

Golden

Newsletter of the Australian Plants Society
Latrobe Valley Group Inc.
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Grevillea chrysophaea – Golden Grevillea

This Month?

Well, what can I say! We continue on, waiting for some let-up. 'The Plan' says we Victorians should be 80% vaccinated by November 5, so that at least should give us an opportunity to gather for a meeting, hopefully our AGM.

In the meantime, we do what we have become good at...waiting and hoping. If anyone would like to initiate a 'Flash Walk', drop me a line and I will put out an email notice. Mike is probably offline for the time being.

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It's official! APS Victoria acknowledges what members of Latrobe Valley Group have always known; how lucky we are to have Colin and Mike. They have awarded Colin a Certificate of Commendation and Mike the Impresa Award for Outstanding Service to APS Victoria. We are hoping that with an easing of restrictions, it will be possible to have a meeting where a representative from APS Vic can present the awards in person. Details of the awards will be covered in full in the December issue of "Growing Australian".

In presenting his report, Chris Long echoed the disappointment we have all felt at not meeting face to face, but commended groups for the innovative ways they have been able to keep in touch. Other items in his report of interest to members is a reminder that the F.J. Rogers seminar "Fabulous Peas" is to be held on 15th and 16th October 2022, and the Melbourne International Flower Show, 31st March to 3rd April 2022. There is also a reminder that, if members value their copies of 'Growing Australian' magazine, short articles are needed to continue with the publication. On that subject the editor, Lachlan Garland, is retiring after 11 years at the helm. After the AGM yesterday, the positions of editor and treasurer are still vacant.

Of course, we are closely monitoring the easing of restrictions and will be in touch as soon as we can organise a face-to-face meet.

Mike had a call from Helen Lovel from Neutrog a couple of months ago, enquiring about our progress with ordering the next batch of Bush Tucker and other products. Covid has stopped us meeting to discuss this so we will publish the details here:

- Our Group needs to decide how often we will make an order - once, twice or more times per year.
- Neutrog will collate individual orders and send them all to one designated delivery location on an agreed/specified date (Col Jackson is willing to accept deliveries at his home). To do this, the individual orders need to be linked to our Group. This is also necessary so that the special negotiated APS Victoria discounted prices can be accessed by our members.
- Neutrog prefers individuals to register, order and pay online from their own account. This is the only way to claim the \$20 discount off your first purchase.
- If individuals don't want to or are unable to register themselves, we can still make a Group order, but they will not receive the \$20 discount.

We will discuss it at our next face to face meeting.



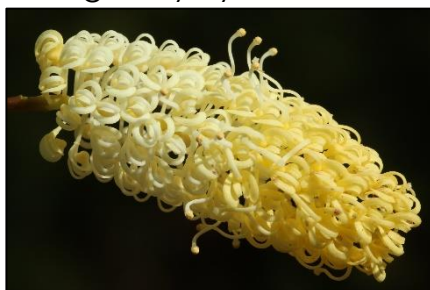
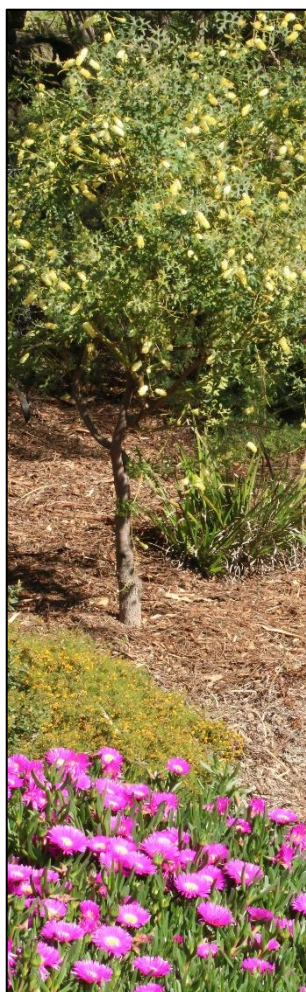
Hibbertia empetrifolia

A big thanks to all the responses to my call for articles, it has helped me fill this newsletter with stories and pictures. However, the hunt for articles is never ending so I ask you to look to your gardens (and the world in general) and see if there is something you could write a few words about and send me photos. The old saying of 'a picture is worth a thousand words' has never been truer, and photos give me a lot of flexibility when I lay out an article.

I recently had an email from Sonya who said with the difficulties of meeting in person, she wondered if we could set up an online social media group. It could be used to ask questions or share photos with all members of the group. It might be very useful in getting all sorts of gardening or plant advice and information without having to wait for a meeting to ask others in the group. I rather like the idea: personally, I use WhatsApp to communicate photos and messages with our kids and, as it's quite simple, am comfortable using it. If you have any thoughts on this, such as a preferred platform, or other ideas, please give me a call.

While there are plenty of plants flowering now, the scene at far left caught my eye the other day. With *Grevillea flexuosa*'s creamy-white flowers in the background, a small 'egg and bacon' prostrate pea in the middle and Pigface (*Carpobrotus glaucescens* 'Aussie Rambler') at the bottom, the bees were kept busy.

It is not such good news with my



Eremophilas though. When we last visited Bob and Dot O'Neill's place, I came away with quite a selection of Eremophilas in tubes. Last spring, I planted them out in some of the best draining sandy loam soil I have at the back of the house. Things were progressing well with all of them flowering since they have been planted. They got through the winter well but now that the weather is warming, they are dying one by one. The combination of wet ground (even if well drained) and warming soil is probably setting up fatal conditions for root rot. One plant though, a prostrate *Eremophila glabra* 'Bellala Gold' is defying the trend and still maintaining full leaf and flower cover.



Species: *Pandorea jasminoides*.

Family: Bignoniaceae.

Derivation:

Pandorea: Named after Pandora, the first woman in classical mythology, who was blamed for the release of all evil into the world (i.e., Pandora's box). This might be a reference to the release of many seeds from the seedpods of species in this Genus, or it might allude to the original species in the Genus being connected to a plague of insects on Norfolk Island.



jasminoides: Derived from *Jasminum* (Arabic *yasamin*), the name of the Jasmine genus, with the suffix *-oides*, meaning like, thus a plant like a Jasmine.

Common Name: Bower Climber.

Distribution: Rainforests and wet sclerophyll forests of north-eastern NSW and south-eastern QLD.

Description: A vigorous twining plant which can grow into the canopy of forests. Leaves are pinnate, with 5 to 7 lanceolate leaflets, each up to 70mm long. Flowers occur over a long period from spring to autumn and are tubular to 50mm long, ending in five spreading lobes, usually pale pink with a deep pink throat. Large elliptical fruits follow, which split when ripe to release multitudes of elongated, papery, winged seeds.

Opinion: I hope it's not as vigorous as its cousin *P. pandorana*, the Wonga Vine, as I've seen some of these in the Mary Cairncross Scenic Reserve (Sunshine Coast hinterland) that disappear into the rainforest canopy with trunks nearly a metre in diameter. I've had some Wonga Vines at home that have stripped branches out of trees due to their weight! Annoying to clean up!

My specimen lives in the back yard where it has taken over a 10m stretch of the southern boundary fence and is probably holding the fence up. It is also showing a tendency to climb into the nearby taller shrubs, some of which I have removed and most of which I should remove, to prevent any future dramas along the lines of the Wonga Vines. But given the age of the plant, more than two decades, and the area that it has covered in that time, I don't think it will be as much of a problem as its cousin. It flowers well over the warmer months and can be hidden by blooms in a good year, but I think our cold winters, in comparison with its natural habitat, keep it in check. It is supposed to be susceptible to

heavy frosts, but I haven't noticed any significant damage, though it is rare for us to get below -2°C. I haven't made any attempts at propagation to date, but I did collect a seed pod last season, which was full of tightly packed papery seeds. The Wonga Vine self-seeds all over the place, but I haven't noticed any Bower Climber seedlings anywhere around the garden. According to the literature, cuttings will strike well too. The spacing of the nodes can be quite long in this species, so it is handy that cuttings don't need a basal node for roots to form and they can be cut shorter than usual.



Sources: Elliot & Jones – Encyclopaedia of Australian Plants, Volume 7.
Jones & Gray – Australian Climbing Plants.
Sharr – WA Plant Names and their Meanings.
Online – ANPSA website.

Mistletoe – Friend or Foe?

By Col Jackson

Pamela sent in this photo of a mistletoe flower taken of a plant growing in a Banksia at John's property next door. She was impressed with the delicate beauty of the flower. Mistletoe (*Amyema pendula*) is common in our area, normally taking up residence in local gums and wattles. It is spread by the Mistletoe Bird, who defecates parallel to branches, thereby depositing seeds on the host branches where they sometimes germinate. It is reputed to kill its host tree, however in 35 years of observation at our property, I have concluded it does no harm to healthy trees and does provide an important food source for local birds and possums.



The Victorian Desalination Plant

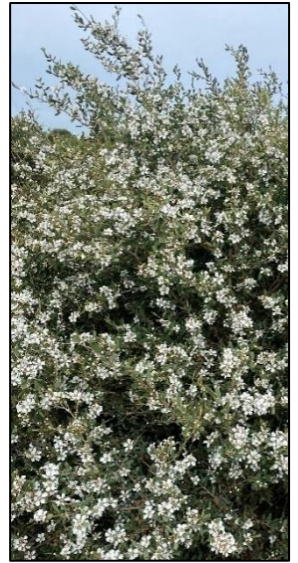
By Judy Hetherington

On our first day out of lock down (this time), Brian decided we should go to Wonthaggi for lunch. Just because we could. We went down the Grand Ridge Road from Warragul and enjoyed looking at the beautiful scenery of the Strzelecki's. At least I enjoyed the scenery, Brian had to keep his eyes on the twisting road. Wonthaggi was a bigger town than I expected, and we enjoyed walking around the main street looking for a good place to eat. After a very nice lunch, I suggested that we go see the Victoria Desalination Plant. It has been a few years since we had a speaker from there at one of our meetings. Brian and I had never been to see it before. The short drive from Wonthaggi to the Dalyston Road took us across country with views of the wind turbines. Seems the Desal Plant has added wind electricity generation to its rooftop solar panels. Being on the coast, these two solutions seem to allow for maximum generation for the electricity used in the desalination and pumping processes.

I am sure that the Desal Plant's regeneration project has exceeded all of its goals! It was quite a contrast to leave the Dalyston Road with its grazing lands and go into beautiful

native grasses and flora. The office building itself could not be seen until we were quite close. It fitted beautifully into the landscape, long and low.

On our short walk around the grounds close to the main building, we were fortunate to see many natives in bloom. If you haven't been to the Desal Plant recently, it is well worth a visit.



Traralgon Sth. FFR & Calignee State Forest.

By Mike Beamish

In between lockdowns, we took the opportunity to go on an early orchid search at the Traralgon South Flora and Fauna Reserve and the Calignee State Forest. There are not a lot of orchids out in flower around the local district yet, we are a bit in-between with the winter orchids mostly finished and the spring orchids not quite ready, but we found enough to keep us interested. It was nice to see a few non-orchid species lighting up the bush in a few places too. The day was bright and sunny, but the breeze was strong, making it difficult to get sharp photos. Here are some samples: ►



Common Beard-heath
(*Leucopogon virgatus*)



Tall Greenhood Orchid
(*Pterostylus melagramma*)



Juniper Wattle (*Acacia ilicifolia*)



Hairy Pink Bells
(*Tetratheca pilosa*)



Hybrid Bird Orchid (*Chilogottus x pescottiana*)



Pink Beard-heath
(*Stryphelia ericoides*)



Varnish Wattle (*Acacia verniciflua*)



Showy Bossiaea (*Bossiaea cinerea*)



Common Hovea
(*Hovea heterophylla*)



Blackwood (*Acacia melanoxylon*)



Dainty Orchid
(*Chiloglottis trapeziformis*)



Spike Wattle (*Acacia oxycedrus*)



Isn't the calendar great for provoking contemplation of past trips and the sights, sounds, and experiences now relegated to fading memory? I was gazing at the photo for October 2021, wondering what to write about it, when I noticed the caption stated the photo was taken at Parry's Lagoon, a popular birdwatching and crocodile-sighting spot not far off the sealed road between Kununurra and Wyndham in WA. Hang on a minute, I thought to myself, I don't remember seeing Water Snowflakes (also known as Snowflake Marshwort or *Nymphoides indica*) at Parry's Lagoon! There were big waterlilies and plenty of birdlife, though no crocodiles put in an appearance.



So, then I was off and running, searching through my photo archives for Parry's Lagoon. It didn't take long to track down – guess what? No Water Snowflake shots! So where was the photo taken then? Dredging through my crowded recollections, I could recall travelling up a creek in the Kimberley in a 45-seat tinny, through gorge and mangrove country until we reached the end of the salt water. There we hopped out of the tinny onto the rocky bank, under instructions to apply our crocodile awareness protocols and wandered upstream along the creek to some shallow pools and cascades, where the participants could have a crocodile-free swim or spa. Cathy joined in for a dip, but I was more interested in the plants, so spent my time wandering around snapping photos, trying not to get distracted and too close to any deeper, darker water. I remember pools covered with Water Snowflakes and in my attempts to get the right angles for my photos, brushing up against small Eucalypts and getting myself covered in unhappy Green Tree Ants! I survived the ants and the crocodiles, learning that it is not only the underwater beasts that you need to be careful of.

Based on these blurry memories, I managed to hunt down the correct location for the photo. It was taken on June 7, 2016 at Camp Creek (which might be a Kimberley Cruise moniker, rather than an actual place name), which runs into the Prince Regent River and the St George Basin on the central Kimberley coast. Here are some more shots taken at the same location – a Penda *Xanthostemon* sp., an unknown moth on an unknown plant & more Water Snowflakes. ►



Below on this page, all unidentified, a *Melaleuca* species, a *Calytrix* species and a *Stemodia* species (I think!). Without a really good reference book and time to research these things, they might remain unidentified for some time to come. Any suggestions will be gratefully accepted!



My Bee Motel

By Col Jackson

Last year, Mary had a bright idea and volunteered me for making a bee motel for our granddaughter. Great! How do you make a bee motel that is effective and two-year-old proof? It needed to be off the ground but still at child height, robust, heavy enough to stay in position but not easily tipped over. Casting around for ideas, I noticed a section of old concrete pipe salvaged from Mary's father's place (big plus there!). Cut to length and mounted in a frame made from old steel mesh, it made a stable structure. I filled it with my usual selection of wood from firewood stacks and drilled the bee nesting holes. It was successful in that it was popular but is yet to attract inhabitants.



Coming events of interest

Note: Please check the Vic APS website for cancellations before attending.

2 & 3 October 2021 – Wartook Gardens - Open Days for Wimmera Healthcare Foundation. BBQ lunch, morning and afternoon teas available. Royce and Jeanne Raleigh, Wartook.

2 & 3 October 2021 - APS Grampians Group Pomonal Native Flower Show, Pomonal Hall.

CANCELLED - 9 October 2021 - APS Echuca Moama Native Flower Showcase, Echuca Masonic Lodge Hall, 426 High Street, Echuca. A huge flower display, plant sales, floral art, Native Bonsai, basket weaving and other displays and demonstrations. 9 am - 4 pm.

CANCELLED - 16 October 2021 - APS Mitchell Annual Flower Expo and Sale, Memorial Hall, Kilmore.

Date to be confirmed – Open Garden for Helen and John van Riet, in Wangaratta, to raise money for Oxfam. Plants for sale.

23 & 24 October 2021 – APS Ballarat Spring Flower Show. Robert Clark Centre, Ballarat Botanic Gardens, Gilles Street, Ballarat. 10 am – 4 pm.

13 & 14 November 2021 Garden DesignFest, Metro Melbourne & Mornington Peninsula

20 & 21 November 2021 Garden DesignFest, Regional Victoria: Ballarat, Euroa, Geelong and Macedon Area.

11 – 16 September 2022, ANPSA Biennial Conference 2022 – Kiama, New South Wales. Preliminary details of the Conference, pre- and post-Conference tours and the beautiful town of Kiama can be found on the APS (NSW) website.

26 to 30 September 2022 - 7th Global Botanic Gardens Congress, Melbourne. *Influence and Action: Botanic Gardens as Agents of Change*. Includes a youth program for future gardens' leaders aged 18 to 24.

15 & 16 October 2022 – 14th FJC Rogers Seminar. Topic: Fabulous peas (the typical 'pea-flowered' plants from the sub-family Faboideae. York on Lilydale in Mt Evelyn. Expressions of interest and queries to fabulouspeas2022@gmail.com



Maybe *Prostanthera rhombea*? - Jackson garden

2021 Latrobe Valley Group Events Calendar

Month	Day	Date	Activity	Time
Nov			<i>Sorry Folks, but as with last month, there is nothing planned due to Covid restrictions. With a bit of luck, I will try to announce a Flash Walk sometime this month.</i>	

Rainfall for 2020 (in mm)

		Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Diane	Drouin (west)	121	147	40	170	123	51	64	154	70	121	89	60	1207
Brian	Drouin (east)	124	136	46	163	125	47	53	158	80	100	69	47	1148
Carolyn	Yarragon	105	171	35	138	125	48	55	138	61	120	44	49	1087
Wayne	Tanjil South	136	108	66	163	134	72	91	107	57	123	55	86	1198
Judy	Moe South	99	95	33	159	137	53	55	128	71	138	37	40	1045
Mike	Boolarra	93	126	40	159	121	73	78	115	63	133	32	63	1093
Mary	Jeeralang Junction	86	134	39	152	93	73	97	98	53	110	37	48	1019
John	Traralgon South	76	55	15	134	105	55	46	115	53	108	51	32	842

Rainfall for 2021 (in mm)

		Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Diane	Drouin (west)	92	57	78	88	65	143	73	83					677
Brian	Drouin (east)	83	58	80	64	68	134	87	44					618
Carolyn	Yarragon	79	30	60	65	75	117	73	102					600
Wayne	Tanjil South	108	37	89	77	175	195	90	95					866
Judy	Moe South	97	25	89	79	75	175	79	83					702
Mike	Boolarra	95	43	81	66	84	181	67	92					707
Mary	Jeeralang Junction	79	35	98	63	71	266	56	114					781
John	Traralgon South	83	16	135	35	26	229	58						580

<https://apsvic.org.au/aps-latrobe-valley/>

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Title page photo: *Grevillea chrysophaea* at Holey Plains State Park by Mike Beamish