



# Correa Mail

Newsletter No 402 - June, 2024

## MAY MEETING - Munda Biddi Trail, WA

Our speakers in May were our very own Bruce McGinniss and Roger Wileman. Both are keen cyclists and on separate journeys tackled the Munda Biddi Trail in southern Western Australia. The presentation was an interesting, colourful and very amusing précis of a couple of wonderful adventures.

The Munda Biddi Trail is a long-distance mostly off-road cycling trail in Western Australia. It runs for over 1,000 kilometres from Mundaring, near Perth, to Albany on the southern coast. The completed Munda Biddi Trail opened end-to-end in April 2013 when it claimed the title of the longest continuous off-road cycling trail of its kind in the world.



Bruce began his ride from the southern end of the trail, at Albany. It was October, the peak flowering season in the south. Because of the length of trail, its route through many and varied habitats, and the distance between towns, it was necessary to carry everything he might need on the bike. Food, water, sleeping bag, and many other essential items were loaded into saddle bags. Bruce admitted to annoying his companion by stopping very frequently to photograph flowers and the colours and variety were stunning.



I can not reproduce even a fraction of Bruce's wonderful photos in this edition but I'll try to convey an idea of what a visual delight it was.



Bruce stops again to photograph yet another flower

The Munda Biddi trail winds through a huge variety of habitats in the south - sclerophyll forest, coastal heath, wetlands, farmlands and kauri forests to name just a few. Bruce showed us a number of wonderful landscapes which beautifully captured the changes as he cycled through.

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Accommodation at night varied, but tents and the wonderful huts provided were the main source. The huts provide water, sleeping benches and pit toilets are tastefully tucked away from the main trail.



Roger began his tour in the north and travelled south. It was late September/ October and he was trepidatious but confident as he headed out with his bike heavily laden. Unlike Bruce, whose trek had taken him through the sandy soils and rich loams of the south, Roger was riding in gravel country. The tiny ironstone rocks, like peas, made the going treacherous. Roger would slide down hills and, with no traction on the ascent, would have to dismount and walk to the top. This made the 80 kilometres between stops more than a day's travel. He needed to carry all his water in this section.



The huts were Roger's accommodation each night, and while, for Bruce they were just that, for Roger there were and endless source of funny stories. At one stop, Roger, always prudent, secured his bike to a bench with a bike lock before turning in for the night. Next morning, after a hearty breakfast, he packed everything secured then packs to the bike and ..... couldn't find the key to the lock!



He searched everywhere even unpacking all his saddlebags, but the key was gone. However, all was not lost. In his tool bag was a tiny pair of tin-snips, the size of a ladies nail-clippers. Laboriously, he stripped away the sheath on the bike lock cable to reveal the rope of stainless steel wires from which it was constructed. He gritted his teeth, and with grim determination and much swearing he cut through the strands, one at a time. After an hour he broke through the last one and lock fell free. With shout of triumph he flung the offending article into the bin and grabbed his hat. And the key fell out!



Roger was taken by the kindness of the people he met at the towns and stops along the way. He was offered a bed in a garage on a very wet and cold night. The local farmers leave fruit for the travellers long the track. And when he locked his key and phone in a motel room, the local shop-keeper loaned him his phone to call the concierge then loaned him a car to go sight-seeing!





I, for one, would be very keen to have this presentation again, so that we could take more time with Bruce's amazing array of photos, and listen to more of Roger's great stories. Thanks fellas!

**PLANT of the MONTH – *Correa* 'Canberra Bells'**

We actually forgot to choose a Plant of the Month at the last meeting, so I've chosen a plant that I took along ... *Correa* 'Canberra Bells'. It was developed by Peter Olarenshaw at Bywong Nursery as a celebration of Canberra's Centenary in 2013. Bywong Nursery is a commercial nursery, not open to the public, which works in plant breeding and developing new plants for the market.



'Canberra Bells' is a very hardy plant at 500 mm x 1.5 m. It has small, dark-green leaves and produces many lovely pink and yellow flowers in autumn and winter. It does very well in pots, and a fairly firm prune in the spring will encourage flowering in the next season. It also works well as a hedging plant and tolerates periods of dryness. Keep the soil moist during flowering to avoid the flowers dropping.

I was intrigued as to the origins of the plant and this led me to an interesting (for me) chase around the internet. Its parents are *Correa* 'Federation Belle' x *Correa* 'Mannii'. So, what are their parents?



**C. Federation Belle – Plantmark Wholesale Nurseries**

'Federation Belle' is a seedling that appeared in the garden of Sarah Caldwell at Mole River Station, in northern NSW. It is thought to be a hybrid between *Correa* 'Marion's Marvel' and 'perhaps' (I didn't like that word 'perhaps') a form of *Correa reflexa* var. *speciosa*. This is a coastal plant in NSW but is wide-ranging across Victoria. The name 'Federation Belle' was chosen to commemorate the Centenary of Federation in 2000. *Correa* 'Mannii' is a hybrid between *C. reflexa* x *C. pulchella*, with beautiful deep pink flowers in winter.



**C. 'Mannii' – Photo: Plantmark Wholesale Nurseries**

And finally, where does Marion's Marvel come from? 'Marian's Marvel' is a cross between *C. reflexa* and *C. backhousiana*. It came from the garden of Marion Beek in Naracoorte, South Australia, way back in 1980. It was a very popular garden plant in the late part of last century, but seems to be less so now, I think.

So the very convoluted links have been made. *Correas* are wonderful plants for any garden. They are tough, tolerate of many kinds of soils and will thrive in shade and sun. But, best of all, they give colour to your garden in winter, when not a lot else is in flower, and don't the birds love them? I highly recommend 'Canberra Bells' for your garden.



**C. 'Marion's Marvel'**

## 2023 MEETINGS and OUTINGS

<b>June meeting</b>	Grant Baverstock – Bats
<b>July Meeting</b>	Ross Shephard – Seaford Banksia Arboretum Project
<b>Aug Meeting</b>	AGM & Photo Competition
<b>Sept Meeting</b>	TBA
<b>Oct Meeting</b>	RSPCA Koala Hospital
<b>Nov Meeting</b>	TBA
<b>Dec 7<sup>th</sup></b>	Christmas Break-up BBQ

Lots more in the pipeline. Stay tuned!

## JUNE 18th MEETING - GRANT BAVERSTOCK - BATS

The speaker at our June Meeting will be APS Geelong member, Grant Baverstock. Grant has been studying bats for nearly 40 years as a self-described citizen scientist, with his interest taking him on field trips with professional bat ecologists.



Grant Baverstock 'on the job'

Grant's intention is to make people aware bats are around and how important they are. To quote Grant ...“Humans can't pick up microbat calls and probably aren't aware they're flying just overhead out here”.

Don't miss this fascinating talk at The Ballroom, at **7.30 on June 18<sup>th</sup>**.

## APS GEELONG MEMBERSHIPS - Don't Forget

We have introduced a new system for our membership renewals, to keep in line with APS Victoria procedures and to enable us to better keep track of our membership.

**All memberships will terminate of 30<sup>th</sup> June each year, regardless of when the previous payment was made.\* Membership fees will be due on July 1<sup>st</sup> every year.**

\* **Exception:** We had hoped to recruit new members at the plant sale in April, and any who sign on at the sale, or from April 1 to June 30, will have membership through to 30 June 2025.

Don't forget, if you join APS Victoria and pay your membership of APS Geelong at the same time, please email our secretary to let him know. That way, we keep you in the loop and keep our records up to date, as we are required by law to do.

A new Membership Form will be attached to this newsletter email. Please fill it in, and either bring it to the next meeting or scan and email it to the secretary. A photo from your phone is fine.

Email the secretary at: [apsgeelong@gmail.com](mailto:apsgeelong@gmail.com)

## FUNGI WORKSHOP - 13<sup>th</sup> April, 2024

Here's something that may be of interest to you. Thanks to Joy Sutton for letting us know about it.

## Unruly Renegades

Exploring the fungi of the Surf Coast Shire

Coastal Forest Lodge  
Corner of Forest & Gundrys Roads, Bellbrae (enter off Forest Rd)

Friday 14 June 2024  
10am – 4pm

Although little known, the roots of almost every plant in the Australian landscape are intimately entwined with fungi. Symbioses are the secret to success in our highly variable climate and nutrient-deficient soils.

Unruly fungal renegades contravene the frameworks we use to understand life. However, they might also inspire the innovative thinking needed to navigate an uncertain future.

Participants will learn the basic skills for identifying fungi and explore the many ways they help ecosystems function. Following an identification session around a specimen table we'll head to the field for search for fungi.

Morning tea and lunch provided. Limited to 20 participants.

Free for Torquay & District Landcare members, \$35 for non-members.

Bookings essential: [laevans1@bigpond.com](mailto:laevans1@bigpond.com)

