



AUSTRALIAN PLANTS SOCIETY
SOUTH EAST MELBOURNE REGION INC.

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NOVEMBER NEWSLETTER 2019

Meetings are held on the first Tuesday of each month, February to December except November.

The venue is the Hughesdale Community Hall, Cnr Poath and Kangaroo Roads, Hughesdale (MEL 69 C7)

Visitors are always very welcome.

COMMITTEE:

PRESIDENT: John Thompson thomme@netspace.net.au
 SECRETARY: Helen Appleby
 TREASURER: Norm Seaton normarjs@bigpond.com
 PUBLIC OFFICER: Helen Appleby
 NEWSLETTER EDITOR: Marj Seaton normarjs@bigpond.com
 APS VIC DELEGATE: Marj Seaton
 COMMITTEE: Amanda Louden amandalouden@icloud.com

Please forward any newsletter contributions, comments or photos to Marj at 36 Voumard Street, Oakleigh South 3167 or to the email address above.

*******Note: Deadline for the DECEMBER newsletter is NOVEMBER 22ND*******

Annual Outing

Our outing this year will be to Kuranga Nursery and its Paperbark Cafe. We are booked in for lunch at **12:30pm on Saturday 16th November**. As mentioned in our last two meetings, the Club will subsidise the day out with \$10 for each of our members, whether single or as part of a household. Other visitors are welcome but are not a part of our subsidy scheme. If you do bring visitors, please let Marj know so she can notify Kuranga of any changes in our numbers. If you shop for plants before lunch, remember they have to be stored somewhere whilst you eat.

The spring/summer menu for the Paperbark café is given on the next page so you can make your choices at leisure.

RAINFALL RECORDS for 2019

The following are our rainfall records so far for 2019 (in mm).

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Oakleigh South	11.4	17	35.2	18.4	81	73.1	64.2	70.2*	57**				427.5
Highbett	7.5	9.9	26.7	9.3	56.7	50.1	47.4	50*	50*				307.6
Hampton	6	5	27	7	57	47	34						183
Cranbourne South	30	24	25	24	105	94	72	133	81				588
Caulfield Sth	5.6	10	12	12	64.75	56	20						180.35
Elsternwick	7	7	14	12	55.5	63.5	36.5	53	46.3				294.8

**To August 22 **From August 22 * estimate*

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November Gathering – Spring/Summer Menu, Paperbark Cafe.

<i>Soup-served with toasted local sourdough bread</i>	12.90
<i>Corn and zucchini fritters topped with smoked trout, greens, red onion, tomato, fetta and pepperberry dressing (gf)</i>	22.90
<i>Fettuccini tossed through with prawns, olives, olive oil & warrigal greens & finished with lemon zest & parmesan (dfo) (v)</i>	23.90
<i>Lemon myrtle grilled fish burger with lettuce, tomato, red onion, pickles, cheese and native lime aioli with a side of wedges (dfo)</i>	23.90
<i>Grazing platter-a seasonal selection of local ingredients including cheese, meats, pickles, preserves and native flavoured house-baked bread (serves 2) (vegetarian option available)</i>	32.90
<i>Macadamia satay chicken served with rice and house slaw (dfo) (gf)</i>	22.90
<i>Paperbark Focaccias—Lemon ironbark chicken with roquette, red onion, smashed avocado and tomato-capsicum relish with cheesy native basil polenta chips-</i>	18.90
<i>Eggplant schnitzel with house slaw, pickles and pepperberry aioli served with cheesy native basil polenta chips (v)</i>	18.90
<i>Saltbush and mountain pepper spiced calamari on an avocado, broccolini, sugar snap peas, zucchini ribbons and spinach salad finished with bush tomato and capsicum drizzle (gf)</i>	22.90
<i>Rolled pork stuffed with muntries, pistachios, semi dried tomatoes served with roasted red onion and sweet potato salad and finished with a bush honey and mustard dressing (dfo) (gf)</i>	24.90
<i>Fish of the day - see our Specials Board</i>	26.90
<i>Roast beetroot salad tossed through roquette, walnuts, apple, red onion and fetta finished with a pepperberry dressing (gfv) (vo)</i>	20.90
<i>Vegetable stack with roasted eggplant, sweet potato, mushroom and capsicum on a bed of roquette finished with smokey capsicum drizzle, goats cheese and pesto (v) (vo) (gf)</i>	20.90
<i>Bush tomato, mince beef, onion and potato pie served with salad greens and tomato-capsicum relish</i>	18.90
<i>Open steak sandwich with greens, tomato, gruyere, horseradish sour cream, pickled beetroot on sourdough and served with wedges</i>	23.90
<i>Pulled maple, rosemary and saltbush lamb on house-made flatbread served with an heirloom tomato salad and finished with a rivermint yoghurt</i>	23.90

There are also scones and sweets available.

October Meeting

Speaker: John Arnott

Topic: "Care for the Rare"

Write-up by Marj Seaton

Before discussing the Care for the Rare project, John introduced us to the role of BGANZ in which Victoria is the most active of all the States. BGANZ aims towards 'Capacity Building'. It advocates for the interests of Botanic Gardens and has been active for many years.



Botanic Gardens, of which there are 42 in our State, are different from Parks and Gardens and cannot look to local government to manage their gardens. BGANZ runs plant forums and network meetings and has produced a practical 'how to' guide to assist in planning and managing living collections. A plant records project is exploring providing a database for regional Botanic Gardens to subscribe to at a fraction of the cost they would incur if done individually.

Within Victoria, BGANZ is currently supporting six regional botanic gardens: Camperdown, Inland BG at Mildura, Shepparton, Sale, Bendigo, Melton and WAMA in four key areas of conservation: in situ conservation, ex situ conservation, community education and research. A minority of regional BGs hold

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collections of Rare and Threatened plants, and indigenous plants are not a focus of their conservation collections.

Why are so few Victorian gardens conserving? John said this is a sign of past times. Gardens in the 1800s were 'pleasure gardens' with a historic emphasis on exotic ornamental collections and plants from 'homelands'. There was no science and no interest in Australian plants. Many of our early gardens were botanic by name, not by nature, and fell into disrepair in the 20th century. They were really managed as high quality parks. Those that have arisen in recent times have been major capital projects, with masterplans and active Friends' Groups. There are new gardens in Shepparton, Echuca, Melton, WAMA, Girgarre (in the Goulburn Valley) and in the Dandenong Ranges.

The Care for the Rare project aims, through RBGV and BGANZ to establish signature plants in Botanic Gardens. This has meant that an assessment has had to be made of Victoria's threatened flora and the establishment of an assessment spreadsheet. In looking at what plants are to be included in the scheme, certain protocols have had to be established, eg, how easy or hard are they to grow, with a scoring system established depending on how exacting requirements are for growing. A lower score is given for plants that are hard to propagate or require extra effort; higher scores are given for long lived taxa and for species with known propagation techniques and for plants with known provenance. Existence in the Victorian Conservation Seedbank holdings was also considered.

The aim is to cultivate suitable plants that are close to the regional gardens. It is important that gardens are set up to succeed. 24 gardens expressed interest in being part of the project which is too many to service in one hit, so 6 gardens are being initially focussed on. The pilot project is being funded by the Helen Macpherson Smith Trust. The six chosen to start are: Wilson Park, Dandenong Ranges, Colac, Shepparton, Ballarat and Sale. After site inspections and collection planning, the plants are being grown at Cranbourne and then distributed to the gardens. Ballarat already has received some of theirs, where they are hoping to double the size of their indigenous collection. Dandenong Ranges is establishing an Alpine Garden including alpine, sub-alpine and montane plants. Colac is establishing a cool temperate rainforest with open forest and heathland species. Shepparton has a walled garden with indigenous plants suitable for hot conditions. Sale is featuring *Banksia canei* as well as plants within half an hour of Sale. One aim for all is to improve interpretation and communication of key messages. Funding ends at the end of 2020. If the project proves successful, then another six gardens will be chosen.

Another project underway is the **Tropical Mountain Plant Science project. (TroMPS)**. This involved three field trips to seven peaks near Cairns where there are true cloud forests (up to 6m of precipitation annually – 1.6m rainfall, the rest from the clouds). With climate change, these clouds are expected to lift and the seven species will be threatened. The visits aimed to collect all seven species and install in



Photo courtesy of www.wettropics.gov.au.

gardens. Within the cloud forest, soil is eroded and plants grow on plant accumulation on rocks. There were actually 70 target species (funded by James Cook University) but more were collected whilst there. Some of the iconic species found here include: *Rhododendron lochia*, *Coronidium rupicola*, orchids, *Freycinetia*, *Linospadix apetiolata*, *Tasmannia* sp, *Prumnopitys ladei*, *Lenbrassia australiana* (yellow flowers, related to the African violet family), *Boea kinnearii*. All are very wet collections, but many of the species are tolerant of dryness as they live with no soil and there is little rain in the dry season. Material collected was processed in Queensland, quarantined, then sent to RBGV and Canberra.

Finally, in answering a question as to why there has been this resurgence in gardens, John attributed much to Friends groups advocating actively for gardens and also to community aspirations.

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Specimen Table – October Meeting

Spring had certainly sprung for our October meeting. There was a very colourful display on the table with contributions from Robert, Catherine, Mandy, John, Pam, Marj and a basketful of goodies from Ray and Eva. There were too many to write all of them up so here are a few of note:

Robert has a hanging basket of *Lechenaultia biloba* on steroids.

Catherine celebrated for all the Richmond supporters with the yellow and black of the climber *Kennedia nigricans*.

Mandy showed her *Allocasuarina crassa* again – a huge stem, female with red flowers. Comes from Port Arthur in Tasmania. Another plant which few could identify was *Melaleuca micromera* – spiraling branches, small wattle like yellow flowers, narrow/tall growing.

Pam was feeling a bit shy so didn't stand up to tell about her plants but she had *Dendrobiums* – both pink and white in her vase, as well as pink *Calytrix tetragona* and *Tetratheca myrsinoides*.

From Marj we saw both lemon and white *Asterolasia hexapetalla* as well as the big yellow and brown flowers of *Bossiaea aquifolium*.

A pom pom like flower of *Pimelea ligustrina* from John was unusual. John strongly recommended against taking *Asteralasia correifolia* inside – attractive enough in the garden with its creamy small flowers but it does have a rather unpleasant smell. He finished with a large leaf of *Brachychiton ormeau*.

Wedding bush featured in Mandy's, Marj's and Ray's collections. It is in full flower at the Grange now. Blue *Conospermum coerulescens*, the leafless *Bossiaea walkeri* and Ray's favourite *Daviesia horrida* made up part of his and Eva's basket. Marj's *Pomaderris aurea* was finished

but Ray's goes on.



Acacia glaucoptera (small leaf form)



Geleznowia verrucosa



Pimelea ligustrina



Allocasuarina crassa flowers



Bossiaea aquifolium



Ricinocarpos pinifolius



Brachychiton ormeau



Conospermum coerulescens

Pick of the Bunch October 2019

Brachychiton sp. Ormeau (L.H.Bird AQ435851)

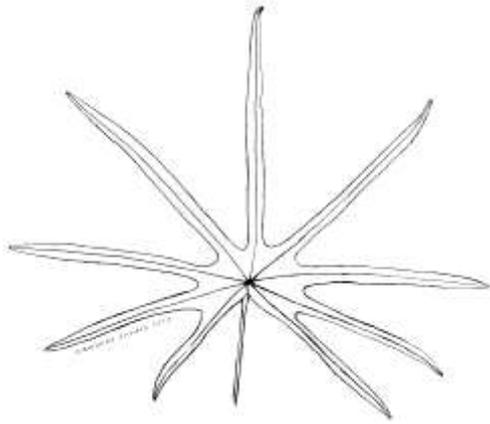
Ormeau Bottle Tree

Specimen grown by John Thompson

Brachychiton sp. Ormeau is large tree that grows to around 30 metres in height in Ormeau's* remnant rainforests and develops a distinctive swollen trunk and greenish-white flowers that bloom in spring. Optimal conditions for flowering and fruiting appear to be during dry springs, when the plants become deciduous.

It is listed as critically endangered with fewer than 200 plants in the wild. It has yet to be formally described but is a close relation of *B. rupestris*. As with many of the *Brachychiton* species its foliage goes through a number of morphological changes before reaching maturity. The juvenile foliage is particularly attractive and can be present c.25 years after germination. The trees are currently under threat from quarrying, weed invasion and low seedling recruitment.

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Brachychiton sp. Ormeau can be grown as a specimen tree in the garden or in a large pot. It is unlikely to grow more than 4 -6 metres high and can be pruned fairly heavily if required. A sunny position in well-drained soil is ideal. Plants respond well to supplementary watering during dry times. Propagation is from seed or grafting.

Brachychiton is in the **Malvaceae** (they were formerly in the family Sterculiaceae which is now considered obsolete.) or the Mallow family. There are c.31 *Brachychiton* species, thirty of which occur in Australia and one (*Brachychiton carruthersii*) from New Guinea. The family contains c.85 genera with about 2000 species with a cosmopolitan distribution.

The genus name *Brachychiton* comes from the Greek, *brachys*, short and *chiton*, a tunic, a reference to the coating on the seed.

*Ormeau is a small town in the Gold Coast Hinterland.

SPINES AND CYANIDE – part of an article from the ABC Science page:

Professor Byron Lamont's team studied 51 species of *Hakea*, and found they could be easily divided into two groupings: insect-pollinated species have predominantly tiny, white flowers surrounded by spiky, dense foliage, which they suggest stops animals such as emus and cockatoos from eating the flower. Bird-pollinated species instead have soft open leaves and bright, easily accessible, usually red, flowers with room for birds to land on stems. This makes the plant vulnerable to being eaten by emus and cockatoos.

Lamont and colleagues travelled to the heathlands north and south of Perth to collect samples of *Hakea*. They macerated the flowers on-site and then used an enzyme and a strip of paper that was sensitive to cyanide to test for its presence. He says they found that plants with red flowers contain 10 milligrams of cyanide per gram, enough to make an animal sick.

Co-author Dr Mick Hanley, of the University of Plymouth, says animals that eat the red *Hakea* flowers may learn to associate the colour with the bitter taste produced by the cyanide. "The colour red acts as a warning to large vertebrate herbivores like emus, parrots and kangaroos that the flower contains distasteful or even poisonous cyanogenic compounds," he says. "It seems that Western Australian plants have not only developed a remarkable defence against would-be flower predators, but that they also clearly advertise the fact."

2019 DIARY

November 9 APS Bendigo hosting APS Vic COMM
November 16 Sit down dinner – Kuranga Nursery, Mt. Evelyn, 12:30.
December 3 Members' slide night, extended supper and 'clear the decks' gold coin donation plants sale. Soil testing kit available.

2020

February Bill Aitchison: Small and Hybrid Acacias
March 3 Miriam Ford: FJC Seminar "Mint Bushes and Allied Genera"
April Trevor Blake: "Malvaceae"
May TBA
June Chris Long: "Boronia Oil"

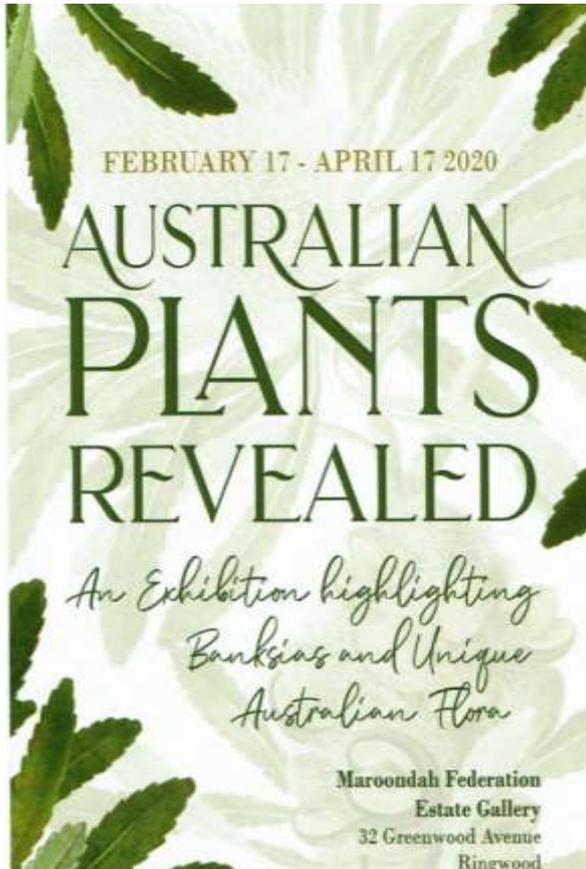
Plant Sales and Shows 2019

October 26,27 Cranbourne Friends Spring Plant Sale 10-4

October 26,27 APS Ballarat Spring Flower Show, Robert Clark Centre, Ballarat Bot. Gardens 10-4
2020:

February 17 – April 17 “Australian Plants Revealed” Maroondah Federation Estate Gallery,
32 Greenwood Avenue, Ringwood.

PROMOTIONS



CRANBOURNE FRIENDS
ROYAL BOTANIC GARDENS VICTORIA



**Growing Friends
Spring Plant Sale**
**Saturday 26 & Sunday 27
October 2019**
10am to 4pm
Australian Garden - Cranbourne
Near the kiosk

Come along and select from a range of plants, many of which you will find in the Australian Garden.

Available: grasses, rushes, strappy plants, climbers, groundcovers, indigenous plants, small & large bushes and trees.

Payment methods: Cash preferred, EFTPOS available

Veronica australis
Photo credit: Warren Worboys

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