

# Golden

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

Issue No. 304 – December 2021

*Grevillea chrysophaea* – Golden Grevillea

## This Month

Event	Traralgon South Members' Gardens visit.
Location	Starting at No1 Cashmere Drive, Traralgon South.
Date	Saturday December 4
Time	11:00 AM

We tried for this garden visit in July and almost got there before we hit a lockdown. With vaccination rates now over 90% we are in the clear. Another plus is that Pamela and Yvonne's and John and Sue's gardens will be looking much better with their springtime flush of flowering and growth. Bring your own lunch and weather appropriate clothing and protection and come along to enjoy a leisurely end to a somewhat troubled year.

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**W**e managed to hold our AGM on November 14. Sixteen members gathered for an excellent lunch at the Morwell Bowling Club, followed by the meeting. After the minutes and reports from 2020 were read, all positions were declared vacant and nominations for 2021-2022 office bearers were sought. In the absence of any new nominations, all current holders agreed to continue and were duly declared elected. With fingers crossed, I included a confident prediction in my report for 2021 that 2022 will be a very different year with many face-to-face meetings, beginning on December 4<sup>th</sup> at Traralgon South. For those members who were not able to make it to the AGM, I thanked our trusty committee on your behalf and hope we will all be much busier next year. We also hope to host a member of the APS executive who will present the Commendation Certificates awarded to Mike and Colin earlier this year.

**JILLS' ODD SPOT:** ABC's Gardening Australia recently addressed conservation activities on Macquarie Island with a particular reference to plants. Lying halfway between Tasmania and Antarctica, the Island was awarded World Heritage listing in 1997 becoming the 2<sup>nd</sup> listing for Tasmania. The Island has been free of feral animals since 2011 and recovery is constantly monitored. Featuring Macquarie Island plants, the Subantarctic Plant House is located within the Hobart Botanic Gardens and is a vital part of this monitoring. This is the closest most of us will get to observe samples of some of the 30 plants, mosses, and lichens



from the island. Kept very cold and with constant freezing winds, the plants are at home here. Like a canary in a coal mine, some dieback and drying of plants has been observed on the Island, which could be linked to climate change. There is a wealth of information online of course and maybe some of us will add a visit to the 'Icehouse' when next in Hobart. At left is a photo of one plant *Azorella macquariensis*, which has evolved a practical way of coping with extreme weather; the roots react by pulling the plant underground.

On November 27 I will join the final quarterly meeting of APS Vic at Mornington, face to face for only the second time this year. An update on state activities will be in the first newsletter of 2022.

And another clutch of swans has made it through at the Traralgon Railway Reservoir Reserve; lovely to see while walking there. Hoping to see you all in Traralgon South on 4<sup>th</sup> of December but, if not, Season's Greetings and a Happier New Year for 2022.





**W**ith the year coming to a close, and with private dwelling visitor restrictions off, our visit to the Traralgon South gardens is all go. The broad format for the day is arrive at 11:00 AM, conduct our meeting, have your BYO lunch (hot water, tea, coffee provided), and then check out the two gardens. There is seating available, but just to be on the safe side if you have folding chairs, it might be a good idea to bring them. And, as always, be prepared for the weather, whatever it may be.

For a long time now, I have been experimenting with mass planting. As a home propagator, I often have enough plants to try this economically. However, the vision (or at least the idea, I'm not sure I qualify as 'visionary') that I start with mostly takes a very long time to come about. It is often the case that until they get some maturity, they are just a bunch of lonely, semi-isolated plants. And this maturity can take many years. One area on a very steep batter underneath gum trees is a good example. I have been trying for many years to achieve a minimal maintenance garden in this area. It is only this year that I have started to look at in with some satisfaction. *Lomandras* and *Dianellas* are starting to really fill in and the gradual addition of a scattering of other plants is filling gaps and providing interest. I have not photographed it as it is difficult to get an overview.

An area of mass planting that is working well is the *Dianellas* above the entry to the bunker. This has been filling in for a few years now, and last Autumn I carried out a 'controlled burn' with a combination of gas torch and water hose. This got rid of the huge amount of dry flower stems and dead leaves, leaving a scorched earth effect for a few months. The new growth has kicked in now and a few new flower stems have started.



A year or two ago I published that I had a self-sown hybrid *Derwentia*, seemingly a cross between *D. derwentiana* and *D. perfoliata*. Cuttings struck readily so I mass-planted in the front garden. They have grown vigorously (somewhat like *D. derwentiana*) and have filled



some square meters with their very pale lilac flowers. It is an absolute magnet for small insects on any sunny day.

Lastly, I would like to thank the many article contributors who have kept the newsletter interesting with stories of your plants, projects, ideas, and observations. By all means have a rest over the holiday break but keep an eye open for anything interesting for next year. I hope to catch up with you all in Traralgon South in December.



**Species:** *Blechnum nudum* (*Lomaria nuda* in some other jurisdictions).

**Family:** Blechnaceae.

**Derivation:**

*Blechnum*: From a Greek word, *blechnon*, which was a name used by Dioscorides for the fern *Dryopteris filix-mas*.

*nudum*: From Latin *nudus*, meaning naked or bare.

**Common Name:** Fishbone Water Fern.

**Distribution:** Common and widespread from coast to mountain tops, particularly along streams, in Tasmania, South Australia, Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland.

**Description:** The rhizome is thick and erect and in old plants can form a black, fibrous trunk to a metre in length. Sterile fronds are erect and spreading to 1.2m in length, with narrow, straight pinnae to 5cm long (longest in the middle of the frond) and entire margins. Occasionally, plants with bipinnate (crested) fronds are encountered. Fertile fronds have much narrower pinnae and arise from the centre of the clump of sterile fronds.



**Opinion:** My specimen struggles in its position in the backyard, on the southern boundary fence and up against the brick wall of the garage. In the warmer months it receives morning sun but is shaded by the garage in the afternoons. I think it is still too warm and dry for it there, as the fronds suffer from browning off over summer, but recover again over the cooler months.

My specimen is a rescue plant which came from the gutter on a local roadside, where it was going to be destroyed the next time a roads maintenance crew decided to clean out the drains. Transplanting was obviously successful, as I still have the plant a couple of decades later. Last season, the fern produced some fertile fronds for the first time, quite obviously different,



smaller and narrower than the normal sterile fronds. They must exude something that is attractive to small critters, as ants and leafhoppers seem to congregate on them, more so than the sterile fronds. The last photo shows a pair of small, black ants and a Passionvine Hopper *Scolypopa australis*.



### Sources:

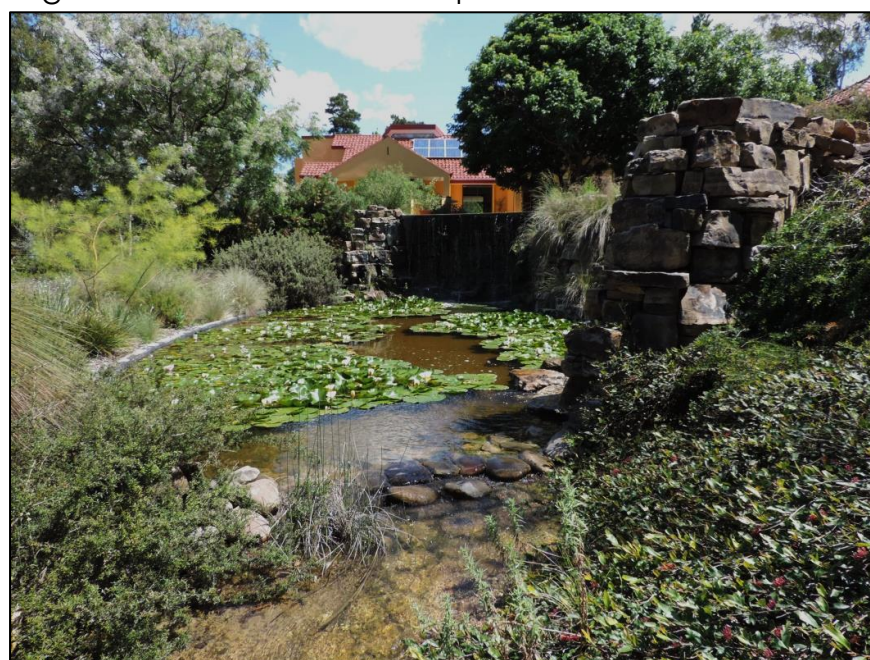
Elliot & Jones – Encyclopaedia of Australian Plants, V2.  
 Jones & Clemesha – Australian Ferns and Fern Allies.  
 Sharr – WA Plant Names and their Meanings.

## 2021 Calendar Spot – December

By Cathy Beamish

These beautiful birds were found in a private garden in Canberra, November 2015. We were at the ANPSA conference and part of that involved day trips to various places. One of them happened to be a big private garden that included a double storey house, huge water features, hundreds of native plants and way over in the trees I found the Gang Gangs. Well, I heard them first!

They were smooching and preening one another, and I managed to take pictures of them all cuddled up together in various different poses. The one I chose for the photo comp shows them the



clearest. All the photos were on full zoom, so it is amazing that any of them came out clear, given how much I shake the camera some days!

I have included a picture of the garden that shows part of the house and part of the water feature, so as to give you some idea of the scale of the garden. Oh, to have the space and money to do something similar! Our editor has the space, not sure he has the inclination though! [Correct...Ed]



## Loch Sport – Springtime fauna and flora

By Warren Simpson

The Simpson family headed down to Loch Sport for a few days' time away from home in late September 2021. It was mainly aimed at giving the kids a break during the school holidays, taking in the beach, animals and looking around for a few orchids, which grow in abundance in the sandy soil there. It also coincided with swan breeding season, which is perhaps where I will start this story.

Swans move around the area quite a bit, however they have a preference for shallow water over weed beds. Lake Reeve, in between Loch Sport and the surf, fits the bill perfectly. It is crossed by several causeways out to the surf and is the perfect spot for swans to establish a nest or three and raise their cygnets. About 30 could be seen in the time it took to drive across the causeway.



One swan nest, home to two cygnets, was readily visible from the main causeway if one looked to the left while crossing. Several other families of swans were visible and appeared to have based themselves around the causeway, one with five cygnets, another with 8. It took a bit of planning to get up close without the parents swimming them off.

Possums are common within the area, especially within The Lakes National Park to the east of Loch Sport. Some nights you will see Ringtails, others Brushtails. The house where we were stopping has a few tea trees at the back and was home to a family of Brushtails. Possum nests or dreys, are a big construction of sticks, tucked up in the treetops. The possums came out one night when the kids were out the back by a fire. Mum and baby shot back up into tree quickly, while Dad hung around a bit more. Male brushtails have a big scent gland on their chests, obvious as a reddish streak. ►





One does not have to cut the grass down there very often, as there are number of eastern grey kangaroo families within the township. This mob hung around our house a bit, with the male standing around 1.5 meters high.



Rainbow lorikeets are also common and quiet, even though they are now wild from what was probably escaped aviary stock.

Introduced Hog and Samba deer are also present, but you need to be quick to spot them and even quicker to snap a photograph!



Plants abound, from coastal tea tree, which forms the majority of the canopy in a lot of areas, through Saw Banksia and Manna Gum country. The national park also contains the southern most natural stand of Mahogany Gum. Understory can include *Thryptomene*, very dense in places although a lot has been removed from within the township, especially after the 1983 fires that burned along the Loch Sport road within the Gippsland Lakes coastal park. Grass trees are abundant in the right areas, as is *Calytrix*, *Damperia* and *Correa*. ►





*Kennedia prostrata* was present in higher numbers than I recall previously out at the Stockyard Hill or main surf beach carpark. I found another pea at the surf beach but did not attempt to identify it.



At right, a yellow flowered form of *Astroloma pinifolium*, I think. I had limited resources with me for identifying plants.

*Carpobrotus* in purple, below, and in yellow, were also in flower.



As were *Dianella* spp. within the park itself. One plant that I was not expecting to see within the park, but which was reasonably abundant in the area in which we found it was the Necklace fern, *Asplenium flabellifolium*. This grows in a low area about 2 or 3 meters above sea level in a location that you would not stumble across easily. This is also home to ►





another rarity that was just starting to bud up. Unfortunately, I have not been able to get back there yet to confirm that is in fact *Caladenia aurantiaca*, which we (the Australian Native Orchid Society TSG) found way back in the late 90's in the lead up to the 4<sup>th</sup> ANOS Conference in 2000. I need to dig in some old newsletters to research this. Kangaroo apples are also present.

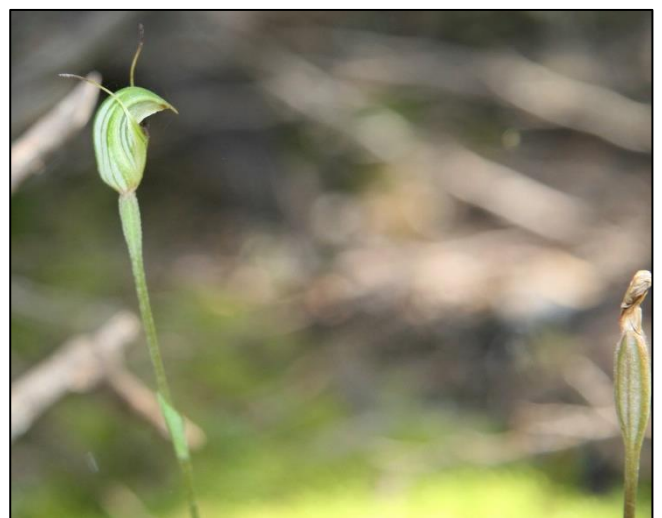


The one plant that I could not find but really wanted to was the silver-leaved form of our logo, *Grevillea chrysophea*. I have only seen it once before, I know where it was, but 30 years is a long time for it to last without a fire.

The entire peninsula that Loch Sport sits on, between Lake Reeve in the south and Lakes Wellington and Victoria and the McLennan Straight in the north holds a vast array of native terrestrial orchids. This also includes the area south of Lake Reeve from Gifford along the coast through Golden Beach and past Loch Sport. I have spent many hours bush bashing through some of this countryside looking for them. A lot of the coastal tea tree scrub, which appears to be the best habitat for them, has been cleared around the various townships along the coast, but some areas that remain still hold incredible numbers. I will give you a taste here...



At right, *Pterostylis collina* or Trim Greenhood with seed pod, is widespread with numbers of around 30 flowers seen this trip. It is late flowering for the type, and I was not expecting it to be out at this time, but I have seen them in three or four well-spaced areas.



At left is the Snail Orchid, a member of the *Pterostylis nana* complex. What was originally one species, this group has been split into a number of species and without appropriate references, I am at my limit. Only low numbers were seen on this trip, but it occurs over a lot of this country. I saw about 20 in flower. ►





At left is *Pterostylis nutans* or Nodding Greenhood. Probably the most common greenhood, but not all that common in this area. There were 30 or 40 seen in flower.

At right is *Pterostylis pedunculata* or Maroonhood, probably the least common greenhood I've seen in this area, with 20 or less seen in flower



*Glossodia major* or Waxlip orchid (right). This would be about the darkest I have seen here, and they get lighter, with only 5 or so seen in flower.



*Caladenia fuscata* or pink fingers (at left), is small and locally common where I have found it within the national park, with 40 or so in flower.

Below is *Caladenia catenata*, by strict definition is White Fingers only, but while these fit the description best, they come in white through to pale pink. Not really sure what is going on here. Exceptionally common out at the surf. It is not really a colony former, but that is the only way to describe their growth, as a colony more in keeping with what you would expect from greenhoods. I never covered all of the suitable area, only a fraction of it and would have seen several thousand flowers. ►







At least two species of Green Comb Spider Orchids are found in the Loch Sport district, *Caladenia dilatata* and *C. tentaculata*. At left, I think is the latter, but I am not certain.

The last one I wish to show you is this, *Caladenia cliestantha*, which opens no further than what is shown at right. I had the identity of this confirmed by D.L. Jones, who described the species back in 1991. It is very cryptic and easy to miss if you are not aware of what you are looking for.



Some other orchids were also found, including a *Corybas* sp., *Cyrtostylis reniformis* and two or three different *Thelymitra* ssp. Some of the tracks here I remember as walking along, standing on leaves because it was impossible to cross colonies wider than the tracks and with leaves so dense that one could not see the ground within the colony.

## Coming events of interest

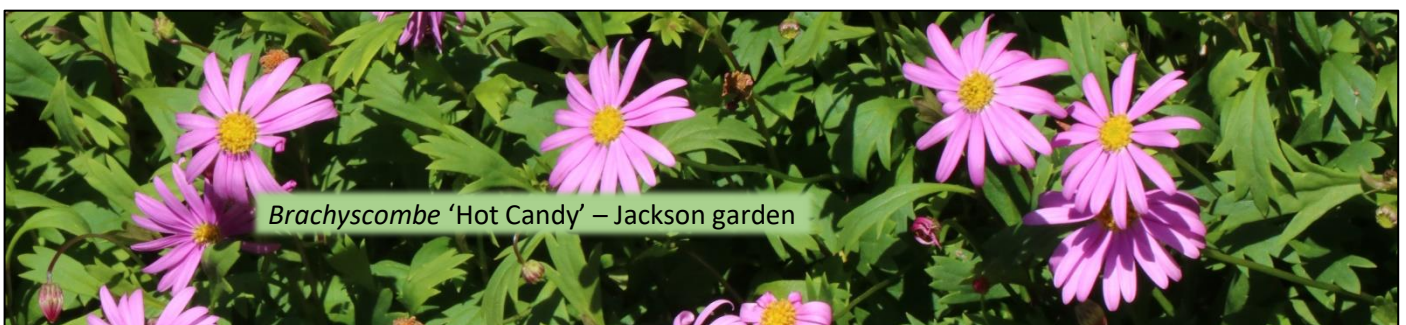
**Note: Please check the Vic APS website for cancellations before attending.**

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

**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** - 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.

**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)





## 2021 Latrobe Valley Group Events Calendar

Month	Day	Date	Activity	Time
Dec	Saturday	4	Visit to Traralgon South members' gardens, BYO cut lunch.	11 :00 AM
			2022? Nothing planned yet so get your thinking caps on for some ideas. Hopefully covid will be kind to us.	

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	128	180			985
Brian	Drouin (east)	83	58	80	64	68	134	87	44	174	130			922
Carolyn	Yarragon	79	30	60	65	75	117	73	102	151	93			844
Wayne	Tanjil South	108	37	89	77	175	195	90	95					866
Judy	Moe South	97	25	89	79	75	175	79	83	197	101			1000
Mike	Boolarra	95	43	81	66	84	181	67	92	187	88			982
Mary	Jeeralang Junction	79	35	98	63	71	266	56	114	120	136			1036
John	Traralgon South	83	16	135	35	26	229	58	68	91	75			814

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

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