

ANPSA

Correa Study Group

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Correa Carawatha Lantern

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Newsletter No.47 December 2012

EDITOR'S COMMENTS

Hello everyone,

I would like to introduce myself as the new newsletter officer, membership officer and treasurer for the Correa Study Group.

This has been my first year as a member of the ANPSA Correa Study Group. I have adopted the roles of membership officer, treasurer and newsletter editor while Cherree Densley remains the study group leader.

My first main interaction with the study group was the correa crawl which was held at Mt. Gambier this year.

This was a wonderful opportunity to meet fellow study group members as well as experience firsthand many correa species new to me in their natural habitat. An article on the correa crawl is included later in this newsletter.

As this newsletter is generated twice a year a formal request for newsletter articles will be sent out twice a year – however articles and photos of your correa experiences are welcome at any time of the year to the above email or postal address.

Amongst the articles supplied by study group members there will be a theme single species of Correa. For this newsletter the species *C. decumbens* is featured.

This spring has brought with it very tough conditions here in South Australia with virtually no rain for over two months now.

One of the reasons for joining the correa group was that as a grower for the APS SA plant sales I have recently expanded the range of correas I propagate – all from cuttings.

I now have 20-30 species of correa and many of them are planted in my garden which is in the foothills east of Adelaide. The soil is predominantly clay with some topsoil added.

Due to the lack of rain I have been giving any of the correas that look like they are struggling through their first summer additional deep watering.

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Correa Comeback – David Pye

After the disastrous summer of 2010-2011 when we had overwhelming summer rains which proved deadly for many of the correas in our area, we are now experiencing gentler weather and healthier correas.

We have planted a large number of correas again and they are thriving so far.

Phil Hempel gave us 2 grafted correas (grafted on to *C.glabra*) and these look very promising. One of them is Correa Big Bob which we have previously had difficulty in growing.



At the moment (early December) we have a few correas in flower.

C. reflexa Point Hicks has been flowering all spring and is still covered in bloom.



C. glabra Coliban River which is a very old plant – probably about 15 years old) has grown into a very large shrub about 1.5 metres high and about 3 metres wide.

It has already started flowering and should continue all summer. It is not a spectacular plant having pale green or cream flowers, but it is a valuable source of summer nectar for our honeyeaters.



Correa glabra Mount Barker should also start flowering soon with its glossy foliage and red flowers. It is a most attractive shrub.

Late flowering Correas. Phil Hempel

Many Correas seemed to flower longer and later than usual this year. Two that stand out are:- a *Correa reflexa* that was collected from Hawthorn Rd Nowra NSW years ago by a member of APS Vic Yarra Yarra.



It is always loaded with flowers during the season and mostly two flowers per axil, the flowers are long and thin with hairy leaves. It grows well in heavy soils and seems to like wet and dry conditions.

It carries more flowers at any one time than any other *Correa* I grow.

The second late flowering *Correa* is one that I purchased from Kuranga Nursery in Mt Evelyn Victoria.

It was labeled appropriately *Correa reflexa* "Late Red". It bears a close resemblance to "Winelover" but has smaller leaves, it is a small open plant that I still have growing in a pot until I can get more propagated before seeing how it grows in my soils.



The National Correa Collection

By Maria Hitchcock

This is being held by me in Armidale, NSW but there are part collections all over Australia held by various enthusiasts.

It's important that we involve as many gardeners as possible because that is the way to truly preserve various forms.

We have lost a great number of varieties over the years from both the wild and in cultivation. From a scientific point of view, we need to at least have them on record as a description and as a photo.

Over the years I have lost various forms as well both in the garden and in the potted collection. I now have a large plastic hoop house to over winter the collection – most of my losses used to occur in winter due to cold and wet conditions. I had few losses last winter despite very severe conditions thanks to the hoop house.

I am missing these forms from the collection and am asking any members growing them to send me some cutting material. I will be away in January so you will need to either send me material in December or February.

Please enclose cuttings in a clip lok plastic bag with a damp folded piece of newspaper and a label. It would be best to send in a small Express post bag.

Obviously some of these forms are not still in cultivation but I'd really appreciate your contribution if you have any of them growing in your gardens.

I'm always happy to reciprocate by sending back cutting material of plants in the collection. Please email me when you send them so I know they are coming.

Send cuttings to
Maria Hitchcock
16 Hitchcock Lane
Armidale NSW 2350
E. maria.hitchcock@gmail.com

C. aemula

'Kelly Hill Caves', 'Hollow Mountain', 'Mt Langhi Ghiran', 'Mt Zero'

C. alba var. *alba*

'Benara Bell', 'Blush', 'Ice Pink', 'Pink Profusion', 'Royal Flush'

C. alba var. *pannosa*

'Flat White', 'White Delight'

C. backhouseana var. *backhouseana*

'Beek's Beauty', 'Betty Fawcett', 'Bill Cane', 'Dainty Pink', 'Gill's Gem', 'Little Lantern', 'Pink Perfection', 'Pink Sorbet', 'Poorinda Grace', 'Poorinda Mary', 'Ross Hyland'

C. decumbens

'Ainsley', 'Cockatoo Creek x', 'Springs Rd'

C. glabra var. *glabra*

'Ivory Lantern', 'Melville Caves'

C. glabra var. *turnbullii*

'Jewels'

C. lawrenceana var. *cordifolia*

'Christmas in July'

C. pulchella

'Autumn Blaze', 'Baby Doll', 'Bett's Red', 'Flinders Ranges', 'Mannii', 'Winter Pink', 'Orange Glow'

C. reflexa var. *angustifolia*

C. reflexa var. *insularis*

C. reflexa var. *nummulariifolia* (true form from Bass Strait islands)

C. reflexa var. *reflexa*

'Green Giant', 'Icicle', 'Lemon and Lime', 'Mt Richmond', 'Petal Point', 'Tucker Time® Multi Bella™'

C. reflexa var. *scabridula*

'Peewee Pete'

C. reflexa var. *speciosa*

'Clearview Giant', 'Yeerung'

Correa decumbens

by Maria Hitchcock – author of 'Correas – Australian Plants for Waterwise Gardens' (Rosenberg, 2010)

Correa decumbens is a sprawling open prostrate shrub in Mallee scrub dominated by *Eucalyptus cladocalyx* on Kangaroo Island.

In the Mt Lofty Ranges it grows in Stringybark Open Forest. It sends out long stems which hug the ground and has erect narrow red and green flowers which are pinched at the tip.



The anthers and style protrude from the tip and are pollinated by ground hopping birds.

Specific locations on the mainland include Aldgate, Ambleside, Bridgewater, Clarendon, Dashwood Gully, Deep Creek, Kangarilla and Stirling East.

On Kangaroo Island, collections have been made at Breakneck River, Kelly Hill, on Kinch's Station on the Cygnet River, at Ravine de Casoars and at Stunsail Boom River.

Correa decumbens can be short lived in cultivation. It is best grown in well-drained sandy soil with some protection from full afternoon sun. Pruning regularly will make the plant denser and prolong its life in the garden.

The vertical flowers are a specific feature of this plant.

All other forms with hanging flowers are hybrids. There are many hybrids being grown in gardens.

Natural hybrids are also common on the western part of Kangaroo Island, involving *C. aemula*, *C. pulchella* and *C. reflexa*. Natural hybrids of *Correa decumbens* have been collected on Kangaroo Island at Harvey's Return, at Kelly Hill, in Flinders Chase National Park, at Vivonne Bay and along Springs Rd.



The two most common hybrids are *Correa decumbens* x 'Karwarra' which was grown by

Karwarra Gardens many years ago and *Correa decumbens* x *aemula* 'Pink Panther'.

Both are very vigorous fast growing dense shrubs which spread out. *C. 'Karwarra'* has shiny dark leaves and bright pink and green flowers while *C. 'Pink Panther'* has duller and paler green leaves and mid pink flowers.

Correa 'Mt Lofty' 0.3 m high x 3 m
C. decumbens Summer - Autumn

This true form of *C. decumbens* grows naturally in the Onkaparinga River area near Kangarilla. It is a spreading prostrate, ground hugging shrub with long narrow very dark green elliptical leaves, 40 mm x 10 mm in size, glossy and furrowed on top and pale green and velvety underneath. The long narrow tubular flowers are bright red with pale green tips. They stand up vertically or at an angle from the foliage. Anthers are strongly exerted.

Frost and drought hardy and fast growing. Grows best in well-drained sandy soil in full sun or part shade. Suited to rockeries, as a foreground shrub in the garden, as an undershrub or in wide tubs. Would also suit being planted near a pool as the glossy foliage would blend in well with rainforest-type plants. Requires very little maintenance apart from tip pruning the edges to maintain a compact shape. Highly bird attractive.

Correa 'Karwarra' 0.7 m x 2 m
C. decumbens x Summer – Autumn

Compact dense spreading low shrub with dark green ovate leaves, 28 mm x 10 mm in size, shiny and furrowed on top, paler green and velvety underneath and with thickened margins. The narrow tubular flowers are pink for most of the length of the floral tube, fading to pale green at the pinched tips. Anthers are strongly exerted in mature flowers. The green calyx is square in cross-section and has four long points. This plant may grow much larger in ideal conditions.



Very frost and drought hardy. This cultivar is very reliable in cultivation and will grow in almost any soil type in either full sun or part shade. Suited to rockeries, foreground planting in the garden or tubs. It requires very little maintenance apart from some occasional pruning at the edges. Highly bird attractive.

Correa 'Pink Panther' 0.6 m x 1 m
C. calycina x *C. decumbens* Summer – Autumn

Named *C.* 'Pink Panther' by Clive Larkman and sold under that name. This is a small dense spreading shrub with small dull green, lanceolate leaves, rough to the touch on top and pale green and velvety underneath and having well indented veins. Older leaves grow up to 30 mm x 15mm in size and are darker green and shiny on top. This cultivar has narrow mid pink tubular flowers growing up to 30 mm x 8 mm with a 5 mm band of green at the constricted tips. Anthers are strongly exerted. The calyx is square shaped with four triangular lobes, which are slightly elongated at the points.

Frost and very drought hardy. Adaptable to a variety of soil types but does best in well-drained sandy soil in full sun to part shade. Suits rockeries, tubs, foreground planting in the garden. Easy care shrub. Tip prune to maintain shape.

The other hybrids are not well known in cultivation and several are mentioned in my book. They include:

Correa 'Ainslie' which originated as a seedling in Howard and Beryl Black's former property at Sutherland near Sydney and named after one of their daughters. It is believed to be a hybrid between *C. decumbens* and *C.* 'Dusky Bells', both of which were growing in the garden at the time and confirmed by the RBG in Sydney.

Correa 'Cockatoo Creek'

C. decumbens x *C. reflexa* var. *insularis*
 Collected at Cockatoo Creek on Kangaroo Island. Grown and tentatively named by Bev and Dean Overton of Kingscote, Kangaroo Island.

Correa 'Harveys Return'
C. decumbens x

Believed to be a natural hybrid from Kangaroo Island. The late Ida Jackson thought it may have originated from the area near Harvey's Return, where there are a number of *C. decumbens* hybrids. Grown by Royce Raleigh of Victoria and named by Maria Hitchcock. Also tentatively called *C.* 'Rolls Royce'.

Correa 'Lightkeeper's Cemetery'
C. decumbens x

Seedling growing naturally on the roadside in 2009 on Cape Borda Rd on Kangaroo Island, South Australia in front of the Lightkeepers Cemetery. It is unknown which species this plant has hybridised with but it could be *Correa backhouseana* var. *orbicularis* which occurs in Flinders Chase National Park.

Correa 'Mama Maria'
C. decumbens x *C.* 'Dusky Bells'
 ACRA registered 854

Chance seedling in the garden of Maria Hitchcock of Armidale NSW. Named by Maria to reflect her Austrian heritage and registered with ACRA.

Correa 'Springs Rd'
C. decumbens x

Large plant growing naturally on the roadside on Springs Rd on Kangaroo Island, South Australia. It is unknown which species this plant has hybridised with but it could be *Correa reflexa* var. *insularis*

Correa 'Summers Surprise'
C. decumbens x

Yvonne Summers of Modbury, a north-east suburb of Adelaide not far from Tea Tree Gully and the Adelaide Hills has a *C. decumbens* x seedling which she named *C. 'Summers Surprise'* and which she transplanted in Spring 2009.

It begins flowering in November. The original plant grew to 2m x 2m with a mounded arching form with long branches and Yvonne has been pruning it vigorously to shape it. She has also propagated from it and is trialing plants in different parts of the garden.

If you have a seedling which you suspect may be a *C. decumbens* hybrid, please contact me with details as I am always keen to add new forms to the National Collection.

***Correa decumbens* – Lynne Mockridge**

Below are a couple of photos of my flowering *Correa decumbens* taken this morning.

It has only been flowering for about a week and as it is still quite small this is the first time it has flowered.

All my other *correas* are well past flowering so it is nice to have one species in flower.

All *correa* species I have tried seem to grow quite happily in my garden and now I am

running out of garden space I am delighted to find they make wonderful pot plants too.



***Correa decumbens* – Russell Dahms**

I have planted a *decumbens* in my back yard. So far it has survived the 'Husky' treatment which often results in massive excavations around newly planted plants.

It has now been in the ground for over a year and is doing quite well. The soil is predominantly clay with a small layer of topsoil and mulch. It will be interesting to see how it survives this summer.

Correa Crawl No 8 – Queens Birthday weekend. 9th- 11th June 2012
– by Cherree Densley

(Yes, there have been seven of these wonderful events).

David & Barb Pye, Doug and Bev Downes, Alison Potter, Russell Dahms and David from the Adelaide Hills, Kath and Ray Sykes, Ian O'Halloran, Phil Hempel, Christine and John Wadey, Neil and Bev Duncan, Nic and Joan Pitaro and myself made up the participants of the 8th Correa Crawl for the ANPSA Correa Study Group.

This 'Crawl' mainly concentrated on the SE of South Australia coming east into Victoria at Nelson and on to Bridgewater Bay.

Accommodated in Mt Gambier for the three nights- three couples stayed in the Old Mt Gambier Goal- a back-packers type of accommodation and was unique in many ways. Different styles of the evening meal was tried - Indian, the Mt Gambier Hotel and the RSL- although some participants did do their own cooking on some nights. The Old Goal had a kitchen and was warm and comfortable despite sleeping in the cells. (The owner/manager was a real character and kept us a captive audience with his stories).



Saturday morning saw us all meet up at Native Plant Wholesalers on Benara Road (Carpenters Rock Road) a few kilometres from Mt Gambier to be shown around by the Owner/Proprietor Philip Dowling.



For three hours we were treated to an in-depth tour of the labeling/dispatch, (some 90 different correa labels amongst the hundreds and hundreds of other labels), propagation (mostly cuttings, some tissue cultured, some division, some seed), potting up, (mostly automated with a pot filling machine), growing on, stock beds, and selling areas where most of our members couldn't resist plants at wholesale prices.

Look up www.nativeplantwholesalers.com to get an idea of the huge range (many originating from this nursery) of plants which are sold from this enormous nursery. We were all very impressed.



One of their most annoying problems at present is a hare which strikes indiscriminately and has, at present, a penchant for Ptilotus. It roams the nursery and seems too intelligent to get caught by the usual methods. One of our members suggested an old fashioned approach with a bow and arrow!!*

Philip is well known by his enthusiasm, love and knowledge of natives and regularly took plants to Vic Plant Sales over the years.



Native Plant Wholesalers nursery is situated at the family home where he started propagating and selling at least 40 years ago and he has expanded and expanded it to now employ approx. 25 people not forgetting that he probably is the largest customer to the local potting mix company just down the road (based on pine waste).



The mature native trees around the home are superb as is the extensive display borders featuring many 'different' plants being trialed including an unknown correa of which we were invited to take cuttings which and to be named 'Correacrawl12'. Hope they strike.



Please let us know progress and bring some to the next Correa Crawl.

Heading further towards the coast our next stop was the unique beach garden of Neville Bonney at Carpenters Rock.



He had kindly arranged for a friend to show us the way- Neville was away at the time unfortunately.



He had started planting his garden over 20 years ago around his fascinating house situated almost right on a flint beach. (These stones are the true flint and the waves pulling them in and out create that lovely hollow ringing sound- it must be almost like an orchestra playing when the bay is rough.

Smashing together two rocks showers out sparks and leaves a strong smell of gun powder.) Neville has planted mostly correas and these have hybridized with themselves and with the local forms of *Correa reflexa*.



It was correa heaven and they were flowering everywhere. He was responsible for introducing *C. 'Carpenters Rock'* many years ago when he came across it on 'The Carpenter'.



After spending quite a lot of time exploring around this coastal retreat we made our way down to the main bay- Buck's Bay, where the fishing fleet is situated, and walked around

the bay to some steps which took us over the bluff.



It was here that we started to find our first correas in the wild and they were just great - flowering their heads off- *Correa reflexa* var *reflexa* in rich reds and pink and with a yellow to cream edge- they were in deep limestone sand and almost right down to the beach which was made up of fascinating rock formations including fossilized roots.

Some members then did a bit of their own exploring along the coastline through to Port Macdonald.

In the evening we had our usual Cutting Swap night- aren't we a lucky Study Group?

Correas of course strike readily (although we are at the coldest time of the year). Members brought large bundles of labeled correas which were arranged around four tables (with probably 50 different correas) with adjacent sheets of paper for each. Half an hour was allowed for everyone to walk around the table inspecting what was on offer.

If you were interested in a particular correa you wrote down your name on the paper. After that time we knew who wanted what. Then further time was allowed for everyone to go around the table collecting cuttings – as you came to each bundle you could tell how many wanted that particular correa . Say for example there were four names on the sheet of paper, you took one quarter of the cuttings and moved on. How civilized is that?

Our new Administrator/Secretary Russell Dahms and one of the major propagators for the famous APS South Australia Plant Sales

staggered out of the old Goal with arms full of correa cuttings!!

We all spent some time with the labeling and paper work for the cuttings and wrapping them securely.

During that Saturday night some also tried their hand at grafting correas.

We just used good long cuttings of Marion's Marvel on which to graft but it is much better to use struck cuttings already established in tubes. Phil Hempel regularly grafts such correas as C 'Fat Fred' and C 'Big Bob' – both of which can be difficult to keep going on their own roots.

Sunday we made our way to Southend to explore this tiny double-beach town (there is a Southern Ocean side and a sheltered wide bay on the inland side where the cray boats unload and there is a jetty). There are no shops – just fishing and holiday houses.

My sister Di has a lovely weekender here and we were invited in for soup and muffins eating this on their extensive balcony overlooking the bay. There was not much incentive to move too far as we all relaxed in this paradise of quietness and beautiful scenery and correas!

My sister Di has explored much of the area over the past five years and proved a great guide.

At Southend there is a unique form of *Eucalyptus leucoxylon var macrocarpa* as well as other not-so-well known plants such as the coastal Exocarpos.



We explored for the rest of the day here finding some different forms of Correa

reflexa- low spreading in full flower- mostly red and yellow but a white one with green tips and one with the yellow spreading through the red almost right up to the calyx making unusual stripes.

The correas on the limestone slopes were intermingled with the lovely bush-tucker Muntries or *Kunzea pomifera*. (My grandmother who lived at Yahl regularly went to this coastline every autumn to collect the Muntries to make delicious jam).

If you haven't tasted jam from this 'little apple' plant then do try it- I'm sure Kurunga sell it. The *Kunzea* made large flat mats of healthy foliage before spreading out on long trailing stems. It was the most dominant vegetation here after the correas- which were everywhere.

Formed and well signposted tracks allow good viewing of the vegetation and scenery without trampling over the plants.

After heading back to Mt Gambier, a bit of spare time in the late afternoon allowed some viewing of the famous Blue Lake (the full deep blue doesn't appear until September) but it is a massive spectacular lake -blue or not.

One thing I was impressed with in the actual town centre of Mt Gambier was the use of the ornamental kale in the flower beds along the main street.

Umpherson Cave and other limestone caves were also well worth exploring and very accessible to the public.

In the evening we once again met up in the well-appointed and warm Meeting room kindly supplied at the Goal to view the 40 minute presentation on correas put together by the Pyes (which is available posted to anyone and for Groups) but now it comes with a great audio.

Phil Hempel has put together a great commentary to the slides with lots of great information about his experiences growing correas.

We also as a Group had the opportunity to discuss other items pertinent to the running/administration of this active and happy group of ANPSA members.

Mostly our members come from Tas, SA, Vic, Canberra and NSW- correas are difficult in Q but they will grow in WA.

Incidentally Phil is sending of an advertisement to all the State Newsletters with details as to how the audio/tape can be ordered and paid for).

Monday morning was very cold- a crackling white frost greeted us and windscreens were deeply iced over but it was a fine and sunny morning as we made our way south to Nelson to find *Correa reflexa* var *reflexa* along the sides of the road leading down to the River Glenelg mouth. These were mainly red shading to pink amongst the outcrop of limestone.

Nelson is a very pretty town and a trip along the river on a boat is very worthwhile- if one has the time and not chasing correas!

However, if anyone is looking for lots of other forms of this correa then the tracks back in towards the river through the Lower Glenelg NP are well worth exploring right back to the Princes Highway. (At one of the tracks one year we found the famous Tinsel Lily and the orchids at that time of the year (early November) were sensational.)

Moving further east we had a bit of a drive into Lake Monybiong through pines and a longish but great walk around the back of the lake to see really lovely forms of *Correa reflexa* var *reflexa*. This correa is available from Codrington Nursery (advert in Growing Australian) who grows two forms. It is a particularly bright pink and quite large flower on really different glistening and wavy foliage on a neat bush.

After a bit of creative navigating we found our way to Di Dowling's most unique and beautiful garden at Bridgewater Bay (some members had left us by then and some had gone the long route through the back of Mt Richmond (famous for lovely correas including the very dark red and large C *reflexa* var *reflexa* - the plant which suckers which has been available for many years.

However Di's garden was a real eye-opener built on sloping sandy ground and with large landscaped beds and winding pathways

mass planted the most mouth watering natives available.

A sensational long and tall hedge of *Adenanthus* 'Silver Streak' provided an excellent windbreak. Di also has a large 'cutting bed' where stock plants thrive. It was very generous of her to show us around and we were very impressed.

After some farewells we found our way different roads home.

*Talking about annoying critters I am distraught at present with the damage that the Red-necked Wallabies are doing at my bush block on Mt Clay. Correas planted around my little house are being targeted big time (after 12 years of good growth) and mature large bushes of such correas as C 'Raelene Goldie', C 'Narrow Neil', C 'Marion's Marvel' and C 'Wilson Promontory' hardly have a leaf left and the bushes are being jumped on smashing them down to get even the topmost leaves. I don't know if they will survive this severe form of pruning.

Large bushes of *Isopogon latifolius* are suffering the same fate- they look strange with just tall denuded stems left still topped with swelling buds.

Ah! We love to attract wildlife to our gardens don't we?

** The next *Correa* Crawl is being discussed already and we have an offer of having one in the Central Goldfields in conjunction with Neil Marriott and the Bendigo Growers of Australian Plants.

We'll keep everyone posted- it may be as early as June 2013.