



AUSTRALIAN PLANT SOCIETY

Yarra Yarra Group Inc.

(Incorporation No: A0039676Y)

Newsletter January-February 2023

*Dear Members,
hope you have all had a refreshing break and are ready to participate in another action packed year with us as we celebrate beautiful Australian native flora. Sadly, many of our native plants are endangered and we need your support now more than ever. Join us!*

A warm welcome to new member Deborah Metcalfe.

Editor

Latest News

**Lunch at Montsalvat Sunday 5th of February
Report by our President Peter Smith and
Sonia Gatti. Photos by Sonia Gatti.**

We launched into 2023 with a very successful social event – “Lunch at Montsalvat”. We thought that members might be interested in visiting the Growers’ Group’s new home at Montsalvat and of course take the opportunity to purchase plants! We were right!

A lovely mild Sunday saw a good turnout of newer and older members. Whilst we were still setting things up, people were connecting or reconnecting. The continuing ‘Covid years’ have robbed us all of social interaction, something which we previously often took for granted. Members were very interested in our new set up and asked numerous

questions in relation to how the tunnels were constructed, our watering system and our propagation methods. Many commented on what a great location it was for our group.

Not surprisingly the main attraction was the plants themselves! Members naturally gravitated towards the plants, but on the ringing of the lunchtime bell, members soon settled down into the sharing of stories and food. Carmen gave a general thankyou to all those who have helped and continue to help with the setting up of this venture.

The ambience at Montsalvat suits the Growers’ Group well. Jo Douglas and her group of volunteers responsible for the maintenance of the grounds at Montsalvat are ever friendly and helpful. We hope that we can contribute positively to its survival.





Ray Weeks and other members checking out the plants in the shade tunnel.

An urgent request from our Committee of Management COM

Your Committee would like to set up a Sub-committee to organise plant sales/ Expo to take the burden off people such as Jill who have been doing it forever. Mike Williams has agreed to run it and meetings will be held via Zoom to make it easy. Two COM members have put their hands up for it but we need more people to get involved so as the load is shared.

If you are keen to keep our popular plant sales and Expo going, please consider joining this Sub-committee and learning the ropes of how to organise events like these. We would really

appreciate your assistance. If you are interested please email apsyarrayarra@gmail.com or ring Peter Smith on 0425798275. Thank you!

Peter Smith reports on an eventful end of the year break up for 2022 which was held once again at Wycliffe in Kangaroo Ground on the 4th of December.

A somewhat 'discombobulated' start to our final event for the year which however ended fabulously!

Our planned breakup at Mike's didn't eventuate so we went to Plan B, as Roy and Janet had kindly offered Wycliffe as a venue, as they have done in past years. Then a week or so out Roy came down with the dreaded Covid lurgy (not so good for Roy)... but OK he recovered in time. Meanwhile Roula kindly came forward offering her catering skills ... we accepted with the group still providing some of the tucker. Then Janet came down with the lurgy ...no probs - Lea, Roy and Janet's new assistant, offered to help guide us on the day.

The day arrived, a bit on the hot side , but a good turnout expected. Roy, Diane and I arrived with drinks and ice. Roy realised that he didn't know how to disarm the alarm...a phone call or two and we were in... wrong kitchen. Right kitchen found but modern oven too much for our minds...eventually someone worked out the right buttons in the right order. We had planned to eat first and then tour. Just waiting on Roula...Suzie on the phone...Roula had the wrong time... OK plan Z - Snack, Tour and then eat.

The tour as usual was most enjoyable...with the hibiscus and eremophilas shining in the heat, and the other plants (mostly in the tough range) obviously happy with the exceptional season. Roy and Janet's recent plantings all taking off, and the chapel garden in particular looking a delight. The gardens and grounds of this large property are the result of their dedication and hard work...

Back to the rotunda for what turned out to be a sumptuous treat. Miriam talked on some of the current aims of APS Vic.... Ann found it all a bit too much...but like all of us, survived to tell the story. Our thanks to Roy and Janet, Lea, Wycliffe, Suzie, Roula and Manny, for what turned out to be an eventful but most enjoyable day.

Photos by Sue Gwilym



Group listening to Roy



Garden bed, *Caprobrotus* sp. mid level, *Chamelaucium* x *verticordia* 'Paddy's Pink' shrub behind.



Melaleuca decussata

**Next Meeting
Thursday March 2**

General Meeting Thursday 2 March 2023

At our next meeting Miriam Ford will be speaking about the Australian Native Plants Society Australia (ANPSA) Conference.

Miriam is the current president of APS Victoria and is a recent past president of APS Yarra Yarra. She loves propagating and growing Australian Plants with a particular interest in the Mint Bushes (*Prostanthera* species) and featured in a recent ABC Gardening Australia episode – see:

<https://www.abc.net.au/gardening/how-to/fresh-mint/14033624>



Miriam with *Westringia fruticosa*, Heathland Track, Sydney

The Australian Native Plants Society Australia (ANPSA) conferences are held every two years in Australia. They are hosted by each state in turn with APS Victoria due to host the next conference in September - October 2024. The most recent one was hosted by APS NSW in Kiama and before that the 2019 conference was held in Albany, WA. These conferences have a particular format which incorporates lectures, excursions and tours around the hosting state. Quite a few APS Yarra Yarra members attend these conferences on a regular basis and could testify to their enjoyment in terms of education, networking and fun socialising and botanising with people from all over Australia with a passion for our native plants. Miriam will talk about several ANPSA conferences she has attended, particularly the most recent, and give you a sneak-peak into the one APS Vic will be hosting in 2024.

Future Speakers & Meetings

**General Meeting Thursday 6th April 2023
The Lantern Bushes (Thomasias & Allied Genera) by Trevor Blake**

Bio by Sue Gwilym

Trevor has had a lifelong fascination with our flora which has taken him and his family all over Australia into some of the remotest areas where the plants and wildlife are

stunning. Trevor has written about and illustrated our flora in many articles and books, for example, he is the illustrator for the "Encyclopaedia of Australian Plants" by Rodger Elliot and David Jones.

Trevor's talk will be on the Lantern Bushes, covering 7 genera in this wonderful group of plants that lend themselves ideally to horticulture. We know a few *Thomasia* and *Lasiopetalum* species but there are so many more that can be quite stunning in gardens. Trevor became interested in them many years ago and had some great success with the few he grew. As he delved into the group for an article, he found there were many specimens he had not heard of tucked away in Herbaria. Trevor had started to illustrate them and decided to try and include all species in each genus, a task that was to take some years. Revisions were taking place and he was keen to include the latest classifications - some long delays here. Quite a number are found in very restricted communities and should be well distributed to Botanic Gardens as well as private plantings with climate change and fire being of great concern. With around 200 species this was turned into a book entitled '**Lantern Bushes of Australia**' which was published last year by APS Keilor Plains.

Photos by Trevor Blake



Lasiopetalum bracteatum



Lysiopetalum involutum

General Meeting 4th May 2023

Please note that the May general meeting will be an Autumn Flower Table, therefore there will be no speaker. Members are asked to bring in specimens from their garden for discussion, labelled with names if possible.

Upcoming Garden Visits

**Sunday 5 March – The Cox Garden
7 Cheverton Rd, Lower Plenty**

Description and photos provided by Ann and Tom Cox

Our garden is situated on about an acre. The land slopes down to the north and when we acquired the property in the late 1970's there were a number of eucalypts, mostly bundys (*Euc. goniocalyx*) and yellow box, lots of *Tradescantia fluminensis* and blackberries, the latter two were dealt with as fast as we could. The soil is the typical Eltham/Lower Plenty clay together with the odd rocky reef – however it makes good mudbricks which were used to construct our home.

Even then it was becoming apparent that the climate was warming and we made the decision that our garden would have to cope with the changes. The house was situated on the block in such a way as to retain as many of the trees as we could. Plants which could tolerate dry conditions were selected – lots of eremophilas, acacias, correas mallees and hakeas were the order of the day.

To support other plants which were less tolerant of dry conditions two large water tanks were installed. The adjacent large allotments were ripe for development so we have tried as best we can to screen off the neighbours. Many of the plants remind us of the places we have visited in many trips to outback Australia. We are good customers of the Arid Gardens nursery in Port Augusta!

Our garden is open for inspection on Sunday 5th March – you are all very welcome!



Twilight Wildlife Tour at La Trobe Uni (Nangak Tamborine) Wildlife Sanctuary on Friday 31st March.

Time to be confirmed but will obviously be in the evening – approaching dark. We did this tour a number of years ago and found it most worthwhile. The sanctuary accommodates tours of about 15 per guide and there is a charge of \$10 per person. Members interested in coming along need to contact Peter Smith by Wed. 15th of March, mob: 0425798275 or Email:

jupeter.bb@gmail.com

On the Grapevine...

Yarra Yarra member Lyhn Barfield (formerly of Research) updates us on the progress of her new home and garden in Point Lonsdale. Fortunately, she no longer has to deal with the infamous rocky/clay Nillumbik soil. (I am very envious!) But sandy soils can present other issues.

Hello to everyone from our new abode here in Point Lonsdale. We moved in 3 months ago and our native garden is now in! The garden has been landscaped with rocks and dunes with 3/4 of the plants in. Thankfully we have had a mild Summer to allow for a comfortable establishment.

Being a completely different environment, (from Research) coastal with brown sandy soil, there was plenty to consider with all the unknowns and also just how the garden would present. Part of the charm of Point Lonsdale are the Moonahs (*Melaleuca lanceolata*) also *Leptospermum laevigatum*. After much consultation and encouragement from Matt Leach of Kevin Hoffman fame, we went ahead with the big plant out with much apology to the plants as they went into brown sand and we not did not know if it would provide adequate nutrients. Well it appears

the sandy soil is marvellous as the plants are all powering on with only one loss.

The garden is in two parts. The front incorporates many local indigenous species like Sea Box (*Alyxia buxifolia*), Moonah, *Lasiopetalum baueri*, Ruby saltbush and *Rhagodia parabolica* (fragrant saltbush). The main structure is provided by *Euc. priessiana*, *Euc. victrix*, *Euc. synandra*, *Banksias speciosa*, *Banksia serrata*, *Euc. dwarf Yellow bloodwood* and a pond for habitat. However, no frogs yet!

The other part is quite a large courtyard. Again many rocks with raised sand beds full of *Euc. sepulcralis*, hakeas, banksias, eremophilas, grasses and groundcovers. Matt suggested we mulch with 7mm scoria which not only provides nutrients and water retention but it also keeps the sand at bay. We have subsequently mulched with cypress pine.

Still being new with garden design and especially using plants that are new to the palette, it became apparent to my thinking what a good idea it is to firstly get the main structure established, allowing it to take on its personality. After that it becomes easier to choose the 'fill in' plants to tie it all together. A work in progress!

All photos by Gordon Barfield





Plastic Pot Recycling By Sue Gwilym

This article appeared in our last edition but I thought it was worth repeating as a reminder, as it includes some very useful information.

Largely, in Australia, plant pots and labels are made from PP5 plastic – a plastic that can be recycled over and over again. However, currently only 8% of the plastic found in plant pots gets recycled as it is difficult for co-mingled recycling facilities to identify them.

Whilst plastics such as polypropylene are sourced originally using oil and fossil fuels, there is now enough material in the system to sustain a circular system of recovery and reuse. Look for the number 5 in the recycling triangle symbol on the base of your pot.



There is a national collection scheme being rolled out which includes a network of garden centres operating as collection points, so all you need to do is to find your nearest PP5 collection point and take your plant pots and labels down for recycling.

Once your PP5 plastic waste has been collected and recycled, industry leaders Norwood printers and Garden City Plastics (GCP) create new products out of the recycled materials, ready to go again.



Local collection points include Beasley's Nursery in Warrandyte, Nillumbik Nursery in Diamond Creek and Rivers of Yarrambat in South Morang. Find more information and your nearest collection point here:

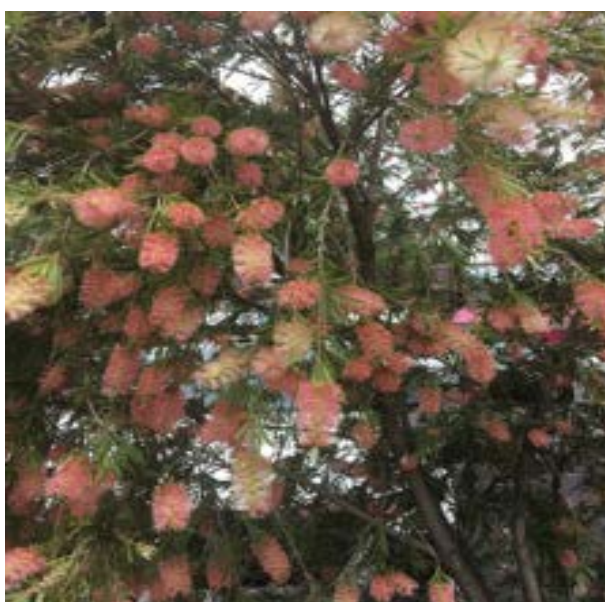
<https://pp5.com.au/>

Australian Native
Plant Sale
Saturday 29th April 2023
10am to 3.30pm
The Briars Nepean Hwy Mt Martha
Professional advice available from the growers
FREE ENTRY Free talks on Pruning & maintenance Propagating plants People Tables Kids Corner
Australian Plants Society Mornington Peninsula
For further details 0428 284 974

A true survivor In the Diamond Creek CBD!

Photos and text by Sonia Gatti

I spied this stunning *Callistemon pallidus* (Father Christmas) in January in the Diamond Creek CBD, opposite IGA. It seemed to be growing in the most inhospitable location, car park on one side and busy main road on the other! The ground around it bare and hard, no sign of any mulch. It had probably had no care in years. For me it was like a joyous Christmas display which attracted admiration and awe. It put a smile on my face and made my day!



Eucalypt of the Year 2023!

Vote for your favourite gumtree.

The following photos and information were reproduced from the Eucalypt Australia website with the permission of Eucalypt Australia.

<https://www.eucalyptaustralia.org.au/>



Celebrating 10 years of #NationalEucalyptDay 

Each year on National Eucalypt Day (23 March), Eucalypt Australia announces the Eucalypt of the Year, as decided by public vote. Last year the crown went to the *Eucalyptus regnans*, the gorgeous towering Mountain Ash of Tasmania and Victoria, while previous years have seen the River Red Gum (*Eucalyptus camaldulensis*), Snow Gum (*E. pauciflora*), Illyarrie (*E. erythrocorys*), and Gimlet (*E. salubris*) take out the top honours. But which species will win in 2023?

The Eucalypt of the Year voting will open on the 21st of February 2023. To improve accessibility and inclusivity, we will provide a short list of 25 well-known eucalypts.

Voting will close on the 19th of March, and the Eucalypt of the Year will be announced on the 23rd March, National Eucalypt Day. Previous winners will be ineligible for re-entry this year.

If you would like to vote go to:

<https://www.eucalyptaustralia.org.au/eucalypttotheyear/>

Eucalypt Australia is a charitable trust that awards grants to support the conservation, education, and research of eucalypts. We envisage a public inspired by and appreciative of eucalypts. National Eucalypt Day, held annually on 23 March and now in its 10th year, aims to raise awareness of eucalypts and

celebrate the important place they hold in the hearts and lives of Australians



What is a eucalypt?

Eucalypt is a term that includes the three closely-related genera *Angophora*, *Corymbia* and *Eucalyptus*, all recognisable as ‘gum trees’. Well-known *Angophoras* include the Sydney Red Gum, *Angophora costata* and the Rough-barked Apple, *Angophora floribunda*. Well-known *Corymbias* include the Lemon-scented Gum, *Corymbia citriodora* and the Ghost Gum, *Corymbia aparrerinja*. Well known eucalypts include the widespread River Red Gum *Eucalyptus camaldulensis* and the massive Mountain Ash, *Eucalyptus regnans*.

Myths about eucalypts abound, but are they always true? Eucalypt Australia asked eucalyptologist Dr Dean Nicolle to do some myth-busting...

<https://www.rememberthewild.org.au/eucalypt-mythbusting-a-comprehensive-guide/>

Why do we need a National Eucalypt Day ?

- As a whole, Australia does cherish the eucalypt, but there are numerous misconceptions about the diversity, safety, importance in our environment and appropriateness as trees in gardens, streets and parks. Celebrating eucalypts publicly in all their forms and uses and actively debunking eucalypt myths helps expose the community to the ecological, cultural and horticultural value as well as the healthy climate contribution of this diverse group of trees and shrubs.

- Gardeners in the south have embraced some of the smaller eucalypts, like the Silver Princess, but we want people to know that there are a wide variety of highly ornamental small eucalypts that are perfect for small gardens and help provide food and shelter for urban wildlife. In fact, from fast-growing timber trees to these small ornamentals, there is a eucalypt for every purpose.

- Many eucalypt species are restricted to very small ranges, which are greatly threatened by habitat clearing and the climate crisis (shifting temperature and rainfall patterns). This is because of the immense diversity of the group. Over millions of years, they have adapted to widely varying Australian conditions, leading to the evolution of more than 900 species! We aim to raise awareness of lesser-known eucalypts on National Eucalypt Day and encourage conversations about eucalypts across Australia.

The Eucalypt of the Year competition does this by highlighting the many different species that are loved by different communities across Australia and introducing people to species other than their local species or the most famous.

The winners for 2022 were: 1-Mountain Ash, 2-Red Flowering Gum, 3-Sydney Red Gum.



Diary Dates 2023

Meeting 8 March 2023 – 2 speaker presentations ; Illawarra Grevillea Park Botanic Garden & Native born poet, Grace Carmichael 1867- 1904; Koonwarra Memorial Hall, 4 Koonwarra-Inverloch Rd, Koonwarra, 1.30 PM
RSVP required:

<https://www.trybooking.com/CFQLE>

Entry Fee: Gold coin donation

8 March 2023 – APS Victoria Committee of Management Zoom Meeting starting at 10.00 am.

25 & 26 March 2023 - Cranbourne Friends RBGV Autumn Plant Sale. 10 am to 4 pm. Wide range of plants, plant list available one week before sale.

Website: rbgfriendscranbourne.org.au

29 March to 2 April 2023 – Melbourne International Flower and Garden Show (MIFGS), Carlton Gardens and Royal Exhibition Building.

Website: <https://melbflowershow.com.au>

1 April 2023 – APS Geelong Australian Native Plant Sale, 'Wirrawilla', Lovely Banks. 8.30 am to 4.00 pm.

12 April 2023 - Prostanthera species, the mint family by Miriam Ford, President Australian Plants Society Victoria, Koonwarra Memorial Hall, 4 Koonwarra-Inverloch Rd, Koonwarra, 1.30 PM. RSVP required:

<https://www.trybooking.com/CFTDJ>

Entry Fee: Gold coin donation

15 April 2023 – APS Heathcote Plant and Flower Show. Mechanics Institute, 121 High Street, Heathcote.

22 April 2023 - APS Yarra Yarra Autumn Plant Sale, Eltham Community & Reception Centre, Eltham. 10 am – 4 pm.

29 April 2023 - APS Mornington Peninsula Plant Sale. 10 am to 3 pm. The Briars, Mt Martha.

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.

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.

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.

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



Administrative Matters

The APS Yarra Yarra Committee:

Peter Smith - President, Garden Visits,

Mob 0425 798 275

Cathy Mann - Secretary, Mob 0409 706 610

Sue Gwilym - Treasurer, Mob 0401 250 331

Carmen Cooper - Membership Officer, Growers Group, Mob 0413 012 045

Anita Bourke - General Committee, Growers Group, Mob 0403 203 399

Suzie Gordon - General Committee, Growers Group, Mob 0457 084 467

Andrew McCann – General Committee

Newsletter - bimonthly

Contributions for the Newsletter to the Editor Sonia Gatti by Monday **17 April 2023** please. Receipt of emails will be acknowledged.

Email: soniagatti59@gmail.com

Or yarrayarra@apsvic.org.au

OR post to Newsletter Editor, APS Yarra Yarra, PO Box 298, Eltham 3095

Thank you to Graeme Sparkes and Cathy Mann for proof reading.

We wish to acknowledge the major sponsorship of our Expo by Hume Bricks & Pavers Pty Ltd.

(<https://www.humebriickspavers.com.au/>)

Thank You!

Website: www.apsyarrayarra.org.au

Facebook: facebook.com/APSYarraYarra

Meeting Particulars: Visitors always welcome.

When: 7.30pm, 1st Thursday each month (except January). Doors open 7.00pm. Come early for plant sales. Supper following the meeting is provided.

Venue: Mummery Room, Edendale Community Environment Farm, 30 Gastons Rd, Eltham VIC 3095

Guest Speaker: Learn more through talks by expert speakers, and discussions following.

Flower Table Specimens: Bring along your flowers, labelled, if possible, for the flower table. Share and swap cutting material for propagating.

Plant Sales: Members may buy plants, unusual varieties are often available, or sell their own.

Library: Members can borrow books from our specialist library.

Chairs: Members, please help set up chairs for the meeting from 7.30pm onwards and put away again after the meeting.

We acknowledge the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people as the Traditional Owners of the country on which we meet, we pay our respects to Elders past, present and future and extend that respect to all First Nations Peoples.