



AUSTRALIAN
PLANTS SOCIETY
— Geelong —

Correa Mail

Newsletter No. 299 – August 2014

JULY MEETING

The July meeting was out AGM and Photo Competition. After a long and illustrious term as our President, Harry Webb delivered his final President's Report, before stepping down from the role. While we have teased Harry mercilessly during his tenure, I would like to say what a great President he has been ... enthusiastic, supportive and always ready to lend a hand, or fly the flag for APS Geelong. Thanks Harry.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Let me first say thank you to you all, for allowing me to serve as president of this great group again this year. It has been a real privilege for me, and not irksome at all. Our committee has worked together with me in a "unity of spirit", and with a common purpose. And because of that, and with a passion for the good of all members, we have been able to work effectively, efficiently, and supporting one another.



AGM

You will have noticed that committee members and stalwarts of our group just get on with it in the meetings in a professional manner. We have not worked in a hierarchal fashion at all, and I reckon that has been great! And hence we have been able to keep an informal atmosphere throughout all of our meetings.

I can report with confidence that our group has maintained stability as well as growth in our membership.

- Our communication through our web page and also the Correa Mail has been of the highest standard.
- We have had a variety of speakers; our social events have been cordial, with good laughter pervading the group. Remember Christmas at Liz's place, and the first meeting of the year at Arthur and Linda's! Our trip to the Southern Grampians...
And should I add, putting up with Ade's jokes!
- We have had wonderful sharing, by bringing in plants to portray, and knowledgeable members naming these for us.
- We have learned a lot more about the propagation of plants by sitting around the table together, and sometimes smiling when we wondered if the person next to us was doing it right!
- We have worked together with the Annual Plants Sale in an orderly fashion, not getting in each other's way, and in so doing, received much praise from an inquisitive public.
- We have shared our plants and knowledge with other organisations.

Now, why have we done so well as the Australian Plants Society of Geelong?

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Treasurer: Frank Scheelings – ftscheelings@gmail.com Editor: Ade Foster - adefoster@internode.on.net
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Can I say that it comes about because our committee and members have demonstrated a true spirit of generosity! I have learned so much more about this quality when I look at the people around me in this group!

I have observed also that there are those in our group who welcome new attenders! And that has been great, because it would be dreadful if we became just an introverted group that shuts out the enquiring minds of people in the community!

So again, my thanks to you all, and I believe that having made my own contribution to the group that I should now step aside to allow someone else to enjoy that same privilege that I have enjoyed.

ELECTIONS

All committee positions were declared vacant, and Toby Cavanagh took the chair to oversee the election of a new committee. All members were nominated from the floor and all were elected unopposed. Our hearty congratulations to our new ...

President - Matt Baars.

Vice-President – Phil Royce

Treasurer – Frank Scheelings

Secretary – Bruce McGinness

And general members ...

Carmel Addlem, Denise Cromer, Shelia Wileman and Roger Wileman.

I was once again asked to edit the newsletter, and would like to thank those who have contributed articles over the past year. In particular, Tony Cavanagh who is always forthcoming and very generous with his time and vast knowledge; and Roger Wileman, who needs a little urging, but provides little gems from his vast store of knowledge of Australian plants.

Please don't be shy, I'd love to receive your articles, photographs, or tips on news reports or stories that may be of interest to members. for inclusion in future editions.

PHOTO COMPETITION 2014

This years' competition had fewer photographs submitted, but the quality of the images remained at the usual very high standard. Thanks to Denise and Carmel, the voting procedure was simplified and efficient. Congratulations to the winners, and thank you to all who made their beautiful photographs available for members to enjoy. The winners are ...

Australian Plants



A spectacular close-up of *Leptospermum* flowers by Tony Cavanagh.



Delicate fungi, *Mycena subgalericulata* taken at Mates Rest, Apollo Bay by Roger Wileman

Australian Animals



A magnificent study of a dragonfly on a Chamelaucium by Tony Cavanagh.



A female Superb Fairy Wren with food for her young taken at Ceres by Frank Scheelings.

Australian Landscapes



A study of a long-dead Beefwood, *Grevillea striata* taken at Mootwingee, NSW, by Frank Scheelings



A breathtaking landscape taken from Geoff and Bev Wislon's home at Mapleton in the hinterland of the Sunshine Coast, which shows their native garden in the foreground (complete with Kookaburra) and the hills past Nambour and on to the sea about 25k away.

PLANT TABLE

with Tony Cavanagh

Because of the AGM and photo competition there were fewer plants than at other meetings, but they were no less interesting for that. Tony talked us through the plants of interest, and added a few notes via email the next day.

The most striking plant from my perspective was a *Correa* which was a pale, almost luminescent yellow with dark green foliage. According to Tony's notes, it is almost certainly *Correa reflexa* "Icicle", a naturally growing form from the coastal bushland near Bald Hill, Portland. It was collected and submitted for ACRA registration by APS member Cherree Densley. He is extremely impressed with this form and would have called it "Lemon Glow" (although that name applies to a *Banksia*) or "Winter Glow". He is going to attempt to grow a few from cuttings.

Eremophila santalina – brought along by Carmel is a very ornamental, large, upright shrub 2m-5m x 2.5m, with dark green pendulous leaves. The flowers are white to cream in spring, hanging like snow drops. It is said to be very drought and frost tolerant. Some discussion was had about its current name with some members stating that it had been renamed and was now the sole member of its own genus. Both Tony and I searched for some information on the 'net, but neither could find no evidence that the name change has occurred. But as we have both have been known to be wrong, (Tony more often than me 😊) I would be pleased if someone else can show its new name. I have written to the convener of APS Victoria's *eremophila* study group, but have had no reply at time of publication.

Frank also brought along a *Sholtzia*, which was mixed up with assorted *Thryptomenes*. It is possibly "*S. oligandra*" but Frank may have another name. It was a lovely little plant with masses of tiny mauve/pink flowers. There were also two *Thryptomenes*, *T. saxicola*, a deep pink, and a lovely white one. Tony says "I had a rather nice white flowered form which I thought came from the Grampians. Not so sure about that now but I seem to remember buying it from a Grampians nursery. On further checking, I believe it to be *Thryptomene saxicola* "Supernova", supposedly rather drought tolerant and a very nice low spreading shrub."

Two lovely *Acacias* are worthy of mention. The most unusual *A. aphylla*, which looks like a spiny green sculpture with delicate yellow flowers created a lot of discussion. But the pick was *A. acinacea*, a form which Tony calls 'rotundifolia' form. It features long sprays of dark green rounded phyllodes covered profusely with lemon yellow flowers. At 2m x 2m it would make a stunning specimen in any garden.



Acacia acinacea

Melaleuca 'Robin Red Breast' and *Hakea francissiana* are old favourites, both with deep red flowers. Other *hakeas* included *H. multilineata*, which has narrow leaves and long, quite woolly pink/red flowers, and *H. lissacarpa*, with dainty white flowers and very fine, prickly foliage.

Banksias were represented with *B. media* 'high Noon' – a plant to 3metres with large yellow flowers; and *B. cuneata*, formerly *Dryandra cuneata* (sorry Tony, I couldn't resist) a very hardy plant requiring good sun and excellent drainage.

Another stand-out was *Eucalyptus erythrocorys*, the Red-capped gum. This is a small tree or maybe a dwarf mallee form with large yellow/green flowers, preceded by striking red caps on the flower buds.



***Eucalyptus erythrocorys*, Photo Jim Barrow**

PLANT of the MONTH *Guichenotia macrantha*

Tony Cavanagh grew this month's Plant of the Month. Tony writes

Somewhat surprisingly, this specimen created quite a lot of interest at the July meeting, perhaps because relatively few new members had seen it but I think because it is such a graceful and spectacular plant with myriads of small lilac bells hanging down from hairy grey foliage. For me, it tends to be a low, sprawling shrub, about 1 metre high by 2 metres wide, with flowers appearing from mid-winter into spring. It is the contrast of these pendent flowers against the grey foliage which makes this the most popular of 16 or so *Guichenotias*, all of which come from Western Australia. It requires well drained soil in a near full sun position and can tolerate dryness once established.



***Guichenotia macrantha*, from Tony's garden**

It is supposed to be able to be grown from seed although we always propagate from cuttings of young fresh growth taken after flowering. This is one native plant which definitely benefits from pruning, done after it has finished flowering, which ensures excellent flowering in the next season. It is well worthwhile to try to obtain a plant from a native nursery.

Editor's Note: *The FJC Rogers Seminar in October is all about Brachychitons and their relatives, which includes Guichenotia. See article at the end of this edition.*

A NORFOLK ISLAND HOLIDAY by Tony Cavanagh

We visited Norfolk Island for a week in May and had a most enjoyable stay. Because you can only reach Norfolk by plane from Brisbane, Sydney or Auckland, New Zealand, we had a short holiday with our son and his family in Brisbane and then flew out from there. We were lucky and got a good package, return airfares, seven days accommodation in a self-contained unit, use of a hire car, transport to and from the airport to our unit and a free half-day orientation tour, all for under \$2000.



Spectacular Norfolk Island coastline

This tiny Australian territory (it is roughly 10 km by 7 km and 34.6 km² in area) lies about 1400 km off the eastern Australia coast and while run by an Australian administrator, enjoys a substantial amount of self-governance. The island is heavily dependent on tourism, although this has fallen in recent years to perhaps 20,000 visitors a year, with six flights a week from Australia and New Zealand. Everything that can't be grown or raised on the island has to be brought in by ship or plane, so many items are expensive although eating out was very reasonable and the main town of Burnt Pine has many shops selling top class European and British clothes, shoes, jewellery and the like at prices well under Australia (also the biggest range of Leggo you have ever seen at around 20% or more saving).

The two main tour companies offer well over 50 tours and activities, mainly centred on the island's convict past and its link with the descendants of the Bounty mutineers (who came to Norfolk in 1856 after outgrowing their even tinier island home of Pitcairn), so you need never be bored. However, what was interesting to us also were the flora and fauna, the Norfolk Island National Park (the whole 5 km² of it!) and its walks, the Botanic Gardens and the fabulous coastline.

As well as taking some of the tours, we used our hire car to visit areas although with only about 140 km of road, it doesn't really take long to see most things. But with fuel at \$2.65 a litre, it is wise not to get too carried away. According to Wikipedia, "Norfolk Island has 174 native plants; 51 of them are endemic. At least 18 of the endemic species are rare or threatened."

By far the best known is the famous *Norfolk Island Pine Araucaria hetertophylla*, which has been extensively replanted all over the island although old specimens can be seen in the Botanic Garden and the National Park, perhaps over 600 years old. A very rare plant, almost extinct until recently when a determined effort was made to rid its island home, Phillip Island, of feral goats and rabbits is *Hibiscus insularis*. The tiny populations there are a single clone and the stands probably established from layering. Some plants are now being grown from seed and take some 18 years to reach maturity so the majority of plants grown are from cuttings, so genetic diversity is still minimal.



Phillip Island framed by Norfolk Pines

Norfolk Island also hosts the world's tallest tree fern, *Cyathea brownii*, often over 20 m tall, the Norfolk Island palm *Rhopalostylis baueri* (see photo on last page) with its striking bunches of red seeds, and large numbers of Kentia or Lord Howe Island palm, *Howea forsteriana*. This makes an excellent indoor plant and is especially popular in the northern hemisphere, the seeds forming a very important source of income for the locals. In 1996-97, their

export was worth \$1.26 million to the island. The Botanic Gardens features many of the rare plants and it is well worthwhile spending a few hours there. Much of the flora was unknown to us but natural bush is largely similar to the sub-tropical rainforest of Queensland and New South Wales. There are many ferns, some *Dendrobium* species, the hop bush *Dodonea viscosum*, and a couple of *Wahlenbergia* species but everything else was new. A few local gardens grew some Australian plants, Grevilleas, Hakeas, Eucalyts, Melaleucas and Callistemons, and many of the exotic Hibiscus were very striking.



Magnificent, stately tree-ferns

Endemic fauna has suffered from human interference to habitat through land clearing, hunting and persecution as agricultural pests, as well as predation by introduced pests such as rats and cats. There were bait traps for rats all through the National Park. Pigs and goats also destroyed much of the habitat of ground animals and of course numerous introduced competitors such as blackbirds and crimson rosellas (that's right, one of ours) have pushed local birds,

especially the very rare Norfolk Green parrot nearly to extinction. Sea birds are numerous but seasonal (late winter to spring) and can be seen on the islands off the north coast near Captain Cook's landing place, especially on the aptly named Bird Rock. Two types of animals you will see everywhere are domestic cattle along the roads and flocks of "chooks". The cattle (almost all female, the bulls are kept in paddocks) are owned by locals who pay a yearly fee to have them graze along the roads. They have right of way over cars and will calmly walk around you if you are in their way. The "chooks" are all wild and descendants of those released when the convict colony was closed in 1855. You can't move close to them, they are so wary, and can fly hundreds of metres, just like ducks, if disturbed. They apparently aren't much good in the cooking pot either; like galahs, a stone cooked with them will be soft before the birds.



Cascade Bay from the cliffs

There are quite good walks in the National Park, some quite steep but they are not very long. Many lead to the coast and what a coast it is, often steep, wooded cliffs with no safe harbours so that all small boats are taken out of the water when not in use. The coast at Anson Bay and near the Captain Cook memorial, both on the north coast, feature million dollar views as is the coast near Cascade Bay in the south, one of the two ports on the island.

We really enjoyed our time on Norfolk and will probably go back in 2016.

FUTURE MEETINGS and FIELD TRIPS

Our **19th August** speaker will be Brett Diehm. Brett has been working on re-establishing native orchids on the Barwon Coast, and will talk to us about his work. On the following **Sunday 24th**, Brett will lead us on a field trip in the area. We will meet at the Collendina car-park (Opposite the Milk Bar in Bonnyvale Road) at 11.00 am.

Our speaker in September is Brad Ferrier. Brad is a landscape architect who works extensively with natives.

We are planning a garden visit in October to several predominantly native gardens in Indented Head, followed by lunch and another garden visit in Drysdale. We'll keep you updated with more details as they are finalised.

Sunday 19th October will see those of us not attending the FJC Rogers seminar visiting some gardens in Indented Head and Drysdale. More details will follow in future editions.

FJC ROGERS SEMINAR

Bendigo

The FJC Rogers Seminar is on **18th and 19th October 2014** at the [All Seasons International Conference Centre, 171-183 Mclvor Road, Bendigo](#)

Brachychitons and Related genera

The *Brachychiton* genus is a member of the *Sterculiaceae* sub-family which includes

- *Androclava*
- *Brachychiton*
- *Commersonia*
- *Guichenotia*
- *Keraudrenia*
- *Lasiopetalum*
- *Pterospermum*
- *Sterculia*
- *Thomasia*



These genera contain the plants from which chocolate and cola extract are derived. The name "Sterculiaceae" comes from Sterculius, an ancient Roman god who concerned himself with fertilization.

A number of species of *Brachychiton* are well known in cultivation. The best known is the spectacular Illawarra Flame Tree (*B. acerifolius*) and others widely grown are the Kurrajong (*B. populneus*) and the bottle tree (*B. rupestris*).

This seminar is open to all interested persons

PLANTS FOR SALE

We still have a number of the plants we purchased from Mahoney's nursery left over from the plant sale.

- *Correa alba* 'prostrate', *C. 'Pink Mist'*, *C. reflexa nummulariifolia* (pale yellow);
- *Grevillea endlicheriana*, *G. lanigera* "Mt. Tambortitha", *G. arenaria*;
- *Westringia fruticosa*, *W. 'Jervis Gem'*, *W. "Wynghabbie Gem"*
- *Adenanthos sericeus*, *A. sericeus 'Dwarf Form'* *A. detmoldii*
- *Isopogon formosus*
- *Eremophila maculata* (purple) *E. glabra 'Amber Carpet'* (green leaf) *E. glabra "Kalbarri Carpet"* (grey leaf)
- *Myoporum parvifolium* (fine leaf form)
- *Leschenaultia biloba* – blue and purple forms
- *Goodenia ovata* 'prostrate'

And a few stragglers. \$5.00 each for members. Contact Ade – Ph: 52439478

THE ONE THAT WOULDN'T FIT.



One last photo from Tony and Liz's trip to Norfolk Island of the fruits and spent flower stalks of the Norfolk Island palm - *Rhopalostylis bauera*.