



Indigenotes

Vol. 16, No. 3

October 2005

Letter from the Secretary

G'day IFFA Folk,

Yes it is probably about time you heard from me! Sorry that I haven't been in touch for a while.

Just over a year ago IFFA drew on the grass roots of the group, those who had nurtured IFFA through the 80's and 90's, to once again give their time, effort, skills and knowledge, to promote the protection and growth of indigenous flora and fauna. The current IFFA committee has over a century of environmental experience (between us).

Over these two decades we saw many goals achieved:

- the terms “indigenous”, “local native” and “environmental weed” are now familiar in the broader community, significantly improving the ecological knowledge about our environment,
- the handful of indigenous nurseries and growers has flourished to supply most areas with local provenance, or locally sourced seed,
- Federal, State and Local government, are progressively incorporating indigenous flora and fauna management into their roles and responsibilities,
- Subsequently environmental employment opportunities have expanded with consultants engaged to provide strategic information regarding the values of local flora and fauna; and bushland management crews or independent contractors employed to undertake the on ground management,
- Agencies have adapted training programs to incorporate greater “indigenous” information for planning and management roles,
- The smattering of detailed vegetation community and sub-community investigations has been somewhat overwhelmed by the almost comprehensive but broader scale EVC mapping,
- In Victoria at least, flora and fauna overlays have been incorporated into many council planning processes.

While much has been achieved, there remains much to improve:

- Many nurseries have no understanding of local flora or gene pools and some are still selling prohibited or environmental weeds,
- There are still no suitable government management guidelines to protect local gene pools,

- Some government actions, or in some cases a lack of action, have a detrimental impact on our local environmental assets,
- The quality and standards of environmental assessment and management are extremely variable, and suffer from a lack of professional standards, guidelines and accreditation to ensure land managers receive quality advice and action,
- Many Local Councils have limited environmental expertise and minimal funding allocated to manage their local flora and fauna assets,

We are keen to ensure IFFA is rejuvenated, and our success so far is reflected in the:

- **Popularity of “Indigenotes”**
If you wish to raise an issue or publish an article, Tony is keen to hear from you and will give you advice and assistance if needed, to **raise your local perspective with all Indigenotes readers**. So take those thoughts and ideas you have, put pen to paper or fingertips to keyboards and share them with us.
- **Development of and increasing access to the IFFA Website,**
Congratulations to Peter for making such great progress to date with our website. Every IFFA member is encouraged to contribute to the Website with your ideas and information, from snippets to articles. We also need some assistance to convert previous Indigenotes articles into web pages. **IFFA is offering some incentives - see page 15 for details and watch the website for updates.**
- **Progress of the Indigenous Nurseries Network committee**
As raised above, many nurseries have no understanding of local flora or gene pools and some are still selling prohibited or environmental weeds. Although there is some progress with invasive species guidelines by the ISC, we are **keen to progress the debate on standards and guidelines for indigenous flora**, particularly those applicable to Victorian indigenous nurseries & growers. If you are interested please give me a call.
- **Commitment to supporting activities such as the coming EPBC Workshop on 29th October**
My apologies that I will not be able to attend due to a prior commitment, however, having attended a previous workshop I **encourage all those with a**

Melbourne's Bushland Book

working need or interest to attend. We would also appreciate a few IFFA Folk to help with refreshments etc.

- **and our increasing membership**

Our Membership Secretary Dimi Bouzalas is **seeking input from IFFA members, yes from you!** about your needs and wants. Please take the time to respond to the enclosed questionnaire so we can focus our efforts towards what will be most worthwhile for IFFA members.

If you need assistance in addressing a local issue or need some advice or information, please don't hesitate to contact me or the other committee members. We will help where we can and more often than not should be able to suggest other avenues for information or advice or put you directly in touch with someone who can help.

From a personal perspective, recent months have brought many changes for me. In April, my mum, Joan, passed away after her long struggle with Parkinson's Disease and my 18 year old feline companion, Ralaping, lost his struggle with cancer.

Also after more than a decade living in Kew we have had to move. Despite the circumstances and over two decades in government employ, my request to DSE for long service leave was denied.

Thus I am taking a long awaited and well deserved break, a little time to recuperate and get things straight, seeking a new work pursuit and a new abode.

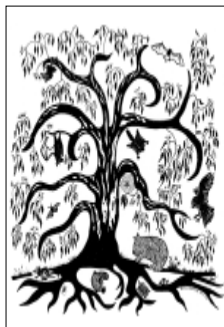
I look forward to getting back in touch with IFFA Folk over the coming months.

Michele Arundell

IFFA Secretary

Cover Artist:

This edition's cover artist is Elissa Simmonds. Designed for kids, it shows some of the fauna associated with a River Redgum Tree. See page 3 for more for kids.



In the last Indigenotes, it was erroneously reported that I was working on a book on indigenous gardens. I'm not, but I am in fact researching a book on Melbourne's bushland. My aim is to help with the conservation of our remnants, by informing people whose activities so often have a negative impact on what we have left, about its value and its uniqueness and about how we can lose it without proper care. So I'm hoping to reach the general public, and also to perhaps get something out into general knowledge that will help get the message over to professionals like road builders, engineers, planners etc.

I would like the book to be largely based on interviews with people who have the sort of deep and intimate knowledge of various of Melbourne's remnants. I know that many people have extraordinary knowledge and expertise, which is often not published, and which I would like to see communicated to the world at large.

I'm about to start contacting people whom I know might be able to help, but there must be many others who I don't know who might like to contribute. So I'm asking for people to contact me if you are able and willing to talk to me about this project. My phone number is 9480 3221 – I've given up my job in order to do this, so its a business and after hours number. Or mobile 0418 391 641 or email lizzied@alphalink.com.au

Elizabeth Donoghue



Thanks to Elissa Simmonds and Dimi Bouzalas for creating the inaugural contribution to this new regular Indigenotes column Kidznotes.

.....
: Guess how many creatures :
: there are on the front page? :
:
.....

Now it's getting dark earlier it's a great time to bundle up in warm clothes grab a torch and head outside for a walk in the moonlight after dinner. It could be your backyard or the local nature reserve. Who knows what you'll find or hear! A good tip is to wrap the lens of your torch in red cellophane, so it cuts down on the glare and does not upset the animals you may find. If you hear an owl call, try and copy the sound it makes. Sometimes owls will come and have a closer look if they hear another "owl" calling. And Mum and Dad will love this activity, especially as you can still all make it to bed by 9pm!

Kinder Social Night at Woodlands Historic Park.

In May we held a Saturday night walk in our local nature reserve for families of my son's Kindergarten. It was to be a bit of a social evening and a great way to introduce the kids to the local wildlife. We only expected 25 people to join in – so were very impressed that we had 84 folk ready and raring to go! We ended up organising a second night to reduce it to 42 folk joining in on each walk. Still quite a crowd but much more manageable.

The Friends of Woodlands Historic Park suggested we hold a puppet play about a Possum in search of a new home prior to the walk. After rustling up some friends and a sister (and her fella) we had a cast, and the wonderful huge river red gums was our set. So with an almost full moon as the spot light (plus a real spotlight) the play really went down a treat (hint – for a stress free play stick the script onto the back of the trees and use little torches to read by).

After the play off we went on a circular walk around the wetland on a nice wide path (a circular track is great to avoid losing anyone). With members of the Friends group managing the spotlights, we were excited to see a boobook owl, and heard the bats hunting down the creek. Although there were no other sightings, everyone just enjoyed exploring in the dark. Then it was off to the ranger's Depot for warming cups of hot chocolate in front of the log fire. The kids had a race to get get into their pyjamas followed by a bedtime story (Thanks to Bernadette the Glenroy West Kindy teacher). Bernadette managed to get everyone to sing a hearty round of "Waltzing Matilda" (even before we cracked open the port!) It really was a terrific night!

The kids loved the opportunity just to walk around in the dark, as it really was exciting (and a bit scary!). And the pyjama race worked well, as some parents later reported that their youngsters fell asleep in the car on the way home, so were easy to pop into bed! Interestingly many of the families had not yet discovered this special park (which is their local patch of bush), so the whole experience was new and special for the parents too. With a starting time of 7pm and a finishing time of 9pm, it was a very family friendly outing indeed!

(answer)
clockwise from top right bat, sugar glider, cicada, spider, owl, wombat, crickets, echidna, platypus, cockroach, bandicoot, moth, fruit bat, stick insect, possum and river red gum.)

Book review:

Wildflowers of the North Coast of New South Wales

by Barry Kemp, Reed-New Holland 2004, 176 pages

Reviewed by Robert Bender

This beautifully illustrated colour book describes the plants occurring from Newcastle to the Queensland border, east of the Dividing Range escarpment. It has a map by Ian Faulkner, a glossary, reading list and index. It is divided into seven sections, on habitat types, and illustrated with 350 of Barry's stunning photos, nearly all of plants in flower to highlight identifying characters. In each section the plants are organised into trees, shrubs (large, medium and small), climbers, mistletoe, vines and ferns. For each plant its scientific and common names, family and 5 to 8 lines of descriptive text accompany a photo of the plant's flowers or fruit to aid identification. Each section has a colour-coded header strip to identify it.

Coastal dunes, headlands and estuaries: *This habitat comprises small trees, shrubs and a few herbs, and occurs on shifting sands or thin-soiled rocky headlands. Many headlands are seriously damaged by human intrusion.*

Swamp forest, freshwater wetlands and riverbanks: *This habitat is similar to the previous one but with fewer herbs. There are rainforest intrusions along river banks.*

Coastal heath *The heathland has a greater floral diversity with 71 species described, again all shrubs and herbs. Divided into wet and dry heath, with some plants restricted to one type. Xerophytic adaptations to unpredictable moisture supply are common.*

Woodland heath *These are mainly on sandstone or sandy soils.*

Open forest *This is the most diverse habitat with 80 species described, a mix of trees, shrubs of various size*

classes, herbs and climbers. Many of them need fire to germinate and have adaptations to survive fires.

Rainforest *This habitat is mainly trees, shrubs and vines. Much of the closed-canopy forest on flat land has been cleared so it is now fragmented and restricted to steep slopes. Four sub-types are described: subtropical, warm temperate, littoral and dry, with good examples in national parks listed for the adventurous.*

Weeds *14 weed species are described, many being garden-escapees: Camphor Laurel, Privet, Lantana, Bou Bush, Morning Glory, Tobacco Bush, Asparagus Fern. Many have seeds dispersed by birds, or on car tyres or bush-walkers' boots. Various LandCare-type groups are battling to restore the disturbed balance.*

Barry Kemp is secretary of the Coffs Harbour Australian Plants Society and works as a volunteer in the North Coast Regional Botanic Garden, assisting with plant identification and managing several sections of the Garden. He retired to Coffs in 1988 after managing the revegetation program at Organ Pipes NP on the NW fringe of Melbourne for 16 years, and co-authoring a book on the flora of the Macedon Ranges.

District	Trees	Small Trees Large Shrubs	Medium shrubs	Small shrubs & herbs	Climbers, scramblers, Mistletoe	Vines, ferns, herbs	Total
Coastal dunes, headlands, estuaries		9		24			33
Swamp forest, freshwater wetlands, riverbanks		10		12			22
Coastal heath		17		54			71
Woodland heath		15		31			46
Open forest	14	15	11	31	9		80
Rainforest	34		10			9	53
Weeds		1		13			14
Total	48	67	21	165	9	9	319

Fungi field trip

Jumping Creek Reserve



Jumping Creek Reserve is part of Warrandyte State Park and fronts onto the Yarra River. Much of the reserve consists of Grassy Dry Forest with Valley Grassy Forest and Herb-rich Foothill Forest on lower slopes.

A range of habitat types were searched by the group of enthusiastic attendees (some of whom missed the group photograph above), equipped with Bruce's new book 'A field guide to Australian Fungi'. The walk started at the lower car park where numerous species of *Mycena*, including the species shown below, were seen growing amongst leaf litter and mulched areas. *Hypholoma aurantiaca* was also common near the carpark. The reserve offers both natural habitat types for fungi as well as constructed habitat types such as garden beds associated with recreation areas.

Members of IFFA and friends were recently treated to a walk and talk by one of Australia's leading mycologists, Bruce Fuhrer. The walk was lead through Jumping Creek Reserve in North Warrandyte where Bruce regularly visits during fungi season.



Mycena sp.

A small, bright white fungus scattered throughout parts of the reserve.



Mycena sp.

Photographed in decaying plant matter where it was found in colonies over a few square metres. This species is creamy-white.

The walk included a visit into an area of dense Burgan (*Kunzea* sp.) with high moss and liverwort cover over parts of the ground. Past land use around Warrandyte includes gold exploration, timber harvesting and agriculture, all of which involved the clearing to some degree of native vegetation. Regeneration of dense thickets of Burgan following disturbance in certain areas is common around the Warrandyte area. Much of the moss cover under Burgan thickets was attributed to *Thuidiopsis furfurosa*, the very common and widespread *Hypnum cupressiforme* and the introduced *Pseudoscleropodium purum* all of which are weft-forming species. Bruce spoke a little on the ecological implications of *P. purum* as a competitor with native bryophytes and small herbs. Compared with most native mosses, *P. purum* produces extensive mats that are often several centimetres thick. The leafy liverwort *Heteroscyphus semiteres* was also common throughout this area. A number of fungus species were found amongst the

bryophytes and leaf litter including the coral fungus *Ramaria flaccida* (below), *Galerina hypnorum*, *Laccaria* sp. and *Psathyrella* spp.



Ramaria flaccida

A pale orange coral fungus found growing under a canopy of Burgan.

Heading south from the carpark, a walking track follows riparian vegetation a few metres from the bank of the Yarra. Along this section of the walk, fewer fungus species were spotted although an impressive display of *Dermocybe splendida* (lower right) was seen.



Dermocybe splendida

A single clump of this species was found on steep ground near the river bank. The cap upper- and under-surface is a deep orange-red. Stems are paler orange.

Many thanks to Bruce for his time and for sharing his vast knowledge on fungi, bryophytes, lichens, vascular plants and most other things that can be found in the bush.

Thanks to all who attended.

Summary and photographs
Matt Dell

Fungi recorded by Bruce and scribed by Tony Faithfull during the walk are listed below.

- | | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------|
| <i>Agaricus</i> sp. | <i>Mycena austrofilopes</i> | <i>Ramaria lorithamnus</i> |
| <i>Calocera</i> sp. | <i>Mycena cystidiosa</i> | <i>Rickenella fibula</i> |
| <i>Clitocybe</i> sp. | <i>Mycena kuurkacea</i> | <i>Omphalina chromacea</i> |
| <i>Collybia butyracea</i> | <i>Mycena ?marangania</i> | <i>Phellinus</i> sp. |
| <i>Collybia</i> spp. | <i>Mycena mirasmiodes</i> ms. | <i>Psathyrella</i> spp. |
| <i>Cortinarius abnormis</i> | <i>Mycena pura</i> (dark form) | <i>Scleroderma</i> sp. |
| <i>Dermocybe splendida</i> | <i>Mycena viscidocruenta</i> | <i>Stereum illudens</i> |
| <i>Galerina hypnorum</i> | <i>Mycena</i> sp. (small white) | <i>Tubaria rufofulva</i> |
| <i>Galerina</i> sp. | <i>Mycena</i> sp. | <i>Xeromphalina</i> spp. |
| <i>Geastrum triplex</i> | <i>Marasmius</i> sp. | <i>Xerula australis</i> |
| <i>Hypholoma aurantiaca</i> | <i>Psilocybe subaeruginosa</i> | |
| <i>Laccaria</i> sp. (pink gills) | <i>Ramaria flaccida</i> | |

Obituary

Vale Alf Salkin

From Virginia Barnett, Australian Plants Society, Waverley

The City of Monash has lost an environmentalist and dedicated community worker following the death of Alf Salkin in March, 2005.

Abraham "Alf" Salkin was born on the 6th of June 1923 in Manchester, England.

Alf's first introduction to the Waverley area was in 1949 when, as a newly arrived English migrant, he and his brother, Ivor, cycled out to the "bush", as the area beyond Warrigal Road was then generally known. Small pockets of natural vegetation remained as the former grazing land was turned over to developers. At this point Alf's love of our native flora began.

Later, Alf and his wife Esma, bought a home in Pinewood Drive, Mount Waverley, and today this native garden triggers memories of happy earlier times.

The childhoods of their children, Ian and Owen, produced times of exploration and learning as they visited many parts of the country and experienced the wonders of nature. In 1964 Alf was asked to form a local group of the Society for Growing Australian Plants. This group developed into a vibrant band of local plant devotees and the monthly meetings saw a range of speakers and demonstrations combined with garden visits and excursions. Throughout, Alf maintained a calm and knowledgeable presence and was always ready and willing to help those on the road to learning all aspects of native plant cultivation.

In his early days as a teacher at Mount Waverley High school Alf oversaw the creation of a native garden in the school grounds which was later named in his honour. He was probably one of very few teachers who endeared in his students a love of native plants and further, the need to keep this interest going. In 1976 Alf established, within the Waverley Society for Growing Australian Plants, a group to strengthen its

involvement with local species, called "FLOWA", an acronym for Flora of the Waverley Area. This group continued the recording work of members and helped with the preservation of local material by collecting seed and cuttings, propagating them and studying their growth in local gardens.



Alf's particular interest was banksias and in the 1970s he completed his Master's degree researching the banksias of eastern Australia. After this he became affectionately known as "the Banksia Man". Thirty years ago Alf was responsible for establishing the Banksia Garden at Cranbourne Botanic Gardens and oversaw its progress over the years. This is now part of the Australian Garden concept.

Alf was curator of the seed bank for many years.

For many years Alf and Esma worked tirelessly towards improving Mount Waverley's gem, Valley Reserve. They started the first working bees in 1982 and in 2002 saw the amalgamation of the Friends of Valley Reserve with the Friends of Scotchmans Creek. This caring work continues today. The Monash City Council dedicated a garden seat in Valley Reserve in Alf and Esma's names, recognising their commitment to this beautiful reserve.

In 1983 Alf and Esma were awarded Honorary Life Memberships by Victoria's Society for Growing Australian Plants.

Alf had a great fondness for poetry readings and would often muse about his days as a RAF pilot, sculptor and botanist. We will miss his company and keen sense of humour.

Our sympathy goes to Alf and Esma's sons, Ian and Owen and Ian's wife, Amy.

Reproduced with permission from APS Waverley

Superb Fairy-Wren Coastal Survey

The Port Phillip EcoCentre is a community-managed 'umbrella' group based in St Kilda Botanical Gardens. The EcoCentre provides support for other community environment groups in the region and conducts its own projects. One such project is the Superb Fairy-Wrens Coastal Survey which aims to map SFW coastal populations between Altona and Black Rock.

These coastal reserves are popular recreational spaces for people and are managed and maintained for this purpose in addition to being bird habitat. Within the City of Port Phillip, as with the rest of Melbourne urban development has fragmented the general population into smaller localized populations.

Blue wrens feed on a broad range of small animal life, mainly insects and other invertebrates. They have been recorded eating seeds to a much lesser extent. They build a spherical nest with a side entry consisting of grass stems, moss, rootlets, twigs, spiders web, and lined with feathers well hidden in tussocks, low shrubs, or occasionally in dense foliage up to 6 metres.

This study aims to examine the behavior and local habitat preferences to inform future management plans and ensure that competing uses do not eliminate the Wrens and other native bird species. The blue wrens, which stay all year round within a local territory, are an important indicator species for other bird species, which inhabit or visit these territories at different times of the year.

In addition to individual reserve surveys, at least 2 designated 'regional survey' days (autumn and spring) are planned each year. We hope to recruit sufficient numbers to simultaneously have survey teams in all of the reserves where wrens occur. This will allow conclusions to be drawn as to whether any movements occur between populations. This information will build on past surveys conducted in Bayside and be published on the EcoCentre website www.ecocentre.com

All enquiries are welcome. Please call Kylie McFarlane 0410 113 900 or Neil Blake 9534 0413

**Snippets,
news reports
and longer
articles
needed for
Indigenotes!**

**Artwork and
photos too!**

**Prize worth \$200
for best IFFA
website posting.
See page 15 for
details!**

From Strictly Indigenous to “Ubiquitous but Worthy”: *Lomandra longifolia* as a Cultivated Garden Plant.

By Ken Duxbury

THE LOCAL MELBOURNE FORM OF LOMANDRA LONGIFOLIA

The local Melbourne form of *Lomandra longifolia* (which is less frequently referred to by its “common” name of spiny-headed mat-rush) is so well known and widely grown in “indigenous” plantings that it really needs no introduction to Indigenous readers.

The characteristics and cultivation of the plant are succinctly described in a recent (Winter 2005) VINC News (Victorian Indigenous Nurseries Co-operative Newsletter) in which *Lomandra longifolia* featured as “Plant of the issue”. The article was written by Jan Chamberlain, weekend staff member, and is worth quoting in full:

“This large, graceful tussock plant occurs in a variety of habitats including red gum woodland, dry sclerophyll forests, grassy open forest and coastal banksia woodland. In the garden it will grow in full or part sun or full shade and grows well under established trees. Its size varies from 0.5-1m high and from 0.5-2m wide.

The yellowish flowers appear from September to December and are said to be scented but I have not noticed this in the local version. It is an important butterfly plant. The seed provides food for birds and insects. Remove dead wood and old or straggly growth if desired. The plant can be pruned to near ground level to rejuvenate clumps.

Koories used the long, tough leaves for fine baskets, mats and fish traps. The leaves could also be split or scraped to provide fibre for string bags.

The white base of the stems was chewed and tastes like peas. Wounds were bound by leaves after having gum applied, lessening the pain.”

A few more details of the role of *Lomandra longifolia* as a butterfly plant should perhaps be provided. It is the larval host plant of the symmopus skipper (*Trapezites symmopus*) and hordes of these small, brown-yellow-and-cream butterflies can be seen fluttering around *Lomandra* plants from January to March, giving gardens a sense of vibrant animation.

I have often wondered why I have never noticed any caterpillars on the *Lomandra longifolia* plants in our front garden, despite there being such an annual abundance of butterflies. However, when I looked the

butterfly up in *Australian Butterflies* by Charles McCubbin (1971) I learnt that this was because the caterpillars hide during the day in shelters made by joining two or more leaves together with silk to form a tube, or in curled-up leaves trapped in the plant. The pupae (which I had also never seen) are fawn coloured with darker speckling, and are found in the same situations as the larvae, or amongst debris around the base of the plant.

LOMANDRA LONGIFOLIA RARELY CULTIVATED BEFORE THE MID-1980s

Lomandra longifolia was rarely cultivated prior to the indigenous plants movement of the mid-1980s. It is not mentioned in any of the general Australian gardening books or books on the cultivation of Australian native plants published prior to 1984 that I have been able to find, with the exception of William Guilfoyle’s *Australian Plants Suitable for Gardens, Parks, Timber Reserves, etc* [1911] where *Lomandra longifolia* is described under the name of *Xerotes longifolia* as “Australian Tussock Grass” or “Mat Rush” (perennial) f. yellow – Vic, - NSW, - Q’land, N. and S. Aust., and Tas.

(Guilfoyle’s book includes a remarkably comprehensive list of Australian Native plants, including a large number of grasses and grass-like plants, many of which are rarely grown outside botanical gardens even today. It is possibly worth emphasising that the book was intended to list species “suitable” for cultivation, rather than those which actually were cultivated, or available from plant nurseries.)

I have also been unable to find any reference to *Lomandra longifolia* in any nursery catalogues dating from before the first indigenous nursery plant lists for the Melbourne region began to appear in the mid-1980s. The species is not listed, for example, in the Schubert’s Nursery (Springvale) catalogues of the late 1950s and 1960s, the Boddy’s Nursery (Geelong) catalogues and planting guides from the 1950s and 1960s, or the Austriflora (Montrose) catalogues from the late 1970s and early 1980s.

The species is also unlisted in the *Austriflora Guide* (1984) or by an earlier book written in 1980 by Bill Molyneux (the proprietor of Austriflora Nurseries) entitled *Grow Native: Creating an Australian Bush*

Garden (1980).

WHY WASN'T LOMANDRA LONGIFOLIA CULTIVATED?

Given that *Lomandra longifolia* is such a common and widespread plant in the wild, with many “high profile” natural occurrences, for example at Studley Park and elsewhere along the Yarra River, and along the Coast of Port Phillip Bay, it seems rather surprising that its potential as a garden plant was not exploited before the 1980s, especially as the plant is easily cultivated by seed, or by transplanting or dividing existing plants.

Some of the reasons why the plant was not cultivated earlier could include:

- Early native gardens, especially during the 1950s – 1960s tended to emphasise flowering shrubs from a few “typically Australian” genres such as Grevillia, Callistemon, Banksia and Melaleuca; trees such as Wattles and Eucalypts and Casuarinas; and ground cover / matting plants such as various prostrate forms of Grevillea. There was very little emphasis on grass-like or strappy-leaved plants, with the notable exception of Kangaroo Paws.
- Native plants tended to be grown for their spectacular, colourful, and “showy” flowers and (to a lesser extent) foliage. *Lomandra longifolia*, with its small (albeit sweetly scented and butterfly attracting) flowers, conspicuously (or inconspicuously) lacked these attributes.
- Native plants tended to be selected for their ability to attract native birds, and, in particular, nectar-eating birds such as honey-eaters and spinebills. (The attraction of butterflies was not at that time a major consideration.)
- For some reason, Melbourne native plant enthusiasts seemed to be remarkably uninterested in the cultivation potential of any locally indigenous plants, preferring plants from other parts of Australia – and from Western Australia in particular. This even seems to have applied to locally indigenous plants which had a long history of cultivation, and which were widely grown overseas, for example Golden Wattle and Red Box. It may perhaps be that local plants were not spectacular or “showy”

enough, or that “familiarity breeds contempt”. It might also be that some dedicated Australian Native Plant Growers possessed a “plant collector” mentality, and were motivated by a desire to grow new, rare, newly introduced, and difficult-to-grow plants, rather than wanting to grow plants which could appear mundane or “ordinary”. (Many of the Australian Plant enthusiasts who wrote articles in the Journal of Australian Plants (1959-) appear to have possessed this cast of mind.)

- In many predominantly or partially-native gardens, or gardens which aimed at being hardy, drought-resistant and low maintenance, Australian native trees and shrubs were mixed with exotic (often South African) strap leaved plants such as Agapanthus, dietes, and Red-hot-pokers.

CULTIVATION OF LOMANDRA LONGIFOLIA SINCE THE EARLY 1980s IN INDIGENOUS GARDENS

Lomandra longifolia has been widely cultivated for use in specifically locally indigenous plantings since the beginning of the indigenous plants boom of the early 1980s. It is included on the first plant list of the Victorian Indigenous Nurseries Co-Operative (July 1986) and has appeared on virtually every plant list approved by Melbourne indigenous nurseries since that time. It also appears on almost all the (now very extensive) list of “indigenous plant” booklets prepared by various Melbourne suburban Councils since that time.

Lomandra longifolia has been widely used in a wide variety of locally indigenous planting schemes since the start of the indigenous plants movement in the mid 1980s.

Some of the uses to which *Lomandra longifolia* has been put include:

- wide use in revegetation schemes along the Yarra River and along creeks such as Merri, Darebin, Gardiners and Koonung Creeks. It has sometimes been used as part of ambitious schemes incorporating a wide range of native herbs and grasses, and sometimes in less ambitious schemes where it is used in “simpli-

From Strictly Indigenous to “Ubiquitous but Worthy”: *Lomandra longifolia* as a Cultivated Garden Plant. (Continued)

fied” planting schemes, together with (often) *Poa labillardieri* and *Dianella longifolia* and/or *Dianella revoluta*.

- revegetation of coastal areas long Port Phillip Bay.
- often used in indigenous planting beds cut into the grass of parkland areas, often in combination with *Poa labillardieri*, *Dianella longifolia*, *Dianella revoluta* and Common and Clustered Everlasting and sometimes *Wahlebergia communis* – together with various locally indigenous trees and shrubs.
- often used in indigenous “display gardens” built around public buildings – for example, Eltham Library – and railway stations (such as Fairfield and Darebin).
- often used in indigenous “accent plantings” for example, those used to highlight the entrances and identification notice boards of Yarra Bend Park.
- very widely used in indigenous and partially-indigenous planting schemes for Freeways, for example along the extended Eastern Freeway, the Monash Freeway, and City Link. It has sometimes been used “revegetation” style plantings (especially, when, as often happens, freeways were built along the routes of water-courses) or as single-species plantings on embankments (especially those which are too steep to mow).
- very widely used for indigenous street planting schemes, especially for roundabouts and traffic calming devices – often in combination with *Poa labillardieri* and/or *Dianella longifolia* and, sometimes, *Dianella revoluta* (often beneath such indigenous street trees as Lightwood, Drooping She-Oak, Red Box, and Yellow Box. These plantings are especially characteristic of municipalities with policies favouring the (sometimes exclusive) use of indigenous plantings – for example Moreland, Darebin, and Nillumbik.
- frequently been used for similar uses such as the planting of car parks, where it forms, where necessary, an effective barrier to cars, and even four wheel drives.

- often used in indigenous planting schemes as an edging plant to define pathways, and keep park users and their dogs away from more delicate and easily trampled indigenous plants such as Wallaby Grass and *Wahlebergia*.
- widely used in indigenous gardens created around service stations, fast food outlets and similar uses in municipalities with an “indigenous plant” policy – for example the former Shire of Eltham (now Nillumbik).

Lomandra longifolia was also widely planted in the private gardens of, initially, a fairly small group of indigenous plant enthusiasts (many of whom were IFFA members). These gardens also typically featured a range of native gardens, usually including *Poa labillardieri* and Kangaroo Grass, and various everlastings and wildflowers such as *Wahlenbergia*.

After the mid 1990s these indigenous gardens became much commoner, especially in suburbs such as Northcote and Brunswick. *Lomandra longifolia* was planted in most of these gardens, and sometimes also on the adjoining nature strips.

In all of these different types of uses, *Lomandra* almost invariably proved to be highly successful, becoming well established even in situations where it received very little follow up care after being planted, or when it was planted beneath existing indigenous native, or exotic trees.

One of *Lomandra*'s great advantages as a horticultural plant is that it is very effective at suppressing weeds, especially when planted at a density of at least approximately 0.8m spacings.

This is very different from the situation with many native grass species such as Wallaby Grass and Spear Grass, and plantings which try to achieve something of the species richness and diversity of natural indigenous grasslands.

These more ambitious plantings require very diligent and skilled maintenance to avoid being overwhelmed by weeds, and there is always the danger that even skilled and careful gardeners will accidentally pull out, or herbicide, an indigenous plant mistaking it for a weed; there are also difficulties with weeds such as Veldt Grass becoming almost inextricably intertwined with native grasses so that it becomes very difficult to

pull out the weed but not the wanted plant.

In many cases, ambitious grassland recreation projects do not get the sustained maintenance which they require, and within a few years degenerate to the stage where they comprise little more small islands of *Lomandra longifolia* and a few half-dead looking tussocks of *Poa* emerging from an ocean of weeds. Examples of this process can be seen at Westfield Park (part of Yarra Bend Park) at the Koori Garden (also at Yarra Bend Park) and at Darebin Station.

Another “competitive advantage” of *Lomandra longifolia* is that it appears to tolerate the occasional splash of glyphosate (Round Up) – which can happen even in skilled and careful management regimes for indigenous plantings. (It certainly seems to be more glyphosate resistant than grass species such as *Poa labillardieri*).

(On a personal note, I might add that the clumps of *Lomandra longifolia* which I planted in my front garden more than fifteen years ago are still going strong, and – unlike a range of other indigenous herbaceous plants which have come and (sometimes mysteriously) gone over the years, have successfully withstood the ravages of drought, times when I have been so involved with landscape design and gardening work and competitive running that the last thing I have wanted to do was spend even the odd five or ten minutes every two or three months looking after my own front garden, annual easter egg hunts which sometimes got slightly out of hand, the two Burman Cats who officially live next door, and, on one recent sad occasion, when the trellis gate separating our front and back gardens was inadvertently left open, several hours of very determined and industrious scratching by a flock of ten exceedingly energetic chooks.)

USE OF LOMANDRA LONGIFOLIA IN COMBINATION WITH NON-INDIGENOUS PLANTS

In the years between about 1986 and 1990, *Lomandra longifolia* was widely, and very successfully, grown in a wide variety of “indigenous” planting schemes, but was rarely used for other types of horticultural purposes. However, since about 1990,

Lomandra has increasingly been used in other types of gardens, until today it can be seen in an astonishingly wide variety of situations, to the extent that it is no longer thought of by some people as an indigenous or even an Australian Native Plant.

The exact process by which this transformation occurred is difficult to determine. However, I believe that the process may have occurred something like this:

From the late 1980s onwards, Councils began to plant *Lomandra longifolia* in mixed rather than strictly locally indigenous street plantings, sometimes beneath exotic trees, for example beneath Plane Trees in the (then) City of St Kilda and the (former) City of Collingwood. These plantings may have been motivated partly by a desire to spread the indigenous message throughout the whole of the Council area, partly by the fact that hardy, low maintenance plantings were required, and *Lomandra* had proved so successful, and attractive, when used in indigenous plantings; and partly by the fact that Councils would have had supplies of *Lomandra* available in their nurseries.

At about the same time, or perhaps a little later, Councils started mixing *Lomandra* with exotic strap leafed plants such as *Dietes*.

Lomandra also started to be used in established “exotic” parks and gardens around Council buildings.

From the early 1990s, *Lomandra* started to be used increasingly in planting schemes for major commercial and industrial developments, schools, and around institutional buildings such as Fire Stations. Most of these planting schemes were designed by Landscape Architects, who may have become familiar with *Lomandra longifolia* through their work designing indigenous planting schemes for local Councils, or for commercial developments in areas such as the former Shire of Eltham where Councils had policies encouraging (or sometimes even demanding) the use of locally indigenous plants, or where the use of locally indigenous plants could create the impression that institutions such as McDonald’s were good corporate citizens and neighbours, who wished to harmoniously relate to their local neighbourhoods and to placate objectors or if (as was usually the case) this was not possible, favourably impress members of

From Strictly Indigenous to “Ubiquitous but Worthy”: *Lomandra longifolia* as a Cultivated Garden Plant. (Continued)

the Victorian Planning and Administrative Appeals Tribunal.

From about the year 2000 *Lomandra longifolia* started to be used increasingly in major residential developments and retirement villages, especially in the communal areas which were maintained by landscape gardeners rather than by residents. Most of these planting plans appear to have been prepared by landscape architects. These gardens tended to be built in suburbs with an established leafy “European” character, and *Lomandra longifolia* was often combined with a limited “palette” of tried and true, hardy and reliable, almost clichéd plants such as Silver Birches, Manchurian Pears, *Pittosporum* “James Sterling” and Sarangua Camellias.

From about 2000 *Lomandra longifolia* also started to be used increasingly in the smaller (normal house block-size) multi unit developments which have proliferated in Melbourne’s middle-ring suburbs in recent years, encouraged partly by planning policies favouring urban consolidation. Most of these planting schemes were not prepared by landscape architects but by other landscape designers or “design and construct” companies.

From the early 2000s, *Lomandra longifolia* also started to be used more widely in private gardens which were designed, constructed and often maintained, by “landscapers” rather than by the owner. Some of these gardens, generally associated with new houses of contemporary design, especially in “trendy” suburbs such as St Kilda featured plants with a bold, architectural character – for example Cordylines, *Strelitzias*, various coloured leaved varieties of *Phormium*, and (especially) *Yuccas*.

In the last two or three years I have seen more and more examples of *Lomandra longifolia* being planted in ordinary “non-indigenous” private gardens of a wide variety of styles, including “traditional” gardens containing mainly “non-Australian” exotic plants, and “native” gardens containing mainly non-indigenous species – often containing mainly cultivars of shrubs such as grevilleas.

This extension into privately designed gardens may be partly due to the way in which *Lomandra longifolia*

has often been included in the garden makeovers provided by the landscape team of Backyard Blitz, which frequently included this species.

Lomandra longifolia was also popularised to some degree by Burke’s Backyard and the associated magazine and website.

In November 2002, Don Burke included *Lomandra longifolia* as one of “Don’s Top Six Low Maintenance Plants” chosen as being his “Best Low Maintenance Performer” along with *Camellia japonica*, *Nandida domestica*, *Phormium tenax*, *Strelitzia reginae* and *Nerium oleander*.

By 2002, *Lomandra longifolia* had started to be included in mainstream gardening books such as *Yates’ Garden Guide*.

Lomandra longifolia had become so widely planted in such a wide variety of situations, that a new book on *The Australian Garden: Designing with Australian Plants* by the Victorian native plant enthusiast, Diana Snape (2002) described *Lomandra longifolia* as being “ubiquitous but worthy”.

And, looking around the parks, gardens, and streets of Melbourne, you would have to agree. However, if you look a little bit closer, you might notice that many of the *Lomandra longifolia* now being planted have a somewhat unfamiliar appearance because they have been grown from non local seed sources or, in some cases, are recently-developed cultivars.

In my next article on *Lomandra longifolia* I will examine some of the issues arising from the increasing use of non-local forms and cultivars of *Lomandra longifolia*, and make some suggestions about the appropriate (and inappropriate) uses of different forms of the plant. And, in particular, I will make the point that, as *Lomandra longifolia* is such a highly-variable and widely distributed species, it is important that plant labels (not only in plant nurseries but in botanical gardens as well) provide more information about the provenance and growth characteristics of a particular form of the plant, rather than simply identifying it as “*Lomandra longifolia*”. There is, really, no such single, uniform, distinct plant.

EPBC Act Workshop

WWF's EPBC Unit Workshops on the EPBC Act cover:

1. Overview of the EPBC Act - This workshop will begin with an examination of the EPBC Act, providing an overview for those unfamiliar with the Act and an update for those already working with it. We then put what you've just learnt into practice by working through a case study. Finally, we finish up with a discussion of case law.

2. National Heritage System - This workshop examines the new national heritage system which potentially offers a way to have places of outstanding national heritage value recognised and legally protected under the EPBC Act. You'll look at the criteria for listing, the management implications and what protection the EPBC Act offers.

3. Second Stage EPBC Act Workshop - These workshops are aimed at Community Groups and NGO's who have already had an overview workshop or have a working knowledge of the EPBC Act. These workshops will give you an update on what's happening with the EPBC Act and then focus more on the process, such as how to write a submission, what the time frames are, what needs to be included.

Free EPBC Unit Project publications will be available at all of the workshops and all will finish with an open Q&A session.

IFFA has scheduled an overview workshop for October 29.

What is the EPBC Act?

The Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (Cth) (the EPBC Act) established a Commonwealth EIA and approvals process that is required in addition to any approvals required under State or local law for Matters of National Environmental Significance and certain action involving the Commonwealth. The general rule is that any "action" that is "likely" to have a "significant impact" on a Matter of National Environmental Significance must be referred to the Australian Government Minister for the Environment and Heritage for assessment and approval before it is taken. Failure to refer such an action is an offence. Matters protected under Part 3 include World Heritage and National Heritage places, threatened species, migratory species and ecological communities listed under the EPBC Act, Ramsar wetlands, nuclear actions and the Commonwealth marine environment.

www.iffa.org.au

Best posting competition

To kick IFFA's website participation rates up, IFFA is offering a prize worth \$200 to the IFFA member making the best news or forum posting on IFFA's new website at www.iffa.org.au.

In order to make a posting you must register and log onto the site, and additional menu items become available.

The competition closes on 30 March 2006 and will be judged in April 2006 by members of IFFA's committee (who are not eligible for the prize). Entries will be judged on the relevance to IFFA's aims and the interest the posting generates, so get in early so that people can see and respond to the posting.

The prize will be a book voucher to a bookshop stocking natural history books worth \$200. The winner will be contacted by email in May 2006.

Adding your group's events to IFFA's website calendar

Logged on users of the website can access the events menu on the left hand side of the screen. Clicking on the events menu takes you to the events page which displays a monthly calendar of events registered on the site. The green arrows at the top of the calendar allow you to navigate between months. If you click on a day on the calendar (click on the number in the square) events for that day are listed.

To add an event, click on the add and event link at the bottom of the calendar. Under the content tab, in the subject box enter a name for the event. Select a category for the event from the drop-down list, describe the activity in the Activity box (this can use html code for those familiar with that), enter a location for the event and a contact person and phone number. You're not finished yet! Select the publication date tab. Now enter the start and finish dates and times for your event. Then click on the save button (looks like a floppy disk) and you're done.

IFFA activities:

How you can use the EPBC Act to protect heritage

Introductory Workshop

Saturday 29 October 2005 1:30pm – 4:45pm
(or till 5:45 if the submission-writing option
is taken)

University of Melbourne Burnley Campus
Quadrangle Lecture Theatre 6, 500 Yarra
Boulevard, Burnley, Vic.

Free for IFFA members, or \$15 full price
and \$5 concession. Please book.

*This workshop is presented by Lyndall Kennedy –
the WWF's EPBC Unit Coordinator.*

**(see enclosed flyer for details, see page 15,
or visit IFFA's website)**

Enquiries and bookings to Tony Faithfull, (03) 93860264 or
editor@iffa.org.au

Membership

IFFA membership costs
\$40 for non-profit organizations,
\$50 for corporations,
\$25 for individuals and families,
or \$20 concession.

Membership includes

**4 issues of *Indigenotes* per year, enhanced
access to IFFA's website at iffa.org.au
and discount subscription to
*Ecological Management & Restoration Journal***

***Members should check the mailing label to
ascertain the status of their membership. If an
invoice is required, please send a purchase
order requesting an invoice.***

***Membership applications and renewals should be
sent to the membership secretary. A receipt will be
attached to the front page of the next issue mailed.***

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Website competition

Best new posting on IFFA's website
(www.iffa.org.au) gets a prize worth \$200

See page 15 for details

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*The views expressed in Indigenotes are not necessarily those of the
Indigenous Flora and Fauna Association.*