

ANPSA Correa Study Group

ISSN 1039-6926
ABN 56 654 053 676

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Membership fees: normal \$10.00
electronic \$6.00

Newsletter No.41 December 2009

LEADER'S COMMENTS

Hello everyone,

How the year has almost flashed by. However it has been a most rewarding and full year and now we come to the last Newsletter for the year- just have a look at the number- as a group we are up to number 41 since the group started- amazing - and despite such a few species in the genus of Correa we still find new things to discover and write about. Thank you to those who responded to David's email and returned items of interest and reports. Please use this Newsletter format to respond to issues raised and as a space to build on our knowledge.

The potted plants from the late Tim Boehm's collection look like new plants now – the ones which were just dried out sticks back in July have responded beautifully to the harsh pruning and some rich Killarney soil. The new 'Correa Walk' as inspired by Isobel is also doing particularly well with only one or two being scratched out by rabbits. My cuttings are all doing well- when the tubes are full of roots I will plant them straight out into the garden in Autumn/Winter. With our mild weather, the practice of bypassing potting on seems to be successful here at Killarney.

Brendon's remark that flowering last season was not as prolific for him raises the broader issue of the length of the flowering season of Correas. In my experience flowering does vary from year to year but more importantly correas, despite being labeled mostly as winter flowering are anything but!! They can be summer, autumn, winter and spring, some can come in a short colourful burst or spread throughout many months or even sporadic year around.

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Some examples in my garden include:

Summer flowering: C reflexa var speciosa Ulladulla, C decumbens, C 'Marion's Best'

Autumn flowering: C. Jewel and C reflexa var reflexa Red Form from Mt Clay (this also has a short season)

Winter flowering: most C reflexas, C pulchellas, C reflexa var reflexa Pink Form from Mt Clay

Spring flowering: C 'Cherree's Best, C reflexa var angustifolia Grampians, C reflexa var reflexa Green form(almost early Summer).

Long Flowering: C Green dream, C LemonTwist, C Coconut Ice (can flower for 8 months), C backhouseana var backhouseana

Short colourful flowering burst: C Benara Bell, C Jewel, C Candy Pink, C Starlight, C Pinker Pink

Flowering throughout the year: C Blush

...continued on page 2.

NEW MEMBERS

We welcome the following new members

Ruth Caple of Caulfield Nth, Vic
Ian Evans of Eaglehawk, Vic
John Flanagan of Bacchus Marsh, Vic
Kristy Martin of Ocean Grove, Vic
Geoff Roche of Maryborough, Vic

LEADER'S COMMENTS

(continued from page 1)

I'm sure that if I were more 'record-orientated' the above list could be refined and expanded. Hopefully you, as members of a Study Group, might be inspired to start a similar list. If you don't know the name of a correa you could start a small sketch book and record what it is anyway with a description. Measure the length of the flower, leaves, shape of leaves, colour of flowers and leaves and stems. Try to draw the flower life size. Alternatively use your digital camera to record colour etc and back this up with measurements etc. Record where you got your plant from and if purchased, how much you paid for it- plants are so expensive now in comparison with even a few years ago. If the plant has a label, stick that in as well. Then come a few years down the track you won't be scratching your head (like I do a lot) about where such and such came from and what is it? And of course, record when and length of flowering season.

You might even record your planting scheme in a small notebook too.

I am determined to try and document the correas in the Warrnambool Deakin Campus this coming year. Over the past couple of years whilst I was completing a Sculpture Major, it became evident that there was a wide range of correas within the many garden beds around the buildings and some of them were huge- many metres in width. I shall try and record and measure them. Where else are correas growing in public places? Could members send in some information please around your towns and streets. At Portland for instance, thousands of correas were propagated and planted for street schemes and public areas- many of them still doing very well. As far as I know this hasn't been done before- making up a record of public plantings of correas. Let's try it and see how far we get.

Sorry to those whom I didn't get to spend much time with during the ASGAP Geelong (or even say goodbye)- as many of you know I was carted off via ambulance midway through the middle week. Apparently I was born with a malfunction of electrical circuits in the heart which, just at this rare time, caused a very rapid heart rate. An IV drug fixed the problem almost instantly but once they got me into Geelong Hospital they weren't going to let me out despite me feeling fine and dandy. So thank you to those who stepped in and helped out. We had had a really good Study Group Meeting the evening before at which Maria earned fine praise and encouragement for her book on *Correas*- frankly, I can't wait for it!! Thank you so much to Barb and David who put up and manned the Study Group display at Costa Hall. I do hope many of you took the opportunity of purchasing a CD or other material.

Cheers to all, Cherree

CORREA BOOK *by Maria Hitchcock*

The book is now finished and in the hands of the publisher. After nearly 20 years of amassing information, travelling, photographing, researching, etc. I am astounded to find that the whole manuscript plus photographs fits on a simple disc. We live in amazing times. I am still chasing up a few photos. If you have a good quality large (1M+) digital photo of any of the following, could you please let me know. All photos are accredited in the book. Labels can be sent to me so that I can scan them and I will return them afterwards. I am looking for:

- C. 'Flat White' photo or label
- C. 'Bill Cane' (Doug Oldaker's plant)
- C. 'Moonglow'
- C. 'Autumn Blaze' or label
- C. 'Narrow Neil'
- C. 'Marian's Mini'
- C. 'Poorinda Grace' - may not exist any more
- C. 'Poorinda Mary' - may not exist any more
- C. 'Desert Glow'

(Ed: Maria's contact details are on page 7)

CORREA GLABRA FROM LEIGH RIVER

Geoff Roche describes a form of *Correa glabra* that is found between Mt Mercer and Bamganie, near the source of the Leigh River, just south of Ballarat, Victoria.

It is found in harsh rocky west facing escarpments, growing in shallow soil and spindly in nature. Plants in the wild grow to about 0.5m, and only grow in dry areas. Red and green forms are seen in same area.

In the garden, plants form a compact bush, around 1m x 1m.



LETTERS FROM MEMBERS

from Yvonne Bakes

Hope you've been enjoying good rainfalls wherever you are. Now that I'm making a

good recovery after my early breast cancer, I'm keen to replace some of the correas that didn't make it through last summer's heatwave conditions (48°C!).

I brought home a correa I fell head over heels for in a nursery not too far from Greenhill Lodge – "motel" for "rural" cancer patients. That Correa pulchella – Bicheno Bell was just a mass of beautiful pink bells (I heard Malcolm Campbell, on ABC radio, say that Correas are related to citrus)

We recently called at Berri Native Plants and bought a Correa reflexa var scabridula and a Correa Mallee Bells which is quite a large plant so I've taken several cuttings as I notice it's rather pot bound. So, fingers crossed. We also bought a Correa Dusky Bells – variegated and an Eremophila maculata – red and I'll look forward to planting these very soon - great bird attractors.

We also read with interest about the labels some members are using. We have purchased some metal lettering sets and Rex makes our plant labels from aluminium printers off cuts cut to size with tin snips and he "hammers" plant names onto the metal, then nails these onto treated pine stakes like so:

CORREA
DUSKY BELLS

Then we "hammer" these into the ground. May not be quite as elegant as the ones in the newsletter, but they're made from recycled materials and they last and last.

These lettering sets are also used to make labels for our mower fuel, tractor fuel, etc, as well as grape vines and orchard trees. They can be wired onto handles of fuel containers or wired onto grape vine wires, or end posts. The labels will most likely outlast us!

Because we have a caravan park, unfortunately we don't get away often enough to be able to come on the Correa Crawls – bad luck for us. It would be great!

We love receiving and reading the newsletters and have them all in a lever arch folder from the first newsletter on. We're now looking forward to the Correa book coming off the press, as there aren't too many books about Correas. We do have a copy of Geoff Sitch's Correa book which we often refer to.

The Correas which manage to survive our harsh environments are the reflexas, pulchellas, albas and glabras – only the toughest do well. (Summer temperatures up to 48°C and winters below zero, day temperatures pretty good – usually). It's a very challenging climate.

Happy Correa collecting folks!

from Brendon Stahl, Victoria

I would like to pose a question to other Correa Study Group members about the flowering of their correas, as my correas did not flower as well last year. I wondered if it was the lack of rain, but also wondered if other members use fertiliser or potash on their correas, once they had been established to help their flowering and at what time of year they would apply the fertiliser or potash?

from Lynne Mockridge, Tasmania

My husband has recently bought a greenhouse and has set up a hydroponics system in it. I am considering propagating some correas by this method and am wondering if anyone else has tried hydroponics and am interested to hear of their results.

from Joan Pitaro

It has been a year of extremes weather wise and most of my correas have survived one way or another. As you would all be aware Summer was very long and hot. The first rain of any consequence came at the end of May but we have had the best Winter and Spring for many years. We have had the best wildflower season in ages and every spare minute I have spent either in the garden or the bush.

The last two Summers(maybe more -I've lost count) we have only been able to water with a bucket so needless to say most plants have been left to survive on their own. Correa 'Split Bells' is one that needs some Summer watering. I have found that some correas are tougher than I thought. Raelene Goldie and an unnamed Correa beside it looked very sad by January and I gave them the occasional bucket to keep them going. I do wonder whether they might have survived without water though, because I had a few other plants that I gave up on, and thought they would die because they looked very droopy. But to my surprise they came to life when it finally rained.

'Raelene Goldie' and 'Marions Marvel' were burnt quite badly by the sun on the 45degree days and then dropped those leaves. Both are exposed to northerly sun which is probably not ideal. 'Raelene Goldie' has come back really well after pruning but I am not sure if I have pruned my older and quite large 'Marions Marvel' hard enough or how well it will respond. Time will tell I guess. Interestingly none of the correas grown by friends at Pomonal (half an hour away) were burnt by the heat and all their plants are in full sun.

I have certainly noticed that the correas which receive some shade faired better than those in the open.

The flowering of my correas this year was generally fairly poor due, I think, to the fact that they had put on very little new growth the previous growing season (too dry) and it was almost Winter by the time it rained this year. Some, such as 'Coconut Ice' compensated by flowering later than normal. I have Correa 'Candy Pink' in two locations and it was interesting to notice the difference in these. I have a row of five plants along the side fence and these receive almost no sun but quite good light, and one mature plant among other natives in an open garden bed. The latter had a couple of tiny flowers in late Winter whereas the ones along the fence flowered prolifically from May onwards

At present 'Pink Frost' -a late flowering correa for me, still has the odd flower on it and so has Correa 'Clare' a seedling that I grew. It is being grown by Grampians group members and a few others. I have found it to be a plant that is best grown among other plants as it tends spread rather than grow as a compact bush. It is extremely floriferous and flowers in Spring rather than Winter and because the weather can be quite warm by Spring it is better in a semi shaded position.

There are lots of correa seedlings coming up so I will leave some of them until they flower and then decide whether they are worth keeping.

My enthusiasm for gardening has been restored. Maybe it can rain after all. It certainly lifts one's spirits to see green again! I hope everyone else has also experienced a better season this year.



Late Spring At Katandra Gardens
from Bob O'Neill

A bed containing 90 different forms of *Correa reflexa* and *C pulchella* have 5% of the plants flowering. The forms are mainly from the coastal Gippsland areas near Cape Conran, Pt Hicks, Bemm R and Furnell Landing Rd, and all are red flowering. Only one *C pulchella* has significant flowering, a form from Lincoln NP. *C aemula* also has light flowering on forms from the Grampians and Mt Lofty. A red flowering *C lawrencianas* is in moderate flower while 2 forms of this species from Mogo NP are in advanced bud. This is a summary of what the correas are up to at the moment in our conditions and I would be most curious as to what is the state of play in other areas.

The correa bed is a mixed bag. The conditions are too wet in winter to be ideal so there have been losses and poor performances, but there have also been some very good results. This demonstrates that there is quite a wide diversity of capacity within the genus to cope with differing conditions, it comes down to the right plant for the right job. Here we will see what works and what does not and fill the gaps accordingly.

Clearly, this time of year is light on for correa flowering, but if you are able to be very selective, year round flowering in your garden may be achieved. There are 100 acacia species in our garden, and oddly their flowering pattern of peaks and low levels are almost parallel to that of the correas.

We had good spring rains which slowed weeding to a halt in parts of the garden as the hoed weeds merely resumed growing in

new positions. The recent dry weather has changed all that. With ¼ of the garden recently remulched, moist soil conditions prevailing and very warm weather, it is a speedy pleasure to reduce the weeds to a mulch residue.

Across the board life goes on. The brachychitons are performing brilliantly, bottlebrushes and the dwarf kangaroo paws are magnificent. I see the next years or so as a sorting out period during which there will be plant winners and losers with new balances in the garden being resolved. The garden must evolve in what will be a challenging and fascinating process.

BREEDING AND SELECTING CORREAS -
by Peter Ollerenshaw, Bywong Nursery

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The genus *Correa* belongs to the family Rutaceae. It occurs naturally in eastern Australia from near the Queensland border through New South Wales, Victoria, Tasmania and South Australia. There are 11 species ranging from prostrate groundcovers to 4 metre tall shrubs. They mostly flower from late summer through autumn and winter and are pollinated by birds and bees. The four petals are fused into a corolla or bell and may come in a wide range of colours from green, red, pink, white, orange and yellow or a combination of these colours. They are easily propagated and make ideal garden or pot plants.

I grow all my *Correas* in pots and for pollination move them into an insect-proof tunnel as they come into flower. I remove any opened flowers and emasculate all the new flowers immediately they open. With *Correas*, the stamens ripen and shed pollen soon after the flower opens, but the stigma is not receptive for 3 – 4 days after that. The stigma is receptive when the 4 lobes recurve backwards and become sticky. For pollination a stamen can be plucked from a freshly opened flower of the desired male parent and dabbed on to the stigma. A good sign of successful pollination is when the corolla withers and falls off 3 – 4 days after pollination. The 4-capsuled fruit may start to grow from this point. However, it is not unusual with some species for the fruit not to

grow at all for up to 6 months, then suddenly grow and mature fairly quickly.

If everything goes well you can collect up to 12 seeds per fruit but 1 – 4 is more common. When the seed is mature the fruit splits open and the seeds are expelled in an explosive fashion. Consequently, the fruit needs to be bagged while it is still quite green to stand any chance of collecting seed.

Seed can be sown immediately after it is collected but I tend to wait until mid-January when all my crosses are harvested, then clean and sow the lot at once, carefully labeling each batch as I go. Once sown, Correa seed needs to be treated with smoke to induce germination. Otherwise you could wait years for any seedlings to appear. Even after smoke treatment, germination can take 6 – 8 weeks and may continue for 3 months. To treat the seed I place the seed trays in a plastic tent and put a smouldering drum of eucalyptus leaves in the tent as well. The trays remain in the smoke for at least half an hour.

By the time Correa seeds have germinated and the cotyledons spread, the roots have already gone down 5 centimetres, so they need to be moved to individual pots. At this stage I label every seedling to prevent any chance of a mix up. The labels remain with the plant until it is named or discarded.

Seedlings can occasionally flower in their second year but in their third year is more likely. At this stage it is time to start culling unwanted plants. I find this difficult as practically all the seedlings have some merit and would probably make reasonable garden plants. However, now is the time to be ruthless and if the seedlings are not different, better than other varieties on the market, or to be used for further breeding then they are destined for the compost heap. Occasionally a seedling with some potential is given another year as flowering can improve in the second season.

Correas are particularly easy to grow from cuttings and the best of the seasons seedlings are propagated with the aim of producing 50 plants of each. These are grown-on to further check their performance. The top performing clones from this trial may go on to be bulked up for commercial release.

We try to involve our customers in the selection process whenever possible, to gain

their feedback on the market potential of any new varieties.

Note by Ed: Peter is achieving remarkable results, as evident from the new correas shown on his website (<http://www.bywongnursery.com.au/>), some of which are reproduced here. We look forward to these becoming available for our gardens in the near future.



CULTIVARS LIST 09 by Maria Hitchcock

I have updated the cultivars list for members - there are substantial changes so please replace your old one with this newer version. It is still a work in progress as there are many unnamed forms with little information. I am still seeking your support to make additions, deletions and corrections. Many of the forms listed have been given locality names or temporary names until we know more about them. In particular I am interested in the size of plants and when they flower. If you can fill in some of the gaps relating to size of plant and flowering time I would be very grateful. Also I have very little information on most of the forms which were painted by Kath Alcock from Marian Beek's specimens. If you come across a nursery label of a form which is not included in the list please send me the label so that I can scan it - I will return it.

You can email the information to Maria Hitchcock at:

maria.hitchcock@gmail.com

or post to 16 Hitchcock Lane, Armidale 2350

or ring on 02 6775 1139



Correa reflexa Point Hicks

CHANGE OF EMAIL ADDRESS

Please note that our email address is now dabpye@gmail.com Barb & David Pye



Correa lawrenceana

CORREA CRAWL – 2010

It is planned to hold a Correa Crawl during Queen's Birthday weekend in June next year, ie the weekend of Saturday 12th June to Monday 14th June, 2010. The venue will be South West Victoria, and details will become available around February next year. Since the next newsletter is not due out before May, it is recommended that interested members contact Cherree (details below). Details of the itinerary and accommodation options can then be sent out as they become available.

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Correa Marianne