



Australian Plants Society Wangaratta Inc.

October 2023 Newsletter

Meetings are held in the Masonic Lodge Hall, 101 Appin Street, Wangaratta, @ 7pm, usually on the 4th Thursday of months of February, March, April, May, June, August, September, October & November.

Outings are usually held on a Saturday or Sunday following each meeting. Refer to the Calendar of Events for details. This month in lieu of the October outing we held a propagating day on 15th October.

Propagation Days are held on selected Saturdays.

The next meeting is on Thursday October 26th. The evening will include an information session followed by a workshop on techniques of grafting eremophilas. Details are on Page 4.

Visitors are always welcome.

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CHANGE TO LOG-IN PROCEDURE FOR APS VICTORIA WEBSITE

The Website of APS Victoria is a terrific resource for members and the general public. Much of the website material is publicly available. Your favourite search engine will come up with the home page.-----



There is also a Members Only section. This gives you access to the seed bank, event planning aids, rules and regulations, "Growing Australian Magazine" etc.

There used to be a password to access this area. The system has now become more secure, and you will need to use the email address you used when you signed up as a member of APS Wangaratta & APS Victoria, and your Membership Number. You will also find your Membership Number on the front of the yellow mailing envelope in which you received your "Growing Australian" magazine. The sign-in box looks like this:

 A screenshot of the login form on the Australian Plants Society (Victoria) website. The header is identical to the previous screenshot. Below the navigation menu, there is a login section. It starts with the label "Username or Email" above a text input field containing the email address "helenvanriet@bigpond.com". Below that is the label "Password" with a question mark icon, above a password input field filled with asterisks. Underneath the password field is a reCAPTCHA widget showing a green checkmark and the text "I'm not a robot", along with the reCAPTCHA logo and links for "Privacy" and "Terms". At the bottom of the login section is a blue "Login" button.

Just follow the prompts & enjoy!

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Please note that there will not be an outing in October. In lieu there was a propagating day on Saturday 14th October. Report on page 6.

DATE	EVENT	DETAILS
OCTOBER		
Thursday 26 th	Club Meeting	Club meeting. Grafting Eremophilas – video & workshop. Details on page 4.
Sunday 29 th	NO OUTING.	In lieu of the October outing, we held a propagating day on 14th October.
NOVEMBER		
Wednesday 15 th	Committee meeting	5pm Freemasons Hall meeting room.
Thursday 23 rd	Meeting with Guest Speakers	Guest Speakers – Graham and Maree Goods. “Desert Discovery” - the protection and enhancement of the natural environment in remote regions of Australia.
Sunday 26 th	Outing	10.30 for 11am . Christmas Party. To the home and garden of Jenny & Richard Kjar, Sessions Rd, Killawarra.
DECEMBER		
Saturday 2 nd	Propagating Day	At van Riet’s. 475 Shanley Street, Wangaratta South. 9.30am onwards.
JANUARY 2024		
FEBRUARY		
Saturday 10 th	Propagating day & Committee meeting	At van Riet’s. 475 Shanley Street, Wangaratta South. 9.30am onwards. Committee meeting will follow the lunch break.
Thursday 22 nd	Club meeting	Freemasons Hall Proposed showing of “The Giants” film – story of Bob Brown. TBC
Saturday 24 th	Garden Visit	Outing to the garden of Philippa and Neil Duggan, Boweya. Early evening garden walk and shared BBQ tea. From. 6pm.
MARCH		
Wednesday 5 th	TBC Committee meeting	
Saturday 23 rd	Garden visit	Outing to the garden of John and Trish Gibbons, Mt Beauty. Including tour of the local Landcare Rehabilitation project.
Thursday 28 th	Club meeting	Topic TBC
Sunday 31 st	NO OUTING	Easter Sunday. Note: Date of outing has been changed to Saturday 23rd March.
APRIL		
Saturday 6 th and Sunday 7 th	OFF GRID LIVING FESTIVAL	CHILTERN – Information and publicity & plants for sale.
Thursday 18 th	Club meeting	Guest speaker - Lisa Farnsworth – The Winton Wetlands Rehabilitation Project.
Thursday 25 th	ANZAC DAY	NO MEETING.
Sunday 28 th	Outing	Outing to Winton Wetlands- Leader – Lisa Farnsworth.
MAY		
Thursday 23 rd	Club Meeting	TBC
Sunday 26 th	Outing	TBC
JUNE		
Wednesday 5 th	TBC	Committee meeting
Thursday 27 th	Club Meeting	TBC
Sunday 30 th	Outing	TBC

NEXT MEETING GRAFTING EREMOPHILAS [Emu Bushes]

Thursday October 26th @ 7pm in the Freemasons Hall

Eremophilas – marvellous garden plants --- are drought tolerant, have spectacular flowers and bloom for ages. There are over 260 species, all endemic to Australia.

Some eremophilas are easy to grow from cuttings, but not all. Keeping them growing and flowering in the garden can have challenges. Some require well-drained sandy soils to flourish. Many don't grow easily or reliably from cuttings. There's a solution ----- Grafting onto a rootstock which roots readily from cuttings and tolerates almost all soil and climate conditions is a great way to grow eremophilas in your own garden.

Pictured is a grafted specimen of *Eremophila glandulifera*, growing in Jan Hall's former garden at Yarrowonga.



Come and join in the workshop to learn how to graft your own eremophilas. Please bring along any Eremophila cuttings you would like to try and graft. The rootstock (*Myoporum bateae*) and all equipment needed for the workshop will be provided on the night.

PROPAGATION DAY EQUIPMENT – CAN YOU HELP?

For many years we have been providing Clonex Purple propagation gel free to our members. We purchase the gel in bulk and decant it into smaller containers. We've been fortunate to be able to use & re-use old-fashioned roll film containers. Our stocks are just about zero. Please, if you have any used film containers or small pill bottles with screw-top lids Helen van Riet would be most grateful to receive them. If you would like a refill with Clonex Purple gel, just ask. We have adequate supplies.



Reminder: Clonex Purple gel must be stored under refrigeration.



It would be appreciated if members could bring along any seedling punnets, forestry tubes, and seedling trays so they can be collected in preparation for our next propagation day on Saturday 2nd December (stocks are low and we ran out of some of these items at the last propagating day). Thanks 😊

OUTING ON SUNDAY 1ST OCTOBER TO THE GARDEN OF MALCOLM AND MIRELLA MCKINNON

The day dawned bright and sunny – a great day for a great garden visit. The Waratahs were stunning, as were the



cool shady glades and sweeping vistas.

It was lovely to welcome back Maureen Rae, Arthur Meyers and Joan Cochrane. Our thanks to Malcolm and Mirella for their boundless hospitality at a time when the pressure is on to get the blooms harvested at just the right time and ready for market.



OUR SPRING PROPAGATING DAY



On Saturday 14th October an enthusiastic crew sowed seeds of 13 species of Acacia of differing sizes and habits. We anticipate that they will be ready for pricking out into forestry tubes within about 6 – 8 weeks.

It was a happy day, with lots of chat, cuppas on tap and

yummy treats to provision us. More experienced members helped the new chums who cottoned on rapidly. We produced some hundreds of cuttings which are now under the mister system in the hothouse.

All are welcome to the next propagating day which will be on Saturday December 2nd. We will make more cuttings, prick out those that have rooted into forestry tubes and plant more seeds and maybe try our hand at some more grafting.



Membership Applications & Renewals are now Online

Go to apsvic.org.au/membership and follow the instructions.

Important: Keep your yellow Growing Australian envelope – when renewing your membership, you will need your membership number that is printed on the front. You must use the same email address that you have previously provided to APS Wangaratta. Our new District Group Membership Officer is Linda Huzzey.

If you do not have internet access, please contact Linda on 0439 608 130

or contact APS Vic Membership Officer Marj Seaton on (03) 9570 6293.

Unless your membership renewal is received by 31st October, it will lapse.

GRAND SPRING DISPLAY TABLE IN SEPTEMBER



On Thursday 28th September we held our annual Grand Spring Display Table.



Therese had organised labels and an enthusiastic crew came laden with armfuls and

bucketfuls of lovely blooms. After a short meeting, we put our minds to the task of sorting into genera and species. There were a few 'maybe this, or maybe that' guesstimates.



Notwithstanding, some of us who are skilled with the mobile phone or real reference books managed to track down the names of nearly everything on display. The award for



spectacular effect went to the white Waratah from Therese. Other beauties were too numerous to list.



Ancient clonal tree, King's lomatia, excites scientists in Tasmania's remote south west

By Zoe Kean



Lomatia tasmanica is in the same family as the waratah, grevillea, macadamia and protea. (Supplied: University of Tasmania/Greg Jordan)

Before the last ice age, deep in the mountains and valleys of south-western Tasmania an unusual little sprout grew from a seed.

The plant grew and grew, eventually unfurling deep red flowers, but as the curled petals dropped to the ground no viable seeds formed.

Today, its wild population is limited to just a 1.2 kilometre square and it may be among the world's oldest clonal plants — having grown from a single seed, genetically cloned many times over through the millennia.

New "individuals" formed when underground rhizomes struck out and new shoots appeared. Or when a limb would break off, form its own roots and start to grow. But these new plants were genetically identical, with no sexual reproduction scrambling their genetics and making new seeds. *Lomatia tasmanica* is critically endangered.

The "mysterious plant" had first come to scientific attention when tin miner, environmentalist, bushman, and artist Charles Denison "Deny" King found a

patch in 1934. The first patch of King's lomatia that Deny King found died. He later found a second patch in the 1960s. Mr King, who lived with his family in Tasmania's remote south west for 55 years, gave directions to the one existing population of the plant.

While mining for tin, Mr King had discovered rocks rich in diverse botanical fossils. He alerted researchers to his finds and encouraged them to investigate. Palaeobotanist Greg Jordan from the University of Tasmania was one of the researchers who took him up on that offer.



Among the wealth of preserved species, Professor Jordan found fossilised King's lomatia. He published his findings in 1991, the same year that Mr King died.

The fossils would be carbon-dated to 43,600 years old, but their full significance would not be clear until genetic analysis was conducted on the living population. Each supposedly "individual" plant was genetically identical and therefore a clone originating from a single seed.

Genetic research has since uncovered ancient clonal plants over large areas, such as a seagrass in the Mediterranean thought to be more than 200,000 years old — but this was a new idea at the time.

Genetic analysis also solved the mystery as to why the plant was sterile. Instead of having two sets of chromosomes, King's lomatia has three, making it triploid, and it is very difficult for triploid organisms to reproduce.

The evidence now showed that the entire population was identical, could not reproduce sexually, and there was a fossil showing it lived at least 43,600 years ago. No-one knows what the plant that produced the founding seed was, although *Lomatia tasmanica* is in the same family as the waratah, grevillea, macadamia, and protea.

A triploid is almost always very different from the parent source because the process of becoming triploid changes it a lot. Here we have an individual clone that has had no evolutionary change and has survived through the ice ages. Through massive climate change it survived somehow.

Dr Balmer paid a rare visit to the King's lomatia this year to check on its welfare. She is now a senior ecologist for Tasmania's Department of Natural Resources and Environment and was "reassured" that this unique species is doing well.

The species is vulnerable to fire ... and because it's located over such a small area, disease could easily just come in and wipe it out. To ensure the plants' safety, the location is kept secret and even researchers only go there if necessary. At Hobart's Royal Tasmanian Botanical Gardens an insurance population of plants has been cloned since 2004 to ensure its survival.

FOR OUR GROUP TO CONSIDER...

A NEW INITIATIVE FROM BUNNINGS WANGARATTA – from your Editor.....

I followed up a phone call from the Bunnings Wangaratta Activities Organiser. Here's the information, which we will talk about at our club meeting on Thursday 26th October.

Hi Helen,

Thank you so much for coming into the store today. As discussed, we are holding a Christmas event on the 7th December from 6-8pm and would very much like your organization to attend with an interest table and Christmas craft.

I have also given your email to Karin who runs the Garden corner on the 3rd Sunday in the month from 11-12 so that she may contact you regarding your organization presenting an informative talk or demonstration or both on Australian Plants about which she was very excited.

I also mentioned that we donate gift cards and product to not for profit organizations in our local community to ensure that they continue to grow and are able to pass on their valuable knowledge. If you have any upcoming events that you think we may be able to help with, please contact me.

I look forward to seeing you instore again soon.

Thank you for your time.

Jane,

Bunnings Wangaratta Activities Organiser.



From your Editor.

Please consider writing an article or sending some interesting photos to me. Short or long, every contribution adds to this Newsletter's interest and relevance to our Club. Our Newsletter belongs to all of us! Please give me a ring or text or email if you would like to discuss an idea. Thank you all!

helenvanriet@bigpond.com 04 01021448

Your 2023/2024 Committee:

President: John Van Riet 04 2812 9007 helenvanriet@bigpond.com

Secretary: Pina Tiso 0409 602 885 pinatiso48@gmail.com

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

Membership Officer: Linda Huzzey 0439 608 130 huzzey@westnet.com.au

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

APS Vic. Rep. & Specimen Table: Therese Graham 0407 563 614 therese238@westnet.com.au

Non-official Roles:

Janice Jones 0427 319 943 wang.jones@bigpond.com

Rosemary Buchanan (Supper Roster) 0428 998 336 rosie_buchanan@hotmail.com

Gillian Anderson 0411 111 830 pdga280@bigpond.com

Jenny Davidson 0418 169 917 jennyld.jd@gmail.com

Helen Wrigley (03) 5722 2824 0427 722 824 hjoywrigley@gmail.com