



Correa Mail

Newsletter No 396 - December, 2023

NOVEMBER MEETING - Miriam Ford - ANSPA

Penny and I were away for the last meeting and I'm grateful to Bruce for this report on Miriam's Talk on the Biennial ANSPA Conference.

Miriam's presentation was on the upcoming ANPSA conference which is being hosted and run by APS Victoria. All APS state groups take turns in hosting the biennial national conference which means every state gets a turn to host every 14 years and it is Victoria's turn this year. Miriam is the president of APS Victoria and a member of the hardworking committee organising the conference so is well qualified to explain to members who are not familiar with the conference and its format.

ANPSA is the national body which supports all the state groups which of course has the same aims as state and district groups. A major purpose of the ANPSA is sharing and spreading of knowledge on the growing and conservation of plants which is a core aim of the conference.

Miriam took us past a couple of past conferences to explain their format and structure and then onto the proposed format of the upcoming Victorian conference. It is a Monday to Friday block which is spread between lectures and field trips in the local state and there are also tours run before and after the conference going to more remote areas of the hosting state.

All conferences have a theme. For example, in the Western Australian Conference in Albany 2019 was: "Blooming Diversity" with the sub-theme: Know and Grow, Enjoy and Conserve with 3 days of presentations 2 days of excursions. Field trips included the Sterling Ranges and the Banksia property in Mount Barker and with day one lectures theme: "Conserve" on Western Australian eremophilas, eucalypts and local carnivorous plants and in the evening the AJ Swaby address by Steve Hopper from Kings Park. A highlight for Miriam on the first day was the welcome to country with a tapestry illustrating all the various legends of the Noongar with a local Noongar man speaking about the various legends

illustrated on the tapestry. Day two theme was "Grow" with Kingsley Dixon from Kings Park Botanic Gardens various aspects of Kings Park with Amanda Shade presenting on propagation. Day five was conserve with presentations focusing on conservation in WA.

The 2022 conference in Kiama NSW was delayed a year due to COVID, which had a theme of 'Past Present and Future'. A successful conference in a beautiful holiday destination south of Sydney. A highlight was an outdoor meeting area allowing participants to mingle and network which is a very important aspect of a conference. A new format was the introduction of "breakout" rooms which allowed a diverse range of topics to be discussed with participants choosing what they wanted to be involved with. For example, different study groups presented on their field of expertise such as grafting Isopogons and Petrophiles. This format will be replicated at the Victorian conference.

The Victorian conference was initially to be held at Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre this has changed and will now be held at The Round, 379-399 Whitehorse Road, Nunawading. The Round is a recently completed venue which the organising committee felt would be a better venue because of the many versatile spaces both indoor and outdoor. The theme is "Gardens for Life" with presentations on Monday, Wednesday and Friday with six choices of excursions on Tuesday and Thursday. Some of the lectures during the conference will cover Gardens for Wildlife and Habitat, Restoration and Revegetation of Wetlands, Grasslands and Verges, Creating Care for the Rare, Insects and Biodiversity, Garden Design, Indigenous Food Plants. Conference attendees will have the opportunity to choose up to two out of the three excursions on the Tuesday and Thursday. Each tour will visit areas of wildflowers in natural bushland, public and private gardens.

For updates and newsletters refer to the APS Victorian website and register your interest through the web site: <https://apsvic.org.au/anpsa-biennial-conference-2024/>

Early bird registration for the conference begins in February 2024. Registration can be for individual days.

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Australian Plants Society, Geelong - Website: www.apsgeelong.org

Accommodation suggestions are in the most recent newsletter from the convenors and there are ample resources available in the newsletters to answer any questions.

ON THE TABLE -

with Bruce McGinness

Thanks again to Bruce for this report on the plant table. Of those who brought plants along, only Chris Walker-Cook has offered any information, the rest is great work from Bruce.

Chris Walker-Cook - *Libertia paniculata* - Branching Grass-flag is a tufted herb, which grows best in a moist, shady spot. Mine has been in flower since the middle of September. In its natural habitat, it is found in sheltered gullies down the east coast, as far south as East Gippsland and is one of only 2 species found in Australia (12 species are found throughout Australasia and South America). The other species in Victoria, *L. pulchella*, is smaller and is found mainly in subalpine areas in Victoria, NSW and Tasmania. Hopefully, the *Libertia paniculata* will prove easier to grow than the *L. pulchella*, which I planted a few years ago.



Phil Royce - *Melaleuca lateritla*. Phil has been growing it for three years and it is in its second year of flowering. It is a very popular plant in the Royce's Garden. Currently it is 1.5 metres high with many orange flowers. *Persoonia chamaepitys* - the Prostrate or Mountain Geebung, has yellow flowers. It is growing next to a path which suits its prostrate growth habit.

Tracy Hinds - *Actinodium cunninghamii* - Albany Daisy. Tracy has been busy getting her garden in order after moving into their new house in July. Members helped with identification of this specimen after Tracy purchased the plant labelled as a flannel flower which it is obviously not. The plant is in the *Myrtaceae* family and is superficially similar to daisies. It is a small shrub producing heads of small pink flowers surrounded by white sterile strap like flowers in spring, hence the

common name of daisy. This plant can be a bit tricky to grow.

Jenny Epstein - *Thelionema caespitosum alba* - Tufted Lily. This is a clumping plant which Jenny is growing in a pot. It produces starry white flowers. The other colour form produces bright blue flowers. Jenny also brought in a *Scaevola* and a *Pelargonium* which is a favourite of Jenny's because it stays small and compact.

Deb Peeters - *Melia azedarach* - White Cedar. Deb brought in a big spray of lilac flowers from her tree, which is one of the few deciduous Australian plants. It is tough and thrives in Deb's Garden, growing to 5 metres high after 25 years. An interesting fact is that *M. azedarach* is monoecious, having separate male and female flowers on the same plant. It produces many yellow fruit which are poisonous to humans but not to birds. It has the potential to become a weed in some areas. *Eucalyptus lacrimans* - Weeping Snow Gum or Adaminaby Snow Gum. This is a beautiful weeping gum with white flowers. It was considered as *E. pauciflora* at one stage but is now a separate species. It has grown taller than expected, (Phil Royce was happy to hear they survive a pruning) They readily re-sprout. *Viminaria juncea*. This is a fast-growing upright tree that is 4 metres tall now with a mature height of 5 metres. Parrots love the seeds. Pruning will extend the life of the tree and prevent it getting too scraggy. *Eremophila bignoniifolia x polyclada* - Big Polly. This is a vigorous, tough plant with an open habit. Deb is growing it in a milk can which allows it to weeps over the edges and restrict it vigorous habit. *Pimelia humilis* - An indigenous plant growing in Deb's grassland on her property. Lovely low growing plant with white flowers, Matt was surprised it was still flowering so late in the year as all the plants in the Lara area have finished flowering.

Matt Leach - *Eremophila mackinlayi* is a hardy plant of 2-3 metres, which Matt prunes after flowering to keep it to this size. It is covered with beautiful mauve flowers with soft grey foliage. It is a grafted plant which is producing chimeras from the combination of the rootstock and scion. *Eucalyptus froggattii* - the Kamarooka Mallee grows near Bendigo. It reaches 5 - 6 metres. It is a rare small tree. Flowers are bird-attracting. Matt's plant the plant is suffering with scale at the moment. *Eremaea purpurea* is a lovely plant featuring purple flowers with golden anthers. It is a good compact plant for a small garden or rockery reliably producing flowers every year. *Ammobium alatum* - Winged Everlasting is a showy perennial plant with silvery foliage which lives for 3-4 years in Matt's Garden. It dies down and comes back. It prolifically self-seeds. A good cut-flower. *Eucalyptus leucocolyn* is a tree with bright yellow flowers which grows true to

seed. This season is its first flowering. *Eucalyptus pressiana* – Bell-fruited Mallee. Matt’s tree is a form with smaller bright yellow flowers, and survived the frost well this year. *Grevillea insignis x pallosa* (*Grevillea insignis* –in sickness and in health.) An upright rangy shrub with pinkish flowers, open habit.

2023 MEETINGS and OUTINGS

Nov meeting Miriam Ford – Prostanthera etc.
January 2024 High Country campout
Feb meeting Zoë Brittain – Marine Algae
Mar meeting Plant Based Trivia
June meeting Grant Baverstock – Bats
Aug Meeting AGM & Photo Competition

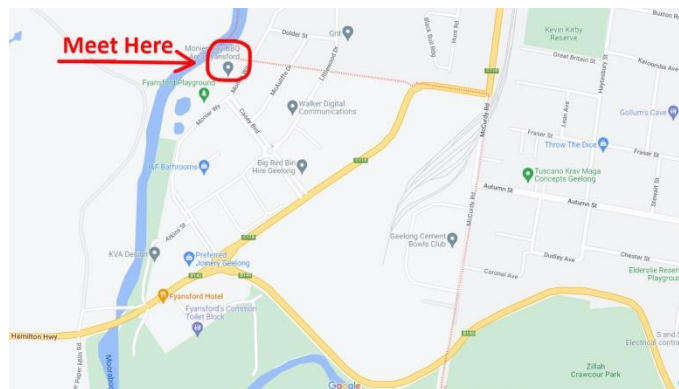
DECEMBER XMAS BREAK-UP

We have decided to hold our ‘Christmas end of Year BBQ’ on **Sunday, December 10th** at the same place as last year ... opposite 58 Monier Way, Fyansford, at 11.00 am.

This is the extension of Deviation Rd, on the other side of the roundabout at the bottom of the hill. There are BBQ facilities, undercover seating and a great playground for the young at heart. We may not be the only ones there, so be prepared to sit in the open.

BYO everything this year, please. The club will not be providing anything other than the opportunity to gather. So bring your own food, drinks, cutlery, crockery and chair. Hope to see you there.

And again, we may resort to a meal at the Fyansford pub if the weather is unduly wet.



As I write the forecast is for 18° and partly cloudy. Fingers crossed 😊

HOW JENNIE CONTRIBUTED TO A ROYAL WEDDING

Eucalyptus pauciflora story as told by Jennie.



Jen planted a *Eucalyptus pauciflora* in her mum’s garden in Brighton long ago. Her mum’s brother had a cut flower farm at the time.

In 2004, a young Tasmanian woman, Mary Donaldson married Crown Prince Frederick of Denmark. She was looking for some snow gum for her bridal bouquet. Jennie’s uncle was supplying the material for the bouquet, and he harvested some branches from his

sister’s tree in the front garden. Consequently material of the tree that Jen planted ended up in the bridal bouquet.

QUESTION CORNER

Chris has again contributed a question for our Question Corner...

Why does my *Acacia coventyi* appear to have only 2 seed pods, even though it flowered prolifically in early Spring?

I suggested possums, but Chris has seen no other evidence to suggest they are the culprit. Looking more carefully, Chris found 6 seed pods, on 2 small branches (the NW aspect). He has been scrutinizing the wattle for a couple of months, because Bruce was asking for some seeds. It is bit of a puzzle still.

Is anyone willing or able to offer a solution?

MT HOTHAM CAMPOUT ... 19 – 22 January 2024

We have made plans for a long weekend campout at Mt. Hotham. We have booked Kalyna Ski Club Lodge for the adventure. 14 members have signalled their intention to take part, but we have eight rooms still available. If you are interested let us know by Christmas and we'll add you to the list.

The lodge is fully self-contained. Pillows and doonas are supplied, b.y.o. linen and towels. Lounge, dining, TV, and games rooms ensure space to relax. Kalyna is self-cater, with a large, fully equipped kitchen. Three cooktops and a grill, four ovens and ample bench space ensure no queues come meal time.

The club is subsidizing the cost for APS Geelong members and the cost to members will be and extraordinarily inexpensive **\$140 per head for three nights'** accommodation.

Hotham, being on the plateau, offers many easy walks for those of us who finds hills a chore. And January is peak flowering period for the high county flora.

Come and join us for a great weekend away. Check out the lodge here.... <https://www.kalyna.com.au/>

THE NOT-SO COMMON FRINGE-MYRTLE

Susan Myers sent me an interesting article which appeared in Roger Thomas's column 'Nature Notes' in the Ballarat Courier.

In the early 1960s, an isolated population of the Common Fringe-myrtle, *Calytrix tetragona* was found in bush-land near Enfield, which led to the declaration of the first nature reserves in the area. Despite its common name, it is no so common in that part of the world. Its normal Victorian distribution is on the inland side of the Great Divide.



On a recent excursion to Enfield, Roger found several thousand plants thriving on a north facing slope.

We were camped at Halls Gap last week and it was very dry. Calytrix was one of the few plants still in flower. It is a hardy shrub to about a metre with slightly fleshy leaves that have a strong spicy scent when crushed. It produces masses of white or pink flowers with very prominent stamens and deeper pink buds.

MERRY CHRISTMAS !!

As another year draws to a close, I find myself in a reflective mood. I turned 70 a few weeks back, which, depending on your outlook, may or may not be considered old. But, twenty years ago, I was a much younger fella when I joined APS Geelong.

I have made some good friends through that association, and have reconnected with friends I met through other aspects of my life – gymnastics, field naturalists and family.

The club has been good for me, and, I hope, I for it. 2024 will be my fifteenth year as Editor of 'The Correa Mail'. It's been quite a journey.

So, as Christmas rolls around again, and we take a break from our club meetings, ask yourself, as I have been doing ... "What has APS Geelong given me? And what have I given APS Geelong?"

I hope you all have a wonderful Christmas. Whatever it means to you and your families; however you choose to celebrate it, enjoy. Look after yourself, and others, and I hope to see you all in 2024.

From Penny and me .. Merry Christmas

