



Correa Mail

Newsletter No 398 - February, 2024

Welcome to 2024. I hope your Christmas / New Year period was not too stressful. The cooler weather and abundant rains have been good for the garden – and the weeds! I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at our first meeting for the year.

FEBRUARY MEETING - Zoë Brittain ... Marine Algae

Our first meeting for 2024 will be on 20th February, and our speaker will be Zoë Brittain.



Zoë is a PhD Researcher at Deakin University, working within the DeakinSeaweed Research Group. She will be speaking about her research into perception of a sustainable seaweed industry in Australia,

exploring how different kinds of people think of sustainability, what this means for seaweed in the wild and whether or not we are all on the same page regarding the future of our beautiful underwater forests.

MT. HOTHAM CAMPOUT - January 2024

We kicked off the year with a weekend at Mt. Hotham, and what a truly wonderful weekend it was. We stayed at Kalyna Ski Club Lodge, built by a co-operative of Ukrainian migrants in the 1970s, and recently renovated. The facilities were amazing ... comfortable, spacious and everything you could think of was provided. And the views? ... Spectacular!



The High Country – Photo: Penny Foster

We were joined by members from Keilor Plains APS group, among them Chris Clark, who spoke to us about the Plants of the High Country a couple of years back. When we combined his knowledge of the plants and the Mt. Hotham area, with that of our own Bruce McGinness, we were treated to an amazing learning experience.



Rhodanthe, Chrysocephalum and Craspedia on Little Mt. Higginbotham

We were on most of our walks joined by Alex, from the RBG Cranbourne, who has a house at Dinner Plain and an almost encyclopaedic knowledge of the plants of the area. We were grateful for her generosity and willingness to share her vast knowledge with us. She was certainly a great addition to an already memorable weekend.

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



***Velliea Montana* – Dinner Plain**

We did a number of walks, (some more agile members did more than others) and encountered a bewildering variety of plant life. Among the walks were Mt. Higginbotham, Little Mt Higginbotham, Mt Hotham Summit, Mt Loch Summit, the Razorback towards Mt Feathertop and Dinner Plain.

The number and variety of plants was a real treat, and while the cooler, wet spring and summer had altered the flowering time somewhat, there was plenty to see and talk about.



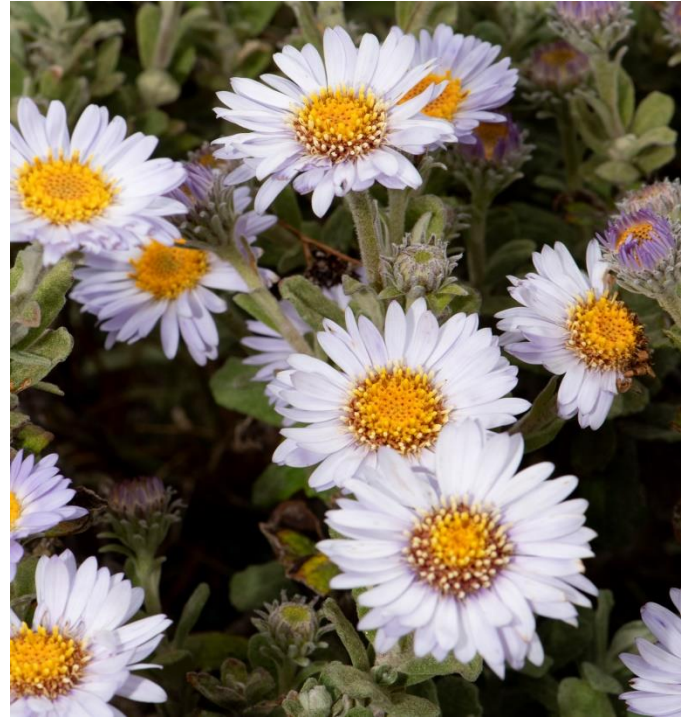
***Bracteantha subundulata* – The Cross, Mt. Hotham**

In typical fashion, it was not just the plants that caught my attention. There were a host of insects and spiders to be photographed and identified.



A Crab Spider – *Thomisidae*, with a fly for lunch

Daisies make up a vast majority of the flowers seen, and the number of individual flowers is simply staggering.



***Olearia frostii* – Bogong Daisy – Mt Hotham Summit**



***Rhodanthe anthemoides* – Camomile Sunray**

But among all the daisies there were other gems to be found. *Veronica nivea* – The Milfoil or Snow Speedwell is one such. A stunning small plant to about 50cm with spikes of glorious mauve/blue and white flowers.



Many of the plants we found were quite small and unassuming, but no less beautiful for that. *Ewartia nubigena* – The Silver Ewartia or Native Eidelweiss, is a small prostrate plant that forms quite dense mats in bare patches on the higher altitudes.



***Ewartia nubigena* – Mt. Hotham Summit**

Cotula alpina – Alpine Cotula is a small, prostrate plant of the damper areas of mainland high country. It is common in Tasmania.



***Cotula alpina* – Alpine Cotula**

Orchids were a feature of the landscape, with the Mauve Leek-orchid - *Prasophyllum suttoni*, very common indeed. We also saw *Prasophyllum tadgellianum* – Alpine Leek-orchid, *Pterostylis crassicaulis* - Alpine Swan Greenhood and *Chiloglottis valida* – the Common Bird-orchid.



***Chiloglottis valida* – Common Bird Orchid**



***Prasophyllum suttoni* – Mauve Leek-orchid**

And, in keeping with the theme of our weekend, we discovered that the Lodge was named for a plant, *Viburnum opulus* or Kalyna, in the Ukrainian language.



***Viburnum opulus* – Kalyna. Image: Gardenia.net**

In Ukraine, *Viburnum opulus* is an important element of traditional folk cultures and is the key element of the Ukrainian traditional wreath. It is seen as a national symbol, an emblem for both the Koliada festivities and the concept of young girl's love and tenderness. A number of folk songs are dedicated to kalyna as well as very popular patriotic song "Oi u Luzi Chervona Kalina". You can listen to it here ...

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wv5qYSt_BL4

2023 MEETINGS and OUTINGS

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|---------------------|-----------------------------|
| 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 |