



# Correa Mail

Newsletter No 371 - August, 2021

**JULY MEETING -**

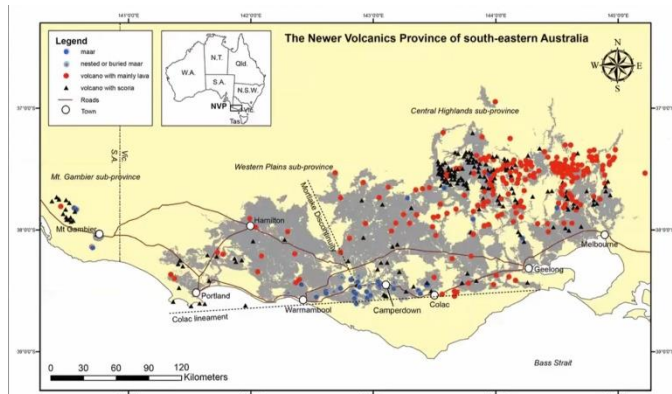
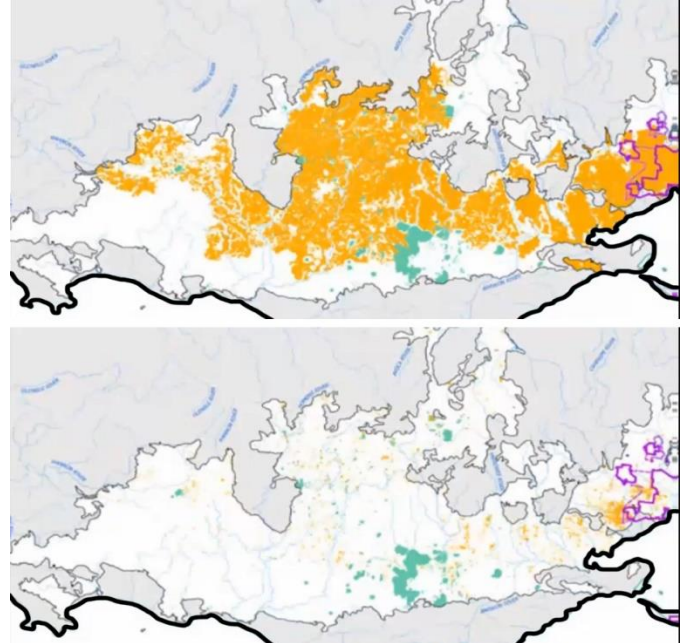
**July 20th**

## Plants of the Western Volcanic Plains

**Chris Clarke**

Chris, apart from being a keen 'planto' and member of the Keilor Plains APS Group is also the President of APS Victoria and co-author of *'The Plants of Melbourne's Western Plains – A gardener's guide to the original flora.'* And it was on this topic that Chris addressed our Zoom meeting.

Victoria's Western volcanic plains stretch from north of Melbourne west and south through to just the other side of the border with South Australia. It was an active volcanic region as recently as 5,000 years ago. They feature very rich, fertile soils where the rainfall is sufficient.



**Map of the plains showing volcanic activity**

The plains were a very extensive and diverse grassland and grassy woodland ecology before European settlement. Some of the best areas were where Melbourne is now spreading west. Some of the best remaining remnants are still in that area, but, sadly, this is the area where housing and new highways are planned. The map below shows the area of grassland that has been lost. The orange area in the top section is grasslands before Europeans, and in the bottom image the area of grassland remaining today. This is just 0.2% of the area that once existed.

Some of the best remnants can be found along railway reserves, where the land was regularly burnt making it less suitable for invasive weed species. There is also evidence of aboriginal settlement dating back more than 30,000 years, such as fish traps on the Maribyrnong River

Regular burning is important for the grasslands to prevent some species becoming dominant. Many plants, like the terrestrial orchids, thrive in the environment after fire or may require fire to germinate. The rare *Pimelea spinescens* has evolved a very deep, protected root system which helps regenerate the plant after drought or fires.



**President: Bruce McGinness – [bsmcginness@gmail.com](mailto:bsmcginness@gmail.com)**  
**Treasurer: Frank Scheelings – [ftscheelings@gmail.com](mailto:ftscheelings@gmail.com)**  
**Australian Plants Society, Geelong: P.O.Box 2012, Geelong . 3220**

**Secretary: Peter Nuzum: [nuzumpj@outlook.com](mailto:nuzumpj@outlook.com)**  
**Editor: Ade Foster – [adefoster@internode.on.net](mailto:adefoster@internode.on.net)**  
**Website: [www.apsgeelong.org](http://www.apsgeelong.org)**



The grasslands also support a multitude of other life – birds, reptiles, amphibians and insects. Chris’s talk also covered some of these many creatures.



**Yellow-banded Dart on *Brachyscombe mutifida***

Chris showed us many beautiful images of the trees, shrubs, herbs and grasses of the grasslands. River Red Gum - *Eucalyptus camaldulensis*, Grey Box - *E. macrocarpa*, Weeping Sheoak - *Allocasuarina verticillata* and Buloke - *A. luehmannii* were the more distinctive trees in the landscape. Smaller trees like Silver Banksia - *B. marginata*, Golden Wattle - *Acacia pycnantha* and Moonah - *Melaleuca lanceolata* were interspersed with shrubs like Butterfly Bush - *Bursaria spinosa*.



**Butterfly Bush - *Bursaria spinosa*.**

The smaller shrubs and flowering plants, many of them now rare or endangered, featured strongly in Chris’s talk. *Acacia paradoxa* – Hedge Wattle, *Grevillea rosmarinifolia*, *Leptospermum lanigerum* – Weeping Tea-tree, *Gynatrix pulchella* - Hemp Bush, *Oloeria ramulosa*, *Cassinia aculeata*, *Dillwynia cinerascens*, *Stackhousia subterranea*, *Rhodanthe anthemoides* - Chamomile Sunray, *Calocephalis citreus* - Lemon Beauty-heads, *Rutidosis leptorhynchoides* - Button Wrinklewort (rare), *Microseris lanceolata* - Yam Daisy, *Malva priessiana* - Native Hollyhock, *Linum marginale* -

Native Flax and lilies like *Bulbine bulbosa* - the Bulbine lily and *Wurmbea dioica* - Early Nancy among many many others.



***Stackhousia subterranea* and a granite floater.**

A full video of Chris’s presentation is to be found online at <http://apsgeelong.org/webinars.html>. I urge you all to spend 40 or 50 minutes enjoying a wonderful visual feast of our indigenous grassland plants.



***Leptospermum lanigerum* – Weeping Tea-tree**

#### **VIRTUAL PLANT TABLE.**

This month again we had a great contribution from the members with around 80 photos Carmel Addlem, Matt Leach, Annette Packett, Tony Cavanagh and Bruce McGinness for contributing. Here is just a sample, with the full slideshow included at the end of our speaker’s talk at

<http://apsgeelong.org/webinars.html>

Matt Leach started us off with a great collection of Banksias from his Inverleigh property and the Kevin Hoffman walk, in Lara. Matt always manages to show us some unusual or uncommon Banksias amongst his specimens and tonight was no exception. He showed us photos taken on his phone, which proved that you don’t need expensive cameras to take great photos. There was *Banksia meseurii*, *B. laricina*, *B. telmatiaea*, *B. menziesii* dwarf, *B. prionotes* dwarf, *B. palludosa*, *B.*



*ericafolia* subsp *macrantha*, *B. praemorsa* burgundy form, another form of *B. ericafolia*, and *B. tricuspis*.



***Banksia laracina***

***Banksia telmatiaea***

Next up was Tony Cavanagh with a sad tale of his beautiful *Hakea francissiana* being destroyed by the local cockatoos and parrots. Annette Packett sent in some photos of her Torquay garden with *Acacia boormanii*, *Banksia intergrifolia*, a very pink *Pimelea ferruginea* and *Eucalyptus caesia* Silver Princess.



***Eucalyptus caesia* 'Silver Princess'**

Carmel Addlem surprised by having all her photos named, which spoiled our favourite pastime – ragging Carmel for not knowing the names of her plants 😊 Her photos of *Hakea multilineata*, *Correa* 'Marion's Marvel', *Grevillea* 'Clearview David' and *Allocasuarina humilis* were beautiful, but her *Hakea* 'Burrendong Beauty' won the night for me.



Bruce, as always, had a few interesting and unusual plants to show us. *Dodonea rupicola*, the Velvet Hop-bush, a vulnerable plant from the Glasshouse mountains in south-east Queensland created a lot of interest. See the article later in this newsletter.

My own offerings featured a lot of *Grevilleas* which, as you know, are my favourite plant genus. Among them were *G. paradoxa*, *nivea*, *bronwenae*, *georgiana*, *zygoloba* and *mackinsonii* and a few hybrids as well. But my favourite for this month is a white-flowered form of *Hardenbergia violacea* called 'Snow White'.



*Hardenbergia violacea* - 'Snow White'

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> August – ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

We will hold our AGM at the August Meeting. All committee positions will be vacated and elections held for President, Vice-president, Secretary, Treasurer and General Members. If you would like to be a part of the committee and help organise the club's activities give some thought to standing, It is not an onerous task and we'd love some 'new blood' on our team.

Remember you must be a current financial member to stand for a position or to vote in the election. A new Membership form can be downloaded from our website. Proxy voting forms and Nomination forms have been emailed to you all.

## PHOTO COMPETITION

We will again be holding our regular Photo Competition at the AGM, August 17th meeting ... this year it will be a virtual competition again. Here's how it works ....

We will have the usual three categories .. Australian Plants, Australian Wildlife and Australian Landscapes. You can enter two photos in each category, a total of six entries per person. Photos must be your own, taken in Australia, and be anonymous. That is, have nothing in them which identifies the photographer.

Email your photos to Bruce McGinness at [bsmcginness@gmail.com](mailto:bsmcginness@gmail.com) by the 4th August. Please



make sure your subject line in the email is 'Photo Competition Entries'.

Once they are all in, Bruce will send out a link to where all the photos can be viewed. They will each have a number (no names). Between 10th and 15th August, you can take your time perusing the photos and visit as many times as you wish.

Choose your favourite photo for each category. You will also receive information about how to register your vote. Voting closes on 15th August.

Winners will be announced at the AGM and prizes presented at our next get-together. Let's make this a successful competition. Get your entries in. ☑



Last years' winner by Di Royce – *Eucalyptus rodanthe*

### Sunday August 22<sup>nd</sup> MELTON BOTANIC GARDENS

Once again we'll be visiting Melton to explore the wonders that are the Melton Botanic Gardens. Meet at the 'Friends' car park, 21 Williams Street, Melton, at 10.00am. The nursery will be open until 1.00 pm, with many wonderful and unusual plants on offer. Bring a picnic lunch or join members at the Melton Country Club – weather and Covid dependent, of course.



Photo: Friends of Melton Botanic Gardens

Chris Clarke talk was based on the book '*The Plants of Melbourne's Western Plains – A gardener's guide to the original flora.*' Copies will be available for purchase from the nursery at the discounted members' price of just \$15. A great addition to your library.

### Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> September

### General Meeting

Our speaker will be Royce Raleigh, and he'll talk to us about peas in general and peas of the Grampians in particular. Royce and Jeanne have a beautiful native garden in Wartook near the Grampians. Royce is a regular contributor to Australian Plants magazine and has a wealth of knowledge on Australian plants.

### SEPTEMBER EXCURSION

### Lerderderg Gorge

Matt and Roger will take us exploring. Exact date and more details will be available soon.

### Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> October

### LITTLE RIVER VISITS

Matt Leach does some gardening for Ros, a lady in Little River, who is very keen to show us her garden. APS Geelong member, Jennie Epstein, is also in Little River and looks after her own garden, the Little River Station garden and has been involved in revegetation works with the local Landcare group. We'll combine all these into a great day at Little River. More details as we get closer to the day.

### ALSO IN OCTOBER

**Orchids.** We'll do a mid-week afternoon orchid hunt in the Anglesea area. Dates will depend on orchid flowering times, which can be quite variable. Stay tuned.



*Caladenia pusila* – Tiny Caladenia from Anglesea

**Werribee Zoo.** The follow-up visit to Craig Shalders' talk will be in the last week of October. We are still working on the best date, and we hope to be able to get you a special personal safari tour as well. Watch this space.

### November 21<sup>st</sup> & 22<sup>nd</sup>.

### WARNAMBOOL

Bruce attended the Annual Quarterly Meeting in Warrnambool and was impressed with the gardens he saw. We are hoping to make a weekend trip to Warrnambool in November to revisit some of these

gardens and perhaps The Peter Francis Points Arboretum at Coleraine. Again, stay tuned.

## December Christmas Function IDEAS WANTED

Scarily, Christmas is approaching, and we are looking for ideas for our Christmas break-up function. Maybe a picnic or BBQ in local bushland, park or someone's house, all are possibilities. Or, perhaps you have an innovative suggestion. We'd love to hear it. Put your thinking caps on, as Mrs. Searle, my Grade 3 teacher used to say.

## WERRIBEE ZOO PLANTING

You will remember that we had Craig Shalders, the Horticulture Manager of Werribee Zoo as our speaker back in May. He told us then of plans to revegetate a large area with indigenous grassland plants.



**New plantings at Werribee Zoo**

Chris Clarke mentioned the indigenous garden in his talk this month, a garden that was once a feature of Werribee Zoo.

Craig posted this photo of the progress last week after Hort staff and volunteers planted 2500 indigenous plants. Another 7500 are in the nursery waiting to be planted.

## DODONEA RUPICOLA - VELVET HOP-BUSH

*Dodonea rupicola* is a vulnerable plant endemic to the Glasshouse mountains area of south-east Queensland. It grows among the acidic volcanic rocks on the tops and foothills, in poor soils, on Mt. Tibrogargan and Wildhorse Mountain.

It is dioecious, having separate male and female plants, which grow to about 1m. It has small flowers, mostly in spring, which develop into extremely hairy fruits. The alternate leaves and branchlets are also densely hairy.

Bruce obtained his plant from the Friends of Geelong Botanic Gardens, and did offer to get some for interested members.



***Dodonea rupicola***

## A BRAND NEW ORCHID IN NEW SOUTH WALES

A local bushwalker and fungiphile, Meredith Philistin, saw an unusual orchid in Lamington National Park, while searching for fungi. She sent a photo to her friend, Joanne Lau, an orchid enthusiast, who recognised the orchid as something different. She immediately contacted Dr Lachland Copeland, a taxonomist and senior field botanist with Eco Logica Australia. And so, a new species resulted.

You can read the full story on the ABC website here ....

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2021-07-28/new-orchid-species-discovered-in-gold-coast-hinterland/100322870>

and watch a video of Dr Copeland discussing some of the plants he has been responsible for discovering, classifying and naming.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=44LdYF4QtJY>