



AUSTRALIAN PLANTS SOCIETY Yarra Yarra Group Inc.

(Incorporation No: A0039676Y)

Newsletter March 2020

General Meeting : Thursday 5th March, 8.00pm Biodiversity Project - Michael Cincotta

Our speaker this month, Michael Cincotta, has had a life long love of nature leading him to complete a Diploma of Natural Resource Management at Epping TAFE in 1995. Over the years Michael worked for a number of local councils and management bodies on bush and revegetation crews where he gained an in depth knowledge of the local flora and fauna. It was this knowledge that led to him being appointed nursery coordinator of the 'Keelbundora Nursery' in 2000 where he remained until 2012, and then stepped up into the newly developed Biodiversity Coordinator role, which he still holds. In 2010 he embarked part time on a Wildlife Conservation and Ecology Degree at La Trobe University which he completed in 2016.

The La Trobe Wildlife Sanctuary is a 30-hectare River Red Gum Woodland restoration project. The Wildlife Sanctuary and Indigenous Nursery is essentially a diverse, ongoing conservation project spanning over 50 years. Michael's presentation will cover some of the most recent success stories, the existing wildlife of the sanctuary and plans to increase biodiversity with the introduction of several keystone ecological species. Michael will also discuss long running citizen science projects and the most recent botany focused projects and partnerships such as the *Rutidosis* project with ARI and the joint APS Yarra Yarra/ FOWLR/LTU *Dianella amoena* genotyping project. Michael will also expand on the many facets of the Indigenous Nursery, seedbank, seed orchards and partnership with APS Yarra Yarra.



Dianella amoena

Garden Outing : Thursday 12th March, 10.30 - 11.30am Guided Tour of Burnley Gardens, Richmond

Something a bit different this time, a mid-week visit and guided tour by the Friends of Burnley Gardens. Cost is \$8.00 per person and members wishing to participate are to meet at the Main entrance at 10.15am, with the correct money. Parking is available on the Boulevard and if you'd like to have lunch nearby there are local cafes or you might like to bring a picnic and enjoy it at the gardens. The Friends Group also has a website with more information if you'd like to have a look: <http://www.fobg.org.au/blog/>

Address: Burnley Gardens, 500 Yarra Blvd, Burnley VIC 3121, Main entrance Melways Map X872 D6 enlarged from 45 A12. Chat to Peter Smith for more information at the meeting or on 0425 798 275.



Garden Visits, Meetings & Diary Dates

General Meetings Coming Up:

April 2 - Biography of Edith Coleman, "The Wasp and the Orchid" by Danielle Clode (Adelaide based author)

Garden Visits & Outings Coming Up:

To be advised - suggestions welcome!

APS Victoria Dates:

February 17 - April 17 - Australian Plants Revealed. An exhibition highlighting unique Australian flora collected by Joseph Banks and Daniel Solander in 1770. Federation Estate, 32 Greenwood Ave, Ringwood. 9am-4pm Mon -Fri & 12 noon-4pm Saturdays.

February 18 - April 18 - Highlighting Banksias and Unique Australian Flora. Karwarra Australian Native Botanic Garden and Nursery, 1190 Mount Dandenong Tourist Rd, Kalorama. Tuesday to Friday 10am to 4.00pm Saturdays and Sundays 1pm to 4.00pm

March 28, 2.00pm - Lecture by Prof Tim Entwisle, followed by afternoon tea and viewing of exhibition at Federation Estate, Ringwood. Note: Bruce Pascoe is no longer able to speak at the event - new speaker TBC.

March 28, 6.00pm - Dinner at Ringwood RSL \$40 per head, bookings and payment required 14 days in advance. Booking form in your December 'Growing Australian'. Further information to exhibitions@apsvic.org.au or email Dallas: bernard.boulton@bigpond.com

October 24-25 - 13th FJC Rogers Seminar on "Mint Bushes & Allied Genera", Hosted by APS Yarra Yarra in Eltham.

Plant Sales:

April 4 - APS Geelong Australian Native Plant Sale, 'Wirrawilla', 40 Lovely Banks Rd, Lovely Banks.

April 18 - APS Yarra Yarra Native Plant & Book Sale, Eltham Community & Reception Centre, 801 Main Rd, Eltham, 10am -4pm.

May 2 - APS Mornington Plant Sale, Seawinds, Arthurs Seat State Park, Purves Rd, Arthurs Seat.

10.00am - 3.30pm

June 27-28 - APS Ballarat Winter Flower Show at Robert Clark Centre, Ballarat Botanical Gardens. 10am-4pm.

September 12-13 - APS Yarra Yarra Australian Plants Expo. Eltham Community & Reception Centre, 801 Main Road, Eltham. 10am to 4pm.

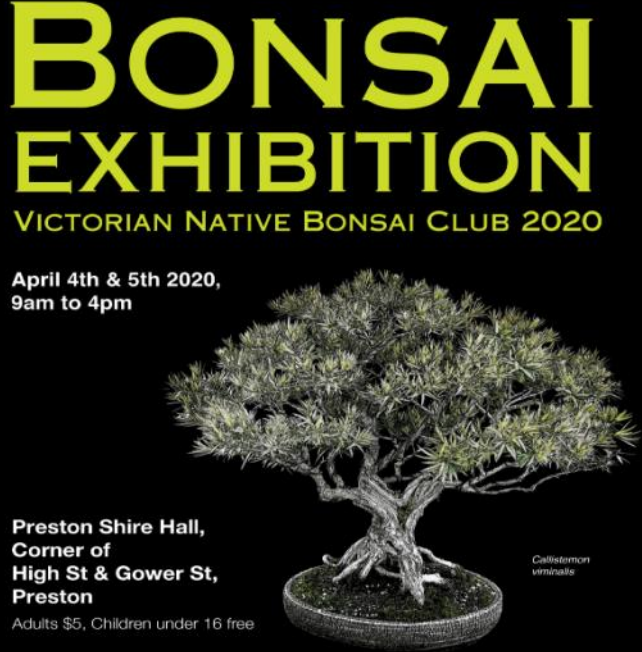
Other Dates:

March 1 - Clean Up Australia Day, Join a local clean up event for the 30th Anniversary of Clean Up Australia Day: <https://www.cleanup.org.au/>

March 3, 7.00pm - La Trobe Wildlife Sanctuary Autumn Stagwatch, Help collect valuable data for World Wildlife Day. Free event, but must register: <https://www.latrobe.edu.au/wildlife/get-involved/citizen-science>

March 25-29 - Melbourne International Flower & Garden Show, Royal Exhibition Building and Carlton Gardens.

Erratum: Last issue we noted Karwarra Gardens had an opening ceremony on March 23rd. It should have been advertised for February 23rd.



BONSAI EXHIBITION
VICTORIAN NATIVE BONSAI CLUB 2020

April 4th & 5th 2020,
9am to 4pm

Preston Shire Hall,
Corner of
High St & Gower St,
Preston
Adults \$5, Children under 16 free

An exhibition of Australian Native Plants as Bonsai
Australian native plants and bonsai related items for sale.
For further information contact secnativeclub@gmail.com
Meetings are held at: Harry Atkinson Centre, Coburg Lake Reserve, Coburg
at 7:30pm on the second Tuesday of the month.

www.vicnativebonsai.com.au



Items of Interest

Helpers Needed - General Meetings

Thank you to Brenda Taylor who has been doing our 'Meet & Greet' at the general meetings for such a long time (and supper duty before that). Brenda is stepping down from this responsibility and we would like someone outside of committee to help out - ideally two or three people so that the job can be shared. It only requires a small commitment at the beginning of the night, welcoming members, taking the \$2 entry fee, giving out a raffle ticket and assisting with the name tags if needed.

We also need some help on the plant sales table, where the responsibility is falling on a couple of our members and again, ideally, if we can get a few more people who can help out the duties can be shared. Duties would include taking payments for plant sales during the night (from 7.30pm) and paying sellers at the end of the night. Training provided! Please talk to Miriam, Peter or Sue to find out more or to offer your assistance. It would be greatly appreciated.

Helpers Needed - Autumn Plant Sale Saturday 18th April

This year our Autumn Plant Sale will be at the Eltham Community and Reception Centre, which is a much larger venue and should give everyone room to move without the crowding we've experienced the last couple of years. We will need helpers to sign on for 2-3 hours throughout the day to set up and pack away, and particularly on the sales tables taking payments and assisting customers with queries. If you can help please contact Jill at the group email (apsyarrayarra@gmail.com) and we will also have a roster sheet available at the next two meetings.

How Does Your Garden Grow?

Did anyone else take advantage of the free daisy seeds given out with Growing Australian magazine last March? It was the best investment of my garden time I've made for a while to sow the seeds and the ones I put in the ground (instead of pots) have done amazingly well. I have them dotted around the garden and I planted several out the front which have drawn many favourable comments from neighbours and passers by - they haven't stopped flowering for months!



Xerochrysum bracteatum



Meeting Report February - Ian Evans : *Brachychitons* by Sue Gwilym

Ian has been landscaping for 30 years, running his own business 'Ian Evans Landscaping' and recently he has been using more *Brachychitons* in his designs. He started out as a nurseryman, but moved into landscaping in preference.

Ian was also part of the team at APS Bendigo that hosted the 2014 FJC Rogers Seminar on *Brachychiton* and allied Genera.

Genus *Brachychiton* holds 31 species of trees and large shrubs, native to Australia (30 species) and New Guinea (1 species). *Brachychitons* are commonly known as Kurrajongs, Flame Trees and Bottle Trees. Kurrajongs are usually evergreens, smaller leaved trees, Flame Trees cover only a few species and Bottle Trees have 3 main species.

Why do we grow them?

Foliage

Some *Brachychitons* retain their juvenile leaves for many years, others have impressive large leaves and most will drop their foliage and become deciduous just before flowering. Grafted species of *B. sp.* 'Ormeau' (which is very rare with only 3 known wild specimens remaining) seem to keep their juvenile foliage permanently.

Bark, Trunk Shape & Overall Form

Some species are grown for the bottle shape of the lower trunks, such as *B. compactus*, which in Ian's opinion is better than *B. rupestris* as they grow more quickly. *B. acerifolius* can sunburn on the trunk in direct light – they can get very hot because they are closely related to succulents, i.e. bundled cells carry through centre rather than under the bark. They can also regenerate from the base and form mounds.

Some examples include *B.* 'Tangerine Bell' (hybrid of *B. acerifolius* x *B. rupestris*), *B. obtusilobus* which is restricted to limestone soils of Cape Range WA, *B. gregorii* (Desert Kurrajong) which is frost hardy and can grow in Tasmania.

Ian suggests trimming off the side branches to encourage development of a single main trunk.

On his trips Ian also collects DNA samples of *Grevilleas* for the Herbarium.



Brachychiton acerifolius



Brachychiton rupestris



Brachychiton sp. 'Ormeau'



Flowers

Brachychitons often present mass displays after leaf drop. *B. albidus* flowers early October/ November right through to February. A few species also flower out of the trunk (cauliferous), such as *B. multicaulis*.

90% of hybrids are grafted on *B. acerifolius*, but Ian grafts onto *B. populneus* as he finds it hardier.

We viewed a variety of slides of flowers on the following: *B. spectabilis*, *B. tuberculatus*, *B. viscidulus*, *B. diversifolius*, *B. bidwillii* 'Beau Belle' which flowers in December, but is not the best form as it gets frost damaged, so Ian prefers *B. bidwillii* 'Southern Form', *B. acerifolius* commonly doesn't flower every year (every 2-3 years), but Ian soaks his for a week every February and it flowers every year, *B. garrawayae* (flowers out of trunk), *B. 'Clarabelle'*, *B. 'Griffith Pink'* is a popular choice, *B. 'Little Ripper'* is small and shrubby form just over 1m high, *B. 'Dark Knight'* came up as a chance seedling, parents unknown, but *B. discolor* is probably one of them, flowers have black centres to the red flowers, *B. 'Gabby's Bells'*, *B. 'Apricot'*.

Interesting Seed Pods

Kurrajongs tend to have hard brown/black pods which open to show retained seeds.

Grafting

Ian learnt his techniques at Burnley and hasn't been seriously grafting in the last three years. He uses wedge or saddle grafts, nothing fancy. Lining up the cambium layer is not essential with *Brachychitons*, because of their internal structure. Best done after flowering & short burst of foliage, before they slow down for winter.

For *Eremophilas*, the root stock used is often the hardy, *Myoporum insulare*, but Ian finds it suckers and prefers *M. montanum*. For Grevilleas he would use *G. 'Bronze Rambler'* or *G. robusta*.

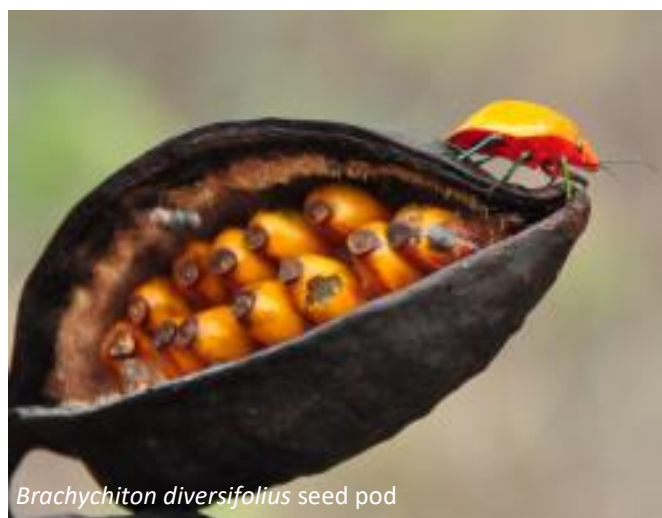
We would like to thank Ian for coming to our group to share his knowledge and his wonderful slide show to highlight a genus we should all be planting more of.



Brachychiton bidwillii



Brachychiton 'Gabby's Bells'



Brachychiton diversifolius seed pod



Garden Visit - 9th February to Fondata, Kangaroo Ground by Peter Smith, pictures by Andrea Himmelspach & Miriam Ford

Our February garden visit was to Kangaroo Ground's Fondata Restaurant (formerly Wellers). Jenny Drummond welcomed us on a pleasantly mild Sunday morning. She gave us a brief background to the garden of this landmark which we have all driven past, and perhaps wondered about. Starting out as a coach stop on the way to the "Queenstown" (now St Andrews) gold diggings, the original building and remnant garden has undergone much change but retained much charm. The *Tecoma*, *Echium* and other originals now mingle with *Melias* and *Grevilleas*. Alister Clark's most popular 'Lorraine Lee' rose still scrambles between the road and the kitchen.

Bev Hanson worked with the previous owners designing and constructing a newer section in 1987. Perchance the new owners contacted Two Birds and a Barrow (TBB) to renovate the garden approximately 5 years ago. At that stage the *Tecoma* had overtaken much of Bev's work. TBB set about cutting back the Invader - by hand - to reveal the original rockwork, bluestone steps and paving. Around the corner was the kitchen garden consisting of Chef's request for herbs and veggies. In another courtyard garden was one Jenny's favourites, a dwarf form of *Alyogyne huegelii* covered in purple flowers. In a newer section, Jenny was instructed to grow a Florentine style garden and she skilfully incorporated native shrubs, ground covers and a few exotics. An erosion problem was cleverly overcome with the building up and re-cambering of the driveway, leading the water down a pebbled watercourse towards the dam.



One of the garden beds, by Andrea



The cast of characters by Miriam

Much of the ground at the rear of the restaurant is taken up with grass and a large paved area to provide for outside functions and to maintain the sweeping views. TBB has created garden beds leading towards the lawn with mostly low planting and some large basalt rocks, all within a "pretty tight budget". The garden and carpark works are ongoing and TBB also maintains the garden, so we hope that the unspoilt charm lives on.

Thank you to the present owners and Jenny for another YY experience.



February Flower Table Report

by Jill Lulham, pictures by Ben Eaton & Rob Dunlop (Document Camera)

Thanks to Rob Dunlop and Ben Eaton for photography, and to Miriam for leading the discussion. Thanks to all members who brought in specimens, especially named ones. This is a selection of plants flowering in members' gardens this month.

MYRTACEAE FAMILY

Verticordia monadelpha (Pink Featherflower, Max's, just finishing flowering, WA, 1m x 1m, good cut flower)

Homoranthus porteri (Max's, red pendulous flowers all year, from North Qld, 1-2m)

Micromyrtus leptocalyx (Max's, Qld, 1-2m x 1m, long flowering, pale lemon)

Melaleuca laterita (Robin Redbreast Bush, WA, 1.5m x 1m, orange-red brushes, hardy)

Corymbia ficifolia (orange form, needs water to flower well)

Backhousia citriodora (Lemon Myrtle, Qld & NSW rainforest, to 8m, can use leaves in cooking/tea)

Syzygium 'Cascade' (Lilly Pilly, hybrid of *luehmannii* x *wilsonii*, 2-3m, pink flowers, sun or part shade, moist, well-drained, can be hedged, fast growing, edible fruit for jellies/jams)

PITTOSPORACEAE FAMILY

Bursaria spinosa (Southern and Eastern Australia, sweetly scented, can be thorny, butterfly food plant, symbiotic relationship with ants and caterpillars of the Eltham Copper butterfly)

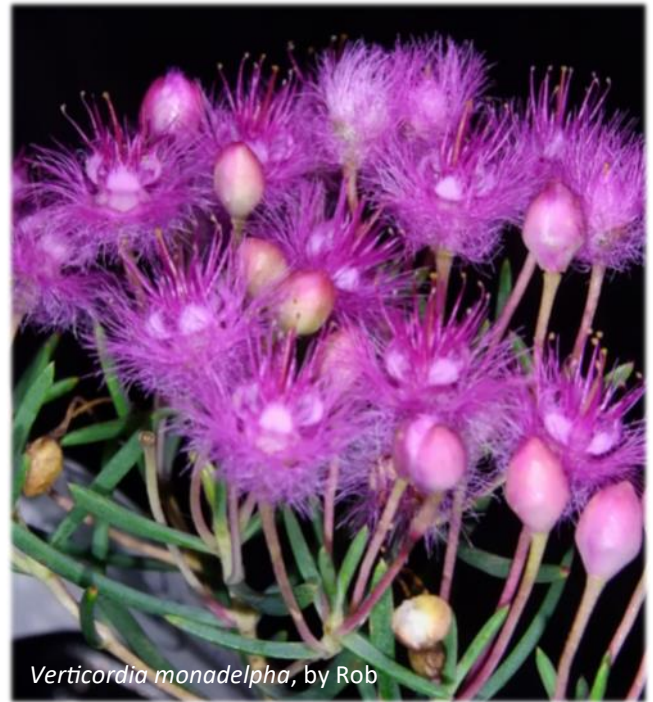
LYTHRACEAE FAMILY

Lythrum salicaria (Purple Loosestrife, Rob D's growing in pot with saucer of water, South-eastern Australia, normally grows in water)

PROTEACEAE FAMILY

Grevillea 'Pink Surprise' (hybrid *whiteana* x *banksii*, Qld, to 4m), *G. 'Caloundra Gem'* (cultivar *banksii* x '*Coochin Hill*', to 4m), *G. johnsonii* (NSW, 2-4m, similar to *G. longistyla*)

Persoonia pinifolia (NSW, Pine-leaved Geebung, or Australian Christmas Tree, 2-4m, yellow flowers in raceme at end of branches, Dec-June)



*Verticordia monadelph*a, by Rob



Corymbia ficifolia, by Ben



Grevillea 'Pink Surprise', by Ben



February Flower Table Report, continued by Jill Lulham, pictures by Ben Eaton & Rob Dunlop (Document Camera)

RUTACEAE FAMILY

Correa reflexa? (Bruce's, white flower form, garden seedling)

Crowea exalata (Vic, NSW, <1m, prefers cool & moist conditions rather than hot, dry, frost hardy)

ERICACEAE FAMILY

Rhododendron lochiaie (North-east Queensland, small shrub, shady area, flowers Spring-Summer, good pot plant)



Crowea exalata, by Ben

SCROPHULARIACEAE FAMILY

Eremophila 'Big Poly' (*bignoniiflora* x *polyclada*, Eastern Australia, 4-5m x 3m, white/mauve flowers), *E. hygrophana* (SA, WA, small shrub, hairy leaves and branches are affected by watering - mould, purple flower), *E. glabra* (showy but different to 'Kalbarri Carpet'), *E. macdonnellii* (central Australia, various prostrate forms and small shrubs, usually grey foliage with large purple flowers)



Eremophila. hygrophana, by Ben

HAEMODORACEAE FAMILY

Anigozanthos 'Gold Cross' (Max's from Peg McAlister, early hybrid)

GOODENIACEAE FAMILY

Scaevola nitida (Shining Fanflower, Max's, WA, 1.5m x 2m, large green leaves, vibrant blue flowers, Spring -Summer, full sun)

AMARANTHACEAE FAMILY

Ptilotus spathulatus (Pussy Tails, indigenous to most States)

RHAMNACEAE FAMILY

Siegfredia darwinioides (WA, small shrub, yellow flowers)



Anigozanthos 'Gold Cross', by Rob

Australian Plants Revealed Update

by Miriam Ford, pictures by Miriam Ford



Banksia marginata cone

APS Victoria is hosting two exhibitions to celebrate the 250th anniversary of Cook landing at Botany Bay where Banks and Solander headed out into the bush to discover & document our amazing flora.

Australian Plants Revealed (65,000 years of traditional plant use and 250 years of science) at the Maroondah Federation Estate Gallery, 32 Greenwood Avenue, Ringwood from the 17 February to 17 April and *Banksias & Unique Australian Flora* at the Karwarra, Australian Native Botanic Garden & Nursery, Kalorama Memorial Reserve, Mt Dandenong Tourist Rd, Kalorama from 18 February - 18 April. The exhibitions are sponsored by APS Vic, APS Maroondah, the Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria and Karwarra.

The Opening Ceremony at Karwarra was held on Sunday 23rd February, with various dignitaries in attendance & was very well attended with the conference room being full to bursting. The exhibition was organised, designed & put together by Dallas and Bernard Boulton of APS Maroondah with some helpers.

One of the highlights is a large series of original prints of *Banksia* watercolours by Ian Wallace. Ian came down from Cairns where he now lives, to talk about his work and show his prints which have now been donated on to his granddaughter Stephanie McDonald who continues to publish and market his works. Ian was a Victorian fruit grower who developed a passion for drawing and painting. On moving to Paynesville he discovered *Banksias* and then explored the East Coast first painting the Eastern *Banksias* and then decided to tackle the Western ones.

He was quite the raconteur at the Opening Ceremony with a lively, humorous and supremely self-effacing presentation. This is no humble house painter, while completely self-taught his paintings are beautifully detailed, accurate & expressive evocations of his love of *Banksias*. Not to be missed. He completed the series after nearly 20 years and travelling over 30,000 kms to find, draw, photograph and finally recreate his subjects in watercolour. In his words 'he simply paints *Banksias* as he sees them, with emphasis on clear details to enable identification.' He has donated signed copies of his two illustrated Guides – one of the Eastern *Banksia*, the other Western *Banksia* – to me for our library.

The works of several other superb botanic artists are also in the exhibition along with other craftwork based around Australian themes. This is a great exhibition in a wonderful setting, don't miss an opportunity to take yourself there for an outing. Take note of the dates for Ringwood also and add that to your list.



Ian with his *Banksia* cone collection



Committee, Newsletter and General Meeting Matters

The APS Yarra Yarra Committee:

- Miriam Ford - President, COM Delegate, Growers Group, Chair FJC 2020 Committee, M 0409 600 644
- Peter Smith - Vice President, Garden Visits, M 0425 798 275
- Andrea Himmelspach - Treasurer, Growers Group, M 0424 314 648
- Sue Gwilym - Secretary, Newsletter Editor, M 0401 250 331
- Carmen Cooper - Membership Officer, Growers Group, M 0413 012 045
- Adrian Seckold - General Meeting Plant Sales, M 0431 071 503

APS YY Committee Meeting Dates:

General Committee Meeting:

10th March, 2020, Carmen's

FJC 2020 Committee Meeting:

9th March, 2020, Lyhn's

Contributions to the March 2020 Newsletter to Sue by Tuesday 17th March please.



Email:

apsyarrayarra@gmail.com

OR post to:

Newsletter Editor,

APS Yarra Yarra,

PO Box 298,

Eltham 3095

Thank you to Miriam Ford, Peter Smith and Jill Lulham for articles; Jill and Miriam for proof reading; Andrea Himmelspach, Rob Dunlop, Ben Eaton and Miriam Ford for images. Editor (SG) for all other images & articles.

We wish to acknowledge the major sponsorship of our Expo by **Hume Bricks & Pavers Pty Ltd** (<https://www.humebriickspavers.com.au/>) Thank You!

Website: www.apsyarrayarra.org.au

Facebook: facebook.com/APSarrayarra

Meeting Particulars: Visitors always welcome

When: 8.00pm, 1st Thursday each month (except January). Doors open 7.30pm. Come early for plant sales. \$2.00 entry includes raffle ticket for plant prize. Supper following the meeting is provided.

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

Guest Speaker: Learn more through talks by expert speakers, and discussions following.

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

Flower Table Specimens: Bring along your flowers, labelled if possible, for the flower table.

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

Library: Members can borrow books from our specialist library.

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

