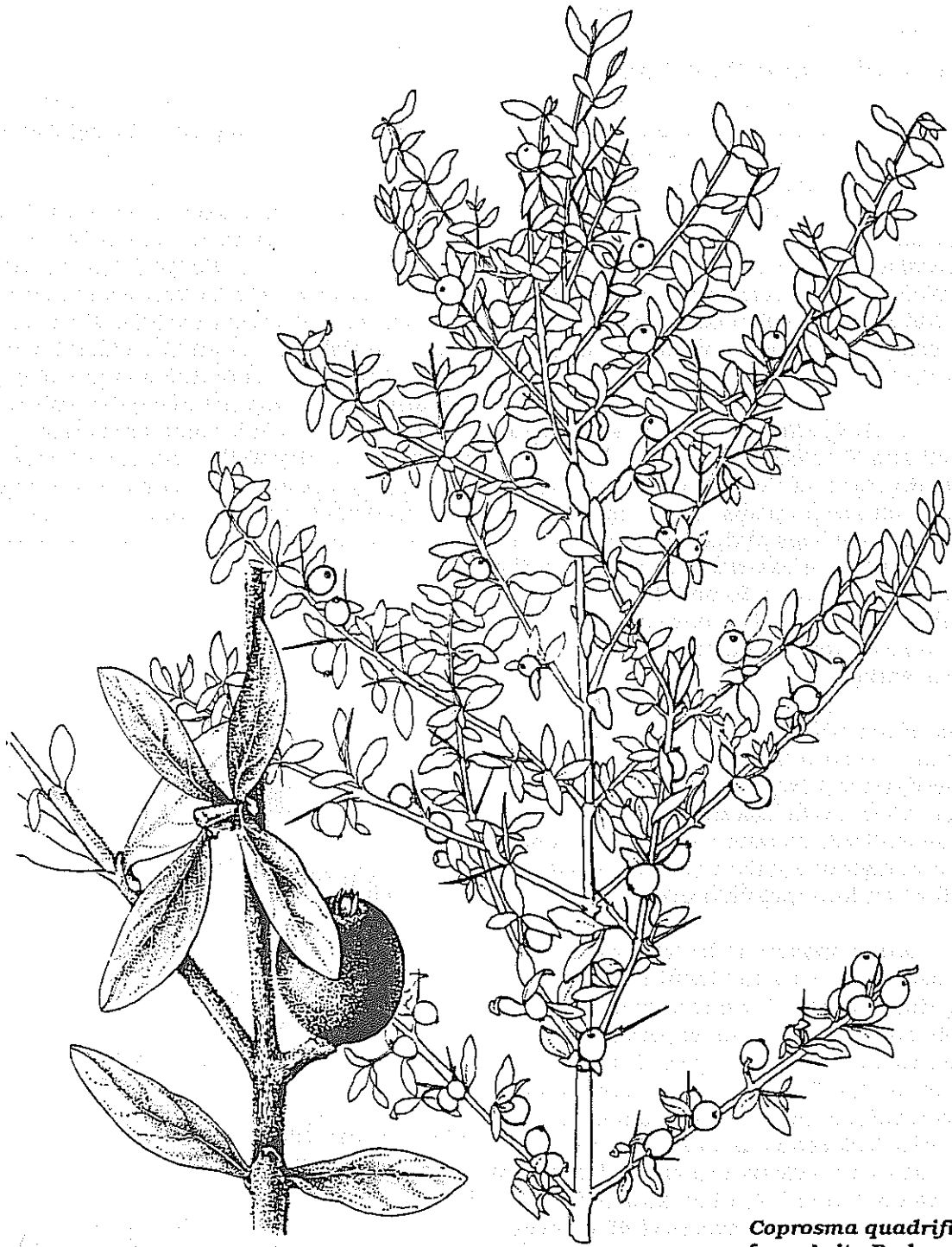


INDIGENOTES



Coprosma quadrifida
from Anita Barley



Orchids off colour in the Victorian Alps.

by Marita Sydes* and Dale Tonkinson**

On a recent field trip to the Victorian Alps observations were made on a number of orchid species as a part of research into the status and pollination ecology of rare orchids in Victoria. This work is being carried out by the National Parks and Wildlife Division and the School of Botany, University of Melbourne with funding from World Wildlife Fund Australia. Two observations are thought worthy of comment and may be of general interest.

Two species of *Thelymitra*, viz. *T. venosa* (Veined Sun-orchid) and *T. resecta* (a rare Sun-orchid) were the main object of the study, in particular their pollination mechanisms. These species occur in *Sphagnum* bogs and associated wet areas at higher elevations in eastern Victoria. When the sites were visited between 26 and 29 January, 1990, all flower spikes of *T. venosa* and the majority of *T. resecta* were found to have withered some weeks earlier.

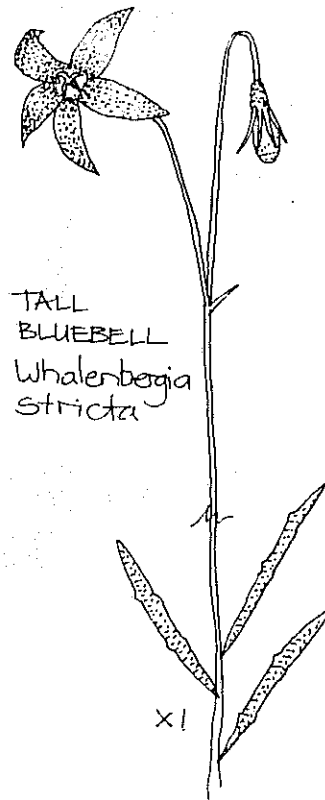
As a result of this withering no seed production will occur in *T. venosa* this season and possibly reduced seed-set in *T. resecta*. Many *Thelymitra* species are known to be colonizers and thus probably short-lived, therefore a total lack of seed production in a given season may have a substantial effect on local population dynamics.

This phenomenon appears to be widespread (Bogong High Plains east to Mount Nunnlong) indicating that individual site factors are not responsible and that a general explanation should be sought. G. Lorimer (pers. comm.) has indicated to us that *T. venosa* was wilting at one site (Rocky Valley, Bogong High Plains) in early January, 1990. This leads us to suggest that extreme weather conditions experienced in North-east Victoria on January 4, when strong NW winds and temperatures in excess of 45 degrees were recorded nearby (eg. Albury), lead to the withering of both flower spikes and leaves of the two species.

It was initially thought that as most sites were degraded by cattle trampling, the resultant dissection of the bog surface may have enhanced the desiccation of the orchids. However after comparison with several undisturbed areas, withering in

T. venosa did not appear to be significantly affected.

Also noted at three sites (Cowombat Flat near the source of the Murray River, Buckety Plains and Rocky Valley on the Bogong High Plains) was a pink *Eriochilus*. Whilst appearing morphologically similar to *Eriochilus cucullatus* (Parsons' Bands), its mid-pink flowers and its habitat seem distinctive. It was located on the margins of bogs in wet heathland contrasting markedly with the habitat of *E. cucullatus* in lowland areas where it occurs invariably on very well drained, and often dry, rocky sites. The taxonomic status of these populations may warrant investigation.



from Andrew Paget

* School of Botany, University of Melbourne, Parkville.

** National Parks and Wildlife Division, East Melbourne.

A note on Wallaby Grasses in cultivation

By Graeme Lorimer*

Last month's *Indigenotes* brought news concerning commercialization of a species of Wallaby Grass (*viz. Danthonia richardsonii*). A few supplementary points may be worth noting.

The genus *Danthonia* is cosmopolitan in temperate zones, with at least 23 species in Victoria alone. Some produce small, fine tufts, others range up to large, coarse tussocks, and collectively they span a wide range of environments. Their copious seed production is valuable for cultivation.

D. richardsonii is largely a NSW species. It produces relatively large, leafy tussocks which make good fodder, but it is unlikely to be the optimum species in cultivation for the majority of applications.

Most localities in south-eastern Australia have enough indigenous species of Wallaby Grasses to select one more appropriate for specific conditions of use, soil, climate and so on. For example there are typically 7-10 species native to each Melbourne suburb, each with different characteristics.

To grow *D. richardsonii* out of its natural range - particularly if it is a variety bred for vigour and exceptional seed production - presents a real danger of escape to the natural environment. Grasses generally are notorious for naturalization: they include around one fifth of Victoria's naturalized alien plant species.

It would be much better if seed companies and agricultural advisors all knew and recommended the best-suited indigenous species of grasses for each application. This could play an important role in addressing land degradation, rural tree decline and problems with irrigation and superphosphate application. Unfortunately, there needs to be much more awareness and much greater availability of seed.

I hope that the general issue of using non-indigenous species in "revegetation" projects (as planned for *D. richardsonii*) will attract further discussion in *Indigenotes*.

*42 Gratten Road, Montrose, Vic 3765.

Paid advertisement

Operation Revegetation Needs Your Help

Operation Revegetation is a joint project of the Knox Environment Society and Ferntree Gully High School. This community nursery grows indigenous plants from the City of Knox and surrounding areas such as the Shire of Sherbrooke. We sell to members of the community as well as to local councils and groups such as the Scouts for revegetation projects.

All the work of seed collecting, propagating and looking after the nursery site is done by volunteers from the Knox Environment Society. We are also involved in revegetation projects, using our plants, in local reserves and along creeks. But we urgently need more helpers if the nursery is to continue to provide a quality service to local residents.

Volunteers are rostered to work at the nursery for one half day per month. This provides them with the opportunity to learn how to propagate and care for indigenous plants, as well as contributing to the work of the nursery and hence to the improvement of the local environment.

They can also be involved in tree plantings - recent ones have been at the new community centre at Stud Park, Rowville, and along the new Corrhanwarrabul Creek bike path.

**The nursery is situated in the grounds of Ferntree Gully High School,
and is open every Sunday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.**

**If you are interested in finding out more about our activities,
please leave your name and phone number with the person on duty at the nursery,
or ring Rachel Griffiths (Volunteer Coordinator), phone (03) 763 6317.**

COMING EVENTS

FEBRUARY

- 21 Wed 7.30 pm. Friends of Gould League Natural History Programs. **Developing a naturalists kit.** Gould League (03) 51 1493.*
- 24 Sat. **Weeding and nature walk in a rich, dry sclerophyll forest on Mt. Dandenong.** Montrose Environmental Group. Contact Graeme Lorimer (03) 728 5841
- 24 Sat, 2pm. **Potting up** in preparation for plantings. Earthcare St. Kilda. Blessington St. Gardens. Contact Neil Blake (03) 543 2014.
- 26-2(Mar) Mon-Fri. **Tree planting and seed collection at Lilydale Wetlands** (Board of Works). This activity will be continuing during week days throughout the month of March. Australian Trust for Conservation Volunteers, (03) 583 3388.
- 26-2(Mar) Mon-Fri. **Weed and rabbit control at the You Yangs.** ATCV (03) 583 3388.
- 28 Wed 10 am. **Friends of the Yarra** working bee at Galatea Point. Contact Judy Rutherford (03) 347 2252.
- 28 Wed. **IFFA meeting.** For details see back cover.
- 8 Thurs 7 pm. **Earthcare St. Kilda** information night re coming tree planting. Contact Neil Blake (03) 534 2014.
- 10 Sat. **Friends of Nepean.** Work day. Meet at Seawinds. Contact Bill Nicholson (059) 811 605.
- 10 Sat. **Earthcare St. Kilda.** See 24 Feb.
- 11 Sun 2 pm. **Friends of the Point** (Pt. Nepean) project afternoon. Weed eradication planting and fortifications study. Meet at the Orientation Centre inside the Park. Stuart Sherrin (059) 84 1953.
- 11 Sun 9.30 am. Friends of Sherbrooke Forest **Mapping Survey.** Meet at the beginning of Foden Track, on Grantulla Rd, Melways 124 C6 - the most southerly track marked. Contact Margaret Finger (03) 754 3548.
- 12-16 Mon-Fri. **Removing old tree guards** on Ballan estate. ATCV (03) 583 3388.
- 13 Tues 7.30 pm. **Earthcare meeting.** Discussions regarding Penguin colony and other local conservation matters. St. Kilda Library. Contact Neil Blake (03) 534 2014.
- 14 Wed 9.30 am. **Friends of Sherbrooke Forest** project morning. Clean-up work in Adele Gully. Meet at O'Donohues Picnic Ground. Contact Margaret Finger (03) 754 3548.

MARCH

- 3-4 Sat-Sun. Fauna Survey Group of FNCV, **Bettong Survey.** Some reports of Bettongs in the Barmah Forest area will be followed up by the group on this field trip. For more details contact Lawrie Conole (03) 481 4926 or Julian Grusovin (03) 543 8627.
- 4 Sun 10 am. Knox Environment Society **Mount Dandenong Bushwalk.** See one of the last remaining sites of the Dandenong Grevillea. See also how its existence is threatened by the South African weed *Euryops abrotanifolia*. Meet at Ellis Jeeves Reserve Picnic Area, Ridge Road, Kalorama, Mel 52 J9 Next to church. Michael Hansford (03) 8594015 (ah)
- 4 Sun 2 pm. Friends of Sherbrooke Forest, **Bird Walk with Alan Reid.** Meet at O'Donohues Picnic Ground, Melways 75 G3. Contact Margaret Finger (03) 754 3548.
- 5-9 Mon-Fri. **Removing old tree guards** on large Ballan estate. ATCV (03) 583 3388.
- 5-9 Mon-Fri. **Removal of Box Thorn,** Warrnambool. Accom. at Port Fairy Youth Hostel. ATCV (03) 327 490.
- 7 Wed. **Deadline for contributions for 9th Australian Weeds Conference.** Enquiries: D. W. Stephenson or J. W. Heap. c/o S.A. Department of Agriculture. GPO Box 1671, Adelaide, 5001, S. A., Tel: (08) 266 8333, Fax: (08) 261 4688.
- 8 Thurs 8 pm. **Flora of Borneo and North Sumatra, by David Albrecht.** Botany Group meeting of the FNCV. National Herbarium Hall, Birdwood Avenue. Contact Margaret Potter (03) 29 2779.
- 18 Sun. **Community tree planting - Lilydale Wetlands.** ATCV (03) 583 3388.
- 19-23 Mon-Fri. **Environmental reconstruction at Sovereign Hill.** ATCV (053) 327 490.
- 20 Tues 7.30 pm. FOGL nat. hist. prog. **Attracting wildlife to gardens,** by Colleen McCulloch. (with excursion on 29 Apr.) Gould League (03) 51 1493.*
- 21 Wed 7.30 pm. FOGL nat. hist. prog. **Rock Pools,** by Harry Breidahl. (with excursion on 24 Mar.) Gould League (03) 51 1493.*
- 24 Sat. Botany Group (of FNCV) excursion. **Mountain Fruits and Trees.** Mt. Donna Buang. Leader: Hilary Weatherhead. Contact Margaret Potter 29 2779.
- 24 Sat 2 pm. **Friends of Sherbrooke Forest project afternoon.** Meet at Micawber Park, behind the restaurant, Melways 75 G7. Asparagus, holly, ivy "all our friends are there!" Contact Margaret Finger (03) 754 3548.F
- 24&25 Sat 1.30 pm, Sun 10 am. **Moorooduc Quarry Reserve** project days. Mt. Eliza Association for Environmental Care. Anne Read (03) 787 2034.
- 25 Sun 2 pm. **Friends of Victoria's 1st Settlement site - Sorrento.** Stuart Sherrin (059) 84 1953.
- 28 Wed 8 pm. **Focus on the Mallee:** Joe Ben-shemesh will speak on the Malleefowl; James Ross, VNPA Mallee Project Officer, will outline the Association's campaign to have the LCC recommendations adopted by the government and exclude exploitative activities from Mallee public land.

Room K, Main Building, Ormond College, College Crescent, Parkville. For further details contact VNPA (03) 654 6843, 654 6874.

28 Wed 8 pm. **IFFA meeting.** For details see back cover.

JULY

4-5 Wed-Thurs. Conference: **The Otways - Fauna and Flora - their conservation and management.** Deakin University, Geelong. Enquiries: Barbara Wilson (052) 47 1265, Martin Westbrooke (053) 33 9213.

A large range of activities such as bushwalks and "Friends" activities are published by the Victorian National Parks Association in their newsletter. For details contact V.N.P.A. (03) 654 6843.

* *Each lecture has a \$7.50 charge, including excursion where offered or \$50 covers the 10 month program.*

SEND OFF

for

Laurie Whelan

(Assistant Ranger of LaTrobe University's Wildlife Reserves)

2.00 pm. 2nd March.

Campus Reserve - Under the Iron-barks.

A contribution towards catering and send off gift would be welcome. Contact George or Shirley at the Reserves (03) 467 2871.

Paid advertisement

GREENING AUSTRALIA LTD

"Sowing The Seeds"

Direct Seeding and Natural Regeneration Conference

A conference, including a field day, on one of the most important emerging technologies in the battle against land degradation in Australia and around the world

Tuesday 22 - Friday 25 May 1990

**ADELAIDE CONVENTION CENTRE
SOUTH AUSTRALIA**

This conference will distill current research knowledge and the practical know-how of researchers, farmers, miners and landcare professionals. IT'S A MUST.

Organised by Greening Australia, the conference features:

- * Up-to-date information on natural regeneration
- * Seed collection and seed orchards
- * Direct seeding techniques
- * How to fit direct seeding into the farm year
- * Direct seeding for erosion control
- * Rehabilitation of mine sites
- * Inspection of large-scale direct-seeding projects and natural regeneration
- * Demonstrations of equipment and techniques

Arbor Week 1990

Dear IFFA members,

Thanks for all your good work through the years, the tide is definitely turning. Now if you say "indigenous" people don't think you are talking about a pain in the tummy!

I am writing to invite you all to participate in Arbor Week plantings. This year May 13 - 20.

- You can plant with your local school. As before there will be activity during the week, May 13-20 with schools. Many schools are considering increasing their efforts either in the school grounds or at a public site close by. They would be thrilled to have your support. Supervisors are needed for this work, please contact us we will connect you or directly your local school.
- You can be part of organising plantings in council, Board of Works, Road Corporation or Park sites. There will be community supported plantings all over Melbourne and some in country areas on May 20th. Project managers are urgently required.
- You can plant another in your own garden..... if there is any room left!
- You can lobby your council to plant or allow you to plant in your street..... if you already haven't done so!
- You can get a team and go bush to a country planting. Land care groups, rural shire councils and the Road Corporation will also be at work.
- You can be part of a networking team which links community groups who have never planted before, with the agencies responsible for the land.
- You can be a fund raiser for the work at the site closest to your heart.

There will be heaps of activity at that time. An arbor Week Committee has been formed with representatives of CF&L, MPE, Go Green, Victorian Schools Nursery, Burnley, Tree Project and the Premiers Department. The State Conservation Strategy will mount a media campaign in the "Keep Vic Fit" series to promote the plantings so everyone will get to hear about it and there will be a surge of support from people.

With all this going on there is a terrific opportunity to educate people about the importance and value of indigenous plantings.

**Please contact the Tree Project on
(03) 370 1863 to discover more and discuss
your participation.**

- Maggie McLeod

Snippets:

Roadside slaughter

"Of course, the understorey was extensively damaged also, but the press don't want to know about such details." writes Mark Trengove from the Geelong Indigenous Nursery. Certainly the Shire of Barrabool shows little interest, judging by the damage their workers have recently done to remnant basalt plains vegetation along the little used Williams Road at Mt Dundeed near Geelong.

Mark writes that: "In June 1987 the State Government published its conservation strategy for Victoria. On the subject of remnants like these it states 'Specifically, the Government will prepare roadside vegetation assessments and management plans jointly with local governments and statutory authorities, beginning with the Department of Conservation, Forests and Lands, Geelong Region'.

It sounded good, but in June 1989 I wrote to the regional manager of CFL Geelong asking what was happening about these remnants. A copy of the letter was sent to the Minister of CFL. The letter was never answered.

There is still no management plan and the remnants continue to be destroyed.

If we are serious about bringing basalt plains vegetation back from the brink of extinction, roadside verges have to be identified, categorised and, where necessary fenced.

Most importantly, they then need to be managed appropriately and this must include a commitment to controlling the weeds that invade these sites.

Our elected representatives claim to be environmentally concerned. What action are they taking on this issue?"

Vegetation clearance controls - deadline for comments

The deadline for comments on the native vegetation clearance controls is the **end of March**. **All IFFA members should put in a submission supporting the controls**, and defending their application to grasslands.

Submissions to Tom Roper, Minister for Planning and Environment, 477 Collins Street, Melbourne 3000.

Profile

La Trobe University Wildlife Reserves Support Group.

As with many groups which start up because of a dedication to a cause, the first workers and volunteers of the Campus Wildlife Reserve spent more time getting on with the job rather than documenting their activities. Not much is known about the beginnings of their group although visitors and users of the Reserves today are rewarded by the efforts of the early workers.

The reserve was set up in the late 1960's by the inspirational Rod Foster. When the University acquired the land which became the Campus Wildlife Reserve it was a dairy farm with a few remnant River Red Gums. Many of the changes we can see today are due to the high level of volunteer input during those years.

At first the volunteers, mostly students, were a very loose organization and in the early 1970's they adopted the name Friends of the Wildlife Reserve.

When LaTrobe University took over Greswell Forest the Assistant Ranger set up the Friends of Greswell Forest made up mainly of neighbours though this group did not have as much steam.

In late 1985 George Paras, the new ranger organized a "rejuvenation" meeting. The two groups were combined as the Friends of Wildlife Reserves, and a constitution was written up. In 1986 they were "requested" to drop that name by the University since it was in the process of launching the Friends of LaTrobe University. They came up with the name Wildlife Reserves Support Group by which they are known today.

The main aim of the group is to assist in the reestablishment and preservation of flora and fauna of the lower Yarra valley at LaTrobe University, especially at the Wildlife Reserves. Their main objectives are:

1. To promote interest in the aims of the Wildlife Reserves within the University and general community.
2. To encourage an awareness and appreciation of indigenous flora and fauna and the processes which are endangering them.
3. To foster goodwill and support of the neighbours of the Wildlife Reserves.
4. To seek financial assistance for the Wildlife Reserves.

The Support Group has monthly project days alternating between the two reserves. The main activities involve weeding, planting, nursery work and maintenance of nesting boxes. They take opportunities to promote the existence of the reserves by holding stalls at open days and festivals. At the moment the members are having a novel time rediscovering ancient skills such as thatching and making best use of available natural resources, by building the Yurt. It will serve as an information shelter for the many visitors of the reserves (and probably a great alternative to setting up tents for the early bird and mammal watchers).

The Support Group has concerns about being seen as "boring" by being "all work and no play". To overcome this, they have an annual social ball with names such as the "River Red Gum Ball". There are about 145 volunteers on the books, most people being students and staff, with the core group being roughly 30. There is no membership fee, the newsletter being subsidised by the Wildlife Reserves.

The editor and assistant wish to thank George Paras for the information to put this profile together and best wishes to Laurie Whelan in his new home.

Paid advertisement

Assistant Ranger (TA 1-2)

Wildlife Reserves LaTrobe University

A competent, industrious person is sought for this vacancy.

Must have interest in environment, native plants and animals and knowledge of environmental weed control. Good communication, extension and maintenance skills are necessary.

**Full details and duty statements:
GENERAL APPOINTMENTS SECTION,
STAFF OFFICE (03) 479 2048.**

**Further enquiries:
George Paras, Head Ranger (03) 479 2871.**

February IFFA meeting:

Wednesday (**YES WEDNESDAY!**) 28 February, 8 pm. at the National Herbarium Hall, Birdwood Avenue, South Yarra. (Melways map 2G, 12A)

March IFFA Committee meeting:

Tuesday 6 March, 6.30 pm. at Geoff Carr's, 13 Lawson St. East Hawthorn.

March IFFA meeting:

Wednesday 28 March, 8 pm. at the Herbarium Hall, Birdwood Avenue, South Yarra. (Melways map 2G, 12A). Flora of Borneo - talk and slides by David Albrecht.

Front Cover:

Coprosma quadrifida (Prickly Currant-bush) is an erect, rigid, multi-branched shrub, 2-4 m, smaller branchlets spiny. Common on sheltered slopes and near streams, chiefly in mountain forests to montane levels. **Leaves** opposite, but rather irregularly sized and spaced, 5-15 mm x 2-5mm, glabrous, dark-green above, slightly paler below, *thin and flat with raised veins on both sides*. **Flowers** in September to November, with unisexual, tiny, inconspicuous flowers. **Fruits** in January to March with small red edible berries. (from Costermans, *Native Trees and Shrubs of South-eastern Australia*)

Articles: Contributions to Indigenotes should be sent to the editor, Tony Faithfull, 10 Alsace Street, Brunswick East, Victoria 3057, Phone (03) 3860264. The deadline for the February issue will be Friday 2 March.

President: Geoff Carr, 69 Spenseley Street, Clifton Hill Victoria 3068. Phone (03) 4894191 (work), (03) 205784 (home).

Secretary: Michele Arundell, 2/81 Alexandra Ave South Yarra Victoria 3141. (03) 2674173 (home), (03) 6509424 (work).

Treasurer: Susan Lee, Flat 5/24 Lisson Grove Hawthorn Victoria 3122. (03) 8185177.

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

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Individual back copies of Indigenotes are available from Michele Arundell for a donation.

Complete sets (vol 1 no 1 to vol 3 no 2) are available for \$50.

IFFA membership costs \$40 for groups, or \$20 for individuals and families.

Membership includes 11 issues of Indigenotes per year.

**Make cheques payable to the Indigenous Flora and Fauna Association, and send memberships and back copy orders to:
The Secretary,
Indigenous Flora and Fauna Association,
Ms Michele Arundell,
Flat 2/81 Alexandra Avenue,
South Yarra Vic 3101.**