



Australian Plants Society

# Yarra Yarra

Group Inc

(Incorporation No. A0039676Y)

## Newsletter May 2018

### *May 3: Maree & Graham Goods: Gardening in the Wimmera*

Graham & Maree come from a farming and administration background. They are Life Members of the Wimmera Growers of Australian Plants of which they have been members for over 40 years. Their garden has been open to the public on several occasions for various charities. They ran a wholesale nursery for several years specialising in Eremophilas. Graham and Maree's current project is growing plants, landscaping and overseeing the planting of the gardens surrounding the new building of their Church which was opened recently.

They first became involved with Australia's inland deserts in 2002 with an organisation called Desert Discovery as part of the Botany team. In 2008, Maree became the Botany Team Leader, while Graham was involved with the photography and identification of specimens. They have done volunteer work for Australian Wildlife Conservancy, Friends of the Great Victoria Desert, Victorian and Western Australian Herbariums in collecting, identifying and processing specimens. Graham and Maree are co-authors of the book, *Birds and Plants of the Little Desert*, a photographic guide and Maree a co-author of *Australia's Eremophilas*



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# APS Yarra Yarra Particulars

## APS YY General Meeting Speakers:

- 7-June** Greg Moore **Urban Greening**
- 5-July** Ryan Phillips **Animal Interactions**
- 2-Aug** AGM & **Grand Flower Table** with short presentation by David Redfern -**A portrait of *Banksia menziesii*** (image below).
- 6-Sept** Katie Holmes **Mallee Landscapes**
- 4-Oct** David & Barbara Pye **Melton Botanic Gardens**
- 1-Nov** APS YY **Grand Flower Table**
- 6-Dec** APS YY **Slide Show & Party**

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- Adrian Seckold (Minutes Secretary & meeting plant sales) 0431 071 503
- \*Peter Smith ( Garden Visits) 0425 798 275.

## APS YY Garden Visits:

**May 13, 2 pm**, Bill Aitchison and Sue Guymer Garden, Donvale.

Natural bush garden with ponds, stream and large dam merging to adjacent bush. Original work and planting done 30 years ago. Recent conversion of a swimming pool done by Phillip Johnson. What has been created is **truly spectacular** - don't miss your chance to experience the waterfalls and frogs.

Melway 49 A1. Plenty of parking at street level. No parking on the property as access steep and tight - there is a limited turning area. People with limited mobility can be dropped off. There are steep & rough areas for walking but negotiable with assistance. Well worth the effort. Bring a plate of afternoon tea to share.



## Contributions to the 2018 June APS YY News to Miriam by 25 May please

**Email:** miriamdfc30@gmail.com (NOTE - this is new please change this in your contacts!) OR post to Newsletter editor APS Yarra YarraPO Box 298, Eltham 3095

Thank you to Maree & Graham Goods, Jill Lulham, Ben Hutchinson, Pat Cameron, Peter Smith & John Bell for articles, Jill and Joanne for proof reading, Ben Eaton, Ben Hutchinson, David Redfern for images, Editor (MF) for all other images & articles.

We wish to acknowledge the major sponsorship of our Expo by Hume Bricks & Pavers Pty Ltd.

Thank you to Vicki Ward's Office for printing



## April 5: Meeting Report -Eremophilas

For Anne, it was not love at first sight and it all started with a grafted *Eremophila maculata* var *brevifolia* that has flowered ever since she purchased it some 20 years ago. She opened her talk with a stunning image of this plant with its lovely vivid red tubular flowers. In fact a particular feature of Anne's talk was her beautiful images. Because of dry difficult conditions in her garden, on a sloping windy site, with good drainage she decided Eremophilas were the plants for her. They are in the Family Scrophulariaceae with 221 species and many more subspecies. Their flowers are tubular with 5 petals, with a range of colours encompassing the entire rainbow. Colour on the plant is extended by the colourful calyces which remain long after the petals have gone.

There are two types of Eremophila- two types of flowers which are preferred by different pollinators. Those which are insect pollinated, around 80% of the species, mostly by bees but also moths & others – these have 4 petals down, two often fused, and one recurved (Left image). These flowers have a kind of landing pad, with runway lights in the UV spectrum to draw the insects in. The stamens are short so the insect has to walk inside and they come in predominantly purple, blue, lilac, cream and white. The other flower type, pollinated by birds, is more like a fuchsia in shape (around 20% of species) with extruded stamens. There are many other colours in this type – reds, browns, greens, deep burgundy to almost black (Right image).

The leaves have great variation in shape and form. Some eremophilas are even grown just for foliage. Some are aromatic eg *E.microtheca*. They are native to Australia and occur in all major landscapes. Their preferred distribution is between 200-400 mm rain, so many occur in SA. Most grow in sandy loam, gravelly soils that are nutrient poor. They do not like humid conditions especially the hairy ones and do not like to be water logged. They do really well in pots. Some will cope with frost, others do not. It is best to establish the plants with regular watering, not too much & then leave well alone. Serious pruning is OK for many, cut back by at least one third.

Very few are grown from seed which is very difficult to germinate. They are best propagated from cuttings. Care must be taken with the hairy grey ones. At Melton BG they place cuttings into 50/50 perlite/potting mix into the greenhouse, watered once a day. Cuttings are best done in the Months with an R in the name she said, particularly during the Autumn. Eremophilas will hybridise in nature within their own subgroup. They do need to be closely related.

Anne gave us a survey of the different range available from Ground Covers to Large Shrubs where "Big Poly" is an example of the latter. It can get to 4 X 4 M with beautiful big flowers and makes a wonderful boundary plant. Some excellent ground covers include *Eremophila Kalbarri* Carpet which can be affected by frost & *E.debilis* where the pink berry like fruit last for many months.

Some medium sized species include 'Yanna Rd', a natural hybrid, almost always in flower, an open shrub, shows flowers well and comes from Qld. Anne had one that is 15 years old; *E. oppositifolia*, dense flowers in spring and after flowers has profuse bracts that create a two toned effect; *E nivea*, soft silvery foliage with pastel lilac flowers, fast growing and short lived, a truly beautiful plant and there are white forms. Anne brought with her a wonderful selection of Eremophilas from the Friends of Melton BG. They sold like hot cakes. Thank you Anne.



## April Flower Table : Jill Lulham

Thanks to Miriam, Rob (Dunlop), for presenting the specimens, and members who brought in labelled specimens and contributed to the discussion. This is just a small selection of those brought to the meeting.

### SCROPHULARIACEAE

*Eremophila cuneifolia* (to 1m, NW WA, no purple flowers on specimen, just the decorative pink calyx which stays on for a long time), *E. abietina* (to 2m, arid areas of WA, sticky foliage, blue-green foliage, pale flowers spotted purple, floriferous), *E. maculata*, *E. flaccida* (<1m, WA, pale purple, wide open flower - hairy, reddish calyx, sticky foliage), *E. 'Meringur Midnight'* (to 5m, Russell Wait's hybrid of *E. bignoniflora* x *viscida*)

### RUTACEAE

*Correa alba* (pink), *C. 'Win's Wonder'* (variegated leaf, pink flower), *C. reflexa 'Lemon & Lime'* (selection from Wilson's Prom), *C. backhousiana*, *C. lawrenciana 'rubra'* (Tree Correa)

### RHAMNACEAE

*Siegfriedia darwinioides* (<1m, SW WA, frilly, cream-yellow flowers)

### MYRTACEAE

*Verticordia grandis* (Scarlet Featherflower, 1-4m, SW WA, long spikes of bright, red flowers), *V. staminosa* (<1m, SW WA, yellow flowers, long stamens, bristly foliage)

*Thryptomene stronglylophylla* ('strongylo' means circular - leaves, <1m, WA, pink purple flowers)

*Homoranthus porteri* (<1m, NW Qld, closely related to *Darwinia*, small red flowers, small narrow foliage)

### ERICACEAE

*Rhododendron lochiaie* (<1m, NE Qld, bright red tubular flowers)

### PROTEACEAE

*Grevillea acuaria* (<1.5m, south WA, small red flowers, normally flowers in Spring, narrow leaves)

### AMARANTHACEAE

*Ptilotus obovatus* (Cottonbush, widespread WA, good drainage, common across the Nullarbor)

### MALVACEAE

*Gossypium sturtianum* (<2m, Sturt's Desert Rose, related to cotton, floral emblem of NT)

### FABACEAE

*Acacia beckleri* or possibly *A. notabilis* (not usually flowering now, large flowers)

Jill was the winner of the auction of Charles' stunning hanging basket from the RHSV. (Plants include *Kennedia carinata*, *Actinotus helianthi*, *Crowea exalata 'Autumn Lights'*, *Veronica arenaria*, *Eremophila macdonnellii*, *Cyathea australis*, *Scaevola striata*, *Hibbertia obtusifolia*, *Pelargonium rodneyanum*, *Lechenaultia Formosa*, *Convolvulus erubescens*, *Halganea cyanae*, and *Xerochrysum viscosum*).





# Images from Rob Dunlop (Doc Camera) & Ben Eaton



Images p 4: Top to Bottom: *Correa alba* pink, *Eremophila* "Meringur midnight" & *Rhododendron lochiaie*

Images this page: Clockwise from the top - *Ptilotus obovatus*, *Verticordia staminosa*, *Verticordia grandis*, *Gossypium sturtianum*, *Acacia beckleri* & *Thryptomene strongylophylla*





## Garden Visit - April 4 - Peter Smith

On a pleasant Sunday 8th April 18 YY members and two visitors were hosted by Bev and John Hanson to a delightful day in their garden, forever preserved with Trust for Nature.

Bev and John outlined the evolution of the garden over the last 40 years with photos of the early stages and also some of the attending wildlife, resident kookaburras verifying authenticity (see p 7).

Bev acknowledged Ellis Stones' influence on her own natural style of design - 'taking advantage of natural contours, creating rooms in the garden, with a surprise as one walks around a corner where a new vista opens up'

Soil from the ponds and extra filling was used to create mounds. Rain water fills the ponds, grey water is used to benefit moisture and shade loving plants such as

ferns. Another notable feature was the use of wildlife boxes built by their son Peter - especially on one recently ringbarked spotted gum with several boxes among the reshooting growth.

Where the garden merges with the adjoining State Park, Manningham council helped with weed and rabbit eradication (a program involving neighbours as well). This has resulted in the surrounding ground flora being invigorated with 26 different types of orchids.

All in all a rewarding and educational day. Among the plants were:

Ground covers such as *Schleranthus biflorus*, *Plectranthus argentatus*, *Brachyscome multifida*, *Eremophila subteretifolia*, *Dodonea procumbens*, *Correa alba var pannosa* (pink).

*Poa poiformis* (blue grass), various paper daisies, various *Anigozanthos*, *Patersonia*, *Orthrosanthus* and *Darwinia citriodora*. *Pandorea jasminoides*, various *Prostanthera* and *Westringia*, *Melaleuca fulgens*, *wilsonii*, *Banksia spinulosa*, *Acacias vestita* (image below), *baileyana* (purple) and *cognata*, various *Eremophila*.





## Big Day Out ( a small taster for August 12 Garden Visit)

### **John and Barbara Bell Garden:**

We moved to Torquay in 1979 onto an empty five acre block, lived in a caravan while the house was built and then we ran a few sheep and some calves but eventually took the internal fences down and starting planting a more extensive garden.

Our soil is a light sandy loam and is slightly acidic and drains very well. The garden tended to grow like Topsy and covers the whole five acres. Some areas have been given over to proteas, leucadendrons and leucospermums and we sell the cut flowers while the remainder has been given over to Australian native plants.

We use scoria as a mulch on some beds and wood chip mulch on other beds. As gardeners we like to try everything thus we have some eucalypts, hakea and acacias as well as a range of Grevilleas, banksias and eremophilas. We also have some correas, prostanthera, hypocalymma, callistemon, kunzea,

kangaroo paw, lasiopetalum, leptospermum, olearia, phebalium, melaleuca, philotheca, pimelea, senna, scaevola and the list goes on.

We are on tanks but have a dam which helps our summer watering particularly this year. In the spring we like to grow some rhodanthe and brachyscome and bracteantha for a bit more colour. We also do some propagating for replacement plants

There will be an audit of visitors as they leave the property and they must have five weeds in each hand when leaving to be able to exit.

*Ed: Lyhn tells me we will also be visiting a garden at Lara (Geelong area) to make a full day out. Depending on numbers we may take a bus so please let us know - there will be a list to put your name down at the general meetings or you can email us. More details to come.*



## APS Propagation Update : La Trobe Team & a recently joined member - Richard Clarke

The most recent Sessions at La Trobe have been largely spent on assisting the Nursery with some of their backlog of work. Hundreds of *Acacia verticillata*, *pycnantha* and *Indigofera australis* seedlings were recently pricked out and potted up for a large order of these species. We also did an inventory of our plants so as to make some decisions about what to put into the plant sale and which ones to grow on. Labels have been prepared for the following which will be available at the Autumn Plant Sale :-Plants include *Eucalyptus caesia* ssp *magna*, *macrocarpa* ssp *macrocarpa*, ssp *elacantha*, *mcquoidii*, *preissiana* ssp *lobata* (the latter 3 work well in large containers); *Hakea bucculenta*, *francisiana* (cream); *Chamelaucium uncinatum*, *megalopetalum*; Paddy's Pink; *Hardenbergia violacea* & *Kennedia coccinea*

In the future this section of the newsletter will also include other member growers. Our long-term member growers such as Noel Gaskett, Mike Williams, Max McDowall, Chris, Bruce (& others) no doubt know a thing or two about how to get the balance right with tubestock vs advanced plants & other important issues to do with plant sales.

We are kicking off with **Richard Clarke** who has recently joined us and who is very keen on grafting Australian plants.

Richard mentioned something of this passion to me at our propagation gatherings in December and went away with material that he has since grafted, successfully, I might add. It was after a longer conversation with Sonia Gatti at one of our propagation sessions at La Trobe nursery (thank you Sonia!) that I felt compelled to visit Richard and learn more about what he was

doing. We are keen to include grafting in our propagation effort in the near future.

Richard has been grafting for a few years now and on my visit to his place I was greatly impressed by the number of advanced plants he has succeeded with and which are growing well in the garden. He has tried his hand at all sorts – Eucalypt, *Grevillea*, *Eremophila* & more recently *Verticordia* (images below left to right respectively).

He tells me he has had his fair share of failures. However I was most impressed by his give-it-a-go/can-do attitude. Yes, he has done his research and sought advice but he has also simply got on with it. He started by establishing root stocks from tip cuttings of the sprouting bits on the root stock of his purchased grafted plants – *Myoporum* for *Eremophilas* and *Chamelaucium* for *Verticordias*. I was impressed to see that immediately after

our general meeting - he had picked up the cutting of *Verticordia grandis* - that he had created 3 new grafted plants on *Chamelaucium* root stock.

I received a gift of a lovely healthy *Eremophila nivea* even before Richard and I sat down to graft some more. After our session where I learnt lots and overcame some of my trepidation I left with two more which are currently looking good in my greenhouse. It was great to work alongside Richard. He first showed me what he does and then watched what I did, making small corrections and adjustments to my technique. It is clear that he has developed a real feel for this technique and is also a good teacher. It was great fun. *Thank-you Richard.*

We will be setting up a small grafting group soon. First we need to establish our root stock from some tip-cutting sessions at La Trobe. **Next May 3, 10 am.**





## Library Report & Media Release from The Australian Garden at Cranbourne

Our Report this year is a little later than last year but “better late than never” as the saying goes. First I’d like to welcome Jenny Hedley to the Library team. I was looking forward to working with Jenny but unfortunately I haven’t been well and I’ve had to retire. Jenny has very kindly offered to continue as Librarian. A big thank you Jenny. I hope you enjoy helping with our Library collection as much as I have.

Currently we have 87 books on the shelves compared to last year when we had 90 books in the collection. We added 22 books through some generous donations and a grant from the committee to buy some new books. When we reviewed the collection during the year, we were able to remove 25 titles from the list. These books had not been borrowed for several years.

This made room for the new books we were adding which have been very popular, judging by the number of loans. 56 different titles were borrowed in 2017 compared to a total of 21 in 2016. Be sure to let the Librarian know if there’s a book you’d like purchased for our collection.

The most popular book this year was *Birdscaping Australian Gardens: a guide to native plants and*

*the garden birds they attract* by George Adams. It was borrowed 8 times. Next were two books, each borrowed 4 times. They were *Creating an Australian Garden* by John M Hunt and *Let’s Propagate: a plant propagation manual for Australia* by Angus Stewart.

Whatever your gardening question might be, it’s fairly likely you’ll find an answer in one of our books. If you can’t, let us know and we’ll try and fill the gap. Happy gardening for the year ahead.

*Pat Cameron.*

*(Ed: Thank you Pat for your dedicated service & all those informative library reports. Thank you also to Jenny and to Patti and Janine who have offered to assist)*

### Media Release: Award Winning Botanic Garden Looking for Volunteers to Share Their Passion

The Royal Botanic Gardens – Cranbourne comprises of 363 hectares of remnant bushland and the award winning Australian Garden – a contemporary landscaped space showcasing beauty and diversity of Australian flora.

Since 2010, a team of dedicated and passionate volunteers have helped visitors enjoy their time at the Cranbourne Botanic Gardens. And for the first time in over 5 years, we are looking for individuals with a love for Australian Flora and talking with people to join our team.

The Cranbourne Botanic Garden is currently recruiting volunteers to become Garden Ambassadors. The Garden Ambassador Team engage with visitors providing general information, insights into plant collections, history, landscaping, conservation and projects. They also conduct daily garden walking tours, assist with workshops and attend events to promote the Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria.

New volunteers will be given full training and a uniform plus support from our existing group of wonderful volunteers. Training will occur over winter to have the new Garden Ambassadors on board by Spring 2018. If you are interested in finding out more about becoming a Volunteer Garden Ambassador please contact Fiona O’Lughlin, Volunteer & Friends Coordinator – Cranbourne, at [Fiona.o’lughlin@rbg.vic.gov.au](mailto:Fiona.o’lughlin@rbg.vic.gov.au)



## Grow Together : a MIFGS Garden by Ben Hutchinson

I was not planning on putting my hat in the ring for MIFGS in 2018. However, I was approached by the MIFGS organising committee in early February after an exhibitor had to suddenly pull out. I was asked to build a show garden with only 8 weeks and a grant of \$15k to design, procure elements and build the display. Some called me crazy, some called me brave (probably a bit of both). Either way, I did it and I'm so proud of what we accomplished.

Given the short time frames, I didn't have time to mess around so I stuck to what I do best; Australian Native gardens. My own family was the inspiration for this design and the finished product successfully united a collection of elements that fosters food, family and good times. The design represented how we spend time together, and how we grow together which is how I came to name the garden.

I broke the planting of the garden into sections; the veggie garden, wildflower 'meadow', and the fern gully surrounding the natural swimming pool. All the plants, bar the veggies, were Natives - that was a non-negotiable. There are just too many plants to list here, but I have a full plant listing for this garden on my website if you'd like more details.

Sustainability is important to me, so it was always going to be part of my decision-making process when choosing the materials. All of the materials

in the design were sustainably sourced – either repurposed or from local sources. The pergola was spotted gum, the curved bench seating was made of second hand blackbutt timber, as was the dining table, and the cubby house used to be an apple crate!

The rock I chose for the garden attracted polarising responses! I chose a simple, easy to find basalt (or honeycomb rock) and I loved listening to the public's comments. Some people looked at it and loathed it, so I lost points with them. But others loved it and it reminded them of their parents or grandparents house when they were kids. Personally, I really like it. It's local, it's subtle, it's in abundance and it's inexpensive. And it's perfect for a Melbourne backyard.

*Images: The full garden (P10) and side garden (p11)*





## Grow Together (continued)

Thanks to my years working in nurseries around Melbourne I had some really great contacts to call on at such late notice. We were able to borrow three quarters of our plants from our very generous suppliers, all of which were returned safely, but I do now have a front yard full of ferns and wildflowers! Due to the strict budget, we borrowed as much as we could and limited purchases to an absolute minimum. This included the labour component too. We relied on the most generous volunteers to help us build this garden – family, friends and complete strangers that we met along the way. We picked up items free off Gumtree and family, the fence was supplied free from a fencing company who was replacing it anyhow and the furniture was all borrowed from some amazing companies who we happen to stumble on in our Google searches. We did actually go a little over the budget, but we were prepared for that to happen. A small price to pay for such an amazing opportunity!

I was so thrilled that our garden was featured on both Better Homes and Gardens, and The Garden Gurus between March and April. We have also received positive responses from many garden bloggers and other media articles since the show

too. I attribute our garden being chosen for both TV shows to the fact that it was pitched at families, which is their audience, and it was a very 'do-able' design for most people. So, although we didn't win an award this time round we still feel like winners!

You're probably thinking, 'so have you had much interest since the show?'. Short answer is yes, thankfully! It seems that we put our best foot forward and the people liked what we did! Fortunately for us, we were the only garden of our type – modern Australian Native family garden – which immediately spoke to those who are of the same ilk. Designing and building a garden is an emotional experience, and it takes people time to decide on who they will trust to deliver the goods. We anticipate that many of the people who loved our garden and are in the market will contact us when the time is right for them. Until then, we will continue delivering beautiful Australian Native gardens across Melbourne!

*Ed: I asked Ben for this submission when I heard about his MIFGS garden. Ben is a recently joined member, an accomplished landscaper & has his own website. Just Google him. Congratulations Ben - what an impressive achievement.*





## APS YY & other Diary Dates

**28 April: APS YY Native Plant & Book Sale.** Eltham Senior Citizens Centre, 903 Main Road, Eltham.  
**10 am - 4 pm.**

**PLEASE NOTE:** We are all gearing up for this Autumn plant sale this weekend, collecting equipment, labelling plants and Joanne is finalizing the roster. This will be **emailed by Thursday**, so please keep a lookout for it.

If anyone has flowers out at the moment, **we need you to bring long stems** with you when you come on Friday or drop them off please. It is always lovely to have some large flower arrangements for inspiration. **Setting up time : from 4pm onwards**

If anyone wants to bake for the troops on Saturday that would be welcome to go with a cup of tea.

**For those that haven't been before it is fun, busy and a pleasure to help and be part of our team.**

**28-29 April & 5-6 May Mullum Mullum Festival** program. Over 20 expert-lead walks and presentations. [www.mullumlullumfestival.org.au](http://www.mullumlullumfestival.org.au)

**5th May 10-3.30pm. APS Mornington Peninsula Plant Sale.** Seawinds, Arthurs Seat State Park, Purves Rd

**12 May APS Melton & Bacchus Marsh Plant Sale.** St Andrew's Uniting Church, Gisborne Road, Bacchus Marsh. 9 am - 1 pm.

**16 June 2018 APS Vic COMM, APS Mornington Peninsula** host a one day event with an excursion in the afternoon, and an optional informal pub evening meal. Commencing at 10.00 am. Benton Square Community Centre, Bentons Rd, Mornington.

**16 to 27 June ANPSA 2018 Kimberley Tour –** Kununurra to Broome. Details from Nicky Zanen, email [nicky.zanen@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:nicky.zanen@hotmail.co.uk) or phone 0401975191.

**30 June & 1 July APS Ballarat District Group Winter Flower Show and Sales.** From 10.00 am to 5.00 pm, at the Robert Clark Horticultural Centre, Ballarat Botanic Gardens.

**21 & 22 July, Cranbourne Friends, Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria Inc. Winter Plant Sale.** 10 am to 4 pm. RBG Cranbourne. Plant list available 1 week prior to Sale on [www.rbgfriendscranbourne.org.au](http://www.rbgfriendscranbourne.org.au)

**18 & 19 August APS Foothills hosts APS Victoria Quarterly Gathering –** Plants and Gardens of the Dandenongs and Foothills – including the Victorian COMM and AGM.

**1 September APS Wilson Park Australian Native Plant Sale,** Wilson Botanic Park, 668 Princes Highway, Berwick. From 9.00 am to 3.00 pm. No entry fee.

**8 - 9 September: APS YY Australian Plants Expo,** Eltham Community & Reception Centre, 801 Main Road, Eltham. 10.00am - 4.00 pm



### **Meeting Particulars: Visitors always welcome**

**When:** 8 pm 1st Thursday each month (except January). Doors open 7.30 pm. Come early for plant sales.

**Venue:** Orana building, Araluen Centre. 226 Old Eltham Rd, Lower Plenty.

**Guest Speaker:** Learn more through talks and discussion by expert speakers

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

**Flower Table Specimens:** Bring along your flowers, labelled if possible

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

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

