



Correa Mail

Newsletter No. 326– March 2017

FEBRUARY GATHERING

Geelong Hotel

About 30 members and guests gathered at the new Geelong Hotel for a 'Welcome The New Year' dinner. The old Corio Hotel in Yarra Street has been extensively renovated and rebranded as the 'Geelong'. The food was excellent, the mood convivial and a great time was had by all.

NEXT REGULAR MEETING

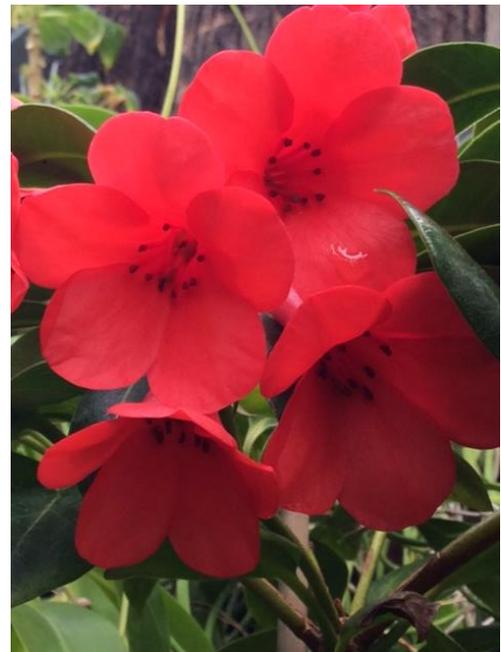
21st MARCH

Our first regular meeting for the year will be addressed by Helen Lovell from Neutrog fertilisers.

During the talk Helen will explain Neutrog's 'Pooh Bah Club' and invite members to join and receive the benefits of regular updates for new products, catalogues, newsletters and samples. All attendees at the talk will receive FREE samples of Neutrog's latest products.

WIDER GEELONG FLORA LECTURE

The Geelong Field Naturalists Club is presenting the Wider Geelong Flora Lecture on Tuesday 14th March at 7.30 pm in the meeting room at the Geelong Botanic gardens. The speaker is Peter Rogers from the Ringwood Field Naturalists Club and his topic is 'Mistletoes'. A cuppa is available from 7 pm. All welcome.



Roger's *R. lochia*

RHODODENDRON LOCHIAE by Roger Wileman

Rhododendron lochia belongs to a very variable and diverse genus of 800 or more species, widely distributed across the Northern hemisphere. The majority are found in temperate east Asia, with over 200 species in New Guinea. There is one, or, perhaps, two species in far Northern Australia.

The original plant was collected by William A. Sayer and A. Davidson while ascending Mt Bellenden Ker,

South West of Cairns, Queensland. The original plant was described by Ferdinand Von Mueller in 1886 in honour of Lady Loch the wife of the Governor of Victoria. For many years it was thought to be the only Australian rhododendron species, but, as more mountains were explored more plants were found at altitudes between 940 m - 1300 m. Mt Bartle Frere, Mt Lewis, Mt Spurgeon, Mt Finnigan and Mt Pieter Botte all support well-developed rain forests where *R. lochia* grows as an epiphyte. On the more windswept mountain tops it grows as a lithophyte.

A second species was described in 1996 and named *R. notiale*, but further research proved that this species was the one originally described by F. Von Mueller. This necessitated the need for a new name for the species commonly in cultivation. *R. virioscum* (formally *R. lochia*) was described in 2002. I admit that I'm more than a little confused by this renaming. The two forms differ in the flower structure - *R. virioscum* has a straight corolla tube, while in *R.*

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notiale it is curved. The two names have not yet gained wide acceptance, and may revert to *R. lochiaie*.**

R. lochiaie is a really attractive plant of about 1.0 m x 1.0 m, with dark green typical rhododendron leaves. The bright red, trumpet shaped flowers to 5cm in width, occurring in bunches of six or more at the end of the branches are spectacular. The plant likes an acidic soil and will grow well in Geelong in a sheltered position. It is ideal as a pot plant and being an epiphyte should grow well in a hanging basket. I had this beautiful plant many years ago, but lost it when we moved to Queensland. When Matt Baars offered me a plant about two years ago I jumped at the chance, it has grown very well in my orchid house and at the moment has about sixty beautiful flowers and buds.



** For a little more reading on the nomenclature issue, here is a link to an article by Lyn Craven, published in the Journal Of The Australian Rhododendron Society, which explains the process (or lack of it.) Ed.

<http://www.vireya.net/archive/CravenAusJ03.pdf>

GARDEN VISITS

Can you help?

We've had a request via Margaret Guenzel for the 'Friends Of The Geelong Botanic Gardens' seeking people who would be prepared to open their gardens for a visit from the 'Friends'. Margaret was a volunteer and propagator for the group. At this stage they are just looking for expressions of interest – no season or dates have been finalised. They are looking for 3 or 4 gardens, with their excursions usually attracting about 20 members.

If you think you can help, please contact me and I'll forward your details to Margaret. Thanks.

NEWSLETTER EDITOR NEEDED – Part-time Position.

Penny and I will be away for all of August and September this year. It is our biennial trip to Finland to visit our son. We will also be spending two weeks in Africa and another two weeks in Western Australia on our return.

So, I need someone to take on the task of producing the September and October newsletters in my absence.

You will need to attend the meetings in August and September, take notes of the speakers address, the plant table, general business etc., and compile all this along with articles of interest and contributions from members. This then needs to be distributed to members and other interested parties.

I will provide you with a working template, email addresses, mailing addresses, and any other assistance that I can.

It is a time consuming job, but anyone with basic computer skills and a little free time can manage it.

TINY SURPRISES.

Penny bought a few little succulents from Attila Kapitany when he came to talk to our meeting last year. They live in a little porcelain pot on our patio table, each one about the size of a small coffee-cup. One has produced a prodigious flower spike and a crown of lovely little thumb-nail-sized flowers



NEWSLETTER ARTICLES.

Help needed

Once again I'm appealing to all members to contribute articles for your newsletter. Roger does an amazing amount of work to keep you all informed, please give him some help. You don't need to be J.K Rowling, just put your thoughts down and I'll do the editing. ☺

If you see anything of interest in a newspaper or magazine, please pass it on to me for inclusion.