



# Correa Mail

Newsletter No 385 - October, 2022

## SEPTEMBER MEETING

## Dryland Eucalypts

Our speakers at the September meeting were David and Barbara Pye. David and Barbara have been regular attendees of our plant sale for many years ... first selling from their own nursery in Bullengarook and latterly as part of the Friends of Melton Botanic Gardens group. Their topic was Dryland Eucalypts of the Melton Botanic Gardens.

David started us off with a bit of history of the gardens. They began fourteen years ago with a very small grant to buy plants. There were some remnant indigenous vegetation ... mostly River Red Gum, Yellow Box and Grey Box. There were some plantings along the creek and boundaries done in the last forty years, plants from all over the country.



One of the old River Red Gums

Now, the remnant indigenous trees remain, along with some of the other plantings. FMBG have planted extensively with trees that are suitable for Melton's rainfall of 450mm. Many of the one hundred species planted are from South Australia, where the climate is very similar. Other factors influencing choice of plants were flowers, foliage, form and availability. Planting began in 2011 and most were grown from seed.

The gardens follow Ryans Creek, and the Eucalyptus arboretum is at the northern end. David explained the

difference between trees, mallees and mallets; and showed us the diverse forms, bark and growth habits of Eucalypts. He talked us through some of the management issues with the various types and then handed over to Barbara who gave us a pictorial guide of some of the dryland species featured in the gardens. These are some of my picks from the night.



*E. dolichorhyncha* is a small, multi-trunked tree from the Esperance Plains of WA. It is a lovely ornamental tree with colourful and very attractive flower buds.



*Eucalyptus megacornuta*, the Warty Yate, is a largish tree with smooth, shiny, multi-coloured bark. The flowers are large and lemon-yellow with striking warty caps that look, for all the world, like the fingers of a nursery rhyme troll.

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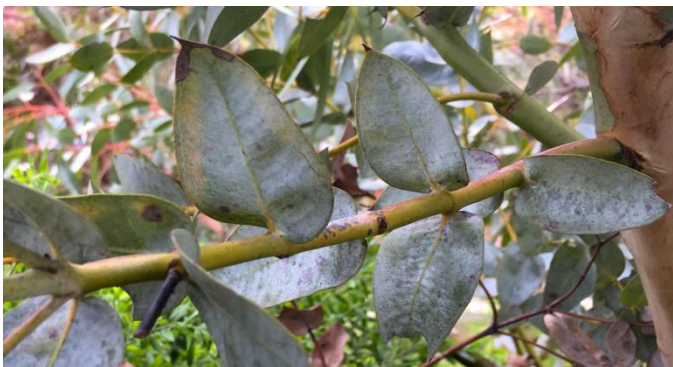


*Eucalyptus lansdowneana subsp. albopurpurea* is now recognised as a true species *E. albopurpurea*. It is generally a mallee, but may occur with a single trunk. It is restricted to SA – Kangaroo Island and the Eyre Peninsular and features beautiful purple mauve flowers.



*Eucalyptus rhodantha*, the Rose Mallee, is a very sculptural plant which retains its juvenile leaves. The deep red flowers appear on stalks and hang below the branches. It is rare in nature and found in just a few spots in the northern wheatbelt of WA.

Frank Scheelings posed an interesting question, which requires some further research. Many Eucalypts have juvenile leaves - paired and opposite, emerging from the stems without a pedicel. As the plant matures, different leaves appear, the 'typical' eucalypt leaves.



Franks question: If a plant keeps its 'juvenile' leaves into adulthood, can they still be called juvenile leaves?



*Eucalyptus woodwardii* is a beautiful medium tree found in the bottom of the Great Victoria Desert in WA. It has pendulous, drooping branches that can reach the ground and these are covered in bright yellow flowers in late winter and spring.

*Eucalyptus leptophylla*, the Slender Red-leaved Mallee is a small open mallee from inland Australia. It grows quite quickly and flowers early and profusely. Barbara's photo was my favourite of the night.



**PLANT OF THE MONTH - *Templetonia retusa***  
By Tony Cavanagh

*Templetonia retusa* is also known as Cockies tongues or Bullock bush. It is best known for its large, striking red flowers but as we have found, it also has bright yellow, orange and apparently whites forms. It is h6very variable in size but we have found a height of 2-3 metres with similar spread is fairly typical for southern Victoria.



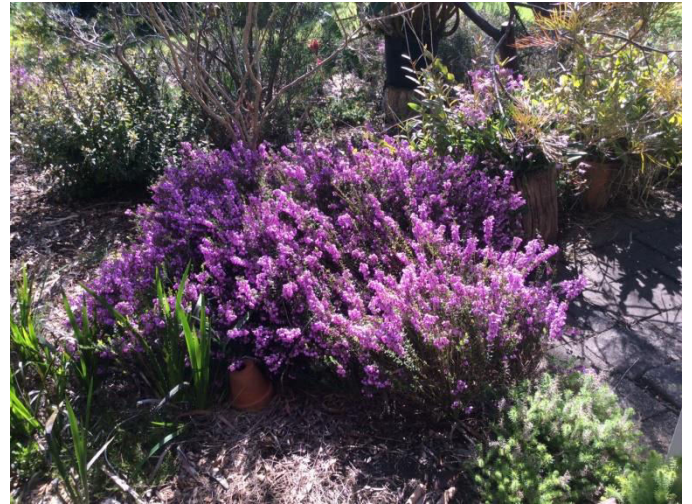


The red form flowers first in August and may be smaller, while the orange and yellow are common in September and October and form larger, stronger growing plants. The flowers are usually up to 6 cm long and as the pictures show, form in dense clumps all over the bush. There is also an orange red coastal form which is a bush of about 1m x 1.5m which is the first to flower, July to early August.

They come from southern WA and are ideal for limestone situations although they also do well in well drained sunny and part shaded locations. We have found them long lived and very reliable in the garden although the yellow form can also produce lots of seedlings which require removal. Well worth while growing.



The last picture is me indulging myself as it is currently my favourite, *Tetratheca ciliata*. This group are of eastern Australian origin and form spectacular clumps of intense purple flowers, long flowering and great for the vase. They are easy to propagate from cuttings and as a result we have at least half a dozen plants around our garden, each a spectacular purple clump in part shade or sun. Highly recommended.



## PLANT TABLE

with Frank Scheelings

Our plant table was extensive and very varied ... proof positive that spring is here. Frank handled the discussion with his usual mix of knowledge and humour.

We began with Phebaliums, and there were three on display. All are shrubs of 1.5m to 2m in height. *P. stenophylla* and *P. bullatum* have soft yellow flowers, while the flowers of *P. whitei* are bright yellow. *P. squamulosum* is a variable species containing a number of forms and 10 subspecies. Flowers may be white, cream or pale yellow.

Thryptomenes are great plants in any garden. *Thryptomene saxicola alba* is a low spreading shrub, almost prostrate with white flowers. *T. calycina*, the Grampians Thryptomene is a large shrub with white flower that have a deep crimson centre.



*Thryptomene calycina*

Acacias are still showing well, and among our specimens were *A. floribunda*, *A. pravissima*, *A. glaucoptera* and *A. triptera*.

Grevilleas always feature prominently on our table and this one was no exception. *Grevillea flexuosa* is a shrub with sharp divided leaves and lovely, pendulous yellow flowers. Prune well after flowering to maintain a



dense canopy. Also on the table were *G. magnifica*, *G. petrophiloides*, *G. 'Winpara Gem'*, *G. 'Whitewings'* and an old favourite, *G. 'Clearview David'*

Chamelauciums are beginning to flower now and we had *C. purpurea* with deep purple/maroon flowers and *C. 'Seaton's Form'* with huge white to pink flowers. One we called *C. 'Matt's Special'*, brought along by Matt Baars which featured tiny, pure white flowers. And another old favourite, *C. 'Purple Pride'*.



*Chamelaucium 'Purple Pride'*.

**WEEKDAY WANDERS**

**with Carmel Addlem**

Our first Weekday Wander was to the Bert Boardman Walk near Steiglitz in the Brisbane Ranges. Sadly, we didn't get the numbers up for our first one, but Jenni and I had a lovely morning finding many delightful treasures around the peaceful bushland.



We discovered many colonies of orchids including Dwarf Greenhoods, Nodding Greenhoods, Leopard Orchid, Wax Lip, Small Gnat and many of the Caladenias in 3 colours. We also saw the Golden Grevillea, Flat Leaf Pea, Billy Buttons, Love Creeper, Beard Heath, Dusty Miller and many

wattles in flower. 3 out of area Park Rangers turned up hoping to see the Leopard Orchid and I had the privilege of showing it to them and other orchids that we found. They were extremely excited and pleased to see the

beautiful flowers that grow in our bush area as we all are. It is truly amazing and nature at its best.



*Diuris pardina* – Leopard Orchid

**THINGS TO LOOK FORWARD TO .....**

These are a few of the dates that you should put into your diaries.

**OCTOBER MEETING**

Our speaker for the October Meeting will be Chris Clarke, APS Victoria President. Chris spoke to us recently about plants of the western volcanic plains and mentioned Natureshare. Chris will expand on this topic and give us a lesson in how to use this great initiative. Following our lesson Chris will give us a talk on Alpine Flora.

**2022 MEETINGS**

- Oct 9<sup>th</sup>** - Visit to Melton Botanic Gardens
- Oct 18<sup>th</sup>** - Chris Clarke . Natureshare / Alpine Flora
- Nov 15<sup>th</sup>** - Tony Hughes - Grafting
- Dec ??** - Christmas Break-up. Date TBA
- April 1, 2023** - 2023 Plant Sale, tentative date?

## MY FAVOURITE PLANTS

by Peter Nuzum

Among my favourite plants is *Kennedia nigricans* or black coral pea with its striking yellow and black pea flowers. Contrary to certain assertions, it does not grow in Richmond, Victoria but is a native to south-west Western Australia. It is found on coastal dunes, creek margins and flats in the Esperance Plains, Jarrah Forests and Swan Coastal Plains.

It is a very vigorous climber with a height of up to 4 metres and a spread of more than 10 metres. So it will need a fence or large wall to climb on. Alternatively, it can be used as a ground cover.



Photograph by JarrahTree...commons.wikimedia.org

It can be propagated from seed, softwood cuttings or semi-hardwood cuttings. If growing from seed, soak the seed overnight in boiling water to soften the outer shell and plant the swollen seeds.

The plant prefers well-drained sandy soils in full sun or partial shade. The foliage can be damaged by moderate frost but will recover in spring. Pruning extends the life of the plant. Flowering time is spring and summer and is great for attracting bird life.

## LIVING DESERT STATE PARK

by Ade Foster

On our recent trip into Queensland and outback NSW Penny and I visited the Living Desert State park just out of Broken Hill. I have been travelling to this part of Australia since I was fifteen (back in the Late Cretaceous) and I have never seen the country so green, lush and covered in flowers. From Rolleston in Queensland, down through Roma, St. George, Cunnamulla, Bourke, Cobar, Mootwingee and Broken Hill the landscape was a kaleidoscope of colour.

The Living Desert State Park was established by Broken Hill City Council in 1992 for the protection of native flora and fauna and the areas indigenous heritage. The 2400 Ha reserve sits atop the rocky hills just 12km from Broken Hill. The views are as spectacular as the plant life.



Looking towards Broken Hill

The Park also features a collection of twelve imposing sculptures by local and international artists, made from 53 tonnes of Wilcannia sandstone. Being a philistine, I will admit to not really 'getting' them.

Within the park are a number of walks highlighting indigenous and European culture and land use. The John Simons Flora and Fauna Sanctuary is a 180Ha fenced enclosure within the park with a signed walking trail and local plant arboretum incorporated. The more common plants are named and the path has interpretive signs telling of indigenous use of the plants.



*Prostanthera striatiflora*, known as Jockey's Cap is a mint-bush of the arid interior the large white and purple flowers are a real standout against the red of the earth and rocks.

A plant which I noticed throughout the inland this year was the Rock Sida, *Sida petrophile*. Although I'm sure I've seen this plant before, I've never noticed it flowering in such profusion. Its yellow flowers contrasting with the soft yellow/green foliage would make an attractive plant in any garden.





Daisies were the 'Plant of the Inland' for us and their sheer numbers and diversity were a constant source of amazement.



There were a number of lovely little shrubs with fluffy white, pink or mauve 'flowers' which concealed some sharp little spines. Cannonballs – *Dissocarpus paradoxus* is one of these delightful little plants.



And among all these, the plant that says 'Outback' to me .. Sturt's Desert Pea, *Swainsona formosa*. They were flowering all around Broken Hill and there were large numbers of them at Living Desert. On our long drive from Cobar to Mutawintji National Park, we stopped for lunch and I told Penny we weren't stopping again unless

it was for Pink Cockatoos or Sturt's Desert Pea. We saw both within the next kilometre.



If you're in the area, I highly recommend a visit.

### FROM THE SECRETARY – A few jottings from Peter

**Name tags:** I am updating the name tags and making new tags for people who currently don't have one. They should be available for our November meeting.

**Club activities:** We held our first weekday excursion to Steiglitz. We will have another next month. If you have any thoughts on where we can go, please let me know and I will pass your suggestions onto Carmel who is co-ordinating these activities.

#### **Some coming Victorian activities:**

Cranbourne Friends Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria's Autumn Plant Sale will be held on October 22 and 23 , 10:00 am – 4:00pm

**Plant Sale:** Planning is underway for next year's Plant Sale. It will probably be held in March this time and the date will be advised once we have sorted it out.

**Activities/Speakers for next year:** We are starting to plan next year's activities/speakers so if you have any suggestions, please let me know.

**Fees:** Please remember that annual subscriptions are overdue so if you are still to pay, please use direct debit and let Frank know you have paid.

**Hessian tree guards:** We can bulk purchase hessian tree guards at a cost of approximately \$2.30 each (includes 3 bamboo stakes. Actual price to be confirmed). If you are interested in these, please let me know. If there is sufficient interest, I will take it to the committee to seek approval for purchase.

Please use [apsgeelong@gmail.com](mailto:apsgeelong@gmail.com) if you wish to contact the secretary for any reason. Thanks.