

Golden

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

Issue No. 301 – September 2021

Grevillea chrysophaea – Golden Grevillea

This Month?

We were sooo close with our AGM meeting in August, then lockdown got us. With the situation as it is now, we have decided to not plan anything and just wait and see how things pan out. If an opportunity arises, you will be notified by email, and we will have a go at having a meeting. Of course, it will all be dependent on Covid rules and venue availability.

The other impediment is that Mike tells me that we currently have only 4 financial members in the group and would be unable to have an AGM or form a group. I assume you are all waiting to meet Mike face to face, but keep in mind we will need more financial members before we can have our AGM.

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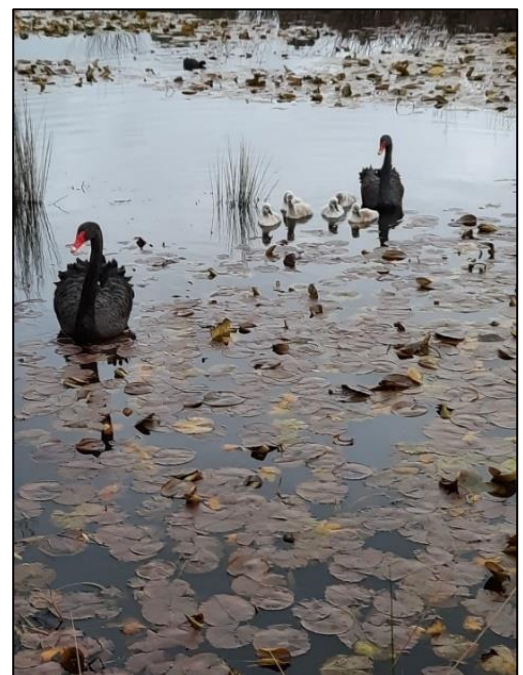
As most of our members know I am currently living without a garden, which is why my monthly messages consist of a mix of what I hope are interesting native plant related snippets. The first one this month concerns Orchids; the Gippsland Orchid Club had their display in Mid Valley shopping centre cut short on Saturday last week. I scraped in with an hour to spare to enjoy the stunning display which included many varieties of *Dendrobium*, commonly called rock orchids. Formed in 1980 by a group of enthusiasts, with members coming from throughout Gippsland, the club meets monthly in Traralgon (Enquiries 51342996). They hold shows twice a year in Winter and Spring, giving members the chance to exhibit plants and compete with growers from their own and other clubs within the Orchid Societies Council of Victoria. Fingers crossed we can enjoy an uninterrupted Spring display in October.



On a more sombre subject, who would have thought that the graceful *Indigofera australis* has a dark secret. You may have read recently of the outbreak of liver disease in over 50 dogs in East Gippsland, some fatally. The source was found to be in raw pet food containing contaminated meat from animals delayed from export due to Covid restrictions. Grazing animals in Northern Australia consume *Indigofera*, which is common in the wild. The poison Indospicine accumulates harmlessly in stock, but dogs are especially vulnerable. After a wide public alert, there is now a call to overhaul pet food regulations. All related suppliers responded immediately to the threat, which occurred in Victoria for the first time.

I have mentioned ABC TV's Gardening Australia before. The episode on Friday 20th featured a delightful walk through the Castlemaine Diggings National Park. I won't bore you with details but if you missed it, catch it on iView. It is heartening to see Australian plants now featuring strongly on the program.

More locally, The Latrobe City Council, with the help of local Historical Societies, is ensuring the 42 reserves named after local identities e.g., Edward Hunter, will have signs installed detailing the contribution they have made to the community. Finally, if you haven't visited the Traralgon Railway Reservoir Reserve lately, the swans are proudly showing off their 6 cygnets and the wattles are in full bloom.



With spring all but on us, and a few long-established plants that had died this winter, I decided it was time to plant my new acquisitions from the past few months. As usual, I find this rather stressful. I can be a bit blasé about plants I have propagated, I usually have multiples and can be adventurous when positioning them, accepting fatalities in the search for the ideal spot. If I have shelled out 12 or 15 dollars per plant though, I am more reluctant to take chances, so I am trying to find that perfect place. Two days of head scratching and trundling around with a wheelbarrow laden with plants has seen nine now planted and protected. At this rate I will be lucky to have them all in the ground by Christmas!

Another garden project that has occupied my time is an old cast-iron bird bath. This was salvaged from my son's house in Boronia by Mary, and I was instructed to make it good again. To my eye, it looked like old rusty junk so I left it in the hope it would be forgotten. I should have known better; it was nominated as this year's birthday present. With the old rusty bolts extracted and threads re-furbished I took it to a local workshop and had it sandblasted and primed with a zinc rich paint. I then coated it with the various colours, coat after coat, till the finished product was ready by the birthday. I must say, now that it is done, it was worth the trouble.



By the time you receive this newsletter, it will be spring, and the garden is showing it. Wattles are bathing the garden with golden light on any sunny day, with endemic wattles in the bush as well as others in my garden. The Blackwoods (*Acacia melanoxylon*) have lit up the surrounds with their lemony yellow, but for pure gold it's hard to go past Wyalong Wattle (*Acacia cardiophylla*).

Our local kangaroo factory seems to be in full production too; it seems that there are joeys falling out of pouches everywhere you look. This photo was taken from our front window the other morning and is just a small sample of what is going on.

Species: *Polystichum proliferum*.

Family: Dryopteridaceae.

Derivation:

Polystichum: From Greek *polys*, meaning many or abounding in, and *stichos*, meaning rows, and referring to the sori (clusters of sporangia, which contain the spores, which in turn are the reproductive units of ferns that do not contain an embryo), which occur in many rows.

proliferum: From Latin *proles*, meaning offspring, and the suffix *fero*, meaning to bear, and used botanically to suggest the production of many progeny from offshoots.

Common Name: Mother Shield Fern.

Distribution: Mainly widespread in Tasmania, Victoria and NSW in the wet forests and ranges, but with records in the Adelaide Hills in SA, in SE Queensland, in PNG and both main islands of NZ. Weird records in outback Queensland way west of Rockhampton and in the middle of the Tasman Sea are open to conjecture! In Victoria, mainly in the east, but also in other wet forests in the central ranges, the Grampians, the Otways and around Portland.

Description: A fern which forms a densely scaly, short, fibrous trunk with age. Fronds are 2-pinnate, furred when young, uncurling to a length of up to 150cm and width up to 30cm, forming a spreading tussock. A bulbil or plantlet is often present towards the ends of the fronds, by which the fern can spread vegetatively to form extensive clumps. The pinnules are dark green above, paler beneath and are asymmetric with the mid-vein closer to one side than the other and the margins shortly serrate (toothed). Rows of light brown sori may be present on the underside.

Opinion: I have several of these ferns in Cathy's rose garden. I didn't plant them, they came up on their own, so presumably they were present on the block before the town arrived. They get plenty of light and sun, particularly in summer when they tend to brown off a little, but otherwise don't seem to mind the exposure. Odd, considering that their normal habitat is understorey in cool, wet, shady forests!

There used to be others in the back garden years ago, but these have all disappeared over time, possibly due to too much shade and/or too dry in summers past. They are easy





to propagate, as the means to do so is sitting on the ends of many of the fronds, in the form of miniature plantlets. They can be detached and planted separately in pots or in the ground, but I find they are more successful if you leave them on the frond, bring the pot to them, cover the end of the frond in the potting mix while leaving the plantlet exposed and allowing the plantlet to establish before separating it from the frond. If you would like some, let me know.

Sources: Elliot & Jones – Encyclopaedia of Australian Plants, Volume 7.

Jones & Clemesha – Australian Ferns and Fern Allies.

Sharr – WA Plant Names and their Meanings.
Online – Flora of Victoria.

From the Archive

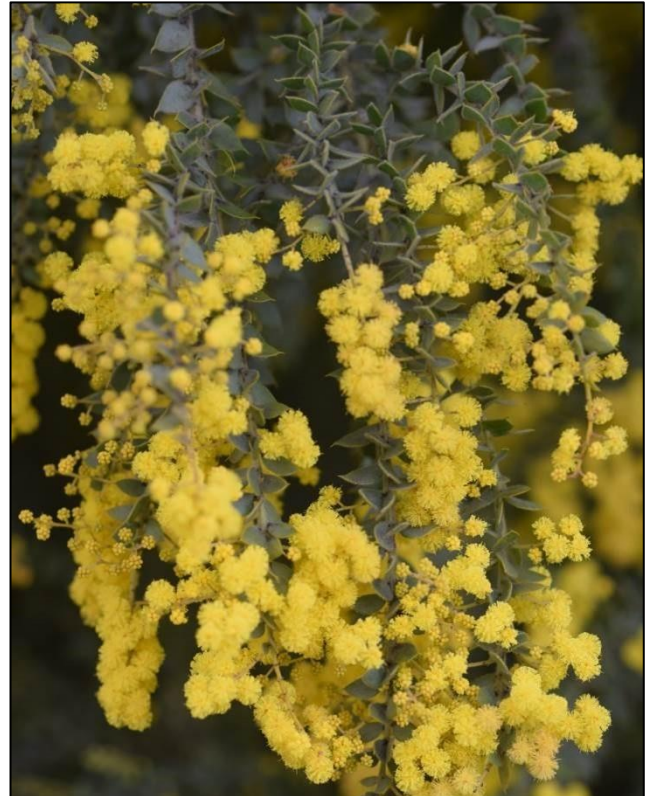
By Col Jackson

Here is a photo that surfaced from the pre digital age at the Jackson household. It was taken during our APS Latrobe Valley (probably SGAP at the time) group visit to the Little Desert in November 2003. Western Victoria had received some heavy rains a couple of months earlier and there was some great flowering happening at the time of our visit. Flowers, however, is not what the subjects of the photo were interested in. As I recall, someone noticed two Tawny Frogmouth owls perched side by side in a nearby tree as we were settling into camp. With a difference in size, the assumption was made that they were mother and offspring. With binoculars trained on the pair, they suddenly



commenced activities most unbecoming of a mother/offspring relationship, so assumptions had to be revised. Note that one member who had no binoculars appears to be still trying to make the most of the view with what was at hand, that is, a bottle.

While Cathy was/is glued to the television, watching the Olympics medal-seeking frenzy in her efforts to amuse herself during our various lockdowns, I was out and about looking for different shades of gold. It's that time of year when a lot of our local Wattles are making their presence felt! In my garden, the first species to make a statement is the Snowy River Wattle (*Acacia boormanii*), with its multitudes of small, bright yellow globes completely hiding the foliage and its strong scent wafting through the garden. I've had this one for many years now and it's a consistent performer, though with



an annoying tendency to sucker and throw out new shoots in all directions.

Next in line is a relative newcomer to the garden, out on the western nature-strip, though it did have a predecessor which fell over and died a decade or two ago. Oven's Wattle (*Acacia pravissima*) has interesting foliage to complement its flowers, but again in a good season the flowers will hide the foliage. No problem for the rest of the year though! A problem with its predecessor was a tendency to grow too big and leggy, combined with a dislike of pruning, resulting in dieback and an ugly plant, so I hope this one behaves itself a little more.

Another newcomer to the garden came from Max James (via Colin) out of Genoa and is flowering for the first time. The Woolly Wattle (*Acacia lanigera* var. *gracilipes*) is still only about knee-height and spreading rather than upright, which is ok with me as I'd rather it stay less than shoulder height and not block the view from a nearby window. The alternative is pruning, a chore which I dislike and am not particularly good at, since instead of regularly removing the tips, I usually let the plant go too long and end up lopping too heavily. ►



Growing in heavy shade in my front garden is another young plant *Acacia extensa*, flowering for only the second time. Last year the effort was pretty sparse, but this year there is a better display. The plant is about 2m tall and slender in habit, possibly due to its shady position. And, last but not least, is Drummond's Wattle (*Acacia drummondii* subsp. *elegans*), which has been growing in its position on the mound behind my frog pond for



many years. It is still less than a metre tall and broad and is the only wattle in the garden to have rod-like, as opposed to globular flowers. The fern frond-like foliage is a feature outside of flowering season.

The only wattle in the garden that is not performing this year is Sweet Wattle (*Acacia suaveolens*), but it is still a young plant and has flowered well enough over the last two seasons to provide a few seeds for me to play with. Everyone is entitled to a year off, now and then!



My garden is of course not the only place to find flowering wattles at this time of year. Out in the Boolarra Bushland Reserve (or the Old Mill Site, if you prefer), there are at least 3 species budding up. Prickly Moses (*Acacia verticillata*) and Blackwood (*Acacia melanoxylon*) are not quite there yet, but Variable Sallow Wattle (*Acacia mucronata* subsp. *longifolia*) is well underway, with some plants in full bloom while others are a bit slower.

Flash Walk – Uralla Nature Reserve.

By Mike Beamish

Although it wasn't an official APS LV activity, I thought I'd let you know how we went. Warren was the only other participant on a breezy and overcast morning, but we managed to walk just shy of 2km on the Donaldson's Track loop in 2 hours and were back to the cars before the drizzle set in. There wasn't much in flower, but we found some Variable Sallow Wattle (*Acacia mucronata* subsp. *longifolia*) and Bushman's Bootlace (*Pimelea axiflora*) to look at, interspersed with a variety of ferns and fungi. Nine species of



orchids were identified, mostly from leaves as only 4 had flowers/buds to work with. Here's a selection of photos to whet your appetites for when the latest lockdown is eased. Above, we have Mountain Greenhood (*Pterostylis alpina*) and Giant Moss (*Dawsonia superba*). Below, Hairy Curtain Crust (*Stereum hirsutum*) and Rainbow Bracket or Turkey Tails (*Trametes versicolor*) on the log.▶



Below, Veined Helmet Orchid (*Corybas diemenicus*), Pink Bells (*Tetralthea ciliate*), Mayfly Orchid (*Acianthus caudatus*) in bud, Prickly Moses (*Acacia verticillata*) and Maroonhood (*Pterostylis pedunculata*).



2021 Calendar Spot – September

By Meg Byers

In 2013 I joined a group of 20, travelling in southwest Western Australia with author and naturalist Ian Fraser OAM. Most of us were past participants of Environment Tours (ET), run by Ian since the 1980's till his retirement a few years ago. My late husband Bruce and I had purchased some of Ian's books as we explored ACT since arriving in 1984 from Sydney.

After returning from Bruce's Churchill Fellowship to Europe in 1997, we ran into Ian leading a group in the Australian National Botanic Gardens. From that meeting onwards we joined a number of ET tours, both day trips in and around ACT and our first, a multi-day tour in early Feb 1998, called "KOSCIUSKO - the grand tour!"

An exciting grand circuit through the biggest National Park in NSW! Along the Alpine Way over the Dead Horse Gap, with enormous views of the upper Murray, past the Geehi Walls down to Khancoban. Through the mighty Jagungal Range to Australia's highest town, Cabramurra, to Kiandra, once Australia's highest and busiest gold field. A detour on the magnificent Long Plain to the source of the Snowy River, then to the Yarrangobilly Caves area and home past the stunning Bogong Peaks Wilderness. Very little overlap with our other Kosciusko tours. (Thanks to Ian for his excellent record keeping)



It was absolutely fantastic and what a way to start our education! On these tours we advanced our knowledge, having started with a passion but a meagre store of knowledge of plant names and all that stuff. We found that others in the ET crowd, led by Ian, were generous in sharing their experiences, knowledge, and enthusiasm for the natural world. Following Bruce's passing in 2003, I continued tours and the long tour to WA which we'd dreamed of joining when it was offered some years earlier. It was such an opportunity to see new flora, fauna and places of natural beauty and historic interest.

The tour started in Perth, and over the next 2 1/2 weeks, travelled east to Norseman, and South to Esperance, west along the coast, with multi day excursions to Stirling Ranges National Park, and Margaret River before turning west again, around the capes and wild beaches and north to Perth. What a privilege to see these sights, gorgeous and unique flowers and birds, tall trees and coastal scenery in every kind of weather except snow.

This calendar photo was taken on September 17, 2013, in the Stirling Ranges National Park. This particular acacia shrub is widespread in WA I believe and was so startling with the exuberant bright yellow flowers and the iridescence of the beetle. We all clustered around to photograph the whole plant (typical ET behaviour) which was shimmering with the movement of dozens of beetles. Here was a group of people just like my Bruce, often down low with various cameras, capturing the fascinating splendour of the Australian landscape.

Thanks for giving me the chance to relive this experience and share my photo and all the personal memories it evokes. I can keep the experiences alive reading Ian's regular blog "Talking Naturally" which is filled with more intriguing essays on the natural world and Ian's enquiring travels into the hidden corners of the world.



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.

CANCELLED - 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 – ANG AIR 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.

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

2021 Latrobe Valley Group Events Calendar

Month	Day	Date	Activity	Time
Sept			With Covid lockdown rules dictating all that we do, we have no planned events. However, if an opportunity presents itself, we will try to call a meeting and conduct our AGM and Cathy's slide show of this year's calendar photo entries. Stay tuned.	

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						594
Brian	Drouin (east)	83	58	80	64	68	134	87						574
Carolyn	Yarragon	79	30	60	65	75	117	73						498
Wayne	Tanjil South	108	37	89										234
Judy	Moe South	97	25	89	79	75	175	79						619
Mike	Boolarra	95	43	81	66	84	181	67						615
Mary	Jeeralang Junction	79	35	98	63	71	266	56						667
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

Australian Plants Society Latrobe Valley Group Inc.
Notice of Annual General Meeting
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.