August 2025, Volume 1

Marginata

Celebrating Australia's wonderful flora

Welcome to the first edition of the South Australia state newsletter. We had hoped to start this newsletter soon after our Journal stopped being published last year. But it has taken longer than we hoped...

Our aim is that this newsletter will keep all members informed of APSSA activities across South Australia, provide opportunities to share plant information, photos, interesting trips anywhere where Australian plants grow, events - our own and others - and share propagation tips.

And be kind - if you've enjoyed a member's contribution, let them know!

No contribution is too small to be included!

IN THIS ISSUE...

Next time:

- **Grevillea feature**

Why "Marginata"?

APSSA's logo is a stylised drawing of ***Banksia marginata***. This species is highly variable in both size (from a 1m bush to a 12m tree) and in appearance, especially as regards its leaves. The immature leaves are toothed like the logo, but often become smooth on the edges as the plant matures. The back of the leaves is white, giving rise to the comon name: Silver Banksia. The species will take fairly hard pruning and can make an excellent hedge. Honeyeaters love the flowers.

What do the boxes above the photos mean?

442mm	+SW	Acid	Sand

The Newsletter aims to provide as much information about the plants featured as possible, within space constraints. The information near the photos is designed to help convey a lot of information succinctly.

The map shows the natural distribution of the plant. Of course, many people also grow plants in their gardens a long way from the natural area, and the boxes above each photo provide more information to improve success.
The first box shows the annual rainfall *where the photo was taken*. This may be either in the wild, or in a cultivated area - but it shows that the pictured plant will indeed grow in areas with that rainfall.
The second box shows *if there has been Supplementary Watering* of the pictured plant. Obviously this will be Nil in the wild, but it can help in understanding the water that the photographed plant has enjoyed.
The third box shows the broad *ph of the soil in the area the photo was taken*. Again this is helpful if you are trying to grow the plant outside its natural home. This in an underrated factor in successfully cultivating native plants, and especially so for the many SA gardeners who face alkaline soils which the plants chosen may not enjoy.
The fourth box shows the *soil type of the plant photographed*. Again, this can be critically important.

CELEBRITY SQUARE

In each newsletter we will feature a plant special to one of our "Celebrity" members.

The first Celebrity selection has been chosen by APSSA President, Tim Wood.

Tim says:
"I have chosen ***Olearia ciliata*** as it is found on Yorke Peninsula. A beautiful compact purple perennial daisy bush to 30cm high, and it was found at Agery reserve, which the NYP group of APS has done some conservation work on.

"It has linear leaves with a hairy margin, hence the name. On a group excursion to Dhilba Guuranda-Innes National Park last October, members found a lot of plants in flower at West Cape.

"Other YP Olearia worth growing include ***O. rudis, picridifolia, muelleri, magniflora, pannosa and ramulosa.*** Propagate from seed (difficult) or cuttings"

Spring plant sale

We will NOT be holding a Spring pant sale at Urrbrae this year.

Instead, we encourage members to support, and publicise, these events.

Fleurieu Group's plant sale at Nangawooka on Sunday 14th September.

Two of the main growers who usually sell at Urrbrae will be at Nangawooka, plus many local growers.

Baroosa Bushgardens/APSSA plant sale, Sat 27th Sept at the BBg site, Nuriootpa 9am - 1pm

Some APSS growers may also be present at:

Mt Pleasant Spring Festival, 20th September

Nangawooka, cnr Waterport Rd and Adelaide-Victor Harbor Rd

The APSSA plant sale at Urrbrae will hopefully be back in Autumn 2026, provided we can get a volunteer to act as co-ordinator. Contact Tim Wood if interested in exploring this.

It's July and the winter sun is rising, and the Cootamundra wattle is my friend
All at once my childhood never left me, wattle blossoms bring it back again...

This line, from John Williamson's nostalgic ballad "Cootamundra Wattle", reminds us that the wattle season is upon us. Let's celebrate Australia's national floral emblem by showcasing some of the prettiest wattles we have.

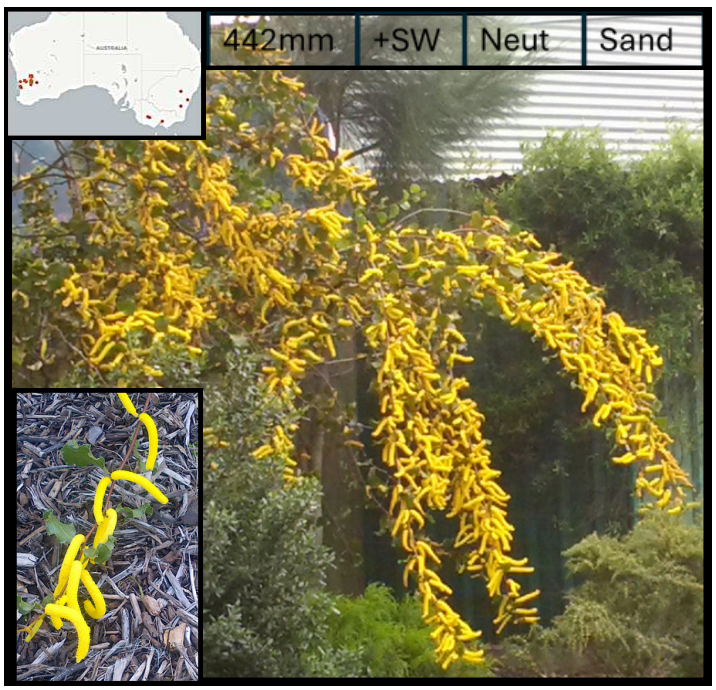
The celebration of Wattle Day has its roots in Adelaide(!) in 1889, when the Wattle Blossom League was briefly formed. The Wattle Club followed in Victoria in 1899, then the Wattle Day League in Sydney in 1909. All this activity led to the Australian Wattle Day League Conference in Melbourne in 1913, and wattle's inclusion on our coat of arms. During World War I wattle badges and sprigs became a potent symbol of home, and major fund raiser for the war effort..

Originally the date varied with the peak flowering time of wattles in each geographical region. It was always 1 August where I grew up in the southern Riverina area of NSW, with other places celebrating on 1 July and 1 September. In 1992 1st September was selected to be the official Wattle Day across the country, with the Society for Growing Australian Plants (our former name) being instrumental in the decision.

Incredibly, Acacia Pycnantha was not officially proclaimed as our national flower until 1988!

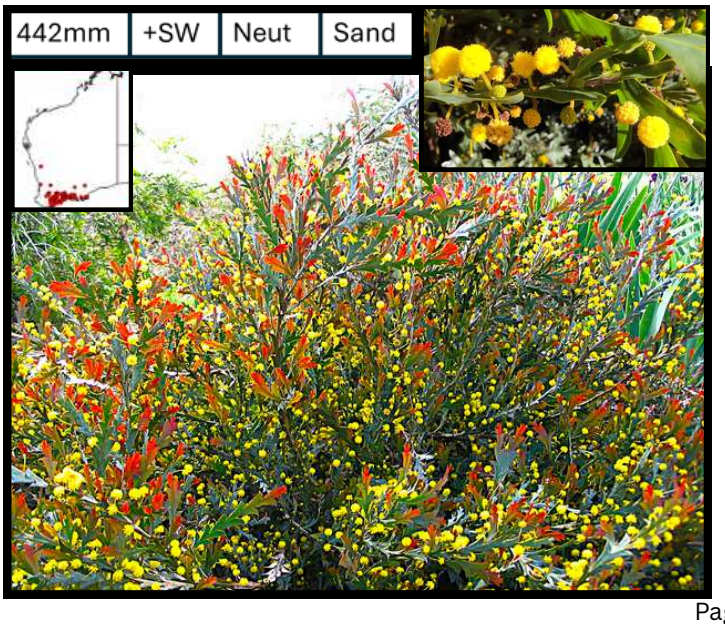
There are nearly 1,000 species of wattle in Australia, making it our largest genus of flowering plants. Acacia forest makes up over 8% of our native forest area, mainly in arid and semi-arid areas and is second only to eucalypts (77% of total forest area). There are about 350 species in other parts of the world, mostly in Africa and the Americas.

Here are a few of our beautiful wattles to whet your appetite for the next few months.



This beauty is Acacia denticulosa, or Sandpaper Wattle, named because of the teeth along the edge of the leaves. But it is the surface of the leaves which is their most distinctive feature - with sharp raised bumps exactly like the coarsest grade of sandpaper! The flowers are long thick rods, about the shape and length of your ring finger. See inset.

This one was growing in Goolwa on sandy loam, but only lived about 5 years. Attempts to grow another have sadly failed.



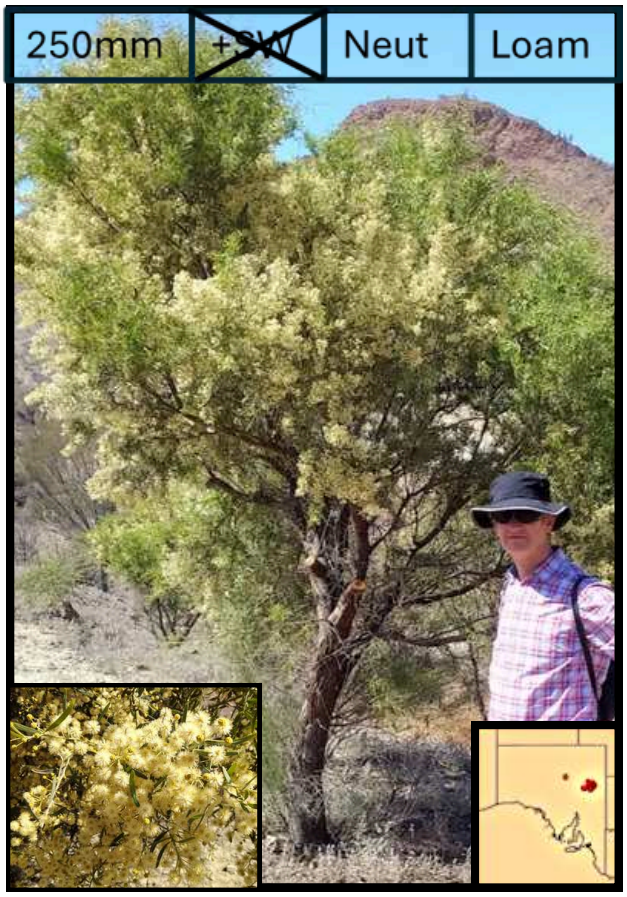
Acacia glaucoptera (Clay wattle or flat wattle) is a small shrub with single large ball flowers growing from the middle of each flat "leaf" segment on a little stalk (see inset). New leaf growth is red and almost translucent. There is a wonderful hedge of A. glaucoptera in the Adelaide Botanic Gardens.

The dominant tree in much of arid Australia is **Acacia aneura**, or mulga. It is highly variable, and also - unusually for acacias - very long lived. A mature tree will often be 100 yo. Some trees have been found to have 240 rings in their trunks! The think leaves often point upwards, which is thought to be a way of both retaining moisture and funnelling rain to the root zone. it has a very deep taproot - a seedling of just 10cm can have a 3m taproot!

A mulga in full flower is an arresting sight. Many parts of the tree are used as bush food.

This is **Acacia ligulata**, mainly chosen for the background because the plant is growing at the very base of Uluru. Two of our national symbols side by side...

Ligulata can host wichetty grubs among its roots, and has other bush food and medicine uses.

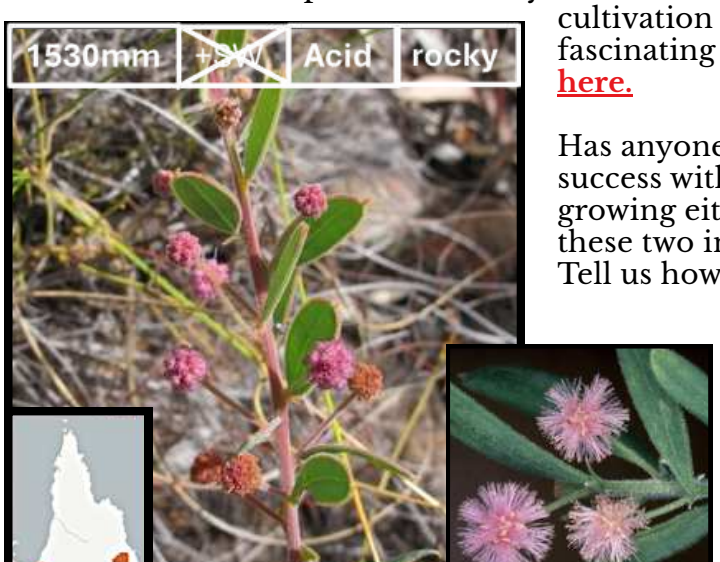


Above we have another arid location acacia, the pale-blossomed **Acacia confluens**, the Arkaroola Wattle. It is so abundant near the Arkaroola Village that there is an Acacia Walk along the ridges. The flowers are in large fluffy dense bunches - see inset. The tree grows to about 3m.

Below we have two non-yellow acacias. On the left is **Acacia purpureopetala**, a critically endangered plant from north Queensland with only 7,000 plants remaining in the wild. It likes steep rocky slopes and grows about 0.6m high. Have any members seen it in the wild? Send a pic!

On the right is **Acacia leprosa 'Scarlet Blaze'**, a lovely shrub up to 5m. A single specimen was discovered NE of Melbourne in 1995, and all plants now in existence come from that one plant. The story of its subsequent cultivation is fascinating - see here.

Has anyone had success with growing either of these two in SA? Tell us how!!



Next newsletter will feature

Grevilleas

Send your photos in now! See p18 for details

RESILIENCE AND OPPORTUNISM

Plants are incredibly resilient and we see plants growing in extraordinary places. At the Melbourne docks I saw a gum tree which had sprouted inside a top of a tall upright pipe 10cm in diameter, and the tree was now 2m high!

In this segment we will highlight situations where plants are living a precarious life quite happily, and taking every opportunity to grow and reproduce.

This ***Callitris glaucophylla*** (White Cypress pine) is clinging onto life at Kings Canyon in the NT. It appears to be growing in rock, and is leaning precariously over into the deep rock chasm below (a permanent waterhole called The Garden of Eden) It is an old specimen, but in good health despite...

Growing on the eastern side of the tree is a healthy mistletoe, ***Lysiana exocarpi*** (Harlequin mistletoe). Mistletoes are hemi-parasites, because the new plant fixes itself to the xylem of the host tree to capture water and nutrients. Once the mistletoe has attached itself (that point is called the **haustoria**), the host tree does not continue to grow past the haustoria.

A whole edition of national journal **"Australian Plants"** was devoted to mistletoes in their great diversity. See here.

APSSA research projects

At a recent APSSA Council meeting, two research projects were chosen to further scientific knowledge of Australian plants, using funds bequeathed to the Society by Bert and Aileen Kollosche some years ago.

One project will be led by Dr Kate Delaporte and is titled "***Walking together with First Nations people to progress impactful research on South Australian plants for healthy living: knowledge sharing, optimising propagation, and germplasm resource collection***".

The second project will be led by Dr Ilaine Silveira Matos on the topic: "***How does drought tolerance vary across life stages in Eucalyptus and Acacia trees?***"

We look forward to following this research as time progresses.

WEEDS: SPACE INVADERS

At its most simplistic, a weed is any plant in the wrong place. Weeds are space invaders, taking valuable nutrients, water and sunlight away from the native plants they replace, sometimes totally excluding the original flora. Weeds come from everywhere - over water, on the wind, in/on cars and boats and shoes, in luggage, as gifts, in the post, in a potplant, in bulk mulch, and in the intestinal tracts of birds and animals. They don't even have to be from foreign climes - some Australian native species become weedy as garden escapes outside their original local area, and have to be treated as weed going forward. We will feature a weed in each edition, so send me your pet aversions for inclusion in future newsletters.

Our Space Invader feature this time comes from Alicen McNaughton, a COOTS member.

Feature weed: Arctotheca calendula
Common name: Capeweed

Native to: South Africa (specifically the Western Cape region).

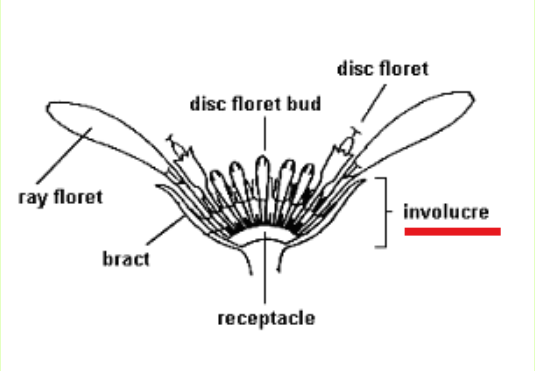
Introduced to: Australia, New Zealand, the United States (especially California), and parts of Europe. In Australia, it's widespread across SA, Vic, WA and NSW, especially in gardens, roadsides, pastures, parks, and lawns.

Description:

- A low growing, spreading plant with soft, woolly, deeply lobed leaves with green upper surfaces and whitish hairy undersides.
- Distinctive yellow daisy-like flowers with a dark centre and free involucral bracts (the leaf-like structures below the flower head - see diagram below).
- Forms dense mats, crowding out native vegetation and garden plants.

Interesting Facts:

- Like many weeds, capeweed was introduced *intentionally* to Australia in the 1800s as a soil stabilizer and for pasture due to its fast growth and ground coverage.
- Capeweed is toxic to livestock in large quantities: while some animals (like sheep) may nibble it, capeweed can cause nitrate poisoning if consumed in large amounts, especially in stressed conditions like drought.
- "Woolly" camouflage: The underside of the leaves is covered in dense white hairs, helping it conserve moisture and possibly confusing predators/insects.
- As many gardeners, Councils and farmers know too well, capeweed is good at evading mowing: it hugs the ground so tightly that it often survives lawn mowing, which allows it to dominate grassy areas.
- Capeweed is allelopathic: capeweed may release chemicals that suppress other plants, giving it a competitive edge.
- Capeweed is pollinator-friendly (sort of): the flowers attract bees and some insects, but because it dominates so completely, it may reduce floral diversity over time.
- Capeweed might be mistaken for a Gazania: both are daisy-like plants with yellow flowers but are distinct species within the Asteraceae family. The most reliable way to distinguish between the two is by examining the **involucral bracts**. Capeweed has free involucral bracts, while gazanias have fused bracts. While both can have lobed leaves, capeweed's leaves are typically more deeply lobed and have a green upper surface, while gazania leaves are often more silvery or greyish. Capeweed is more of a sprawling ground cover, while gazanias can have a more upright growth habit.



Why It's a Problem:

- Invasive in pastures, competes with native species.
- Reduces biodiversity.
- Hard to control once it takes over, especially in disturbed soils.

Management:

- Regular mowing, hand-pulling, or spot-spraying in garden beds.
- improving soil health and replanting with competitive groundcovers can help suppress regrowth.

Winter flower vase

442mm	+SW	Neut	Sand

We are lucky that many Australian plants flower in winter. This vase includes:

- Acacia baileyana prostrate
- A. aphylla
- Banksia marginata
- Thryptomene saxicola (white)
- Eremophila glabra (yellow)
- Kunzea baxteri
- Acmadenia tetragona
- Anthrocercis littorea
- Grevillea "Moonlight"
- Eremophila maculata (pink)

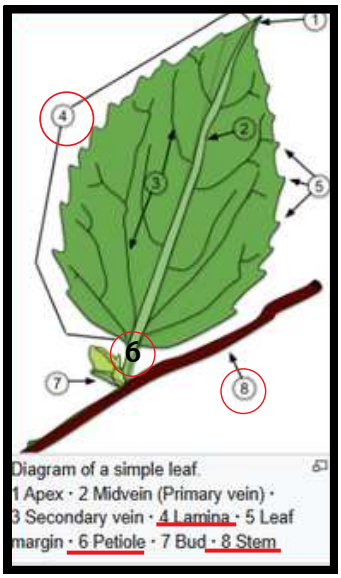
Does anyone know why native plants are so "thirsy" when cut? Natives seem to take up 3-4 times the amount of water than exotic flowers use. Let us know!

Botany bites

Explaining botany terms

Phyllodes, cladodes and other things which are not leaves

In this newsletter both phyllodes (in the wattle feature) and cladodes (in the Uluru holiday article) have been mentioned, but how exactly are they different to "real" leaves?



Leaves are the most common photosynthesis organ of a plant, and consist of a blade (or lamina) and a stalk (the petiole). They make food for the plant using solar energy, and move gases and water between the atmosphere and the plant. (See right).

Phyllodes are modified, flattened *petioles*, the stalk that usually attaches the leaf to the plant. Phyllodes are especially common in Australian acacias. Essentially, the stalk never develops into a leaf; it just keeps on growing out of the stem and takes on the roles of a leaf. Sometimes both true leave and phyllodes can be present on the one plant at the same time! See ***Acacia sauveolens*** at left.
(To confuse things even more, phyllodes can also be called "cladophylls"...)

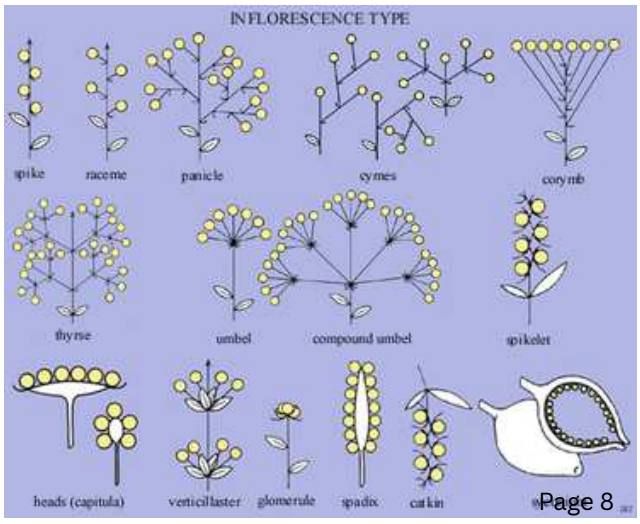
Cladodes, on the other hand, derive from the *stem* of the plant and also take on the roles of leaves. They can be flattened, but can also be needle-like.
Tasmania's Celery-top Pine ***Phyllocladus aspleniifolius***, has cladodes - see right. ("Phylloclade" is another name for cladodes... Why do they do this to us??)
Many dry-climate plants have cladodes rather than leaves, as a way of preserving moisture. Examples are ***Allocasuarina decaisneana***, the Desert Oak, (shown left) and the (non-native) prickly pear genus, opuntia.

And if you are still confused, take heart: some botanists use these terms interchangeably - even Encyclopaedia Britannica mixed them up confusingly!

Inflorescences vs flowers

Why are some flowers referred to as inflorescences? Essentially, an inflorescence is a "bunch". An inflorescence is a group or cluster of flowers on a stem, and they come in many shapes and sizes. Acacias, eucalypts, banksias, mistletoes are some examples of Australian plants bearing inflorescences.

In acacias, inflorescences may comprise from as few as 3 individual flowers (e.g. ***Acacia lunata***) to as many as 130 or more (e.g. Acacia anceps). ***Banksia marginata*** inflorescences can comprise up to 1,000 individual flowers arranged in pairs along a central axis.



Send botany queries here, and we'll try to find understandable answers.

Study Groups

ANPSA, the national body representing the native plant associations from each state, supports a number of study groups which all members across Australia are eligible to join. Study groups (SGs) vary in their activities, from publishing major books on their particular topic of study, to field trips, sharing knowledge, and get-togethers. All publish interesting newsletters.

Study Groups cover a broad range of species and topics. Here is a list of all the Study Groups, and how to join. Expand your horizons by simply emailing the SG and asking to join!!! SG members are not obliged to become active members but can learn a lot simply by joining.

Acacia, acaciastudygroup@gmail.com $10 (may be free for email?)
Australian Food Plants, australianfoodplants@gmail.com Free
Grafting, graftingstudygroup@gmail.com Free
Pea Flowers, fabpeamail@gmail.com Free
Australian Plants for Containers, benwalcott5@gmail.com Free
Banksia, banksia@westnet.com.au Free
Correa, dlhandscombe@bigpond.com Free
Dryandra, banksia@westnet.com.au Free
Eremophila, lthorburn@viria.com.au $5
Eucalyptus, warwick@alliedtrees.com.au Free
Ferns, ANPSAferns@bigpond.com $5
Garden Design, GDSG@anpsa.org.au Free
Goodeniaceae, goodeniaceaestudygroup@gmail.com Free
Grevillea, bruce.moffatt@tpg.com.au Free
Hakea, hakeaholic@gmail.com $10
Isopogon and Petrophile, isopetstudygroup@gmail.com Free

Here are some snippets from recent Study Group newsletters.

Hakea Study Group

The SG leader talks about how the drought across southern Australia seems to have affected seed setting in ***Hakea linearis*** and ***H. longiflora*** (see right), a very rare plant.

WA members of the group visited a property in the Darling Ranges where a new member is attempting to grow all known hakeas (there are 169) on a 40 acre block, and has already established 40 species. When he is away, the owner can view his garden and then water it as needed, all from his phone.

Another field trip visited a bush block NE of Perth, which also has about 40 different species. This member was “old school”, carrying water in plastic bottles from a tank to his many specimens. Kangaroos are a big problem in the drought.

370mm | ~~+SW~~ | n/a | gravel

The group continued further east to Calingiri, to see the only population of ***H. chromatropa*** (left), where 20 plants are growing on the roadside. Propagation efforts by a member of the Study Group are helping this population increase little by little. Elsewhere in this newsletter there is a detailed article by Hans Griesser about this endangered plant.

One WA study group member reports successfully growing several hakeas on extremely alkaline sandy soils – which should interest many SA members with the same soil type.

Species grown in alkaline soil include ***verrucosa, neurophylla, ruscifolia, Burrendong Beauty, laurina, lisssocarpha, cucullata, erecta, orthorrhyncha ssp. filiformis, circumalata, petiolaris, prostrata, bucculenta, obtusa, newbeyana, invaginata, horrida, multilineata*** (right)***, platysperma, pandanicarpa ssp. crassifolia, cinerea, corymbosa and minyma.***

Keen SA study group member Hans Griesser wrote about the effect drought was having on his 50+ hakea collection, including the loss of several plants. Members from the Grampians reported the same issues.

H. multilineata

Correa Study Group

Again, the severe drought across south-eastern Australia, with many correas needing supplementary watering to survive.

In explaining his severely overcrowded garden, one member from Gippsland says "*All of my plants are illiterate and/or ignorant and pay absolutely no attention to their labels, growing to sizes with no correlation to those printed on the labels*"! Here are a few of his correas; some are natural hybrids of his own naming.

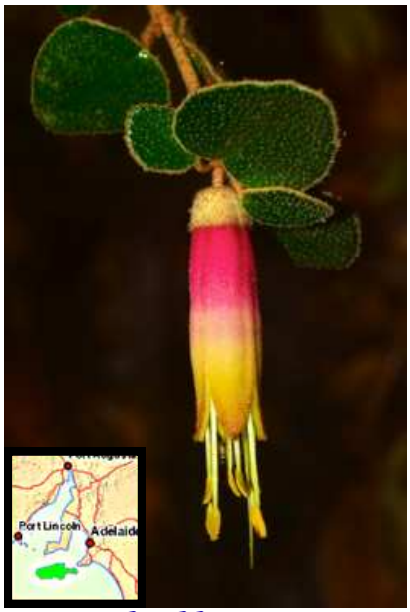
Correa "OMG"

Correa eburnea (Deep Creek correa)

All | 950mm | +SW | Alk | Hv loam

Correa reflexa var reflexa, showing frost damage to leaves

Correa reflexa var. reflexa 'Wellington Green'



Correa backhouseana var orbicularis

Correa "Boolarra Sunset"

Other Correa SG members from Canberra describe opening up their large garden with new paths and plantings – always exciting! They report several deaths from harsh summer sun (yes, in Canberra!), which is something SA correa growers know very well. Here are are few of their new correa plantings.

Correa "Mallee Pastel"

Correa reflexa var. reflexa "Granny's Grave"

Correa "Prolific"

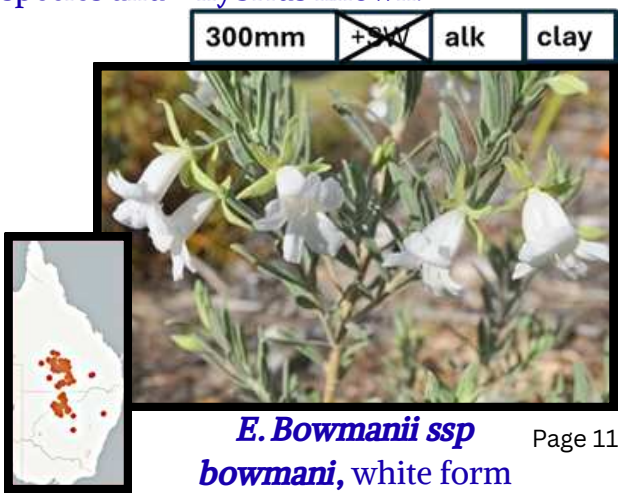
And finally, the newsletter outlined a recent "Correa Crawl" outing in eastern Victoria which included rambling in the bush as well as visiting private gardens, attended by SG members from across the state.

Eremophila Study Group

This SG newsletter features a particular eremophila species in each newsletter, and this time is was **E. bowmanii**, a grey hairy plant whose common names include Velvet Fuchsia. Flowers range from dark purple to mauve, pink and white (below, right). There are 3 subspecies and 2 hybrids known.

E. glabra x nivea "Pink Pantha"

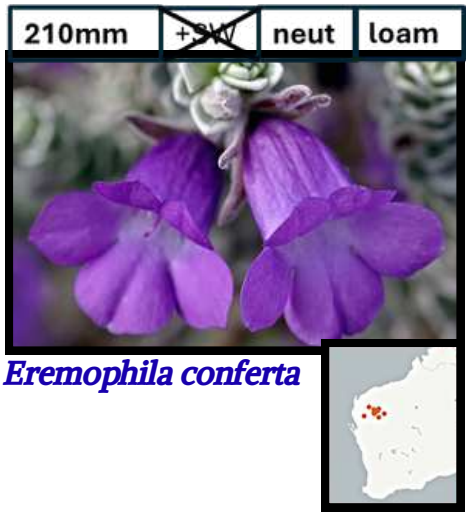
A member from Bodalla on the NSW south coast describes the eremophilas he is growing on his bush block, including this beauty, left.



E. Bowmanii ssp bowmani, white form

A young WA member showed off her propagation method using raised sand beds (to get away from the natural clay) and plastic milk bottles to control humidity. After only 2 years she is already growing 40 different species of eremophilas!

The SA group is very active in the Eremophila Study Group – hardly surprising given the genus's "desert lover" meaning. They have been attempting, fairly unsuccesfully, to propagate showy northern species such as ***E. citrina, E. conferta*** (see below)***, E. congesta, E. obliquesepala, E. pilosa*** and ***E. rhegosm*** – all coming from northern summer–rainfall areas. Perhaps these species have short lives in their native habitat as well? And frost is probably also an issue. A contrary view is that crowding in garden settings (in nature the plants are widely spaced), and fungus from winter rains are the reasons for southern failures.



Eremophila conferta

The next get–together of the SA group is planned for Wellington in October – for details see Regional Groups, page 16 in this newsletter.

The Queensland group held a grafting session, with detailed discussion about rootstocks (mostly ***myoporums***, but not exclusively) and grafting cut methods. They noted that the Qld humidity was certainly helpful in grafting. [Anyone interested in grafting eremophilas would be well advised to join the SG, as the information given in this newsletter is excellent.]

A week–long roadtrip is being planned in the Qld outback in August – if you are planning a trip north, this could be worth considering. NSW are also tentatively planning a roadtrip in October, to Canberra, Gundagai and Wagga Wagga.

Editor's note: The Correa SG newsletter included some marvellous photos of mushrooms and fungus. Does anyone have a particular interest in these organisms? If so, please contact the Editor to discuss a future feature on them. Click here.

Amazing Arid Australia

Save the Date!

The 2026 national conference will be held in Alice Springs next year.

24-28 August 2026

South Australia is responsible for the conference, so we'd love SA native plant lovers to come along.
Unique plants in a unique environment

Full program out in the New Year

Swainsona formosa, street planting in Alice Springs

What we did in the holidays

When plant lovers travel, we are constantly on the lookout for plants which are new to us or particularly unusual or beautiful. Share your most significant holiday and travel plant "finds" with other members - send in a couple of photos and a short description of why they captured your attention.

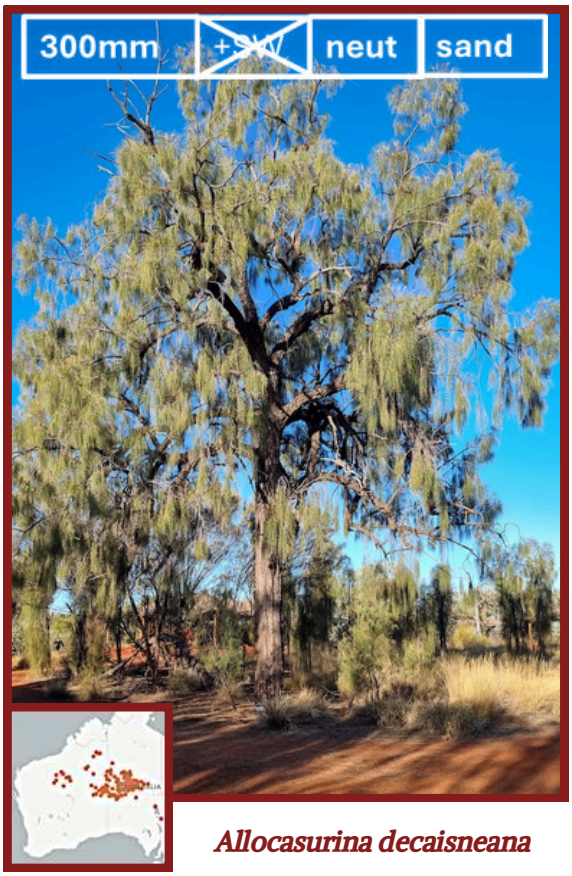
Our first holiday item comes from a member travelling in near Uluru. The forests of small narrow trees on sand hills required more investigation!

"We came upon grove after grove of young narrow trees crowded together, but saw no mature specimens of this shape. Does this tree stop growing when only a couple of metres high?

"We discovered that these are young **Allocasuarina decaisneana**, or Desert Oaks. (The name "oak" confused at least one international visitor, who was vainly trying to see any resemblance between these small pine-like trees and the majestic forest giants of the northern hemisphere!).

"The desert oak saplings grow very close together in a narrow habit in groups of more than a hundred, in sand swales. Each tree attempts to grow down to the water-table before any surface water dries up. To dissuade competitors from surviving, the saplings shed their "cladodes" (modified leaves) to form a dense mat around themselves, preventing their neighbours from sharing moisture and nutrients. Most saplings don't make it, and the strongest remaining tree starts to spread out into a more usual tree shape while still fairly small.

"However, if several of the saplings neighbours succeed in reaching the water table, the developing group of trees continue their narrow habit upward until all but one is left standing. Then, with no more close competition, the tree finally branches out and forms into a lovely mature specimen. A mature desert oak can be up to 1,000 years old!"



Allocasurina decaisneana

The sound of desert oaks in the breeze - like all casuarinas - it so evocative. What do you think the collective noun for a group of desert oaks should be? Perhaps:

- **a "whisper" of desert oaks?**
- **an "oasis" of desert oaks?**

Send your suggestions to newsletter@australianplantssa.asn.au for publication in the next edition.

Raising Rarity - conservation through cultivation

Hakea chromatropa

Plants that, in the wild exist, only in one or a few highly localised stands are at high risk of threat or even extinction from events such as wildfires. Their conservation can be supported by gardeners willing to grow plants in their gardens and supply seeds or cuttings to help the natural population. One such plant is H*akea chromatropa,* a taxon which was first found in 2006 and described in 2007, thus being the newest Hakea species.

It is an upright shrub to 2.5 m with prickly leaves and profuse late winter flowering, with the flowers starting out creamy white and turning pink as they age; hence the specific name "chromatropa", meaning colour turning.

It is listed as a "Priority One" species in WA, meaning that it is known from only one or a few locations which are potentially at risk. While Wikipedia refers to four populations, members of the ANPSA Hakea Study Group earlier this year visited the only population they know of, on a roadside near Calingiri WA. Paul Kennedy, Study Group Leader, mentions that there were twenty plants, and "this is probably the most vulnerable Hakea as one swipe of a road grader would wipe the species out".

Fortunately, it propagates well from seed and has adapted well to cultivation in gardens, even far from its natural habitat. Several members of the Hakea Study Group have plants growing in their gardens in WA and Victoria, and I have two plants growing in my garden at Gumeracha in the northern Adelaide Hills.

The fact that the annual rainfall here is almost twice that of its natural habitat and the soil fairly heavy loam do not seem to bother them. They have flowered nicely for the last three years and set fruits well, but so far my attempts at collecting seed have mostly been foiled by the yellow-tailed black cockatoos who frequently visit my garden to raid the assortment of tasty snacks on dozens of Hakeas and Banksias.

If you have enough space to grow this plant where you can avoid getting too close to its prickly nature, I'd encourage you to do so, both for conservation and as a shelter for small birds. No cat will raid a bird nest inside this plant!

Hans Griesser

Obituary - Rod Kent

"Planting a tree is a very important thing"

We recently learned of the death of Rod Kent, on his 79th birthday. Rod was APSSA Membership Officer for many years and also APSSA Treasurer. He was a member of Council from 2003 to 2008 and was appointed Vice president in 2006. Rod is described as "a quiet but reliable member" by a Society colleague who worked with him for many years.

Rod started his lifelong passion for gardening early. As a child, he grew a garden at his family home in Glengowrie with his father Sydney. Rod was never happier than pottering around the garden with his father, and he always remarked how this sparked something in him.

Rod had a large bush block on Kangaroo Island which he re-propagated with local species over several decades. He joined APSSA when he was posted to Coober Pedy, and immediately joined the Hakea Study Group - asking members for seed of ***H lorea, chordophylla, francisiana, minyma*** and ***coriacea*** to try in that challenging environment. He later moved to the Fleurieu where he was active in conservation organisations.

Rod was still growing seedlings when he died, and was cremated with gumnuts of ***Eucalyptus woodwardii*** in his pocket, from a self-grown tree.

Rod, a single father, is survived by his children Alainée, Lovetia, Vaughan, and Mignon.

About the Editor

Alice McCleary has been interested in plants since she was a child. Her father's family had been farmers for generations, and she grew up in south-western NSW on an irrigated stone-fruit farm, and then on a irrigated rice/wheat/cereals farm with some sheep and cattle.

Upon moving to Adelaide in the early 1980s, she developed her first garden in Myrtle Bank and included a number of natives in an already-established traditional garden. This pattern continued through subsequent house-moves in the Unley area - with fruit trees always being added consistent with her roots.

In the mid 1990s she purchased vacant land in Goolwa, and had the opportunity to develop a wholly-native garden from scratch. This garden was featured in the xx edition of "*Australian Plants*", and brings constant happy labour and joy. Alice is also the Treasurer of APSSA.

REGIONAL GROUPS

When travelling around SA, drop in on a regional activity and share your passion for our flora

NYP Region,

55 South Tce, Kadina

14 Aug, 1pm - monthly meeting

30 Aug - 9am, Wattle Day Open Garden and nursery sales

30 Aug 2p propagation workshop

11 Sept 7.30pm, monthly meeting

https://www.facebook.com/events/1360022918597082/?checkpoint_src=any

In the nursery at NYP Group

Brinkworth Group

meets in the Brinkworth Hall, Main St, Brinkworth. Phone 0437 114 540 for details

Let us know what you are up to so we can publicise it!

Gawler and Barossa Group

Lyndoch Institute Town Hall, centre of Lyndoch

20 August, 7.30pm, monthly meeting

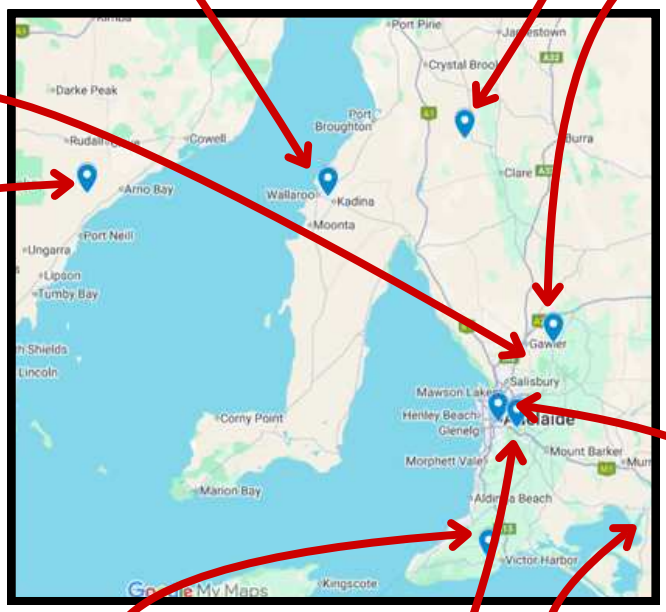
17 September, 7.30pm, monthly meeting

27 September, 9am - 1pm, joint sale with Barossa Bushgardens, at BBg site Nuriootpa

15 October, 7.30pm, monthly meeting

Phone 0400 962 082 for more information. Zoom links available.

Mt Pleasant Spring Sale, 20 Sept



Eastern Eyre Peninsular Group

meets in the Arno Bay/Port Neill region phone 08 8688 2289 for more information

Let us know what you are up to so we can publicise it!

Adelaide Group

21A Richards Tce, Goodwood

28 August, 7.30pm, monthly meeting, "Identifying acacias"

31 August, 10am, visit Bill Anderson Smith's garden, 379 Hancock Rd, Fairview Park

14 September, 11am, visit to Verner Kutsche's bush block at Ponde

25 September, 7.30pm, monthly meeting

23 October, 7.30pm, monthly meeting

Phone 0447 995 777 for more information

Fleurieu Group

Carrickalinga house, 17 Torrens St, Victor Harbor

27 August, 2pm, monthly meeting

14 September, 10am - 3pm, plant sale at Nangawooka

24 September, 2pm, - visit to Karen Lane's to look at butterfly attracting plants, with expert guide

22 October, 2pm, garden visit

Contact swansonleonore@gmail.com for more information

Eremophila study group weekend - 11th- 12 Oct at Wellington. contact Tim Wood

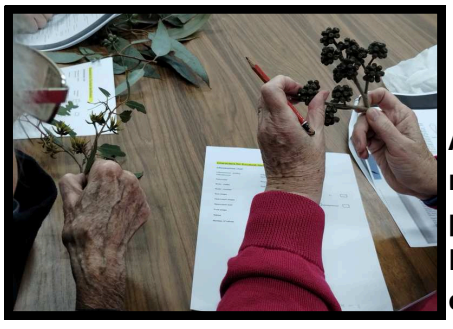
COOTS Group

21A Richards Tce, Goodwood

3 August, noon, monthly gathering

7 September, noon, monthly gathering

5 October, noon, monthly gathering



Adelaide Group members practiising using Keys to identify eucalypts

Fleurieu members planting winter-germinating seeds, such as Billlardiera, Callitris, chocolate lily and Dichogpogon

Book review

THAT GRASS BOOK - IDENTIFYING GRASSES IN SOUTHERN AUSTRALIA by Ellen Bennett (2023)

Ellen Bennett's "That Grass Book" fills a crucial gap in field guides for South Australian plant enthusiasts. Published by the Native Grass Resources Group, this practical guide addresses the common frustration of grass identification with an innovative approach that makes the seemingly impossible task of distinguishing native from introduced species genuinely accessible.

Strengths

The book's standout feature is its life-sized silhouette key – a brilliant solution to the challenge of grass identification. Rather than relying solely on technical descriptions, Bennett provides actual-size silhouettes of fresh grass heads that readers can match directly with specimens in the field. This approach transforms what was once a daunting task into something approaching simplicity.

The guide covers approximately 80 genera and 130 common species across southern Australia, striking a good balance between comprehensiveness and practical usability. Each species receives thorough treatment with detailed photographs and close-up images of distinguishing features. For South Australian native plant enthusiasts, this represents excellent value – the book clearly indicates which species are native versus introduced, addressing a primary concern for conservation-minded readers. High-magnification colour photographs assist with species-level identification, while the straightforward layout makes field use practical.

Practical Applications

This book excels as a field companion for bushwalkers, revegetation volunteers, and landcare groups. The silhouette matching system works particularly well during peak flowering seasons when grass heads are most distinctive. For property owners wanting to identify native grasses for conservation or landscaping purposes, the clear native/introduced distinctions make this an invaluable resource.

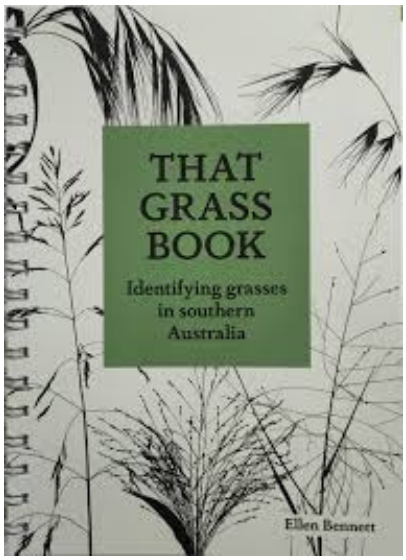
The guide would be particularly useful for ecological restoration projects, where accurate identification of existing native grasses is essential before introducing new species.

Areas for Improvement

Future editions might benefit from expanded coverage of less common native species, particularly those found in specialized habitats like mallee or coastal zones. Additional information on grass ecology, flowering seasons, and habitat preferences would enhance the book's value beyond mere identification.

Including more detailed distribution maps and notes on conservation status would also strengthen the guide's utility for South Australian readers concerned with local conservation priorities.

The book can be borrowed from the APSSA Library, or, for $45, purchased from the Bookshop. Please email the APSSA Librarian at librarian@australianplantssa.asn.au



Contributions are welcome - and essential!

Member contributions are the lifeblood of a membership newsletter. Large and small items are welcome – we are aiming for an informal and chatty document that will help connect members to each other and the wonderful natural world around us.

Experienced and beginners alike will, we hope, feel comfortable in making a contribution.

Some of the things you may like to share are:

- **photos, anecdotes, scientific information, propagation** and any other interesting aspect of Australian native plants.
- **photos of social events** such as plant sales, speakers and their presentations, meeting activities, nursery work, conservation projects, workshops, award nights, Christmas parties etc.
- **diary dates for APSSA and regional activities**, and any other organisation with similar aims which is holding an event you think others may be interested in. Remember that the Newsletter will be quarterly, so take that into account when considering which events to send in.
- successful **grant applications**, with followup photos once the grant is completed.
- **suggestions for newsletter ideas**
- **corrections and complaints!** We can all learn from each other, so if a plant is wrongly labelled or information is wrong or incomplete, tell us so we can pass it on. Try to be polite!

When sending photos of plants, please include (**if at all possible**):

- your name and suburb/town
- full name of plant if known
- a paragraph short note on why it is noteworthy
- general location of where photo was taken, and month
- if growing in cultivation:
  - the annual rainfall, and whether supplementary watering has been applied to the plant.
  - soil ph – eg acid/neutral/alkaline,
  - soil type – eg clay/loam/sand. (This info will help others know if it will grow for them.)
  - age of plant, if known

If you don't know some or all of this information, send in whatever you have!

Species vs cultivars

Of course we are all very interested in naturally-occurring species of native plants, but we cannot ignore the fact that breeders are constantly introducing new cultivars and grafted plants which have useful characteristics in many settings. In other situations only natural species are appropriate. The broad Constitutional aims of APSSA have room for both species and cultivars. The newsletter welcomes photos of cultivars and grafted plants, with appropriate identification.

Editor's email address: newsletter@australianplantssa.asn.au

Letters to the Editor welcome!

Photo credits and location map credits include:

- Australian Native Plants Society (Australia)
- Florabase, the Western Australian flora
- APSSA
- Australian Native Plants NSW
- Atlas of Living Australia
- Lucid Central
- Australian National Herbarium
- ResearchGate
- Australasian Virtual Herbarium
- Mike Beamish (correas)
- Ben Walcott (correas)
- Brian Freeman (eremophilas)
- Jason Cockayne (eremophilas)
- Tim Wood
- Alice McCleary