



April Member Meeting IN PERSON

Friday 22nd April

Ringwood East Elderly Citizens Hall, 2-8 Laurence Grove, Ringwood East

Parking is available behind the hall (Melway map 50 B8) and can be accessed via Knaith Road.

To attend, you will need to be fully vaccinated.
Please enter via the FRONT door from 7:30pm.
The back door will only be open to allow Chris Fletcher to bring in her plants. The meeting starts at 8pm.
The sign-in book and name tag box will be on a table just inside the internal entry door to our meeting room.

A Snapshot of Victoria's Alpine Flora Chris Clarke

Chris has been a very involved member of APS Keilor Plains for some years, and is also the current President of APS Victoria.

APS Victoria is the Regional body to which APS Maroondah district group belongs. It is very active on our behalf. You will be aware of the quarterly magazine which APS Victoria produces and sends to you (called "Growing Australian"), the free seed bank and the book sales at discounted prices, but they do a lot of other things in the background to make our lives easier. For instance, they arrange personal liability insurance for all APS Victoria members during APS events.

Chris spoke to us via Zoom on the subject of "Plants of Melbourne's Western Plains" but this will be the first time that he has presented to us in person. He will be taking us on a photographic journey looking at alpine wildflowers and some of their pollinators from several of his trips to these regions.

Help at Member Meetings

Alison Rogers

Supper at the March meeting was enjoyed by the members stayed around to chat at the end of the meeting. We will have supper again at the April meeting. However, we do need help from a couple of volunteers to serve the drinks through the servery. (This is a safety issue.)

If you find you have a chance to get to the hall by 7:30pm, we also need helpers to set up chairs, and helpers to pack them away at the end of the meeting.

Many hands make light work. If a few of us take turns then each of us may only need to do it once a year.

Garden Visit

Sunday 24th April at 2 pm Russell Watkins garden, Donvale

50 Berrima Road, Donvale (Melway Map 34 K12)

Park in the street. However, the driveway is steep, so if you have limited mobility you can drive down to the house.

Russell has lived on this 1.5acre property for 26 years. It extends to Mullum Mullum Creek and has many self-sown Yellow Box (*Eucalyptus melliodora*) as well as numerous other indigenous plants.

Russell has been a keen gardener since childhood and his interest in indigenous plants in 1983. The garden includes exotics as well, but Russell says that his interest in Australian plants is growing.

This is a garden which Maroondah group has not visited before so we hope to see many of our members take the opportunity to see it.

Trevor's Book Launch

2-5pm 30th April

Our own Trevor Blake invites us to the launch of his new book "Lantern Bushes of Australia". Trevor put in several decades of dedicated work to produce this informative beautiful field and garden guide to the Thomasias and their Allied Genera.

This event will take place in the Function Room at the Edinburgh Gardens, North Fitzroy (this is the old Fitzroy Footie oval which is right next to the Bowling Club). There

is good parking in St Georges Road. There is also a designated tram stop at the Bowling Club.

If you are intending to go to the launch, please let Trevor know for catering purposes.

Contact him at trevorblake@optusnet. com.au.



Lantern Bushes of Australia; Thomasias & Allied Genera A Field and Horncultural Guide

by Trevor L. Blake



Propagation from Seed

Presentation to the March meeting prepared by Andrea Dennis, Ryno Oppermann and Bill Aitchison

(unfortunately Andrea could not attend due to a family commitment)

written up by Diane Hedin

Bill explained that the inspiration for this activity came from Andrea who wanted to propagate unusual and difficult-to-grow species for her own garden and to add to the diversity of species grown at Maranoa Botanic Gardens where she works. Andrea feels that there is a dumbing down of native species available in ornamental horticulture, where the focus is on showy, popular cultivars while the parent plants might be fading out of production or becoming endangered in their natural habitats.

Helpful reference books include Elliott and Jones "Encyclopaedia of Australian Plants", "Collect and Grow that Seed" by Judy Barker *et al*, and "Growing Australian Native Plants from Seed" by Murray Ralph.

Four types of treatment of seeds for germination:

(1) No treatment -

Schoenia filifolia ssp subulifolia According to literature:

seeds sown 18 months after collection sow seeds in Autumn Gibberellic acid may help surface sow, cover lightly germination in 5-30 days

From trial:

no pre-treatment required bog method used germination in 6 days

Schoenia cassiniana (pink flowers that turn white after pollination) germinated after 3 days.

Xerochrysum bracteatum and Pycnosorus globosus germinated after 3 days. Seeds were grown in the open. Callerya megasperma, also known as the Native Wisteria. The plant is not readily available in nurseries and the group was keen to grow some for the F. J. C. Rogers seminar. It is a vigorous climber, native to moist areas of SE QLD and NE NSW. Seeds mature in April to May. The group has not had success growing this plant from cuttings but hopes to get some seeds.



Schoenia filifolia ssp subulifolia

(2) Treatment for species with a hard seed coat Species with a hard seed coat that require some treatment include acacias, daviesias and hardenbergias. Bill had experience with *Hardenbergia violacea* seeds that germinated quickly after being soaked in near boiling water for a couple of days. Once germinated the young plants also grew quickly.



Ryno experimented with seeds of *Acacia grasbyi* (a Miniritchi Wattle that grows in WA, NT and SA) and had the best germination rate of 92% with seeds that were scratched, soaked in boiling water overnight then soaked again in cold water overnight. The no treatment group had 0 germination, scratch and boiling water soak had 83% germination and ones that were boiled on the stove for 5 minutes yielded 50%.





Acacia grasbyi

(3) Species that need smoke to germinate

Smoke is applied as smoke water, smoked vermiculite or by using a smoke machine.

Thomasia triphylla: Thomasia seeds are sometimes heavily predated and it is important to obtain good quality, fresh seeds of less than 3 years old. Crack or abrade the seed coat, soak in boiled water for 24 hours, apply smoke water at least once and apply fresh smoke. Germination is expected after 30-50 days.

Glischrocaryon aureum (Golden Pennants) seeds are sown in autumn to spring. Andrea has experimented with growing these seeds in punnets smoked in a Weber BBQ.

Trials are also being done with seeds of *Hemiandra* pungens, *Hibbertia cunninghamii* (notoriously difficult to grow from seeds and are usually grown from cuttings), *Hypocalymma robustum*, *Lechnenaultia linarioides* and *L. biloba* (lechenaultias are burnt areas colonisers).



Glischrocaryon aureum



Seeds can be smoked using a smoker that apiarists use when pacifying their bees.



Thomasia triphylla



Lechenaultia linarioides







Callerya megasperma



Gibberellic acid (GA) is a naturally occurring plant hormone.

Regelia ciliata was treated with GA as suggested in the literature, and Ryno had 1 seed germinated after 9 days. Guichenaultia ledifolia was treated with GA and germinated after 13 days.

Stylidium species are sown in March to mid-April and germination is expected in 12-45 days.

For most species, the following treatment is recommended:

- Soak in GA solution for 24hrs
- Smoke water or vermiculite can be beneficial
- Dry seeds before sowing onto peat moss fines
- Place in well-lit position with good air flow
- Use bog method to water.

To finish the presentation, people shared their experiences in getting different seeds to germinate. Bill encouraged anyone who is interested to join in with these experiments as practical experience can sometimes differ from advice in the literature.

If you would like to join a small group of members to try propagating some of the species discussed (or other species), please contact Bill (aitchguy@gmail.com).



Schoenia filifolia ssp subulifolia and Brachyscome iberidifolia



Schoenia cassiniana

Hormone treatment products

Pasture Max: GA solution, available from agricultural suppliers.

Plantstarter: synthetic plant hormone, a rooting agent, available from most gardening shops.







Lechenaultia biloba

March Specimen Table

Bill Aitchison

Our thanks to Joe Wilson for leading the Specimen Table at our March meeting.

Banksia marginata – This specimen came from a special suckering form that has been growing for a while in a garden in Box Hill. Joe commented that this is a better flowering form than some *B. marginata*. The plant is about 1.5m x 1.5m (some forms get to about 5m, and there are also dwarf forms).

Dodonaea sinuolata – This was in full flower, but the flowers are not particularly conspicuous. Later it is the red fruits that are very evident. It comes from NSW, generally 2-3m, puts up with harsh dry conditions, no attention needed apart from an occasional prune. A good screening plant.



Dodonaea sinuolata

Acacia aphylla – This is a good plant to grow for its foliage, but also attractive when in flower. Joe has it on his nature strip under a Queensland Brushbox.



Acacia aphylla

Eremophila glabra ssp. tomentosa — If you have a bare area and are wondering what to plant there, this is your plant. It has attractive flowers and beautiful grey foliage, one of the easiest to grow of all the eremophilas, tough, puts up with clay, dry soils, no extra watering, and a good groundcover. Birdattracting.

Acacia glaucoptera – Another plant with lovely foliage, it can get to 1m and spread 2-3m. Graeme Nicholls advises that it is easy to propagate from cuttings. Prunes very readily. A good tough plant.



Acacia glaucoptera

Eucalyptus latens 'Moon Lagoon' – Some people will cut this right down to the ground each year to get the new juvenile foliage. A lot of mallee eucalypts such as this respond very well to pruning.



Eucalyptus latens 'Moon Lagoon'

Buckinghamia celsissima – Caryl and Doug Wightman brought this along, their plant is about 15 years old. Last year Caryl spent ages cutting off every single flower, and it has responded magnificently this year. From Qld/NSW, it likes good soils and a bit of love and attention.



Buckinghamia celsissima

Olearia axillaris (Coastal Daisy) – Merele Webb brought this along. Hers is quite an upright plant, with silver (quite smelly) foliage, 2m high and 2-3m wide. It is a front line coastal plant.



Olearia axillaris

Billardiera macrantha – Michael Cook got a frame from Bunnings for this to climb up, and it is now growing up the side of the house. Joe suggests that it prefers shade and a bit of extra moisture. Very nice yellow flowers in November that attract birds. At our meeting this was referred to as *B. longiflora*, but this name is now only applied to plants from Tasmania.

Specimen Table

We had a very successful specimen table at the March meeting. There was plenty to talk about despite the dry summer.

Please contribute specimens for the April meeting with their names attached if possible. As each specimen is displayed by the presenter, a piece is also taken to put under the document camera so that it can be clearly shown on the screen. This can present difficulties if the specimen is very small. Hence, if possible, please bring 2 pieces of small material (tied together).

Presenting the Specimen Table

Nicky Zanen took a picture of the technology used at APS Maroondah meetings to display the Specimen Table. The flowers on the bench are displayed and discussed by the presenter holding up the material, but images are also projected. The Document Camera and projector enable members to see the flowers in detail.



Oooops!

Your newsletter editorial team apologise for errors in last month's *Kunzea*. We had the wrong month for the Garden Visit, but perhaps worse was that we mislabelled one of Geoff Lay's photos in the speaker writeup!

The beautiful yellow flower shown on the bottom of page 3 was inadvertently labelled as *Leptosema chambersii*. Leptosemas are peas – which this plant is not! The correct caption should have been *Petalostylis cassioides*. Thanks to Rodger Elliot for pointing this out.

Newsletter Contributions

We get many compliments about APS Maroondah's monthly newsletter Kunzea. The compliments come not only from our own members, but also from members of other APS groups across Victoria. This is very pleasing.

It reflects both the great job that Graeme Nicholls does with the layout, but also the informative content. This is where YOU come in.

Some of the content is regular reporting – advising upcoming Maroondah events, followed by commentary afterwards. The depth of interesting information comes from a broad range of personal experiences of gardening with Australian plants, or seeing them in their natural habitat. We need you to provide these items.

What can you provide? Some ideas are photos of your Australian plants/native area of your garden, or flora seen in the wild. If you can provide plant names and even an few words to go with the photos, that is even better.

You could also send a brief note about what you are currently doing in your garden, or where you have been lately, or what is doing well for you — or perhaps suffering over the recent dry months.

Please email contributions to aitchguy@gmail.com. Please note that photos should be at highest possible resolution so that they will reproduce clearly in *Kunzea*. Also, photos should be sent as separate files from words/article.

Looking for a New Editor

Each month Sue Guymer puts together the content to go into our newsletter "Kunzea". Graeme Nicholls then puts the artistic touches to the layout, and arranges to distribute the newsletter.

Sue is looking for a break from this job. She has done various parts of the editor role for about 20 years and feels that both she and the quality of the content could benefit if a new Contents Editor were to take over. This is a great opportunity to get more involved in APS Maroondah, learn more about Australian plants and get to know other members better. You don't need to be on the Committee (unless you want to, of course). When Sue took it on in the late 1980s, she had only been a member for a few month, and wasn't on the Committee.

Please take this request seriously. It isn't easy to find people willing to take on regular responsibility for a role such as this, but the future of *Kunzea* will depend on someone coming forward to help.

Rutaceae Ruminations

Marilyn Bull and George Stolfo

This is the ninth in a series of articles on members of the Rutaceae family written by Marilyn and illustrated by George.

Boronia filifolia

Slender Boronia is a beautiful, very dainty, low-growing boronia which flowers on and off almost all year. Solitary or in groups of 3, the little pink flowers dot the ends of each stem.

I have had success with this species over many years, with plants lasting quite a few years before succumbing, perhaps because I missed watering it for too long in a particularly dry spell. I have lovely memories of it on Kangaroo Island, covering the sides of the road, growing in moist white sand. I do not have those conditions but it seems to be very forgiving.

Boronia filifolia is a low mounding shrub to 0.5 m high. It prefers shade but will take more sun if the roots are kept cool. It is most floriferous in spring. Its leaves can take on a purplish tinge sometimes. The leaves are narrow with one form having finer leaves than the other and smell of aniseed when crushed.

This is a great little plant to have dotted around the garden. It responds to pruning and can live for many years.



Pea Seminar Update 15th and 16th October 2022

Registrations for the 14th FJC Rogers' Seminar on Fabulous Peas are flowing in. A hardcopy of the Registration Form was distributed with the March edition of *Growing Australian*, and an electronic version can be found in the "2022 - Fabulous Peas" section of the APS Victoria website (apsvic.org.au).

Discounted, earlybird fees apply for the Seminar until the end of June. However, as places are limited, we encourage you to register sooner rather than later.

Also, if you have not already done so, contact us at fabulouspeas2022@gmail.com to register your interest and be kept up-to-date with our newsletters.

Autumn Plant Sales

The March plant sales run by APS Yarra Yarra and the Friends of RBG Cranbourne were greatly successful. Many native plants found new homes. Also, many plant nuts had a chance to catch up with like-minded friends.

The Geelong Autumn Plant Sale will also have been held by the time you read this.

Other Australian plant sales coming up are APS Mornington Peninsula (7th May) and APS Melton & Bacchus Marsh (14th May).

Later there will be winter sales at Ballarat and Cranbourne. See page 8 for more details.

Early winter is here

Sue Guymer

I have always felt that the weather around Melbourne in the early part of the calendar year seems to change from summer to winter pretty much overnight!

We might get the occasional warmer day sporadically following this change but there doesn't seem to be an autumn "season". This year, I had just changed our summer doona to our winter doona about a week before the end of March. About a week later — we needed to put on the heater!

You probably remember me mentioning the *Timelines* calendar that we follow. *Timelines* calendars are developed for a specific area and are intended to reflect the actual seasonal changes and timings of that area. They are an alternative way of thinking about our

weather patterns, rather than using a Gregorian calendar with fixed dates for the seasons. It was originally developed for a continent on the other side of our planet, but it has been transposed by six months.

Our *Timelines* calendar was developed by Manningham and Nillumbik Councils for their area, including knowledge of Indigenous people of the area. I understand that the original inhabitants recognised six seasons, not four. The *Timelines* calendar also recognises six seasons, although they have been lined up with calendar months for convenience. We have just ended Late Summer (February and March) and entered Early Winter (April and May).

Seems right to me.

Buckinghamia celsissima

Ivory Curl

Graeme Nicholls

This is a plant which always turns heads when in flower during autumn. The long creamy flowerheads often completely hide the dark green glossy foliage, and the bees love them.

It is native to the rainforests of north Queensland, where it can be a medium sized tree, but it rarely grows beyond a large shrub in cultivation in cooler climates. Surprisingly, although it is a rainforest species, it seems to thrive in open, sunny, dry positions here in Melbourne, growing in heavy clay.



The picture below was taken of a plant growing in the harshest of conditions in the front of a business premises in Nunawading. Sadly the business has now closed and the new owners cleared the site.



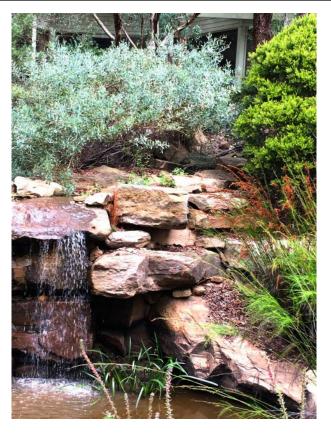
When Less is More

Sue Guymer

I am a plant person more than a design person, so I probably don't cut back or remove plants as often as I could. Sometimes it is good to be reminded that this is desirable

Recently we had someone clean up the vegetation in our ponds and he suggested cutting back a wattle which was overhanging the creek above the billabong. This was a great idea and both the wattle and the overall "picture" look better for it.

On another recent occasion, a storm took out a couple of skinny eucalypts beside a path. The aspect now looks more inviting.



Crinum luteolum from seed

Bruce Schroder

Earlier this year I posted pics on Maroondah's Facebook page of the rare event of the mass flowering of the rare yellow-flowered *Crinum luteolum* in the southern Flinders Ranges, as a result of an unusual summer storm event that impacted on much of outback South Australia. Not rare as "endangered" but rare as in they only appear after the few and far between summer storms that hit the region. After the storms in early February, it is reported that they flowered in their millions throughout the desert regions to the west and east of the Flinders Ranges.

In their natural habitat, tennis ball-sized bulbs are usually about 400-500mm deep below the ground with a very long neck, but with no visible foliage unless it rains. The bulb system must somehow be able to sense the change in moisture at the surface through this long neck, triggering the development of a dormant flower bud deep within the bulb. A flower spike will appear at the ground surface within only days of the rain event. Flowering and setting seed is usually complete within about a month to 6 weeks.

Unlike many species of Australian plants that can cling onto their seeds for many years after flowering in hard woody fruits, the seeds of the few members of the Amaryllidaceae family we have growing in Australia, such as Crinum and Calostemma, are considered recalcitrant. This means that they need no stimulus to commence germination, and in fact cannot be prevented from germinating. The seeds, often up to 25mm in diameter, have a large and fleshy endosperm (the part of a seed which acts as a food store for the developing plant embryo, usually containing starch with protein and other nutrients), which sustains the developing seedling whilst its young roots search for a toehold and moisture. Without follow up rains, most young seedling plants perish.

Back in 2012 and 2013, there were similar such events resulting in a proliferation of seeds, probably not much



Crinum luteolum plant.

more than a month after the rain. I was fortunate enough to obtain some seeds from these 2 events, and managed to produce a dozen or more plants which I have been nurturing now for almost 10 years. I sowed my first batch of seeds in May 2012. Of course growing conditions on the slopes of Mount Dandenong are somewhat far removed from those on the slopes of the Pichi Richi Pass in the southern Flinders Ranges, so I have trialled some plants in the garden, some quite dry under cover in deep (300m) narrow pots, and some in large deep (450mm) tubs out in all weathers Melbourne has to offer.

To my utter surprise, one of the 3 bulbs in the deep outdoor tub has recently presented me with a flower spike for the very first time. A 10 year wait for the first flowering – that's patience!





Crinum luteolum flowers.



March Garden Visit

Orton and Cove Gardens

Sue Guymer pictures by Bill Aitchison

Tom and Rosemary Orton and their daughter Kate Cove have adjacent properties. As a group, we last visited these gardens in 2014, when they had been there about 8 years. They share a large, combined back garden after removing boundary fences and some old garden beds.

Rosemary said that gardening with Australian plants has been a big learning curve for her and Tom, coming from England. Evan Clucas helped them with the planting in the early days, and they still have a couple of banksias from then. They are continue to learn about Australian plants from APS.



Banksia spinulosa

Kate told us that the nature strip was just grass when they moved in. They added gypsum and compost and rotary-hoed it, letting it settle for about 6 months before planting. She describes her landscaping style as "a bit random", and she pulls things out and replaces them at will. She has a beehive in the back garden so is careful to have lots of small plants which are attractive to the bees, particularly those with blue flowers.

Kate's favourite plant in the front garden is an allocasuarina (possibly *Allocasuarina crassa*) which was supposed to be prostrate. It keeps to about 1m tall but its branches are quite sprawling and it needs a lot of cutting back. Kate describes it as "crazy-looking".



Kate's favourite allocasuarina.



Acacia glaucoptera has been featured in the front gardens. A prostrate form of Goodenia ovata is doing beautifully on Tom and Rosemary's nature strip. Chrysocephum apiculatum and Brachyscome multifida also feature here.

There are lovely ponds in front of both houses with small native fish – Murray River Rainbows. Tom put his bobcat skills to use to provide drainage to a bog area for frogs in the back, as well as the ponds in the front.



Gnomes pond.



Nature Strip.



Bridge in the front of the Orton garden.

The Ortons' front garden includes a low-growing red-flowered Corymbia ficifolia and Correa reflexa, both in flower. There is also a coppiced Eucalyptus caesia 'Silver Princess', Philotheca myoporoides which has been clipped quite hard, Brachyscome multifida covered in mauve flowers, a low form of Acacia cognata hanging over the creek leading under a bridge to the pond. Personia pinifolia in flower, Brachyscome formosa 'Piliga Posy' and Crowea exalata in flower.

The combined backyard is a lovely relaxed space. In the well-shaded back corner is a "Frog Bog". Around the bog is a "lawn" of *Viola hederacea* and *Dichondra repens* combined. Shade has been very well incorporated in this area. A very large *Acacia baileyana* (purpurea form) helps to shade the house. There is also a large leptospermum with burgundy foliage. *Eucalyptus conferruminata* flowers by the back fence.

We ended with a lovely afternoon tea on the deck. Many thanks to Kate, Tom and Rosemary for their hospitality, and particularly to Rosemary for the lovely home-made biscuits.



Corymbia ficifolia



Allocasuarina flowers (male).



Acacia baileyana purpurea



Eucalyptus conferruminata

Activities in 2022

Our meetings will normally be held on the 4th Friday of the month, with the garden visit on the following Sunday.

Autumn Sales and Displays

7th May – APS Mornington Peninsula Plant Sale, "The Briars", Nepean Highway, Mt Martha, , from 10am to 3:30pm.

14th May – APS Melton & Bacchus Marsh Plant Sale, St Andrew's Uniting Church, 18 Gisborne Road, Bacchus Marsh, from 9am to 1pm.

25th **& 26**th **June** – APS Ballarat Winter Flower Show, Robert Clark Centre, Ballarat Botanic Gardens, Gilles St, Ballarat, from 10am to 4pm.

23rd **& 24**th **July** – RBG Cranbourne Friends Plant Sale, Australian Garden (near kiosk), RBG Cranbourne, from 10am to 4pm.

Plant Sale

The Briars, Nepean Hwy, Mt Martha. Saturday 7th May 2022. 10am to 3.30pm.

Come along and get professional advice direct from the growers.



Australian
Plants Society,
Mornington
Peninsula.
For further details
contact secretary
0428 284 974





Karwarra Australian Native Botanic Garden & Nursery

An inspirational public garden displaying colour^ful Australian native plants, including rare and special plants. Retail nursery selling a wide range of small tubes and 140cm pots.

Open Tuesday – Friday 10am-4pm, Saturday & Sunday 1pm-4pm. Free entry.







Seminars and Conferences

Sunday 11th – Friday 16th September 2022
ANPSA Conference, hosted by APS NSW at Kiama.

Saturday 15th & Sunday 16th October 2022

14th FJC Rogers Seminar on "Fabulous Peas", hosted by APS Maroondah at Mt Evelyn. Please send expressions of interest to fabulouspeas2022@gmail.com

Registrations are NOW OPEN.

You will find the form at https://apsvic.org.au/fjc-rogers-seminar- 2022/

FNCV Botany group talks

Third Thursday of the month starts at 8pm at FNCV Hall, 1 Gardenia Street, Blackburn (Melway map 47 K10).

21st April – Pam McDiarmid, botanical artist on "Re-finding Beckler's 1861 Menindee Plants".

APS Melton & Bacchus Marsh Inc.



NATIVE PLANT SALE

at St Andrew's Uniting Church, 18 Gisborne Road, Bacchus Marsh, (MEL333 J6)

Saturday 14th May 2022 9am-1pm

FEATURING HAKEAS

and dwarf EUCALYPTS

Info: Barb / David 0417 289 369 or apsmeltonbacchus@gmail.com

Australian Plants Society Maroondah Inc.

Postal address: P.O. Box 33, Ringwood 3134

Email: maroondah@apsvic.org.au

Newsletter contributions:

Contributions for the May 2022 Newsletter should be sent to Sue Guymer at aitchguy@gmail.com no later than

Friday 6th May 2022

Maroondah Group website:

australianplantssoc.wix.com/maroondah

APS Vic website: www.apsvic.org.au

Published by APS Maroondah Inc. Registration No. A0013122B

