Goodeniaceae Study Group

# Newsletter

## November 2021

No 21

## CONTENTS



## Next Newsletter

The next newsletter will be published in **April 2022**
We would love to hear from you about your garden or what is going on in the local bush with plants of the Goodeniaceae family.
Photos are appreciated too.

## Goodeniaceae Study Group

**Leader:** Royce Raleigh
**Ph:** 03 5383 6200

**Newsletter Editor:** Maree Goods
**Email:** goodeniaceaestudygroup@gmail.com

**Address:** Goodeniaceae Study Group
C/O Wimmera Growers of Australian Plants
PO Box 533, Horsham Vic 3402.

**Email:** Web: http://anpsa.org.au/goodeniaceaeSG/

## A Word from the Leader

*Royce Raleigh*

Welcome to our November Newsletter. At long last our Victorian and NSW members can breathe a little easier now that Covid restrictions have eased.

What a wonderful spring we have had here in western Victoria. Here at Wartook Gardens our Open Days went ahead on 2/3 October with a terrific response from the public and that signalled an opening for many more gardens here in the Wimmera. Lots of money has been raised for charities which have had a pretty lean time over the last couple of years.

We feel very sorry for any members caught up in flood waters or storm damage and hope that your gardens did not suffer too much. We lost a large tree and some shrubs but luckily there was comparatively little damage.

Thank you to all members who have contributed to the newsletter. It is great to hear about your experiences and successes, but it is also great to hear about failures. Remember it is your newsletter, and we are trying to learn from each other. We need to know what sort of information you would like us to distribute. We would welcome any suggestions and keep those contributions coming in ready for the next newsletter.

I would like to see some process whereby we might help members increase their range of plants and any suggestions in this area would be welcome.

I hope that all members get their gardens successfully through summer.

We wish everyone a safe and happy Christmas and we all look forward to a much more relaxed 2022.

*Goodenia willisiana* growing beside a track in Wyperfeld National Park, August 2021.

# Recovery after the New South Wales Fires, 2019-2020

*Text and Photos: Roger Farrow*

I have been following the post fire recovery of the vegetation in Moreton National Park (SE NSW) specifically in the heathlands off the Nerriga Road and have observed the resilience of several species of Goodeniaceae and their prominence in the recovering herbaceous vegetation. *G. bellidifolia. G decurrens* and *G. paniculata* have quickly resprouted from their taproots and the flower display from *G. bellidifolia* is now greater than before the fire presumably due to lack of competition from the shrubs that were burnt to the ground. *Dampiera stricta* has come back in huge swathes from seed that is somewhat reminiscent of the appearance of *D. fusca* after the 2003 fires in the ACT and the 2006 fires in the Tinderry's. I think some of the dire predictions about the demise of species after the inferno in 2019-2020 is greatly exaggerated as the vegetation is highly fire adapted, especially in the heathlands where many species are fire dependant for reproduction. Even *Scaevola albida* (such a misnomer as it so blue) is much more spectacular in flower this year, possibly due to all the extra nutrients in the normally nutrient-poor leached sandstone.

*Goodenia bellidifolia,* Bulee Pass-Nerriga Road. March 2021.

*Goodenia decurrens,* Tianjara. March 2021.

*Goodenia heterophylla* Bulee Pass-Nerriga Road. March 2021.

*Goodenia paniculata,* Nissan-Nerriga Road. One month after the fires.

*Dampiera stricta,* Bulee Pass Nerriga Road. March 2021.

*Scaevola albida,* Nerriga Road. March 2021.

# *Dampiera stricta* - a pyrogenic species?

*Text and Photos: Roger Farrow (ANPS Canberra)*

Pyrogenic species are fire-dependant ephemerals that germinate after the passage of a hot fire and follow up rains. They flower and shed seed in a mass event and the seed remains dormant in the seed bank till the next hot fire when the cycle starts again. Cool winter burns generally do not break dormancy.

The Currawan fire was one of many that started after two years of intense drought in SE Australia from 2018 to 2019. It was ignited from a lightning strike on Currawan Mountain in Morton National Park on November 26, 2019. It burnt for 74 days and spread over nearly 500,000 ha, that is most of the Park. It completely razed the shrub and forb layers leaving just a bed of ash. Substantial rains fell in March 2020 and wet conditions have prevailed to the present. I have been following the regeneration of vegetation at sites in the Park since then. I have found that all of the species present before the fire are progressively regenerating by a variety of mechanisms because the Australian flora, outside the rainforest, is highly fire adapted and has been so since the angiosperms evolved in the Cretaceous era.

*Dampiera stricta.*

*Dampiera stricta* is a common but not abundant understory, herbaceous plant in the Budawang sandstone in Morton NP. It tends to be concentrated in disturbed area at the side of trails. Although a perennial, its changing locations suggest it is not long lived. It reproduces from very small seeds.

*Dampiera stricta*. March 2021.

After the passage of the fire, seedlings of a range of species started to germinate although many were difficult to identify at this stage. By summer 2020-2021, a year after the fire, a mass flowering event of a single species occurred that had never been seen before in the Park. This was the Pink Flannel Flower, *Actinotus forsythii*, a known obligate pyrogenic species. By the autumn of 2021, large areas of the Park were covered by plants of what could be now identified as *Dampiera stricta*.

*Dampiera stricta.*

In spring 2021 these plants burst into flower, covering large areas with a blue haze of colour including areas previously occupied by the Pink Flannel Flower, which by now had completely disappeared. Flower colour varied from dark to pale blue and even white.

*Dampiera stricta.*

*Dampiera fusca,* Booroomba Rocks.

Further evidence of its pyrogenic nature comes from its close relative, *Dampiera fusca*. This exhibited a mass germination event on some mountain tops of the ACT after the 2003 bush fires and in the Tinderry Tops after the 2006 fires there. These plants disappear completely between fires after just one generation and are obligate pyrogenics. The individual plants live 2-3 years and produce several flushes of flowers and seed over this period.

Further Reading

Ooi, M. K. J; Denham, A. J.; Santana, V. M.; and Auld, T. D. (2014). Temperature thresholds of physically dormant seeds and plant functional response to fire: variation among species and relative impact of climate change. Ecology and Evolution, 4 (5), 656-671.

Editor's Note: I am wondering if those who have grown *Dampiera stricta* and *D fusca* in their garden have had the same experience as is those species in the wild. That is they do not live any longer than two to three years. Looking forward to your comments on this.

## *Growing Dampiera in Pots*

*Text and Photos: Maree Goods*

*Dampiera diversifolia.*
This plant in growing in a tub out in the open at Wimmera Native Nursery, Dimboola. It would have to be at least 10 years old.

*Dampiera salahae.*
This has been growing is a tub facing north for about four years. Each summer it goes a bit tatty but in the autumn it puts out new shoots which flower in the spring.

# Growing Goodeniaceae - Mostly in Pots

*Text and Photos: Kevin Sparrow*

I thought I might send through some photos of the Goodeniaceae that I am growing. Most I have growing in pots but some are in the ground.

I have a number of *Goodenias, varia, macmillanii and viscida.*

*Goodenia varia.*

*Coopernookia georgei* is a stunner that is a really easy one to propagate by cutting, growing this in a large tub.

*Goodenias macmillanii.*

*Goodenias viscida.*

## An unknown dainty prostrate

One that sends out runners that I was given, its yellow flowers get scrunched up or top petals hang over.

**Could be a Velleia? Any ideas?** Note: Velleia is now Goodenia.
Editor's Note: Please email the newsletter editor if you have any ideas. The imformation will be passed onto Kevin.

Plant.

Leaf.

Flower.

Scaevola aemula 'Bondi White' is one that you need to keep propagating as it dies down over winter but it grows easy by cutting.

*Scaevola aemula* purple flower works well in a hanging basket.

*Scaevola porocarya* is a lovely pale blue color, I have it growing in a tub, its best to keep propagating it to keep it fresh looking.

*Scaevola striata* is a ripper, purple flowers.

*Scaevola nitida* is a similar looking to *Scaevola crassifolia*.

*Scaevola crassifolia* - shrub form to 1.5m is a brilliant corn flower blue color in flower.

*Scaevola porocarya*

# What Dampiera is This?

*Text and Photos: Maree Goods*

It was prior to the FJC Rogers Seminar on Goodeniaceae in 2018 I struck a plant of Dampiera which the pieces had come from the garden of Royce and Jeanne Raleigh at Wartook Gardens. The patch at Wartook Gardens has grown quite extensively, even out onto the footpath. At Wartook Gardens it has the habit of drying off over the summer but comes back better than ever after the first autumn rains.

I have never been able to grow Dampiera successfully in our garden on the Wimmera Plains north of Horsham. The only way I can grow them is in containers or pots, therefore this plant is very happy in an old steel wheelbarrow.

Even though it has been admired by many over the years and during the weekend of the Seminar at Wartook Gardens, nobody has been able to identify this species of Dampiera. Can you be the first to identify it?

By the way we have now moved into Horsham and working on our new garden which is currently a blank canvas. I am hopeful I will be able to grow some Goodeniaceae in the garden as it is totally different soil. Much more friable and what we have recently planted is looking promising. Not too many deaths yet. I will keep you posted.

# *Lechenaultia biloba*

*Text and Photos: Royce Raleigh*

In a quote from page 70 of Volume 6 "Encyclopaedia of Australian Plants"

"The RHS Dictionary of Gardening describes this outstanding ornamental species as 'perhaps the most beautiful hard wooded shrub in cultivation' and as 'one of the world's most heavenly plants' because of its beautiful blue flowers."

Check this same page for more information including comments on cultivars that were available when this Volume was published in 1993.

When I was a member of Maroondah Group in the 1960's and 70's there were many wonderful selections available which have disappeared since that time.

On our first 13 week trip to WA in 1975, Jeanne fell in love with the beautiful blues of Lechenaultia biloba and has been propagating them ever since. However it is also true that many of the areas where we used to see swathes of Lechenaultia biloba in the past have gradually been disappearing for all sorts of reasons. It is important that we all try to ensure that any good selections that are growing or that we come across are propagated and maintained in gardens.

Jeanne and I have recently planted a garden bed with between 50 and 60 Lechenaultia – mostly biloba. Although some our biloba plants are many years old- some up to 20 years and more, Jeanne has been diligent in the continued propagation of replacement and additional plants.

Lechenaultia biloba has been popular in cultivation for a very long time and it grows naturally over a wide area of the SW of WA. It prefers full sun but will tolerate shade.

Here at Wartook Gardens we have some horrific frosts, so have to be careful where we place plants. As a consequence many of our plants have to be in some shade. Luckily we do have some that are able to take quite severe frost with no damage. With Lechenaultia biloba there are tall and low-growing forms, compact and leggy, suckering and non-suckering. If the garden proves a struggle many will do well in a pot or tub.

Here are some of the forms and colours that we have growing at present.

Perhaps one of our best blues is this deep blue, which has turned out to be frost hardy. It makes a striking plant and we are trying to build up numbers around the garden. It also means that we can plant it anywhere.

This blue and white form is perhaps our hardiest and long-lived plant. It is a long stemmed woody - almost a shrub to a metre high. We have many of these around the garden and all are doing well. To date this form does not sucker for us. We found a lot of this growing naturally in the Fox's Lair Reserve in Narrogin in WA.

This low growing form is one of our best suckering forms. The sky blue flowers make it a most attractive plant and the suckering enables the plant to gradually cover an area.

Wherever there are blue flowers someone is always looking for a white. The books tell us that we often find an odd white

plant among a population that is normally blue. We see it here in the Grampians where *Glossodia major* one of the blue orchids, normally a lovely blue but we can invariably find an occasional white. The white *Lechenaultia biloba* is not common in cultivation – probably because there is little material around for cuttings. To date we have three plants doing well in the garden and Jeanne is trying to build up greater numbers. A lovely plant to put with the blues.

This is a group of *Lechenaultia biloba* around a metre high – hence the wire netting to support them. They are growing in semi-shade under the protection of wattle. This group has been there for many years.

This is probably one of our palest blues. A lovely colour all the same. Another low growing form, that to date, does not sucker for us.

If any members have other colour forms or well-shaped plants we would love to see some photos.

# Scaevolas at Little Forest

*Text and Photos: Phil Trickett*

It's been a great spring for our scaevolas in our South Coast NSW garden – locality Little Forest. We have a number of different forms and species and all have excelled themselves this year with long extended flowering and very few deaths despite our wet conditions (1300 mm so far this year). They are serving to fill in some of the large spaces left after bushfires and garden renovation.

Our largest and most vigorous species is a form of *Scaevola aemula* sourced from the North Coast NSW. It loves our rich soil and damp conditions, growing quickly to more than 2 m in diameter, and flowering profusely. These plants tend to be short-lived, so it's important to keep propagating them from cuttings.

*Scaevola aemula*, blue.

*Scaevola aemula*, pink.

We have had a lot of trouble keeping the pink form of *Scaevola aemula* alive for more than a few months but we have one that appears to have found an acceptable position in our garden. It's now a couple of years old and has been in full flower for months. The branch in the photo is carefully placed to deter our rogue wombats (we have far too many of these!) from digging it out. The pink form is stunning so it is worthwhile persevering to find a spot in your garden that suits its temperamental nature.

*Scaevola nitida* is a species we have had for a number of years, and it is spectacular in flower with its unusual pale blue flowers. This species can be short-lived in summer-wet climates like ours but is easy to propagate from cuttings to keep back-up plants coming on. See photos on following page.

A recent addition to our garden is a hybrid between *Scaevola aemula* and *Scaevola albida*. It's only about a year old but is growing beautifully in a pretty wet spot, indicating that it may have the toughness and longevity of *Scaevola albida*.

One of our star performers has long been a mounded form of *Scaevola albida*. We have never been able to discover the source of this plant, but it receives lots of positive comments from visitors to our garden. An added bonus is that it is very tough and long-lived, powering through even our wettest of times.

*Scaevola aemula* 'Bondi White' is another touchy plant for us, but we have found a successful position for it under a large eremophila. This is the longest-lived one of these we have had, and is continuing to grow and spread. Like all scaevolas it is very easy to propagate from cuttings, so we have a number ready to try in different spots.

Scaevolas are very underrated in gardens. Despite some being short-lived, their prolific, extended flowering and quick growth make them great as feature plants or to fill a spot in the garden. And they are so easy to propagate, even with the most basic propagation set-ups. Once you buy one, you should never have to buy another.

## Plants That Have Died

*Text and Photos: Royce Raleigh*

How often have we seen a plant that has died in the garden and immediately pulled it out of the ground? This maybe a mistake as far as some species of the Goodeniaceae family are concerned. In recent years Jeanne and I have got into the habit of just cutting "dead" plants off at ground level.

Here is a Dampiera that we were growing a couple of years ago – it appeared to be getting established and flowered, then after last summer it gradually faded and died. We were very disappointed as it was one that we had not grown before. We cut it off at ground level and then at the beginning of spring we were delighted to see a sucker appear from where the plant had been. We now hope that we can keep it alive through the summer and that it grows on to flower next year. We will keep you posted as we do not have a clue as to the species.

We have had this happen before to Lechenaultia. About five years ago we had two plants of *Lechenaultia* Ultra Violet that were well established, but had not yet started to sucker, which "died" in the early summer after flowering. Jeanne cut both plants off at ground level. The following autumn after good rains many suckers appeared over a square metre and the following spring we had a lovely display of flowers.

So next time a plant dies, do not pull it out cut it off and you may be lucky enough to get the plant back.

Original plant.

New shoots from what was thought a dead Dampiera.

*Lechenaultia* Ultra Violet.

# Dampieras at Wartook Gardens

*Text and Photos: Royce Raleigh*

We had our Open Days to raise money for the Wimmera Heathcare Foundation on 2-3 October 2021 and the group of plants that made perhaps the greatest show, were the Goodeniaceae. There were many complimentary comments on the wonderful "blue plants" – Dampiera and Lechenaultia.

Jeanne and I have had a fascination with blue flowered plants ever since we began travelling to the West in 1975. Many of us do not realize that Australia has almost as many naturally flowering blue plants as the whole of the rest of world put together. So we have been trying to build up our collection of Dampiera even before that trip, as we brought many with us from Melbourne in December 1974. Most at that time would have been purchased from Australflora Nursery, and others grown from cuttings from members in the Maroondah Group SGAP. Since then we have collected plants from wherever able – nurseries from eastern and South Australia, friends from all over the country and APS members likewise. This has meant buying many plants, but Jeanne has also propagated many from cuttings.

Around about the year 2000 we began mulching with scoria rather than pine bark and the Dampiera in particular have thrived where we have mulched with it 75mm to 100mm deep. We use the scoria referred to as "7mm fines" and because there is a lot of very fine material, we suspect that some trace elements may be able to be taken up by the plants. The scoria seems to have quite a positive effect on all our Dampiera species that we have mulched fully so far.
These are the species that we can identify so far and we will get to our 'unknowns' later.

*Dampiera adpressa,* Qld and NSW.
We have a couple of plants of *Dampiera adpressa* and unfortunately I planted them in a very dry spot and they are struggling after some dry years. In the photo that plant did very well for three years and then got too dry. We will keep trying for a better spot in the garden as apparently it is not well known in cultivation. It requires some moisture in the soil and is used to getting summer rainfall. If members are growing this please let us know your experiences.

*Dampiera alata,* WA.
This is one of our most vigorous species. We have this in a few spots in the garden and they have all done well. It is a great plant to plant on the edge of a raised garden bed. This photo is where we have regenerated some garden beds and is two years old. *D. alata* has flat stems while coronata has triangular stems, but flower colour is very similar.

*Dampiera altissima*, WA.
The books say this is the tallest of the genus – not for us. Have we got the right name? We have been told by numerous people that it is altissima, but we are happy to be corrected if it is not. It is a lovely showy plant which we have to be careful to keep away from frost. We have more than one plant doing well.

*Dampiera coronata*, WA.

This is another plant that does extremely well for us and flowers for such a long time. It has a similar suckering habit to alata and we have let it cover an area of about 12 square metres. It has been growing for about 30 years.

*Dampiera diversifolia*, WA.
We have grown plants of this species for the last 45 years as it is very popular in cultivation. Our plants do suffer from frost and we have to water through the summer. In the past when we used to get plenty of rain we had a patch a one stage 3m across with a mass of blue flowers. We are continually trying new plants in various positions around the garden.

*Dampiera eriocephala*, WA.
A dwarf clumping rootstock with an outstanding plant on top. It has large heads of bright blue flowers. It is in limited cultivation in Victoria as it is somewhat difficult to keep going for many years. We have lost one of our plants but hope that we keep this one going. It needs a very well drained situation but is hardy to frost and dry periods.

*Dampiera fasciculata.*

We first saw this plant growing in the wild near Ravensthorpe and Hopetoun where on some roadsides it made a great display. This is the first time it has flowered for us and it is a most striking plant. Jeanne managed to propagate three plants from cuttings and we will certainly be trying many more. The books say it is a variable species, so we have been lucky to get a good form. A spectacular Dampiera.

*Dampiera hederacea.*
This is an understory plant in it natural habitat which has adapted well to cultivation, but prefers some soil moisture. We have this growing in a number of spots in the garden and some have developed more strongly than others.

*Dampiera lanceolata* Qld, NSW, Vic, SA (Photo Dampiera lanceolata Rankins Springs crop)
Apparently a very variable species and there seems to be some confusion as to whether it is all the same species. The form we like is the tall form from Rankin Springs in NSW which can have stems well over a metre tall. This is by far our tallest Dampiera species that we grow.

*Dampiera lavandulacea.* WA.
This is well known in cultivation where it can form large clumping colonies. We have 2 large clumps of this species and some other plants not doing quite so well. Hardy to frost and dry spells.

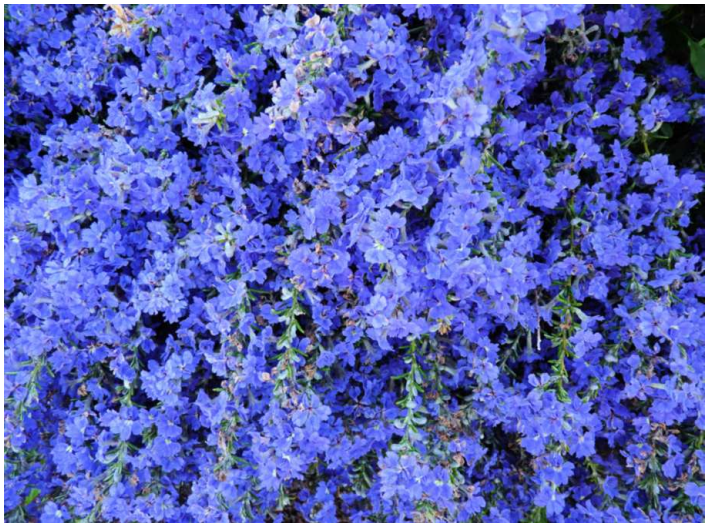
*Dampiera lindleyi*, WA.
Rodger Elliot gave us a plant of this species many years ago and it is still growing, but not thriving. We have since obtained other plants and put them in better positions.

The new growth that comes after flowering is typical of most Dampiera. For propagating, this new growth makes ideal cutting material as soon as it is firm enough to use. Taking pieces from old plants does not seem to give us the same success. If you have not tried cuttings before for Dampiera – give it a go

*Dampiera linearis*, WA.
Another very variable plant that is widely cultivated. Grows well in full sun and semi-shade. You can see by the photo how this plant is thriving since it was mulched 2 years ago. We have many plants that are probably linearis but this is another species like lanceolata that probably need a lot more research to see whether or not they are really all the same species. Linearis has terete stems, and many plants sold as linearis have all sorts of stems.

*Dampiera pedunculata,* WA.
This is another delightful Dampiera with very deep blue to purple flowers. Usually only about 75mm to 100mm tall, and loves to grow on the edge of well-drained garden beds. When in flower this is another one of our favourites.

*Dampiera purpurea,* Qld, NSW, Vic.
Another variable species with some forms also being quite tall. The one referred to as the broad leafed form is probably the most spectacular with bright bluish purple flowers.



*Dampiera rosmarinifolia,* Vic, SA.
This widely cultivated and most ornamental species is almost a local plant for us as it comes into north western Victoria. Flowers are normally blue but mauve, purple, pink or white forms can be found. This is one plant that we have found slow to get established but can soon form large clumps. The range of colours adds interest to the garden.

*Dampiera sacculata* WA.
This is a widespread suckering plant from the SW of WA with very deep blue to purple flowers. It makes a wonderful show when in full flower. None of our plants have begun suckering as yet. Another one of our favourites.

*Dampiera salahae*, WA.
This is a very interesting Dampiera from the Geraldton area of WA. It was sold to us many years ago as another form of linearis. But many have since told us that it is salahae. It had formed a lovely clump before the February 2014 Grampians bushfire when it was burnt to the ground. It is now back to a full clump again. It is a most attractive plant when in flower or when the clump is putting on new growth after flowering.

*Dampiera sericantha,* WA.
This is another species that has been confused with *D. linearis* and many plants sold as *D.sericantha* are in fact *D. linearis*. Our plant is doing quite well on the edge of a garden bed but flowers better in some years than others. A quite attractive low growing species.

*Dampiera teres,* WA.
This is a most attractive plant and one of the later flowering Dampiera. It is quite a vigorous grower which can clump up to a metre high. Plants are usually mauve flowered and rarely pink. The pink form, of which we have a number of plants, is a most attractive soft pink. It is not as vigorous as the mauve but still is growing well for us. Our large plants were burnt to the ground in the February 2014 Grampians bushfire, but soon came back strongly after the fire.

*Dampiera trigona*, WA.

This is a widely cultivated species from the coastal areas of the Darling district in WA. Our plants have usually stayed as one clump, but pruning has stimulated the growth of new stems. Flower colour is usually blue but a pink form has become available in recent years. We have both forms doing quite well.
As you can see some species make a wonderful display of colour when planted on the edge of a garden bed.

**Colour down the drive.** This is an unknown (to us – species) but is one of the more spectacular species that we are growing.

I will leave our "unknowns" for another newsletter as some of them are very interesting and quite different from many that we are growing.