



AUSTRALIAN PLANT SOCIETY Yarra Yarra Group Inc.

(Incorporation No: A0039676Y)

Newsletter May-June 2024

From your Editorial Team

Dear Members

A warm welcome to our new members: Kim Northmore, Sabine Klass, Cindy Casey, Margaret Burgess, Keith Billing, Ross Floyed, Jane-Frances Gooden, Ben Hutchinson and Sean Walsh.

Djeri, the Manna Gum grub, has moved into Warin (Wombat season) on the Wurundjeri calendar at the Eltham Adventure Playground, signalling cold, wet weather through to July. Yet, even as everything seems to have hunkered down, the Woolly Pomaderris (*Pomaderris lanigera*) is already loaded with buds, waiting impatiently for the last frost to pass (now *that's* being prepared), and a few local *Acacias* have recklessly decided they just can't wait for Wattle Day.

Too late to regret all that propagating and planting not done in what Millie Ross once aptly described as Melbourne's two weeks of Autumn. Thank goodness for our native-plant nurseries and our own Yarra Yarra Growers' Group when Spring comes.

And Spring will bring a bonus this year: the ANPSA's Biennial Conference *Gardens for Life* will be just across the river. Don't forget that **the early-bird closes on 30 June**. For details and registration, hurry to

<https://www.anpsa2024conference.com>

Until then, Winter is a hot cuppa, a warm fire, and a dozen or two books ... on native plants, of course.

Your Editorial Team

Time to renew your membership!

Your APS Victoria and your Yarra Yarra memberships are due for renewal on **1 July 2024**. Pay for both online at the APS Victoria website. Details are on page 4.

If you are a new member who joined our group after 1 January 2024, your membership will run until 30 June 2025 and requires no further action.

APS Yarra Yarra Annual General Meeting on 1 August 2024

The APS Yarra Yarra AGM 2024 is not far away.

When Thursday 1st August at 7.30pm

Where Mummery Room, Edendale Farm

Nomination forms (for Committee), proxy forms, finance and President's reports, agenda and minutes of last year's AGM will be sent out to all members closer to the time.

Future speakers - see page 5

Thurs 4 July	John Thompson on Correas
Thurs 1 August	Vikki and Wayne Tonissen from Weeping Grevillea Nursery

Future garden visits - see page 5

Sun 7 July	Sam Cox Garden
Sun 4 August	Weeping Grevillea Nursery
Sun 6 October	Linda and Neil's Garden
Sun 10 November	Maranoa Gardens



HURRY!
EARLY-BIRD REGISTRATION
CLOSES 30 JUNE 2024
See flyer on page 2



Gardens for Life

ANPSA 2024 Biennial Conference Melbourne

The Round, 399 Whitehorse Rd, Nunawading Victoria 3131

For more information <https://www.anpsa2024conference.com>

Some of the lectures during the conference will cover *Gardens for Wildlife and Habitat, Restoration and Revegetation of Wetlands, Grasslands and Verges, Creating Care for the Rare, Insects and Biodiversity, Garden Design, Indigenous Food Plants*, and many, many more.

A choice of excursions to *Melton Botanic Gardens, Dandenong Ranges National Park - Sherbrooke Forest, Karwarra Botanic Gardens and the Chelsea Australian Garden at Olinda, Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria Cranbourne (RBGVC), the Australian Garden, Grasslands tour in the suburbs of Melbourne, Anglesea Heathland, and Gardens for Wildlife - three private gardens.*

Conference Registration

Early Bird Rate

- \$585 AUD (ends 30 June 2024)

Full Conference Rate

- \$650 AUD

Registration includes access to all five days including any day excursions and conference catering.

Day Only Registration

- 1 Day Rate: \$160 AUD
- 2 Day Rate: \$290 AUD
- 3 Day Rate \$420 AUD

Registration includes access to all Conference Sessions on your nominated day of attendance including conference catering.

Limited Student Discounts Now Available

Book for Conference

<https://www.anpsa2024conference.com/registration>

Pre and Post Conference Tours

Pre - 23 to 28 September 2024

Post - 5 to 10 October 2024

- **Grampians Wimmera Tour**
\$1800 AUD
(Pre Conference tour booked out)
- **Great Ocean Road Otways Tour**
\$2380 AUD
- **Gippsland Wilsons Promontory Tour**
\$2080 AUD
Single person supplement not included. Additional costs are required at registration.

Book your tour

<https://www.anpsa2024conference.com/registration>



AJ Swaby Address “Connected through nature”

Presenter: Phillip Johnson

Open to the public, free of charge

3:30pm, Wednesday 2 October 2024

The Round, 379-399 Whitehorse Road, Nunawading, Victoria

Yarra Yarra needs your help!



Every volunteer organisation relies on its members doing their bit to keep the group thriving and growing.

If you have an hour to spare (or maybe even a little more), your Committee - and all your fellow Yarra Yarra members - will be delighted for your contribution, large or small, formal or informal.

Remember: many hands make light work.

What about becoming Apprentice Treasurer?

I am happy to continue in the role of Treasurer for another year at our next AGM, however, 2024-2025 will be my fifth and final year in the position. So, while you can all relax for now, we need to have a strategy for the future.

It may seem a bit early to be putting the feelers out, but I would be keen to hear of any interest from prospective Treasurers out there as this is a vital role for the group and has traditionally been difficult to fill.

The role is not an onerous one, and I would be happy to have a sidekick this year to help me so we can do a long handover and share the role.

It would be very advantageous to do the events together and end of financial year, as these are the biggest commitments of time and energy for the whole year.

If anyone would like any further information on what the role entails, I'm happy to answer questions and run through the duties in finer detail. My contact details are at the back of the newsletter.

Thanks.

Sue Gwilym

URGENT PLEA for a new Secretary

An **URGENT PLEA** for someone to take up the Secretary's role as Cathy will be stepping down at the AGM.

This is a role which could be shared by two people if desired - maybe a Minutes Secretary and a General Secretary - or any other way you would like to divide the tasks.

Cathy is more than happy to mentor and help you and has prepared copious notes on all aspects of the job, so you will not be alone!

Please consider how you can assist in any way.

Please call Cathy on 0409 706 610 to discuss if you would like.

Thank you.

Or heading up the newsletter's Editorial Team?

The Editorial Team of the newsletter is an experienced and well-oiled machine, but we need a leader. Join Maeve, Deb and Sally at Yarra Yarra's beating heart - well, we think it is! No experience necessary, just a keen feel for community and fun. Call Sally on 0412 546 580 to discuss.

And our wonderful Webmaster still needs your help

I would like a few volunteers to help me with YY Facebook/Instagram and especially our website www.apsyarrayarra.org.au PLEASE!

This is to ensure we have new content uploaded regularly to keep our followers interested in native plants and what YY do. Basically, we need a group to help with social media publicity/communication. This is so these sites can continue being updated when I am not available to do it, and to ensure their longevity into the future.

No special expertise with HTML, coding or programming required for the website. Just being comfortable with computers and interested in growing the public's interest in native plants. I'm happy to do some training sessions or just help when and where needed.

Contact Jill through yarrayarra@apsvic.org.au

Treasurer's Report by Sue Gwilym

Membership renewals due



Your membership renewal is **due 1st July** (unless you joined us after 1st January this year) and must be paid by 30th September 2024. We'd appreciate it if you could pay your membership fees promptly so you are financial before our AGM.

This year the Committee has agreed to increase the Yarra Yarra fee from \$12.00 to \$15.00. Our fee has not gone up for at least 8 years and, whilst we have shouldered rising costs, particularly since the pandemic, we feel a small increase now will mitigate the need for a larger increase at a later date.

All membership payments are to be actioned via the APS Victoria online payment system, preferably by credit/debit card. If you can't pay by this method, please still renew online and you will be given directions on how to pay by EFT or cheque direct to APS Victoria. If you would like to pay by cash, I can accept payments at the next general meeting or give me a call if you'd like to make arrangements.

Please log in to the APS Victoria website for renewing members: <https://apsvic.org.au/Login/>

and use your email address and membership number as your password to log in. We can provide you with your membership number if you have forgotten to keep hold of it (it is printed on the envelope of your APS Vic newsletter).

There is the option to renew with more than one District Group, so remember to choose all the District Groups you are a member of (or would like to be a member of) from the drop-down menu and pay for all of them together.

If you have any questions or need help with your membership renewal, please call me on 0401 250 331 or email yarrayarra@apsvic.org.au.

Membership Types	APS Victoria Membership (Includes 4 x Growing Australian)	APS Yarra Yarra Membership (Includes bi-monthly newsletter)	TOTAL MEMBERSHIP FEES	Optional 4 x Australian Plants Journal	TOTAL MEMBERSHIP FEES Inc. Journal
Single	\$38.00	\$15.00	\$53.00	\$20.00	\$73.00
Household	\$44.00	\$15.00	\$59.00	\$20.00	\$79.00
Student	\$29.00	\$15.00	\$44.00	\$20.00	\$64.00

Neutrog orders

The Neutrog store is open for member-only orders at great prices, and they are also now offering smaller sized packs in both pellet and liquid fertiliser and soil health products. If you felt that you wouldn't get through a 20kg bag of Bush Tucker, it is now available in a variety of smaller sizes from 300g, 500g, 1.5kg and 4kg, as are many of their other products.

We are also now set up for four deliveries a year, up from our previous two, these being in Autumn, Winter, Spring & Summer. The cut-off times for orders will be in February, May, August and November for these seasons. Our next delivery is therefore scheduled for early September and there are four pick up points including Weeping Grevillea Nursery in Panton Hill. You can choose to register with Neutrog at your membership renewal (if you're not already registered) and if you have any issues with ordering, please contact the Online Store Team on 08 8538 3500.

Future speakers

4 July 2024

John Thompson on Correas

John is a long-time member of the Australian Plant Society and is currently the President of the South East Melbourne group of the APS. In 2020 he received the Impresa Award from APS Victoria for Outstanding Service to his group. He has been a regular presenter at the Plant Genus Workshops at Cranbourne since their inception in 2010.

John is a keen grower of Stylidium (Triggerplants) and other unusual Australian plants and has provided plants for the gardens at Cranbourne.

When not gardening, he works for a stained glass studio as a production manager, overseeing the drafting of full scale designs, cutting and fabricating windows for both domestic and public buildings.

John's talk will focus on the history, utilisation and horticultural aspects of correas and their relatives.

1 August 2024

**Vikki and Wayne Tonissen
Weeping Grevillea Nursery**

The Weeping Grevillea Nursery has been operated by Wayne and Vikki Tonissen for over 40 years. It all started when we collected hundreds of Grevillea Robusta seeds that we planted and then didn't know what to do with the plants. We found a book on grevilleas by Don Burke that included a few pages on grafting. Self-taught, we made slow initial progress.

Over the years we have received a huge amount of support and encouragement from within the nursery industry and fellow grafters. We work hard at trying to visit nurseries, our customers, other growers and anyone with an interest in grafted plants, particularly grevilleas. Wayne did a year at Burnley too.

Initially we specialized in grafted standard grevilleas, that we call Weeping Grevilleas. We then sourced tubestock from a number of tubestock specialist growers to provide a range of regular grevilleas in 140mm pots.

We were able to source a wide selection of grafted grevilleas, usually short grafts, that we were able to use as source material for our Weeping Grevilleas.

Until about 2019, the business was operated in conjunction with a busy lifestyle that included working full time, raising a family, caring for aged parents, and then looking after grandkids.

For the last few years full time work no longer applies,

but all other activities remain full on.

Today, we produce over 50 different Weeping Grevilleas during the grafting season. For us, in Victoria, the grafting season starts and finishes with daylight saving. Our range evolves and continues to change as we find improved species and discontinue some lines that fall out of favour. Of course we have our frustrations too, as we get excited about a new variety and then discover that it is incompatible with the rootstock and we lose a year's supply of that variety.

After full time work has finished, we are now experimenting with new varieties, different rootstocks, interstocks, and even grafting a whole new range of non grevilleas - something we once said we would never do! - such as acacias, flowering corymbias, citrus and hakea. Who knows what we will do next?

Our presentation will cover details about grafting, the why, when, how, what, etc. And we look forward to showing you around the nursery on 4 August.

Future garden visits

**Sam Cox's Garden
Sunday 7 July 2024 at 2pm**

Our July garden visit will be to Sam Cox's garden in Wattle Glen, starting at 2pm.

12 Lorimer Rd, Wattle Glen (Melways 12 J9)

Following from Sam's talk on 6 June (see the report on the next page), members will be able to immerse themselves in his design principles and see mass and void come to life. Bring your notes and your questions!

**Weeping Grevillea Nursery
Sunday 4 August 2024 at 2pm**

Our August garden visit will to Weeping Grevillea Nursery, starting at 2pm.

cnr Kangaroo Ground/St Andrews Rd
and Bartletts Lane, Panton Hill. (Melways 271 G1)

**Linda and Neil's Garden
Sunday 6 October 2024**

Address and time to be confirmed. Launching Place

**Maranoa Gardens
Sunday 10 November 2024 at 2pm**

Parring Road, Balwyn (Melways 46 G7)

Speaker reports

6 June 2024

Sam Cox, native landscape designer

Report and photos by **Sally Collyer**

Don't forget that Sam has invited us to visit his garden at 12 Lorimer Rd, Wattle Glen (Melways 12 J9) on 7 July 2024 at 2pm

In my early days in Eltham, I would walk past a simple wooden gate at the top of a few stone steps. Dense shrubs obscured the garden, and I was intrigued but too hesitant to sneak up those steps and peer in. One lucky day, I was invited through that gate in what turned out to be the last viewing under the *Open Gardens Scheme*. The garden was mesmerising. The property seemed vast ... and yet I walked that street grid and knew it wasn't. And that pool! It had to have been there forever ... and yet I knew it was man-made. Someone commented that many trees had been lost to drought and wild weather. Where were the gaps from these missing trees? This land was undisturbed, unharmed ... the 'garden' must be round the corner. I've often hoped for a little Füllung in my own garden, but how? And then came Sam's talk.

Origins of the naturalistic style

Sam works in the naturalistic style, imitating nature. Where did this style originate? Sam's take on the timeline of the development of the naturalistic style of course begins with the legendary **Edna Walling**, a true pioneer whose fascination with Australian native plants was inspired by roadside verges. Sam showed one of her conceptual plans liberally peppered with her hand-written annotations. That synergy between design and construction is a foundation of the naturalistic style, along with the way of combining mass and void, which can be seen even in Edna's earliest designs.

Her partnership with **Ellis 'Rocky' Stones** was pivotal. Ellis's ability to place stones changed the way we go about landscaping today. But where did this ability come from? Sam believes it was Ellis's awareness of the natural landscape, the natural environment. There are stories of Ellis numbering the stones in outcrops on a farm to be able to replicate it in the garden.

It was a respect and a sensitivity that **Gordon Ford** absorbed - or perhaps honed - in his two years' training with Ellis, before starting his own landscaping career at the age of 33.

Sam met Gordon when Sam was saving for an overseas trip by working as a landscape labourer. Gordon encouraged Sam to take that overseas trip and see the works of Capability Brown and Humphry Repton. When Sam returned, he asked for that promised week's work experience. The week became three years. Burnley went by the wayside as he realised he was learning far more from Gordon. As Sam said, "I have no qualifications - I am experienced based." (And what experience!)

I still feel like I'm doing Gordon's work.

Key influences

A key influence on these four pioneers was the English garden schools of the 17th-20th centuries: the informality and sweeping landscape of Capability Brown and Humphrey Repton, the cottage garden movement led by Gertrude Jekyll, and the wild garden promulgated by William Robinson.

Another key influence was Japanese garden design. In Japanese design, there is a spiritual connection to rock placement. Sam noted that the basalt plains of Victoria are the largest in the southern hemisphere: sensitivity to rock is, literally and figuratively, fundamental to our landscape .



Mass and void, habitat and ephemeral water, all in one rock

A third influence on work after World War II was the shortage of materials. Builders and gardeners alike used what was available. The mudbrick homes in Eltham used the abundant clay. Stone was there for the harvesting (with a lot of hard work!). When asked later, "Steps: stone or wood?", Sam noted that Ellis used sleepers because they were cheap and readily available, whereas sleepers nowadays are expensive and hard to source. Today, the move is back to stone even near school playgrounds. Gordon also opted for stone. In fact, Sam related with bemusement, Gordon had a wobbly stone step at his front door and claimed it maintained his awareness of where you step and why. (Maintaining balance through exercise as one ages is commendable, but it still sounds a little alarming.)

The design/construct synergy

Fundamental to the naturalistic style is awareness of environment. Such awareness demands synergy between design and construction. Sam is concerned that modern landscaping has created a disconnect between designers and constructors: designers funnel into the design stream, and then separately there is a construction team building the design to their plan. In Gordon's practice, as in Edna's and Ellis's, the designer **was** the labourer.

This synergy demands that you are constantly part of the landscape you are trying to build, that you physically work in the space every day, learning from that space. This is one of the main reasons that Gordon was so successful. But the work was hard: an impressive photo shows Gordon cajoling an enormous rock with a crowbar. Modern mechanical equipment means the work is faster and less physically laborious, but the outcomes must still be the same as with hand labour. For Sam to have a connection to the rock placement, the lay of the land, he spends 2-3 days a week working on site and is often "the guy operating the digger".



Mass and void and their interaction

In keeping with this ethos, Sam does not "prepare design concepts or plans for others to build". Instead, his hands-on practice allows for a concept design to be adapted sympathetically to the environment throughout construction. (It is an organic and sensitive approach clearly imbued with his training under Gordon.)

The principles of the naturalistic style

Genius loci

First and foremost in this style is understanding the *genius loci*, or 'spirit of place', captured in Sam's serendipitous photo of the morning sun shining through Manna Gums in the Yarra Valley. We go to national parks to experience this, but the reality is that we can build this in our gardens, by emulating nature.

Mass and void

The concept of mass and void is everywhere, and it creates beauty in our minds. Mass against void can be the land against the ocean. It can be the rocks and plantings against the driveways, paths, lawns and groves. The Japanese have managed to distil the essence of mass and void into their courtyards. We are drawn to the points of contrast, transition and interaction between the mass and the void: the garden edges along the path, the view across the hills or out to sea or (as am noticed when surfing) from the sea back to the mass of the land and the transition at the coastline.



Tree canopy allows us to immerse ourselves in the garden

No defined boundaries

Removing the sense of boundaries is essential. Sam showed photos of a small garden in Toorak, masking 3.5m high walls with climbers and espalier, and an Alphington property backing onto the Yarra, with a standard pool fence hidden amongst planting. Tree canopy is essential for the human scale of the garden, so people feel they are within the garden and not imposing on it. Even in a small garden, obscuring the fences and visually linking to the borrowed landscape - a neighbour's tree, a distant hill - removes the boundaries.

Bringing nature as close as possible to, and into, living spaces

Connection is not just extending out but also drawing in. Sometimes the plantings are so close, they're brushing against a window, blurring the line between 'in' and 'out'. Such connection was never more keenly appreciated than during COVID, when so many clients thanked Sam for having wonderful spaces in which to spend lockdown.

Bushfire regulations have made this kind of close planting harder. Clients must determine their degree of tolerance for bushfire risk, and Sam has had to decline work where the client was unable to accept the risk inherent in the design concept, especially after Black Saturday. Sam's own property is as well prepared as possible "and then we leave."



Borrowed landscape, connecting across the road and over the neighbours' house to the tree canopy beyond

Swansong, Bay of Fires, Tas

In our last treat for the evening, Sam walked us through a stunning case study: establishing his own holiday home in pristine bushland above the Bay of Fires in Tasmania. His 'client brief' was "to continue the feel of camping but a bit more comfortably." It was inspiring to be taken, with descriptions and photos, through the intricate stages that minimised the impact on the land and demonstrated all the principles, challenges and means he had described throughout his presentation.

I probably can't wangle an invitation to Swansong, but I can't wait to experience Sam's garden in Wattle Glen.



The natural interplay of rock and water, mass and void



Striving always to capture the genius loci, the spirit of the place.

Natural and local materials

Central to the timeless quality of the naturalist style is the use of plants and materials that belong to the area. Castlemaine slate is a particular favourite. Sam favours indigenous plants, working with provenance so far as possible and sourcing the majority of his stock from Edendale Nursery. However, he is not a purist when it comes to plant selection, working with whatever is available and combining native and indigenous plants. Peripheral areas, though, rely on indigenous plants because they can be trusted to look after themselves where they will get less care.

*He gains all ends
Who pleasingly confounds
Surprises, varies, and conceals
the bounds.*

Alexander Pope

(A cutting found amongst the papers of Gordon Ford)

Garden visit reports

Royal Botanic Gardens, Cranbourne
Sunday 5 May 2024

By **Kevin Ley**, photos **Sally Collyer**

The startling feature on first entering the Gardens is the Red Sand Garden with its intentionally designed trick perspective which, by its diminishing spacing, from foreground to background, of separated clusters of grey desert bushes, conveys an impression of a landscape fading far into the distance. Cutting through the middle of all this, from south to north almost like a compass needle (clearly with this, too, the visual effect is intentional), is a very long narrow bed of, I think, *Chrysocephalum semipapposum* daisies, the foliage and bright yellow flowers contrasting strongly with the red sand. This bed is actually mown at regular intervals to ensure that the bed presents as an evenly low vegetative carpet. In the foreground are some flat whitish ceramic plates embedded in the sand and suggestive of remaining pools of water in the desert. Apparently the red sand incorporates a proportion of crushed terracotta, so that the sharp angularity of the tiny terracotta shards helps to restrict the movement of the red sand so as to prevent the whole composite from being whipped up when the weather is blowy. To keep germinated weeds at bay the sand bed is lightly tilled from time to time.

Now of course no Australian red desert possesses in actual reality a north-south floral strip running through it like a compass needle, nor in any field of view does the actual spacing between patches of vegetation diminish consistently from south to north. When you ponder on what is presented in the Red Sand Garden, you start to appreciate the genius of how it forcibly suggests the vast Australian red desert stretching far away to the north.



The striking foliage and 'visual lift' of *Eucalyptus pulverulenta* (not the 'Baby Blue')



Acacia pendula, Weeping Myall or Boree, from dry outback areas in Queensland, NSW, and Victoria

Peter had booked two tours for us, The first tour focused on Eucalypts as we wended our way around the circuit. The second tour took a somewhat different route, including the Gondwanan Garden of ferns, cycads, conifers, first flowering plants and their modern equivalents. Here follow, in no particular order of emphasis, a series of brief commentaries on just some of the features I thought were particularly interesting.

A eucalypt with a most attractive weeping habit. I thought it looked very like a smaller version of a Weeping Willow. This was the Weeping Gum or Weeping Mallee (*Eucalyptus sepulcralis*) from an area along the south coast of WA. Obviously the specific epithet references a sepulchre or tomb, and I've just this minute found out that the species was formally described by the great Baron von Mueller and that he gave it its specific epithet *sepulcralis* because he thought the tree would be ideal for planting in and around cemeteries since it weeps like a Weeping Willow. (What a curiously roundabout way of settling on a species name!)

The use of grey-leaved Eucalypt species, including the 'Baby Blue' form of *Eucalyptus pulverulenta*, the Silver-leaved Mountain Gum from southern NSW, as a clever aspect of the landscape design which provides a visual 'lift' to particular areas. A further point of interest



A very tightly pruned and sculptural *Olearia phlogopappa*

concerning 'Baby Blue' (and which was confirmed by what we saw) is that in the crown of the tree the ends of the branches retain the juvenile foliage. The specific epithet *pulverulenta*, meaning 'powdered', refers to the bloom or 'powder' covering on the leaves, buds, and fruit; dust or powder is produced when stone, say, is reduced or pulverised.

A handsome small shrub of a eucalypt, the Varnished Gum, *Eucalyptus vernicosa*, from mountainous areas of Tasmania. Its leaves are glossy green, it is very slow growing, reaching 1m in height or else growing as a mallee to about 4m. Don't confuse it with the Varnish Wattle, *Acacia verniciflua*, from Victoria and NSW.

The Narrow-leaved Mallee from southern WA, *Eucalyptus angustissima*. The suffix *-issima* in the specific epithet means very, and *angust-* means narrow, and in this case the specific epithet refers to the marked narrowness of the leaves. In fact this species has the narrowest leaves (0.15-0.3cm) of all the eucalypts. I already happened to know that the Tasmanian Blue Gum, *Eucalyptus globulus*, has the longest leaves (15-30cm) of all the eucalypts, so in my view the name of the Eucalyptus with the narrowest leaves is an excellent bit of trivia to know as well! Probably my only previous acquaintance with the *-issima* suffix has been with the name *Telopea speciosissima*, which acknowledges that the Waratah is very beautiful, also with the name *Austrostipa elegantissima*, which implies that Feather Spear-grass is very elegant and ornamental.

A majestic raptor, a goshawk, wheeling high above.

In the Weird and Wonderful garden, a series of many large slabs (several metres long and wide and roughly half a metre in thickness) of Pyrenees Vaulted Slate. These were aligned east-west and set on edge in the ground at an angle of ten degrees from the vertical, and their sun-directed northern faces were distinctly warm whereas the southern faces, being in shade, were quite cold. We all had fun in touching the surfaces and feeling the difference. This temperature gradient across the

slabs' thickness was cleverly taken advantage of by the planting of cold-adapted Tasmanian species against the slabs' southern faces. One such species was the iconic *Richea dracophylla*, the Dragon Heath.

Also in the Weird and Wonderful Garden, several Queensland Bottle Trees, *Brachychiton rupestris*, with grossly swollen trunks. These are mature specimens transported in from elsewhere. I have one at home, planted in the late 1970s; these days it has a nice 'bottle' with a diameter of about 55 cm at its widest, just above ground level, but it is by no means as bulbous as those at Cranbourne. These latter have the widest part of their trunks high above ground level.

A quite tall (though presumably not yet semi-mature) Wollemi Pine, *Wollemia nobilis*.

The presence, resulting from repeated pruning, of an exceptionally tight ball of *Olearia phlogopappa*, pruned this way because it was right on the edge of a pathway. So if you really must formalise a section of your native garden (most of us probably wouldn't want to, but it could be fun to try it on a small scale) there are probably numerous natives which can be pruned so as to achieve a structure which is quite tight. Who, when planning to create a hedge, for example, would have thought of using *Olearia phlogopappa*?

McCutcheon's Grevillea, *Grevillea maccutcheonii*. From the foot of the Whicher Range in the south-west of WA. Formally described in 1996. Rare and in danger of extinction. The specific epithet honours a WA government ecologist, Graham McCutcheon. Note that the McC- spelling in his surname differs from the macc-spelling in the specific epithet; the latter spelling is determined by the rules of the International Code of Nomenclature for algae, fungi, and plants.

A tall stand of Silver Wattle (*Acacia dealbata*), remaining from RBGC's earlier days when this quick-growing species was planted as a protection for an underplanting of vulnerable rainforest plants. (Incidentally I have read somewhere the claim that this protective measure, often used when a stand of rainforest is being established, is not really necessary.)



Rhododendron lochiae in bloom at Cranbourne in January 2024

A grouping of cloud or fog forest plants, such as are found on peaks in the wet tropics of north-eastern Queensland. The constructed landform bearing this grouping is elevated a few metres from the surrounding area, this having been done as a contrivance of the landscape designer to suggest altitude; I fear that this subtlety would probably be lost on most visitors to RBGC, including myself, unless it had been pointed out to them. The planted grouping includes *Prumnopitys ladei*, a beautiful conifer in the family Podocarpaceae.



Prumnopitys ladei, Mt Spurgeon Black Pine (above) and its intricate foliage (below)



The grouping also includes the famous *Rhododendron lochiaie*, the Native Rhododendron which bears large red trumpet flowers in spring and summer. See the previous page for a photo taken in January, and see Wikipedia for explanatory information regarding the contested name *R. viriosum*.

Nuytsia floribunda, the Western Australian Christmas Tree, from the south-west of WA. The genus *Nuytsia*

includes no other species. The RBGC specimen is a young bush. Probably it will never be my lot to enjoy the sight of a mature specimen with its gorgeous orange-yellow flowers. It is capable of having a parasitic relationship with numerous other species, and the roots of an individual tree attach to the roots of many nearby plants, and so draw water and hence nutrients from the hosts. The tree's roots can be up to 150 metres long, the most extensive of any plant known. The Western Australian Herbarium adopted the name *Nuytsia* for its journal of systematic botany which deals mainly with the plants of WA.

Acacia aphylla, the Leafless Rock Wattle, endemic to an area around Perth. As its specific epithet indicates, this wattle has no 'leaves' (i.e. phyllodes, in the case of wattles); nevertheless its wiry blue-green stems have the ability to photosynthesise like leaves. The species thus possesses an evolutionary adaptation which gives the plant a much reduced total surface area, and this limits the loss of water by transpiration.

Androcalva rossii (formerly *Commersonia rossii*), Native Hemp, from near Sydney to far eastern Vic., in forest and on rainforest margins. Leaf edges toothed, flowers white or cream. (Not to be confused with *Gynatrix pulchella*, Hemp Bush, which grows in NSW, ACT, Victoria and Tasmania, indeed it grows in our own local area, and I grow it at home.) For years I have been growing the fairly similar *Androcalva fraseri* (formerly *Commersonia fraseri*), Brush Kurrajong, found in rainforest and wet eucalypt forest along and east of the Great Divide in NSW and south-east Queensland; in my garden this has become weedy. In 2011 *C. fraseri* and *C. rossii* were transferred to *Androcalva*. You may recall that one of the recent talks at our monthly meetings focussed on *Androcalva*.

So from what we saw and especially from what we heard at the RBGC, you can appreciate that there are pleasant advantages to be had by taking their tours. We pay special tribute to our tour guide Barry – a one-time member of APS Maroondah and a former garden landscape designer – for his extensive information and for the enthusiastic manner of its imparting. We acknowledge, too, our drivers Peter and Ray for the journey to and from Cranbourne, and Peter again for organising the whole outing.



Foliage of *Androcalva rossii*

Garden visit reports

Wycliffe Bible Translators Working Bee 15 June 2024

By Peter Smith

Disappointment...

Great Working Bee!...

Missed Opportunity..?

I and four others (Jenny and Graham H, Diane, and Jill L) attended on a cool but lovely Saturday morning to briefly help Janet and Roy Gwyther-Jones with their labour of love in tending the gardens at Wycliffe in Kangaroo Ground. Many of us realise the scale of their task but unfortunately not many came on the day.

The day was rewarding and interesting in the work done, fungi spotted, rabbit holes discovered, stories of Janet & Roy's teaching career in PNG and other tales shared ... Pruning was the main task advertised, and whilst members have been asking for guidance in this area, an opportunity to workshop this many-faceted, ever-changing art was missed. Weeding, as always in all gardens, was another task, but due to Janet and Roy's diligence this was not as daunting as expected. We then rounded off the day with Jill's pumpkin soup .

Janet and Roy were most appreciative of our combined efforts, and we were pleased to show our appreciation for their generosity over the years.



Petrophile biloba (Granite Petrophile) (Photo Andrew McCann from the May meeting flower table)

To make a prairie, it takes a clover and one bee, -
One clover, and a bee,
And revery.
The revery alone will do
If bees are few.

Emily Dickinson, 'LX'

Out and about



A little extra: breathtaking flowers and foliage of *Banksia aemula* (Wallum Banksia) at Maranoa Botanic Gardens (Photo Sally Collyer)



The intricately gnarled trunk of *Eucalyptus blakeyi* (Blakely's Red Gum) at Peter Francis Points Arboretum (Photo Sally Collyer)

News on the Wongavine

Australian Plants Society (APS) – District Groups, State and National related Busyness
by **Miriam Ford** (APS YY & South Gippsland member, APS Vic President & ANPSA 2024 Convenor)



APS South Gippsland group at the Rifle Range Reserve, Wonthaggi (Photo Jenny Sierakowski)

APS Vic and District Groups.

Many of you know me but some recent members may not. I am a long-term member of APS YY, a relatively recent ex-President (just before Peter Smith) and am now the President of the State body APS Victoria which oversees all the state District groups.

APS Vic is responsible for many matters including the Quarterly Magazine, *Growing Australian*, that you receive as part of your membership. I regularly write several articles for that publication including my President's report which you will find at the beginning.

One of the many things I enjoy about my role as President is that I get to visit various District groups around the State, giving presentations, meeting members and visiting their gardens. It is a great way to get to know people and to see the many inspiring activities they are involved with that are in keeping with our central motto, **Preservation by Cultivation**.



Paul Sierakowski with Banksia 'Giant Candles' (Photo Miriam Ford)

Keeping our native plants front and centre, growing and propagating them, disseminating far and wide through our plants sales and just generally informing people about Australian plants, encouraging them to grow them in their gardens.



Desal plant – View from the Boardwalk (Photo Miriam Ford)

Some of you may also have met me at the plants sales in my other capacity as a plant seller, **Mims Mints**. I love growing and propagating Australian Plants with Australian Mint Bushes (*Prostanthera* spp) as a specialty.

I moved from Hurstbridge to Wonthaggi in South Gippsland in January, 2024 and so am now also a member of the APS South Gippsland Group. I am enjoying being a part of this group – boy can they grow Banksias down here – and I have attended several gatherings/meetings already including a recent walk in one of the very local reserves, the Rifle Range Reserve. I have two in my street – Rifle Range at one end and Tank Hill in the middle. There are many such reserves in the area as a result of vast restoration and revegetation projects after the State Coal Mine closed. In addition, the government chose Wonthaggi as the site for the Desalination Plant and this meant another huge area was restored and revegetated with local indigenous flora as a result of that construction. It is worthy of a visit.



View of Squeaky Beach, Wilsons Prom. One of the destinations for the Pre and Post Gippsland and Prom Tour for ANPSA 2024. (Photo Miriam Ford)

ANPSA 2024, our National Conference

APS Vic has the responsibility this year to host the National conference on Australian Flora – ANPSA 2024. ANPSA is our National Body – the Australian National Plants Society (Australia). The responsibility for hosting the National conference circulates around the various states – NSW in 2022, Victoria in 2024 and SA in 2026. It is a big deal and in my role as Convenor, with **Nicky Zanen** as my co-Convenor, we are busy. All these conferences have a central theme and our is **Gardens for Life** – the full program is now up on the Conference Website <https://www.anpsa2024conference.com/> and you will see how we are addressing our brief.

The conference itself runs from **September 30 to October 4, 2024 at The Round in Nunawading**. There are many different presentations (Monday Sept 30, Wednesday Oct 2 & Friday Oct 4) on how gardens matter to us, to our wildlife, to our mental health and to our country. There are also pre and post conference tours to different parts of the State and these are proving popular. Within the body of the conference there are two excursion days (Tuesday Oct 1 & Thursday 3) to 6 different locations – a wealth of choice.

Call for volunteers

If you haven't been to one of these conferences before then I heartily recommend them for information, networking and all-round fun – be quick to register as the **early bird closes 30 June**. We have an ANPSA

2024 working committee that is made up of people from around the state and we meet monthly via Zoom. We are also looking for Volunteers to help us during the actual conference. We will be coming up with a list of jobs soon which will mostly be related to being generally helpful with regard to directing people to the right places (or people in charge) at the right times. We will certainly appreciate helpers. Already several people have volunteered from APS Yarra Yarra. Just get in touch with me or Nicky via Cathy, APS YY secretary.

APS Vic COMM (Committee of Management Meeting) & Quarterly Gatherings

On a final note, the APS Vic Committee of Management has quarterly meetings around the State. These gatherings are hosted by different district group and can be 1 day or 2 day/weekend gatherings. APS Vic provides funding to support the host group. APS YY hosted one last November 2023 and APS Mornington Peninsula hosted the May 2024 meeting. The COMM takes place on the Saturday morning and is followed by garden/local reserve visits. In May we visited the Banksia Arboretum in Seaford. APS Bendigo is hosting a full weekend in late July and then APS Wangaratta in November 2024. Consider going to these gatherings especially the full weekends as they are rich in conviviality, companionship and gardens. See *Growing Australian* for more details.



As a result of my recent visit there to give a talk we toured the Grampians/Gariwerd Endemic Garden at WAMA (Wildlife Art Museum of Australia). From left: Ben (the manager), Glenda Lewin (patron), Miriam, Phil Williams and Neil Marriott. (Photo Miriam Ford)



Flower Table - May

By **Deborah Metcalfe**

Photos by **Andrew McCann**

Thank you to everyone who brought along flower specimens for our May meeting.



Eremophila punicea ['White Form']



Correa 'Red Empress'



Grevillea 'Spirit of Anzac'



Siegfriedia darwinioides



Spyridium coactilifolium [Fleurieu Peninsula]



Crowea 'Festival' hybrid of *Crowea exalata* and *Crowea saligna*

Flower Table - June

By **Deborah Metcalfe**

Photos by **Ben Eaton**

Thank you to everyone who brought along flower specimens for our June meeting.



Correa baeuerlenii 'Chefs Hat'



Templetonia retusa 'Cockies Tongues'



Acacia genistifolia



Hakea 'Burrendong Beauty'



Grevillea 'Deua Flame'



Xerochrysum species



Diary dates 2024

IMPORTANT: Please check the APS Victoria website for cancellations at <https://apsvic.org.au>

30 June 2024 - **RBGC winter afternoon talk** by Dr Garry Price on Alf Salkin: Botanist, Conservationist, Environmental Educator. The Spitfire bomber pilot who brought banksias to Cranbourne. At 2.00 pm in the Auditorium at Royal Botanic Gardens Cranbourne. Cost \$20 RBGC members, \$25 non members. Details from <https://cranbournefriends.tidyhq.com/public/schedule/events/>

27 & 28 July 2024 – APS Bendigo host APS Vic Committee of Management Meeting full weekend of activities. For more information email bendigo@apsvic.org.au or ring 0400 149 319

- Quarterly Committee of Management Meeting & Bendigo's 50th Birthday Celebration Dinner
- Saturday July 27th and Sunday 28th July, 2024, hosted by APS Bendigo.
- The meeting is at "Chasers", Bendigo Greyhound Racing Track, Bendigo.
- Self-drive tours to local public and private gardens, Bendigo forests and Landcare projects.

5 September 2024 – **Wimmera Biodiversity Seminar** on *Pests, Partnerships and People Power*. Goroke. Details to follow.

7 September 2024 – **APS Cardinia Regional Annual Plant Sale**, Akoonah Park, Berwick, 8am to 4pm.

7 September 2024 – **APS Mitchell Expo and Plant Sale**, Wallan Multipurpose Centre, Bentinck St, Wallan.

21 & 22 September 2024 – **APS Grampians Group Pomonal Native Flower Show**, Pomonal Hall.

21 & 22 September 2024 – **Angair Wildflower and Art Show**, Anglesea Memorial Hall, McMillan St, Anglesea, 10am to 4pm. Wildflower display, indigenous plant sales, art show and painting sales.

28 & 29 September 2024 – **APS Bendigo Flower Show**, Victory Christian College, Kairn Rd, Strathdale, Bendigo, 9.30am to 4pm. \$5 entry, children free. Specialist native plant nurseries, books, garden accessories and more.

5 October 2024 – **Echuca Moama Native Flower Showcase**. Masonic Lodge Hall, 426 High St, Echuca .

12 & 13 October 2024 - **Cranbourne Friends RBGV Spring Plant Sale** 10am to 4pm. Wide range of plants, plant list available one week before sale from <https://rbgfriendscanbourne.org.au/>

19th October, 2024. – **APS Ballarat Spring Flower Show**, Robert Clark Horticultural Centre, Ballarat Botanical Gardens, Gillies Street, Ballarat. (Next to the Conservatory). 10am to 4pm. Native Plants for Sale.

November 2024 – **APS Wangaratta** host APS Victoria Committee of Management meeting and AGM.

2025 16-24 August **RBC Cranbourne** focus on banksias, including plant sales, walks and exhibitions

2025 15th **FJC Rogers Seminar 2025** on *Epacridaceae* hosted by APS Mornington Peninsula.

2026 ANPSA 2026 Biennial Conference, planned to be held in Alice Springs.

APS Yarra Yarra Australian Plants Expo - 14-15 September 2024 10am-3pm

Eltham Community & Reception Centre, 801 Main Rd, Eltham



The **2024 AJ Swaby Address** will be **Connected through nature** by **Phillip Johnson** **3.30pm on 2 October 2024 at The Round, 379-399 Whitehorse Road, Nunawading**
The Address is a free event open to the public as part of the ANPSA 2024 Biennial Conference.

Please register your attendance to this free lecture by emailing anpsa2024@gmail.com.

Phillip will cover the evolution of his work, focusing on the importance of working with nature, and look at the various design solutions that his team have created to help address the world's extreme weather conditions by mimicking natural environmental systems. Phillip is a Landscape Designer and 2013 Gold and Best in Show winner at the RHS Chelsea Flower Show in London. He says: *By healing our environment, we heal ourselves at the same time.*

Administrative matters

APS Yarra Yarra Committee 2023-24

Andrew McCann, <i>President</i>	M: 0419 553 303
Cathy Mann, <i>Secretary</i>	M: 0409 706 610
Sue Gwilym, <i>Treasurer</i>	M: 0401 250 331
Peter Smith, <i>General Committee, Garden Visits Co-ordinator</i>	M: 0425 798 275
Sonia Gatti, <i>General Committee, Growers' Group</i>	M: 0423 414 068
Suzie Gordon, <i>General Committee</i>	M: 0457 084 467
Suzanne Craine, <i>General Committee, Speaker Co-ordinator</i>	M: 0407 290 903



Eucalyptus leucoxylon spiralling to the sky, Maranoa Botanic Gardens (Photo Sally Collyer)

Our floral emblem

The **Wax-lip Orchid** *Glossodia major*, is indigenous to Nillumbik. Thanks to Sue Gwilym for our banner photo.

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Monthly meetings

Visitors are 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 or sell their own. Unusual varieties are often available,

Library: Members can borrow books from our specialist library.

Chairs: Members, please help set up chairs from 7pm onwards and put them away again after the meeting.

Newsletter contributions

Contributions to the newsletter are always welcome. Please send all contributions to the next newsletter by the deadline. Early receipt is greatly appreciated.

All emails will be acknowledged, but sometimes emails go astray. If you have not received an acknowledgment within a few days, please try again.

Deadline **Friday 9 August 2024**

by email to sallycollyer@yahoo.com.au

or yarrayarra@apsvic.org.au

or post to Newsletter Editor
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Eltham VIC 3095

Website www.apsyarrayarra.org.au

Facebook facebook.com/APSYarraYarra

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.

