



AUSTRALIAN
PLANTS SOCIETY
— Geelong —

Correa Mail

Newsletter No 335 – March 2018

February Meeting - February 24th BBQ

Our first 'meeting' for the year was the now traditional afternoon/evening BBQ gathering at Arthur and Linda Pape's place in Lovely Banks. A small but enthusiastic group met for a very congenial evening. Thanks again to Arthur and Linda for their readiness to host us yet again.

Grevillea scapigera by Roger Wileman

Grevillea scapigera, the Corrigin Grevillea, is a small suckering plant with bluish, bipinnate leaves and unusual white flowers. It occurs in the wheat belt area of Western Australia between Corrigin and Quairading. It was declared rare in September 1995, with only 39 plants remaining at thirteen sites - mostly in highly degraded roadsides.



Attempts were made to obtain the farmland adjacent to the largest known roadside population, but to no avail. So a program was started to relocate this endangered *Grevillea* to three new selected sites which had been previously cleared and were in various stages of regrowth. Each site required different preparation before planting could start - ripping, scalping, rabbit and weed control, fencing, and tank and trickle irrigation systems. This last was a major undertaking, and at one stage the solar panels and pump were stolen.

Initial plantings were done from tissue culture from ten different clones. New planting varied from year to year and at one time numbered eighteen hundred plants over the three sites. Since the program finished some years ago the numbers have dropped dramatically with only approximately four hundred plants still surviving. One of the main reasons for such a dramatic drop in numbers is the plants' very short, seven year life-span.

G. scapigera sets large amounts of seed, which germinate quickly after fires. But chance of fire at these particular sites is very small as the surrounding areas is planted to wheat and barley and any fire is quickly controlled. Lack of fire is another reason that this grevillea is in decline along the roadside locations. Without occasional burning the weeds take over and *Grevillea scapigera*, being a small prostrate plant, is easily smothered.

I was invited to one site last year, and found that the ground was very hard and compacted. It seemed to me a less than premium site to try and reestablish a very endangered plant. It had been ripped in some places, with some plants placed in the rip-lines. Others had been planted randomly over the site. The plants in the ripped lines appear to have fared much



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worse than the plants in the unripped areas. At this site there is a small, locked wire cage containing small bags of seed collected from the surviving plants, and checked regularly for their viability.



This project has been a long and involved programme to re-establish and increase the number of plants, but, I felt I was looking at a vanishing species. It may end up like our club emblem, the Lara Grevillea, *G. rosmarinifolia*, which seems destined only to be found in private gardens.

CALLING ALL KEEN PHOTOGRAPHERS!

The Friends of Kevin Hoffman Walk are conducting an amateur photo competition along the walk. The competition is open to all ages and abilities. There are four categories into which you can submit your photos:

- Flowers and plants
- Wild animals, including insects, reptiles and birds
- The scenery along the Kevin Hoffman Walk
- People, pets and activities along the walk

Please note that you must have the person/people's permission to submit the photograph for the competition.

You must also be able to verify where on the walk your photo(s) were taken, so take a wider shot where you took that macro, just to show us the location. This won't count in your photo allocation.

Submit only digital photos (no watermarks or sneaky photoshopping), over 800kb in size. There is a maximum of 4 photos per person that can be submitted over all categories. Email us at ...

friendsofkevinhoffmanwalk@outlook.com

for an entry form, then submit your photos and completed form to the same address.

The 12 winning photos, as voted by the Friends of Kevin Hoffman Walk committee, will be printed in a 2019 Kevin Hoffman Walk fundraiser calendar. The calendar will be available to purchase later this year. So, happy snapping down at the walk!

UPCOMING EVENTS

GFNC WIDER GEELONG FLORA LECTURE.



On Tuesday 13th March, as part of the Wider Geelong Flora Lecture series the Geelong Field Naturalists' Club have Dr Steve Sinclair, a Plant Ecologist from the Arthur Rylah Institute, talking about "Salt Marsh Vegetation in Sth West Victoria". Salt Marsh Vegetation can be found right in Geelong ... at least for now. Note the time, 7:00 pm for 7:30 pm at the Geelong Botanic Gardens meeting room.

VISITS TO MEMBERS' GARDENS 18th March

We are re-introducing the opportunity for members to visit the gardens of other members. Our first one will occur mid-March and others are planned for Spring. Naturally, all members are invited to attend and see how, and what, Australian plants are growing in our area.

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The visits are planned to include two gardens that are just a short drive apart, and at one of them there will be a morning or afternoon tea available. Details of the next garden visit are:

On **Sunday, 18 March** we'll meet at John and Barb Bell's garden, 1050 Horseshoe Bend Road, Torquay at 1.45 pm until 3.00 pm. The Bell's garden is well-established on a large semi-rural block.

At 3.00 pm we'll continue to the Phil and Di Royce's at 3 Malbec Loop, Waurin Ponds until 4.30 pm. Afternoon tea will be at the Royce's. The Royce's garden is more recently established on a normal suburban block.

If you'd like to share your garden with members during the Spring, please have a chat with any Committee member during our monthly meetings between now and then so that visits may be coordinated.

March Meeting

20th March

Our speaker for March is Tony Hughes, a well-known propagator and lecturer in Horticulture at Melbourne University.

April Meeting

17th April

At our April meeting, APS Geelong's own Roger and Sheila will share photos and stories of their Western Australian wanderings.

PLANT SALE

21st April

Our big April Plant Sale is on again this year. Once again Arthur and Linda will host the event at their Lovely Banks property, and once again, we'll be asking all members to be in some way.

There are three main tasks on the day which we ask members to volunteer to undertake:-

Gate – taking entry money, offering parking instructions and directing traffic.

Barbeque – cooking and co-ordinating with the kitchen to keep everyone fed

Kitchen – Serving food, snack tea and coffee to patrons, workers and growers.

There are also lots of other things that need doing during the course of the day, so there's plenty for everyone.

We will have a clean-up and preparation on the preceding Saturday 14th April, from 9.00 am, to be sure that everything is ship-shape, and a final set-up on Friday 20th April. More details in the next newsletter.

As usual there will be a BBQ dinner for all the volunteers and growers on the Saturday evening after the sale. It's always a great night and a good way to wrap up the day and thank our growers for their support.

NEW PLANTS DISCOVERED

This little gem popped up on the ABC Facebook page. A bit of searching found a press release from the Queensland Government some of which is reproduced here. At the end of the story is a link to a radio interview which goes some way to explaining the extraordinary first sentence of the story. 😊

Who'd have thought taking a tinkle in the bush could lead to a major botanical discovery? Some twenty new plant species were discovered across the state last year by a team of excited botanists from the Queensland Herbarium.

Queensland Herbarium Science Leader Dr John Neldner said most of the new species were reliant on a particular localised habitat with small populations, and were often unable to adapt to change and therefore vulnerable to extinction.

"For example, our botanists discovered a new species of melaleuca – *Melaleuca comosa* – restricted to a single population in western Queensland," Dr Neldner said. "Our new cycad – *Cycas distans* – was discovered in two populations in the Mitchell River district. They also discovered a new species of *Labichea*, growing only on Mount Mulligan in the Einasleigh Uplands, west of Dimboola, in North Queensland."



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The 300 metre-high and 18 kilometre-long Mount Mulligan – also known by its Aboriginal names of Woothakata and Narrobullgin – is a well-known botanical hotspot.



Cycas distans – Photo: Paul Forster

“We discovered a new species of perennial grass, belonging to the *Elionurus* genus: *Elionurus pupureus*. The species has a strong lemon scent. It was found in several small locations on Cape York Peninsula.

“Meanwhile, the new orchid – *Gastrodia umbrosa* – only grows on the Atherton Tableland in north Queensland. It’s a member of the *Gastrodia* orchid genus, but the species in this genus lack chlorophyll, the stuff that make plants green,” Dr Neldner said.

“This lack of need for chlorophyll was also associated with another two species we found in the Wet Tropics in north Queensland, both from the *Thismia* genus, commonly known as fairy lanterns.

“These plants grow in dead or decaying organic matter, often not emerging from the soil until they are ready to be pollinated by insects. That makes them very difficult to find, only visible when flowering, which occurs during wet weather.”

Dr Neldner said the herbarium’s botanists also discovered two new species of native daisies – *Olearia bella* and *Olearia orientalis* – bringing the number of these species in Queensland to 26. Once again, both have highly restricted distributions.

In a recent interview Dr. Neldner explained journalist to Andy Toulson just how his team made these discoveries, and how significant they are.

You can listen to the full interview here:

<http://bit.ly/2E5Kdwt>

FROM APS GRAMPIANS



Australian Plants Society Victoria Inc.

Sat 20 & Sun 21 October 2018



Hosted by Wimmera Growers of Australian Plants Inc.
& Australian Plants Society Grampians Inc.

For expressions of interest email:
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<https://apsvic.org.au/fjc-rogers-seminar/>



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