

NOVEMBER MEETING

Our November meeting took the form of a 'Rare and Unusual Plant' auction. Although there were few members present, auctioneer Frank Scheelings, kept the crowd entertained with his lively banter and unique style.

Sue McDonald was a ferocious bidder, as was Roy Whiteside. Arthur Pape's strategy was to bid at the very end and steal a plant from the grips of someone else - but the night was quite successful and a great time was had by all.



Frank in full flow

Thanks to those members who grew or sourced the plants, and to those who bid, the club raised almost \$300 on the night. Thanks to Nicole Leach for her Powerpoint presentation of each plant, some of which appears below.

Darwinia leiostyla - '**Coolamon Pink**' is an attractive plant which grows to 1m high x 1m wide. It is best cultured in pots. It is frost tolerant and prefers a sunny position but grows well in shade. Its

Plant Auction

magnificent flowers occur in Spring. It is a cross-bred species, first found in Doug McKenzie's garden in Ocean Grove.



***Olearia adenophora* - Scented Daisy Bush**

This is a rare plant from the Gippsland region of south-eastern Victoria. It grows to 1m high x 1m wide and will grow in acidic, neutral or alkaline soils. It is drought resistant and frost tolerant. It prefers full sun or partial shade and produces flowers in Spring to Summer.



Darwinia oxylepis - Gillam's Bells

D. oxylepis grows 0.6-1.5m high x 0.8m wide and is found in the Stirling Ranges, Western Australia. It will grow in acidic, neutral or alkaline soils, and does well in pots. It is tolerant of light frost. Flowering in Spring, it prefers light shade.

***Blandfordia grandiflora* - Australian Christmas Bells**

This very interesting and beautiful plant grows to 0.5-1m high x 0.1-0.3m wide. It prefers acidic or neutral soils, and is drought and frost resistant. It prefers to be kept moist and in a sunny or lightly shaded. It is found in New South Wales, in the Blue Mountains and in southern Queensland and produces its amazing flowers in Summer.



***Grevillea maccutcheonii* - McCutcheon's Grevillea**

This rare Grevillea grows to 2m high x 2m wide. It will grow in acidic, neutral or alkaline soils. It is drought and frost tolerant and prefers a sunny or lightly shaded position. Found naturally on the Swan coastal plains in Western Australia, it flowers in Summer and late Autumn.

***Aphanopetalum resinosum* - Gum Vine**

A. resinosum is a climber, rare in Victoria, which will grow 3-5m high x 3m wide. It will grow in acidic, neutral or alkaline soils, and will tolerate light frosts. It will grow in shade or full sun, and flowers in Spring. It is native to New South Wales, in the rainforest areas of the North Coast region; Queensland in the rainforest areas of the South coast region. In Victoria, it is known from a single colony East of Mallacoota

***Eucalyptus sinuosa* (Octopus Mallee)**

This native of Western Australia is a rare, mallee type Eucalypt which may grow to 3m high x up to 3m wide. It will grow in acidic, neutral or alkaline soils and is frost and drought tolerant. It prefers a sunny position and flowers in Summer through to Autumn.



***Acacia denticulosa* - Sandpaper Wattle**

This rare and unusual Acacia grows 2-4m high x 3-4m wide and is native to Western Australia, north and north-east of Perth. It will grow in acidic, neutral or alkaline soils and prefers a sunny position, though light shade is OK. It is drought resistant and will tolerate light frosts. The flowers appear in spring.

***Eucalyptus deflexa* (Lake King Mallee)**

Another rare mallee, *E. deflexa* grows 1-3m high x 1m wide. It will grow in acidic, neutral or alkaline soils, is drought resistant and prefers a sunny or lightly shaded position. It flowers in Autumn, through winter and into the Spring, and is a native of Western Australia.



***Banksia cuneata* - Matchstick/Quairading Banksia**

B. cuneata is a rare plant from the Avon Wheatbelt in Western Australia. It grows up to 2-3m high x 2-3m wide. It will grow in acidic, neutral or alkaline soils, and will tolerate light frost. It prefers a sunny or lightly shaded position and flowers in Spring and Summer.



There were many more interesting, and hard to find plants on offer and I hope we can have another similar auction next year.

ON THE TABLE

I missed the last meeting so notes on the plant table in this edition will be less detailed. There was a small but interesting table and some of the highlights included *Actinotus helanathi*, *Xerochrusum bracteatum*, *Dianella revolute*, *Pimelea nivea*, *Hymenosporum flavum* 'Golden Nugget', *Eremophila* 'Summertime Blue', *Grevillea tetragonoloba*, *G. insignis*, *G. insignis x pilosa*, *G. plurijuga*, *G. plurijuga x superba*, *G. armigera x rigida*, *G. petrophiloides ssp magnifica*, *G. oligomera*, *G. insignis x georgeana*, *Leptospermum rotundifolium*, *Thelionema caespitose*, *Isopogon anemonifolius*, *Melaleuca elliptica*, *M. pentagona*, *M. leptospermoides*, *Callistemon citrinus*, *C. 'Dawson River Weeper'*, *C. 'Harkness'* and *Phoenixeus teretifolius*.

PLANT OF THE MONTH

***Swainsona galegifolia*
By Matt Leach**

Swainsona galegifolia or the Darling Pea is a small open shrub reaching 80 cm x 80 cm. Found naturally in inland NSW and Queensland, it can be a long lived plant. It grows from a crown at the base of the plant,

every year refreshing the plant with new shoots. The top growth can be susceptible to frost.

The leaves are pinnate to 10cm long, green to greyish in colour. The pea flowers are in a spike, up to 15cm long, and up to 2.5cm across and can be white to a magenta-crimson in colour. Balloon-like pods follow the flowers.

It is easy to grow from seed and flowers from October to February.



I prune back old branches every year in winter to invigorate the plant. My plant has been growing for 5 years in a clay bed, but others we have around the garden are in all sorts of soil types - so they are not fussy.

Rabbits can be a problem at times, as can the wallabies.

Supplementary water in summer helps keep the plant growing vigorously and flowering throughout the summer.

Our original plant came from the APS Geelong some 20 years ago. That plant has since died, but we have several seedlings grown from this original plant. We didn't have any growing for a few years and we thought we had lost it, but we found some seeds in a packet while looking for some other plant seeds.

The seeds need a little sanding/scarification or hot water treatment, but the germination rates are high using these techniques. From seed to flower takes about 12 months. It also grows well in a large pot or tub.

VISIT TO HANSON'S GARDEN by Phil and Di Royce

On 29th October, the Royces, Baars, Leaches and Sheila, Roger & Denise took off from Harvey Norman Corio at 9.30am as planned, with first destination being Kuranga Nursery. Matt B. & Phil were driving while passengers kept a lively conversation going. Naturally, Phil & Matt were concentrating on the traffic so were relatively quiet.

We pulled up at Kuranga at 11.10 and parked in the shade. After a bit of a look around the shop, we

launched into the nursery. The more common natives were pretty well everywhere and some of those with spaces in their garden didn't resist the temptation of a purchase or seven. MattL shared his knowledge that few, if any, of the plants purchased would be seen at our group's November Rare Plant auction (chuckle, chuckle).

After an hour, t'was time to eat, and get out of the sunshine. We'd reserved a table in the on-site café and thoroughly enjoyed the offerings, as well as more chat! Our appointment at the Hanson garden was 2.00pm and so we left Kurunga, with a slow exit via the shop.



There was lots of traffic again before safely arriving at Harvey Norman Corio at 5.00pm. More chat as we said our goodbyes after what had been an outstanding gardening day.

APS BALLARAT FLOWER SHOW – 21/22 October by Phil Royce

The Royces chose to do another first in October - attend the APS Ballarat Group's flower show and plant sale. It was held in the Robert Clarke Centre in the Ballarat Botanic Gardens, adjacent to a very full-looking Lake Wendouree. While the show was a 2-day event, we only went up on the Sunday.

We pulled up at the Botanic Gardens about 11.30 after a drizzly drive up the Midland Highway. After walking into the Robert Clarke Centre and paying our entry fee, we both an 'eye's light up' moment. The APS Ballarat members had arranged a stunning flower show! Colour, colour and then some more along four long rows of plant tables. And sadly, I had a '*%&^\$@' moment as I realised that Di was correct (yet again) - the camera should have been with us here, not in Waurn Ponds. So, sadly, there are no photographs to show off what we saw.



The Robert Clarke Centre – Ballarat Botanical Gardens

Along the tables, like species were near one another. Despite this, pink, red, white, mauve and sort of yellow flowers seemed to intermingle. Some tall and



The trip to Warrandyte was windy and up'n'down with a fair amount of traffic and chat. Arriving a bit late we were met by John and Bev Hanson - John the parking attendant and Bev the guide. As part of Bev's welcome she distributed some notes which provided the detail for the next little bit.

The 4-hectare bushland property was purchased in 1969 & the house built in 1972 incorporating the benefits of passive solar design. Bev is a Burnley College-trained horticulturalist and incorporated a natural style into the garden including the land contours, feature rocks and ponds. The Hanson garden is designed to flow from one area to another. All rainwater is diverted to fill ponds and water tanks. Some of the larger trees have had nesting boxes built into them. In 1981 bushland on two boundaries was declared part of the Warrandyte State Park and in 1999 the Hansons put a covenant on their property with Trust for Nature to preserve the bush forever.

After Bev's chat we were let loose to walk around the property. I think it was just delightful - Grevilleas (yes Ade, there were some big ones), *Banksias*, *Myoporum*, *Melaleucas*, *Leptospermum*, *Eucalypts* and many others. Then there were the birds - wrens and honey-eaters amongst them. We were warned of another animal - snakes. But nobody noticed, or heard, one! Even near their underground fire bunker.

The time to eat again arrived and we all enjoyed the afternoon tea we brought with us, supplemented with the provided tea and coffee. We thanked John and Bev for their hospitality and left close to 3.30pm.

wiry, others clumping. To accompany each of them was a very comprehensive sign describing their growth features. It was clear that a lot of thought and careful execution had gone into the presentation of the flower display. As well as the plant display, there were several other tables containing books (but no Bill and Sue), and garden nic naks - I bought some plant labels. For me, it was a 'well done' APS Ballarat.

The Centre wasn't so crowded when we bumped into John and Gladys Hastie, members of both Ballarat and Geelong APS Groups, and ex-Executives at Ballarat. They advised us that visitors come and go, spending about an hour looking at the flower show and then wander about the plant sellers' stalls outside. Di wandered around the stalls and enjoyed talking about the stock, but it was too chilly for me. When we caught up, she told me that one of the growers was selling rare native plants. She also had both hands full - 7 inch pots. One Grevillia and one Melaleuca.

T'was now around 12.30 and time to hit the refreshment area. Tea, coffee and a range of food was available - we chose scones and cream. And bumped into Gladys & John again - they were taking a little break from their jobs at the show. During the chat, one of us, excluding Di, John and Gladys, spilled their drink. After a clean-up, the Royces departed and took a different track back home.

Overall, it seemed to me that the two APS groups differ in emphasis for their annual events: Geelong's on the plant sales while Ballarat's is on the flower display. If our members have this in mind when they visit the APS Ballarat Flower Show, they'll have a great experience with native plants and like-minded people.

VISIT TO MELTON BOTANIC GARDEN - 26 November by Di Royce

The Royces arrived, as planned, at a Melton Botanic Gardens car park in Lakewood Boulevard at 10.00am after a drive through rain and thunder with an occasional distant bolt of lightning. But no one else was parked. Hmmm. Where were the others? A short drive took us to the Baars, Leaches, and Carmel at the main Garden's Tullidge Street car park.

Fortunately, at Melton it was dry, even though the sky was threatening. And the Garden's nursery already had visitors. Also at the nursery was a team of Friends of the Melton Botanic Garden volunteers getting equipment and plants ready to start the morning planting.

We had an enjoyable walk through the well-established Australian plant section looking at many labelled plants. For those without labels, Matt B. and Matt L. were able to identify for Phil & I. We then moved on to the area that was dedicated to WA

Australia plants. The flowers on the Eucalypts were astounding and they shared space with a very unusual Grevillia - some of us got very up close for their photos. These garden beds had been well prepared with raised sands and soil and most plants were thriving.



Grevillea leucopterys ??

Following the paved paths lead us to garden beds with South African plants, along with new garden beds that just had rabbit protective fencing removed. The garden in this area has a large man-made lake and the new garden plantings are following the banks of the lake. It all made an impressive spectacle. More land will become available as land around the gardens gets developed and the Shire has directed the developers that land has to be given to the Botanic Garden. Good planning!



Eucalyptus torwood

We were able to speak to the Team leader of the volunteers (John) and asked him about the structure of the Botanic Gardens and the volunteer program. The Melton Shire Council is very supportive and there are about 50 active members of the Friends of Melton Botanic Garden group - it even has a couple of overseas members. Some members of APS Melton & Bacchus Marsh group are also members of the Friends group.



We all left the Gardens with a few plants from the nursery at about 12.00pm, wanting to come again and see what more has been done, and walk around the rest of the garden. A very enjoyable morning.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Christmas Break-up

Our Christmas break-up BBQ was cancelled due to the forecast of torrential rain. It will be held next Saturday, December 9th at John and Barb Bell's house at 1050 Horseshoe Bend Rd, Torquay. Melways 493 H9. Arrive at 12.00 noon and please bring everything you will need, food, drinks and a salad or dessert to share with others.

February 2018 Meeting

Our first meeting for 2018 will take the form of dinner at a local hotel. Details will come with the next Newsletter in January.

FROM APS VICTORIA

12th – 20th January 2018

ANPSA 2018 Conference, Hobart. Pre and Post Conference tours to King Island and Tasmanian Alpine areas. To receive updates email asgapjan18@gmail.com. Bookings are now open. For more information visit the websites:

www.apstas.org.au

www.anpsa.org.au/conference2018

16th to 27th June 2018 – ANPSA 2018 Kimberley Tour – details from Nicky Zanen, email nicky.zanen@hotmail.co.uk or phone 0401975191.

EREMOPHILA CUNEIFOLIA

Ade Foster

One of the rare and interesting plants offered at the auction last month was *Eremophila cuneifolia*. I was given a plant some years ago by the wonderful Roger

Wileman, which was grafted ... I believe onto *Myoporum* root-stock? It flowered for the first time last year, and since has been a constant source of enjoyment.



Roger's *Eremophila cuneifolia* in my garden

E. cuneifolia, known commonly as Pinyuru is a native of the north-western part of Western Australia, from around Carnarvon inland into the Little Sandy Desert. It's a spreading, somewhat sticky shrub with wedge-shaped leaves, pink/mauve bracts and quite deep mauve/purple flowers.

It was first described by Friedrich Wilhelm Ludwig Kraenzlin in 1929. The type specimen was collected by the explorer Charles Crossland, near Mount Hale on the upper reaches of the Murchison River, about 140 kilometres from Meekatharra. The specific name 'cuneifolia' is from Latin - *cuneus* meaning wedge and 'folium' meaning "a leaf" and refers to the shape of the plant's foliage.



The literature says flowers occur mostly June to October, but my plant flowers most profusely in November/December, with a second flush in late autumn.

As a grafted plant it will tolerate most soil types, and is tolerant of light frosts. It likes a sunny position and is quite drought tolerant.