



Running Postman



AUSTRALIAN PLANTS SOCIETY – MELTON & BACCHUS MARSH INC

SEPTEMBER MEETING

Overview by Cathy Powers

Neil Anderton took us on a journey and highlighted the many features of the Inverleigh Conservation Reserve. The imagery of predicted rainfall for this spring indicates that the area will receive about 1/3 of its usual amount. This has resulted in a shortened flowering season for many species of wildflowers.

The Reserve is a 1050 island remnant of Plains Grassy Woodland which is surrounded by farming land.

There are approximately 300 species of plants (37% of all recorded species in the Victorian Volcanic Plains Bio-region) including 50 species of orchid.



Neil Anderton



Aftermath of Ecological Burn

Logging, plantation forestry, rubbish disposal and stock grazing caused large-scale disturbances to the understorey during the early 1900s and into the 1980s.

The soil was created by volcanic action changing the course of the local rivers resulting in sand and silt to form the soil.

Acacia paradoxa is an issue and

attempts to control it through fire have been a disaster due to the introduction of the grassy weeds and the dense re-growth of the *Acacia*. Neil then went on to give us a slide show of the magnificent orchids to be found in the reserve. In just about each month there is at least one orchid in flower. Thanks to Neil for sharing his backyard.

Points to remember: ‘Grooming’ – essentially mowing the *A. paradoxa* by lowering a cutting head onto the plants is an effective technique for removal of heavy thickets but costly.

CALENDAR EVENTS

2014

26 November

This is our last meeting for the year. As detailed in the last newsletter, the venue is the Melton Botanic Garden: meet at the depot.



It is a social evening which will include a picnic/BBQ (a gas BBQ is available) and a walk in the gardens, especially the Eucalypt Arboretum.

(see page 4 for a teaser)

Please be self-sufficient with food, drink, picnic gear and lawn chair.

NOTE:

START AT 6.30pm

2015

28 January

ANNUAL PLANT SALE

PREPARATIONS

Potting Up, Wining & Dining

NOMENCLATURE

The dictionary says this means a set or system of names or terms, especially those used in a particular science or art (botany would be one of those).

What's in a name?

Chamelaucium



Distribution map

Image from ANPSA website

The genus (within the Myrtaceae family) was first detailed by French botanist René Louiche Desfontaines in 1819. The derivation is uncertain; possibly from Greek, *chamai* = dwarf and *leucos* = white but it has also been suggested that the name derives from the Latin term applied to the headgear of medieval Popes (above from ANPSA website).



WAX FLOWER

Names used for the papal tiara in the 8th & 9th centuries include phrygium, camelaucum and pileus. May be beautiful and worth millions but not a bit like the flowers of this genus.

Chamelaucium is a genus of about 30 species all occurring only in south western Australia. They are generally woody, evergreen shrubs with narrow leaves and 'tea-tree' like flowers.

There are a large number of cultivars on the market and recently we saw at least three during a nursery visit. Helix Australia is the developer of the following and the images are from their website (www.helixaustralia.com.au).

My Sweet Sixteen:

Has masses of pure white flowers which mature to a rich red shade allowing the plant to display a variety of colours (white – pink)



Dancing Queen:

This plant has a unique double flower in shades of pink.



Sarah's Delight:

Wax blooms of pink with crimson red centres and fine green foliage.



Moonlight Delight:

Large glossy red buds in mid-winter followed by large white flowers with a crimson centre in early spring.



There are, of course, many more cultivars and hybrids. These four were at Katherine Vaughan's nursery, which we visited after our Inverleigh excursion, and now one of each sits at my house waiting for the autumn rains.

Growing:

They prefer an open sunny or partly shaded spot with free-draining soil. They are tolerant of hot dry conditions and have a low water requirement once established. They should be well-watered at planting and through the establishment phase. Plants respond well to heavy pruning and shaping (late spring).

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING & PRESENTATIONS



Graham Bonaparte (AKA Woods) introduced our two newest recipients of Honorary Life Membership. Barb & David Pye have been members of our group virtually from its inception and have supported our ventures like the annual plant sale as well as the gardens at the Willows Historical Park (Melton). By helping identify plants, teaching propagation techniques and supplying plants at meetings – the question begs: “What would we do without them?”



John & Sue Walter, our first HLMS came along to the meeting to help us celebrate. Since their award, our group has changed the floral emblem to *Kennedia prostrata*. John & Sue’s plaque brought back memories of the original floral emblem – the *Allocasuarina luehmannii* (buloke).

*Honorary Life Members: John & Sue Walter, Jean Weybury, Barb Pye, David Pye
Joan Carr was in Tasmania – we missed her!*

Excursion group



Inverleigh Conservation Reserve

Neil was a gracious guide and, despite the quite dry conditions, we were able to find a couple of orchid species in flower as well as some of the natural wildflowers. John almost did not find us but we are so glad he did.



What's flowering in the Melton Botanic Garden, November 2014? (by David Pye)

With around 90 species of Eucalypts in the Eucalyptus arboretum and more than 60 non-Eucalypts including 30 Eremophilas, there is always plenty flowering in the garden.



Eucalyptus woodwardii comes from WA and grows to around 10m tall, with grey foliage and showy yellow flowers. The branches often hang down and this species is a popular street tree in Northern Victoria.

Myoporum parvifolium is a ground cover which grows vigorously and covers large areas. There are many forms with green, purplish or reddish foliage. A carpet of different forms has been planted in the arboretum, with a red form providing a colourful contrast to a green form.



Eremophila subteretifolia is a delightful ground cover with bright green foliage and masses of orange flowers. It can cover an area of 2 metres or so.



Swainsona galegifolia is a colourful shrub to 1m high and flowering for many months over the warmer months. Flowering branches can be cut to ground level after the flowers are finished. New growth from

the rootstock will result in a bushy and showy plant.



Eucalyptus macrocarpa is flowering for the first time in the garden. The flowers are very striking and contrast well with the whitish – grey foliage. The plant is also popular with caterpillars resulting in the leaf damage visible in the photo.



Eremophila calorhabdos is also flowering well in the garden, both grey leaf and green leaf forms. The grey leaf form is shown here. They develop into upright shrubs growing to 2-3 metres high. They can be straggly, but regular pruning will keep them bushy and enhance the floral display.





CALENDAR OF EVENTS FOR 2014

December – no meeting.

2015 meeting topics

January – mark your diary and come along for our annual potting up day. This is during fire season so if it is a day of Total Fire Ban, the activity will be postponed.

February: Presentation by Bob Chinnock – Feral Cacti

March: Presentation by Mike Beamish – King Island flora

April: Presentation by Maree Goods – Little Desert flora

ANNUAL PLANT SALE (subject to venue confirmation)

2nd May, 2015 from 9 – 1pm



Please make plans to volunteer on the day. Unlike previous years, all hakea plants will be cared for by Barb & David Pye. Closer to the plant sale date, there will be a roster set up but if you have preferences, please contact our secretary (Cathy).



SECTION for us: Australian Natives

Container of Banksia = 1st prize

Container of other variety of natives

(single species) = Best Exhibit for Australian native flora: Grand Prize

Container of other variety of natives

(mixed species) = one 2nd, one 3rd

Container of cut flowers = 1st prize

(this was Lucille's Waratah bouquet)

There were ribbons and 'show bags' for the winners. I kept the pruning saw and Lucille got the lettuce seeds thus both getting something we will use.

If this event happens again next year, our group members should seriously consider entering items – perhaps we can offer to help with the display and judging.



OUR WEBSITE:

www.runningpostman.org.au

LIBRARY and More

Your committee met to discuss forward planning, use of our library collection and potential expenditure of accrued funds.

Your input is sought on all the following two subjects:

If you have a suggested topic and speaker we would be keen to hear about it.

If you have suggestions about distribution of our funds to worthwhile projects, please let us know. (Keep in mind that it must comply with our rules and incorporation legislation.)



Due to the lack of use for the books in our library, the committee has decided to conduct an audit and discontinue the library. The process will be:

- Following the conclusion of the audit, the books will be for sale to members (at the February meeting).
- Remaining items will be offered to the Friends of the Botanic Garden.
- If there is anything left, we will sell the items at our May plant sale.

QUOTE OF THE NEWSLETTER

The two best physicians of them all -- Dr. Laughter and Dr. Sleep.

--- Gregory Dean Jr.

Surprises in the Garden

Farmer's Friend

By Cathy Powers

What is surprising at the moment is that many of the plants are hanging on despite the lack of rain. However, the calmer days brought an interesting view in the sky. It was not in my garden, thank goodness, but certainly the tourists were enjoying the wonders of the Brisbane Ranges from a lofty view. The other things in the air are the *Pieris rapae* (huge numbers) which has most likely resulted from the food source of the Cannola fields near us.



It seems that anything in flower is an opportunity for these 'white' butterflies to feed. Now I will need to be on the lookout for the little caterpillars which most likely will

start to appear. Interesting that the white of the wings are not near so white against the background of my hibiscus.



Australian Plants Society – Melton & Bacchus Marsh Inc.

Incorporated in Victoria: A0026204P

ABN: 68 053 689 781

APS Melton & Bacchus Marsh Committee 2013/14

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	Cathy Powers – Newsletter editor		

URL for relevant internet websites:

Website: www.runningpostman.org.au

APS Victoria website : <http://www.apsvic.org.au/>

ANPSA website: <http://anpsa.org.au>

All contributions to the newsletter are gratefully received. Please send a word document and photos to the group's Gmail address. If you have any questions, feel free to contact me by email, snail mail or phone.

Postal Address:

P.O. Box 946

Bacchus Marsh, Victoria 3340

MEETINGS: 4th Wednesday of the month except July and December (doors open at 7.30pm)

VENUE: Dunvegan Cottage, Willows Historic Park

Cnr Reserve Rd & Nixon St, **Melton** **Melways:** 337 C9