



Dillwynia sericea

NEWSLETTER

AUSTRALIAN PLANTS SOCIETY, MITCHELL GROUP INC.

aps.mitchell@gmail.com

PO Box 541, Kilmore, Victoria 3764

Inc# A0054306V

May news...!

Hello and welcome to our May Newsletter.

I hope everyone's gardens have survived our long dry spell and recent storms. My own garden has experienced a few losses but *Correa* "Little Cate" is currently proving to be a real survivor and perfect for a low informal hedge (pictured at right).

Moving on to committee news...To enable as many members as possible to have a say regarding our meeting venue our President, Ian Julian has recently sent an email to all members requesting a yes or no vote. Responses to date are in favour of the new venue. If you have yet to vote or have not received the email please reply to Ian as soon as possible at :

ianjulian@bigpond.com

Among other things on the committee agenda guest speakers for the remainder of the year are a work in progress and with our Annual Spring Plant Expo getting ever closer we'll be bringing more news on both fronts over the coming months. If members have any ideas,



Correa "Little Cate"

Photo: J Petts

suggestions or feedback please feel free to let a committee member know.

Our next newsletter is due out on June 13th. As always, contributions both large and small are very, very welcome and should be sent in by Monday June 6th. Email contributions to: wattlegum@southernphone.com.au or post to PO Box 381 Pyalong Vic 3521.

Happy gardening & cheers until next month,

Jeanine :-)

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For Sale ...

2004 VIKING GE 250 Mulcher
230/240V-50Hz. \$75.00

Used for two years and then set aside (covered) as it didn't handle the big stuff I was getting from the tree cover.

Runs fine and has had the blades sharpened, they still handle the small stuff very well. The chute for material to be mulched is removable so it and the motor/wheel assembly can fit in a small car.

Contact Bill Barker: Ph: 5783 3838 or Email: bee.barker@bigpond.com



May 2016

Volume 3, Issue 4

Mitchell Diary Dates..

- **MONDAY MAY 16th**
7:30pm MEETING
Guest Speaker:
Paul Piko - Orchids of Hidden Valley
OWNERS & TRAINERS BAR, KILMORE RACING CLUB, EAST STREET, KILMORE VIC 3764
- **MONDAY JUNE 20th**
7:30pm MEETING
Guest Speaker:
Karen Sutherland - Edible Native Plants
- **MONDAY JULY 18th**
7:30pm MEETING
Guest Speaker: To Be Advised.
- **SATURDAY AUGUST 27th 10:30am**
EXCURSION MEETING:
APS MITCHELL WILL BE JOINING APS STRATHBOGIE RANGES GROUP AT EUROA for a Guest Speaker Presentation by Leon Costermans
Venue To Be Advised
- **MONDAY SEPT 16th**
7:30pm MEETING
Guest Speaker: To Be Advised.
- **SATURDAY OCT 15th**
APS MITCHELL ANNUAL SPRING PLANT EXPO & SALE
- **MONDAY OCT 17th**
7:30pm MEETING
Guest Speaker: To Be Advised.



Standard of the Month, May...

By Brian Weir

Grevillea tenuiloba

Yet another WA grevillea, like so many of the others it's range is a couple of hours by road North East of Perth. The normal flowering period is spring into summer when the bush has hundreds of golden toothbrush flowers all over, this picture is late autumn so there are only scattered flowers but still a stunner. Yep, as prickly as "all get out of here" - gloves are a must when working with this one.

As a bush it grows to 1-1.5m tall x 2-3 m wide, handles frosts to -4c. When pruned it responds well and it is best to use grafted plants in Victoria.



Grevillea tenuiloba

Photos: Brian Weir

MEETINGS ARE HELD ON THE
3rd MONDAY OF THE MONTH
(February to November)
unless otherwise advised

Commencing 7:30 pm in the
Owners & Trainers Bar
Kilmore Racing Club,
East Street, Kilmore Vic 3764

Entry \$2.00 Gold Coin

Guest Speaker

Door Prizes

Plant Sales

Fertilizer Sales

(APS Mitchell Slow Release
fertiliser \$5.00 per 500g)

Use of the APS Mitchell free
Library (See Barbara)

Supper & Chat

VISITORS VERY WELCOME

Members & Visitors are
encouraged to bring along
exhibits for our Flower
Specimen Table

Please label plants



May Meeting Monday the 16th 7:30pm...

By Jeanine Petts

For our May meeting we are very privileged to have Paul Piko return to present a second talk on Native Orchids.

Paul is a member of APS Mitchell Group, has regularly contributed articles including stunning photography to our newsletter and has had a long association with the Australian Native Orchid Society (ANOS (Victoria)) being a committee member, Terrestrial Study Group coordinator and has lead many field trips.

For this presentation Paul will be speaking on Orchids found in Hidden Valley's remnant bushland and a crowd funding campaign which is being put together for a couple of Orchids in Melbourne's west.

If you have an interest in Orchids, local species or have enjoyed Paul's articles and photography this is definitely an evening not to be missed.



Spotted Sun Orchid,
Thelymitra icxioides
(Hidden Valley)
Photo: Paul Piko

Memberships...

For membership/renewal enquiries or forms please contact Bill Barker- Phone: 5783 3838 (or see Bill at a monthly meeting)

Alternatively visit APS Mitchell's website:

http://www.apsmitchell.org.au/?page_id=18

April Meeting Report...

By Barbara Mau & Jeanine Petts

It was great to see more than a dozen members turn out for our April meeting. Barbara and Bill had done a great job bringing along equipment and setting up for the evening's propagation demonstrations.

Barbara took the floor first and began with collecting and growing from native seed...

Two books by Murray Ralph which lay out individual seed requirements, how they behave and how to propagate and are an invaluable resource for anyone collecting and propagating native seed:

- *Growing Australian Native Plants from Seed: For Revegetation, Tree Planting and Direct Seeding*
ISBN 9780646428666
- *Seed Collection of Australian Native Plants: For Revegetation, Tree Planting and Direct Seeding*
ISBN 0646128620

Some basic guidelines when seed collecting and propagating include:

Equipment to take when collecting

- A basket for equipment and seeds to be collected
- Paper bags or plastic clip bags
- Insecticide
- Pencil

When collecting

- Collect only 10% of any one species
- Collect on warm, dry days
- Add a little insecticide to your seed bag/container to eliminate any seed eating insects
- Label seed container with species name, date of collection and seed provenance

Noting the date is important as varying plant species can have a differing seed shelf life, dormancy or hardening off period etc.

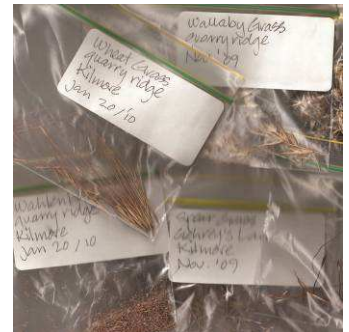
At home

- Using a sieve de-husk the seeds
- Place seeds into clean plastic clip-bag or glass jars with tight fitting lids
- Label containers with name of species, date collected and provenance
- Store in air-tight containers in a dark, cool place

Seed Dormancy

- Most seeds have an after ripening period of, usually 3 to 12 months depending on species.
- Murray Ralph's book *Growing Australian Native Plants from Seed* is an excellent guide for most Australian seeds
- Seeds with harder coatings may require special treatment e.g. soaking in water, heat or smoke treatment or abrasion

If you would rather purchase seeds simply "Google" Australian native seeds to find a number of seed order services. Remember APS Victoria also has a seed bank and members can order 6 free packets of seeds per quarter. Information on ordering and the seed bank is published in each edition of APS Victoria's *Growing Australian*.



Labelled seed
Photo: Barbara Mau

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April Meeting Report...

(Continued from page 3)

Seed Planting

- Sterilise your seed trays/containers* in 20% bleach, 80% water, for 20 minutes, rinse and let dry (*Cell trays, seed trays, forestry tubes, thumb pots etc.)
- Add good quality seed raising medium with a little addition of perlite or vermiculite.
- Coarse river sand and vermiculite is also good
- Damp down the potting mix and spread seeds evenly over the surface and sprinkle lightly (x 2 the width of seed sown) with vermiculite or coarse sand.
- Water gently (using trigger a spray bottle works well) and keep moist in a warm, draft free (20 degrees) and well lit place but out of direct sunlight
- Label with Species, date collected, date sown & provenance
- Germination will depend on species, again Murray Ralph's book *Growing Australian Native Plants from Seed* is the perfect reference for this.

Once your seeds are sown you can create a mini green house by putting a plastic bag over the pot, or place the pots, trays etc. in a translucent plastic box with a lid. Seeds need oxygen and water to germinate so keep moist but don't over water, a gentle mist of water every 2 days is generally sufficient. Early spring and autumn are the best times to sow seed. Brian doesn't cover his seed trays and uses fine scoria in place of vermiculite or sand to lightly cover seeds. When your seeds have sprouted the next stage is pricking out and potting on...

Picking Out

- Once seedlings have their second set of leaves they ready to be potted into forestry tubes
- Have ready:
 - Sterilized forestry tubes/containers (sterilise in 20% bleach, 80% water, for 20 minutes)
 - A dibbling tool* for easing seedlings out and "dibbling" a new hole in the pot for the young plant to be inserted in. (*Barbara uses a chop stick & Jeanine uses an old screwdriver or bamboo skewer and a fondue fork for pricking out)
- Fill forestry tubes with Australian Native Potting Mix
- Gently remove individual seedlings (using dibbler)
- Dip the seedling's root into a container of water to straighten the roots out
- Carefully lower the plant's root into the prepared potting mix (dibbled hole)
- Firm the soil gently around the root
- Add a thin top layer of vermiculite, this helps keep the soil moist and prevents crusting
- Water well and keep moist (water every other day) in a sheltered well lit place inside or dappled sun outside
- Plants are ready to be planted out when roots emerge from the bottom of the forestry tube



Sown seed tray & Translucent box as mini green house
Photos: J Petts



Sprouted seed
Photo: Barbara Mau



Grown on, hardening off.
Photo: Barbara Mau

(Continued on page 5)

April Meeting Report...

(Continued from page 4)

A poly box makes the ideal container for potted on plants, it will help insulate the pots and a standard size poly box will hold 54 forestry tubes.

Propagation by Cuttings

- Take cuttings of firm new growth in October to March
- Don't use the top soft tips of new growth
- Remove all flower buds
- Prepare sterilized containers with 20/80 mix of peat moss and perlite
- Cut each cutting to lengths of approx 75 mm and remove most leaves leaving two or three top leaves only
- Cut the end you will be dipping into rooting hormone at 45 degree just below a node
- Dip the fresh cut into rooting hormone, insert into potting mix and gently press the soil around stem
- Mist leaves, cover with a clear plastic bag or clear soft drink bottle that has been cut in half, this aids in temperature and moisture control.
- Once plants start to grow, usually 2 to three weeks, remove covers and harden off for a week to 10 days
- Pot up the young plants into sterilised forestry tubes using Australian Native Potting Mix



Above: Newly potted struck cutting
Below: Half plastic bottle as mini green house
Photos: J Petts



Bill & Bee use a mix of Pearlite, Vermiculite and a Native Potting mix for potting on and a propagating mix (Scott's). Bill's method for potting on is as follows :

First gently separate the struck cuttings (Bill uses a fork for this). Then part fill the tube or pot for the new plant with mix and give it a "firm tap" to settle/tamp down the mix. Hold the cutting at the desired final resting height and fill mix in around the plant. Give the pot another firm tap to tamp down and it's ready to be watered in with a gentle mist.

Some of the cutting hormones mentioned over the evening were Clonex Gel (purple), Rootex P (powder) and Esi-Root (liquid). Also mentioned:

- Brian's favoured cutting mix is 15% peat moss with 85% Pearlite.
- A quote by Bob O'Neil in reference to when to take cuttings "Whenever material is available"

A final word of Caution:

- When handling any seed propagating material or potting mixes it is most important to wear gloves, safety goggles and mask for protection against hazardous, air born materials.
- Norbert also strongly advised hand washing after handling potting materials is also a must as Legionella is found in all potting mixes. Taking care around hanging baskets was also recommended.

A few last tips for planting out:

- A little water in the planting hole to start
- Tap the sides of the pot to ease/slide the plant out. Do not pull the young plant
- Tease the bottom of the roots out a little
- Water in well to wash soil in around roots and remove any air pockets

Garden Guide- What's to do in May...

By Barbara Mau

With the very welcome, recent rain, I have decided to focus on some bank erosion that could deteriorate further during the course of the coming winter. The two steep, west-facing banks were cut to make room for the construction of our house. The composition of the cut is a combination of small basalt deposits within a larger crumbling sedimentary layer that, now exposed to the elements, is slowly crumbling.

Being a total novice at stabilising banks I asked around, and Googled various products, and there are many! As the two cuttings are hardly highway construction cuttings in scale they are none-the-less a combined length of 50 meters and 3-4 meters high. I wanted a product that was efficient for my purpose, biodegradable and affordable. The two banks receive the full brunt of summer's heat so good water retention is important. To stabilise the bank over a couple of years the intention is to plant indigenous grasses and flowers into the erosion control membrane. I am hopeful that in the time it takes for the plants to reach maturity, conversely, the installed membrane will disintegrate and become part of the soil structure.

I finally decided on a product known as 'TEC Mat® Jute' that ticked all the boxes. It is 100% organic, weed suppressing, allows moisture penetration, reduces moisture loss and is biodegradable over 2-3 years. This product comes in a variety of weights, 280 - 750gsm. I chose the 750gsm as a tougher product to plant into rather than the lighter weight recommended for direct-seeding. If seeds were to be used then the 280gsm, with its open weave erosion control mesh, would work well as it retains moisture, allows water and light infiltration to encourage vegetation germination and growth. All the Jutes come in 1.83m x 25m rolls. Smaller quantities of similar product are available through Bunnings.

In conjunction with the 750gsm Jute, 1000 x U Pins, 150 x 150 x 4mm were bought. The pins are necessary to secure the Jute to the face of the eroding bank. The Jute was seamless and easy to install, and once the bank was securely blanketed I was ready to start planting!

The first to be planted were a variety of creepers for the top of the bank. The idea being that they will grow towards the sun,

north and westwards, and down the face of the banks. Then the fun part...planting a tapestry of grasses shot with the colour of some simple, favourite flowers.

In order to plant into the embankment, horizontal incisions, 30 cm long were made approximately 1 meter apart. At the center point of the horizontal cut, a vertical cut, of approximately 20cm was made and the two flaps folded inwards. A couple of U pins were hammered into position, roughly 30cm under the horizontal cut, to create a pocket for the planting soil to settle into, a kind of half wall basket. At this point I would dig a hole into the bank face and let the soil fill the Jute pocket. The selected plant was then placed into its new home, back filled, top dressed with loose gravel from the site, and watered in. The gravel, I have noted, did an excellent job in preventing any wash out in the more recent down pours that we have had. All appears stable and happy, fingers crossed!

The species I had propagated and for this task, soil condition and orientation were in their forestry tubes, hardened off, and ready to be planted out. First to go in were the creepers for the top of the bank.

Hardenbergia violacea, False Sarsaparilla, *Atriplex semibaccata*, Creeping Saltbush, *Carpobrotus modestus*, Inland Pigface, *Kennedia prostrata*, Running Postman, and *Pultenaea pedunculata*, Matted Bush-Pea.

Then for the bank I planted a profusion of grasses. The beautiful *Elymus scaber*. Native Wheat-Grass. *Rytidosperma geniculatum*, Knead Wallaby-Grass, (one of my favourite small wallaby grasses), and *Rytidosperma racemosum*, the delicate, sun catching Slender Wallaby-Grass.

The grasses have formed the main stay of the bank and are interwoven with *Brachyscome multifida*, Cut-Leaf Daisy (white form) *Chrysocephalum apiculatum*, Common Everlastings (yellow), *Pelargonium rodneyanum*, Magenta Stork's-Bill (Magenta) and *Wahlenbergia stricta*, Tall Blue-Bell (Blue).

I will of course keep you posted on the 'progress' of this adventure.

Until next month, Cheers and Happy Gardening to you all!



Bank for stabilisation
Photo: Barbara Mau



U Pins & "A work in progress"
Photo: Barbara Mau



Planting close up
Photo: Barbara Mau

Reminders, APS Victoria Diary Dates & Other Events

Thank you

- For the various contributions of articles, answering pesky questions, event information, photo's, feedback, proof-reading, researching & providing other information as needed and general support...

A BIG THANK YOU TO:

Bill Barker,
Ian Julian,
Barbara Mau,
Paul Piko,
Maureen Runge,
Lorraine & Brian Weir.

APS VIC DIARY DATES...

May 7 - APS Melton & Bacchus Marsh Plant Sale, 9 am - 1 pm, Uniting Church Car Park, Bacchus Marsh. Sale features Genus *Hakea* with a large number of unusual species. A full list is available approximately one month prior to sale. Pre-orders can be sent to the secretary:

apsmeltonbacchus@gmail.com

May 15-26 - ANPSA 12-day Natural History Kimberly Camping Tour. Enquiries to nicky.zanen@hotmail.co.uk or phone 0401 975 191

June 11-13 - Bookfest 2016. RBGV Cranbourne Gardens 10 am - 4 pm in the

auditorium.
Melways 133 K 10

June 25 & 26 - APS Ballarat Winter Flower Show and plant sales. Robert Clark Horticultural Centre, Ballarat Botanic Gardens. 10:30 am - 3:30 pm. Entry Free, includes a cup of hot tea or coffee.

July 23 & 24 - Growing Friends Spring Plant Sale. RBGV Cranbourne Gardens. 10 am - 4 pm.

September 3 - APS Wilson Park Plant Sale. Wilson Botanic Park, Princes Hwy, Berwick. 9 am - 4 pm.

September 3 & 4 - Bendigo Native Plants Group Flower Show. Rotary Gateway Park

26 High St, Kangaroo Flat.

September 10 & 11 - APS Yarra Yarra Native Plants Expo. Venue to be advised. 10 am - 4 pm both days.

October 1 & 2 - APS Grampians Group Pomonal Native Flower Show. Pomonal Hall. 9:30 am - 5 pm



OTHER EVENTS...

September 24 & 25 - Yea Garden Expo. Yea Race Course Entry \$5 children free. 10 am - 4 pm both days.

Committee & Contact Information

AUSTRALIAN PLANTS SOCIETY, MITCHELL GROUP INC.
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Bill Barker 5783 3838

Committee: Janis Baker, Leanne Egan, Neil Humphreys, Dawn McCormack, Jeanine Petts.

Group Librarian: Barbara Mau

Plant Sales: Brian & Lorraine Weir 5783 2912

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From Maureen...

A lovely image of Maureen's recent artwork...



Newsletter contributions:

Contributions should be sent to Jeanine Petts

Email: wattle gum@southernphone.com.au

Post: PO Box 381, Pyalong Vic 3521

For inclusion in the next Newsletter please forward contributions prior to the first Monday of each month.



ROTARY CLUB OF YEA
PO BOX 149
YEA VICTORIA 3717

To the Garden Club President and Secretary:

YEA GARDEN EXPO

After several years of conducting an Open Gardens program, the Rotary Club of Yea has decided to embark on an additional feature and conduct a Garden Expo. It will be held on the 25th and 26th of September at the Yea Racecourse.

All manner of goods and services, all related to gardening will be on display and we are inviting your club to attend this timely Spring event.

Our flyer advertising the Expo is attached for your reference. Closer to the time when entries are finalised, I will contact you again with the categories represented so that your members will be aware of the choices available.

As you will note from the flyer, we are inviting a range of gardening vendors to participate in order to provide potential purchasers with a full range of gardening options as well as discovering new ideas and products. Our research indicates that having an Expo at the start of Spring is a significant opportunity to establish your gardens for the coming growing season.

The Yea Racecourse provides an ideal venue for the Expo as we have facility for over 100 stallholders to display their products/services without feeling cramped and also have ample capacity for free parking. We will have food vendors and will also provide activities for children. The township of Yea is also worth a visit with its award winning Tourism centre - the Y Water Information Centre, many cafes and restaurants, the Rail Trail bike track, accommodation and many other attractions.

Would it be possible for your Club members to receive this notice, either by personal email or by tabling this event at your coming meetings? We welcome your support and feel that this inaugural Expo is the start of a worthwhile and interesting project for the Rotary Club of Yea and one that the gardeners of Victoria will look forward to as an annual event.

Yours faithfully,

Jim Osborne
Coordinator, Yea Garden Expo

YEA GARDEN EXPO

24 & 25 Sep, 10AM-4PM

Location: Yea Racecourse
Only an hour from Melbourne....

**FOOD & DRINKS AVAILABLE
FACE PAINTING TOO !**

Native & flowering plants

Garden tools

Vegetable bins

Motorised barrows & vehicles

Seedlings

Garden sculptures

Mulch, fertilisers & compost

Ride-on & push mowers

Nurseries

Designers & Contractors

Mulchers

Deciduous & Ornamental trees

Large & small books

Entry \$5 for adults - kids FREE

FREE PARKING

Contact: yeagardenexpo@optusnet.com.au

