



APS Bendigo Inc.

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Reg. No. A0014487F

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We are a district group of Australian Plants Society - Victoria and Bendigo membership requires membership of APS - Vic.

February 2019 Newsletter

Greetings -

Isn't it wonderful to have some respite from the heat here in Central Vic. In my usual way I planted some new plants a day or two before the extreme heat started - amazingly most are still alive although I did choose Lemon Beauty Heads, brachycomes, Wallaby Grass and a few others that are small and that I consider very hardy. Add a bit of Go Go Juice and Seamungus and all good - so far! And now into a new year of plant group.

As we start our year it is important to acknowledge the passing of Fay Dawson and Mary Wilkinson. Fay was more of a newcomer to Bendigo but not to native plants. She and husband Ian moved here a few years ago and joined our group. She enlightened us about the Wollemi Pine and many other plants. Mary and Eric Wilkinson have lived in Bendigo for many years and been members of the group for some time. Mary's passion was bonsai particularly with Australian plants and her quiet considered manner translating through to her hands as she tended and cared for her many bonsai babies. We will miss them.

For our meeting **this Tuesday** it's time to get to know each other a bit better and share a meal. So bring some food to share - both savoury and sweet, and something to drink. Tea and coffee will be supplied. While we eat we will have a general discussion about plants with questions and hopefully answers! and Ian will do a short Plant of the Evening presentation.
So See you on Tuesday - Sandy

Committee Column

Please let the committee know if you have ideas for the group such as guest speakers, topics for discussion, flower show ideas, excursions etc.

For those interested in a trip to the Ceramet Solar site at Bridge-water please pick a Wednesday in March (6, 13,20,27) and the most popular wins! We need at least 8 people. And regarding MIFGS, perhaps the best idea is for anyone wanting to go with any other members (car or train) then let Sandy know so days and times can be co-ordinated.

Flower Show - we aim to have a 'Grevillea' theme so please consider popping some grevilleas into pots or treating any you already have in pots with loving care, then bringing them to our show so we can make a stunning display! And let committee know if you are interested in being on a sub-committee.

Our new group name needs a new logo! Anyone out there have a graphic artist in the family or such like? Committee has some ideas but the more the better. Please let us know.

7.30 pm Tuesday 19 February 2019
Bring and Share meal plus general Plant Discussion

Plant of the Evening - Ian Evans

NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING

7.30 pm 12 March 2019, 35A Murphy St, East Bendigo

November Plant of the Evening

Joan Sullivan

Homalanthus populifolius

'Bleeding Heart Tree' 'Queensland Poplar'

Native to the Queensland rainforest, this plant often pops up in gardens around Bendigo and is considered invasive in Hawaii, southern Africa and New Zealand. It is the host of Australia's largest moth, the Hercules Moth.

Homalanthus is from the Greek for 'smooth flower' and '*populifolius*' from Latin meaning 'leaves like a poplar'. The triangular almost heart shaped leaves are between 5 and 10cm long and turn a vibrant red as they age hence the common name. It is a member of the Euphorbiaceae family so handling may cause a skin irritation or allergic reaction.

The tree grows up to 8 metres tall and has a slender trunk. The insignificant flowers are yellow green to red and are male or female. They flower from spring to early summer and the fruit matures by early autumn. Birds such as silvereyes, Lewin's honeyeater, bowerbirds, currawongs and orioles feast on the fruit.

The seeds have a long dormancy and enjoy a warm spot, disturbed soil and direct sunlight in order to germinate. The tree makes a pretty garden plant and they rarely reach full height in our southern gardens.



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Meetings are held at the Golden Square Community Hall, Old High St, Golden Square, on the third Tuesday of each month from February to November. The room is open from 7.10 pm, for viewing of display specimens. Program begins at 7.30 pm.

November 2018 Presentation
Marilyn Bull - remote WA & Mt. Augustus
 Photos - I. M. Bull



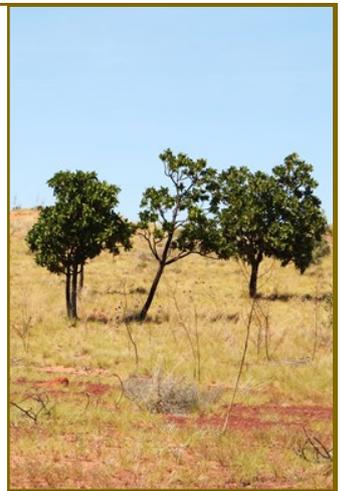
Marilyn and her partner Geoff are avid travellers taking their 4WD on many plant hunting adventures. When Geoff heard about Dragon Tree Soak the vehicle was packed and in August 2016 they were off with eight others following. For 200ks and 12 days in the Anna Plains area they were 'off road' and with no track to follow this meant very slow travel, crossing continual dunes separated by swales. Many times it was a case of first walk up the dune to see what was on the other side so that the safest route could be chosen. It was tricky - working sometimes and sometimes not! But never mind, one can always dig your way out.



And a golden rule - always have the camera ready as whilst you don't want anything to go wrong you need the camera just in case! The first flower they saw was the vibrant puce calandrinia. And then two wattles, one with pink flowers and the other with hairy leaves.



Every car carried one full spare tyre and lots of bits and bobs to repair punctures. By driving EXACTLY in the tracks of the first car most avoided problems. *Acacia colei* was everywhere. The largest plants they saw were the Desert Walnuts *Owenia reticulata*. The very dark green leaves made these trees really visible from a distance. At times the intense blue Tinsel flowers were so dense there was no choice but to drive over them.



They did their best to avoid damage to vegetation including in the burnt areas which were regenerating. They saw a wattle with a weird leaf, curious camels, native currants and all sorts of other plants including the tropical *Persoonia falcate*. There were beautiful grevilleas such as the caustic *G. pyramidalis ssp leucadendron* and *G. eriostachya* and another pink wattle. At McLarty there were remnants of the long gone mining.

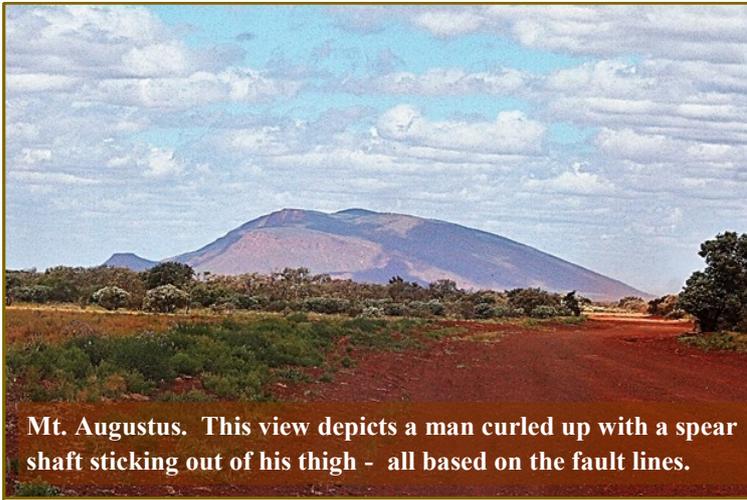
McLarty Hills. One is high enough to have a trig point.



'Dragon Tree' which is a member of the pea family and another pink wattle.



Finally - 'The Soak'!
 Which they had to share with camels.



Mt. Augustus. This view depicts a man curled up with a spear shaft sticking out of his thigh - all based on the fault lines.

Then group then split up and Marilyn and Geoff went on to Mt. Augustus which is an inselberg - an isolated rock hill, or small mountain that rises from level surrounding plain. It is 3 times older than Uluru and formation began well over 1600 million years ago when rocks formed from sand and gravel deposited in an ancient river bed. They saw very few flowers on their drive to the mountain but once there they hit the jackpot with flowers galore. It was early September and the camp ground was fantastic. Both 4WD and 2WD cars can make the trip. So what did they see? Aboriginal art work, insects, birds, snakes and flowers!

At the base of the mountain there was lots of feathery Ptilotus including these yellow and pink ones - in fact so many yellow ones that from a distance everything looked yellow! Then to contrast, royal blue lobelia growing with yellow button daisies and on the plains great expanses of purple eremophila.



On a walking track and in the middle of the road strange holes in the ground and little piles of gravel - nests where the female of the rare Dawson's Burrowing Bee lays her eggs while the male watches on from a bush, then dies. There is a turret on top for the young bees which when full grown measure nearly an inch long.

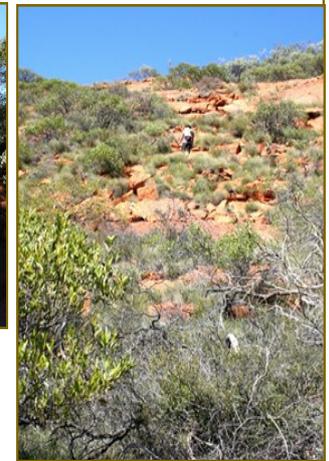
In the middle of the desert there were verdant green gullies with large white barked eucalypts. Further on, various yellow daisies, brachycomes, dodonaea, puce swainsona and an Alyogyne with translucent pale yellow flowers.



As they climbed to the summit there were less herbs although they did see heaps of bright yellow *Goodenia prostrata* growing with rich blue Brunonia, lasiopetalums, *Trachymene pilbarensis* (bit like a rice flower!), one quandong fruit!, pink calytrix and lots of grasses.



Kerandrenia velutina



Rock gullies and escarpments challenged them and many of the rocks had art underneath. There was the vibrant red flowered *Eremophila latrobei*, cream *Goodenia microptera* and masses of a plant with a very hairy white flowers that resembled Passion Fruit flowers.



Two and a half hours later they reached the cairn on top. The view was so worth it. In all, the camp ground was superb with good powered sites and cabins but most of all the flowers were beyond superb. Memories of acres of blue, pink, yellow, purple and white. And the verticordias were only just coming out! - Thank you Marilyn (& Geoff!)



From the top!

The November Specimen Table

Ian's first *Grevillea leucopteris* was grafted but seedlings come up every year and grow very quickly. If you have *one* in the garden you will *always* have one. Flowers are large and white with a heavy honey scent attracting moths and other insects at night. Some don't appreciate the smell hence it is known as the Smelly Sock grevillea! The plant is Joan's height but the leafless flower spikes are 10 - 15 feet long. Frost will knock it around a bit. John Linder seen them in the thousands on the plains near Kalbarri.



Ian's *Lasiopetalum bracteatum* has purple flowers and grows on the hills in W.A. His ungrafted plant has been in a pot for three years but those that are grafted have much bigger leaves and look better. Another of his West Australians is the white flowered *Commersonia densiflora* which grows north of Perth. He has never been able to strike it from cuttings but thinks grafting is worth a try. Ian's last offering was another white flower - *Goodenia albiflora* - from the Sand hills north of Alice Springs. It is very showy. It doesn't like it too wet and sends up suckers all the time.



Bev C's *Hakea baxteri* is also tall - about 4m and she hopes it doesn't grow taller! It flowered for quite a few years before she noticed the flowers as they are tucked in at the base of each leaf. It is a very prickly plant and has never set seed. It has a narrow growth and gets cut back quite often.

Marilyn is particularly rapt with the red *Regelia veluntina* as she has had a number planted for 20 years anticipating super-duper cut flowers and this is **the first year** it has flowered!! At least the foliage is great for floral art so she survived the wait for flowers. Her orange *Eremaea beaufortiodes* is a dense shrub 1.5 x 1.5 and is covered in orange flowers. It is very hardy and she never has to do anything to it - not even watering! Another of Marilyn's - *Verticordia citrella* is bright yellow and very hardy.



Planted in the ground it is 60cm and has many upright branches. It is grafted onto uncinatum (wax flower). ↓



C. densiflora



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APS BENDIGO DIARY

- Tuesday 19 March** - Phil Trickett - Isopogons and Petrophiles
- Tuesday 16 April** - John Lindner - Landscapes and Plants of the Deserts of Northern South Australia
- Tuesday 21 May** - Derek Fraser - Poisonous Plants
- Tuesday 18 June** - Ken Wellard - Palatable Plants
- Tuesday 16 July** - Chris Long - Garden Diversity

Other Diary Dates

- 16 & 17 March - Cranbourne Friends Autumn Plant Sale – 10.00 am to 4.00 pm. (Mel 133 K10)
- 13 April - APS Yarra Yarra Plant & Book Sale. At Eltham Senior Citizens Centre, 903 Main Road, Eltham from 10 am to 4 pm.
- 27 April – APS Geelong Plant Sale at 'Wirrawilla', 40 Lovely Banks Road, Lovely Banks. (Mel 431 D6). 8.30 am to 5.00 pm
- 4 May - APS Mornington Peninsula Plant Sale, 10 am to 3.30 pm, at Seawinds in Arthurs Seat State Park, Purves Rd, Arthurs Seat

Bendigo Field Naturalists Club

7.30 pm second Wednesday of the month
Golden Square Hall, Old High Street, Golden Square