



Newsletter

December 2023

No 23

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A Word from the Leader

Text and Photos: Royce Raleigh

I must begin by giving a huge apology to all members for failing to keep you informed and explain why there has been no newsletter for over 12 months. I have had a number of health issues that resulted in me virtually unable to walk. It has taken 12 months and much frustration to get a correct diagnosis. On the 6th November I had a hip replaced in Ballarat and after a successful operation I was home the next day. The difference is remarkable. However there is at least another hip and a knee to go, so it will be some time before I am out of the woods. Hopefully I will soon be on the mend and can get back to doing the gardening again. Next hip operation is on February 5th.

A lot has happened in the garden at Wartook over the last 18 months. 2022 turned out to be a very wet year and the whole area became much wetter than usual. Some our drains were water filled for extended periods of time. As a result the water table was quite high and we were able to do lots of planting. This was followed by a mild summer and the ground really didn't dry out to the extent that the Wimmera normally does.

This resulted in good subsoil moisture at the start of 2023 which was very different from the preceding years. Although we have not had a wet 2023 the rainfall pattern has been somewhat different. Up until midyear we had reasonable rains and the garden drains were constantly full – we now think due to the resulting high water table remaining from last year. Winter and spring rains were very light and we had many many very cold nights, and some horrific frosts – some of the worst we have seen since the 1982-3 drought! *Eucalyptus synandra* and *rosacea* suffered very badly from wet feet in the winter but look to have revived with new growth in recent weeks.

The damage was easily seen around the garden as many plants were very badly frost burnt and some killed outright. As the ground continued to dry through September and October we were starting to see many quite large plants die, particularly some *Acacias*, *Hakeas* and *Grevilleas*. A number of these plants were well over 2 metres tall. It reminded us of the problem we had many years ago when we started to first dig drains around all garden beds. It turned out to be the same problem -plants becoming waterlogged in the winter, with deep roots dying and the surface roots keeping the plant alive until the ground has dried out when we then see the plant actually die.

So how did the Goodeniaceae fare in all this?

Dampieras

Although some of our very large *Dampieras* appeared to suffer to some extent, particularly with dieback in the winter they generally flowered extremely well.

Next Newsletter

The next newsletter will be published in **April 2024**. We would love to hear from you about your garden or what is going on in the local bush with plants of the Goodeniaceae family. Photos are appreciated too.

Goodeniaceae Study Group

Leader: Royce Raleigh

Ph: 03 5383 6200

Newsletter Editor: Maree Goods

Email: goodeniaceastudygroup@gmail.com

Address: Goodeniaceae Study Group
C/O Wimmera Growers of Australian Plants
PO Box 533, Horsham Vic 3402.

Web: <http://anpsa.org.au/goodeniaceaeSG/>

Check this out

Revision of the connate bract group allied to *Goodenia panduriformis* (Goodeniaceae), including recognition of three new species.

Kelly A. Shepherd & Brendan J. Lepschi

Nuytsia: The journal of the Western Australian Herbarium
Nuytsia 34: 227–254

Link: <https://doi.org/10.58828/nuy01061>

online 26 October 2023.

See page 6 for more information of two of the three new species.

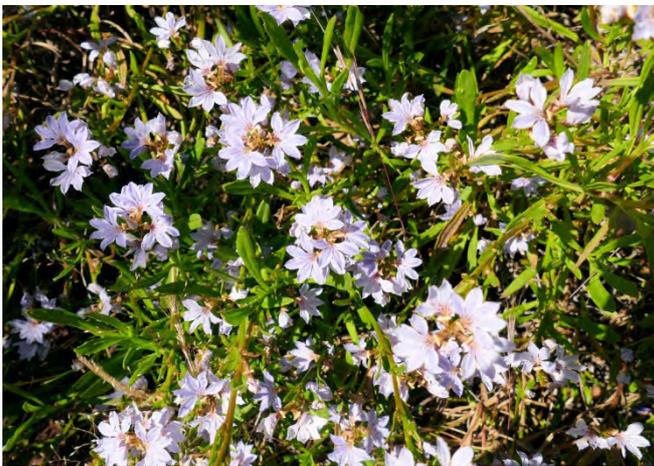


Dampiera linearis – the plant is over 2m across

However *Dampiera rosmarinifolia* suffered badly and some of our large plants are greatly depleted. However there is now a lot of new growth appearing, and the recent 46mm of rain has helped enormously.



Lechenaultia “Blue Ruffles” – does well for us in a protected position.



Scaevola species has formed a nice clump 60cm across.



Lechenaultia biloba – a lovely deep blue which is not affected by frost – a great one for this area. One of our other very deep blues is susceptible to frost and we have to be careful where we plant it.

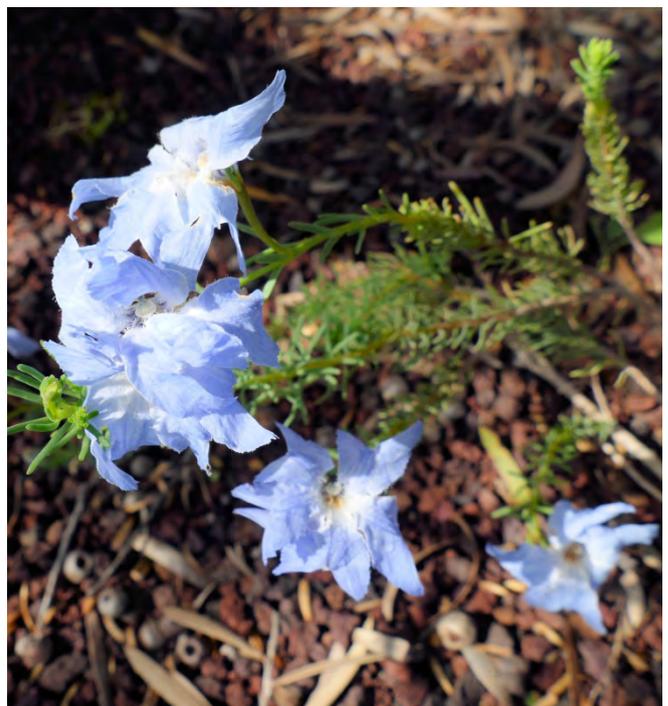


Although *Scaevola aemula* got hit very badly with frost in the winter, it comes back very well, and quickly, once the warm weather arrives.

One very interesting plant has been *Lechenaultia superba*. We have had this plant growing in the garden for many years. However it appeared to have “died” and the plant totally disappeared. It has now regenerated from obviously a root deep in the ground.

Although we lost a number of *Lechenaultia* plants in the garden we still have 11 different forms

Right: *Lechenaultia biloba* pale blue – a nice suckering form which is proving hardy.





Lechenaultia biloba white has proved difficult to keep going for more than a few years and Jeanne has to keep propagating new plants to keep it going. It makes a great contrast with the other colours.



Lechenaultia expansa – this has also proved quite a tough plant if planted with some protection from other plants.



Left: Another nice *Lechenaultia biloba* blue.
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Lechenaultia biloba – blue and white form is proving very tough, with a couple of plants now about 30 years old.



This *Lechenaultia formosa* is proving a resilient plant, whereas we have lost our lovely prostrate red forms, which can be so spectacular.



Another plant I would regard as a "toughie" it continues to do well in a number of different situations-

Lechenaultia superba

A relatively rare *Lechenaultia* found along the coast between Albany and Esperance, with a good population in the Fitzgerald National Park.



(WA Florabase photos for *Lechenaultia superba*)

Although we have grown *Lechenaultia superba* for many years I have been unable to find my photographs of the flower. Our longest living plant was 13 years, but it had to be protected from frost by planting under a very large *Callistemon*. We still have plants growing and have had the species growing for almost 40 years. Although we thought that we had lost the last of our remaining plants earlier this year. We were most surprised that after a very good late spring rain of about 50mm, this is what appeared from the ground. We had no idea that the roots were simply dormant. We have had this same thing happen with *Lechenaultia Ultra Violet*, which usually will reshoot after autumn rains



Lechenaultia superba regrowth.

I look forward to at last getting a photo of the plant in flower next year.

Can anyone give me the name of this *Dampiera*?



The strange season this year and even severe frost did not affect this plant. It is one of our most prolific *Dampieras* and forms a lovely display about 2m across and 150mm high.



We believe that this is a form of *Dampiera hederacea* and it is another *Dampiera* that was not affected by this year's weather. It is another late flowering variety and is in flower in late November and December.

Colour Forms of *Lechenaultia formosa*

All of us from time to time have grown many different forms of *Lechenaultia formosa* and those of us that have travelled along Green's Road, north of Esperance in WA, know that in WA there is a great range of colours. The problem is that for many of us we do not propagate enough to keep all colours going. These are some that we have had, but unfortunately we too have lost a number this year.





Just a tiny section of Green's Road North of Esperance.



Unusual *Dampiera*

Text and Photo: Neil Marriott

Many years ago I was given a robust, upright suckering *Dampiera* from Rodger Elliot. It has thrived in our gardens, and I have grown and sold it for years, but have no idea what the species is. I am calling it *Dampiera* aff. *lanceolata* Pink, as it has lovely mauve-pink flowers for many months of the year. It is strongly upright, growing to around 0.5m x 0.6m and suckering lightly through the garden. Plants can be chopped back hard if needed and it flowers for many months through spring into early summer. Does anyone know what species it is?



Dampiera aff. *lanceolata* Pink.



Blue-banded Bee on *Scaevola aemula*.

An update on a climbing *Goodenia ovata* plant

Text and Photos: Rodger Elliot

In an earlier newsletter I contributed an article about a plant of *Goodenia ovata* that was a 'branch-climber'. See Goodeniaceae Study Group Newsletter 22.

This plant is now over 2.5m tall and maybe touching the 3m mark. It is likely to keep growing taller as it clambers through a well-established Black She-oak, *Allocasuarina littoralis*.

Many plants adapt to grow as branch climbers and are very successful in that role. This *Goodenia ovata* is one of those plants. The site it occupies is atop of a hill which is very well drained and I reckon on the dryish side for most of the year.

Have included a pic of the plant which is well sheltered within the *Allocasuarina* and probably a bit hard to see. However, the plant seems quite happy and lacks any dead branches but does show a fairly typical array of dead leaves still attached to the stems which if desired, could easily be removed.

An excellent example of adaption and survival in Berwick, Victoria. I do wonder whether enterprising birds may find it to be a perfect nesting site to raise a young family? Hopefully not a blackbird!!!



This *Goodenia ovata* has found its niche by using its branches and stems to find support provided by the stronger growth of the *Allocasuarina littoralis*.

Goodenia aluta and *Goodenia crescentiloba*

Text and Photos: Graham and Maree Goods



Goodenia aluta in the Gibson Desert.





Goodenia aluta. Gibson Desert, WA.



Goodenia crescentiloba. Little Sandy Desert, WA.



Goodenia crescentiloba. Little Sandy Desert, WA.



Goodenia crescentiloba. Little Sandy Desert, WA.

In May 2013 an organisation we belong to, Desert Discovery, was asked by the local indigenous council to survey an area around Wells 12 and 13 on the Canning Stock Route. The reason for the project was to collect as many species of plant that were either in bud, flower and/or fruit. The area was known to have a population of bilbies and the indigenous people were wanting evidence of what plants grew which may be used in the diet of bilbies.

We were part of a team of four people who were responsible for the collection of plant vouchers to be forwarded to the WA Herbarium for identification. Once the specimens were identified the results were then forwarded back the indigenous council who had originally sort the services of Desert Discovery.

At the time little did we know that we were collecting specimens that would be new to science and in 2023 the results of this were published. The species was *Goodenia crescentiloba*.

Again 2018, we were once again on a Desert Discovery project in the Gibson Desert collecting for the WA Herbarium. This time a voucher collection has now been described as *Goodenia aluta*.

Whilst we are not botanists, far from it, it is great to know that we can still have an impact on science as citizen scientists. Citizen science differs from other forms of volunteering; a citizen scientist assists with the collection and/or analysis of data.

All species were collected under permit and we were very well supported by the WA Herbarium in particular Karina Knight, Rob Davis and Kelly Shepherd.