2023** – APS Grampians Group Pomonal Native Flower Show, Pomonal Hall.

**7 October 2023** – APS Echuca Moama Native Flower Showcase, Echuca Masonic Lodge Hall, 426 High Street, Echuca. 9 am to 4 pm. Flower show, native plant sales, basket weaving display, floral art and painting sales.

**14 October 2023** – APS Mitchell Plant Expo and Sale. Wallan Community Centre, Bentinck Street, Wallan. From 9 am to 3 pm.

**21 & 22 October 2023** - APS Ballarat Spring Flower Show. Flower show, plant sales etc. Robert Clark Centre, Ballarat Botanic Gardens, Gilles Street, Ballarat. 10 am – 4 pm.

**21 & 22 October 2023** - Cranbourne Friends RBGV Autumn Plant Sale. 10 am to 4 pm. Wide range of plants, plant list available one week before sale. Website: [rbgfriencscranbourne.org.au](http://rbgfriencscranbourne.org.au)

**30 September to 4 October, 2024** – ANPSA 2024 Biennial Conference in Melbourne hosted by APS Victoria.

# Five surprising Aussie pollinators that make your dinner possible

by [Western Sydney University](#)



We owe such a lot to the humble European honeybee. For an insect that was only brought to Australia in 1822, it has become well-established as one of our most important crop-pollinating insects.

But honeybees are under threat from pests and environmental changes that have caused widespread colony collapse around the world. That's one

reason why there's growing interest in Australia's native pollinators that keep our food and natural ecosystems ticking along.

Australian Pollinator Week is all about raising awareness of the important role of pollinators so that we can look after them and ensure they are ready to pollinate our orchards, fields and forests.

Professor James Cook of the Hawkesbury Institute for the Environment at Western Sydney University shares his top five native pollinating superheroes:

1. Native bees: with around 2000 species of native bees in Australia, these little beauties are well-adapted to our native flowers and many are surprisingly active on our fruit crops. Many of them live on their own in the ground or in plant stems – you can even build them a home with a Bee Hotel.
2. Flying Foxes: these nocturnal pollinators love the sweet nectar of native flowers. Flying foxes can be absolutely covered in pollen and are essential in the health of native forest ecosystems and as pollinators.
3. Flies and Butterflies: even those pesky blowflies that bother us in summer are actually important pollinators – in fact, they are important pollinators of avocados and coffee plants! Your Saturday brunch just wouldn't be the same without them!
4. Moths: flowers of some fruit crops like Pawpaw only open at night and attract moths as pollinators. Moth-pollinated flowers are often white or translucent and can be fragrant to attract moths by their scent.
5. Birds: Many native bird favourites such as lorikeets and honeyeaters perform pollination services for native plants, often emerging covered in pollen that they move between flowers as they feed on the nectar of native trees.

"Around the world, European honeybees have been severely affected by pests like the Varroa mite, loss of flowers for food and nesting habitat, and climate-change events such as increasing drought," explains Professor Cook.

"That's why it's so important that we all look after the wide variety of pollinators that live in Australia by giving them food, shelter and habitat. It's for our own food security too, as well as their survival."

James explains that there are several really simple tips you can do in your own garden to encourage pollinators:

- Plant a landscape or garden with diverse species, including trees such as flowering eucalypts, mid-height species like lilly-pilly, Grevillea, Callistemon and Leptospermum and ground level plants such as our native Australian daisies, as well as our favourite culinary herbs – and leave some of the flowering weeds in place too, as plants like dandelions are excellent bee pantries
  - Don't regularly mow the lawn to extremely short – plenty of grasses and other ground covers provide food and habitat
  - Leave some patches of exposed, well-drained earth for ground-dwelling solitary bees to nest in
  - Check small cracks / holes in masonry or brickwork for solitary bees before deciding to fill them.
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## The Secret Sex Life of Ferns --- Helen van Riet



There are many ferns native to Australia. Some, such as Maidenhair fern [*Adiantum aethiopicum*], Kangaroo Fern [*Microsorium pustulatum*] [pictured above], and Fishbone fern [*Nephrolepis cordifolia*] are household names which have been mainstays of gardeners for generations.

Ferns are a very ancient life form. They evolved long before the advent of flowering plants. Ferns reproduce by rhizomes or spores or both. Rhizomes

are readily visible. Reproduction by spores is not so obvious. The spores are carried on the undersides of mature fern fronds in groups called sporangia [see above]. These germinate in moist conditions to form the sexual stage of the fern. This is a small flat plate called a prothallus - a bit like a liverwort in appearance. On this plate both male and female sexual organs are created and, in the presence of water, combine to form a young fern with roots extending from the underside of the prothallus. The young plants grow on to form asexual mature ferns, which, in turn produce spores for the next generation. Sometimes, in a moist, shady area of our garden, a new fern will appear unannounced. This 'happenstance' is a useful way to propagate new ferns. Keep a sharp lookout for new baby ferns emerging near the mother plant. When they are established, they can be pricked out and planted in other areas of the garden.

In the commercial horticultural industry, spores are propagated in a sterile environment in laboratory conditions. For the home gardener, a non-sterile method may be used with varying success. Sterilize a mix of 50/50 cocopeat and perlite with boiling water and place in a tray or dish. A soft terra-cotta house brick can be used as an alternative growing medium. Sow the spores onto the medium, cover with plastic or glass, place in a shady,

well-lit spot and keep moist. When flat plates develop into young ferns, prick these out into individual pots.

Not all ferns are ground-dwellers. Look up! A lovely epiphyte is the Elkhorn fern [*Platycerium bifurcatum*]. This fern forms large clumps and occurs naturally in rainforest and moist gullies of eastern Australia. It reproduces via rhizomes or spores. Young rhizomes can be attached to slabs of hardwood or wired onto a living tree in filtered sun with good air movement. Water regularly and feed with light dressings of blood and bone or well-rotted animal manure. The Elkhorn [pictured above] is a family heirloom and is about 35 years old. It is happily growing under the eaves, on the south side of our house, attached to fork in a Japanese maple.



Do you have a book on Australian plants which has inspired or encouraged you?

Maybe you have a favourite which you have read to your children or grandchildren?

President Janice will facilitate our meeting on Thursday May 25<sup>th</sup>. The topic is **BOOKS THAT HAVE INSPIRED US WITH GARDENING**.

You are invited to A 'SHOW AND TELL' about one [or more] books that have piqued your interest, helped you along your gardening path, provided enjoyment, humour, entertainment, maybe even tears.....

Start checking out your bookshelves now for your star selections to share at our May meeting!

At each of our meetings we feature what is flowering or is of interest in our gardens. Therese Graham is the coordinator of the Plants Display Table, and is providing us with laminated categorised labels to assist in identifying the plants that we bring. Pictured is Jenny Davidson and John van Riet checking out the distinctive botanical features of a member's contribution at our March meeting.



The Australian Plants Society (Victoria) is dedicated to promoting, growing and the conservation of Australian native plants, in gardens, community areas and their original environments.

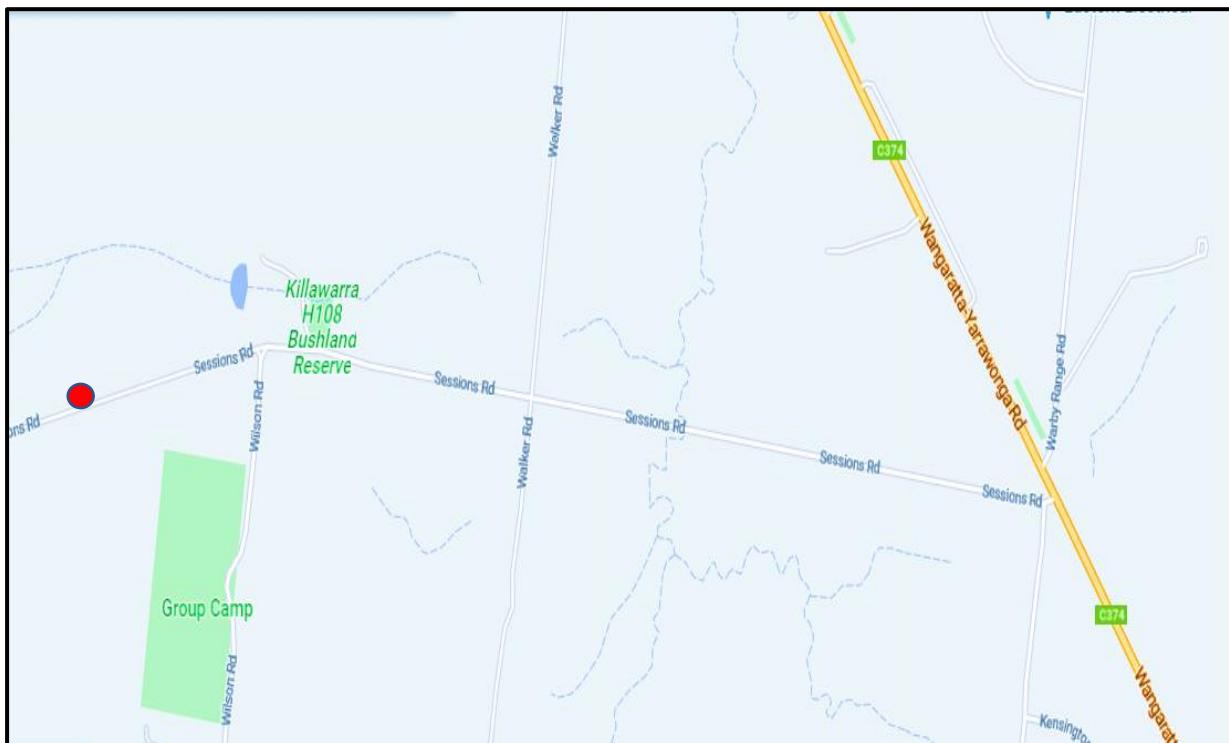
This is a reminder that you can access the latest "*Growing Australian*" magazine through the APS Victoria web-site. For those who may not be familiar with this, here's the sequence: <https://apsvic.org.au>

Open the Members area with the password **22&epacris**. Scroll across the headers in the Members area & click on "*Growing Australian*". Open the latest edition by clicking on the date.

**MAP --- 310 SESSIONS ROAD, KILLAWARRA.**  
**Outing on Sunday April 30<sup>th</sup> to the home of Glen & Heather Miles**

Sessions Road runs off Yarrawonga Road, towards the Warby Ranges. No. 310 is exactly 3.10km from the Wangaratta/Yarrawonga Road intersection.

It is mainly unsealed. There is a sealed section from the junction with Wilson Rd. which becomes unsealed at the gate of the Miles' Garden. The driveway slopes upwards towards the residence. The car parking area near the house and main garden will be clearly indicated.



**Your Committee:**

**President:** Janice Jones 0427 319 943 wang.jones@bigpond.com

**Vice-President:** John Van Riet (03) 57 257 207 helenvanriet@bigpond.com

**Secretary:** John Podubinski: 0428 360 787 j.podubinski@gmail.com

**Treasurer:** Joanne Diver 0412 985 501 divers@aappt.net.au

**Membership Officer:** Gillian Anderson (03) 5766 2397 pdga280@bigpond.com

**Newsletter Editor:** Helen van Riet 0401 021 448 helenvanriet@bigpond.com

**APS Vic. Representative & Specimen Table:** Therese Graham 0407 563 614

**Non-official Roles:**

Jenny Davidson 0418169917

Helen Wrigley (03) 5722 2824

Rosemary Buchanan (Supper Roster) 0428998336

Joye Podubinski 0403048791