

# Golden

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

## This Month

**Event** A presentation on the alpine flora of Victoria by Chris Clarke.  
**Location** Traralgon Bowls Club, 50 Liddiard Road, Traralgon.  
**Date** Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> of May  
**Time** 12:00 Noon for optional lunch – 2:00 PM meeting start.  
Come along and enjoy a proper sit-down meal (optional), meeting and presentation, the likes of which we haven't been able to see much of through covid. Chris will be sharing his experiences of some recent alpine exploring and trekking. He will also present awards to members of our group.

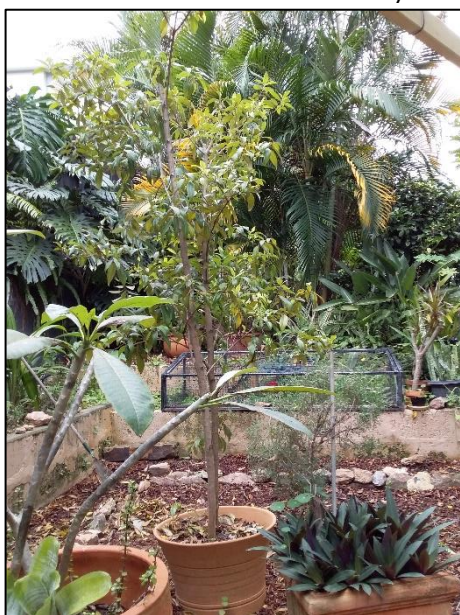
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I am just back from a trip to Queensland where I stayed with my sister who lives in inner Brisbane, an easy walking distance to the city. Over the last 25 years, she has created a tropical paradise on her small block. Naturally, wanting to keep my hand in, I was happy to help when she needed to prune a Lemon Myrtle (*Backhousia citriodora*) which had survived 15 years in a small pot but had blown over recently. We reduced the



height by half which left us

with thousands of leaves and dried flowers to harvest. I came home with a collection which is now in my freezer. She will be sharing with the neighbourhood and her son who is a chef. The plan is now to relocate, break the terracotta pot and establish it into the ground. Obviously, they are very hardy as it showed no ill effects from our surgery. Although data on the trees suggest they prefer a warm climate, I had two specimens for years in Yallourn North. Apart from the leaves and flowers, which are so useful in cooking, it is an attractive addition to any garden, with beautiful cream or white blooms in Summer and Autumn.



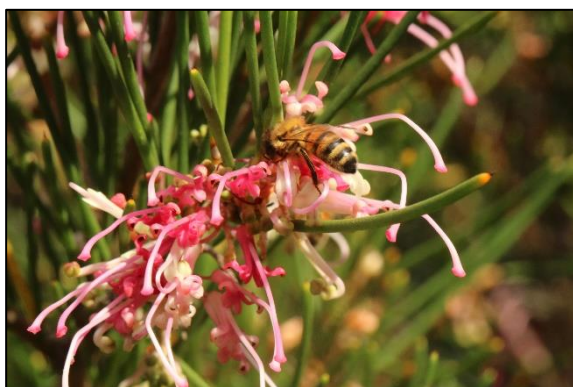
There is another tree, however, which wouldn't be happy in Victoria as they are frost sensitive. It is the Golden Penda (*Xanthostemon chrysanthus*) and they are spectacular right now in Brisbane. Often planted in groves for full effect in parks and verges, they grow from 10 to 15 metres tall, are related to Eucalypts and Bottle Brushes and have almost fluorescent yellow flowers.

I am looking forward to seeing you at our next meet on 5th May.



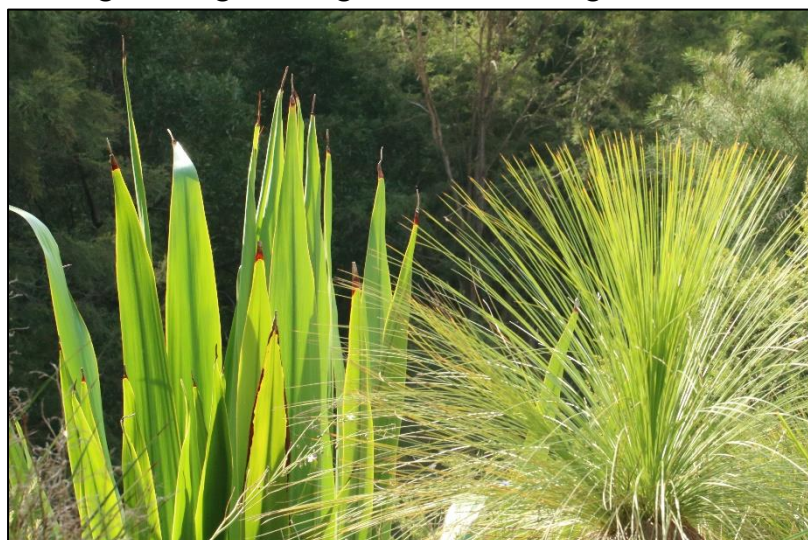


The last month has just flown by. My good intentions of garden preparation and planting hasn't yet eventuated as home renovations to install a new fireplace and going away at Easter somehow took priority. The garden though, has moved on. Much more flowering of the Grevilleas that I mentioned last month, and the Banksias are giving it another go too. I know I seem to bang on about it every year but the flowering of *Plectranthus argentatus* is spectacular. In the front garden it fills a patch of shady garden with those silvery leaves and is still putting on good flowering. However, in an open sunny area behind the house it is just a solid haze of tiny pale blue flowers. These seem to attract both honeybees and the native Blue-banded bees.



Hakeas have started flowering too with *H. clavata*, *H. verrucosa*, and *H. Burrendong Beauty* all buzzing on a sunny day.

I have long been a fan of wind-blown movement in the garden, particularly on grassy and strappy leaved plants. The Gynea Lily and Xanthorrhoea were a classic example of this when I took this photo. A gentle breeze (the kind we mostly get in our sheltered gully) was wafting through the garden, creating a dance of subtle collaboration between these



plants; the movement of the Xanthorrhoea creating a shimmering effect with the strappy lily leaves behind gently twisting and swaying.

If you are looking for an excuse for a day out, check out the APS events calendar later in this newsletter. There are a couple of plant sales coming up in early May; perhaps a chance to get some planting stock into your garden before winter.



**Species:** *Viola hederacea*.

**Family:** Violaceae.

**Derivation:**

*Viola*: The Latin/Roman name for the violet.

*hederacea*: Resembling the genus *Hedera*, the Latin name for ivy, referring to the shape of the leaves.

**Common Name:** Ivy-leaved Violet.

**Distribution:** In open forests from the inland foothills of the Great Dividing Range to the coast, in eastern NSW, southern Victoria, south-eastern SA and in Tasmania.

**Description:** A spreading, perennial herb that reproduces from seeds and creeping stolons (basal stems that grow just below the surface and put down roots and develop shoots at regular intervals). Leaves grow in clumps at the nodes and are broadly reniform (kidney-shaped) to semi-circular, up to 3cm long by 5cm wide, on stalks to 12cm long, with margins faintly toothed and a rounded apex. Flowers are usually violet and white, rarely pale violet or wholly white. They are terminal on erect scapes to 12cm long, less than 2cm wide, with 5 petals. Two petals open upwards like ears, two open laterally as wings (these are often hairy at the base) and the lower petal is obovate and pouchy with a notch. Fruits are ovoid capsules to about 6mm around.



**Opinion:** According to the literature, there used to be a multitude of varieties and subspecies, but recent research has elevated all of these to specific rank, leaving *V. hederacea* on its own. Since my plants are derived from local seeds, I'm pretty sure they are plain old Ivy-leafers! I've had them for years in pots and in a variety of positions throughout the garden, where I have tried to use them as a living, green mulch/groundcover. However, they don't compete very well with real mulch or with too much overgrowth from the neighbours and tend to slowly die out. At the moment, the only place they are surviving in the ground is in amongst the only bed of ~~weeds~~ exotics (roses, daffodils, dahlias, freesias, gladioli, dietes) that has escaped my patriotism (only through threat of physical harm), where they don't get crowded out. Pity they are ►

not vigorous enough to oust their companions. They are easy to grow from seed or from division, just separate one clump from the rest, preferably with some roots attached, and plant elsewhere.

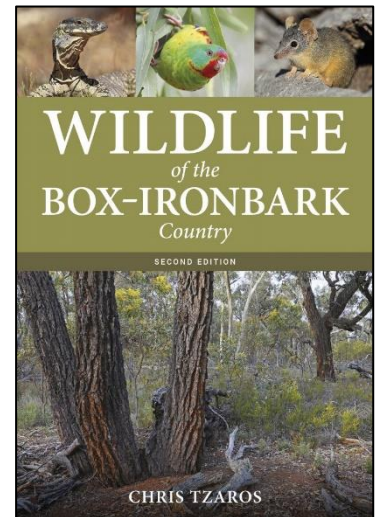
The top photo is from my garden, but the second photo is of a lovely white form that we found at Billy Goat Bend campground in the Mitchell River NP in October 2021, growing amongst a patch of normally coloured flowers.

**Sources:** Elliot & Jones – Encyclopaedia of Australian Plants, Volume 9.  
Online – Flora of Victoria.

## Book review – *Wildlife of the Box-Ironbark Country*

By Ian Fraser

**T**his is a thoroughly updated version of an out-of-print classic originally published in 2005. The subject is the rich but fragmented box-ironbark eucalypt woodlands that stretch across central Victoria from Chiltern southwest to Stawell in an irregular amoeba-like strip. It incorporates a range of reserve types, from national park to state forest, plus a lot of unprotected land. If you have no intention of ever visiting Victoria I think that a) this review is probably not of interest to you and b) you're making a mistake. However, for the rest of us this is a book worth getting for future trips to this nature-packed little state, and if you live there it's an absolute must. It is both a valuable backgrounder to the ecology, management issues and challenges of the system, with detailed descriptions of the sub-habitats, and a field guide to the vertebrates. The latter seems pretty ambitious, but a table at the end of the book, with all vertebrate species recorded in the zone, indicates that it's comprehensive with the exception of species that are rare vagrants, those at the limit of their range, and ones that are present within the area but don't use the box-ironbark habitats. Those are indicated in the table. Each field guide entry includes comprehensive information and a detailed map, plus a high-quality photograph. There's no guide to plants or invertebrates (understandably), though common plants are listed for each sub-habitat. An important concluding chapter introduces 16 reserves (or 'places to watch wildlife') with for each access information, detailed habitat description and 'notable natural values', and 'feature species', accompanied by an excellent map. Overall a valuable addition to the natural history literature and it will certainly be in our book box for our next trip south.



*Wildlife of the Box-Ironbark Country*; second edition, Chris Tzaros CSIRO Publishing. 288 pages. RRP \$50

[Ian Fraser is a Canberra-based professional naturalist and writer. In 2012 he launched the natural history blog 'Ian Fraser, Talking Naturally', at <http://ianfrasertalkingnaturally.blogspot.com.au/>

This contribution was submitted by Meg Byers, who knows Ian through previous environmental tours in Australia. Editor]

## Next Year's Calendar Planning...

By Cathy Beamish

It seems that our calendar is something our members would like to see continue, so I have been putting thought in to how to go about it this year. After discussion with those at the April outing, it was decided to conduct an experiment and take a different approach to the whole process. Instead of members submitting up to 6 photos and everyone then voting on them, this year members can submit up to 10 photos and no-one will vote for them!

The plan is to collect as many photos as possible from members, keeping in mind that each photo needs to be of a high enough resolution and completely clear for it to be dramatically enlarged. Once the closing date has passed, my trusty side kick and I will go through all the photos to make sure they meet the basic requirements and then start to sort them into various groups in preparation for compiling the calendar. These groups may include plants by genus, colour, location or just have a unique perspective on the flora and fauna of our country.

The final layout of each month will be determined by the number and subject matter of the photos that are sent to me. I am hoping to have enough photos to enable at least 2 or more per page.

So, what you need to know is this:

- You can send me up to 10 photos; all need to be in focus and more than 2mb in size (phones meet this requirement easily these days).
- Closing date is 30th June.
- You will probably need to send me 3 or 4 emails as you won't be able to send the 10 photos all at once.

In previous years I have tried to have the calendar available for the AGM. This year I will save myself the stress of that timeline and will focus on getting the formatting right. With luck, they will be available for purchase during September or October.

I will discuss the calendars more and answer any questions at our May meeting at the Traralgon Bowls Club.

2022 Latrobe Valley Group Events Calendar				
Month	Day	Date	Activity	Time
May	Thursday	5	<i>Alpine Flora of Victoria – Chris Clarke</i> <i>Chris will also be presenting awards to certain members of our group. We have a booking at Traralgon Bowls Club for an optional lunch at 12:00 noon with the meeting starting at 2:00 PM.</i>	12:00
June		9	<i>Moe Rail Trail?</i>	
			<i>Spring Ballan Trip?</i>	



The Yam Daisy photo was taken on January 2, 2021, from a plant growing in a tub in my front garden. This plant is one of many that I have grown from seed, while others have self-seeded throughout my garden, with the seed source being the original plants distributed by Colin a couple of years previously. I've collected heaps of seed over the last two seasons, most of the 2021 batch has now been distributed to people interested in giving them a go, but I still have plenty from this season if you would like some. The local Yinnar South Landcare Group was happy to receive a big bagful for trialling on their revegetation project block in the Billys Creek valley, upstream from Morwell National Park, even though the species probably doesn't naturally occur there.



There are three recognised species of Yam Daisies (*Microseris*) in Victoria: *M. lanceolata* occurs in the high country of north-east Victoria, *M. walteri* occurs across much of northern and western Victoria at lower altitudes and *M. scapigera* occurs on the basalt country in the southwest of the State. My plants are *M. scapigera*, differentiated from the others by the length of the seeds (more than 7mm long) and the number (more than 20) and shape (not flattened or widened at base) of the pappus bristles on the top of each seed.

I've never used any plants in the kitchen, so I'm thinking I might mass-plant some superfluous seed into one of my under-utilised vegetable garden beds in preparation for a food supply during the coming apocalypse (how's that for a dire, paranoid prediction!). I've also toyed with the idea of adding them to my native lawn projects (along with chocolate lilies, leek lilies, orchids and other grassland plants), but I'm worried that if I succeed, the lawns will become pseudo-gardens and I'll be reluctant to use them as lawns. Problems, problems!





## Coming events of interest

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

**7 May 2022** - APS Mornington Peninsula Plant Sale. The Briars, Nepean Highway, Mt Martha 10 am to 3.30 pm.

**14 May 2022** - APS Melton and Bacchus Marsh Plant Sale. 9am to 1pm. St Andrews Uniting Church, 18 Gisborne Road, Bacchus Marsh. Featuring hakeas and dwarf eucalypts.

**4 June** APS Vic COM – North Shepparton Community & Learning Centre, 10/14 Parkside Drive, Shepparton 3630. Registrations from 9.30. Meeting 10 am to 12 noon. Garden visit to Drew Baglin's garden, Kialla. For more information call Jenny Polinelli – 03 5829 8416.

**25 & 26 June 2022** – APS Ballarat Winter Flower Show. Flower show, plant sales etc. Robert Clark Centre, Ballarat Botanic Gardens, Gilles Street, Ballarat. 10 am – 4 pm.

**23 & 24 July 2022** - Cranbourne Friends RBGV Spring Plant Sale. 10 am to 4 pm. Wide range of plants, plant list available one week before sale. Free entry. Advised 24/3/22

**27 & 28 August** - APS Yarra Yarra Australian Plants Expo, Eltham Community & Reception Centre, 801 Main Road Eltham. 10.00 am - 4.00 pm both days

**1 September 2022** – Wimmera Biodiversity Seminar 2022. Details to follow.

**3 Sept 2022** – APS Wilson Park (Berwick) Plant Sale, Wilson Botanic Gardens, Berwick in conjunction with City of Casey Garden Expo. Date to be confirmed.

**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. Registrations open now.

**17 & 18 September 2022** – APS Bendigo Flower Show, Kangaroo Flat Primary School Gym, Freeman Drive, Kangaroo Flat, Bendigo. 9.30 am to 4.00 pm. \$5 entry, children free.

**24 & 25 September 2022** – APS Loddon Murray host COM and Quarterly Gathering in Swan Hill.

**26 to 30 September 2022** - 7<sup>th</sup> 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.

**1 & 2 October 2022** - APS Grampians Group Pomonal Native Flower Show, Pomonal Hall.

**8 October 2022** - APS Echuca Moama Native Flower Showcase, Echuca Masonic Lodge Hall, 426 High Street, Echuca.

**15 & 16 October 2022** – 14<sup>th</sup> 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](mailto:fabulouspeas2022@gmail.com) ►



**22 & 23 October 2022 - APS Ballarat Spring Flower Show.** Flower show, plant sales etc. Robert Clark Centre, Ballarat Botanic Gardens, Gilles Street, Ballarat. 10 am – 4 pm.

**22 & 23 October 2022 - Cranbourne Friends RBGV Spring Plant Sale.** 10 am to 4 pm. Wide range of plants, plant list available one week before sale. Free entry.

Website: [rbgfriendscanbourne.org.au](http://rbgfriendscanbourne.org.au)

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	128	180	113	28	1125
Brian	Drouin (east)	83	58	80	64	68	134	87	44	174	130	106	26	1054
Carolyn	Yarragon	79	30	60	65	75	117	73	102	151	93	88	20	951
Wayne	Tanjil South	108	37	89	77	175	195	90	95	207	167	112	64	1416
Peter	Mirboo North	92	53	107	81	101	274	88	78	170	87	96	45	1272
Judy	Moe South	97	25	89	79	75	175	79	83	197	101	93	37	1130
Mike	Boolarra	95	43	81	66	84	181	67	92	186	88	83	35	1098
Mary	Jeeralang Junction	79	35	98	63	71	266	56	114	120	136	117	26	1178
John	Traralgon South	83	16	135	35	26	229	58	68	91	75	68	33	915

Rainfall for 2022 (in mm)

		Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Diane	Drouin (west)	67	30	81										178
Brian	Drouin (east)	74	11	76										161
Carolyn	Yarragon	107	5	55										166
Wayne	Tanjil South	83	15											98
Peter	Mirboo North													0
Judy	Moe South	73	13	64										150
Mike	Boolarra	72	6											78
Mary	Jeeralang Junction	68	11	85										163
John	Traralgon South	88	10	31										129

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

<b>Leader:</b>	Jill Fidler	0407871603	jillsgarden71@gmail.com
<b>Deputy-leader:</b>	Cathy Beamish	0447452755	cathy.beamish@gmail.com
<b>Secretary:</b>	Judy Hetherington	0497000925	heth76933@gmail.com
<b>Treasurer:</b>	Mike Beamish	0447452755	mcandcjb@gmail.com
<b>Newsletter Editor:</b>	Col Jackson	0429095527	coljackson57@hotmail.com
<b>Website:</b>	John Stephens	0439755013	john.stephens9@bigpond.com
<b>Librarian:</b>	Pamela Cox	0429194733	theroseglen@yahoo.com.au
<b>Publicity</b>	Delma Hodges	0408398385	rj3dh2@aussiebb.com.au



Golden Grevillea  
*Grevillea chrysophaea*

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