



# AUSTRALIAN PLANTS SOCIETY Yarra Yarra Group Inc.

(Incorporation No: A0039676Y)

## Newsletter May 2020



### Coronavirus Edition

Dear Members,

We hope that you've all been coping with, or preferably making the best of, the stage 3 restrictions we have been under and which will remain in place until 11th May (or until further notice).

Our Autumn Plant Sale went ahead online and we hope you've been able to take advantage of some of the great plants on offer - now is the time to get them in the ground! Miriam, Jill and the Growers Group have been doing a great job to make this work and make it as easy as possible for members. Thank you all for your efforts. Miriam has a more detailed update later in the newsletter.

The Online Plant Sale is also open to the public this week, until 2nd May, but that doesn't preclude members still ordering as well. Check the new form on our website, which will be updated daily if species are sold out : <https://apsyarrayarra.org.au/australian-plants-expo/autumn-plant-sale/>

We will also run a plant sale in September/October, although we're not sure just yet what form that might take, whether it will also be online or run from a venue with numbers restricted.

Without our usual meetings and garden visits on hold we requested articles, photos, or ideas from members and we received some beautiful photos of what is flowering in member's gardens right now. We hope you enjoy them and don't forget to send us more for our June newsletter.

### **Bushfire Recovery**

With the coronavirus pandemic taking over our lives it's easy to forget the horrific bushfires that hit us over summer. We had several enquiries about what members could do and there was a great article in the March edition of 'Growing Australian', which was reprinted from The Conversation 28/01/2020. One of the best things you can do to help is to pull out the weeds that take advantage of the clear ground to establish themselves ahead of our native flora. This is critical over the next 6-18 months so it's never too late to get involved with a community park care, bush care, land care or friends group and lend a hand (events on hold at the moment). If you can't do the work yourself, these groups will also accept donations to help keep other volunteers in the field.

You can find lots of information and links to groups you can join at the Australian Association of Bush Regenerators website (<https://www.aabr.org.au/>) or join their Facebook group (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/>





### **Call for Committee Members**

The call for Committee members remains open, with us not having received any enquiries yet. Please consider volunteering a few hours of your time to keep our group running. Contact Miriam, Sue or Andrea if you would like more information on the roles available.

### **Best and Most Reliable Plants**

Neil Marriott's article in 'Growing Australian' (March 2020) posed a very interesting question in these challenging times. Formerly 'tough as old boots' plants in the Australian garden have not survived the gruelling summers we have experienced. Melbourne I thought also had periods of humidity that were not in line with our usual hot and dry summers and did not suit a lot of our garden regulars. So what plants are the new stalwarts of the future Australian garden? How did your plants cope over summer? Which plants would you recommend now to someone planting a new garden in our area that are reliable and proven performers? We'd love to get a list together of what you think should be on the list of best and most reliable plants - send us your top 5 favourites (more if you wish) and we'll send them through to APS Victoria for their newsletter.

### **Towards 2 Billion Trees**

Our native forests are home to some of the most unique wildlife and plants on Earth. Today our precious trees are being lost at an unprecedented rate. Every year an estimated 500,000 hectares of native forests and woodlands are bulldozed across Australia. Without our urgent, collective action, an estimated 750 million native animals in Australia will die as a consequence of excessive tree-clearing by 2030. As a consequence of the recent bushfires more than 10 million hectares of Australian land have been burned. And while trees burn, our wildlife also suffers. World Wildlife Fund (WWF) has launched an ambitious 10-point plan for the next 10 years designed to: **STOP** excessive tree-clearing, **PROTECT** our existing trees and forests, and **RESTORE** native habitat that has been lost.

If you'd like to find out more and read the report 'Towards 2 Billion Trees' please visit their website : <https://www.wwf.org.au/what-we-do/2-billion-trees#gs.4w93po>





### Online Plant Sale, FJC Rogers Seminar, & APS YY Growers Group Update by Miriam Ford

#### Online Plant Sale & APS YY Growers

By now members will have purchased plants in our online sale. Not quite the same as last year, but then what is in this COVID-19 pandemic era. The sales have been slow and steady which is a good thing. I make up the orders and they are either picked up here or Jill collects and takes to Eltham. The Barfield's, at Research is also a collection point. People can, by appointment, come here to Hurstbridge to make their selection. The plants are arranged such that social distancing applies and just one car up the driveway at a time fits the criteria. When this newsletter goes out, we will have opened the sale to the public. Thanks to Jill an interactive descriptive form was created of the list of species offered by the APS YY Growers which made the whole thing possible. Jill is also tracking sales & doing pickups. Thanks also to Carmen for time spent researching and providing the detailed descriptions of plant species which was pivotal to creating our plant labels and which also assists people in making choices when otherwise not familiar with the plants.

The Growers collaboration with La Trobe University Indigenous Nursery saw the University locked down due to the COVID-19 restrictions and us having to remove all our stock. The tube stock came to me at Hurstbridge and Carmen took charge of the seedlings, many trays therein of *Eucalypts*, *Hakea*, & *Acacia* predominantly, all germinated from seed, set up in early summer. Once pricked out by Carmen I picked up to store here. They are doing very nicely (see image). We will have a great array for sale later this year or next, many beautiful and rare species, otherwise impossible to obtain elsewhere. The APS Motto – preservation by propagation & cultivation.

In order for the sale to take place, a great deal of sorting out and re-organisation of stock needed to take place here at Hurstbridge, which was mostly down to me due to logistics and terrain. I appreciated the assistance (just one at a time to follow the rules) from Jenny Hedley, Atika Rea, Lyhn Barfield, John Walkley and Andrea Himmelspach with plant maintenance (once the plants were arranged in alphabetical order) and labelling. Thank you also to Suzie Gordon and Bel Matthews who have been very industrious *in situ*. Because of the doubt about the FJC Rogers 2020 seminar going ahead, see below, we have many very well grown species from the Mint Bush and Allied Genera collection in our current sale. The APS YY Growers generated 110 species for the sale within which were 55 *Prostanthera* & 12 Allied Genera (*Hemiandra*, *Hemigenia* & *Westringia*). And that's not all folks! There are more to come. Thank you to all the Growers who have made it possible with their commitment and dedication over the years. It continues, albeit in reduced format here at Hurstbridge for the time being. With thanks also to Mike Williams, one of our highly experienced, independent growers within APS YY who has supplied many species to us and continues to work up species within the Allied Genera.



Jenny with plants





## **Online Plant Sale, FJC Rogers Seminar, & APS YY Growers Group Update by Miriam Ford**

### FJC Rogers Seminar 2020

The FJC Committee has yet to meet to make a final decision on what we do in regard to this seminar which was meant to take place at our Expo venue, the Eltham Community and Reception Centre (ECRC) over the weekend of October 24th & 25th. As restrictions on large gatherings will still apply then and our particular demographic is the population at highest risk to viral infection it is most likely to be cancelled in its current form and to be offered in another way. We will update you further when we know what that format will be. We did request some feedback from you, our members, in our previous news and while the results were very limited we arrived at the following consensus:

#### **Member Survey**

		<b>Total Y</b>	<b>Total N</b>
1	Cancel the seminar with no alternatives	4	7
2	Cancel but with online videos of speakers, if they are willing	7	4
3	Cancel but with online videos of garden, owners willing	5	6

The FJC Rogers Committee meets at the end of May/early June when we will make our decision in consultation with APS Victoria.

## **Face Masks to make at home (& promote Australian plants) by Jill Lulham**

I have been keeping busy making masks for all the family. This one is using quilting material with Australian wildflowers as the design.

The pattern is available on the internet, and was recommended to me by my cousin who is a doctor and using them for his private practice, when it was hard to get the usual surgical ones.

It should be washed daily, and has a removable filter inside.

The pattern can be found online here:

[craftpassion.com/face-mask-sewing-pattern/](http://craftpassion.com/face-mask-sewing-pattern/)

I modified it to include a pocket for a doubled-over pipe cleaner inside to help it fit properly over the nose.

Tip: be careful to print the pattern as pdf, 'actual size' (not 'to fit'), and Letter size, not A4, even though you use A4 paper.



Jill's daughter models the Australian flora face mask

### The 2020 Eucalypt of the Year



Eucalypt Australia is thrilled to announce that the winner of the 2020 Eucalypt of the Year competition is the spectacular Illyarrie, *Eucalyptus erythrocorys*, also known as the Red-capped Gum.

It's one of the most distinctive of all the eucalypts, with its dark red bud caps, bright yellow flowers arranged in four tufts, and heavy, woody fruits. It's totally unique, and not closely-related to any other species of eucalypt. It's native home is on the west coast of Australia, between Perth and Shark Bay, where it grows on almost pure limestone. However, it's often planted ornamentally in cities such as Perth, Adelaide, Melbourne and Alice Springs. It's very tolerant of drought and rapidly responds to fire by reshooting new growth from trunk and branches.

In second place we have *Eucalyptus regnans*, known as the Mountain Ash in Victoria or Swamp Gum in Tasmania. It's the tallest of all eucalypt species, and holds the current title for the tallest tree in Australia.

The iconic Lemon-scented Gum, *Corymbia citriodora*, has taken out third place. It's one of only two eucalypt species with lemon-scented leaves, which contain the essential oil citronella. It grows naturally in woodlands and open forest in central and north Queensland, and can grow up to 45m tall.

### Vale Shirley Carn

Many of our members will remember our visits to her wonderful gardens over many years. Thanks Nicky for letting us know: "Yesterday one of our marvellous plantswomen and gardeners passed away after a short spell of home palliative care. Shirley Carn. Active member of APS Foothills, Karwarra Gardens and Ferny Creek Horticultural Society, opened the gardens she developed in Monbulk on so many occasions including through the Open Garden scheme. Our sympathies go to her wonderful family. She inspired us, shared with us and taught us so much. We were lucky to have her in our midst."



### In Awe of Autumn by Miriam Ford, images by Gordon Barfield

I love Autumn - the clear, still, calm days, early morning mists, the intensity of colours, the budding up and the flowers, so many lovely flowers. So I asked Gordon Barfield to come over and give me a lesson on taking macro photographs of the plants in flower in my garden. Many of you will recall from our Christmas Slide shows Gordon's exquisite images of birds and wildlife as well as the flowers in his and Lyhn's lovely Open Garden in Research. I learnt much during our recent morning session, but I was just the assistant in this instance – all images by Gordon. They are:

*Verticordia grandis* – (Myrtaceae family), *Verticordia* – the turner of hearts & *grandis* as in large leaves, flowers. I have this splendid grafted specimen in a hanging basket. It was meant to be *V. oculata* but it isn't. It is endemic to WA, coastal plains, Geraldton region. A stunning beauty and great in a hanging basket.

*Hemigenia sp* WA (Lamiaceae family, subfamily Prostantheroideae) – grafted from Phil, endemic to WA, also growing well in a hanging basket. Member of the Mint Bush and Allied Genera plants being grown for display at the FJC Rogers 2020.

*Hakea 'Burrendong Beauty'* – (Proteaceae family) one of the most stunning Hakeas, loved by bees, birds and humans alike. If you are not growing this, you should be. Go out and get one! It does very well in local gardens. I have about 6, many purchased from Noel Gaskett at our General meetings. It must be propagated from cuttings unlike most Hakea which is best from seed. The hybrid (*H. myrtoides* X *H. petiolaris*) was discovered growing in Burrendong Arboretum in central NSW.

*Melaleuca fulgens*, magenta – Myrtaceae family, *fulgens* means glowing which is indeed what it does when in flower, a beacon of intense colour. Endemic to WA, NT and SA. A scrappy looking bush otherwise, fully redeemed when it flowers.



*Verticordia grandis*



*Hemigenia sp.*



*Hakea 'Burrendong Beauty'*



*Melaleuca fulgens*

### **The Barfield Garden – The Linden by Miriam Ford, images by Gordon Barfield**

I was sent many beautiful flower images but for this piece it will be just be a selection of *Eremophilas* (Scrophulariaceae family) from the garden. Lyhn loves *Eremophilas* & tells me she has about 60 overall.

*Eremophila cuneifolia* (*Eremophila* means desert loving, the preferred habitat of this genus) & *cuneata* - wedge shape, note the leaves). Endemic to the NW of WA, it is a spreading sticky shrub & has persistent coloured sepals and deep purple flowers.

*Eremophila splendens* 'Spitfire' – the species is endemic to WA, restricted to the Shark Bay area. It is covered in glandular hairs and the name *splendens* derives from its splendid/shiny appearance. A great performer in the garden.

*Eremophila* 'Meringur Isaac'. This stunner is the deep purple version of 'Big Poly', a hybrid of *bignoniiflora* X *polyclada*, one of the larger shrubs in this Genus and a hardy performer in most gardens. The parent plants have a wide distribution in the drier areas of the mainland states of Australia.

*E. flaccida* (from *flaccid* as in limp, hanging down, the usual habit of the flower) – endemic to WA, Pilbara region, a low spreading sticky shrub with large attractive flowers & again persistent coloured calyx/sepals.

Images clockwise from top left: *E. cuneifolia*, *E. splendens* 'Spitfire', *E. flaccida*, *E. 'Meringur Isaac'*



## April Member's Gardens

### Jill Lulham, Patti Crowley and Ray Barnes Gardens by Jill Lulham, images by Jill Lulham

#### Patti's Garden

Patti is very pleased with her *Eremophila prolata*, which is very small but looking lovely in flower, and lots of bees on it. She bought it at one of our meetings.

Also can anyone identify the flower on the cream cloth, please?

Patti asks can she put cow manure on top of leaves to soak down into soil? She says Shirley Carn swore by cow manure, but maybe she didn't have lots of leaves.



*Eremophila prolata*



*Correa sp.*



*Crowea sp.*



*Diplolaena grandiflora*





## April Member's Gardens

### Jill's Garden

My garden was looking forward to a bit more attention from me with this home isolation, mainly weeding, but as luck would have it, I have all the family here and a 6 year old grandson needing minding, & home schooling, while the others work from home. So lots of meals to be made too, but at least we are also getting lots of exercise with walks and cycle rides along the Yarra each day.



*Thyptomene saxicola* 'Paynes'



*Correa pulchella*



*Eremophila ovata*



*Chrysocephalum semipapposum*



*Crowea saligna*



*Swainsona formosa*



*Grevillea leptobotrys*



# April Member's Gardens

## Ray's Garden



*Correa 'Canberra Bells'*



*Scaevola 'Fashion Pink'*



*Melaleuca fulgens 'Hot Pink'*



*Eremophila 'Big Polly'*



*Hakea 'Stockdale Sensation'*



*Prostanthera eckerslayana*

### My Garden by Sue Gwilym, images by Sue Gwilym

My garden in Eltham is quite new, just over 3 years old. We inherited a very old, overgrown, mostly exotic garden and have worked to turn it into a native garden over the years. We're on clay with some steep sections and we have large trees in surrounding gardens providing shade in ours. We still couldn't resist planting a few trees in ours, but otherwise I like small plants, grasses and groundcovers.

*Eucalyptus leucoxylon ssp megalocarpa*



*Brachyscome* 'Lemon Twist'



*Brachyscome* 'Mauve Delight'



*Xerochrysum bracteatum*



*Pelargonium australe*



*Correa* 'Trixielle'



*Veronica* 'Monty's Blue'



*Wahlenbergia stricta*



*Leptorhynchos squamatus*



### **Callistemon subulatus 'Brogo Overflow' by Sonia Gatti**

My *Callistemon* is looking glorious at the moment. It cheers me up every morning. An asset in these difficult times.

It flowered in January but this recent flowering is even better. It is about 2-3 years old and is situated in the corner of a north facing raised bed, surrounded by brick and wood retaining walls. I planted it in this corner so it would spill over the wall which is located close to our back patio. It has become a spectacular show piece. Whilst flowering, it is covered in bees, so one problem is that we can't sit too close to it!

It is very hardy. It is growing in clay soil and because it's situated close to retaining walls, I'm not sure how good the drainage is. But it seems to be thriving!



### **Tiny Orchids by Sue Gwilym, images by Evan Gwilym**

On a walk up a local bushland track we were enjoying the fresh air and keeping a look out for what was in flower.

These two tiny orchids were difficult to spot:

*Eriochilus cucullatus* (left) is 8-25cm high with flowers 2cm across and a thin wiry stem. Flowers can be pink but we only saw white specimens.

*Pterostylis parviflora* (right) is 15-30cm high with a spike of up to 13 flowers 1cm long and is unusual with the flowers facing into the stem.





## Committee, Newsletter and General Meeting Matters

### *The APS Yarra Yarra Committee:*

- Miriam Ford - President, COM Delegate, Growers Group, Chair FJC 2020 Committee, M 0409 600 644
- Peter Smith - Vice President, Garden Visits, M 0425 798 275
- Andrea Himmelspach - Treasurer, Growers Group, M 0424 314 648
- Sue Gwilym - Secretary, Newsletter Editor, M 0401 250 331
- Carmen Cooper - Membership Officer, Growers Group, M 0413 012 045
- Adrian Seckold - General Meeting Plant Sales, M 0431 071 503

### *APS YY Committee Meeting Dates:*

#### General Committee Meeting:

12th May, 2020, by teleconference

#### FJC 2020 Committee Meeting:

TBC end of May/early June

### *Contributions to the next Newsletter to Sue Gwilym by Tuesday 19th May please.*



#### **Email:**

[yarrayarra@apsvic.org.au](mailto:yarrayarra@apsvic.org.au)

OR post to:

Newsletter Editor,  
APS Yarra Yarra,  
PO Box 298,  
Eltham 3095

Thank you to Miriam Ford, Jill Lulham and Sonia Gatti for articles and photos; Jill and Miriam for proof reading; Miriam Ford, Jill Lulham, Gordon Barfield, Sonia Gatti and Evan Gwilym for images. Editor (SG) for all other images & articles.

We wish to acknowledge the major sponsorship of our Expo by **Hume Bricks & Pavers Pty Ltd** (<https://www.humebrickspavers.com.au/>) Thank You!

**Website:** [www.apsyarrayarra.org.au](http://www.apsyarrayarra.org.au)

**Facebook:** [facebook.com/APSarrayarra](https://www.facebook.com/APSarrayarra)

### *Meeting Particulars: Visitors always welcome*

**When:** 8.00pm, 1st Thursday each month (except January). Doors open 7.30pm. Come early for plant sales. \$2.00 entry includes raffle ticket for plant prize. Supper following the meeting is provided.

**Venue:** Orana Building, Araruen Centre, 226 Old Eltham Rd, Lower Plenty.

**Guest Speaker:** Learn more through talks by expert speakers, and discussions following.

**Audience etiquette:** No interruptions to the speaker during the talk, questions (one per person) at the end of the talk, when requested.

**Flower Table Specimens:** Bring along your flowers, labelled if possible, for the flower table.

**Plant Sales:** Members may buy plants, unusual varieties are often available, or sell their own.

**Library:** Members can borrow books from our specialist library.

**Chairs:** Members please help set up chairs for the meeting from 7.30pm onwards and put away again after the meeting.

*Cancelled Until Further Notice*

