

Golden

Newsletter of the Australian Plants Society
Latrobe Valley Group Inc.
No. A0045337C

Issue No. 300 – August 2021

Grevillea chrysophaea – Golden Grevillea

This Month

Event: Annual General Meeting and slide show of the winners for next year's calendar photo competition.

Location: Morwell Bowling Club, 52 Hazelwood Road, Morwell.

Date: Thursday August 12th.

Time: Optional lunch at 12:00 noon and AGM starting at 2:00 PM.

This meeting is subject to current Covid restrictions at the time. An update email flyer will be sent out just before the meeting when we have some certainty.

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I am so sorry that we were unable to enjoy the hospitality offered at Traralgon South for our meeting last month. Yvonne and Pamela, and John and Sue had all worked like Trojans preparing their gardens and houses for our visit, only to have the fruits of their labours snatched away at the last moment. John and Sue's garden had suffered extensive damage in the recent wild weather event and a lot of clean-up was required to bring things back into shape. We hope to get another chance to see them soon.

As you know, our AGM is due in August, but we are unable to make firm plans at this stage with so much Covid uncertainty. We have set a tentative date for August 12 with a daytime meeting. A booking has been made at the Morwell Bowling Club for a 2:00 PM AGM meeting, and for those who choose to, lunch at the Bowling Club at 12 noon. We will update you with an email flyer once that date approaches and we have some confidence regarding Covid restrictions. If you think you could contribute to the running of the group, please consider nominating for a committee position.

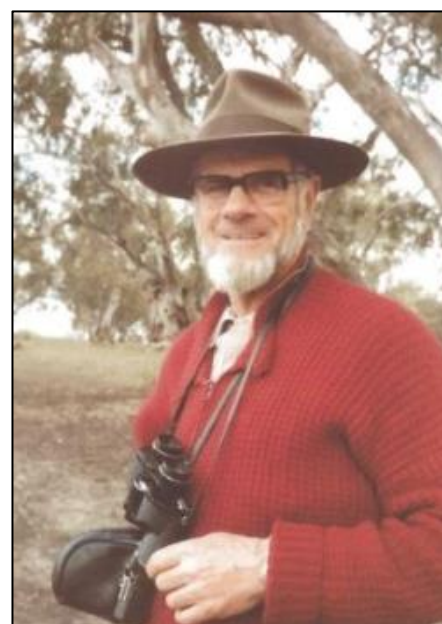
Reading the details of the FJC Rogers seminar "Fabulous Peas" in October next year at Mt Evelyn, I realised that I had always taken the title for granted. Thanks to Mr Google and an article by Royce Raleigh with June and Peter Rogers, I was able to discover the background of one of the founding members of the society that we take for granted today.

APS Victoria honoured Mr FJC (Fred) Rogers by naming these bi-annual Seminars in recognition of his magnificent service to the Society and his desire that members should continue to be educated about specific groups of plants.

Fred joined the Society for Growing Australian Plants (SGAP) in 1959, following the inaugural meeting in Melbourne in 1957. As a foundation member of the Southeast Region, he served as President from 1963-1968 by which time there were over 1200 members. During this time 7 more groups were formed, and he became President of the Maroondah Group which he led for 5 years.

In 1976 he became the Principal of Horsham West Primary School. The move did nothing to dilute his dedication to the Society and the Wimmera branch of SGAP was formed.

In addition to his work to promote Australian Flora, he became a founding member of Ringwood Field Naturalists in 1961. Other tributes to his tireless dedication include Life Member of Maroondah APS, APS Victoria, Ringwood Field Nats. and the awarding, in 1995, of the Natural History Medallion for services to Australian Native Plants. Two reserves in Ringwood bear his name and a plaque in Wimmera ensure that his name is not forgotten there. The Seminar in 2022 will be another reminder of his enduring legacy.



Since this seminar is almost in our backyard, we should be able to field a team.

Watch for updates on our next meeting, Jill Fidler.

Bower birds have been common in our garden for many years now; they are regular visitors to the lawn out front, scrounging any fruit scraps that get put out on the grass. We also hear the males practicing their calls and displays underneath the shrubs in the garden. From our first sighting of the magnificent black/purple male several years ago now, the males have become regulars and it is not unusual to sight two at a time. However, much to Mary's disappointment, we had not seen a bower on the property. In the last few weeks though, a bower has been built in a clear area behind some shrubs. Mary was so excited, at last we had our bower, appropriately decorated with the current fashion: blue plastic items. And amongst the blue plastic I noticed a pair of plastic tweezers that I am sure have been stolen from my propagating area. It didn't last long though. After a few days it was smashed to the ground; all the careful work flattened and destroyed. Apparently, this is normal, rival males will destroy and steal from other bowers (or maybe it's a female saying "Not good enough buster, try again"). Since then, it has been built and dismantled four times. Oh, the things the males have to do to impress females!



As you will see from our front-page header, this issue is our 300th. This prompted me to do a quick look back on the past 28 years. An initial 'expression of interest' meeting was held in November 1993 when Paul Kennedy travelled from Melbourne to chair the meeting and explain the requirements for forming a group. On the attendance list that night was Warren Simpson and Col Jackson. I believe another EOI meeting was held in February (chaired by Warren) that garnered some larger attendance. The next meeting in March was the meeting where the Society for Growing Australian Plants (SGAP) Latrobe Valley group was formed. This meeting elected Warren as the first leader and Marg and Wayne Wilkinson as the newsletter editors. For many, many years Marg was the tireless editor, collating the group info, typing it up, printing it out and mailing it to all members (yes, we weren't using email then). It is only recent years that the editor's role changed to Pamela and Yvonne and then to me. So, thanks, Marg, for all the work you put in for all those years, keeping the info flowing out to the rest of the group.

As usual, I am desperate for newsletter contributions from members. I thank from the bottom of my heart those regular providers, but as always, I want MORE! Please see what you can do.

Species: *Eremophila* 'Augusta Storm' (*E. glabra* x *E. veneta*).

Family: Scrophulariaceae (was Myoporaceae).

Derivation:

Eremophila: From Greek, *eremos*, meaning desert or lonely place, and the suffix *-phileo*, meaning to love, thus a lover of deserts or lonely places.

glabra: From Latin, *glaber*, meaning without hair, perhaps referring to the gynoeceum (female parts of the flower).

veneta: A Latin word meaning bluish green and referring to the flower colour.

Common Name: None.

Distribution: This plant has no known natural distribution; it is a hybrid of garden origin. *E. veneta* occurs in the Avon district of South-west WA, around Corrigin, Gnowangerup, Kent, Kondinin, Kulin and Lake Grace, where it overlaps with *E. glabra* subsp. *albicans*, so it is possible that some similar natural hybrids exist in these areas.

Description: A small shrub up to 1m tall and broad with silvery-green foliage and tubular, purple flowers to 25mm long at any time of year, with flushes usually in autumn and spring and after rain.



Opinion: A lovely little plant when it is at its best, but it does the same thing that a lot of other Emu-bushes do in my garden, it loses most of its leaves behind the growing tip so that the end result is a leggy plant with bare branches and a little tuft of leaves at the tip. I presume this is a reaction to growing the plant in conditions nothing like its usual habitat; that is, cooler and damper Boolarra versus warmer and drier wheat-belt WA. How to counteract this tendency? Provide more light, warmth and air movement around the ►

plants, regularly tip prune to slow down the growing points and encourage bushiness. I do try, but I'm not winning.

My specimen is planted in the northern bed, up against the fence that divides my "front" and "back" yards, in a line of four different *Eremophila* species. My theory was that they would receive plenty of direct light during the middle of the day, though not much in the mornings and late afternoons. The fence would reflect light and warmth back onto the plants, but would also restrict air movement a bit, perhaps too much. The theory hasn't worked as hoped; three of the four plants have dropped most of their leaves and Augusta Storm is virtually prostrate with bare branches up to 60cm long, ending in a nearly invisible tuft of leaves. It still flowers, the honeyeaters still love it, but aesthetically it's a failure. Maybe treating it as an annual, or biennial at most, is the way to go.



Sources: Elliot & Jones – Encyclopaedia of Australian Plants, Volume 3.
Chinnock – Eremophila and Allied Genera.
Sharr – WA Plant Names and their Meanings.
Online – FloraBase: Flora of WA.

Some time ago Jill suggested the idea of a newsletter spot called The Bee Motel in which we could post a photo and a few words describing our experiences with our (or perhaps someone else's) bee motel. I decided to kick it off this month with my efforts at home. A brief description of materials, manufacture, and success (or not!) might be a good start, but I will leave the format up to you.

During our recent visit to Woolenook Nursery, Mitch passed on some tips on constructing and positioning bee motels. While I can't remember it all, I think this covers some of the main points.

- **Shelter:** Provide some sort of rain proof cover for the housing material.
- **Position:** A sunny position, preferably facing north or northeast.
- **Material:** Wood or hollow reeds. Avoid treated timbers (although they could be used for the cover). Wet clay can be packed in and allowed to dry also as some bees prefer to build in bare dirt. Reeds could be small bamboo or similar. I use the Common Reed (*Phragmites australis*) dry flower head stems. These can often be sourced in wet areas along roadsides.
- **Sizes:** A variety of hole sizes should be provided from 2mm to 10mm diameter. Drill as deep as you can. Be prepared for drill breakages, maybe buy a selection of cheap smaller drills for the purpose.

These are suggestions and you should feel free to utilise anything that takes your fancy, particularly in the overall housing. There are endless possibilities out there to construct interesting and unusual bee hotels.

My first attempt at a bee hotel was the re-use of an old mailbox. With the rear door removed, packed with a variety of materials, and mounted on a post in the garden it made a nice quirky feature. But did it work? There was definitely some success with many of the round holes, both in wood and reeds; obviously they have been used and filled. Some holes appear empty, but they may have occupants deeper within. As a kind of filler material, I had rolled up some paperbark and stuffed in around the other materials. To my eye, this does not seem to have been used at all, but it may still house other small invertebrates. My next question is 'Do I replace the materials and renew the motel?' I think I should



remove the existing material and place it in a sheltered, sunny spot (probably one of my wood stacks) to allow any residents to hatch and escape in the spring. I can then refill the box with new material and hopefully start the cycle again.

Coastal Tea Tree – a sculpture beyond life.

By Mary Jackson

Prior to the current lockdown a friend and I decided that a day at Inverloch to blow away the cobwebs was needed. Even the weather and lots of other people agreed.

As I hear lots of mutterings from our newsletter editor in relation to the lack of articles submitted, and the difficulty to create an interesting newsletter, I try to be on the lookout for opportunities to oblige.

On the beach walk were several pieces of *Leptospermum* driftwood that were so out of place in the beach setting yet so artistically perfect and beautiful. Many years of their ocean beach conditions had bleached, worn, cleaned and polished these limbs to show off their forms and patterns.

What a perfect background setting these plant remnants, together with the sand and seaweed they lay on, created.



2021 Calendar Spot – August

By Cathy Beamish

This wonderful specimen from the reptile world (the Eastern Water Dragon) was found in the Australian National Botanical Gardens (ANBG) in Canberra in November 2015. We had gone there to attend an ANPSA conference. Activities for the week included pre and post conference tours, of which we joined the pre-conference tour to the east coast, as well as day trips to parks, reserves, or private gardens.

The day trip to ANBG provided us with some pretty plants to photograph, but the highlight for me was the water dragon.



He was relaxing on a big rock beside the path, looking very comfortable while

sunning himself. Zooming in allowed me to take the shot that showed all the spectacular colours on his neck and face. As you can see from the other attached photo, he (assuming it's male!) also provided a great foreground for my other shot!



What a winner!

By Pamela Cox

This delightful pink native Mint-bush (*Prostanthera* sp.) was donated by Jill for the raffle, and it hasn't stopped flowering since I first put it in the ground. A real winner.



Coming events of interest

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

4 Sept 2021 – APS Wilson Park (Berwick) Plant Sale, Wilson Botanic Gardens, Berwick.

4&5 Sept 2021 – Open Garden Bill Aitchison & Sue Guymer garden, Donvale. 10 am to 4.30 pm both days, bookings need to be done online. Entry \$10 per adult. Further details on the OGV Website.

11 & 12 September 2021 – APS Yarra Yarra Australian Plants Expo, Eltham Community & Reception Centre, Eltham. 10 am – 4 pm.

18 & 19 September 2021 - APS Bendigo Flower Show. 9.30 - 4pm \$3 entry Kangaroo Flat Primary School, Freeman Drive, Kangaroo Flat.

18 September 2021 – ANGAIR Wildflower and Art Show, Anglesea.

25 & 26 September 2021 – APS Grampians Group host APS Victoria COM Meeting and APS Vic AGM 2:PM at the Pomonal Hall.

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.

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.

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

16 and 17 October – 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

2021 Latrobe Valley Group Events Calendar

Month	Day	Date	Activity	Time
Aug	Thursday	12	AGM and Calendar Photo winners slide show following optional lunch at 12:00 noon. Venue Morwell Bowling Club. Please note that this day and date is tentative and could be changed due to Covid restrictions. Final notification will be sent closer to the date.	2 PM

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							521
Brian	Drouin (east)	83	58	80	64	68	134							487
Carolyn	Yarragon	79	30	60	65	75	117							425
Wayne	Tanjil South	108	37	89										234
Judy	Moe South	97	25	89	79	75								365
Mike	Boolarra	95	43	81	66	84	181							549
Mary	Jeeralang Junction	79	35	98	63	71	266	56						667
John	Traralgon South	83	16	135	35	26								294

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

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



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

Australian Plants Society Latrobe Valley Group Inc.

Notice of Annual General Meeting

Thursday, August 8, 2019, 7.30pm

Horticultural Building, Federation Training, Monash Way, Morwell VIC 3840

Agenda

Attendance:

Apologies:

Confirmation of previous AGM Minutes:

Business arising from previous AGM:

Correspondence:

Business arising from Correspondence:

Reports:

Election of Office Bearers:

General Business:

All committee positions become vacant. Please consider whether you can provide assistance in any of the positions; Leader, Deputy Leader, Secretary, Treasurer, Newsletter Editor, Website Officer and Librarian. Nominations for the positions will be received immediately prior to the election for each position. If you are unable to attend the AGM and wish to nominate for a position, please advise the Leader in writing or by email prior to the AGM.