

ANPSA

Correa Study Group

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LEADER'S COMMENTS

Hello everyone,

Hope your correas are budding up for the next flowering season. Some of mine are. We have had rain most weeks here on the coast and whilst the weeds are prolific and persistent, my correas have grown well. One of the last and longest flowering correas of the season, and in my opinion, one of the most beautiful was Correa 'Tricolour' – it came from Marilyn Sprague's nursery last year. However, it is a sprawling plant, and as I have it in a raised bed with bluestone pitchers along the edge, this plant showed off its flowers very well as it spills over the edge.

It was great to read about Phil Hempel's grafting successes in the last Newsletter. Are there any other member's trying grafting? Phil uses *Correa glabra* as a root stock as this species is a good strong grower for him. By using a species which is reliable on which to graft those special large red *Correa reflexa* forms (which we love) but which are more susceptible to being lost in the garden, then we can be more assured of keeping them.

Ian and I had a trip up to see the Boschens near Warracknabeel in the winter - Norma grows mostly eremophilas - which were budding up beautifully when we visited, but she also grows lots of correas. Gardeners in these difficult areas do it tough- they had been almost flooded out, there were threats of a mice plague, threats of locusts not to mention strong winds, heat and dust storms. The correas were managing but not as good as previous years.

I wonder if those members who lost many correas early this year with the persistent, large summer rains have managed to replace plants or have you lost a little heart? For many years, correas have been one of those groups of plants that always survived in our gardens - it was unusual to hear of plants dying. But it was an unusual year in many ways being cooler and wetter.

I am looking forward to some flowering from the pulchellas (in particular) this coming season as they didn't flower very much at all this year (but they didn't die though!)

- Cherree Densley, Killarney, Vic

CORREA CRAWL IN JUNE

See details on page 8

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**NEWSLETTER EDITOR &
MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY
NEEDED See page 6**

NEW MEMBER

We welcome the following new member

Russell Dahms of Athelstone, SA

CORREA WEBSITE:

from Phil Hempel: The Correa web site I put up some time ago is still active. Is it of any value or should I remove it? I have not received any comments on it to date. Site is <http://home.vicnet.net.au/~correa/>

The following letter came from Italy, as a result of the website.

VIVAI PIANTE CAPITANIO STEFANO
C/da Conghia 298
70043 Monopoli (Ba)
www.vivaicapitano.it

Dear Sirs,

We are an Italian nursery that grows Mediterranean and Australian ornamental species.

Compliments for your web site, it is very interesting!

Can you please help us to identify the Correa in the photos? We are growing it but we don't know the name. Until now we called it Correa x "Harrisii" but we think it is not the right name. We found some photos in internet of a similar one called Correa pulchella "Pink Eyre".

What do you think?

We would appreciate a lot your reply!

Thanks in advance.

Best regards.

(Can any of our members help?)





NAME ISSUES - from Phil Hempel

On a recent visit to a large local native plant nursery I spotted a large red flowering Correa on sale. Not surprised I saw it had the standard Correa reflexa label with its name typed on a stick-on label attached. The name it was given was "Late Red", it was flowering late and is still in flower going into the second

week of November and it is generally red. This Correa "Late Red" is identical to Correa "Wine Lover". Naming it "Late Red" does identify the Correa, but by not using the name "Wine Lover," the plant loses its provenance and history and introduces another duplicate name to add confusion.



LETTERS FROM MEMBERS

from Adele Kellett

Since most of my correas have drowned last year, alongside with the majority of other native garden, I'm not sure I qualify to continue being considered an admirer of native gardens. I have discovered recently a couple of self sown *Correa reflexa* plants which I'll let stay where they are, but that's about all that's left from what was a 70% Australian garden until 2011.

It was interesting to be a member of Australian Plants Society for a good number of years- close to ten, if I remember right. Correas did appeal to me for their tough and undemanding beauty that lasted well during the years of the drought. We started our garden at the beginning of the drought period, and I planted a combination of various drought resistant plants on our 2.5 acre block, which is a flat heavy clay based area on the top of a hill. Naturally, we never thought that drainage would be a problem. Last year, our garden remained under water for a number of months, until we dug a hole, buried a water tank with a submersible pump, and started pumping the water out into the roadside drains, which are fairly inadequate as well. Needless to say, we lost most of the eucalyptus garden in the back, all but a handful of correas, and lots of native shrubs. *Hakea salicifolia*, some local banksias, some tea trees and most of the bottlebrushes are still alive, and looking quite good.

It was quite an eye opener to realise that, although the native plants were mostly indigenous, and were selected to suit heavy clay that is fairly wet during the winter, and that we had constructed a few elevated spots for the more sensitive plants, most of the native plants did not cope well with the heavy rainfall at all. By contrast, none of the Mediterranean or South African plants seem to suffer from having been waterlogged for a long period of time. *Kniphofias*, for example, seem to thrive both in parching sun, and in water reaching up to their lovely ears! So unfortunately at the moment I've lost some of the admiration I once felt towards lots of Australian plants...

It was an interesting experience being a member of APS, I have learnt a lot, have met some interesting people, have visited some

really stunning gardens, but, unfortunately, my own gardening choice is now leaning towards the exotics of the tough and resilient variety. I'm thrilled to see that the native birds, the frogs and the blue tongues don't seem to mind the change in style at all.

So - in short, thank you for your company, and good luck with your continuing interest in the local flora!

from Brenda Moore

Massive loss of correas is still occurring at our property. I would estimate that we have already lost at least fifty correas across a wide variety of species and there are quite a few more that are "suffering" and may not see Christmas. I'm not sure whether it is due to the wetness of the soil, to some sort of virus, to flea beetle, to a combination of all of these or to something different altogether. Sometimes we notice reddish, blackish blotches on the leaves. These blotches turn yellowish and then the leaves fall off. Most plants lose their leaves completely from the base upwards. Some, but not all, have little splits/lumps along the branches. There are no signs of any caterpillars or insects on the leaves. A puzzle indeed!

We are on steep sloping land with terracing. Correas have died in the flatter, wetter areas and on the well drained slopes, in sun and in shade. Large old plants to new smaller plants have been affected. Most of the correas in pots under the eaves of the house seem to be doing well. It will be interesting to see if they remain healthy.

Due to these widespread losses, sadly it seems unwise to plant any more correas at present, although we do have some small ones growing in tubes in the nursery. The only positive thing about this situation is that we now have a wider variety of plants filling the spaces on our somewhat difficult land on which correas used to thrive.

New plantings of *chamelaucium*, *leptospermum*, *leionemas*, *lysiosepalum*, dwarf acacias, green leafed *eremophilas*, and even some with grey foliage, are thriving. However correas continue to be a favourite of ours and I suppose in a few years time we will be ready to try planting them again.

It will be interesting to read of the experiences of other members over recent times.

from Sue Guymmer

We are still planting *Correa pulchella* forms more than other *correas*. We didn't lose many *correas* at all in the wet - definitely more losses in the dry (mainly *C reflexa* forms). Here in Donvale we are on quite a slope so it may be that the inherent drainage has been the reason why our *correas* haven't suffered as much as in other gardens.

from Bob O'Neill

Our new garden at Narre Warren South is now largely laid out and planting is almost complete. Effectively the mulched garden area is just over half an acre, some of which is given over to a fruit and vegetable plot. The soil type is a grey, fine sandy loam in character and is only fair to poor in regards to drainage. There is plenty of sun, at times windy, the low number of frosts are mild and the average rainfall is probably something just over 750mm. These are the more important factors we play with.

As with all gardens, there are varying conditions and micro climates present in different parts of the garden. In due course we believe that the maturing garden will gradually increase these variations, enabling us to be more diverse and successful in the range of plants we trial. So far we have not noted any adverse effects on plant growth in areas that until recently were home to large old cypress trees. In general we use gypsum and garden lime or dolomite during all of our planting.

Having effectively a garden area of one twelfth the size we were formally blessed with, we simply cannot retain all the species grown before, especially larger species. In regards to *correas*, the aim has been to retain all the *pulchella* forms we possessed as a special collection, plus a selection of all other *correa* species. *C. pulchella* has surprised in adapting well to our conditions to this point, with very few losses experienced. There would be 100 plus plants representing some 30 odd different forms currently growing in the garden, and we are very keen to increase that number. A recent walk around the garden revealed that most were making from fair to excellent progress. As a species they reveal a well displayed, wide variation in

flower size and colour, foliage and plant form, hence their appeal to us.

Of all the *correas*, *C reflexa* have fared most poorly with numerous losses experienced. I read that Neil Marriott also experienced more success recently with the *C. pulchellas* than with the *reflexas*. Currently we are attempting to establish our most preferred forms in the most suitable locations in the garden. A number of *reflexas* on their last legs have been planted in "intensive care" in a raised bed in a last ditch to save them. Some *reflexas* have done well, a good indication that it is drainage that is a most crucial factor. *C lawrencianas* have performed very well indeed, the remaining species have fared acceptably.

As well as for cuttings, use has been made of the hot house to plant seeds of spring vegetable plants as from 1st August with appreciable success. The end result is that we have sweet corn ranging from just emerging to one metre with the flower section present, tomatoes have commenced fruiting and we have picked zucchinis, all by Cup Day. Next year we hope to trial planting seeds in mid July to push our luck a little further.

During the move to our new home, we were blessed with friends who baby sat just over 1000 plants for a period of 3 months. You just cannot live without friends in general, and so it is also with gardening in particular. I was told once that the best way to preserve your favourite plant is to share it with a friend. We certainly are only too happy to share our plants with other keen gardeners.

Our bird list has risen to 20, the last 2 additions being a crested pigeon and a red rumped parrot. On an average day, if one was persistent, probably 6-8 species would be noted, none of which would greatly excite a keen birder. Insect and animal life is relatively simple. Rabbits, foxes, slugs, snails, worms, bees, small black ants, dragonflies, cabbage white butterflies, flies and mozzies are in the area. So far we have not detected possums, frogs nor lizards nearby.

We are both well if not really fit, have fairly well settled in and are looking forwards, not backwards. A number of things have changed, but *correa* folk in particular are always welcome to drop in as always.

from Phil Hempel

On the subject of Correa losses during the wet weather. I have planted out the areas that became the wettest with Correas I have grafted, mostly from material I was given by Bob O'Neill. In other areas where I suffered losses, I have taken the gamble that the wet period was unusual and not likely to happen again for many years, so I have replanted all these areas with more Correas. Fortunately I have had great success with growing Correas over the past two years from cuttings and have an excess of plants. This means that plant losses are not such a tragedy compared to if I had purchased them. I have so many Correas that I am able to give many away to friends and family.

from Barb Pye

Having lost many correas last summer our enthusiasm for the genus has waned

NEW OPPORTUNITY

Barb & I find it necessary to end our administrative role with the Correa Study Group.

With family commitments, a nursery, a farm, a large garden, and a heavy involvement with the development of the Melton Botanic Garden, we find it necessary to reduce some of our activities. We will be particularly busy this autumn, which will make it difficult to get out a newsletter. It will be necessary to get information on the Correa Crawl to members, but it will be difficult for us to do much more. A new editor would be welcome, to prepare and send out a newsletter in May.

In terms of memberships, we would expect to hand over during the new financial year, having tidied up all records.

MELTON BOTANIC GARDEN

The Melton Botanic Garden (MBG) was recently gazetted by the Shire Council and occupies 24 hectares of land along Ryans Creek. The development of a Master Plan was funded by the Shire Council, but establishment of the garden is the responsibility of the Friends of the Melton Botanic Garden (FMBG). The creek forms the backbone of the garden and is notable for a number of old River Red Gums. The creek flows into a lake, which forms the backdrop to a pleasant picnic area with two rotundas and BBQs. For several years, the Friends group

considerably, but as I look out our window now there is a beautiful *Correa reflexa* from Point Hicks which is still in full bloom and has been flowering for about 3 months. *C. reflexa* from Port Albert is also blooming well. Many gardens in this area lost correas and people seem very reluctant to try them again. Our correa sales have plummeted – we probably need a return to dry conditions to get people to try them again. This does not seem likely this summer – we had 35mm of rain yesterday (late November). *C. lawrenceana* and *C. eburnea* were the only species which survived unscathed – we lost specimens of all other species and quite a few hybrids as well. Lots of seedlings keep coming up – I wish they didn't take so long to flower. Some are quite large now and haven't flowered yet – maybe next winter.

We need someone to take over the newsletter in time to produce the May edition, and someone to take over responsibility for membership early next financial year.

Please consider if you can help. We do not wish to see the end of the Correa Study Group.

Our involvement with the Melton Botanic Garden will be particularly great this autumn, when the team will have up to 20,000 plants to get in the ground, signs to design and erect, seating to purchase and install, a 200 metre roadway to build, and 900 metres of gravel path to complete. Our involvement with this work will leave little time to prepare and circulate a newsletter. However, we look forward to a few days break in June to participate in the Correa Crawl.

has been revegetating the creek area, and has recently begun to implement the Master Plan. In March 2010, a working party was formed to drive the establishment of a 4 hectare Dryland Eucalyptus arboretum in the northern end of the MBG, and immediately began to seek funding. A tree propagation program was commenced, in case there was success in obtaining funds. Funds were eventually obtained, and on site work on the arboretum commenced in January 2011. Since then, we have built 2.5 Km of paths, 1 Km of fencing, and planted 400 Eucalypts of 60 species, and several hundred shrubs and ground covers. By the end of June next year,

we expect to plant a further 200 Eucalypts of another 30 species, and up to 20,000 shrubs and ground covers.

The Melton Botanic Garden is a voluntary project, with many groups contributing, including FMBG, APS Melton & Bacchus Marsh, Melton Shire Council, Western Water, Western Highway Realignment, Gordon TAFE, CVGT Work Experience Activity

Team, and Victoria University. Funding for the Eucalyptus Arboretum has been provided by the Bjarne K Dahl Trust, and the Department of Sustainability & Environment.

To find out more about the Melton Botanic Garden, visit the FMBG website (fmbg.org.au). The garden is readily accessible at all hours and is found at MELWAY 337 D10 & C11.



**CORREA CRAWL, June 2012:
Sat 9th - Mon 11th**

We are looking forward to the Correa Crawl, to be held in South Australia next June, and expect an exciting weekend, involving:

- Accommodation in Mt Gambier.
- Exploration of conservation parks and national parks in the coastal area (Kingston to Nelson), and nearby inland (Penola, Naracoorte & Mt Gambier).
- Visits to native gardens in the area.



- A program to commence on Saturday morning and end with lunch on Monday.

Study group members are asked to comment and provide advice. Some will have visited this area and can suggest places to visit. Cherree knows the Nelson area, but we would like more information on the conservation parks in SA.

To ensure that you are kept up to date, please advise David Pye (contact details on front page) if you are likely to participate.



Canunda National Park

