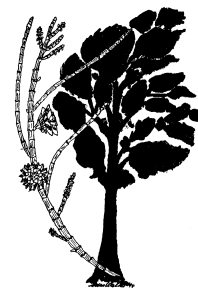


**Australian Plants Society**  
**Melton & Bacchus Marsh Inc (A0026204P)**  
ABN: 68 053 689 781 Website: <http://www.bulokebulletin.com>



# BULOKE BULLETIN

**NEWSLETTER No. 102**  
August-September 2008

edited by Martin Grannas

Next newsletter to be edited by David & Barb Pye. Send contributions via [pye@ssc.net.au](mailto:pye@ssc.net.au) by October 2008

## **GARDEN DESIGN IN SUBURBIA**

talk by Ben Somerville at the August meeting

& ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> August, 7.30 for 8.00 pm at the Willows\*\*

## **SPRING FLOWERING TABLE – Members Night**

Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> September, 7.30 for 8.00 pm at the Willows\*\*

## **GARDEN VISIT – McCARTHY GARDEN, Bullengarook**

Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> September at 2pm at Carroll's Lane, Bullengarook

Lucille and Norris have a large garden with both exotic and native plants. They have a wide variety of natives including waratahs, which will be in flower at the time of the visit.

## **EREMOPHILAS 7<sup>th</sup> FJC Rogers Seminar**

Sat-Sun 4-5 October, FJC Rogers Seminar at Horsham

Brochure and registration form available with APS-Vic quarterly newsletter

## **POMONAL NATIVE PLANT SHOW**

Sat-Sun 4-5 October, Pomonal Hall

**\*\* Meetings are held on the fourth Wednesday of the month - at Dunvegan at the Willows Historical park in Melton (Melway 115/C10 or 337/C9)**

**DOORS OPEN AT 7.30PM, PROGRAM COMMENCES AT 8PM**

## **COMING EVENTS**

Wed 22<sup>nd</sup> October Plants for small gardens talk by Marilyn Gray

Sun 26<sup>th</sup> October Garden Visits to the Stewart and Hendrickson gardens at Daisy Hill, near Maryborough, Arrival 11.30-12.00. BYO Lunch.  
Both gardens are large (3-5 acres) with extensive plantings of Grevilleas, Acacias, Hakeas, Eremophilas, Correas and many other Australian plants.  
Full details including mudmap in the October newsletter. Car pooling is suggested and can be arranged at the October meeting

Wed 26<sup>th</sup> November End of Year Breakup – Report on WAtrip by Cathy Powers

## NEW MEMBERS

We welcome the following new members:

Karen Hunter of Bacchus Marsh

Rae Howe of Long Forest

Brian & Carolyn Hendrickson of Daisy Hill

Pauline Dewar of Bacchus Marsh

## New Membership Fees

Membership fees have not changed in the past 10 years. As reported last newsletter, the committee has decided to increase and restructure of group fees to \$10 for members receiving newsletter by email and \$15 for members receiving their newsletter by post. There has been no change in fees for at least ten years, and costs have increased considerably in that time.

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – Wed 27 Aug

Members are reminded that all committee positions are vacant and open for election. Positions to be elected include President, Vice-President, Secretary/Treasurer and Assistant Secretary, and 3 ordinary members. Our bylaws state that no one can hold a specific Executive position for more than 3 years, commencing with the 2007 AGM. Other positions, e.g. newsletter editor, librarian, etc. are appointed by the committee.

Please note: There has been an indication, by some current committee members, that he/she will stand for re-election. We will need a member to nominate for the position of Secretary as the current secretary is not willing to continue on in this role but she will nominate for the position of Treasurer.

## MAY MEETING REPORT – GRASSES & MORE

While doing some research in order to write a report on our May meeting subject, presented by Ern Perkins, I found out that there really is no category of 'grasses' in the major Australian plant books. There are categories like ferns, climbers, shrubs and trees but no grasses. Not enough attention has been given to the beauty of our grasses in flower or in leaf only. Since there are over 1000 exclusively Australian native grass species, the result is a selection of plants with varied texture, growth pattern, colour, and size for your own garden landscape.



The cool season grasses do not go dormant over winter and remain green unless there is a protracted period without moisture. The warm season grasses actively grow in the warm weather and go dormant during the winter (which usually causes foliage colour changes). Ern's presentation was not only interesting because of the photos of various types of plants but also the structure and identification profiles. Ern certainly left us with the impression that lawns were not to his liking but it is worth noting that some of the native grasses can be used as lawn and will survive with minimal watering.



Regarding grasses, the one thing I remember is that without grasses our society would never be able to feed its population. Consider that rice, barley, oats and wheat are all 'grasses'. When creating a garden atmosphere, you can't go amiss by choosing a few of the native grasses (using that term loosely). Here are

some samples of flowers that will provide interest and attract the wildlife.

The other item of Ern's talk was with regards to his and Lesley's involvement with flora research in cemeteries. From the small snippet we saw, it could be another full talk because it was very interesting. I admire them both because as Ern showed us, some of the cemetery boundaries were not marked and a lot of the time, neither were the graves.

Thanks to them both for contributing to our meeting with information and sharing their experiences as well as knowledge.

## JUNE MEETING REPORT – KANGAROO ISLAND

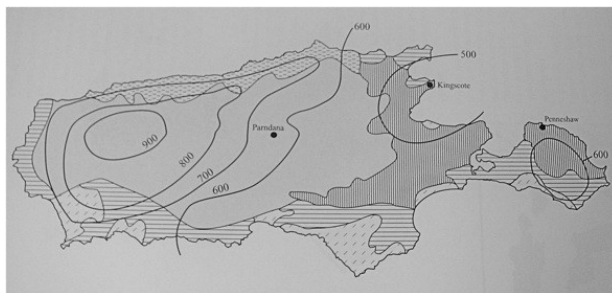
Our group was treated with an arm-chair tour of Kangaroo Island, its fauna and flora included. Doug Down opened the presentation with an overview of the history and an outline of their week-long trip to a diversified destination.

Kangaroo Island (from now on referred to as K.I.) is Australia's third largest island, covering some 4,500 sq. kms. Evidence of stone tools and Aboriginal campsites were discovered in the early 1900s but the early explorers discovered K.I. to be uninhabited, as shown by the lack of campfires and the tameness of the wildlife. Carbon dating of the campfire remains indicates that the Aboriginal people were living on K.I. as early as 16,000 years ago but why they abandoned K.I. or when they last lived there remains a mystery.

The first non-Aboriginal people to live in K.I. were sealers, escaped convicts and runaway sailors who sought refuge there in the early 1800s. From that point onwards, the island has had an interesting and chequered history. The Australian government even established a war service land settlement scheme for ex-soldiers after WW II.

During the 1930s there were 48 eucalyptus stills in operation and today one remains in operation. The non-human influence on the eucalypts is, of course, the introduced koala population and this has had a severe impact through overgrazing.

The island has some distinct regions and each has some unique vegetation. The Flinders Chase National Park is in the western area while the eastern edge is where the ferry lands and visitors depart.



Map of K.I. showing isohyets (equal rainfall lines) taken from Doug's presentation slide.

Russell Best provided us with a visual tour of their trip, including many endemic species of flora (some actually noted as rare), listed here:

- Acacia myrtifolia* var. *angustifolia* (Narrow-leaf Myrtle Wattle)
- Adenanthos macropodiana* (K.I. Silver Bush)
- Allocasuarina muelleriana* subsp. *notocolpica* (K.I. Sheoak)
- Bertya rotundifolia* (K.I. Bertya)
- Beyeria subtecta* (K.I. Turpentine Bush)
- Brachyloma ericoides* subsp. *Bicolour* (K.I. Brush-heath)
- Correa backhouseana* var. *orbicularis* (K.I. Correa)
- Dampiera lanceolata* var. *insularis* (K.I. Dampiera)
- Grevillea muricate* (Rough-leaved Grevillea)
- Grevillea quinquenervis* (Five-veined Grevillea)
- Hakea aenigma* (Flat-leaved Hakea)
- Petrophile multisecta* (K.I. Conesticks)
- Pimelea macrostegia* (Big-headed Riceflower)
- Pultenaea trifida* (K.I. Bush-pea)
- Spyridium halmaturinum* var. *scabridium* (K.I. Spyridium)
- Spyridium phyllicoides* (Narrow-leaved Spyridium)
- Tetratheca halmaturina* (Leafless Pink-bells)
- Tetratheca insularis* (K.I. Pink Eyes)

A Kangaroo Island description for tourists is WINTER: spectacular with lush green countryside, flowing rivers and abundant wildlife; SPRING: a season of rebirth with a wonderful array of wildflowers, birds and mammals; SUMMER: a land of contrasts – golden pastures against summer wildflowers; AUTUMN: a time of transition with some rainfall gradually providing a fresh growth. There is a season for everyone! Thanks you to Doug & Russell (fantastic photography!) for an interesting trip review.

## PLANT OF THE MONTH - May

By Cathy Powers

### Pimelea physodes – Qualup-bell

It would seem a far cry from your scented daphnes to the Qualup-bell yet both belong to the same family. (Thymelaeaceae). There are two genera of this family in W.A.: Pimelea and Wikstroemia (extremely rare from north-west Kimberley). The Qualup-bell gets its common name from the species origin at Qualup on the Gairdner River, W.A..



It is the arrangement of the Pimelea flowers which is the principle characteristic. With few exceptions, the blossoms are massed in heads surrounded by an envelope of over-lapping petal-like bracts. When these bracts exceed the length of the flowers, and the head is drooping, the result is a magnificent garden specimen such as the P. physodes.



The true flowers are to be found crowded within the bell-shaped involucre and can be up to 5cm long. The large bracts of the flowers are variously coloured, ranging from purple to apple-green or yellow.

The plant is usually erect with a reputation of being difficult to maintain because of its absolute good drainage requirements. For this reason, it is well worth spending a little extra to purchase a grafted plant. The other issue is stability. It is imperative to stake this plant because when it is in full flower it becomes top-heavy, resulting in the entire plant falling over in even light windy conditions.

I have had immense pleasure from my plant, pruning every year after flowering to maintain shape and bushiness, giving it additional water only on the very hot summer days and watching the Eastern Spinebills fighting over which flower each is allowed to visit.

## PLANT OF THE MONTH - June

By Graeme Woods

### Banksia pulchella — "Teasel Banksia"



Pulchella is derived from the Latin "pulchellus" meaning pretty or beautiful making it an apt name for a lovely small banksia.

This is a hardy small plant growing to 1 metre tall by 1 metre wide with stunning but dainty flowers all year round.

The yellow to orange-brown flowers are only 25mm long and 50mm wide making them, with *B.meisneri*, the smallest in the banksias.

This banksia is thriving in Gisborne in a sunny well drained site with no additional watering. The gnarled appearance of the old cones is an added feature (page 225 Banksia Book).

Other small banksias we have growing that are similar to *pulchella* are – *meisneri*, *nutans*, *violacea*, *incana* and *lanata*... All are worthy of a place in any garden and are worth searching for.

### Garden Crawl with Keilor Plains Group

On Saturday 9 August the Keilor Plains APS group hosted their reciprocation of a garden crawl we organised in 2006. About a dozen of us first visited Neil and Bev Duncan's residence in Essendon. Their small suburban front garden is a beauty – a large *Euc caesia* (silver princess gum) was in flower as was an acacia (didn't find out which one - ed). Some salient features of their backyard were many self-seeding *Rhodanthe* daisies flowering, and many grevilleas and ereophilas. An *Epacris impressa* was also flowering. A decent cluster of *Pterostylis* orchids was growing through plastic mesh (gutter guard) at ground level that protected the bulbs from bird disturbance. A selection of plants that Neil and Bev had propagated was for sale.



Next we went to John and Corinne Upsher's property right on the sunny southern banks of the Maribyrnong in Maribyrnong. A chest-high *Euc preissiana* (bell fruited mallee) was in flower outside his front gate and its yellow flowers immediately caught everyone's attention. John informed us that it also impresses passing walkers and cyclists who surreptitiously help themselves to the gumnuts– the tree was bare

of any mature fruit for us to pocket. John had a very well-lit (large windows and clear roof sheeting) garden shed in which he propagates cuttings. The bottom-heat box he used was a design that some of us may try to copy for our own propagation efforts. John and Corinne kindly provided a morning tea.



Lastly we travelled to Strathmore on the northern edge of Essendon Airport to see Ian Graham's magnificent front garden. Many flowering grevilleas (see photos), and eremophilas were on display, as were some of the largest *Indigofera australis* (austral indigo, wasn't quite ready to flower yet) that many of us had seen. This garden was a real inspiration.



The group then went to Woodlands Historic Park for a picnic lunch just before the rains began. Many thanks are extended to our hosts Bev and Ian Duncan, John and Corinne Upsher and Ian Graham, and the rest of the Keilor Plains organising group for a very pleasant Saturday's outing.

## Rock Construction — Lynton Barr

Information from an article published in the June issue of APS Bairnsdale & District Group newsletter (with their kind permission – thank you!)

Rocks are garden ornaments of a special kind. They can be a feature, they can focus the eye, they can line a path or a stream, they can sculpture in their own right, they can be a support for plants to tumble over or form the banks of a rockery or terrace. The garden design books are full of ideas. However, if your garden won't support a large crane as it moves in to place rocks in strategic locations or even a bobcat – there is only one solution . . . Make Your Own. One of our members Lynton Barr, is an expert and here is his recipe. Jo Hope

If you have ever tried to find that perfect rock for a position in the garden

1. It is important to set out a firm foundation for your rock structure. This can be rubble, bricks or bagged sand or soil. Supermarket bags can be filled with sand and used, in fact any type of bag.
2. Set out bags in approximate shape of the rocks you wish to construct. It is important to observe rocks in their natural environment to see how they blend into the landscape.
3. Once you have established the foundation, cover your filled gabs with wire netting and peg the wire into the soil at the base of the foundation. Chicken wire netting is ideal as it is easy to mould into the shape you require.
4. Cover the wire with a mixture of the following (my recipe)
  - a. 2 parts Quarter minus Stone

- b. 2 parts River Sand
  - c. 2 parts Bricklayers Sand
  - d. 1 part Cement
5. For Colour: Add oxide to your mixture – about half a cup depending on colour desired. I use (for Sandstone) light Brown Oxide. This is readily available at hardware stores and is blended with your mixture.
6. Work your mixture into the wire mesh, making sure to cover the wire by about 3-4 cm. Some experts suggest a second wiring and a second cover mix, however I have found the one cover sufficient.
7. I cover the mixture with a dark soil and pat it into the cement. This adds colour variation and assists growths of Lichens and Moss to adhere to the rock surface.
8. I often add pieces of bark or soil clods to the rock finish and, as these rot out, the rock is left with interesting indentations.
9. After 24 hours, wire brush the soil back and work back to a rough surface.
10. BEFORE PLANTING – swab down your rock 3 times over a two week period with a solution comprised of 50% Vinegar and 50% water. This neutralizes the lime that may be in the soil after cementing. Native plants prefer an acid soil.

Your rock will take 12 – 18 months to weather and in that time Lichens and Moss mat adhere to add a natural look to your rock. The time factor will depend on the positions of your rocks. Shaded, moist places will allow Moss to grow faster than areas in the full sun.

Have fun! But remember to look at nature before commencing your construction.

## HAKEAS FOR SALE

Most of the Hakeas produced for the Annual Plant Sale have now been sold, providing useful income for the group. Next year, we will consider different Hakea species and perhaps dwarf Eucalypts.

## **LOCAL NATIVE PLANT NURSERIES**

(within 30 minutes from Melton)

Jean Weybury, 103 Underbank Boulevard, Bacchus Marsh, 5367 1559 (Ring before coming)

Melton Native Nursery (John Forrester), 505 Harkness Road, Melton 9747 8884 (Weekends only)

Newport Lakes Native Nursery, 2 Margaret St, Newport, 9391 0044 (discount to APS members, indigenous flora)

Suntuff Natives, Barb & David Pye, 1220 Bacchus Marsh Road, Bullengarook 5428 9369 (Ring first)

Western Plains Flora (Ian Taylor) 628 Wildwood Road, Wildwood, Melway383 K2, 9740 3178 (indigenous flora)

Wild about Wattle, Visit Wattle Display garden (West Melton) by appointment only. Call Esther: 0411 148 874. (Plants for sale, orders welcome)

## **SEMILOCAL NATIVE PLANT NURSERIES**

(approx. 1 hour from Melton)

Glenleith, John Mahoney, 275 Whites Rd, Mt Duneed 5264 1091 (10 mins south of Geelong)

Vaughan's Australian Plants, 1060 Port Arlington Road, Curlewis 5250 5592

### **APS Melton & Bacchus Marsh Committee**

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Vice Martin 5426 4748

President Grannas

Secretary / Cathy 5369 4302

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