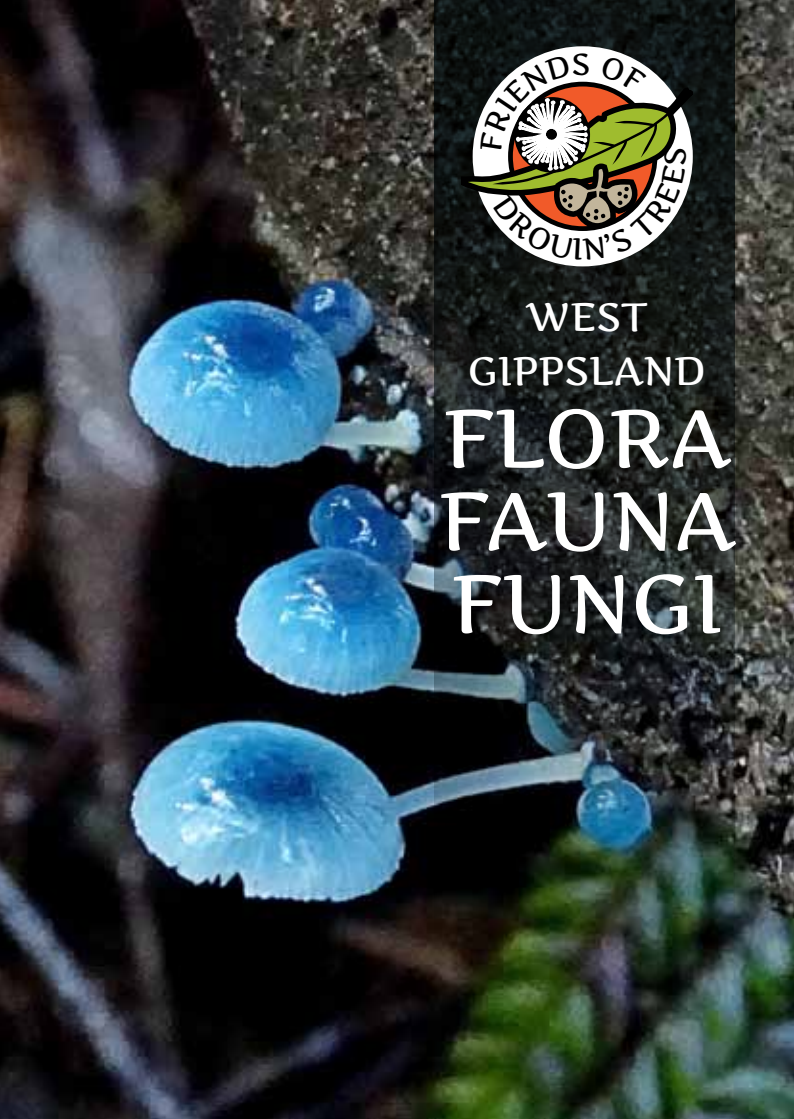


WEST GIPPSLAND FLORA FAUNA FUNGI

Disclaimer
Walking in woodland and wetland places or in high traffic situations can be dangerous. People using this guide to walk in or around Gippsland, do so at their own risk.

The Friends of Drouin's Trees, the Committee for Drouin or any of their representatives and Baw Baw Shire Council shall not be liable for death, injury or loss or damage to property of any person participating in any activity when using this guide.

Front cover: Pixie's Parasol P52
Back cover: Mountain Correa P18
The photographs and text for this book were provided by Peter Ware, Friends of Drouin's Trees.

Ringed Xenica, see page 68

CONTENTS

West Gippsland is a Special Place

Our little corner of the world is a special place. The land area of Gippsland is less than 1% of the total area of the land mass of Australia and yet we have some of the most diverse species of animals, plants and fungi in the country.

This booklet is aimed at providing an appreciation of the flora, fauna and fungi of West Gippsland and nearby, some of which are endemic to our region. Please be aware that the content within the booklet is not meant to be an accurate depiction of the amazing biodiversity of West Gippsland – just a taste.

Thank you for supporting the Friends of Drouin's Trees by purchasing this booklet. Please note, this booklet provides general information only. While considerable effort has been taken to ensure the information provided is accurate, the Friends of Drouin's Trees and Baw Baw Shire Council assume no responsibility for any errors, omissions or inaccuracies.

Early Gippsland

The original, traditional occupants of Gippsland were people from the Gunai/Kurnai and Bunurong nations.

In 1835, an agricultural squatter settlement was established at Bass by Samuel Anderson from Hobart. In 1840, Paul Strzelecki led an expedition through the region and named the district after the then Governor of NSW, George Gipps.

Angus McMillan in 1841, discovered a suitable location for a port for Gippsland at present day Port Albert. After his explorations of Gippsland, McMillan established a large, sheep and cattle holding on the Avon River north of Maffra.

The discovery of gold in the 1850s brought about the birth of some significant towns in Gippsland. Omeo, Bairnsdale and Sale were all established as important towns on the way to the goldfields. At its peak in the late 1800s, the gold town of Walhalla had an estimated population of ten thousand.

The completion of the Melbourne to Sale railway in 1879 provided opportunity for the settlement of West Gippsland and many forestry and pastoral enterprises were established, some being still viable today.

Angus McMillan c1900 (The Guardian)

Early Drouin, Weebar Rd courtesy Drouin History Group

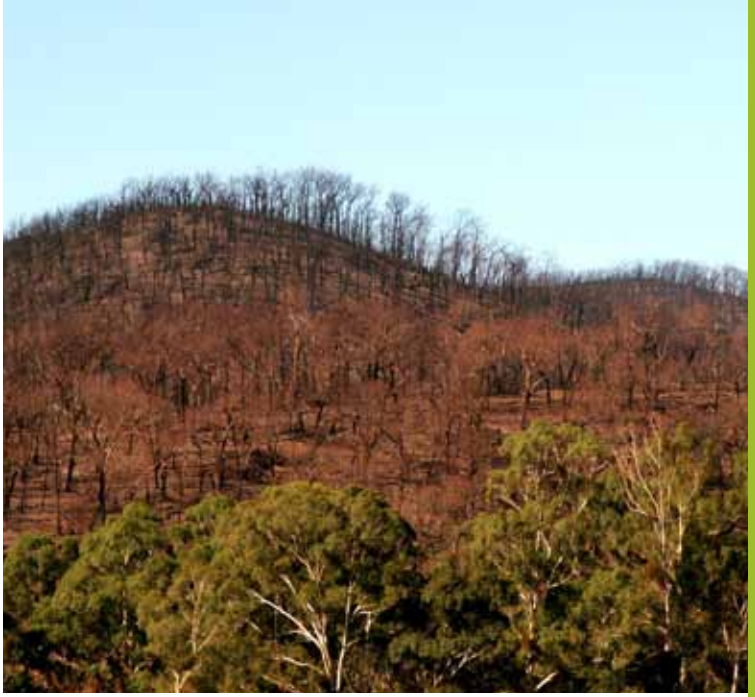
Our Climate

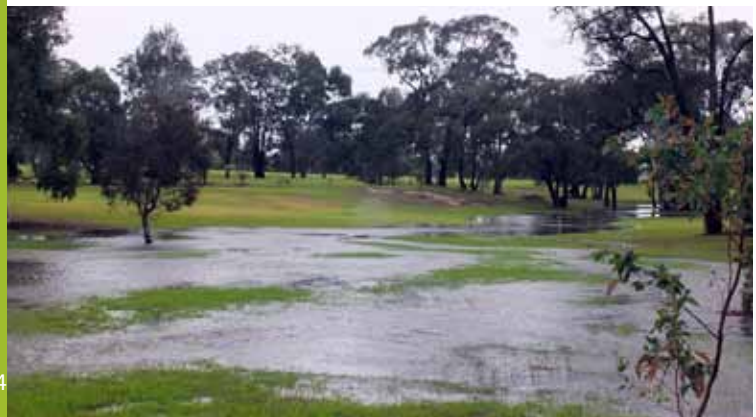
Gippsland's climate is described as temperate. Parts of East Gippsland once boasted of being 'Victoria's Riviera'.

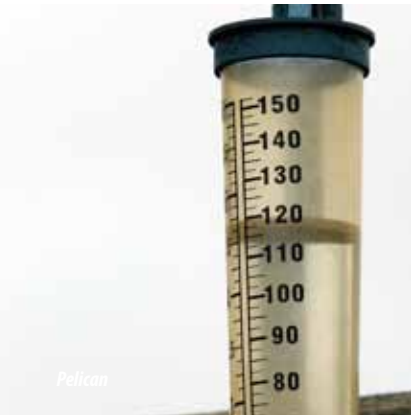
Average annual rainfall is variable: 1600-1700+mm on the southern flanks of the Great Dividing Range and less than 600mm in the rain shadow of Central Gippsland. Baw Baw Village is one of the wettest places in the country.

Average summer temperatures are around 25°C, milder near the coast and considerably cooler on the Baw Baw Plateau. Winters are generally mild too, but Mt Baw Baw can be covered in snow for several months each year.

The Victorian Government Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, DELWP, cautions that Gippsland is getting warmer and drier due to climate change. The DELWP states that since the 1950s, much of Gippsland has become warmer by 1.0 –1.2°C and annual rainfall has decreased by 100–200mm.

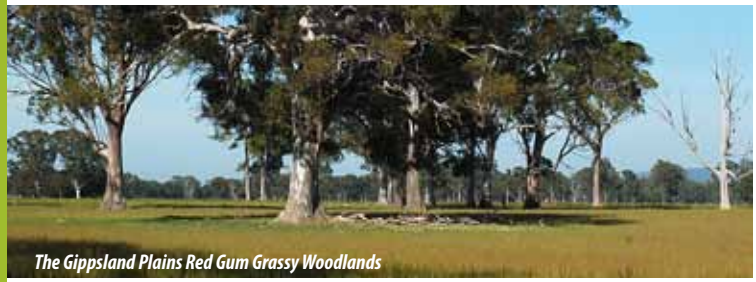






Pelican

Coastal Heathland



The Gippsland Plains Red Gum Grassy Woodlands

Rainforest

Gippsland Geology and Environments

Apart from some pockets of alluvial deposits, most of Gippsland's soils are relatively infertile. West Gippsland however, has some of the most fertile soils in the country, which is why much of the land has been cleared for agricultural production. Recently, quarrying for sand to be used in the construction industry has expanded significantly in the Westernport region.

Gippsland contains several internationally important Ramsar wetlands: Gippsland Lakes, Corner Inlet and Westernport. Ramsar sites have management plans designed to protect their specific ecological condition.

The Gippsland Plains Red Gum Grassy Woodlands is a nationally threatened ecological community that has protection under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999.

Within our region exists such diverse landforms as alpine mountain ranges, exposed elevations, cliffs and gullies, undulating hills, grassy plains, coastal sand dunes, estuaries and lakes. Our little patch is a diverse and wonderful place.

Toorongo Falls

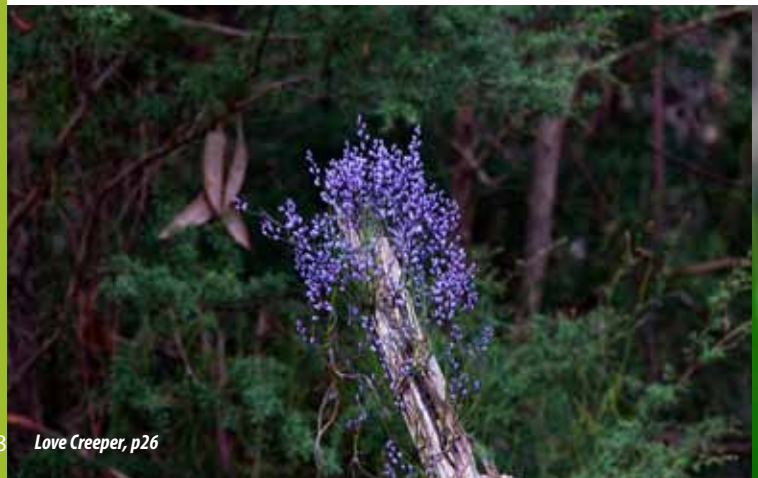
GIPPSLAND GEOLOGY AND ENVIRONMENTS

Flora

The variety of soils, climatic conditions and landforms provide our region with a diversity of vegetation types, including alpine and montane forests, rain forest, dry and wet forests, grassy woodlands, coastal woodland and heathland, riparian woodlands, etc. There are many species of plants found here that occur rarely, if at all, anywhere else in the country.

The wet forests of West Gippsland are now mostly found in small pockets of National Parks, State Parks and local reserves. The dominant trees of these forests, Messmate, Mountain Grey Gum and Mountain Ash, were highly prized for timber production and were felled liberally.

In many parts of Gippsland, remnant vegetation has been disturbed or removed for agricultural purposes. In parts of West and South Gippsland, remnant vegetation is increasingly being lost to urban development.



Love Creeper, p26

Orchids

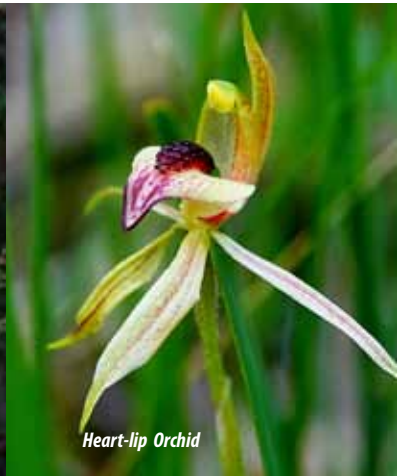
Victoria, with less than 3% of the land mass of Australia, has more than 25% of Australia's terrestrial orchid species and Gippsland is well represented. Orchids in our district can be found from the highest mountains right down to the coast.

Orchid flowers are symmetrical in just two planes and many are resupinate (back to front).

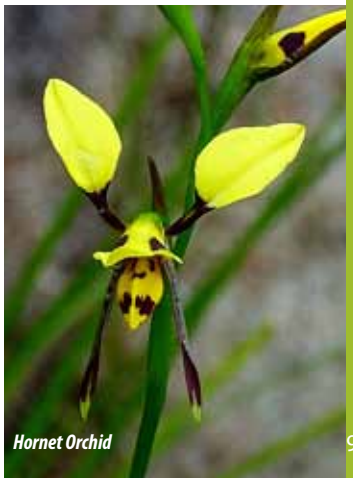
Most terrestrial orchids have one modified petal called the labellum, fused stamens and very tiny seeds.

Many orchids have a symbiotic connection with specific fungi in the soil and many have very specific pollination strategies.

Our terrestrial orchids are threatened by urbanization, land clearing and climate change. More attention could be paid to orchid conservation.



Heart-lip Orchid



Hornet Orchid

Fungi

Often overlooked, fungi are vital to the functioning of an ecosystem. Whilst their fruiting bodies, the mushrooms, appear in an endless array of form and colour, it is their out of sight mycelia – a root-like structure consisting of a network of fine threads called hyphae – that provide an essential connecting web for the nutrition of plants.

Fungi can be thought of as the workhorse of an ecosystem. By breaking down dead animal and plant matter, fungi return nutrients to the soil for living plants to absorb and grow. Many plants and fungi exist together in vital symbiotic relationships benefiting both organisms.

Fungi have their own kingdom; they are not plants. The number of species in Australia is unknown but is probably upwards of 14,000 and we know a little about just a few of them – there is a long way to go. Considering their importance, it is unfortunate that frequently, very little attention is given to fungi in ecological restoration projects. And then there are the mosses, lichens, algae, and bacteria…!

Fungi can be broadly divided into three categories:

Saprotrophic fungi; feed on non-living matter without directly connecting with plants.

Mycorrhizal fungi; have a mutualistic, symbiotic relationship with plants.

Parasitic fungi; feed on living plants and animals usually to the detriment of the host organism.

Mycena clarkeana, p50

Fauna

This booklet refers principally to some of the mammals, reptiles, amphibians and insects that might be encountered in broader West Gippsland. The booklets, *Birds of Drouin* and *Birds of Drouin & District*, cover some of Gippsland's common and more special avian species.

Australia's long-term geographic isolation has resulted in many of our animals being unique and endemic. However, European settlement of the continent has been blamed for Australia's mammalian extinction rates being among the highest in the world. It surely is imperative that we do our utmost to protect our very special animals.

Information on three very special Gippsland endemics can be found online:
Baw Baw Frog – *use the search tool at environment.vic.gov.au*
Giant Gippsland Earthworm – *giantearthworm.org.au*
Warragul Burrowing Crayfish – *burrowingcrayfish.com.au*

Butterflies

Australia has more than 400 species of butterflies and many of them are endemic. Butterflies and moths belong to the order lepidoptera. Butterflies mostly have antennae that are knobbed or hooked, are mostly diurnal and usually rest with their wings closed. Moths have tapered or feathery antennae, are mostly nocturnal and generally rest with their wings open.

The lifespan of a butterfly, from egg to larva to pupa to adult butterfly, may total several weeks, months or up to a year. The adult butterfly stage may only be for a few days in some cases.

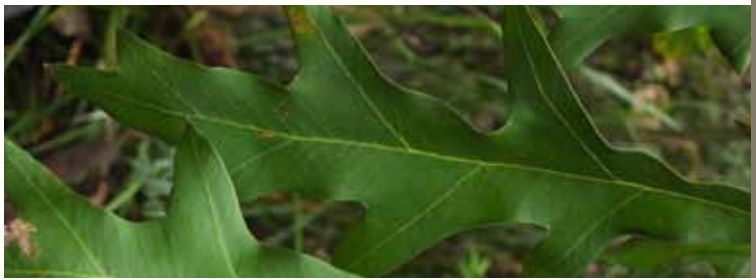
Butterflies are valuable pollinators and good bio-indicators. Many butterflies are preyed upon by other animals. Some butterflies have vital mutualistic connections with ants and possibly with other invertebrates.

We can help advance butterfly conservation simply by planting butterfly-friendly species in our parks and gardens.

Gully Grevillea

Grevillea baklyana

This tall shrub to small tree is endemic to West Gippsland and is listed as 'vulnerable' under the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988. It grows in the upper catchments of the Bunyip and Tarago Rivers. Gully Grevilleas prefer moist but well drained situations. Very occasionally, plants appear for sale in nurseries and will grow quite well in shady, wind-protected gardens. In its natural state, the large (up to 10cm) pink to red flowers usually appear from October to December and are good honeyeater attractors.



GULLY GREVILLEA

Forest Boronia

Boronia muelleri

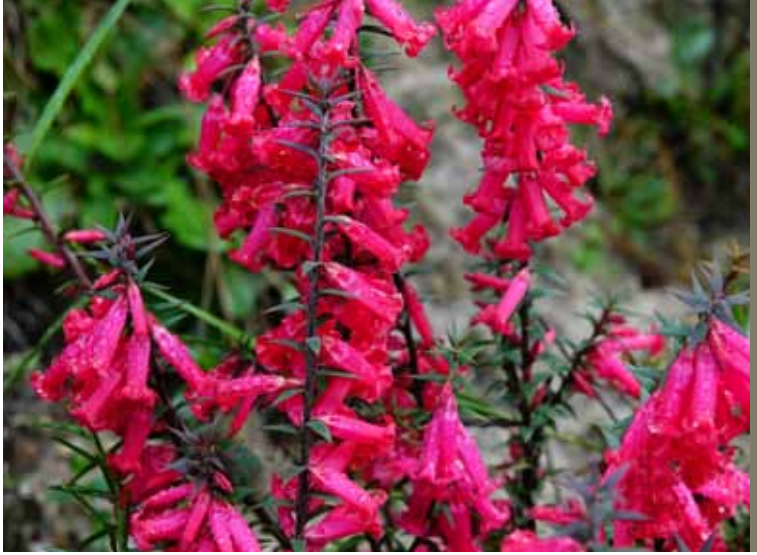
A tall shrub that grows in disjunct locations throughout West Gippsland, far east Gippsland and the Otway ranges. Forest Boronia is normally found in heathy understoreys on sheltered hillsides. The mix of pink buds and waxy, white flowers from spring to late summer is very attractive. The soft, weeping foliage is distinctively aromatic. Ferdinand Von Mueller collected the first specimen from the upper reaches of the Bunyip River in 1863. There are various cultivars that appear in nurseries from time to time.

FOREST BORONIIA

Common Heath

Epacris impressa

Common Heath is an erect or spreading shrub that can grow to nearly 2m. The pink, white or red flowers generally appear in winter. Common Heath is easy to find on the roadsides throughout all of Gippsland. It is Victoria's floral emblem. Although 'epacris' means 'on a hilltop', the plant can be found in a variety of habitats. There are many cultivated varieties that are suitable for a garden. The tubular flowers are a favourite nectar source for Eastern Spinebills.

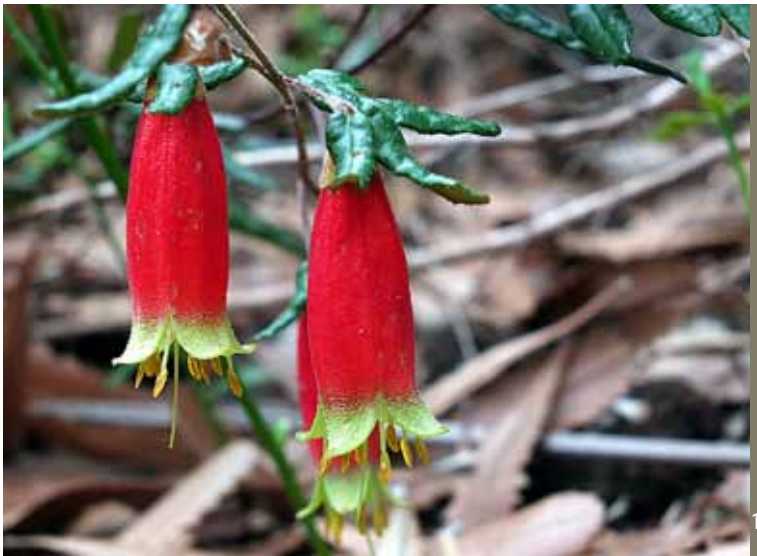


COMMON HEATH

Common Correa

Correa reflexa

In our district, Correas can be found in the drier foothills where they generally grow in light shady locations. They can vary in form from prostrate to erect and tall as 1-2m. The tubular, bell-shaped flowers usually appear from May to December and can be coloured from yellow-green to crimson red. Correas make hardy garden plants and many cultivars are available. Generally, they prefer well drained soils and semi-shade and are a good species for attracting birds to a garden.

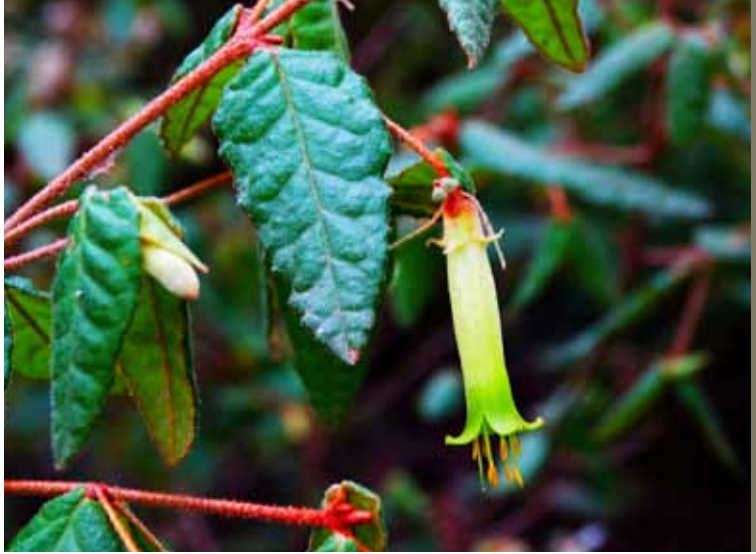


COMMON CORREA

Mountain Correa

Correa lawrenciana

The Mountain Correa is a tall shrub to small tree. In West Gippsland it grows in the dense understorey of tall, wet forests. Usually, the flowers are a pale green and appear from late winter through spring. *Correa lawrenciana (or lawrenceana)*, is another Australian endemic that grows well in garden situations. It prefers cool, moist and light shady places and is good for attracting birds, bees and other native wildlife.

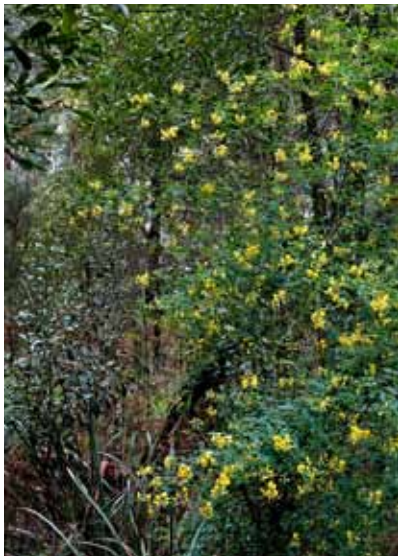


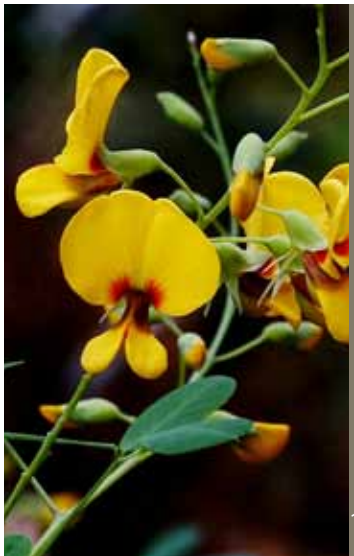
MOUNTAIN CORREA

Golden Tip

Goodia lotifolia

Golden Tip is widespread through West Gippsland but some populations may consist of only one or two plants. It is a light, open shrub with clover-like leaves and golden 'pea' flowers with a deep red blotch in the centre. It flowers in spring. Golden Tip is an understorey plant that grows in a variety of habitats. It is considered a 'coloniser' species and is often more abundant after disturbance or bushfire. A good garden plant that is often best presented with several plants in a cluster.



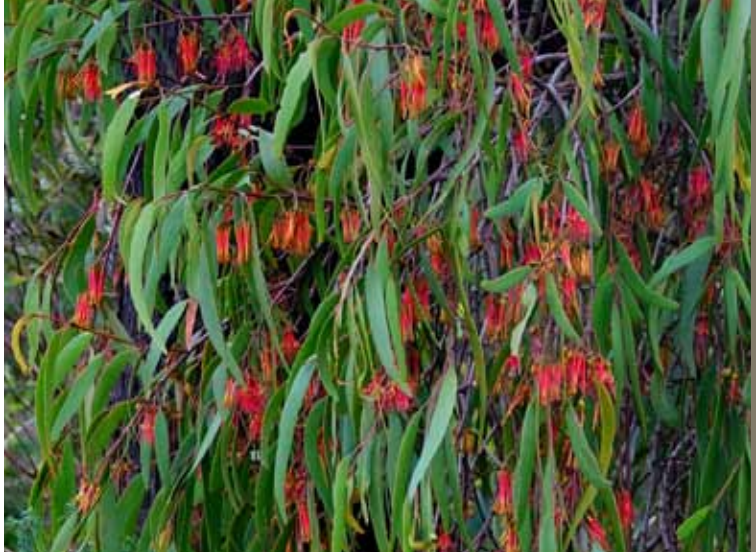


GOLDEN TIP

Mistletoe

Amyema spp

Australia has almost 100 species of parasitic mistletoe, many of them being endemic. Because they have chlorophyl in their leaves and can therefore produce their own food, most mistletoes only use the host tree for supplying water and for support – so really, they are semi-parasitic. Many mistletoes are host-specific, others will grow on a variety of trees and shrubs. Many of Australia's native mammals, birds and invertebrates are heavily reliant on mistletoe for food and shelter.

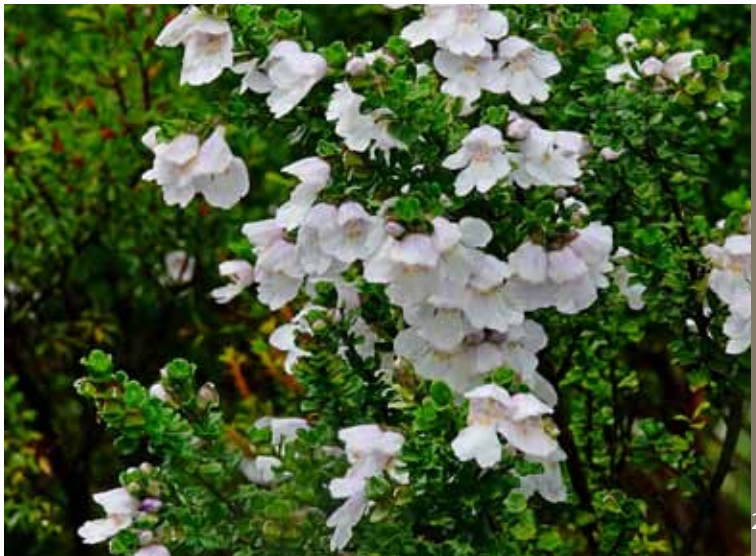


MISTLETOE

Alpine Mint Bush

Prostanthera cuneata

This low-growing bush – up to about 1m – is endemic to the alpine and sub-alpine regions of Tasmania, Victoria (Mt Baw Baw) and New South Wales, where it mostly grows as understorey in Snow Gum woodland. The foliage has the strong mint smell of other prostanthera species. Alpine Mint Bush makes a good cold climate garden specimen. It is very hardy and an excellent insect attractor. In a good nursery, you might come across a prostrate form which makes a great addition to a rockery.

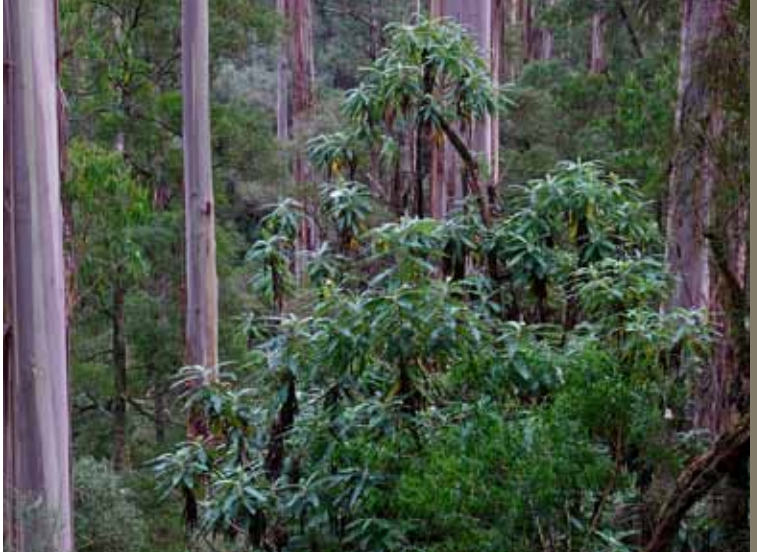


ALPINE MINT BUSH

Blanket Leaf

Bedfordia arborescens

Blanket Leaf is a slender-trunked tree that grows in cool, sheltered rain forest gullies where it is considered a mid-story plant. The loose clusters of yellow flowers normally appear between November and January. As its name suggests, the leaves are a feature of this tree: they are large with a white, woolly underside. West and far East Gippsland are Victorian strongholds for this interesting tree. Blanket Leaf is listed as 'vulnerable' in the Tasmanian Government's Threatened Species Protection Act 1995.

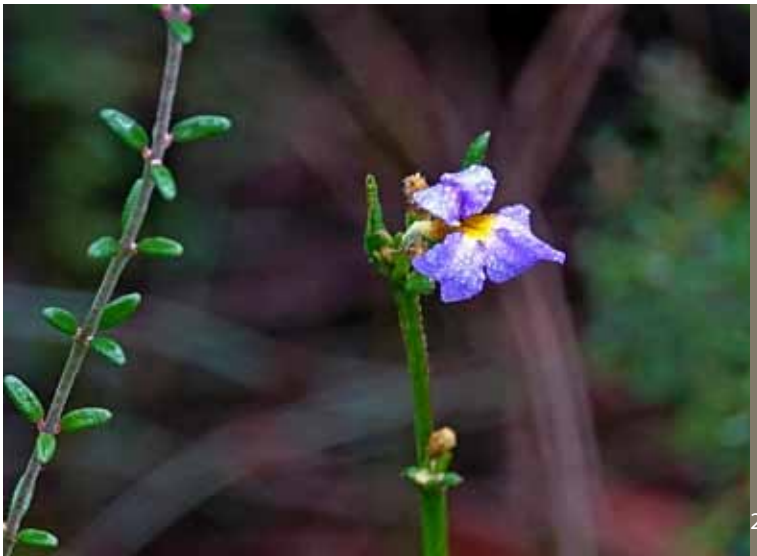


BLANKET LEAF

Blue Dampiera

Dampiera stricta

Blue Dampiera is widespread throughout all of Gippsland and in some places is very abundant. It is an attractive, blue-flowering small shrub found largely in open forest areas, roadsides and sometimes on disturbed sites. The flowers usually appear from August to January. There are several closely related species of Dampiera. Licola Dampiera – *Dampiera galbrathiana* – is listed as 'vulnerable' in the Victorian, Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act. Dampiera is fairly common in nurseries and different colour forms are available.

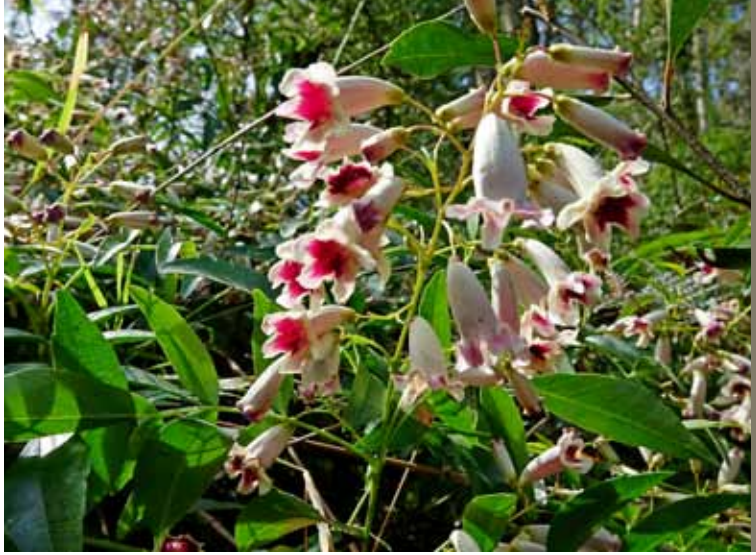


BLUE DAMPIERA

Wonga Vine

Pandorea pandorana

The masses of pendulous bell-shaped flowers of the Wonga Vine in the bush are a delight to come across. In West Gippsland, this stunning climber is found in moist woodland and forest situations. It can climb to the tops of trees that are 4 to 6m tall, or more. Wonga Vine garden varieties are readily available and they grow well in a moist but well-drained situation. They are fast growing, frost tolerant and can take a vigorous pruning.

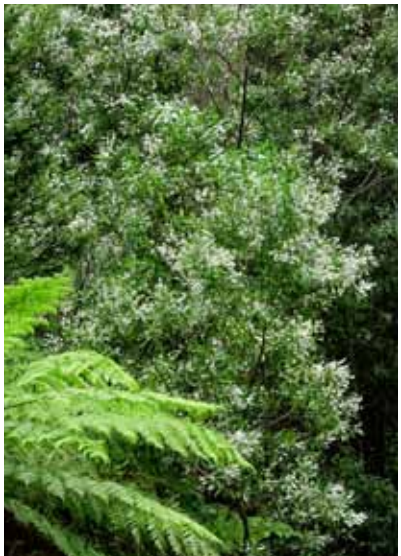


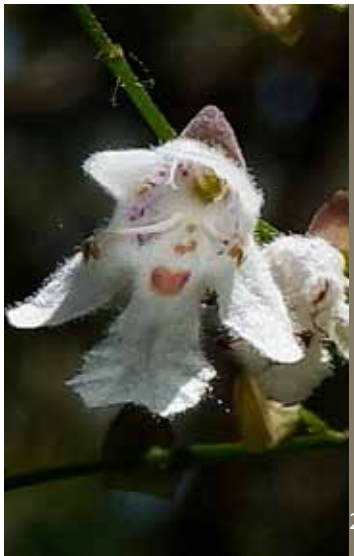
WONGA VINE

Victorian Christmas Bush

Prostanthera lasianthos

The Victorian Christmas Bush is a small graceful tree (or tall shrub) that grows in shady, moist, lowland forests. West Gippsland trees very reliably seem to come into flower in late November or early December, just in time for Christmas. Lasianthos is the largest of the mint bushes. It is a fast-growing tree that deserves consideration for garden situations – attractive, bird and insect attracting and aromatic.



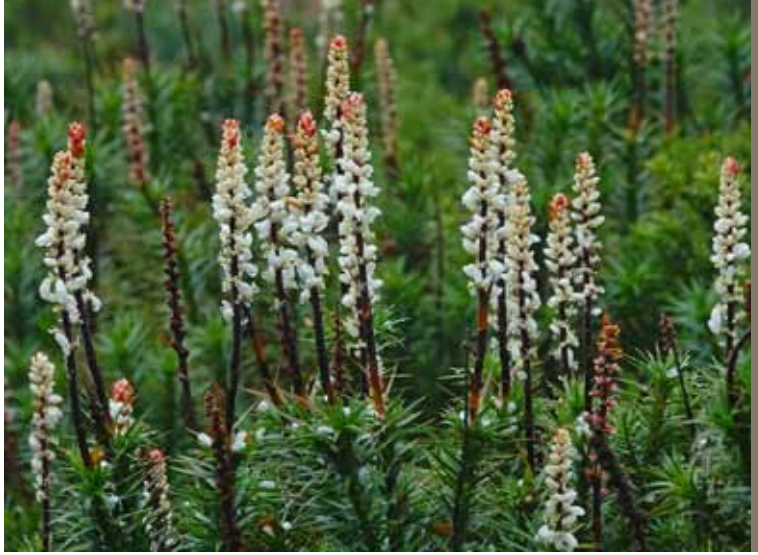


VICTORIAN CHRISTMAS BUSH

Candle Heath

Richea continentis

Candle Heath is an alpine and sub-alpine Australian endemic species found on the Baw Baw Plateau, where it is widespread in boggy conditions. The spikes of flowers appear in December and January. The leaves are pungent. Candle Heath grows to a height of about 1m and is very picturesque under the Snow Gums. Locally common on Mt Baw Baw, Candle Heath has a very small natural distribution.

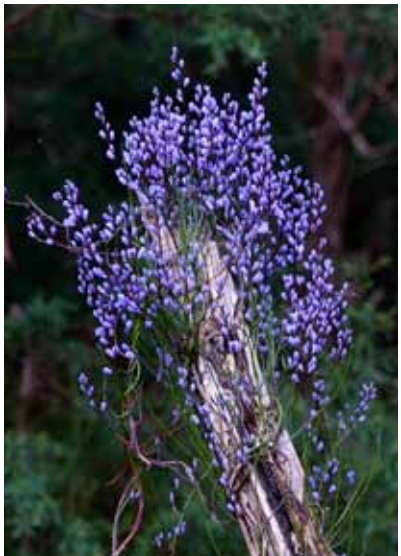


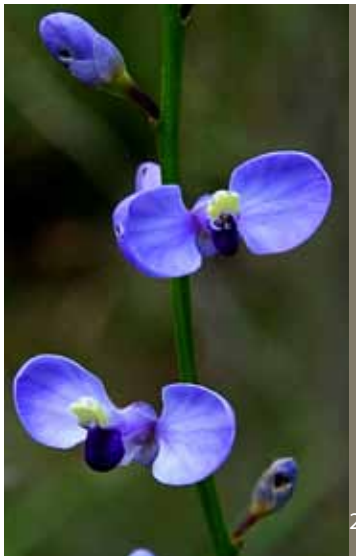
CANDLE HEATH

Love Creeper

Comesperma volubile

This slender, twining shrub grows to about 3m. The sprays of tiny, intense blue flowers can appear from July to about December. Love Creeper is widespread throughout Victoria but Gippsland, West Gippsland in particular seems to be a bit of a stronghold where it grows in woodland and heathland communities. Early settlers apparently used the root to attain a sarsaparilla flavour. The buds and flowers seem to just suddenly appear overnight.



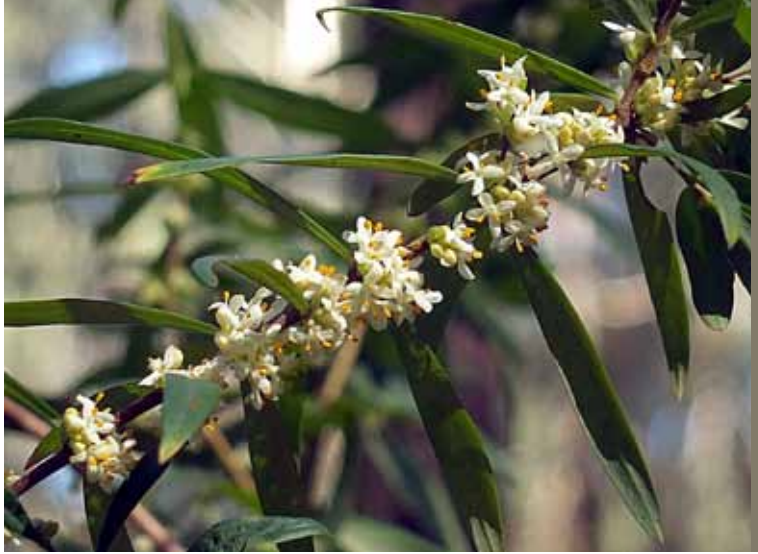


LOVE CREEPER

Bootlace Bush

Pimelea axiflora

The common name of this medium-sized shrub, 1-3m, refers to the fibrous bark which was used by indigenous and early settler people as a substitute for string. A closely related, sub-alpine form of Bootlace Bush is listed as 'vulnerable' in the Victorian Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act. West Gippsland is well represented on the distribution map for this species. Bootlace Bush is an attractive, open arching, mid-storey shrub.

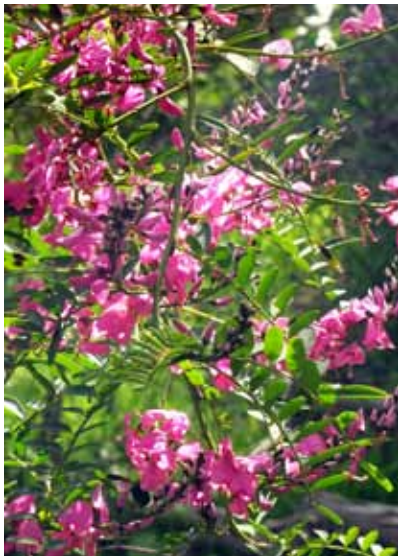


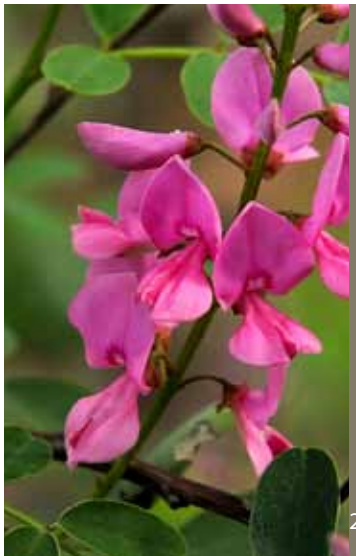
BOOTLACE BUSH

Austral Indigo

Indigofera australis

'Indigofera' refers to the Latin for 'bearing indigo', the purple dye originally obtained from this plant. Indigenous use included crushing the leaves to make a poison for fish. Austral Indigo is an attractive semi-open shrub, 1 to 3m, with purple pea-shaped flowers that usually appear from late winter to late spring. It is grown as a garden specimen and like all members of the pea family it is a legume – its root nodules fixes Nitrogen from the air into a form that other plants are able to absorb.



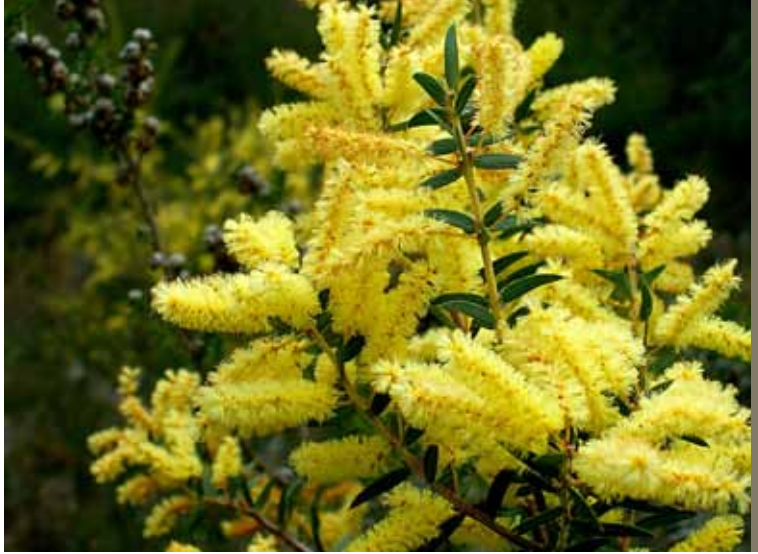


AUSTRAL INDIGO

Spike Wattle

Acacia oxycedrus

Spike Wattle is an adaptable garden plant; its dense and prickly form makes it a useful hedge and windbreak plant. It grows well in full sun in a range of soil types and is low maintenance. In its natural state, Spike Wattles can grow to the height of a small tree. The cylindrical, bright yellow blooms occur from winter to spring. The leaves of the Spike Wattle are stiff and sharply pointed.

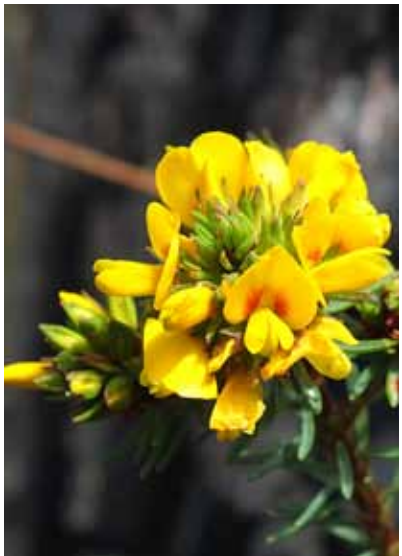


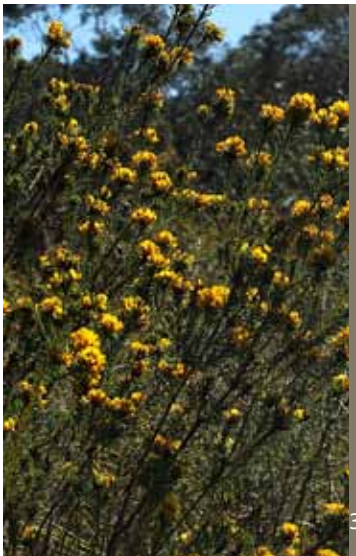
SPIKE WATTLE

Swamp Bush-pea

Pultenaea weindorferi

This rare and endangered pea is endemic to Victoria and grows in wet depressions in just a few places in Bunyip State Park and around Trentham. Swamp Bush-pea grows to height of approximately 2m. Before the Black Saturday 2009 bushfires, only a few dozen of these plants were known. After the fires, it was estimated that more than 250,000 plants were germinated; a dramatic illustration of the reliance of some native species on the action of bushfires.



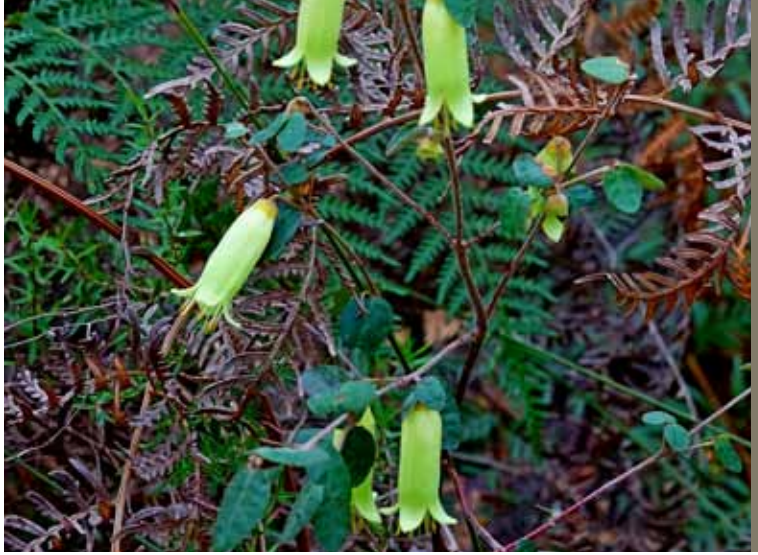


SWAMP BUSH-PEA

Appleberry

Billardiera scandens

Appleberry is another Gippsland shrub on the 'endangered' list. It is small to medium shrub-twiner. Although there are populations in other regions in Victoria, it is best represented east of Melbourne. Appleberry is an understory species mostly found in dry, shady situations. It is easily propagated and makes a great addition to a native garden, not being too vigorous or invasive.



APPLEBERRY

Sweet Pittosporum

Pittosporum undulatum

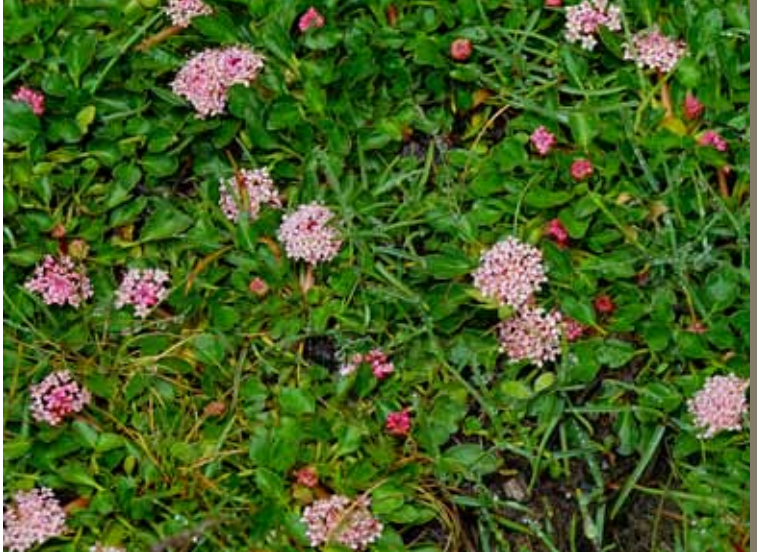
In West Gippsland, Sweet Pittosporum is an environmental weed. It has a dense canopy that shades the ground and drops a lot of leaves. The shade, plus a chemical inhibitor in the leaves, prevents any native plants from growing underneath; walk under some Sweet Pittosporums and there is no understorey. Sweet Pittosporum is native to East Gippsland and parts of New South Wales and Queensland.

SWEET PITTOSPORUM

Alpine Trachymene

Trachymene humilis

Alpine Trachymene is a mat-forming herb that grows in damp areas among the Snow Gums on Mt Baw Baw. In some references it is called Alpine Lace Flower. The pink to white flowers appear in summer. Alpine Trachymene is considered rare and is on the 'endagered' plant list. This plant also grows in the alpine regions of Tasmania and New South Wales.

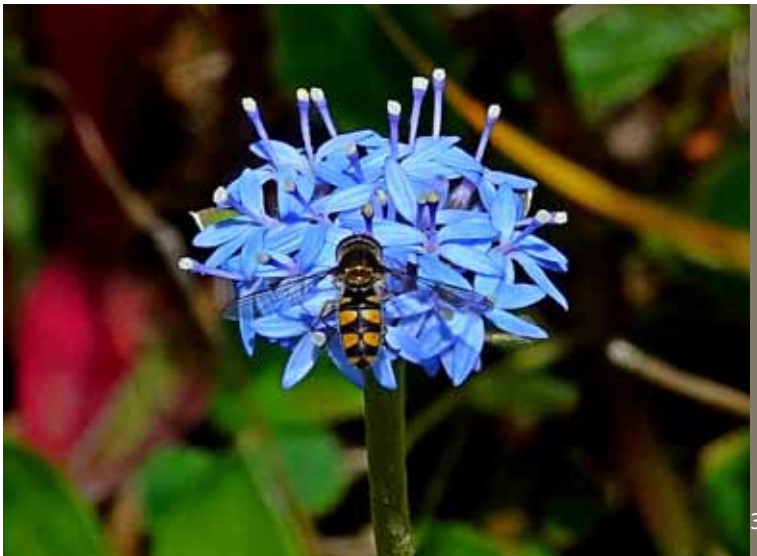


ALPINE TRACHYMENE

Blue Pincushion

Brunonia australis

The eye-catching Blue Pincushion is a perennial that grows to about 50cm in grassy woodlands. Blue Pincushion is widespread throughout Victoria but a little unusual in West Gippsland. It is used as a garden wildflower specimen; it can grow on quite shallow soil and is often used as a container plant. Readily available in good nurseries.

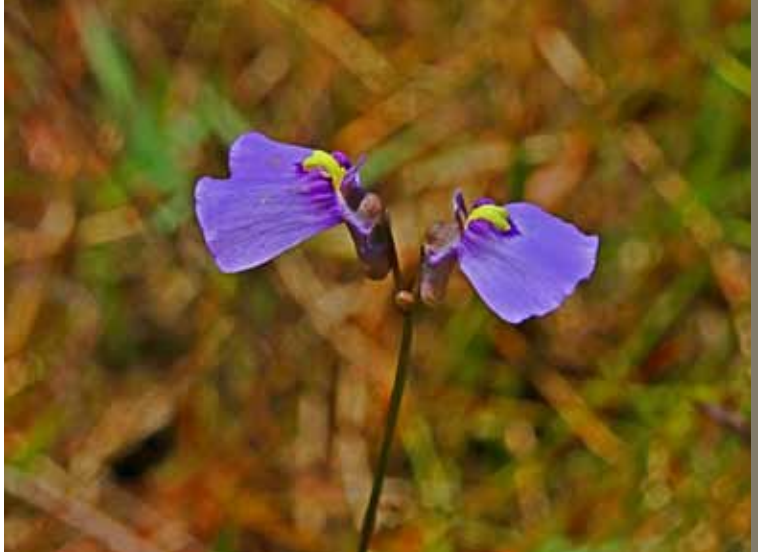


BLUE PINCUSHION

Fairy Aprons

Utricularia dichotoma

This fascinating little plant is found in wet, boggy areas of grassy heathlands. Fairy Aprons are carnivorous. They trap microscopic aquatic animals in bladders attached to their roots. They grow to about 50cm in good conditions. Widespread throughout Victoria and locally common in some spots, Fairy Aprons appear from August to April.

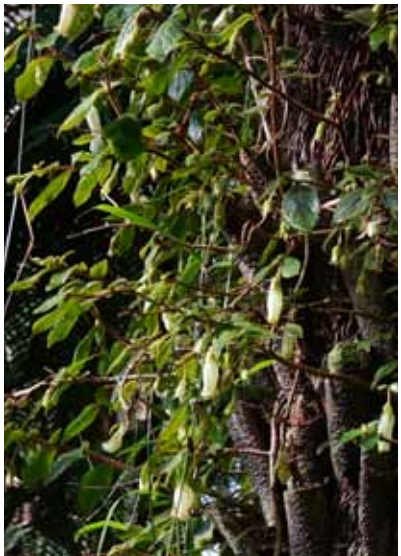


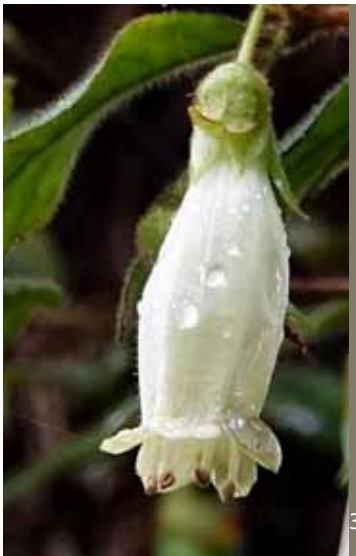
FAIRY APRONS

Fieldia

Fieldia australis

Fieldia is a delicate, epiphytic climber found in the moist gullies of West Gippsland's rainforests. It usually grows on Tree Ferns and moss-covered rocks. The pale cream-white, tubular flowers normally show in late summer-autumn. Fieldia is named in honour of the amateur naturalist and Supreme Court Judge of New South Wales, Barron Field, 1786-1846.



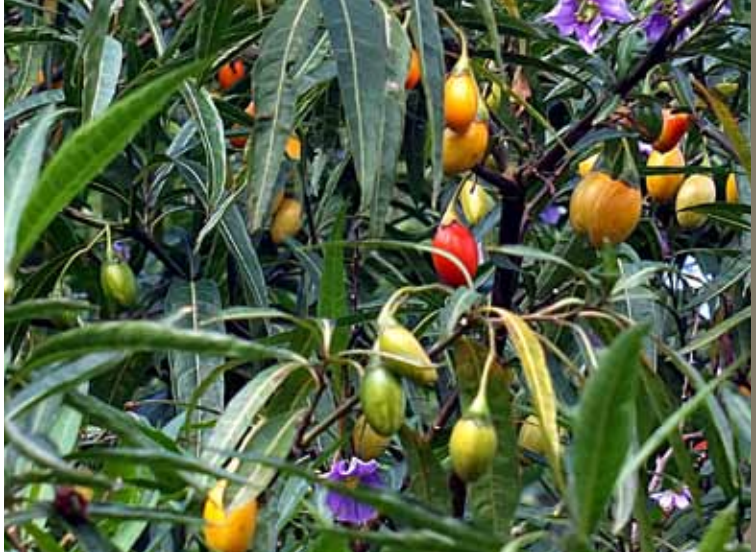


FIELDIA

Kangaroo Apple

Solanum species

There are several species of Solanum that appear very similar. It is a soft, woody shrub that can grow to about 3m tall. Kangaroo Apple is a member of the nightshade family and related to tomato and eggplant. The fruit, when ripe and prepared correctly, is regarded as a nutritional bush food. Unripened fruit are TOXIC. The leaves can be linear or deeply lobed and the flowers lavender-violet or bluish-purple.

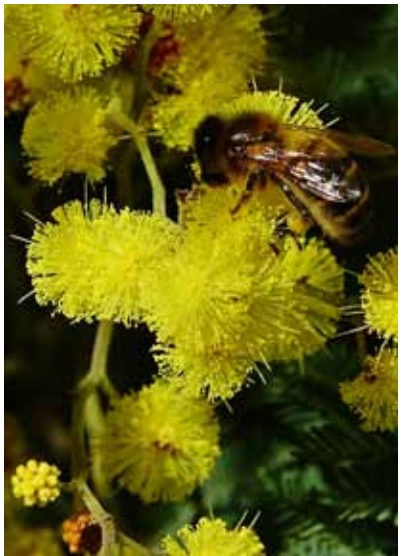


KANGAROO APPLE

Silver Wattle

Acacia dealbata

The Silver Wattle can be a spindly shrub or a 30m tree. It is widespread in West Gippsland and often grows near streams. Wattles are fast growing, usually short-lived and are typically a pioneer species after bushfire. The bright yellow flowers which can begin to arrive in July, are insect and bird attracting. Silver Wattle is now grown worldwide and in some countries has become an invasive weed. Silver Wattle timber is sometimes used for craft and furniture making.



SILVER WATTLE

Grass Tree

Xanthorrhoea species

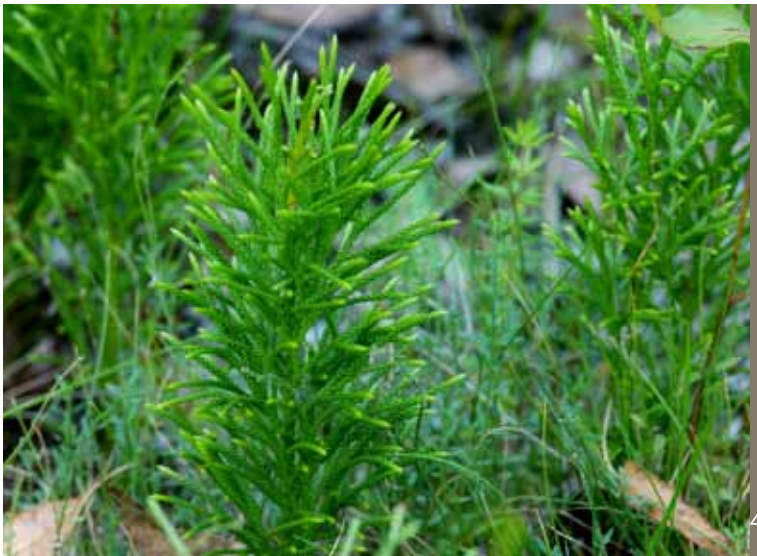
We have two species of Grass Tree in West Gippsland (and nearby); *Xanthorroea australis* and *Xanthorroea minor*. They tend to grow on rocky or poor soil types in drier forests. The flower spikes contain masses of tiny flowers rich in nectar that attract a variety of insects and birds. Fire is not essential but it can dramatically stimulate flowering in the following season.

GRASS TREE

Bushy Clubmoss

Lycopodium deuterodensum

This interesting plant is often described as a 'fern ally'. Bushy Clubmoss is a vascular plant that produces spores. It is a very ancient species with origins going back 400 million years when it grew to a height of 30-40m. Bushy Clubmoss is just 30-40cm tall, perhaps reaching 1m at most. It grows in high rainfall areas of open forest, scrub and heathland, usually in sandy soil.

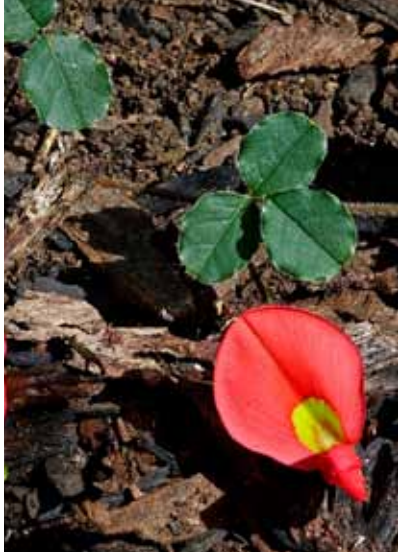


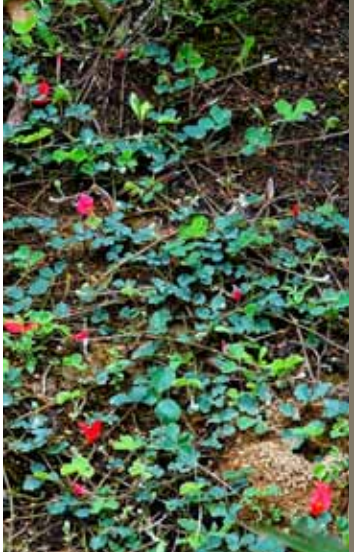
BUSHY CLUBMOSS

Running Postman

Kennedia prostrata

Running Postman is low shrub or dense ground cover found in a variety of West Gippsland habitats, usually in sunny or light shady places. In some spots at times, the plant can be so extensive it is difficult not to tread on it. The brilliant red and yellow pea-flowers occur in spring, followed by brown fruit pods containing the seeds. Running Postman is readily available as a nursery plant and it makes an ideal ground cover in a native garden.



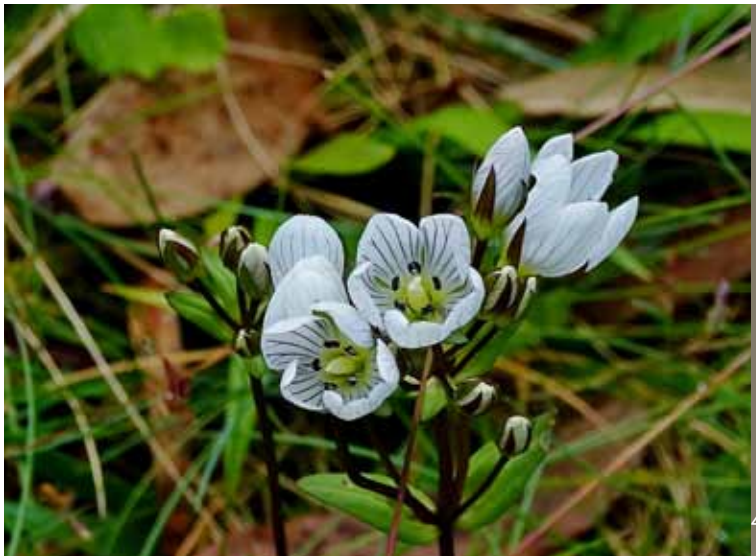


RUNNING POSTMAN

Mueller's Snow Gentian

Chionogentias muelleriana

This alpine plant has limited distribution above the snow line on the Baw Baw Plateau. It is endemic to Victoria. Snow Gentians grow to about 40cm tall and are covered in snow for many weeks. They flower through January and February. The species is named in honour of Ferdinand von Mueller who was appointed Victoria's first government botanist in 1853.

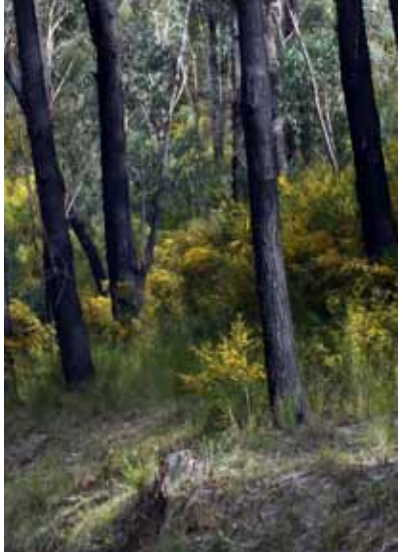


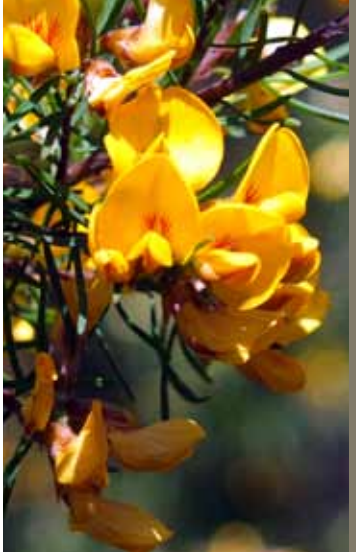
MUELLER'S SNOW GENTIAN

Soft Bush-pea

Pultenaea mollis

On the right day, this pea makes for a stunning bush landscape. It flowers from September to November and grows up to 3m in dry to moist open forest situations south of the Great Dividing Range. There's more than 1000 'egg and bacon' pea species in Australia and sometimes they can be very difficult to properly identify. The seeds of a few were used as bush tucker by Aborigines but many have seeds that are toxic to humans and animals.



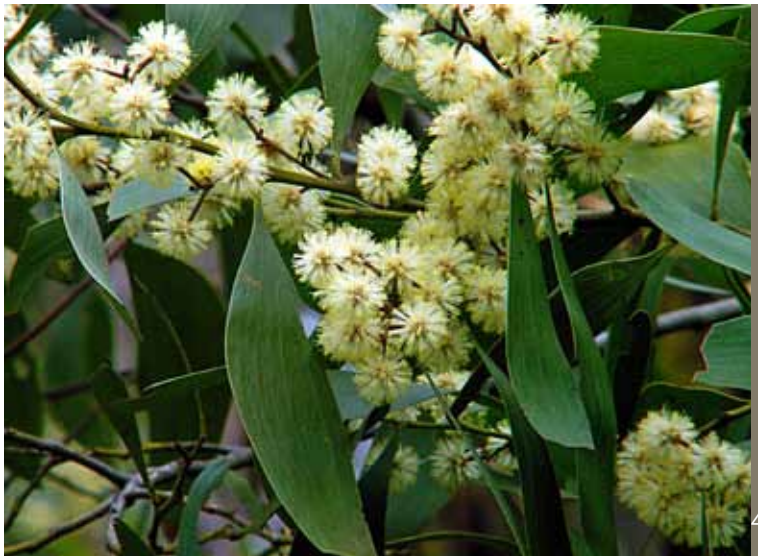


SOFT BUSH-PEA

Blackwood

Acacia melanoxylon

Blackwoods or Sally Wattles are a common tree throughout West Gippsland. The species has been introduced to other countries and has become a pest species in a few places. Indigenous Australians used to extract a pain-relieving analgesic from the tree and its timber today is sought after for furniture making, hand tools and panelling. Blackwoods can grow to 20m and their pale yellow to white flowers appear between July and December.

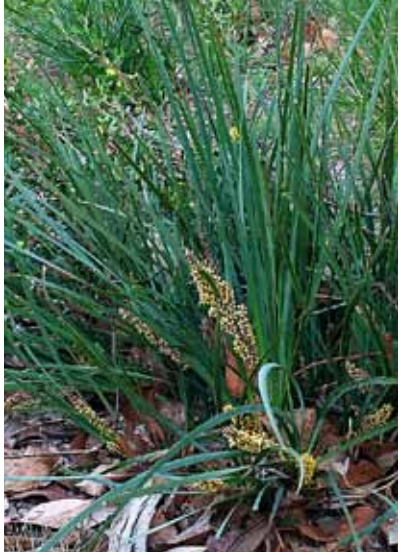


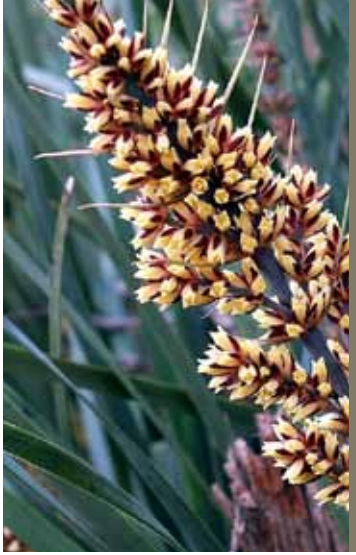
BLACKWOOD

Spiny-headed Mat-rush

Lomandra longifolia

Spiny-headed Mat-rush is a common tussock that grows to half a metre or more, in a range of places that include sandy soils, wet, swampy ground, rocky hillsides and open forests. It makes a tough garden plant that is able to tolerate dry periods. It is bird and butterfly attracting and a great wetland plant for frog habitat. Indigenous Australians made baskets, dilly bags, mats and fishing nets from the leaves and they ground the seed heads to make a damper.



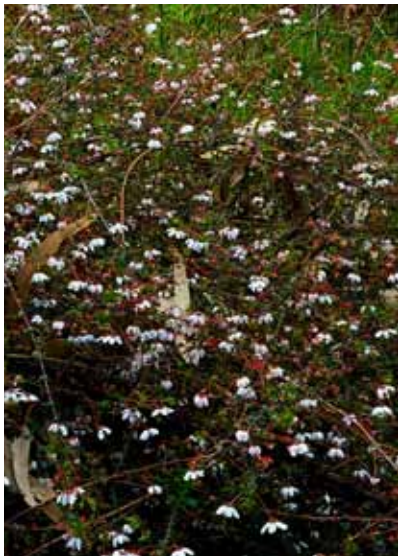


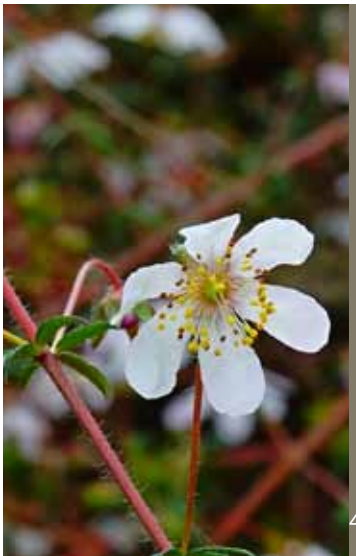
SPINY-HEADED MAT-RUSH

Wiry Bauera

Bauera rubiodies

This wiry, tangly shrub will sometimes grow to 2m in good conditions; moist soil, part shade and brief inundation. The white-pink flowers can appear almost any time of year but especially during spring and summer. Wiry Bauera is a good insect attractor and often small birds like wrens and thornbills will seek refuge within the tangly branchlets. Sometimes called River Rose or Dog Rose, Wiry Bauera is endemic to this corner of the continent.





WIRY BAUERA

Orchids

1 Rosy Hyacinth-orchid: *Dipodium roseum*, to 1m tall, up to 50 flowers per stem, summer flowering, epiparasite, pollinated by native bees and wasps.

2 Large Tongue-orchid: *Cryptostylis subulata*, 80cm tall, can have 10 or more flowers, November to April, pollinated by male Ichneumonidae wasp.

3 Austral Ladies Tresses: *Spiranthes australis*, 45cm, dozens of tiny flowers, December to February, in decline due to loss of swampy habitat.

4 White Fingers: *Caledenia catenata*, 30cm, single flower usually, September to November, restricted to lowland forest in southern Victoria.

5 Fairy Fingers: *Caladenia alata*, 10cm, uncommon, flowers September to October, lowland forest and heathy woodland.

6 Graceful Sun-orchid: *Thelymitra simulata*, 40cm, 6-8 flowers, December and January, unusual, only on top of Baw Baw Plateau.

7 Large Duck-orchid: *Caleana major*, up to 50cm, sometimes 4-5 distinctively-shaped flowers, September to January, variety of habitats.

8 Purple Beard-orchid: *Calochilus robertsonii*, grows to 40cm with up to 8 flowers, September to January, widespread.

9 Nodding Greenhood: *Pterostylis nutans*, to 30cm, single flower, winter to spring, well known, often grows in large colonies.

1. Rosy Hyacinth-orchid

2. Large Tongue-orchid

3. Austral Ladies Tresses

4.White Fingers

5. Fairy Fingers

6. Graceful Sun-orchid

7. Large Duck-orchid

8. Purple Beard-orchid

9. Nodding Greenhood

Fungi

1 Dark Vegetable Caterpillar: *Cordyceps gunnii*, 10-20cm tall, parasitizes moth larvae in the soil, grows under acacia species.

2 Earth Star: *Geastrum triplex*, 5cm diameter, grows in leaf litter and detritus, puffball - spore ejects through central hole.

3 Purple Cups: *Peziza tenacella*, cups to 30mm across (when open), gregarious in burnt ground after fire.

4 Fly Agaric: *Amanita muscaria*, 10-12cm diameter, grows in soil, introduced, the toadstool of fairy tales.

5 Golden Tufts: *Cyptotrama asprata*, caps usually only 2-3cm diameter, on decaying wood, always a delight to find.

6 Golden Curtain Crust: *Stereum Ostrea*, funnel-shaped fans 5-10cm across, on dead trees and logs.

7 No Common Name: *Mycena clarkeana*, caps to 2cm diameter, grows in dense colonies on stumps, logs and dead trees.

8 Scarlet Bracket: *Pycnoporus coccineus*, brackets to 10cm but variable, found in wet and dry forests and woodlands.

9 Pear-shaped Puffball: *Lycoperdon pyriforme*, 2-3cm diameter, grows on wood, 'an upside down pear'.

1. Dark Vegetable Caterpillar

2. Earth Star

3. Purple Cups

4.Fly Agaric

5. Golden Tufts

6. Golden Curtain Crust

7. No Common Name

8. Scarlet Bracket

9. Pear-shaped puffball

Fungi

10 Pixie's Parasol: *Mycena interrupta*, caps about 5mm diameter, translucent stems, grows on logs in all stages of decay.

11 Rainbow Fungus: *Trametes versiclour*, brackets up to 6cm across, grows in colonies, underside consists of tiny pores.

12 Orange Pore: *Favolaschia calocera*, 10-20mm diameter, introduced, grows in colonies on dead wood.

13 Yellow Club Coral: *Clavaria amoena*, can grow to 10cm, grows in soil, sometimes in moss beds, often gregarious.

14 Splitgill: *Schizophyllum commune*, fans or brackets on dead wood can be up to 25mm, worldwide species, has a human pathogenic reputation.

15 Slender Parasol: *Macrolepiota clelandii*, often reaches 10-15cm tall, appears early in the season, grows in soil detritus.

16 Ruby Bonnet: *Cruentomycena viscidocruenta*, 3-5cm tall, covered in a glutinous liquid, grows on dead twigs, fern fronds, etc.

17 Austropaxillus: *Austropaxillus infundibuliformis*, caps to 6-7cm diameter, under eucalypts, forked gills, depressed cap as it ages.

18 Tall Mycena: *Mycena cystidiosa*, can grow to 10cm high, grows in colonies in the leaf litter and wood on the ground.

10. Pixie's Parasol

11. Rainbow Fungus

12. Orange Pore

13.Yellow Club Coral

14. Splitgill

15. Slender Parasol

16. Ruby Bonnet

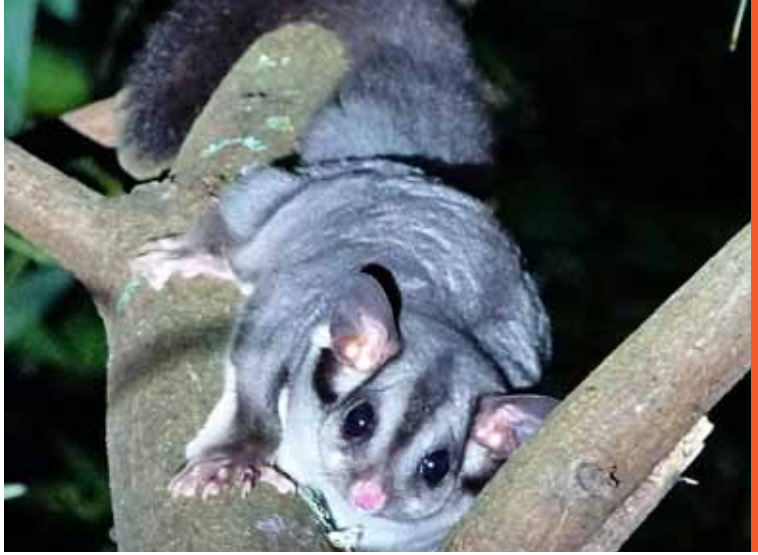
17. Austropaxillus

18. Tall Mycena

Krefft's Glider

Petaurus notatus

This nocturnal, marsupial has a skin membrane between the 'wrist' and the 'ankle' which enables it to leap and glide between trees. The varied diet of the Krefft's Glider consists of nectar and pollen, seeds and fruit, insects, sap from trees, even small birds and their eggs. All sugar gliders are significant pollination vectors. Banksias are a favourite habitat for the Krefft's Glider. Being reliant on tree hollows for their survival, bushfire and clearing of large, old trees is impacting their numbers.

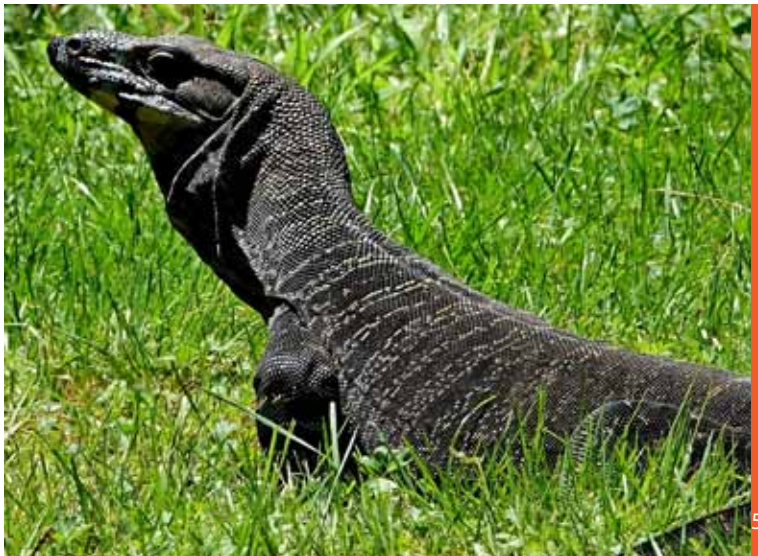


KREFFT'S GLIDER

Lace Monitor

Varanus varius

Goannas in our district can grow to 2m. They are often seen near bush picnic grounds and rural chook houses. Their natural diet consists of other small reptiles, birds' eggs, carrion and sometimes berries. Lace Monitors require large hollow logs and trees for settling and nesting. The female lays 6-12 eggs in a termite mound or rotting tree hollow. She returns months later and scratches escape holes for the hatchlings. The Victorian Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act (June 2022), lists the Lace Monitor as 'endangered'.

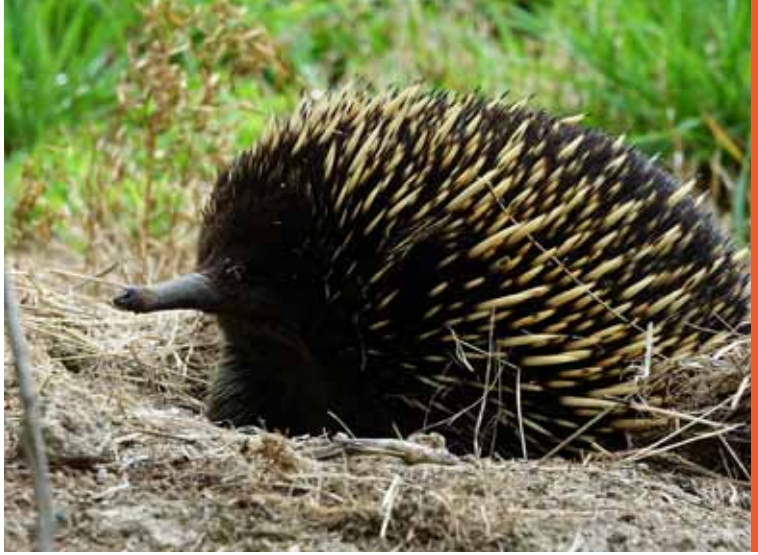


LACE MONITOR

Echidna

Tachyglossus aculeatus

The very special Echidna is Australia's most widespread mammal. Like the Platypus, it is a monotreme: a mammal that lays eggs. Echidnas use their strong snouts and long tongues to break into rotten logs and termite mounds and slurp up termites and other insects. Their strong claws are used to dig for ants and other invertebrates in the soil. Echidnas are good swimmers. Habitat loss in the form of suitable understorey containing logs and tree stumps, is the main threat to the survival of the Echidna.

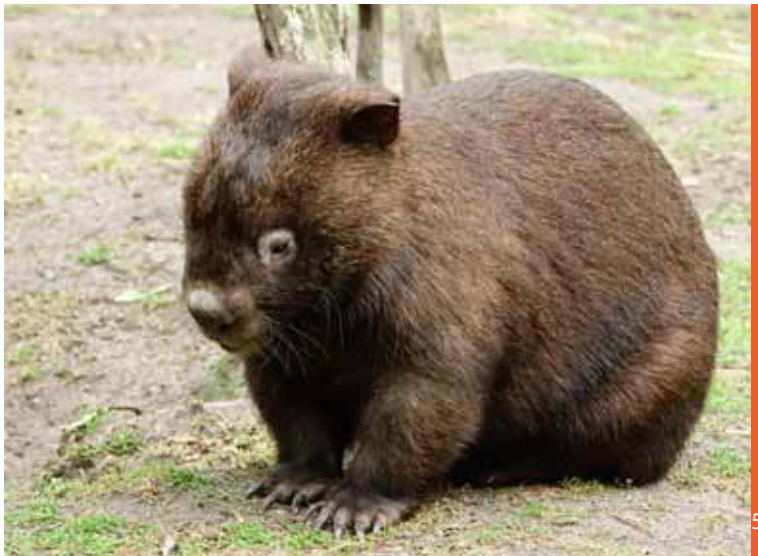


ECHIDNA

Common Wombat

Vombatus ursinus

Wombat numbers in Gippsland have declined significantly since the 2019/20 bushfires. This nocturnal, burrowing mammal, with a rear-facing pouch, survives on a diet of native grasses, sedges, rushes, roots and tubers. Common Wombats inhabit sub-alpine heath and woodland, wet forest, dry forest, woodland, and coastal scrubland. The baby Wombat when born is about the size of a jellybean and it will spend up to 10 months in the mother's pouch. Wombats in the wild can have a life span of 15 years.

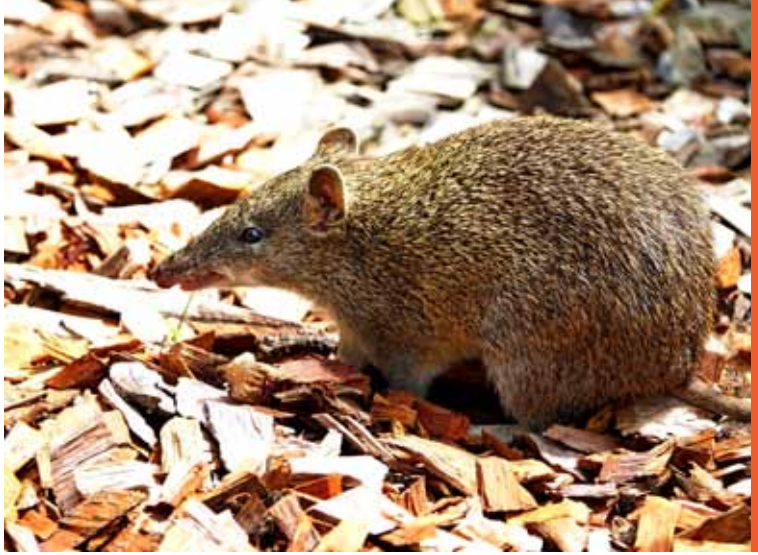


COMMON WOMBAT

Southern Brown Bandicoot

Isoodon obesulus

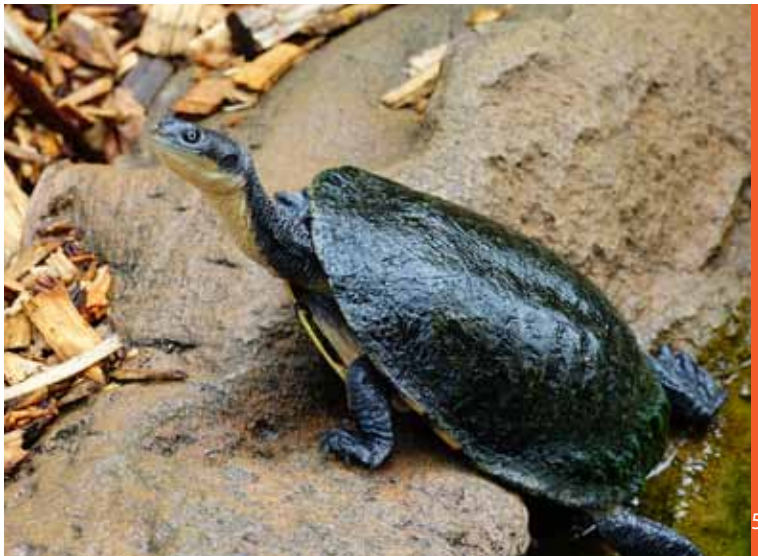
The Southern Brown Bandicoot, SBB, has an omnivorous diet of insects, spiders, worms, plants and fungi. Although described as nocturnal, SBBs can often be seen foraging in the daytime. The SBB is equipped to dig for its food but does not live in a burrow, opting for a well concealed 'nest' in thick vegetation. Their preferred habitat is open forest and scrubland with extensive, dense groundcover. Bandicoots are marsupials and the babies remain in the pouch for about 50 days after being born. West Gippsland was once a stronghold area for the Southern Brown Bandicoot. The SBB is listed as endangered in the 2022 edition of the Victorian Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act.



Long-necked Turtle

Chelodina longicollis

Long-necked Turtles, or more correctly Eastern Long-necked Turtles, tend to inhabit slow moving water bodies like lakes, dams and sewerage ponds. Often, they will disperse widely between water bodies as seasonal conditions dictate. They eat small aquatic crustaceans, fish, worms and insects. After mating, the female digs a hole on nearby land and lays up to 20 eggs. The eggs are incubated for several months and the hatchlings emerge fully independent. The Long-necked Turtle has a musk gland that emits a foul-smelling liquid for defence purposes.



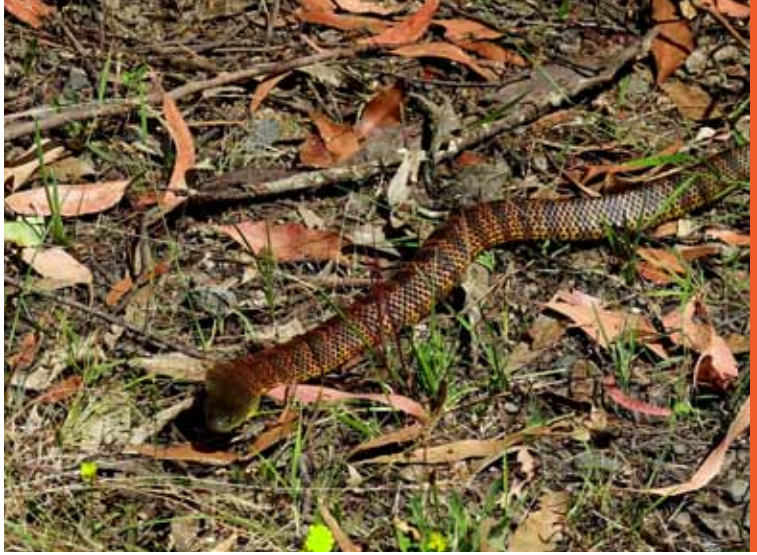
SOUTHERN BROWN BANDICOOT

LONG-NECKED TURTLE

Tiger Snake

Notechis scutatus

Tiger Snakes can be quite varied in pattern and colour. West Gippsland tigers typically grow to about 1.2m. They are nearly always found near a permanent source of water such as wetlands, creeks and dams. Frogs, lizards, small mammals and birds form the bulk of their diet. Tiger Snakes are highly venomous and if agitated enough to bite, the result can be very serious for a human. The Tiger Snake is endemic to Australia but its numbers are thought to be in decline.



TIGER SNAKE

Ringtail Possum

Pseudocheirus peregrinus

Ringtail Possums in our district are mostly found in eucalypt forests and woodland, tea tree scrub, rainforests and sometimes, urban gardens. They build a basketball-sized nest of bark, leaves and grasses – called a drey – in a tree or some tall scrub. If available, tree hollows are sometimes occupied by ringtails and some individuals readily take to an artificial nest box. Ringtails use their tail as an extra limb to aid climbing. Their diet consists mostly of foliage and fruit.

RINGTAIL POSSUM

Koala

Phascolarctos cinereus

Phascolarctos cinereus means 'ash grey pouched bear'. Fossil remains of this Australian icon have been found dating back 25 million years. Its closest relative is the Wombat. Since European settlement, approximately 80% of Koala habitat has been destroyed. Of the remaining 20% almost none is protected and most occurs on privately-owned land. The Koala is listed as 'endangered' but little is being done to protect it or its habitat. The Koala's favourite tree species is the Manna Gum.

KOALA

Swamp Rat

Rattus lutreolus

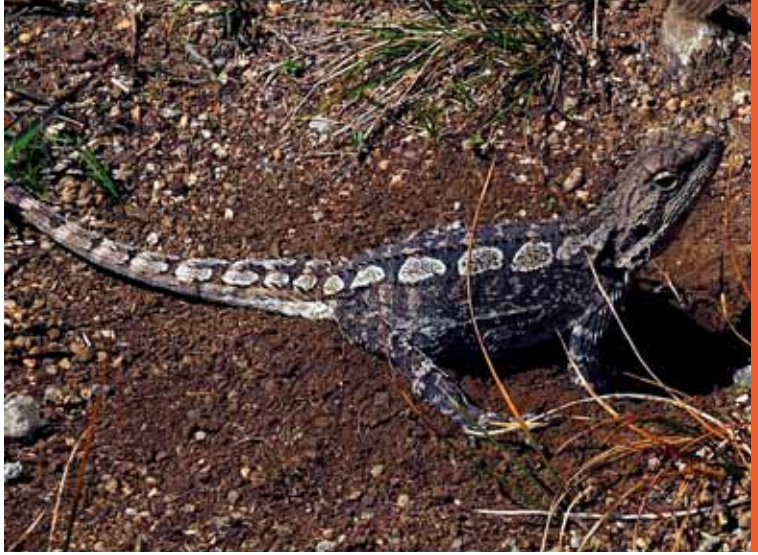
The Bush Rat and Swamp Rat are two native rats that live in this district. (The introduced, pest Black Rat has larger ears, a much longer tail and more elongated snout) Although common, Bush rats and Swamp rats are seldom seen. Swamp Rats live along creeks, river flats, swamps and lowland depressions that occasionally flood. They tunnel through dense vegetation and are partly nocturnal and diurnal.

SWAMP RAT

Jacky Lizard

Amphibolurus muricatus

The Jacky Lizard spends most of its time on the ground in open forest and heathland although it can climb vegetation and in some places is called the Tree Dragon. It can grow to 30cm, including the tail. The Jacky Lizard has wonderful camouflage which it uses by remaining still, waiting to pounce on some prey – grasshoppers, ants, beetles, etc.

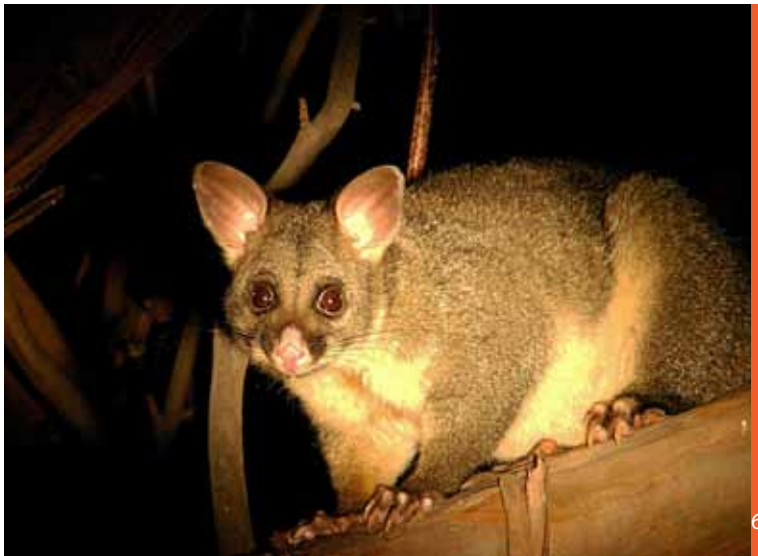


JACKY LIZARD

Brushtail Possum

Trichosurus vulpecula

Although 'brushies' are a forest or woodland species, they have adapted well to urbanization; a ceiling cavity is as good as a hollow tree for a Brushtail Possum. They are a nocturnal species whose diet consists of leaves, blossom and fruit in the wild but in urban areas they will eat almost any food. Brushtail Possums mark their territories with an excretion from scent glands under their chin and tail. Once hunted extensively for their fur, Brushtail Possums are now protected.

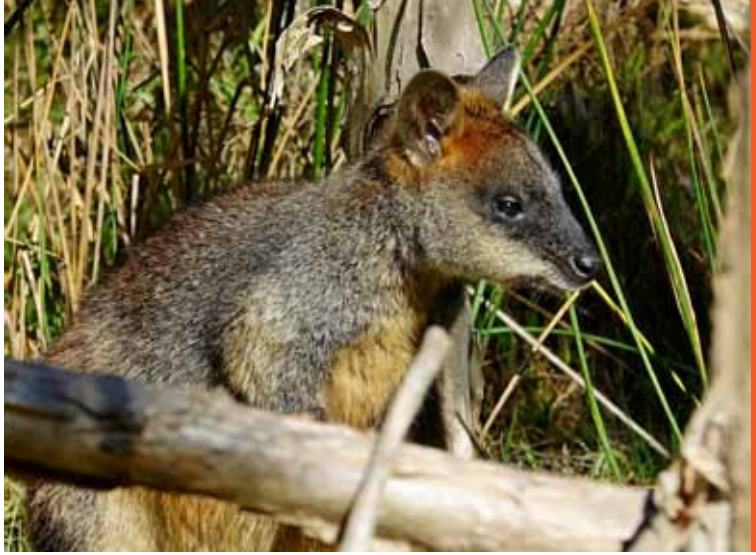


BRUSHTAIL POSSUM

Swamp Wallaby

Genus Wallabia (bicolour?)

The division between 'kangaroo' and 'wallaby' is fairly arbitrary. Wallabies are generally smaller than Kangaroos. The preferred habitat of the Swamp Wallaby is thick forest undergrowth where they feed on a variety of native shrubs, grasses and ferns. Swamp Wallabies can breed at any time of year and the joeys stay in the pouch for 8 or 9 months. The females can overlap two pregnancies at once. 'Swamp' refers to the swampy odour they give off.

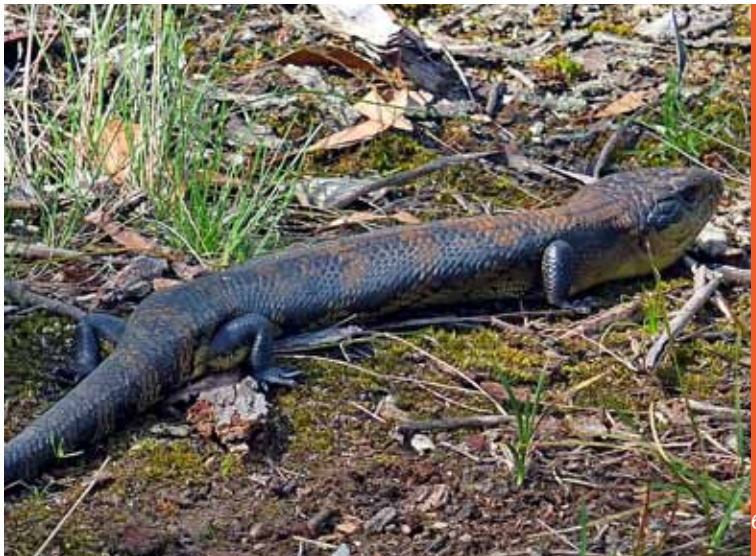


SWAMP WALLABY

Common Bluetongue

Tiliqua scincoides

Some Bluetongues can be as long as 60cm and weigh up to 1kg. They are a terrestrial lizard (skink actually) that inhabit relatively open country with lots of tussocky cover and leaf litter and sometimes urban gardens if you are lucky enough. They are diurnal, sheltering at night under logs and rocks. The female is ovoviviparous: the eggs hatch inside her body. When threatened, Bluetongues hiss and expose their bright blue tongue as a means of startling the intruder or predator.



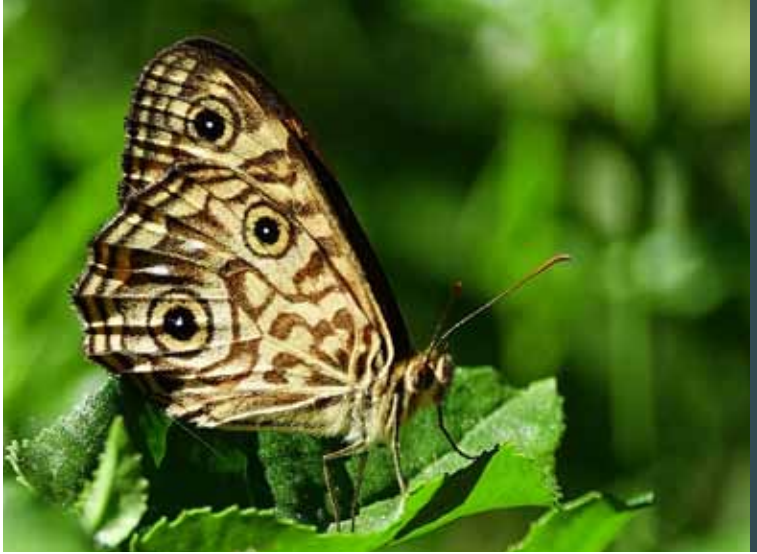
COMMON BLUETONGUE

Ringed Xenica

Geitoneura acantha

The striking Ringed Xenica is fairly common in moister habitats of West Gippsland. Native Weeping Grass, Microlaena stipoides, is one of its favourite host plants. In the daytime, the caterpillars remain concealed at the base of the plant and emerge after dark to feed.

Most of the time, butterflies rest with their wings closed.



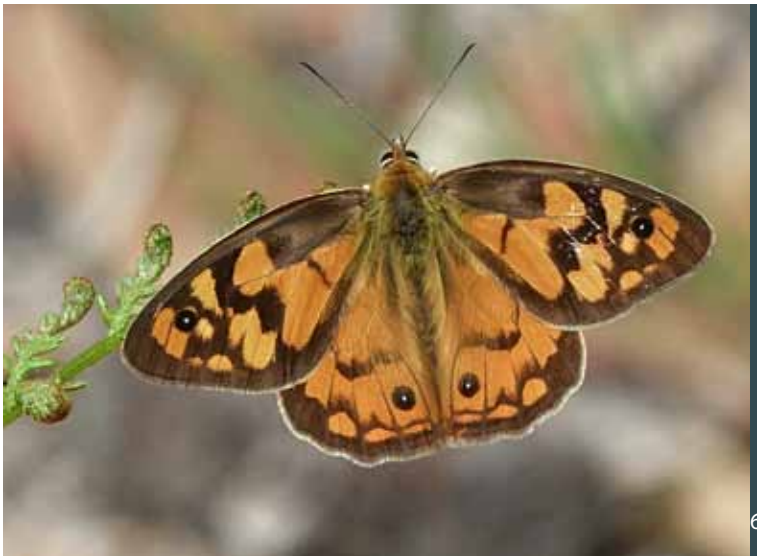
RINGED XENICA

Shouldered Brown

Heteronympha Penelope

This species is usually found in drier eucalypt woodlands where sometimes they can be quite common. The male Shouldered Brown is very territorial. The larvae feed at night on Wallaby Grass and Common Tussock. Often found at altitudes above 700m.

Many butterflies are prey for birds, lizards, snakes, dragonflies and spiders.



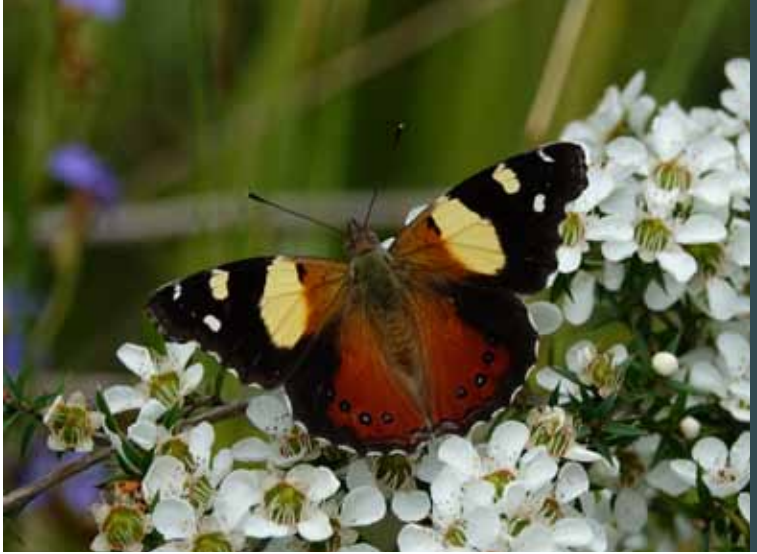
SHOULDERED BROWN

Australian Admiral

Vanessa itea

Admirals are found in open areas and forest margins. They have a rapid stuttering flight and often perch high in some vegetation. Favoured host plants are the nettle family. Admirals are nomadic or migratory as they search for their nettle plants.

Butterflies have clubbed or sometimes hooked antennae.



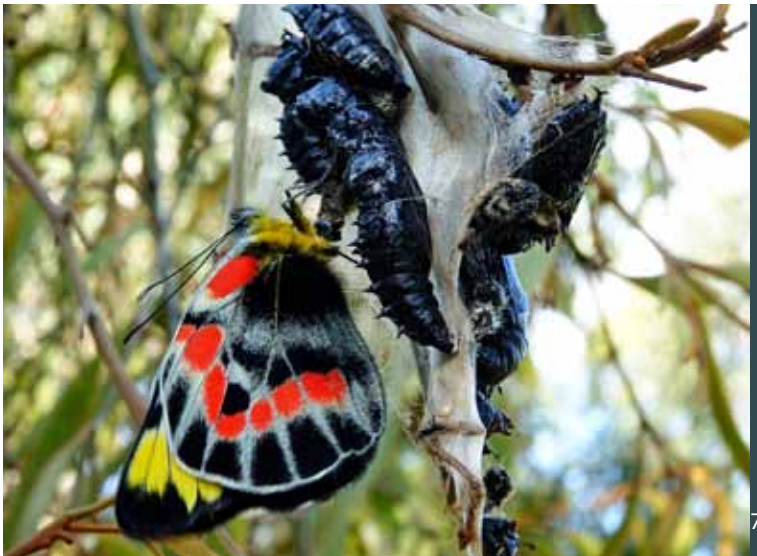
AUSTRALIAN ADMIRAL

Imperial White

Delias harpalyce

The common food plants for the larvae of this butterfly are species of mistletoe. Imperial Whites are found in open eucalypt forests. They can often be seen flying on cold days. The upper wing surface is white. The caterpillars spin a web on their food plant and attach themselves to it in groups.

Butterfly wing-patterns are produced by mosaics of colourful scales.



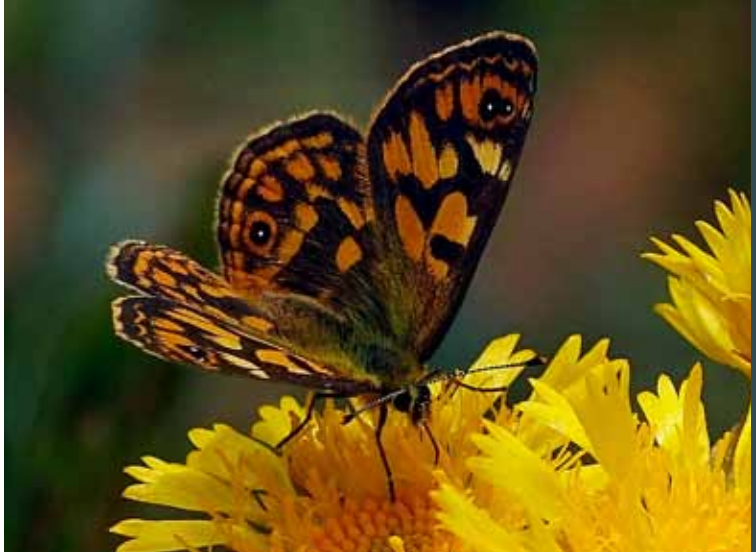
IMPERIAL WHITE

Orange Alpine Xenica

Oreixenica correae

This is an alpine butterfly of the Baw Baw Plateau between 1200 and 1800m elevation. Orange Alpine Xenicas appear through summer where they fly close to ground level. Alpine Xenicas are considered to be under threat from climate change and loss of habitat.

Adult butterflies may live for as little as a week or as long as three months.



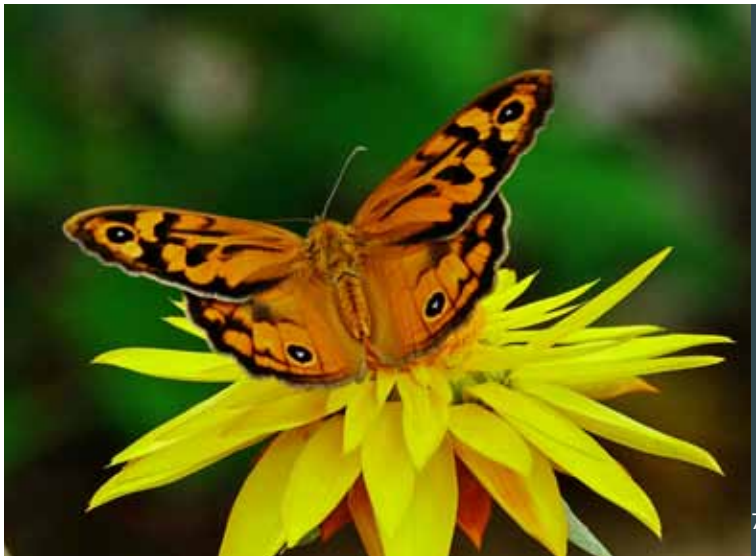
ORANGE ALPINE XENICA

Common Brown

Heteronympha merope

One of our best-known and most widespread butterflies. Occurs through a wide variety of habitats including urban gardens. Common Brown larvae feed on a variety of native and introduced plants. Females are thought to aestivate during the heat of summer; hide away in a form of reverse hibernation.

The 'eye-pattern' on the wings of some butterflies is believed to be a form of mimicry to deter predators.



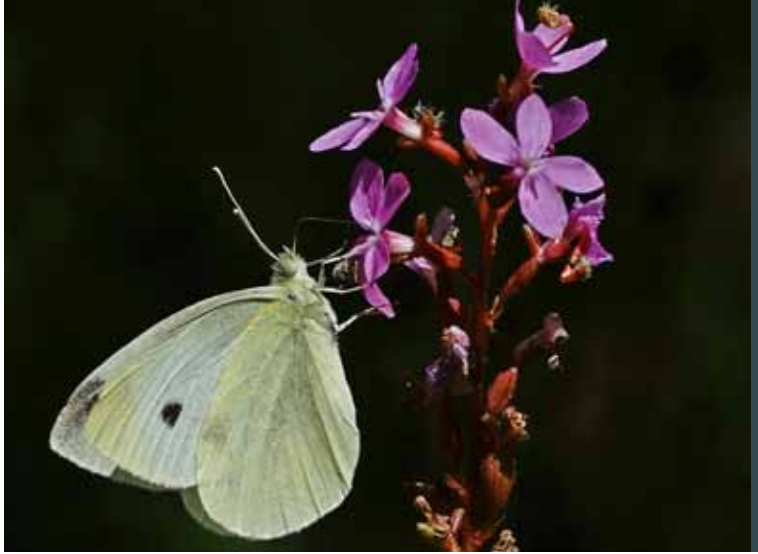
COMMON BROWN

Cabbage White

Pieris rapae

The familiar Cabbage White is an introduced butterfly from Europe and is a serious horticultural pest in some places, especially for brassica plants. It first appeared in Melbourne in 1929 and was first recorded in Sydney in 1941. An attempt at biological control of this pest using predatory wasp species has only been partially successful.

Instead of jaws, butterflies have a retractable feeding tube.



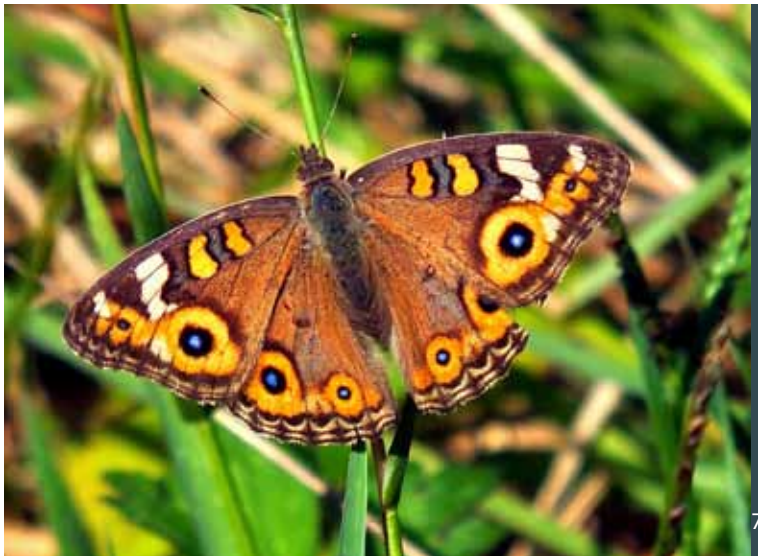
CABBAGE WHITE

Meadow Argus

Junonia villida

This is probably Australia's most widespread butterfly found in a variety of habitats – woodlands, grasslands, urban gardens, etc. The adult butterflies are migratory. When not feeding, the larvae tend to remain hiding in ground litter.

There are around 400 species of butterflies in Australia, about 100 or more can be found in Victoria.



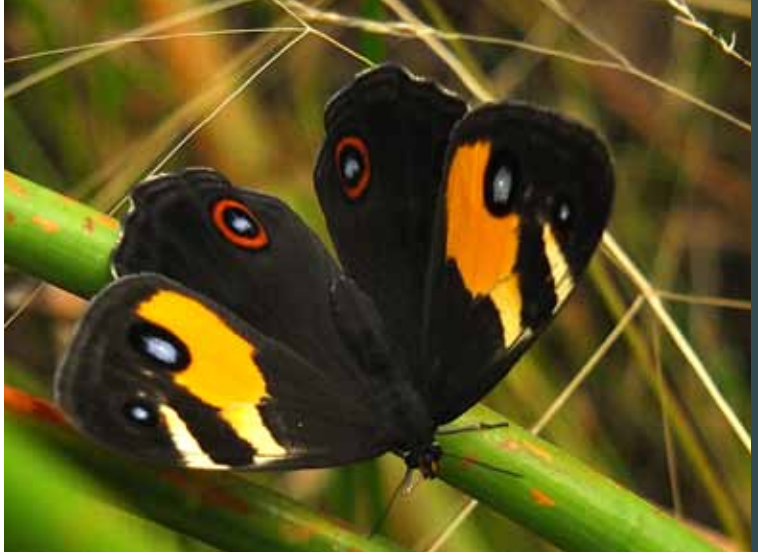
MEADOW ARGUS

Swordgrass Brown

Tisiphone Abeona

Swordgrass Browns like to fly in open, sunny places. They are common in some West Gippsland locations – wherever there are stands of Gahnia sedge, its preferred host plant. Gahnia habitat clearing is thought to be having a significant negative effect on populations of this butterfly.

Male and female butterflies are attracted to one another by pheromones they emit.

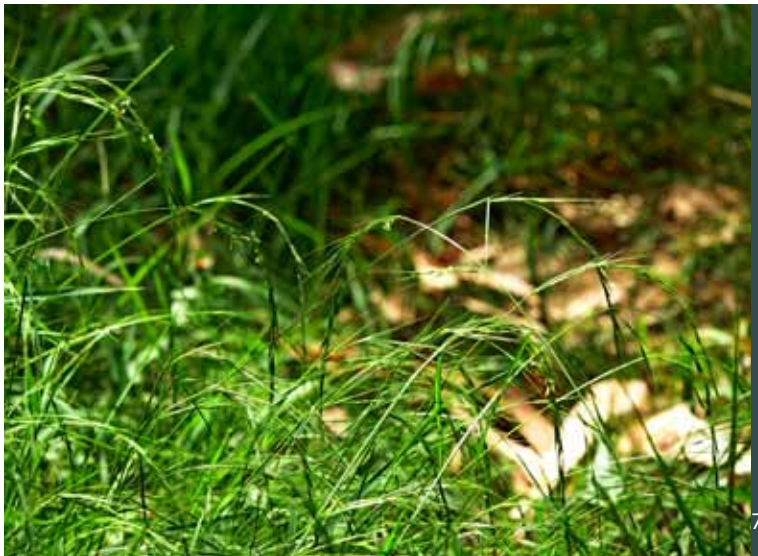


SWORDGRASS BROWN

Weeping Grass

Microleana stipoides

Probably at least a dozen species of butterfly are known to use native Weeping Grass as one of their host plants. It's possible that Weeping Grass is obligatory for some species of butterfly. Overgrazing and over-planting with less drought-tolerant introduced grasses has resulted in Weeping Grass meadows gradually disappearing. Some enlightened nurseries are beginning to urge Microleana as a lawn substitute, particularly for people wanting to attract butterflies to their gardens.



WEEPING GRASS

Other Invertebrates

1 Bee Fly *Staurostichus sp* are a fly (one pair of wings), that look a bit like a bee (two pairs of wings).

2 Mistletoe Moth *Comocrus behri*, striking adult moth mostly seen on sunny summer days collecting nectar from eucalyptus blossom.

3 Feather-horned Beetle *Rhipicera femorata.* Little is known about the life cycle or habits of this unusual beetle. They can be found in open eucalypt woodlands.

4 Orb Weaver *Eriophora sp* mostly, they construct a large circular web to capture prey at night.

5 Damselfly *Ischnura* genus
Inhabit slow-moving waters such as ponds and lakes. Here, the male and female are in the 'wheel' mating position.

6 Blue Skimmer *Orthetrum caledonicum*. Dragonflies have forewings and hindwings that differ in size and shape. They usually rest with their wings open.

7 Crane Fly Family *Tipulidae*. Resemble large mosquitoes but do not bite or feed on blood. Crane Fly larvae live in moist soil.

8 European Wasp *Vespula germanica.* Pest species introduced to Australia in the 1950s. They are attracted to sweet foods and can sting repeatedly.

9 Katydid Family *Tettigoniidae.* Related to grasshoppers and crickets. They eat other insects, leaves, nectar and pollen and are considered a beneficial insect.


1. Bee Fly


2. Mistletoe Moth


3. Feather-horned Beetle


4. Orb Weaver


5. Damselfly


6. Blue Skimmer


7. Crane Fly


8. European Wasp


9. Katydid

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This booklet was designed in Drouin
by Helen Timbury Design

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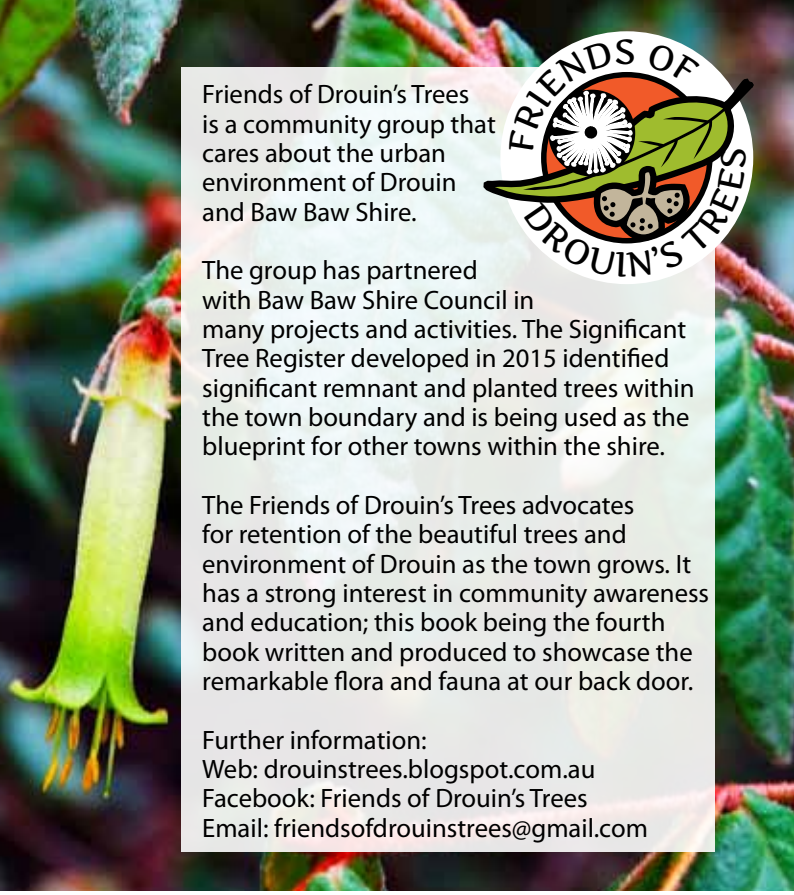

Friends of Drouin's Trees is a community group that cares about the urban environment of Drouin and Baw Baw Shire.

The group has partnered with Baw Baw Shire Council in many projects and activities. The Significant Tree Register developed in 2015 identified significant remnant and planted trees within the town boundary and is being used as the blueprint for other towns within the shire.

The Friends of Drouin's Trees advocates for retention of the beautiful trees and environment of Drouin as the town grows. It has a strong interest in community awareness and education; this book being the fourth book written and produced to showcase the remarkable flora and fauna at our back door.

Further information:
Web: drouinstrees.blogspot.com.au
Facebook: Friends of Drouin's Trees
Email: friendsofdrouinstrees@gmail.com

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