



Correa Mail

Newsletter No. 317– May 2016

2016 PLANT SALE

April 9th and 10th

Our 2016 Plant sale was a mixed success on the weekend of 9th and 10th of April. A sunny Saturday saw large crowds coming through the gate and all the growers reported strong sales.

Sunday was blustery and there were small numbers in attendance ... many of these were 'repeat offenders', who ran out of cash on Saturday and had returned for more plants. One lady, who arrived at 12.10 on Sunday was told "You have just 50 minutes til we close" . "Well," she said, "I have \$200 and I'm not leaving til I spend it." I hope she did!

Thanks to our great group of growers Suntuff Natives, Vaughan's Australian Plants, Geelong Propagation, Tree Action, Otway Greening, Special Effects Nursery, Austplant, Chris Fletcher Nurseries and Russell Waite for their support of our sale.

Thanks also to Matt, Penny, Chelsea, Claire and Jerry and Bunnings for adding a little extra to the sale with their stalls, and to Matt and Nicole for their amazing flower table.

And especially a huge thank you to Linda and Arthur Pape, for once again, making their property available to us, at a particularly difficult time. We wish Arthur a very speedy recovery and look forward to hearing his bawdy ditties at the next Plant Sale BBQ dinner.



ORCHIDS OF THE ANGLESEA AREA

By Ade Foster

The speaker at our April Meeting was yours truly. I spoke about the orchids found in and around Anglesea with a slide-show of my photos, taken over a roughly six years when I was an avid orchid 'hunter'.

I was introduced to the joys of orchid hunting by Frank Scheelings, and with him as my trusty side-kick, we tramped the bush tracks and heathlands most weekends in search of another species to add to the 'collection'. Despite what Penny and Tina believed, we worked hard on these excursions, in pursuit of greater knowledge. ☺



Frank hard at work

In their lovely little book 'Orchids of the Anglesea District', Everett Foster and Margaret McDonald list 108 species. Several are naturally occurring hybrids, and one or two may well have disappeared from the area. I have managed find and photograph at least 86 of these.

The names of orchids are changing constantly, depending on whose book you use as a reference. I choose to follow Backhouse and Jeanes, who use the ANBG 'approved' names for orchid genera. In his book 'Native Orchids of Australia', David Jones has divided many groups, particularly the 'Greenhoods' – *Pterostylis* and the 'Spiders and Fingers' - *Caladenias*

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into many 'new' genera. ANBG have conducted genetic examinations and find no basis for these changes, so I stick with them. However, there are two distinct groups within *Caladenia* which are quite different visually, and Jones has used *Archnorchis* for Spider Orchids. This is one change that I approve. It just makes sense to me, so I use it. Call me fickle.

But, no matter what we call them, orchids have a special hold on those that chase them. No other group seems to possess the hearts and minds of the fancier in quite the same way, and more than one book has been written on the subject.



***Thelymitra aristata* – Great Sun -orchid**

My favourites by far, are the 'Sun-orchids' – *Thelymitra*. As the name suggests, these are a sun loving group, and most require a warm day, over 24 degrees to open. Should no suitably warm day occur in their flowering period, they self-pollinate and the buds die away. They can be frustrating for the photographer, and more than once I stole a few hours from work to try for an orchid when the day was right. They can be quite small and inconspicuous, with a single flower less than 1cm across, such as *T. flexuosa*, or they can be magnificent with thirty flowers to 50mm on a spike 1.2 metres high as in *T. aristata*.

The Greenhoods – *Pterostylis*, are the most numerous group in the area with 19 species. The 'typical' greenhood has filiform lateral sepals which stand up, like ears, and the dorsal sepal and petals combined to form the hood of the common name. The labellum is a mostly narrow 'tongue' visible to varying degrees under the hood. *P. nutans*, the Nodding Greenhood, is a very widespread species in the area, and we have found flowers from June to late November.

The Midge-orchids, *Corunastylis* are a group of tiny inconspicuous orchids. They are generally only 10 -15 cm tall, growing among the grasses where they are almost invisible. They feature a spike of up to 15 tiny flowers, each usually greenish or brownish, which adds to their cryptic nature. They flower in autumn.

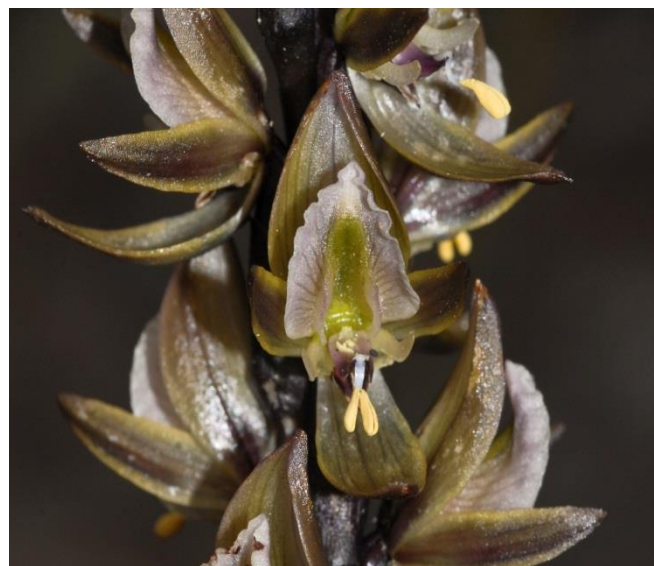


A 'typical' greenhood, *Pterostylis concinna*

The *Caladenias* are another diverse and widespread group around Anglesea, with 8 species recorded. Typically small, with 1 – 3 flowers to about 15mm, they can be very variable. *Caladenia carnea*, Pink Fingers, can range from a very deep pink, through all the shades to pure white.

The *Arachnorchis* or Spider-orchids are a striking group with ten species recorded. Many are tall, with long filamentous petals and sepals, and a lovely toothed labellum. They are, however, remarkably promiscuous, and many hybrids will be found to confuse and excite the unwary hunter.

The leek orchids are a group of 8 species with a tall flower spike, from 50 – 120 cm, usually densely covered with scented flowers. Much work has been done on *P. odoratum*, and there are now six 'sp. aff.' in the group which will, no doubt, become separate species eventually. Interestingly the flowers in *Prasophyllum* are upside-down, with the labellum at the top, and the dorsal sepal at the bottom. They flower in big numbers after fire.



***Prasophyllum elatum* – with 'upside-down' flowers**

There is a loose group, which I call the 'Insect Orchids' because of their common names – The Mayfly-, Mosquito-, and Gnat-orchids. I believe the common name arises from their appearance, and the pollinating insects of each group. They often appear in large numbers and massed colonies. Although the flowers are tiny, and brownish, the leaves are quite large and usually bright green, which makes them stand out in the dry leaf-litter of the forest floor.

The Duck-orchids, *Caleana* and *Paracaleana* are another favourite, and no matter how often they are encountered, another photo is required. The common name is perhaps the most descriptive of all for this delightful little orchid.



***Caleana major* – Flying Duck-orchid**

Red-beaks, sometimes called the Undertaker Orchid, is prolific at Anglesea. There are millions of them scattered across the sandy hillsides, but you don't often see them, as it is only after fires that they flower prolifically. Most seasons they produce leaves only, sometimes so dense as to form a carpet. These are thick and leathery, a deep green and may vary from the size of a 20c piece to the size of a man's hand.

There are many more orchids that haven't appeared in this article. Anglesea is a must visit in the spring, if you have even a passing interest in our fabulous orchid flora. I urge you to take a drive, have a wander, and see what you can find. Always remember the unwritten rule of orchid hunting – 'The best orchid is always within 5m of where you parked the car'. ☺

ON THE TABLE

with John Hastie

The flower table was a very colourful and interesting on this month, and John led us through the inevitable discussion with masterly control.

Grevilleas featured as they always do, but there were many in full flower that are usually late winter or

spring flowerers. They are confused, and given that it was 30 degrees today (20/4/16) I don't blame them. Old favourites 'Peaches'n'Cream', 'Superb' and Ellendale cultivars of *G. fililoba* were there, alongside *thelemanniana*, *bipinnatifida*, *insignis*, *georgiana*, *paradoxa* and *cagiana*, to name just a few



Grevillea cagiana

There were some very interesting Banksias again. A very large flowered *B. spinulosa*, sold as 'Birthday Candles', created some debate. There was a lovely specimen *B. violacea*, with deep purple, almost spherical flowers; and *B. pulchella*, a small shrub with dainty lemon yellow flowers. Among the other notables were *meisnerii*, *menziesii* var. *meisnerii*, *nutans*, var. *cernuella*, *incana*, *orbifolia* and *media*.

Correas are starting to come into their own and some lovely, mostly hybrid varieties were on show. There was a lovely baby pink *C. pulchella* type; the striking *C. 'Autumn Blaze'*; an unidentified lemon yellow one of *glabra* type; *C. glabra* var. *turnbullii* which once revelled in the name *C. schlechtendalii*.

Among the hakeas were *H. crassinerva* 'Burrendong Beauty', *H. laurina* and *H. verrucosa*, which has lovely pink flowers, and, like many in this genus, very prickly leaves. *Crocea exalata* is a large flowered species with very palish pink flowers, while *C. 'Festival'* has vibrant, very deep pink flowers.

There were only two Eucalypts, but both were lovely specimens – *E. pachyphylla*, a smallish mallee with large bright yellow flowers, and *E. synandra* a delicate small tree with tiny, pendulous pale yellow blooms.

There were also two beautiful and unusual acacias. *Acacia iteophylla*, the Flinders Ranges Wattle is a large shrub to 3m with long narrow phyllodes and masses of lemon yellow flowers. *Acacia merinthophora*, the Zig-Zag wattle, is a large, very open shrub to 3m. Each stem changes direction where each phyllode branches off it, creating a most interesting zig-zag effect.

DEALING WITH POT-BOUND PLANTS

by Tony Cavanagh

Many of us over the years have had pot-bound plants and have wondered how much you can mess around with the roots before planting them. Conventional wisdom seems to be that you should disturb the roots of “natives” as little as possible. I am always amused by the presenters on the ABC gardening show *Gardening Australia* on TV who pussy-foot around this issue and do minimal work on loosening a few bottom roots, on even very pot-bound plants, before dropping them in the planting hole.

So what is a pot-bound plant, how does it get that way and what can you do about it?

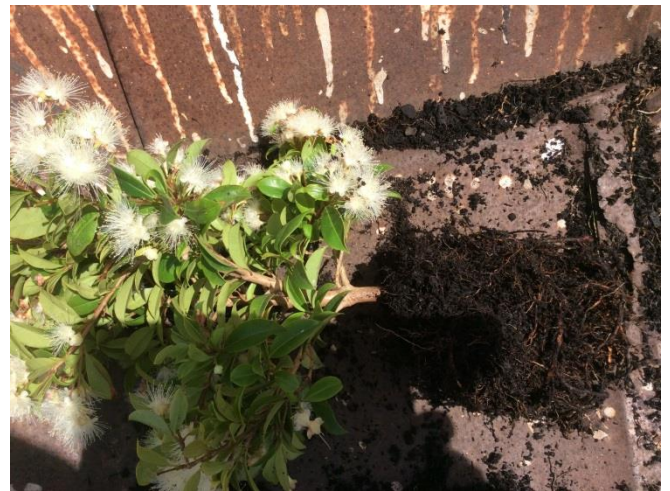


This picture shows what I would call a moderately pot-bound plant, a *Syzigium* dwarf, sometimes called Lilly Pilly. You can see that the roots are tangled and prominent on the root ball surface, and usually tend to spiral around the pot. It almost always occurs when plants have been held too long in a small pot and many of the poor looking plants you see on the “throw out” tables in nurseries suffer from this problem. The “poor look” comes the fact that the growing plant has used up most of the nutrients in the pot soil but the real problems came when you go to plant it in your garden.

If you simply knock it out of the pot and drop it in the planting hole, chances are that it could well be dead in a couple of years or that it will never look healthy. The roots in pot bound plants tend to grow spirally around the root ball up against the surface of the pot, and stay that way after planting, meaning they have little chance of growing out into the natural soil of your garden. You need to “persuade” them by severely teasing out the roots.

You will notice the small saw in the picture. It is my favourite tool, followed closely by a hatchet, for getting rid of the tightly bound surface roots. I simply make a series of vertical cuts around the plant about 1

– 2 cm deep and pull the cut roots off the root ball. If it is a large pot plant, the hatchet helps in this task.



This picture shows the plant ready for re-potting. All the tangled surface roots are gone and the cut roots can grow out into the soil. The third picture shows two plants after a month in their new pots, healthy and growing strongly.

I cannot recall ever losing a plant after this severe treatment, and on some large banksias, I cut off 6 cm from the bottom and removed 4-5 cm from all round the root ball, with no ill effects. So next time you have a pot bound plant, treat it roughly like I do. Believe me, it will thank you for it.



A job well done ☺

OUR NEXT MEETING

May 17th

The speaker at our May meeting will be Richard Austin. Richard is the President of Australian Native Orchid Society, and will talk to us about his work monitoring the regrowth of the Lake Mountain area after the devastating Black Saturday fires in 2009.

Richard's main interest is in the orchids of the area but he has been monitoring all species and has some interesting findings to discuss.

FUND-RAISER – BUNNINGS SAUSAGE SIZZLE

On Sunday May 15th, we will be conducting the sausage sizzle at the Bunnings North Geelong Store. This is a great way for us to make a sizable amount of money, with the aim of paying for a few worthy speakers to address our meetings. We would love you all to offer an hour of your day to assist with cooking, serving and money handling on the day. We will be there from 8.00 am – 4.00 pm, and then packing up. Closed shoes must be worn. If you are able to assist please let Matt Baars know, so he can try to fill the roster. Thanks. Matt can be contacted by email at: baars16@bigpond.com

THE TALBOT MATERNITY TREE by Roger Wileman

I have always had a fascination with Eucalyptus species and in particular *Eucalyptus camaldulensis*, the 'Red Gums'. To me, they are an icon of the Australian landscape, and of the many red gums I have seen, large, tall, stunted and majestic, one in particular has always had a special place in my mind.

I first saw The Talbot Maternity Tree about 50 years ago. It is a truly ancient tree reported to be 700 years old. It is not an overly tall tree but at first sight you can see that this is a really ancient, with a base diameter of 15 metres.



The massive 'Maternity Tree', with Sheila for scale.

About 2 km north of Talbot, in central Victoria, and 300 metres along Pollocks Road, is where you will find this magnificent tree. The north east side of the trunk

has a large hollow facing away from the cold south west weather. This hollow is the part that has fascinated me for so many years, as it was used by the local Aboriginal women to give birth to their babies for many, many generations, long before white people set foot in Australia.



The 'birthing' hollow

In all the many years that this tree has been alive, I wonder who was the first baby born there, how many more followed, and who was the last? Sadly, it seems certain that no more will be born there.

I like to think that those babies were born to be the next generation, and though they have all gone, the tree still survives. After 700 years it is still setting seed for the next generation of magnificent Red Gums.

