ANPSA Correa Study Group

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Correas in Fran Middleton's Garden

Newsletter No 61 May, 2020

LEADERS' COMMENTS

Hello to all you correa lovers,

In these times of lockdown and isolation, we gardeners at least have our gardens to provide us with comfort, space to flex our muscles and an inspiration and purpose to get out of bed in the morning. The detail is ever changing. A little bird watching stroll rewards us with the simple pleasures of spotting the wattle birds at work, be it wet or dry, or maybe a little thornbill flitting about. That big weed that had escaped the eye and hoe till now does irritate, but the flush of flowering compensates.

This summer-autumn period has been blessed with good rains, so the gardens here have progressed very nicely. We took a little wander through the garden in early May with the purpose of assessing the correa flowering levels. It was most interesting to note the little details. Correa pulchella Remarkable Rocks was ablaze in full orange while a pink pulchella form was at early flowering levels.

The lawrenciana group was most interesting. Christmas in July has been and was in full flower, while v genoaensis, Slim Jim and v grampiana had no flowers. Meanwhile, the tall red form continues to be at high flowering levels, as it had been for some time. C aemula Kangaroo Is. had no flowers as was the case for C reflexa Robe; by comparison C baeurlennii had just completed its flowering.

To this point we have not made recordings of detailed observations of precise flowering seasons of the various correas, but now we can see that this could be a most fascinating project. We have a feeling that in fact a correa of one form or another would be in flower for much if not all of the year here. This would be a most useful little project to set up during these virus home confinement days.

So life goes on. In the hot house we have a few correa cuttings still on bottom heat, unfinished business, with probably a few spares to find homes elsewhere.

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Incidentally, does anyone happen to have a correa form with a plump bell in excess of 5cm in length?

We are both well and adapting to the changing lifestyle, even though we do miss direct contact with our friends and social groupings.

Trusting that this finds you folk and your gardens all going well.

Dot & Bob



Facebook Likes Correas



I've not really been much of a Facebook user but the cancellation of everything that usually fills my diary because of Coronavirus isolation has certainly changed the rhythms of life. I'm a fairly new member of the Australian Native Plant Enthusiasts forum and on a windy, wet and cold Canberra day I uploaded this photo of some of my Correa flowers. Over that weekend I was quite amazed as more than 1,200 people 'liked' my photo and there were lots of comments too. It was heartening to read that some people want to give them a try after being unenthused about Correas before (hard for you and me to imagine that!).

Bob and Dot O'Neill spotted the photo on the forum and asked me to write a piece for this newsletter. I'm a new member of the Correa Study Group but they've been some of my favourite plants for a long time and I'm far from being finished collecting them for my Canberra suburban garden. Correas in the photo, clockwise from the big one C. reflexa 'Flared Bell', C. 'Redex', C. pulchella 'Little Cate', C. alba Pink form, C. 'White Lies', C. reflexa 'Point Hicks', C. 'Annabell', C. 'Marian's Marvel', C. pulchella 'Remarkable Rocks', C. 'Mallee Pixie', C. 'Vanilla Ice', Oops, think that might be C. pulchella 'R. Rocks' again?, C. reflexa unnamed gift, C. calycina, C. 'Marianne', C. 'Dusky Bells', C. glabra 'Coliban River', C. 'Federation Belle', C. pulchella 'Orange Glow', C. glabra 'Ivory Beacon'. Although these are about three-quarters of my collection I can see so many gaps in the Genus that need filling! It's like an itch you've got to scratch.

Fran Middleton, Canberra

Correa News from Peter Ollerenshaw - Bywong Nursery

I noticed in the last newsletter that some people seem to be mistaking our Correa brand name for the plant name. "Winter Bells" is the brand name we have given to all our new Correa releases. From the photograph in the newsletter the cultivar referred to as "Winter Bells" appears to be Correa 'OMG'. This name was adopted after a number of visitors to our nursery who saw advanced plants in full flower, exclaimed "Oh my God".

I have also attached photos of two new Correas we are releasing this autumn. They may take some time to be generally available. Correa 'Pinksensation' is a shrub to about 1 metre tall with masses of small pink flowers from autumn to winter. Correa 'Midnight Blush' is a rounded shrub to 75 cm with deep green leaves and red/pink flowers. These occur from late autumn through winter.





Correas in the Walcott Garden - Canberra

Words Ros Walcott

Photos Ben Walcott

Our property was first developed in 1926 when a small house was built on the 9300 square metre block and a number of Pinus radiata were planted around the perimeter in the early thirties. Other large conifers were planted at the front of the property, including a now magnificent Portuguese Cypress, (Cupressus lusitanica). The property was purchased by the French government and used as their Chancery office for many years. We purchased the property in 2001 and the planting of this garden began in July 2003. Over a six month period, from July 2003 to December 2003, the basic planting of 2,500 plants, including 40 trees, was completed. The soil is pH neutral and high in clay content. All garden areas had extensive soil improvements, including lots of Dynamic Lifter, to help cope with the clay soils. Thirty truckloads of wood chips (15 cubic metres each) were spread on all gardens in the first year. In the seventeen years since the original garden construction we have spread at least another ten truckloads of 'forest litter' each year which has improved the soil immensely. Planting has continued at a reduced rate since the original planting, and we now have over 5,000 plants representing over 850 different species and cultivars. We are keen to attract birds to the property and have progressed from about 35 species in the garden in 2003 to seeing over 105 species by 2020. Our climate is harsh, we have very dry and hot summers, often over 40 degrees C. and frosty, cold winters, with consecutive days of minus 5 degree frosts, and occasional frosts to minus 12 degrees. On average we get about 600mm rain per year, but last year only got 390mm, so rainfall is very variable. On January 20, 2020 we experienced a severe hailstorm, which stripped many plants of their leaves, wrecked our car, filled our kitchen with slush and turned our beautiful ponds of waterlilies into salad. On the positive side our garden is mostly protected from the wind by Red Hill.

We are very pleased to have opened our garden to more than thirty different organizations, including Open Gardens Australia, to thousands of individuals, regularly to members of Australian Native Plants Society, and hosted Gardening Australia and attendees at the biennial conference of Australian Native Plants Society (Australia). Our garden is featured on a stamp in celebration of Open Gardens Australia.

We now grow almost 60 different correas, more than 40 of them named cultivars. The best of our species correas is Correa alba, or White Correa, which forms part of a double hedge across the front of our property. The taller part of the hedge is Callistemon salignus. We have planted approximately 60 C. alba in this hedge at two different times, 40 in 2007 and 20 in 2013. We have only had to replace about ten of these plants due to drought and heat. They form a most satisfactory hedge, with attractive dark green foliage with silver backs and many starry white flowers over a long period. This hedge has been clipped several times to make it even and to encourage growth. We recently purchased from Kuranga Nursery Correa alba 'Star Showers'. This is a prostrate plant with the same leaves and flowers as the parent and is thriving in dappled shade in our garden.



Correa alba and hedge.

Correas in the Walcott Garden (cont)

Our other favourite species correa is Correa baeuerlenii or Chef's Cap Correa. * We grow approximately 20 of these under a large Portuguese Cypress, Cupressus lusitanica. We were told originally that these correas needed protection from frost and direct sun, even heavy shade, but by the way they are marching out into the sun, I doubt that advice. They are a very attractive correa with glossy, dark green leaves, green bell shaped flowers with a unique fused calyx which gives flowers the appearance of a chef's hat. The other valued feature of this correa, along with most other correas, is that they flower for a long timer in winter and provide food for the birds.



We purchased three Correa calycina from Kuranga Nursery in 2007 and have enjoyed their green bells, much visited by spinebills, and leaves with rusty, furry backs. These plants are from Fleurieu Peninsula, SA, and are endangered in the wild. After over a decade of enjoyment we removed the original three plants this year as they had become leggy and beaten down by the frost and drought. We have planted Correa calycina bronze leaf from Kuranga Nursery to replace them.

As part of our original planting we put in 10 Correa decumbens prostrate and 15 Correa decumbens 'Mt. Lofty'. Both are tough plants for a tough position and have persisted through the early years in the garden without the benefit of shade or protection. The prostrate version is not as low growing as 'Mt. Lofty' which makes us suspect that the identification is incorrect. Maria Hitchcock thought that the plant we have was more likely to be Correa 'Pink Panther'. We really like the upturned red and green flowers of 'Mt. Lofty' and the way it suckers and spreads in the shaded part of the garden.

We have a number of different Correa glabra growing in the garden, identified variously as having green, red or yellow flowers. These are stalwart plants with glossy green leaves which grow rapidly and flower profusely.

Correa lawrenceana var. rosea, or Red Mountain Correa, is an tall evergreen shrub with rich green leaves and pale red flowers most of the year. It needs a semi-shaded, cool, moist position and tolerates snow and frost. We have tried a couple of these plants with mixed success, but have now hit on a better position in the garden for the last three we planted. These are now thriving and flowering over a long period. I hope that they will grow tall for us.





Correa mannii is a small shrub with deep green heart-shaped leaves and red flowers which can only tolerate light frosts, so we have to protect it under another plant. Our landscaper originally chose this plant to anchor the eight corners of our two parterres, but the position proved to be too exposed for these plants and they all died. We now have two planted under trees which are blooming – one died over last winter and we will replace it. The colour of the flower is especially appealing.

Over the years we have planted 15 Correa pulchella, both pink and red flowered, and also pulchella cultivars 'St. Andrews White' and 'Pink Mist'. These are marvellous plants in the garden, reliable, free flowering and long lasting. I remember Gwyn and Geoff Clarke saying they were advised that these plants were short lived, but theirs was still thriving 37 years after they first planted it in their Canberra garden. A friend gave us 4 'St. Andrews White' to try in the garden and we had to stand back as they leapt from the ground with dense, shiny foliage and lovely white flowers. 'Pink Mist' is another attractive cultivar and has performed well for us. flowers. 'Pink Mist' is another attractive cultivar and has performed well

We planted 5 Correa sp. hybrid (lemon) two years ago. This plant is sold regularly at our ANPS Canberra sales and is recommended strongly as prolific in flower. We lost two of them in the frost, but the other three have just started to flower for us. The origin of this plant remains a bit obscure and I cannot throw any light on its history. The plant is prostrate for us with dark green leaves and short, wide, creamy lemon flowers.

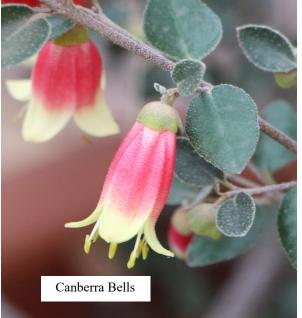
Correa 'Mallee Pastel' and Correa 'Mallee Pink' have performed well for us, especially one 'Mallee Pink' bush which has been covered in flowers every winter since 2005.

Correas in the Walcott Garden (cont)

Peter Ollerenshaw of Bywong Nursery near Canberra has developed many correas, including 'Canberra Bells' which was chosen as Centennial Plant for Canberra in 2013. We find that 'Canberra Bells' does better in a pot for us, where it can sometimes have 100 red and white blooms on a small bush. We did not have any success with it in the ground. Peter's collection, Winter Bells, consists of 'Adorabell', 'Annabell', 'Canberra Bells', 'Catie Bec', 'Green Dream, 'Isabell', 'Jezabell', 'Just a Touch', 'Little Cate', 'OMG', 'Peter Sutton' and 'Snowbelle'. These are small attractive plants with a variety of flower colours. We have tried 50 plants in this collection and lost 28 of them for varying reasons. This shows that we have a tough time keeping correas even if they are bred in our region and for our conditions.









We had two uncharacteristically wet years in Canberra 2010-2011, and along with many other gardeners lost numerous correas in sodden soils. I felt downhearted with the many failures during those two years. Correa 'Angels's Tears', C. 'Federation Belle', C. 'Firebird', C. glabra red form, C. 'Green Dream', C. 'Pinker Bells', C. reflexa Kangaroo Island form, C. reflexa 'Skye Bells', C. reflexa x decumbens, C. reflexa var. reflexa 'Brisbane Ranges' and Correa 'Tucker Time Dinner Bells' all died during 2010-2011 despite being well established before that wetter period.



Correas in the Walcott Garden (cont)

One of our foundation plantings, 30 Correa glabra 'Winter Glow', (or 'Coliban River'), planted under varying degrees of cypress.shade, have grown quite large even though they have been regularly clipped into cloud shapes. Their cheerful lime green bells take us through the winter and their glossy foliage looks good all year long. Despite the fact that our old (decrepit, but heritage) cypresses keep dropping limbs and smashing the plants to smithereens does not discourage them. Another foundation planting consists of about 40 plants of the reliable Correa 'Dusky Bells' which have performed admirably.



I had originally planted the old stalwart Correa 'Marian's Marvel' under some shade to protect it from the frost. It did flower, but not profusely. Then I saw 'Marian's Marvel' planted in full sun and frost in Murrumbateman. It was magnificent. I rushed home to plant a new 'Marians' Marvel' in full sun and have been rewarded by many more flowers and a healthy looking plant. Ben made 7 cuttings from our original plant and these are now thriving in plenty of sun. Do not always follow the advice to protect plants from the frost – some are quite able to cope.

We have not had much luck with some of the alba cultivars, such as Correa 'Coastal Pink', which is surprising when you think how successful C. alba is in so many different conditions. We planted 7 of these attractive pink flowered forms, but only have 3 remaining. 'Ice Maiden' and 'Lemon Twist', also alba hybrids, have met with mixed success in our garden. Correa glabra cultivars are more successful in our garden than Correa reflexa hybrids. 'Barossa Gold', 'Cappuccino', 'Ivory Beacon', 'Ivory Lantern', 'Long John', 'Red Rock Correa', and 'Rock Correa' are all glabra hybrids and are flourishing in our garden, while we only have two reflexa hybrids remaining after all those we have tried, 'Gwen' and 'Redex'. I really enjoy 'Redex' because of its glossy crinkled leaves and cheerful red and yellow flowers. We have planted 24 of these over the years but have only 5 remaining.









Ring A Ding Ding

We planted 8 Correa 'Ring A Ding Ding' four years ago and have been very impressed by their prolific orange flowers and prostrate habit. We lost two of them in the horrific heat of last summer, but they are standout performers.

Correas are very rewarding to grow with their long flowering times, attraction for the birds, and compact shape. They are eminently useful in garden design because of their neat foliage, which can be clipped, and the many small species and variety of cultivars. Some of the larger species and cultivars make great hedges and boundary plantings. We wish that correas were more reliable in our garden, as they are sensitive to both heat and cold, drought and wet periods. We will strive to provide 'Goldilocks' conditions for our correas in a difficult climate in the process of change.

A Pretty Correa from the 2019 Correa Crawl - by Linda Handscombe

David and I had never been on a Correa Crawl before despite loving Correas for many years. David's job as a Parks ranger meant that he always worked over the Queens Birthday Weekend. Last year, following his easement into retirement and our move from the Grampians to Illowa near Warrnambool, we joined Cherree Densley, Dot and Bob O'Neill and some other enthusiasts to travel from Warrnambool along the coast to Nelson.

The most floriferous stop for the weekend was definitely at the turn off into the pines in the Lake Monibeong

[Mombeong] area near Long Swamp.

In an undulating area of coastal vegetation we found many, many forms of Correa reflexa. I was like a kid in a lolly shop. The very first Correa that I spotted was the prettiest and when I couldn't find it again, I searched and searched, the whole time remembering that I'd seen it in between a pile of broken drawers and a broken pram. When I found it again, I felt it deserved to be preserved and saved from disappearing under piles of rubbish. I took three tip cuttings and struck them in a polyflute box outside in a Warrnambool winter with easyroot and no bottom heat. I was surprised that they, along with some others, all struck successfully.

This particular Correa reflexa var. reflexa is pink with yellow tips.

After the Correa Crawl finished, David and I stayed in Nelson for a few more days and visited Carpenter Rocks and Port Macdonnell. We found many more lovely Correa reflexas there, especially in the area of the Port Macdonnell cemetery. Thanks to the organizers for a great weekend.

The Pretty Correa

The three photos show it in situ, (top right)
In a tube in the igloo (bottom right)
The flower after I accidentally knocked it off, (below)







Correas at Elliminyt (Colac) Western Victoria - Brendon Stahl

The advice that I received from Maria Hitchcock was to use Dynamic Lifter on my Correas in Spring and Autumn - about a handful per small plant then two handfuls for larger plants.

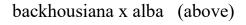
Maria's suggestion to fertilise just before rain is forecast, has worked for my Correas at Elliminyt (Colac) in Western Victoria. They have flowered much better than they had previously.

The Correas in the photographs are: calycina x glabra, pulchella, backhousiana x alba OMG Winter Bells.



calycina x glabra (above)

pulchella (above)



OMG Winter Bells (left)

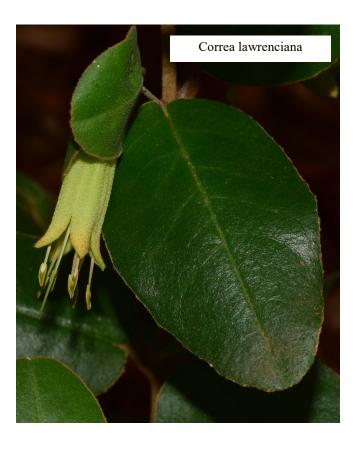
Correas in my garden - Mike Beamish

The best performing Correa in my garden at present is the C. glabra var. turnbullii planted on the west side of the block, where it gets ample sunshine and exposure to the south-westerlies that blow through at regular intervals. The glossy green leaves are pretty enough on their own, but it's now in full flower and the contrasting red blooms are spectacular. This plant was sourced as a cutting from the Grampians Correa Crawl a few years ago and its twin is doing just as well, though not as big, in my Mum's garden in Morwell.

Cuttings of Correa lawrenceana from the Grampians Crawl have also been planted out and have flowered for the first time this autumn. My surviving plant seems to be var. latrobeana, while the one that perished had darker green leaves and was probably var. rosea. A similar cutting in my Mum's garden initially struggled and looked as if it was going to fail, but has since sprouted well and now has a few dull pink flowers.









Correas in my garden - Mike Beamish

Correa 'Candy Pink' has bulked up and flowered well, but C. 'O.M.G. Winter Bells' and C. 'Dusky Bells' are the only other Correas with a few flowers at present. My orange C. pulchella, C. backhouseana var. orbicularis and C. eburnea are healthy but flowerless, the Wilson's Prom form of C. reflexa doesn't seem to like the bullants tending their nest underneath it and is dying back, and the C. reflexa 'Wellington Green' form seems to have objected to our wet summer and is wilting, a sure sign of rotting roots. The 'Boolarra Bitzer' seedling has been pruned back by a third, is still tending towards legginess and seems to be reluctant to flower. Another seedling has appeared in the garden and was successfully lifted into a pot. This one also looks very much like C. backhouseana var. orbicularis, but the leaves are bigger and without the C. glabra influence that 'Boolarra Bitzer' displays. Hopefully this one will flower better!The photos are "Linda's Peach" a cutting grown plant taken from a seedling in the Handscombe garden at Pomonal and the other is of a strange leaf that



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A Quirk of Nature by Joan Pitaro

This is a strange leaf that grew on Correa alba X. The inside leaves? were originally open but have dried and curled inwards.



Plants in the Garden - Joan Pitaro

Plants in the garden here in Ararat are looking well. We have had a number of useful amounts of rain

fall throughout the summer and this has meant that quite a number of Correas are now in flower. The most damage was done by a number of days of extreme heat.

This heat burnt the leaves of a couple of correas that caught the sun during the hottest part of the day. They have survived and I have taken cuttings, once these have struck I will pull out the parent plants and start again planting the new plants in a different spot (if I can find one).



Plants in full flower at present are C. reflexa – Carpenters Rocks/ Southend, C. Bellarossa (seeding that I have had for a number of years) C. Linda's Peach, C. lawrenciana Budawang, C. Annabelle, C. Catie Bec, C Albie Lindner, C. Maya's Garden, C. pulchella orange, C. Summer Bells, C. eburnea, 2 C reflexa Portland - large crimson and cream bell and a cream/white with green bell. Many other bushes are not far behind although a couple of pulchellas are much later.

I now have quite a few seedlings come up in the garden and depending on where they are I will let them grow until they flower and then decide whether they are worth propagating or not. My problem now, is that I really don't have enough room for more plants, although so far I have managed to find

some little cranny to squeeze a new plant into. Not ideal!

I have decided that C.eburnea is one of my favourite correas. I like the colour and shape of the leaves and the way they are held on the plant, its upright habit (maybe it doesn't have any choice in my garden) and the way the flowers peep out of a pair of leaves. The tiny buds appear out of tiny pair of beautiful soft green leaves. Nature at its best!

At this time of year I do enjoy seeing the correas coming into



flower and watching the birds coming to collect their nectar. I hope that other members are enjoying their gardens at this time of year, but also think of those people who have been affected by the drought and bushfires and are having to face the resulting challenges.

Necessity for Selection - by Bob O'Neill

Nine and a half years have passed since moving to our one acre property at Narre Warren South. Over that period the garden has grown and matured to the point that we have no more space to grow additional plants, save a small number of fill in plants. To insert more of the medium and larger plants means simply that the axe must be wielded to create space. The essence of this is fairly simple; to introduce a new correa form to the garden, with at least 2 copies of that form, means that an existing form would need to be eliminated. Recently I received a lovely correa from Maria Hitchcock, Correa reflexa Holy Moly. It will find a spot in the garden, and as luck would have it, we have had a couple of recent losses, so things will be able to be juggled this time. Maria also supplied us with a replacement Correa calycina, a species that I had sadly lost earlier. Friends are important for more than a chat!

Over the years we have assembled a correa collection that has many personal associated attachments. Many were sourced from friends, so when I wander the garden paths these plants stir memories of those people and of their gardens. Neil Marriott's "Neil's Best" (now named as Red Empress) stands out as our only reflexa that suckers and at the same time creates a lovely, strong feature. Another friend provided me with an unnamed, unusual, attractive pulchella, so that has been dubbed as Big Al. That gentleman, Alan Lacey, is due to drop in some time soon to be reunited with his long lost friend Big Al. One lovely pulchella is aptly named Dot's Dream. Some generous people have since passed on, but the plants live on, such as Alby Lindner.





Some correas we added to the collection from early on in my correa collecting days. Reflexas Fat Fred and Running Creek are such plants. Since then I have seen different forms bestowed with the name Fat Fred, but I have declined to add these to our collection. Reflexa Flared Bell I also obtained early on. Another group of valued plants was sourced during Correa Crawls, more recently Ararat and Nobbles Rock Car Park Portland. Some years ago we collected Mt Richmond White on a Correa Crawl, but more recently when we returned to that area the white form was not to be found, only the red, demonstrating that surprising changes may occur in relatively time frames.

In the collection we attempt to have representation of all the species. We spent years attempting to source Correa lawrenciana v genoensis. Finally I was able to source 2 nice plants at the Cranbourne Gardens Plant Sale. I have found that one must be most persistent and watchful to pick up such unusual plants. At this point I am still on the lookout for that striking plant, hopefully with a flower bell exceeding a plump 5cm in length.





Being a plant collector at heart, the passion gets you out of bed each morning with the possibilities of the future poised before one.

Correas at the Melton Botanic Garden David Pye Photos by Barb Pye

Many Correas are drought tolerant and thus they were considered to be worthy of trialling at the Melton Botanic Garden. The garden has an annual rainfall of 450-500 mm, but in recent years this rainfall has often been around 300mm.



Correa glabra is indigenous to the Melton region and the local form has done well in the garden. *Correa pulchella* comes from similarly low rainfall parts of South Australia and several forms and hybrids have been found to be successful. *Correa backhouseana var coriacea* from the Eyre Peninsula has also been successful. A plant of *Correa reflexa* that was accidently planted in the wrong bed is also thriving.



Correas at the Melton Botanic Garden David Pye (cont) Photos by Barb Pye



Although we have bought a few plants, most have been propagated at the FMBG Nursery. Cuttings are prepared by usual means with at least 4 nodes, and the lower leaves removed. After dipping in Purple Clonex, the cuttings are inserted in 40mm tubes containing an equal mix of potting mix and vermiculite with a trace of controlled release fertiliser. Seventy tubes fit neatly into a polystyrene box which is moved to our shadehouse and watered daily by soft spray. The shadehouse is covered with 50% white shade cloth and is partially open at each end. With a high level of light and good air circulation, the cuttings do well and most develop roots.



Correa lawrenciana - "Christmas in July"



FUTURE CORREA CRAWL - June 2021 ????

So much now depends on post Covid19

<u>BUT</u> we are considering a future Correa Crawl west of Melbourne assuming all is well by then.

This crawl could be based west of Melbourne, to include the Brisbane Ranges, Enfield, Bullengarook (green forms of Correa reflexa), Werribee Gorge (Correa glabra), and perhaps other areas near Ballarat. It might be possible to include the Melton Botanic Garden on the Monday morning, prior to the usual lunch and return home.

We would welcome any additional input regarding this proposal.

Financial Report

Bank Balance 13/05/2020

\$1,096.11

(No change since last newsletter)

Membership

Currently we have a membership of 63 individual or couples.