AUSTRALIAN PLANTS SOCIETY — Geelong —

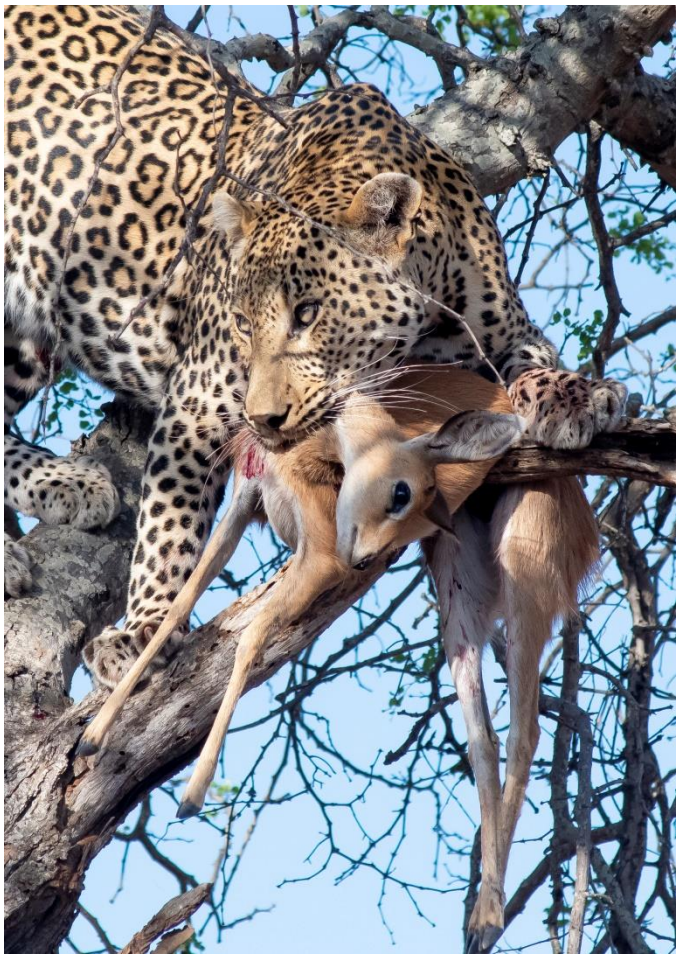
Correa Mail

Newsletter No 344 – March, 2019

FEBRUARY MEETING **Members' Night**

We tried a new format for the February meeting, replacing the 'traditional' BBQ with a members' night, inviting those interested to talk to us or show us some photos of what they had been up to since our last meeting in November, 2018. I think the night was a great success.

We began with Ade showing us a few shots of a troupe of wild dogs and leopard with a kill, taken on a December trip to Africa; some scenery and insects photographed on the club's trip to Falls Creek, (see report on the trip for Ade's photos) and finishing up with a few mildly embarrassing wedding photos taken on February 19th, 44 years ago.



Leopard with Steenbok kill

Frank gave us a photographic tour of the plants in flower in the high country at this time of the year with some amazing macro shots of the flowers found on the Falls Creek trip. While January is probably the peak flowering period in the Victorian Alps, there was still plenty to see in the first week of February, as is evidenced by Frank's wonderful photos.

Euphrasia eichlerii

Dianella tasmanica

Chris Walker-Smith showed us a delightful collection of photos of his garden in West Geelong and had us all quite envious of the wonderfully landscaped pond and rockeries.

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Amazing landscaping in Chris's West Geelong garden

Phil and Dianne took us on their tour of the silo art through northern Victoria, and a visit to the Australian Inland Botanic Gardens near Mildura.

Silo art at Sheep Hills

Phil was particularly taken with the speed at which the silo art was completed, as detailed on the information boards at each site. He and Di showed some remarkable dedication to the cause by doing the walk around the botanic garden in 35+ degrees.

Matt and Nicole took us to Northern NSW on their coastal camping trip, visiting a number of National Parks and places of interest. They went to Forster, visiting Green Point, Sugarloaf Point Lighthouse and Seal Rocks. They visited 'The Grandis', the tallest tree in NSW, Booti Hill National Park and Crowdy Bay National Park.

Crowdy Bay National Park

They moved on to Nambucca Heads and visited Dorrigo and Bongil Bongil National Parks, the Coffs Harbour Botanic gardens, culminating with a trip to Dubbo to visit friends and the Burrendong Arboretum

Dorrigo National Park

UPCOMING MEETINGS

March 2019 - Maria Hitchcock OAM will speak to us about Correas. Maria is the author of *"Correas – Australian Plants for Waterwise Gardens"* and *"Wattle – Australia's National Emblem".* She has the Registered National Collection of about 200 Correa varieties in her garden in Armidale, NSW. Don't miss this fascinating talk.

We have decided to have a Correa theme to the night, so bring as many Correas as you can for the plant table, along with anything else you may find interesting. Maria will have some cutting material available, and we hope to have Correas as door/raffle prizes too.

April 2019 – Dr. Dean Nicolle is an Australian botanist, arborist and ecologist. He is widely recognised as the leading authority on the genus *Eucalyptus*. He has written five books on Eucalypts, including Field Guides to the Eucalypts of South Australia, Victoria and Tasmania. He founded the Currency Creek Arboretum in South Australia where over 900 Eucalypt taxa are grown. Dean has a PhD in mallees.

ON THE TABLE **with Matt Baars**

I apologise to Matt and to our readers, but I was involved in IT issues and wasn't able to listen to the plant table discussion this month, so I have no descriptions to add to this article. Here then is a partial list of the plants that were on show. Ed.

Banksias: *aculeata, burdettii elderiana, pilostylis, violacea*
Eucalyptus: *forrestiana subsp dolichorhyncn, forrestiana subsp forrestiana, armillata, macrocarpa, pterocarpa, synandra*
Grevilleas: *bipinnatifida, sericea, cagiana, eristachya x spinosa, thyrsoides* ' Wendy Sunshine', 'Sylvia', 'Katherine's Sister', 'Calloundra Gem', 'Peaches'n'Cream'.
Also: *Halgania preissiana, Swainsonia formosa, Pelargonium rodneyanum, Scaveola aemula* pink, *Anctinotus helianthia, Pycnosorus globosus, Backhousia citriodora.*

Roger brought in an interesting Grevillea from his garden with small, black-anthered flowers similar in form to a*rmigera or hookeriana*, but with a different leaf structure and habit. Matt L suggest *G. crowleyae*?

PLANT OF THE MONTH - *Eucalyptus lansdoweneana*
By Matt Leach

This flower was chosen by Di Royce , our door prize winner. The flower is from a seedling of *Eucalyptus lansdoweneana*. The parent plant is a small mallee of no more than 3 metres after 20 years growing. The leaves are very glossy green to yellow-green about 120-180mm x 20-30mm. The flowers are a deep crimson/red, produced in spring.

***E. lansdowneana* – parent plant flowers**

The seedling in question has some resemblance to the parent plant in flower structure and size but flowers are dark purple and were produced in late summer. The leaves are somewhat glossy green 70-110mm x 20-30mm. The seedling is almost 5m tall and has been in the ground for around 15 years. The habit is a mallee but with a much denser canopy. This seedling is one of seven that arose from the *Eucalyptus lansdoweneana* parent at the same time and have all grown to be pretty much identical to each other in their habit and flower colour. We do have a few trees nearby once thought to be the same species - *Eucalyptus lansdoweneana subsp albopurpurea.* These have now have been given species status as *Eucalyptus albopurpurea*. The seedling resembles this plant to some extent with the habit and flowers, however *E. albopurpurea* flowersare light purple to mid purple, through to white. The flowers appear earlier, around Christmas at Inverleigh.

The seedling flower as chosen by Di Royce

I have noticed over the last few years that the *Eucalyptus lansdoweneana* and its seedlings, when in flower, don't seem to have the same attraction to insects and birds as the *E. albopurpurea* which they go really nuts for. The seven seedlings are grown amongst other mature Eucalyptus so they have had a hard life growing in very dry conditions with some supplementary water through the first two summers to help establish. They have a spindly canopy compared to other Eucalyptus but denser than the parent. I wonder if they were grown in the open, away from any other plants or structures would they have any different habit?

BUS TRIP TO FALLS CREEK Report by Ade Foster

On February 1st, fourteen intrepid travellers made the drive to Falls Creek for a four day weekend at the fabulous Chorki Ski Lodge. We hired a 25 seat bus which Roger and Sheila boarded at my place in Belmont. We drove to Matt and Pam's in Corio to collect them along with Chris and Helen, Matt and Nicole and Bruce. Due to unforeseen circumstances Frank and Tina and Phil and Dianne drove their own vehicles later in the day.

We were on the road before 10.00am – ahead of schedule and the mood was one of anticipation. Unfortunately the aging music system in the bus would not play my CD of carefully chosen and age appropriate music, so we were forced to listen to Pam asking 'When are we stopping for coffee?' every ten minutes. We duly stopped at 11.30 and topped up the fuel … and coffee, then drove on the Myrtleford where we had a picnic lunch at a lovely, shady park beside the Happy Valley Creek, a tributary of the Ovens River. We filled the tank at Mt. Beauty and made to tortuous trip up the mountain arriving at Falls Creek about 4.30 pm.

Chorki Ski Lodge – http://chorkiskiclub.com.au/

The bus was too big (or the road too narrow … take your pick) to park outside the lodge, so we left it on the main road car park and Frank kindly ferried luggage, food and the elderly up the steep incline to the lodge. It was spacious and we had a bedroom with ensuite bathroom each. There was a gigantic walk-in fridge which just managed to contain the food Tina had brought and the wine the rest of us felt was necessary. While we all settled in Frank and Bruce took a walk along the Roper Lookout Track a short distance from the lodge.

Next morning we were at the start to the Heathy Spur Track soon after 8.00 am. With a bit of ferrying, one car was left at the end of the track to save a 3km walk along the road back to the starting point. Tina, Sheila, Matt B and I walked the Roper Lookout Track while the others, foolishly accepting Frank's estimate of 4.5 km, took the steeper Heathy Spur. The country here is a mixture of heaths, open tussock grasslands, bogs and patches of snowgum woodlands. The predominant colour of the flowers was yellow with *Craspedia, Microseris, Podolepsis* and *Xeroshrysum* all making a vivid show.

***Xeroshrysum* on Heathy Spur**

While the more sensible of us spent the afternoon recovering from the 8km walk along the 4.5 km track, those younger, fitter or more foolhardy took another walk on some flatter ground near Mt. Cope. Apart from the myriad flowers there were small animals in abundance. Grasshoppers and butterflies jumped and fluttered at every step and much time was spent looking at and photographing them. The big Alpine Katydids with brilliant red and blue abdomens were common as were little Tussock skinks and larger Alpine water skinks. There were beetles and flies and caterpillars in such numbers that it often took an hour to walk just a few hundred metres.

Magnificent Tinzeda - *Tinzeda albosignata*

Dinner was pizza and a drink - $15 – at The Last Hoot in the village then an early night to prepare for the next mornings' walk.

On Sunday morning we started at the Langford Gap car park and walked the Langford West Aquaduct Road, an easy, flat walk to Wallace's Hut. Roger took his mountain bike up several precipitous tracks and joined us along the way, looking disgustingly fit (or just plain disgusting) in his MAMIL cycling gear. For the uninitiated, MAMIL = Middle Aged Man In Lycra. ☺

This walk follows the aquaduct, and while there were a few weeds along the way, there were plenty of interesting native plants to keep us occupied. We wandered, groups forming to discuss a find, dissolving to wander off and reforming at the next interesting plant or insect. The aquaduct itself was crystal clear and teeming with trout from 150 – 300mm. I spent a happy time catching grasshoppers and flicking them into the stream to watch the little trout rise to the bait.

Bogong Daisy along the Aquaduct Track

The pattern of the previous day was repeated with resters and walkers doing their individual things after a late lunch. But, a sudden sharp rain storm brought the walkers home a little earlier than planned. After dinner and perhaps a few glasses of wine, or gin and tonic, my CD was tried in the stereo at the lodge. Success! An enjoyable, and remarkably tuneful, if somewhat loud singalong ensued, undertaken enthusiastically by all but Matt and Nicole. Their musical tastes may not stretch to Gene Pitney, The Everley Brothers or Creedence, but Nicole's parting shot as they hastily exited via the bedroom stairs was below the belt. 'Happy Hour at the Nursing Home', indeed!

On Monday morning most of us made the climb to Mt Cope. It was bleak and windy in the open heaths, but in the shelter of the snowgums it was warm and very pleasant. We made it to the top – or close enough – and the views were worth the climb.

The others had spent a productive and much appreciated morning cleaning the lodge, and after an early lunch we were packed and ready for the long drive home by 12.30. Roger rode his bike down the mountain, a much easier trip than that undertaken by the sweating individuals we passed who were toiling upwards. We picked him up below Bogong Village, and headed for home.

A wonderful weekend was had in the company of wonderful people. Thanks to all involved for a most enjoyable trip.

A 'REMNANT' PLANT **by Ade Foster**

I was watering in the back yard one warm evening in January, hose in one hand and glass of wine in the other, as is my wont. (My neighbour thinks I have an easy life.) As usual, I was pulling out any baby weeds I encountered and dropping them on the path for later collection. An unusual one caught my eye, and it seemed familiar, so I left in in situ, and searched my failing memory for an answer to its identity.

My little 'weed'.

Back in the summer of 2003, the middle of the drought, I decided to do away with all the lawn on our Belmont block, and plant natives. I laid out the garden beds in my back yard, brought in sand as a mulch and, in blissful ignorance, planted any old 'native' I could find at the local nurseries.

The garden 2003 (top) and 2018 (below)

Most of them survived my clumsy ministrations and soon the garden was looking a treat. One that I was particularly fond of was *Kennedia prostrata*, the Running Postman, which I encountered often on my bushwalks at Anglesea and in the Brisbane Ranges. I had visions of it spreading across the yard, brightening my day with its lovely , bright red pea-flowers. It grew quickly, flowered profusely and promptly died the following summer. It was replaced with a *Pultenea pedunculata*, which is still kicking, and forgotten. Until that warm evening last month when I found the 'weed'.

The mystery weed is a tiny *K. prostrata* which has appeared in the bed where my forgotten original was planted. The seed has lain there for 15 years, buried in the sandy mulch, and, this year, for whatever reason, has germinated.

K. prostrata is a widespread species found across southern Australia, from coastal northern New South Wales, across Victoria and South Australia and into the south and west of Western Australia. It grows in a variety of habitats from open forest to grassland and coastal heath.

It is a mostly a prostrate shrub but, in some places is a weak climber. The leaves are dark green and in groups of three, with undulating or ruffled edges. The large pea-flowers are a vivid red (sometimes pale red or rarely pink) and can be as much as 30mm long. The seed pods which follow the flowering are flattish. It prefers an open sunny or lightly shaded position, and in the right spot will give a spread of 2.5 metres. It will grow readily from treated seed, or from cuttings.

K. prostrata flower – Grampians

My little plant is being tenderly cared for, and hopefully, will repay that kindness with a splash of red next spring.

STRANGE THINGS HAPPENING by Matt Leach

Matt showed us these photos at the last meeting. Curious indeed! For those who weren't able to attend, here's the story. Ed.

These photos show a strange occurrence that I have noticed growing on the Kevin Hoffman Walk in Lara. The two plants are *Eremophila mackinlayi* and *Myoporum insulare* growing as one. You may think they are a usual pairing for grafted plants. Usually, they are. But, look closely. They are 'grafted' the wrong way … usually the *Myoporum insulare* would be the root stock and the *Eremophila mackinlayi* would be the scion or the plant material grafted onto the *Myoporum*.

I know that this particular Eremophila was grown by my father as a cutting with no grafting of any other plant material to it.

Previously in this same area of the Kevin Hoffman Walk we did have some grafted Eremophilas that had died off, leaving the *Myoporum insulare* rootstock behind. It wasn't until our president, Bruce, donated some Eremophilas that I had to find room for them. So the Myoporums had to go. They were pulled out, cut out and/or poisoned. Bruce's donated Eremophilas were planted, as well as the cutting grown *Eremophila mackinlayi*.

A few months ago the rabbits attacked (ate) the *Eremophila mackinlayi* taking off most of the growth, so a tree guard was placed around it. A few weeks later I noticed a new shoot growing from the broken top that looked a little odd. It was not the expected leaf shape or colour of the Eremophila. I kept a close eye on this new shoot and to my amazement it seemed to be new growth of *Myoporum insulare*.

Does anyone have an explanation to how this can occur?

DORIS GUNN

We have had correspondence from Doris Gunn's daughter to let us know that Doris has had to leave her precious garden in Ocean Grove, and is now living in a nursing home. Doris and her husband, Bill, were founding members of our club. We send our best wishes to Doris at this time.

EUCALYPTUS GRANDIS RESEARCH

At out last meeting Matt and Nicole showed us some photos of their trip to the north coast of NSW. One of the sites they visited was 'The Grandis' the tallest tree in NSW, a giant specimen of the Flooded Gum, *Eucalyptus grandis*. By coincidence, I read that same day an article in the online science magazine Cosmos, an article about research on *E. grandis*.

Scientists are trying to determine what makes some plants more able to withstand heat waves than others in the same genus. *E. grandis* was chosen because of its wide distribution and the varied habitats in which it is found. Seedlings were sourced from across its 2000km range where conditions range from mild to extremely hot.

The seedlings were then subjected to heat wave conditions under laboratory conditions with temperatures in the 40s for four days at a time. Seedlings sourced from areas with higher temperatures coped better. These specimens were found to have a higher concentration of a certain protein in their leaves which allowed these plants to continue to thrive despite the drastic conditions.

Given the increased likelihood of extended hot periods across the globe, this is an exciting and, possibly valuable finding. As trees are generally slow growing, they can take a long time to adapt to climatic changes. If trees for forestry or other commercial use are sourced from higher temperature areas, this may reduce the incidence of loss due to heat stress.

Read the article, and much more, here:
https://cosmosmagazine.com/biology/gum-tree-parents-determine-heat-stress-survival-in-seedlings

Read the research published here:
https://besjournals.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/1365-2435.13260