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Correa Study Group

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Hello and welcome to the 64th edition of the newsletter. Thank you to Bob and Dot O'Neill for their tireless work in keeping the group and the newsletter going for years and thanks for your help with this edition. Thanks also to all those who contributed.

I'm from the 'Great South West' of Victoria in windswept Illowa [3 years] and previously from Pomonal in the Grampians. Moving to 6 acres of volcanic soil near Tower Hill and the coast has made gardening interesting especially with regards to propagating natives and growing Correas. It's damper here and less sunny than the Grampians. It's cooler too and there's the salty wind to factor in. The Correas that did so well in Pomonal have taken longer to settle in but they've finally taken off. The colours seem more vibrant and the flowers are a little bigger but they blow out regularly and roll around like tumble winds. (Reminder to self, TIP PRUNE!). There are no spine bills to visit them yet but our fingers are crossed. The rabbits visit though! They're a big problem and they seem to love all the members of the Rutaceae family (Correas, Philothecas, Diplolaenas). Why is that? We love growing all Correas. We are trying to grow more species especially local to western Victoria. There are so many plants with special connections. There are lots of Correas from Joan Pitaro and a number from Neil Marriott. Now we have quite a few from the last Correa Crawl pre Covid. I received a wonderful parcel of cuttings in the mail earlier this year but that's a story on its own for another newsletter. Please send any ideas, contributions and kind corrections for the next edition. If you're ever down this way, come for a visit.

Correas of the Alpine National Park

Michael and Cathy Beamish

Here are some shots of the Correas that grow along the Tamboritha Road / Wellington River in the Alpine National Park north of Licola / Heyfield / Traralgon. They were just

beginning their winter flowering (mid-April) and were looking lush and healthy after a relatively cool and moist summer in that part of the world. This particular bush is growing on the side of the bitumen road in a mound of road rubble that has been scraped off the road surface prior to sealing. I'm not a soil expert, so I don't know the details of the geology, but I'd describe it as pink slate rocks interspersed with a modicum of gravel, very hot, dry and exposed over the warmer months. Altitude is about 280m above sea level and this part of the valley is in a rain shadow from the ranges to the south and west. However, the Correas (and all their companion plants) seem to like it and do better in this type of country than they do in my garden in Boolarra. There, they probably have too much of the opposite conditions, heavy, clay loam soils and wetter, colder conditions for longer periods. I'd guess that they are officially called Correa reflexa var. reflexa and they have very hairy and relatively large green leaves (though new shoots and leaves can be a pretty pink) and green flowers, so I usually call it 'Wellington Green'. I've never seen any red colouring in the flowers on plants from this area, but that doesn't mean there aren't any.







Pretty pink new foliage in October 2020



Hello everyone,

Huge hugs to Bob and Dot for keeping the Correa Study Group going in such a successful way. It is a group based solidly on the efforts of many including of course Maria Hitchcock. Her book 'Correas: Australian Plants for Waterwise Gardens' is the gold standard. Thanks to Linda for taking on this newsletter.

It's so dry here in the south west of Victoria. For the first time in 39 years we have had to buy water. We have a bore for sheep, the garden and the toilet and it's still going strong [thank goodness] but rain tanks are down to a small puddle. 6000 gallons cost \$300 for

My garden has had many ups and downs and probably the word 'garden' rightly should be exchanged for jungle. I'm proud that trees I raised from seed now attract koalas all year round. We have heaps of different birds -raptors, water birds and medium to small songsters. The blue wrens even nested this year.

In my 80th year, I still garden [the light work] nearly each day. I have lots of vegies and over 1000 pot plants. I am very active in local basket weaving and use many plants from our garden.

I take over 1000 photos every couple of months.

Cherree and her seed grown

Xanthorrhoea

Correas are huge shelters for nesting birds and they now block the

paths. My 6 enormous Xanthorrhoea [8' x 8'l grown from seed

are fabulous and dominate the garden. As I have got older I've brought the garden closer by growing Correas and smaller natives in pots. One bush house and 2 hot houses are mainly for succulents, cacti and Aloes.

We have removed and continue to remove beds overrun with kikuyu and turned them back to grass. Long 'stayers' are of course Correa 'Marianne Beek'. Correa baeuerlennii. Correa

backhouseana Tassie, Correa aemula. Correa mannii, Correa 'OMG', Canberra hybrids and Correa 'Coconut Ice'. One of the very best has

been Correa 'Poorinda Fantasy' that I collected as cuttings from Marianne Beek about 20 years ago. Casuarinas, Eucalyptus leucoxylon and diversifolia plus sugar gums and manna gums, blackwood wattles, Banksia seminuda and integrifolia, Callistemons, Melaleucas and of course Correas continue to be the backbone of our jungle.



Basket weaving



Correa 'Poorinda Fantasy'

The warm and generally dry autumn seems to have passed with 34mm of beautiful rain last night. After the dogs were walked and the sun warmed the somewhat chilly morning air, I went for a garden wander with the Correas being the main focus.

One or another Correa will be in at least light flowering mode over the whole year, but in general the flowering trough is over the warmer months of the year. Currently they are entering towards mid flowering levels. Some of the plants that took my attention were as follows:

- 1. C. calycina var. halmaturorum KI. It is a somewhat uncommon species that is going well in a sunny position and is at mid flowering currently.
- 2. C. reflexa 'Flared Bell'. This has been one of my favourites over the years. It features large flared bells and the plant is young and flourishing.
- 3. C. *pulchella* 'Dot's Dream'. This plant stands out with its unusual colour shading. It is upright in form growing towards 80cm.
- 4. C. *lawrenceana* 'Christmas In July'. Our plant is 2m tall and approx. 4m in width. In full sun, it is hardy, requiring little attention and is currently flowering profusely. It does take up space, but in our situation it is well worth growing.
- 5. C. reflexa Tambo. This plant is excellent in semi shade. I love the large, Spaniel dog eared shaped foliage.
- 6. C. *lawrenceana* red. At 3m x 2.5m it is an excellent screening plant, located against a fence behind a young orange tree. It does its job without becoming too aggressive.
- 7. C. *pulchella* white. This is a small established plant 70cm x 80cm in a sunny position. I find the fine foliage most attractive.

The overall garden is now fully developed. New plantings are done in small gaps or as replacements. With Correas, the main aim is to conserve the most valued forms gathered over the years, leaving little opportunity to add new variations, which is difficult to accept. 2 or more copies are grown of each correa form so as to retain the collection. Currently cuttings are being grown of some ageing plants that will be removed as soon as the replacement cuttings are fit to take their places.











Late Autumn Correas continued





The past summer was dry and at times testing, causing some losses of plants, including Correas. Still, with a large and intense garden, I guess that one must accept that to a certain level. We were fortunate in having water available to hand water all plants deemed to be in need of that extra sip, at times twice weekly if they were younger plants yet to establish. With things rather well in order, we look forward with anticipation of a fine correa show over the coming months. All is well here, including the dogs.

What a Difference Pruning, Care and Feeding Make Dot O'Neill

For years we have had a scrawny pulchella correa in a very dry position between the driveway and tiles. It has faithfully lived on when other plants may have given up hope.

This year with a new focus on this particular garden bed by giving it water when the garden bed has been dry and taking time to prune the correa as well as giving it a few doses of "Power Feed," we have been rewarded by a magnificent show of colour.

Correas respond well to pruning as you can see in this photo.



'Panrock Pink'

C. pulchella x

0.6m x 1m

Fl. Autumn - Winter

Originated in Neil Marriott's garden 'Panrock' near Stawell Vic.

Dense shrub with small dark green oval leaves and mid pink bell flowers with recurved tips. Frost/drought hardy, well-drained soils, semi-shade. Suits foreground planting, courtyards, rockeries, tubs. Attracts birds.



'Panrock Orange'

C. pulchella x

0.3m x 0.6m

FI. Autumn - Winter

Originated in Neil Marriott's garden 'Panrock' near Stawell Vic.

Open groundcover with small dark green oval leaves and bright orange bell flowers with recurved tips. Frost/drought hardy, well-drained soils, semi-shade. Suits foreground planting, courtyards, rockeries, tubs. Attracts birds.



C. reflexa x

1m x 1m

Fl. Autumn - Winter

Seedling which arose in Maria Hitchcock's garden in 2021 and named after her husband Don.

Upright dense shrub with large oval leaves (35mm x 20mm)which are dark green and rough on top but pale green and velvety underneath. It has long bright red bells with green recurved tips (35mm x 8mm) which stand out from the foliage. Frost/drought hardy, well-drained soils, semi-shade. Suits foreground planting, courtyards, rockeries, tubs. Attracts birds.



'Hayley'

C. pulchella

 $0.4 \text{m} \times 0.6 \text{ m}$

Fl. Autumn - Winter

Originated in Bob O'Neill's garden in Melbourne and named by him.

Dense low shrub with small pointed dark green leaves and bright orange bell flowers with recurved tips (18mm x 12mm). Frost and drought hardy. Well-drained soil. Prefers full sun to part shade. Attracts birds. Suits rockeries, tubs, foreground planting.





Correa lawrenceana 'Christmas in July' Barb

Barb and David Pye

Our Correa 'Christmas in July' is probably about 15 years old. It is 2 metres high and

about 3 metres wide. The flowering this year is going to be prolific after a record wet year for us in Bullengarook. We live at an altitude of 500 metres with a long term rainfall average of 750 mm but last year we had over 1100 mm. All of our Correa lawrenceana plants have thrived here even in the drier seasons. We would like to propagate a lot more Christmas in July but have had difficulties getting a good strike rate. Have any of the study group members had experience with



propagating this plant? What is the best time to take cuttings? What hormone is best? We find other Correas strike at any time of the year with no trouble.



Correa reflexa var. reflexa 'Granny's Grave'

Linda Handscombe

Correa reflexa var. reflexa 'Granny's Grave', was a correa form selected from the coastal vegetation at Warrnambool. This vegetation community called "Coastal Headland Scrub" is listed as rare and endangered and is today highly modified due to weed invasion and development.

A sample of the Correa was taken to a meeting of Warrnambool SGAP by member Ken Arthur and it was subsequently registered with ACRA by Cherree Densley on behalf of the group and the ASGAP Correa Study Group in 1999.

Ken was a roadside vegetation officer with Vic Roads at the time. He and his wife Gwen later also ran the lovely Gwenkenny Nursery in Illowa that sold a wide range of native plants including many Correas and an extensive range of Eremophilas.

Ken was familiar with the coastal vegetation of Warrnambool in the 1980s and was fascinated by the 'common', the area known locally as 'Granny's Grave' between the surf club and Point Richie and the wide range of plants growing there which included Correas.

The area had previously been grazed and was still fenced and at that time the coastal vegetation was low and wind sheared.

The plentiful Correas were low too. Ken took cuttings from between 50 to 100 different plants. When they grew, he planted at least 10 of them in the garden at Vic Roads in Jamieson St, Warrnambool. In maturity, the plants ranged from completely prostrate to 2m tall. The flowers were various

shades of green and the leaves were varying sizes and textures.

Over the years and for various reasons the precious Correas and other flora of the 'common' have all but disappeared. Ken remembers Patersonias and Adrianas. The low coastal vegetation leant itself to mowing by the Council and many of these areas are now grass and

parking areas. Taller vegetation including Coastal Wattle and Italian Buckthorn have taken over.

Two years ago, Ken took local naturalist and author of 'Plants of the Great South West', Kevin Sparrow together with a number of council staff, to refind a remnant patch of Correas.





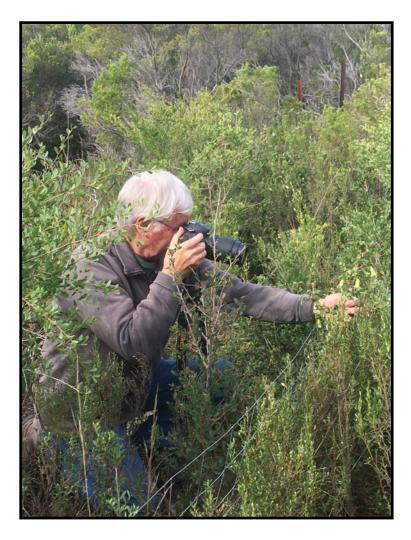
Correa 'Granny's Grave' from Codrington Nursery in our garden. Photo by Dave Handscombe

An area of about 20 square metres had been fenced off by council staff previously to protect them but the exact location of it had been lost due to the huge growth of the surrounding vegetation.

Correa reflexa var. reflexa 'Granny's Grave' continued

Kevin and his wife Joyce took David and I in to find them a few weeks ago. The Correas outside the fence had been grazed and had disappeared. Rabbits had damaged the Correas inside the fence and Italian Buckthorn had invaded the area. The remnant Correas varied in height and in flower size and colour and leaf size and texture. As insurance against loss, we took a few small cuttings.

Ken says that apart from being an excellent and hardy garden specimen, Correa 'Granny's Grave' made an excellent low maintenance plant for public spaces. This can be seen at the Swan Reserve Garden in Raglan Parade where there are some excellent examples.



Thank you Kevin Sparrow and Ken Arthur for your help with this article.





Italian Buckthorn (*Rhamnus alaternus*) seen at left and Coastal Wattle (*Acacia longifolia* subsp. *sophorae*) are rapidly overtaking the coastal heathland. Grazing animals are pruning the remnant Correas back to the wire fence.







The three photos above taken by Kevin Sparrow show various *Correa reflexa* var. *reflexa* from within the fence near Granny's Grave. Kevin also shared the article below from the Warrnambool Standard in 2003 when his book project was launched. Note the lovely low coastal headland reaching down to the sea in the background. You cannot see the sea from this spot now.



This *Correa reflexa* var. *reflexa* was from the same area and was about 1m tall. Photo by Dave Handscombe.



Correas in our Garden

Lorraine Weir

We have had an ordinary spring, summer time in our garden with the loss of many Correas due to root rot here in Wallan. Late heavy spring rain then summer heat plus humidity being their downfall. My once quite large collection of Correas has been whittled down somewhat. The pics are of the best flowering just now. Seedlings that have come up in our garden seem better for our conditions.



Start at the short arrow and follow the long arrow clockwise.

From the editor

I love this floral spiral and each time I lose track I find my way again with *Correa* 'Isabell', *Correa* 'OMG' and *Correa* 'Tutu'.

- 1.'Pixie Bells'
- 2.'Federation Belle'
- 3. KI reflexa
- 4. Barbara Pye pulchella
- 5. Unnamed seedling
- 6. Cream & Bronze
- 7. 'Jaffa'
- 8. Bob O'Neil..'380'
- 9. 'Alva'
- 10. 'Catie Bec'
- 11. 'Maja's Miracle'
- 12. Isabell
- 13. Unnamed seedling
- 14. 'Nell'
- 15. 'Ring a Ding Ding'
- 16. 'Carmen'
- 17. 'Skye Bell'
- 18. Unnamed seedling
- 19. 'Em'.....our seedling
- 20. 'Annabelle'
- 21. Bernie Shanahan reflexa
- 22. Bemm River
- 23. 'OMG
- 24. Gill Muller. white reflexa
- 25. Brisbane Ranges
- 26. Glabra
- 27. Pulchella minor
- 28. 'Tutu'
- 29. 'Long Fella'
- 30. 'Tri Colour'
- 31. 'Autumn Blaze'
- 32. 'Vieve' Our seedling
- 33. 'Jules'....Our seedling

This most beautiful Correa was named in the 1998 revision of the genus by Paul Wilson. Sadly, this revision was seen by a number of botanists as rather conservative in its approach, and today there are moves for further in depth revision of the genus. Included in this revision will be the raising of *Correa reflexa* var *angustifolia* to become a species in its own right.

The morphological characters that separate var. angustifolia from var. reflexa and all other varieties are:

- Leaves narrow-oblong, (cf ovate in var reflexa, var scabridula & var lobata, oblong-ovate in var speciosa)
- 2. Leaves densely rustyflocculose beneath (cf moderately rusty-stellate beneath in var reflexa & var scabridula)
- 3. Flowers with calyx broadly obconical or bell-shaped, shortly 8-lobed (cf hemispherical, truncate to undulate or rarely shortly 4-lobed in *var reflexa* & *var scabridula*, triangular acuminate lobed in *var lobata*, 4-dentate *in var speciosa*).

Here in the Grampians we are establishing the WAMA Botanic Gardens. WAMA stands for Wildlife Art Museum of Australia, and our vision is to establish a world class Australian botanic garden surrounding the art gallery, workshops and restaurant. We are developing this on the beautiful WAMA property just outside Halls Gap, which includes an area protected by a Trust for Nature Conservation Covenant protecting Grampians natural heathy woodland and wetlands.

Growing naturally on the property is *Correa reflexa* var *angustifolia* –several lovely plants are a mass of vibrant red flowers during late summer-autumn.

One of the first gardens being established on the WAMA site is the Grampians/Gariwerd Endemic Garden. We were fortunate to obtain a grant of around \$80,000 for the landscaping, design and construction of this garden. One of the major features of this unique garden will be the planting of a broad range of the genetic variation within each species, ensuring broad genetic diversity.



For **Correa reflexa var angustifolia** this has meant collecting of as many distinct forms of the plant as possible. Fortunately, many of our WAMA Horticultural Team, as well as members of our Correa Study Group have numerous forms already in their gardens. Our horticultural team has been busy propagating most of these, as well as hundreds of plants of the OTHER 70+ Grampians endemic species

WAMA has been most fortunate to have the Royal Botanic Gardens and Cranbourne Botanic Gardens as partners in our team, and together we conducted several field trips to the Grampians/Gariwerd collecting endemic plants. Amongst these have been many different forms of this beautiful Grampians Correa, ranging widely throughout the Grampians in a multitude of different forms. Most are proving to be absolutely wonderful garden plants, hardy in hot dry summers and tolerant of cold wet winters.



Correa reflexa var angustifolia

-extremely narrow
flower form Mt Rosea
N Marriott



Correa reflexa var angustifolia – tall and narrow form N Marriott

This is another Grampians endemic that we have propagated in good numbers for the subalpine section of our Endemic Garden. It is a lovely low dense shrub to around 2.5m confined to the tops of Mt William, Major Mitchell Plateau and amazingly, on nearby Mt Langi Ghiran.









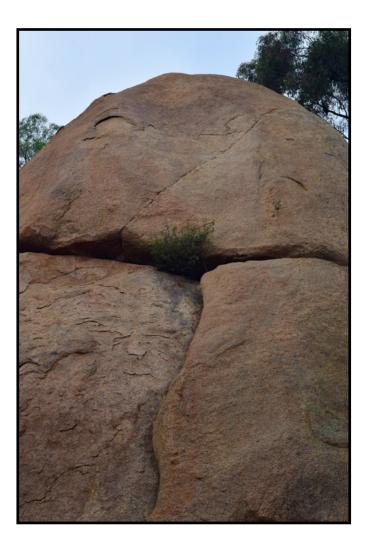
From the editor.

This was a very floriferous selection from Mt William in the Grampians. It did well for a little while and then fizzled out. All the ones we gave to friends to try in their gardens met a similar fate.

We had a week to kill between engagements at Bacchus Marsh and Maryborough, so took the opportunity to do a bit of touring around central Victoria. We ended up spending four nights at Kooyoora State Park in the little Parks Victoria campground on top of the hill and occupied our days trundling around the variety of walking tracks on offer, checking out whatever was in flower (not much in late April) or otherwise caught our eye. Guess what caught our eye as we were descending from a lookout on top of a granite dome! You got it, a Correa in full flower! There were about half a dozen plants at this first site, perhaps up to 2.5m tall and



generally broader than that, with a profusion of lovely green-gold flowers. Later in the day and a kilometre or two distant we came across another colony of many more plants, on flatter ground but still on a granite slope. Nearby, one plant in particular was growing in a substantial crevice on the face of a huge boulder. Now that's what you call a Rock Correa! It was not until a few days later that we realised we were wandering amongst the type locality for *Correa* 'Inglewood Gold'.





From the editor

We've been having a problem losing track of the names of Correas in the garden. Push in labels keep getting lost under spreading foliage. My sister put me onto these labels that, for the moment, sit well above the plants. The 120 x 35mm polypropylene UV stabilised labels (in multiple colours) are attached to 500mm high tensile wire. She got hers from a horticultural supplier that sells labels and we're getting our next order from a prospecting company.



Magpie and mower proof plant labels!



Next edition

The next edition of the newsletter will be in late **November.** Please consider writing something for it. Correas in the wild, in your garden, in the nurseries..... Propagating Correas, pruning them and burning them on the bonfire when they fail. Correas by the coast or in the frost. Maybe you have some ideas for segments you'd like to see in the newsletter. Send them all in but please send good quality photos separate to the text.

Membership

Memberbship of the Correa Study Group is free as newsletters are sent digitally.

Current membership is 65 households and various groups.

If you know of APS members who wish to join, contact me and I can put them on the mailing list. If you wish to be removed from the mailing list, please let me know.

If you'd like a copy of the Correa disk, let Dot O'Neill or myself know.

Correa Crawl

Unfortunately due to the late coming together of the new committee and time constraints, the 2022 Queen's Birthday Correa Crawl won't go ahead. There is a possibility of a shorter version at a later date and we will let you know.

Financial report Dot O'Neill

Bank Balance as at last newsletter 9/7/20 \$1126.11

Expenses

Postage of Correa Disks to members \$23.67

Postage of Newsletters to Newsletter editor \$26.20

Bank Balance as at next newsletter \$1076.24