



Correa Mail

Newsletter No. 285 – May 2013

PLANT SALE

April 6th and 7th saw the return of the APS Geelong Annual Autumn Plant Sale. The weather for the weekend was perfect, and the crowd turned out on Saturday, with a steady stream through the gate, and all growers reporting good sales.

The traditional Saturday BBQ was a great success, and a great time was had by all.



The 'Man With The Silly Hat' sells another plant.

Sunday, however, was very quiet, so our figures were down a little on previous sales. This no doubt is due in part to the cancellation of last year's event. There were other factors, too, including school holidays, and the very dry summer/autumn.

But numbers overall were enough to urge us on to bigger and better things next year. There are a few ideas on the table to improve attendance of both growers and buyers. This will improve sales and so improve our profits.

There was a great deal of interest in the club, and quite a few buyers went away promising to come along to a meeting, to see how we roll.

A big thanks to all who helped out over the weekend, and especially to Arthur and Linda for their unfailing hospitality.

FROM YOUR PRESIDENT.

Harry Webb

What a privilege it is for me to be part of a great team that is known as the Australian Plants Society of Geelong! Our plants sale displayed our continuing contribution to the community and to the environment.

Facing the obstacles that confronted us as a result of last year's sale cancellation, we showed our resilience and fortitude against the odds by having another sale!

Thank you Arthur and Linda for sharing your property with us ... it was super! And then, so many of you doing your part without fuss, just getting on with it in a great cooperative spirit - on the gates, catering for visitors and stall personnel, helping out with the sale of plants, giving advice to people with many questions, (since our community too wants to see renewal of the Australian landscape) and then those who did the preparation beforehand and tidying up afterwards!



Harry speechifying at the aftersale BBQ

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Our committee members worked so hard behind the scenes. We are so lucky to have people like these, with great dedication and strength!

People came from near and far to our Annual Plant Sale because they believe and trust us!

I wish there were a thousand ways to thank you all, because you have done so much to make a difference. Well done, and thank you!

APRIL MEETING

Phil Royce

Phil and Di Royce moved from a five acre property at Teesdale to a 700 m² property in Grovedale a few years back. They wanted to build their garden from scratch to suit their new space, and to give themselves a garden that fulfilled their expectations. Armed with a trusty fork, and great enthusiasm, Phil set to work. Di recorded the progress with before and after photos.

Inspiration was taken from the Adelaide Botanic Gardens and the Eurobodalla Regional Botanic Gardens about 60 kilometres south of Bateman's Bay in N.S.W. The garden was intended to be two distinct areas - imaginatively called 'Front Garden' and 'Back Garden' - planted with mostly natives with a few exotics for effect.

The first problem encountered was the soil ... clay, clay and more clay ... typical of the Grovedale area. Phil laboured with his fork, copious amounts of gypsum and mushroom mulch (and advice from Di) to make improvements here. Progress was delayed by the cancellation of our plant sale last year, but the first plantings took place in a strip along the driveway.



'Front Garden' with *lomandras*, *grevilleas*, *acacias*

A landscaper was employed to complete the front garden. Drains were installed and, taking some ideas from the Teesdale block, mounds were created and rocks employed both as mulch and an interesting feature. Plants included *Leucodendron* 'Safari Sunset'; *Anigozanthus* 'Bush Ranger'; *Adenanthos sericeus*

(Woolybush); *Lomandra confertifolia* 'Little Con'; *Grevillia priesii* 'Sea Spray'; Gynea Lily; *Acacia cognata* 'Green Mist'; *Eucalyptus caesia* 'Silver Princess'; *Eremophila glabra* prostate form.

The back garden presented the same problem with clay soil, but it was so hard that Phil needed to employ a jack-hammer to break it up. A little 'Dingo' came in handy for moving soil about (or perhaps it was just fun to play with).



Intrepid Phil

A crushed rock and crazy paving pathway winds its way along the back of the house, leading to a circular paved entertaining area. The planting along the edges of the path are designed to over-grow it to some extent and soften the edges. Wooden screens were erected to separate the main garden from the vegie patch, and large amounts of mulch were applied in an effort to conserve water.



A very interesting and stylish back garden

The back garden planting to date include *Brachyscome multifida*; *B. microcarpa*; *B. augustifolia*; *Grevillia 'robyn gordon'*; *G. 'jelly baby'*; *G. johnsonii*; *G. 'moonlight'*; *G. 'misty pink'*; *G. longistyla*; *Xerochrysum bracteatum*; *Correa reflexa*; *C. pulchella*; *Leptospermum laevigatum*; *L. macrocarpum*; *L. scoparium*; *L. flavescens*; *Crocea exalta*; *Banksia*

spinulosa; *Dianella revoluta*; *Eremophila glabra*; *E. divaricata*; *Astartea clavulata*; *Ptilotus exaltatus*; *Agonis flexuosa*; *Melia azedarach*; *Hakea maccreana*; *Kunzea montana*; *Oleria lepidophylla*; *Harenbergia violacea*; *Scavoleum aemula*; *Thryptomene saxicola*; *Lomandra* 'Little con'.

WHAT'S IN A NAME

Tony Cavanagh

Tony continues his series about plants named after people.

Kennedia. While only a small genus of around 15 species, *Kennedias* are important horticulturally as nearly all species are attractive to spectators in the garden. They are creepers/trailers or climbers and are found in all Australian states with some 9 endemic to WA. The best known is *K. prostrata* which I am sure all of us have seen in the bush, a prostrate plant with bright red/pink pea flowers and dark green foliage.



Running Postman - *Kennedia prostrata*

Most *Kennedias* have pink to purple to red flowers except perhaps the spectacular rampant WA climber *K. nigricans* with its flamboyant black/purple and greenish yellow flowers. *Kennedias* are generally very hardy in the garden although I always think of them as preferring at least some shade. They seem to handle most soils and are sometimes used on banks and slopes to help stabilisation. They are usually grown from hot water-treated seed.

Kennedia was named after Lewis Kennedy (born c1721, died 1782), founder of The Vineyard Nursery, in about 1745 with partner James Lee. The nursery was in Hammersmith west of London and the firm (simply called Lee and Kennedy) soon developed a reputation of being able to supply the largest range of rare and unusual plants. They were large stockists of Australian plants and received some of the earliest seeds and plants for private gardens from Botany Bay. One of their best known customers was the Empress Josephine (wife of Napoleon) who developed a spectacular garden at Malmaison. It is likely that Kennedy supplied her with a then unknown plant which the French botanist Etienne Pierre Ventenat

named *Kennedia* in his honour. No picture is known of him.



Black Coral-pea - *Kennedia nigricans*

Kunzea. When we think of *Kunzea*, we usually think of the spectacular WA species such as *K. priessiana*, *K. affinis*, *K. baxteri* and *K. sericea* with their massed displays of pink, pink-purple or red flowers in heads or clusters. A couple, *K. ericifolia* and the alpine *K. muelleri*, are yellow. There are up to 40 species, mostly medium shrubs with a couple such as the white-flowered *K. ambigua* and *K. pomifera* being sprawling or prostrate. Most are quite hardy and long-lived, doing best in near full sun and well drained soil although *K. ambigua* and *K. pomifera* grow well in sandy soils and are widely used for soil stabilisation in both coastal and inland situations. They can be grown from seed or cuttings, the latter being best for propagating good forms.



Kunzea priessiana

Kunzea was named after the German Professor of Zoology at Leipzig University, Gustav Kunze (born 4 Oct. 1793, died 30 April 1851). Kunze was a versatile scientist with strong interests in entomology and botany (mainly ferns and orchids) as well, and was appointed Director of the Botanical Gardens in Leipzig in 1837. It was named in his honour by the botanist and ornithologist Ludwig Reichenbach in 1828, later the founder of the Dresden Botanical Gardens, so

there is a botanical gardens connection but I have been unable to discover how these two Germans became involved with our plants.



Gustav Kunz

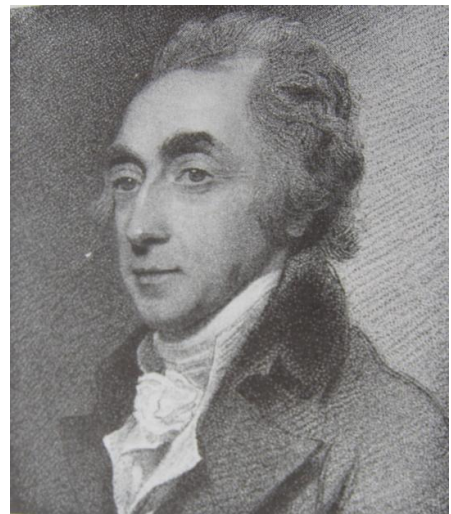
Lambertia. This genus is part of the *Proteaceae* (Banksia) family but most species are not widely grown. There are only 11, 10 in WA and one in NSW, and, surprisingly, it is the NSW *L. formosa* (Mountain devil, Native honeysuckle) which is best known in the garden. (It was also grown in England in 1789). They are generally medium to tall shrubs, and the tubular flowers (often red to orange or yellow) are profuse and form in clusters. Established plants are generally hardy but being *Proteaceae*, they do require good drainage and perform best in full sun or light dappled shade. I have not tried them from seed but have been successful from cuttings.



Noongar Chittick - *Lambertia inermis*

The name honours an English botanist and early member of the Linnean Society, Alymer Bourke Lambert (born 2 Feb. 1761, died 10 Jan. 1842), whose main plant interest was in the genus *Pinus*, about which he was the main authority having published A description of the genus *Pinus* in parts between 1803 and 1837 where many new species were described. He also bought other herbaria and amassed a large

collection of specimens and drawings from Australia in the years after settlement but I cannot determine if he grew Australian plants. *Lambertia* was named in his honour by the well known English botanist J.E. Smith in 1798.



Alymer Bourke Lambert

***Lechenaultia*.** This group have some of the most brightly coloured and spectacular small plants in the Australian flora. By far the best known are the sky blue *L. biloba* and the orange-red *L. formosa* although with some 26 species, there are many other interesting ones. One I remember being fascinated with in WA was the “wreath lechenaultia”, *L. macrantha*, which forms flat wreath-like mats on the ground with the green foliage in the centre surrounded by the profuse flowers. Unfortunately it is almost impossible to cultivate, a common story with most species which are often described as “touchy” and “short-lived”; they are best treated as a biennials (replace every couple of years). If you can get a plant, it is easy enough to grow more from cuttings. They require a sunny, well drained spot and benefit from light pruning with watering only in very dry weather. There are also many hybrids which may be hardier although I am unsure how many are available in nurseries.



Leschenaultia Formosa form

The name honours the French botanist and ornithologist Jean-Baptiste Leschenault de La Tour (what a mouthful!) (born 13 Nov. 1773, died 14 March 1826) who was the official botanist on the French expedition to Australia and the South Pacific led by Nicholas Baudin between 1800 and 1803. While it appears from the expedition journal that he did not work particularly hard at his job (the junior gardener Guichenot collected more specimens and labelled them more usefully!), and later published few new plant descriptions, his specimens from Australia and other countries were described by many French botanists in later years. Between 1803 and 1807 he made the first thorough botanical examination of the Javanese flora and later collected in India from which he obtained two species of sugar cane and six species of cotton, and also South America. I think that the naming of Lechenaultia by Robert Brown in 1810 is an honour justly deserved.



Jean Baptiste Leschenault de la Tour

WILDFLOWER CARDS

Those who made it to the plant sale would have seen Julie Jones selling some delightful hand-made greeting cards, depicting Australian native wildflowers. The cards are made by Julie's sister-in-law, Claire Dalton, and are miniature masterpieces.

Julie volunteers for the KCC Slum Project in Kenya, an organisation who assists slum-dwelling people in any real and meaningful ways. Julie works particularly with children who have AIDS.

Half of the proceeds from card sales are donated to the KCC Slum Project, a very worthwhile cause. The cards, and Julie's enthusiasm for her charity were wonderful additions to our sale. So thanks, Julie, we hope it was worth your while.



A small sample of the beautiful cards on sale

You can find out a little about KCC Slum Project here :-
<http://kccslumproject.wordpress.com/>

PROPAGATING FLANNEL-FLOWERS

Margaret Guenzel brought some Flannel-flowers, *Actinotus helianthi*, to the March meeting, and spoke briefly about their propagation. All those present were amazed at Margaret's ability to cultivate these beautiful plants where others have failed. So, I invited her to write an article on the subject for the *Correa Mail*. Margaret proposed instead to bring some seeds and seedlings to the April meeting and do a demonstration for the members. After warning us of the dire consequences of heckling, she shared her knowledge with us all.

Margaret grows two or three dwarf forms derived from a compact form she purchased some time ago. Flowers are their best at Christmas. The difficulty with Flannel-flowers is the availability of 'fresh' seeds, so Margaret very generously brought along small packets for members to grow their own. Seeds should be planted in October, as seeds sown now will not make it through the winter. (Eileen's heckling was crushed mercilessly at this point, and we all sat up a little straighter.)

Seeds are sown in pots, but the environment is not really to their liking, and perhaps only 20% of seeds will germinate. Margaret uses Yates 'Bloom' potting mix, because it has a lot of sand in it. It is sold at Safeway for about \$6.00. If you have sandy non-alkaline soil, you can use your own with a little potting mix thrown in.

Soak the seeds in lukewarm water, with a drop of 'wetting agent' and soak for at least an hour, Strain

and rinse the seeds well to remove any traces of the wetting agent. Fill a pot with the potting mix and sprinkle the seeds onto it, spreading them with a small stick to get an even coverage, removing the bracts, which are not needed.



Flannel-flower, *Actinotus helianthi* - photo Chris Ross

The seeds should then be covered with a layer of 6mm quartz gravel, a bucket of which can be obtained from most good garden centres. (If you walk with a stick, limp more than usual, and wave your senior's card about, you may even get one free, as Margaret does.) Many other seeds like this gravel, too. Margaret also suggested sprinkling a tablespoon of smoke infused vermiculite over the pot. This apparently mimics the effects of bush-fire and speeds up germination process considerably.

Seeds will germinate after 21 days in warm weather and will continue for another 6 weeks or so. When the second set of leaves appear, or when the plants have reached a height of 50mm, they can be carefully transplanted. They have a long root system and are easily damaged, so take extreme care and be prepared to lose 50%. The same applies when the larger plants are potted on ... so it is not a task for the ham-fisted or weak-hearted!

Putting smaller numbers of seeds in a pot and picking out the weaker ones may avoid the need for transplanting and thus give you a better crop. Don't overwater, and try to avoid wetting the foliage as they are prone to grey mould.

Once mature plants are settled, seeds can be removed, buried in the pot and allowed to germinate, thus replacing the older plants which only last two seasons. Seeds are harvested when the bracts have dropped off and the seed head looks like a pom-pom.

Margaret wished us all good luck, and expects to see a flannel-flower from every member next Christmas.

This was a most informative talk, and I would encourage other members who have success with a particular plant to share their knowledge in a similar fashion.

UPCOMING EVENTS

5 May - APS Yarra Yarra Autumn Plant Sale & Propagation Demonstrations. Cnr Brougham St and Main Street, Eltham. From 10.00 am to 3.00 pm.

18 May - APS Melton & Bacchus Plant Sale, Cnr Lerderberg St & Gisborne Road, Bacchus Marsh, will feature hakeas, orchids and dwarf eucalypts. From 9.00 am to 1.00 pm.

15 June - Quarterly Gathering hosted by APS Mitchell.

31 Aug / 1 Sept - Bendigo native plant group is holding a flower show and wattle spectacular, with unusual wattle plants for sale in tubestock. Held at the Rotary Gateway Park in Kangaroo Flat. 10.00am to 4.30 daily.



AUSTRALIAN OPEN GARDEN SCHEME

Australian Plant Workshop
Sunday 12 May. 1.15pm - 3.45pm
 Arthurs Seat

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.

Bookings essential - limited tickets available
 Tickets: \$60.00 includes afternoon tea, notes and a plant to take home. You can find more information about this exciting event and book online [here](#)

May 4-5 ... Melliodora, 5-7 St Georges Ave, Templestowe. Surrounding an Alistair Knox house is a diversely planted bush garden with unusual eucalypts and banksias and native orchids.

May 11-12 ... Fairview Garden, 7B Fairview Ave, Wheelers Hill.

June 15-16 ... Illyarrie, 7 Library Rd, Balnarring Beach. Rare and beautiful Australian plants create year round interest. Many WA species including unusual banksias and grevilleas.



The topic of Geelong Field Naturalists flora lecture for July will be '*Caladenia pumila* - Back From Beyond The Brink.' Thought extinct for almost 90 years, a

single Dwarf Spider-orchid, *C. pumila*, was found at the Inverleigh Common in 2009. Neil Anderton will discuss the rediscovery, protection and propagation efforts to date of this delightful little orchid. The meeting commences at 7.30 p.m. at the Friends Room at the Geelong Botanic Gardens on Tuesday June 11th. The entrance is at the intersection of Holt Rd and Eastern Park Circuit. (Medway 452 G4)



Caladenia (Arachnorchis) pumila - Inverleigh

FUTURE SPEAKERS

May. Liz Wells has an interesting garden on her rural property with some very interesting stories to tell.

June. Kerry Maloney will talk to us about using Australian plants to dye fabric.

July. AGM and Photo Competition.

September. Roger Wileman – *Dendrobium speciosum*

WHAT'S IN THE BUSH GARDEN?

Weeds!

A couple of years back, a weed appeared in my garden as if from nowhere. I had not seen it before, but it took over my mulched paths between the garden beds. It grew incredibly quickly, spreading to 60cm in less than a fortnight. A few enquiries taught me that it was Common Purslane, *Portulaca oleracea*. Also known as Verdolaga, Pigweed, Little Hogweed,

Pursley, and Moss rose, it is an annual succulent in the family *Portulacaceae*. While it may reach 40 cm in height, the offender in my garden is quite prostrate.

It has smooth, reddish, prostrate stems and alternate leaves clustered at stem joints and ends. The yellow flowers have five regular parts and are up to 6 mm wide. Depending upon rainfall, the flowers appear at anytime during the year. The flowers open singly at the center of the leaf cluster for only a few hours on sunny mornings. Seeds are formed in a tiny pod, which opens when the seeds are mature. Purslane has a taproot with fibrous secondary roots and is able to tolerate poor, compacted soils and drought. (*No wonder it does so well at my place!*)



A baby plant intent on invasion!

Although purslane is considered a weed in Australia, it may be eaten as a leaf vegetable. It has a slightly sour and salty taste and is eaten throughout much of Europe, the middle east, Asia, and Mexico. The stems, leaves and flower buds are all edible. Purslane may be used fresh as a salad, stir-fried, or cooked as spinach is. Because of its mucilaginous quality it also is suitable for soups and stews. Aborigines apparently use the seeds to make seedcakes. Greeks, who call it *andrakla*, fry the leaves and the stems with feta cheese, tomato, onion, garlic, oregano, and olive oil, add it in salads, boil it or add to casseroled chicken. In Turkey, besides being used in salads and in baked pastries, it is cooked as a vegetable similar to spinach. In the south of Portugal (Alentejo), "beldroegas" are used as a soup ingredient. Because of its high water content Purslane cooks down quite a bit. Pick more than you think you will need. It makes a quick cold soup in hot weather by cooking and blending together with other vegetables.

Happily, it responds well to 'Round-up', or can be pulled out fairly easily when the ground is soft.

Source: Wikipedia