



Correa Mail

Newsletter No 353 – December, 2019

NEXT MEETING:

February 18th

Our first meeting of 2020, (2020?? Really!?), will be a show'n'tell night. Members are encouraged to bring along a few photos and stories about what they have been up to, what they've seen, what's flowering in their gardens ... anything that might interest the members. All welcome and everyone is encouraged to take part.

PLANT TABLE

with Matt Baars

Our plant table was an interesting mixture of old favourites and some startling 'new' editions. One of the latter was a Eucalyptus hybrid 'Nullabor Lime', a cross between *E. pyriformis* and *E. macrocarpa*. It features similar foliage to *E. macrocarpa* and large bright lemon/yellow flowers. The plant, growing at Leach's property in Inverleigh, is six years old and about 3 metres high. Two other Eucalypts made the cut this month. *E. pyriformis*, the Dowerin Rose, is a small rather straggly mallee from Western Australia and reaches 1.5 – 3m. It has red, pink or yellowish flowers. *E. woodwardii* is a tree which may reach considerable height in cultivation. It is found in the red sand country east of Kalgoorlie, and has masses of bright yellow/green flowers.

Calathamnus pinifolius is an interesting plant at this time of year. It features long branches lined with sharp, pine-like needles and red branch-hugging flowers. Many members commented on how nice they would look as a Christmas wreath on the front door.



Photo: Roger Fryer – Northqueenslandplants.com

There were several Regelias on the table this month. Regelia is a genus of six species, five of which are found in the south west of Western Australia. The sixth is found in Kakadu National Park in the Northern Territory. They are closely related to *Melaleuca*, *Beaufortia*, *Calothamnus* and *Eremaea* and have a similar appearance. *R. inops* has rounded flower heads which are bright mauve and presented on the ends of the stems, which have rows of paired leaves. *R. velutina* is a large shrub to 3m with dark green, velvet-like leaves and showy orange/red flowers. *R. megacephala* is also a large shrub with purple/red flowers.



Regelia megacephala?

Regelia megacephala from Frank Scheelings' garden

PLANT OF THE MONTH –

by Matt Leach

This month's Plant of the Month was chosen by Helen Day. It was a beautiful hybrid, Grevillea georgiana x insignis which was brought to the meeting by Matt Leach. Matt writes ...

My father purchased the plant from Catherine Vaughan's nursery in Teesdale. He was after a *Grevillea georgiana* but purchased this, thinking it was as close as he was going to get. There is basically no published information about this hybrid.

It is a little frost-tender but flourishes once the weather warms up. The leaves are pretty much a 50-50

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cross of both parents. They are not as wide as the *G. insignis*, not as narrow as the *G. georgiana* but as prickly as both parents. The plant is currently about 1.25m tall and the flowers red to dark pink in colour. It is not a prolific flowering plant but produces flowers for a long period of time. It is a quite scraggly plant, requiring pruning after flowering. The plant is about 4 years old in a raised granitic sand bed with some drip irrigation and is grafted onto *G. robusta* rootstock. It is extremely attractive to birds, especially honeyeaters.

Both parent plants are from the south-west of Western Australia. *G. georgiana* leaves are deeply lobed, twice divided and glaucous, whereas the *G. insignis* leaves are oblong and papery or leathery. The flowers of *G. georgiana* are upright, about 10cm in height, red in colour with a white centre. The *G. insignis* flowers are round and dark to rose-pink in colour. *G. insignis* grows to 2-3m in height, whereas *G. georgiana* is only 1-2m high.

Seedlings produced from this plant all have differing leaf forms but all appear to be closer to *G. insignis* than *G. georgiana*.



Victor Leach's *Grevillea georgiana* x *insignis*

PS – My father now has his *Grevillea georgiana* and he's very happy with the way it's progressing. The birds don't seem to like these flowers as much as the hybrid.

CHRISTMAS BREAK-UP BBQ

About thirty members attended the Christmas BBQ which was held at Ade and Penny's house in Belmont. The weather threatened to spoil the party, but, apart from a brief shower, the night was not marred by the weather.

At one point it was thought the fire brigade might be needed, as Frank and Ade managed to set the BBQ alight, but all was well. However, as a result, Judith's hamburgers looked a little like a burnt offering.

Thanks to all who attended, to Frank for organising food and drink, and to Ade and Penny for their hospitality.



What do you mean we ran out of wine?

HOW TO FIND NORTH USING A BANKSIA

By Bruce McGinness



At a recent presentation given by Kevin Collins on banksia at Colac APS he explained how a banksia inflorescence can be used to find north. Flowers on the northerly aspect of the inflorescence open-up first because they get the most light and heat. This creates an inverted V that points to the north. On the Banksia praemorsa and Banksia ashbyi photographs this can be clearly observed, I checked that the V did point to the north in the field with reasonable accuracy. Looks like I can retire my navigational mossy stick to find south and carry a banksia flower around to find north instead.

XANTHORRHOEA AUSTRALIS **by Bruce McGinness**

I purchased a number of one-year old seedlings of *Xanthorrhoea australis* by mail order in May 2008 from Lorraine Deppler who managed Bush House Nursery. They came as wee spindly things which I didn't think would have much hope of success. As we know patience is a virtue that a gardener must have so I persevered and have 3 remaining plants which are growing in pots, one flowered last year and I was pleased to see another plant produce a spike this year. This particular plant is growing in a large glazed earthenware pot and it has performed very well.



Through the kitchen window I watch the different birds and insects that visit the inflorescence as I am slaving away at the kitchen sink. The inflorescence is now fully open and it glows when the sun hits it. I don't know the name of the butterfly in the picture and would welcome

an identification. I planted one of the Xanthorrhoea in a garden bed and it was doing well until we had a very wet spring a few years back and it promptly died. I may try planting one in the ground again, but this time I will build up the garden bed to provide better drainage. Overall, they have been rewarding plants with their interesting foliage and provide much excitement when an inflorescence appears.



Editor's Note: The butterfly is an Australian Admiral, Vanessa itea, common in eastern and southern Australia, from Atherton Tablelands to south west Western Australia. Also found on Lord Howe and Norfolk islands and in New Zealand. The larvae feed on stinging nettles, both the native Urtica incisa and introduced U. urens.

MERRY CHRISTMAS

Another year has drawn swiftly to a close - another successful year for our club. Thanks to all of you who have contributed articles for the Correa Mail during the year, and thanks to all who will do so next year! I look forward to another great year of meetings, speakers, outings, BBQs and general hilarity in 2020. Please have a safe and happy Christmas however you choose to celebrate it.

From Penny and me,

