

OCTOBER MEETING

Small Eucalypts

Our speaker was Jason Caruso and the topic was small Eucalypts suited to small gardens. Jason is an animated and entertaining speaker, firmly committed to the idea that there is no garden too small for a Eucalypt. And his talk proved it to be so.

He began with a quote from Murray Bail's book '*Eucalyptus*', a tale of a man called Holland, who sets up a property in NSW with the intention of planting every Eucalypt species.

"...in the world of trees, only the acacia has more species than the eucalyptus—but look at the acacia, a series of pathetic little bushes. Whenever on his property Holland saw clumps of wattle ... he lost no time pulling them out by the roots."



Eucalyptus crucis as a bonsai

Jason's garden is a small paved courtyard, packed with natives in pots including a delightful bonsai *Eucalyptus camaldulensis*, *E. crucis*, *E. vernicosa* and others.

Propagation from seed is the key to obtaining small Eucalypts, as the commercial nurseries tend to deal in very large species. They are easy to propagate with seed on vermiculite. Choosing the right Eucalypt is the next trick.

Many Eucalypts have the 'Mallee habit' - regenerating from a lignotuber if damaged by wind, drought, fire or human intervention. Should the original single stem be damaged - in our case by hard pruning- the plant regenerates with multiple stems in the 'Mallee' form. This makes them an ideal candidate for small gardens.

If your Mallee tree is getting too big, simply cut it back to ground level. This will encourage multiple stems, and eventually a smaller plant. And, you can use the off-cut materials in many ways for craft, furniture, or firewood. And, in this way you are storing carbon in the new growth, so it's a win all round.

Mallets are the other type of Eucalypts that can be used. They lack lignotubers, so don't regenerate from the bottom if cut to ground level. But they can be pruned to beautiful small (2 -3 m) trees. They need a slightly bigger garden space, but are great plants. *E. forestiana* - the Fuscia Gum is a fine example.

Jason then showed us a beautiful slide show of twenty or so suitable plants, mostly from W.A., describing their habits, flowers, fruits and finer points with an infectious enthusiasm.

E. landsdowneana ssp albopurpurea is a small tree with a fine weeping habit and masses of purple flowers in winter and spring. It flowers very heavily when young.

E. albidia is a beautiful tree with lovely silver juvenile foliage, often used in floristry. The adult foliage is green and 'typical' Eucalypt. Jason suggested hedging this plant to retain the juvenile

foliage, and selling the trimmings to your local florist. He 's always thinking ☺



***E. albidula* , adult & juvenile foliage. – Marilyn Sprague**

E. latens “Moon Lagoon” is another with lovely silver, juvenile foliage. *E. kingsmillii*, an ornamental plant with attractive fruits and buds, as well as little yellow flowers.

E. pachyphylla is one of Jason’s favourites. A great plant for a pot will flower reasonably in a larger pot / wine-barrel. It prefers well-drained soils, but will cope with a little extra water,.

The largest fruiting Eucalypts are *E. youngiana*. The very large flowers produce fruits the size of a child’s fist. The weight of the fruits gives the tree a weeping habit. It may grow a bit big for very small gardens, but is well worth it if you have a little more space.

E. pimpiniana from the Nullabor grows to 1 or 2 metres, flowers heavily with yellow flowers when young and has a shrub-like habit.

E. rameliana, was discovered in 1876 and then disappeared, thought extinct. It was rediscovered in 1991 in the arid areas of north central W.A. Not easy to find, but would be a great garden plant if you could find it. It is grown in King’s Park Botanic Gardens in Perth for those who don’t want to trek to the dune country to see it in its wild state.

E. sepulcralis is a spindly, yet ornamental plant with an open canopy allowing you to grow other plants beneath. *E. desmondensis* also fits the ‘spindly’ category, if that is to your taste.

E. synandra is a rare plant that can now be found in a few specialist nurseries. It is a small plant with interesting flowers that open as a pale creamy yellow, fading to pink as they age. A good plant for a large container or pot.

E. macrocarpa is the best known of the large flowering Eucalypts. It needs an open area with lot of air circulation to avoid fungal disease on the leaves.

Jason showed a photo of Phil Vaughan’s garden – a rockery with many plants including three small Eucalypts. *E. priessiana* – the Bell-fruited Mallee, with yellow flowers, *E. rhodantha* with beautiful silver foliage and large red flowers and *E. tetraptera*, the square-fruited or four-winged Mallee.

E. buprestium is known as the Mallee Apple. It has tiny yellow flowers which turn in to clumps of inordinately large fruits. It is a decorative plant that may be difficult to obtain. *E. decurva* is an interesting plant from the Stirling Ranges with creamy white bark and ornamental fruits.

E. formanii is a plant that doesn’t look like a eucalypt at all. The juvenile foliage resembles that of a Melaleuca and can be pruned to maintain that interesting form, and to stop it growing too large. It flowers very heavily producing masses of creamy-white flowers.



***E. formanii* in full bloom – Marilyn Sprague**

E. kreuseana, the book-leaf mallee has a very interesting foliage. It can be a bit spindly but will thicken with judicious pruning.

E. Orbifolia / *E. websteriana* should be grown for the foliage. The leaves are perfect heart shapes and could be substituted for roses on Valentine's day. Natives are better ... and cheaper!

E. pluricaulis ssp porphyrea is another plant that can be grown for its foliage which is a startling purple colour. Flowers heavily with yellow flowers and does require some pruning to keep it compact.

E. vernicosa – the world's smallest Eucalypt – with tiny glossy green leaves. Known as the Varnished Gum it grows in the alpine areas of Tasmania and is more a medium shrub than a tree. It won't do well in high temperatures, and does require constant moisture.



The heart shaped leaves of *E. orbifolia*

There are also a number of grafted and hybrid plants which are becoming available in nurseries.

The newly opened Melton Botanic Gardens has an area devoted to these small Eucalypts. Jason recommended this as a site to visit if you wish to see these plants before you invest in them.

Editor's Comment: We received this delightful email from Jason after the meeting, and thought we should share it with you all.

'Hi Liz and Ade,

Just wanted to say thank you for asking me to present last night. I hope the presentation was well-suited to your group's needs and purposes.

I also wanted to say another big thank to the entire group for being so kind, welcoming and friendly. Your group is a very lively bunch and Jo and I had a wonderful (and somewhat rebellious) evening.

Many thanks, hope to catch up at some stage in the future.

Cheerio,

Jason.

ON THE TABLE

Roger and Tony

As is to be expected at this time of year, the plant table was spectacular.

There were a number of *Chamelauciums* with colours ranging from white to deep purple/red, and flower size from a one cent coin to a fifty cent piece. *Chamelaucium incinatum* and *C. floribundum* were represented with many cultivars including Seeton's Form, Purple Pride, Sweet Little Sixteen and Sweet Rosie among others. Everyone should have at least two of these fabulous plants in their gardens.

Grevilleas were notable including *G. endlicheriana*, *G. magnifica*, *G. buxifolia*, *G. Georgiana*, *G. bronwenae*, *G. flaxuosa*, *G. steiglitziana*, *G. zygoloba* 'Pink' and many hybrids and cultivars.

There were *Melaleucas* including *M. citrina* with lemon yellow flowers, and the deep purple *M. fulgens* hybrid. Two beautiful *Calytrix* – *C. tetragona* and *C. alpestris*, *Hypocalymna augustifolium* and a *Beackia* 'Winter Pink' all showed various shades of pink.



***Hypocalymna augustifolium* – Pink-flowered Myrtle**

A beautiful deep red *Boronia heterophylla* from Tina Scheelings' garden was a taking point, as was *Boronia* 'Aussie Rose' with its deep pink flowers.

But Eucalyptus was the topic of the night and Roger brought along several striking specimens. *E. pyriformis* was grown from seeds and showed large pink flowers. Roger also collected seed from white, cream, red, purple and pink varieties. There was *E. rodanthe* with striking orange/red flowers, *E. kingsmillii* with lovely red blooms, A hybrid *E. pyriformis/macrocarpa* with startlingly large red flowers and *E. beardiana* with tiny bright yellow flowers.

PLANT OF THE MONTH

Pimelea spectabilis

The Plant of the Month, chosen by Matt Baars, was Pimelia spectabilis, grown by Tony Cavanagh of Ocean Grove. Tony writes:

Pimelia spectabilis is a small shrub, usually less than one metre with smaller spread, but absolutely spectacular when in flower from late August to perhaps early December. The flower heads, composed of many hundreds of individual flowers are the largest of the genus, up to 7 cm across. They are usually white or cream, occasionally yellow, (some sources say pink as well but I have not seen this) with a pink blush in the centre and absolutely prolific on the bush so that you can hardly see the foliage.



***Pimelea spectabilis* in Tony's garden**

Now comes the bad news. Like most good plants, it comes from WA, in the Stirling and Eyre districts, south and south east of Perth, where it grows in light forest in very well drained gravelly or sandy soils. Even in its home territory, it can be short lived, the main enemy being cinnamon fungus, *Phytophthora cinnamomi*. So, in the east, it must be grafted (if you can find a plant). Mine came from Pete MacKenzie and was grafted probably onto one of the eastern Pimelias. It is the second I have had, the first only lasting a few years even though grafted. It is in semi shade, and is a picture in the garden.

CAPTURING FLORA: 300 years of Australian Botanical Art

by Debbie Gaskill

I have just returned from a visit to this new exhibition in sunny Ballarat. I am sure a number of our members would enjoy it as much as I did. There are a small number of still life paintings of plants (not all of Australian flora) but the bulk of the exhibition is devoted to traditional botanical art.

As the title indicates the earliest of the paintings are from the late C18 and early C19 with many more recent works as well.

Besides well-known Australian and British artists, printers and engravers, the exhibition shows works from some of the French explorers and botanists and looks too at the influence of botanists from Spain, Belgium and Central Europe.



***Banksia serrata* – Celia Rosser**

The exhibition is enormous and would take a couple of hours to go around if you wanted to read every word. Fortunately the ticket allows the bearer to go in and out during the day so it would be quite feasible to browse, eat and return for more browsing.

As well as comments on the artists themselves there is a lively discussion of whether botanical art is really art or just illustration and you can read comments from the modern artists about how they see their work fitting into traditional art forms.

From a technical point of view I especially enjoyed a series of Celia Rosser's sketches showing how she put together one particular work in her banksia series, starting with the original pencil sketch and following it through to the completed painting. From botanic, aesthetic and historical points of view I would recommend this exhibition to members who enjoy botanical art.

The exhibition is on from 25/9 to 2/12, at the Art Gallery of Ballarat, 40 Lydiard Street North Ballarat

Visit the website for more information :-

<http://www.balgol.com/>

WHAT'S IN A NAME

Tony Cavanagh

Tony continues his series about plants named after people.

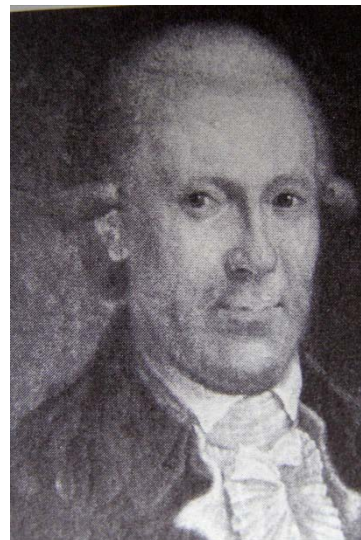
Hakea. Of the group of four names I will cover today, three were named after relatively obscure Europeans who, however, did have connection with botany or

horticulture. *Hakea* has always been a relatively popular group to grow and many species have developed a reputation for being tough and reliable garden plants. On the downside, these same attributes have led to species like *sericea*, *decurrens*, *laurina*, *gibbosa* becoming serious weeds, both in other Australian states and overseas. The usual means of spread is after bushfire where millions of seeds can be released. There are around 150 *Hakea* species, ranging from prostrate to trees with many shrubs in the 1.5 to 3m high group, and are found in all habitats and all states, especially in WA and Central Australia, although 40-50 occur in Eastern Australia. The flowers can often be confused with those of *Grevillea*, although the angular woody fruits of *Hakea* easily separate the two. Some are also quite prickly. Flowering is predominantly in winter to spring and many, especially those from WA and Central Australia, are quite spectacular



***Hakea purpurea* - so much like a grevillea**

The genus was named after Baron Christian Ludwig von Hake (born 1745, died 1818), Bavarian nobleman, patron of botany and the sciences and Government Minister/Councillor in Hannover. And that's about all anybody ever says about the gentleman. We don't even know if he grew plants! The picture I have used is the only one known to exist. The name was applied to three species, *H. glabra*, *pubescens* and *sericea* in 1797 by Adolph Schrader, Director of the Old Botanical Gardens at Göttingen University and the botanist J. C. Wendland. They are believed to have been grown in the gardens from seed from Botany Bay. Earlier hakeas were cultivated in England from 1790 from seed from Botany Bay but were initially named in other genera.



Baron von Hake

***Hardenbergia*.** This is a tiny genus of just three species, *violacea* from all Eastern states and South Australia, *comptoniana* from coastal WA and the rarely cultivated *perbrevidens* from northern Queensland. They grow as climbers/scramblers but there are shrubby forms as well of *violacea*. They flower prolifically in late winter to spring and are very popular garden plants, often seen trailing over fences or climbing over other shrubs and trees. Colours are vivid purple, the best known, but also pink and white. The cultivar "Happy Wanderer" was popular for many years but I don't know if it is still available. They can be grown from seed (which requires nicking or hot water treatment) or from cuttings. I am growing three colour forms of a lovely, non-rampant shrubby form and they come true to seed.



***Hardenbergia violacea* - 'Pink Form'**

The group was named by the British botanist George Bentham in 1837 after Franziska, Countess von Hardenberg (died 1854), younger sister of the Austrian soldier, diplomat and plant lover and collector, Baron Karl von Hugel. Hugel maintained a large garden outside of Vienna in which he grew many Australian plants. Over 1833-34, he visited several

areas of Australia and collected plants and seeds which were later cultivated in his garden, It is reported that *Hardenbergia* was grown over the greenhouse pillars and was one of his favourites. George Bentham would have known Hugel but why he chose to name the plant after his sister, we do not know.

Hibbertia. Apart from a few species, the hibbertias are generally not well known in cultivation. This is a pity as they are mostly small and attractive shrubs, with a few climbers, with dark green foliage contrasting with the (normally) yellow to golden rounded flowers which gives rise to the common name of “guinea flower”. Surprisingly, there are around 150 species, some 70 in WA, with some spreading overseas to New Guinea, New Caledonia, Fiji and Madagascar. I have usually thought of hibbertias as requiring semi shade and not being allowed to dry out. As they can become straggly with age, they benefit from pruning. Some such as the snake plant, *H. scandens*, vigorous climber, and coastal forms of *sericea*, *acicularis* and *virgata* are reliable in coastal areas. One of my favourites is the WA *H. cuneiformis*, also from coastal districts, which forms a medium, dark green shrub with large, golden flowers.



***Hibbertia cuneiformis* – Cut-leaf Hibbertia**

Hibbertia commemorates George Hibbert (born Jan. 1757, died Oct. 1837), merchant, politician, slave and ship owner and amateur botanist, with a passion for members of the Proteaceae, especially the South African Proteas. He promoted botanical exploration by sending the adventurer and plant collector James Niven to South Africa for five years from which he sent home many specimens and plants. *Hibbertia* was named in his honour by Henry Andrews, owner and editor of the botanical magazine *The Botanist's repository* in 1800, from a specimen grown in a London garden from seeds sent from Botany Bay.



George Hibbert

Hovea. After recent revisions, there are believed to be about 37 species of *Hovea*, with the majority in eastern Australia and Tasmania. They can be found in a wide range of habitats, from coast to the snow country, in open sun and in sheltered gullies. Despite being very ornamental, they are rarely grown and probably because people have little experience with them, they have a perhaps undeserved reputation for being difficult. A semi shaded spot with cool root run and not too dry should be satisfactory. Some species such as *H. longifolia* have been divided up into many varieties after revision and are very confusing to separate. The widespread *H. purpurea* is also very variable and probably most commonly grown while *H. montana* from the Victorian high country is very attractive before and after Christmas on the high plains.

The name commemorates Anton P. Hove (died 1798) who was a Polish botanical collector who worked for some years with the Kew Botanic Gardens, collecting for Sir Joseph Banks in West Africa, India and the Crimea but not Australia. Plants of what was later to be called *Hovea* by Robert Brown in 1812 were grown, astonishingly, by George Hibbert in his garden and flowered around 1796. They were yet another example of success from material sent from Botany Bay.



Hovea Montana – Falls Creek



AUSTRALIAN PLANTS WORKSHOP - Arthurs Seat

Sunday 18 November 2012 ,
1.15pm-3.45pm. Bookings are
essential for this event as places are
very limited. **Tickets \$65.00 includes
afternoon tea, notes and a plant to
take home.**

You can book online via Open Gardens secure site
[here](#) or phone 03 5424 8061 during business hours.

Glen Yearsley is a talented and passionate
plantsman, specialising in Australian natives. His
glorious garden is home to more than 600 flourishing
varieties of these fascinating plants in beautiful beds
sweeping down the hillside, around the nursery and
encircling a dam.

Enjoy a tour of the garden as Glen talks about the
evolution of the use of Australian plants in our
gardens, the characteristics of particular plants,
establishing and maintaining various species, and
solutions to any problems you might have.

He'll also discuss a wide range of scented natives
and how to use bush tucker plants in the kitchen.

OUR NEXT MEETING

November 20th

You'll have to put up with me again ... with photos
from our recent short trip to Western Australia. There
was so much to see, and all of it new to us. Any help
with identification of the plants will be gratefully
accepted. ☺

BUS-TRIP

Graeme & Ros Woods' Garden

Saturday November 24th will be the bus trip to
visit Graeme and Ros Woods' garden in Gisborne.
Graeme spoke to us about Grevilleas earlier in the

year. He has 250 true species of Grevilleas in his 3.5
acre property, and also collects Banksias and Hakeas.

The bus will leave from the Harvey Norman Corio
car-park at 9.00am sharp. We will stop for lunch in
Gisborne, so bring a picnic lunch.

Then we will stop at David and Barbara Pye's
'Suntuff Natives' nursery at Bullengarook on the way
home. They have a lovely garden and a good selection
of plants. You can get a little teaser at their website
<http://www.suntuffnatives.com.au/>

The bus will have a trailer in tow, to allow us to
carry our lunches on the way up, and our plants on
the way back.

As I write, the bus is almost full, so please contact
me asap if you want a seat for this trip. Ph: 52439478
or email: adefoster@internode.on.net

If the bus is full we may be able to arrange a car-
pool for those who weren't quick enough/ More
information at the meeting on November 20th.

CHRISTMAS BREAK-UP

December 8th

The Christmas break-up this year will be at John and
Barb Bell's house at 1050 Horsehoe Bend Road, near
Torquay. Arrive at 5.00 pm. We are grateful to John
and Barb for their hospitality, and look forward to
another great night. We would like an idea of
numbers to avoid over- (or under-) catering. There
will be an attendees sheet at the next meeting. If you
are not going to be at the meeting but do wish to
attend the Christmas bash, please email Bruce
McGinness at brucesm@unimelb.edu.au or phone
5278 8827.

Annette Packett, who lives in nearby Jan Juc, has
offered her garden for visits in the afternoon before
the BBQ. More information will be available at the
November meeting.

MEMBERSHIP REMINDER

It's that time again .. membership fees are past due. If
you have not paid yet and intend to, please make your
remittance as soon as possible. Fees are :-

Single -newsletter by email	...	\$ 15.00
Single - newsletter by post	...	\$ 30.00
Family - newsletter by email	...	\$ 20.00
Family - newsletter by post	...	\$ 35.00

Cheques payable to '**APS Geelong**' mailed to P.O. Box
2012, Geelong, 3220.

Or by electronic funds transfer ...

**Account Name: APS Geelong Inc ... BSB: 063 633,
Acc No: 10247079**

Please note that your name must appear in
transaction details

WHAT'S IN THE BUSH?

Sun-orchids

Late spring and summer is the time of the sun-orchids. These striking plants belong to the genus *Thelymitra*, and are well represented in the bush around Geelong. They are not hard to find, but are often reluctant to open, except on warm, sunny days. So, if it's overcast, or under 24 degrees – don't bother looking.

Should the spring be particularly cool and no suitable days occur, most *Thelymitra* can self-pollinate and wait until next season for the right conditions for their flowers to open. Very frustrating for a budding photographer (no pun intended).

Frank Scheelings and I took our usual spring Wednesday afternoon 'half-day' and made the trip to Inverleigh Common, in search of an orchid which we knew was to be found there, *Thelymitra luteocilium*.



***T. luteocilium*, Fringed Sun-orchid – Our target**

But although it was warmish, the cloud cover was too great, and the sun-orchids stubbornly refused to co-operate. We did find some plants with buds that looked promising ... more frustration. The following Friday was forecast to be the perfect day, and 'coincidentally', we both seemed to have the afternoon free, so a return visit was a no-brainer.

We concentrated on a beautiful area to the east of Old Teesdale Track, where the *Pulteneas* are currently carpeting the ground with brilliant yellows, oranges and reds. Our work-wagging was rewarded with 10

species or hybrids in flower. We were lucky enough to find *T. luteocilium*, although the ones we thought were the target species turned out to be a hybrid.



***T. antennifera x luteocilium* – A striking plant**



***Thelymitra arenaria* – The Forest Sun-orchid** stands about 45cm tall with up to ten mauve/blue flowers.

We also found *T. carnea*, *T. pauciflora*, *T. ixioides*, *T. juncifolia*, *T. antennifera*, a hybrid *carnea x ixioides* (called *xirregularis*) and a large, as-yet unidentified blue one. As I remarked to a friend 'It sure beats workin'.