



TALGA NEWSLETTER

THE AUSTRALIAN LAVENDER GROWERS' ASSOCIATION

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

WELCOME TO THE NEW YEAR 2024!

Yes, I know it's February and this new year is well underway, however my last note was back in November and it's been an intense lavender season since then! Our weather in the Blue Mountains was unpredictable and often violent with storms and high humidity making harvesting a bit tricky.

However, I know other parts of the country have had it worse or better depending on the lucky lottery of location and I sincerely hope that wherever you are, you and your loved ones are safe and have had a good summer to date. How was your harvest? **We welcome your photos and stories to share in each issue of ENews, send it before the 10th of each month** to editor Karen McRae at email news@talga.com.au.



The two month break for TALGA Committee has flown by and we are returning to the management of the Association with renewed enthusiasm and ideas. In late January, Fiona Glover and I enjoyed a short trip to Bombala and Bibbenluke in the Monaro region of NSW to attend the Monaro Country Lavender Co-op 30th anniversary celebrations.

During the speeches, we were reminded that the very first registrations for TALGA were taken at their 1994 Bombala conference and our Association was formally launched the following year. Fiona writes about this MCL event later in this edition.

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Click [here to follow](#) the TALGA Facebook page.



Also in this month's ENews is the exciting announcement of our **annual in-person event TALGA Seminar Field Day to be held on Saturday 6 April in Mt Evelyn, Victoria**. We are releasing details of speakers and how to book your spot to attend so check it out and hope to see you there!

We continue our **member-exclusive webinar series in March**, read on for the announcement of the date, topic and speaker, I am excited to be organising these important online information sessions which are accessible to all our far-flung members across Australia.

We welcome new members joined since June last year, Victor Brett NSW, Jason Sims VIC, Laurel Hosking SA, Ronald Van De Winckel TAS, Chris and Tina Irish NSW, Lee Valentine VIC, Donna and Tom Johnston VIC, Eric and Sherrida Edgecombe NSW and Steve Oelsner SA.

Finally, I would like to welcome the newest member to join the Committee, Pascal Jallier, who learned about lavender farming in his home country France and brought his knowledge to a 352 acre property in Braidwood four years ago. We welcome his expertise and career training in Industrial Design, Finance and Marketing and look forward to working with him on TALGA projects during his term as committee member.

If you would like to contribute your time and talents to TALGA, please let me know via email president@talga.com.au- we welcome all volunteers!

Louise Bickerton
President | TALGA | M: 0409 717 899



MEMBER EVENT: SEMINAR FIELD DAY 2024

ANNOUNCING TALGA SEMINAR & FIELD DAY 2024 - REGISTRATIONS NOW OPEN!!

- **WHEN:** SATURDAY 6th APRIL 2024, 9AM-4PM
- **WHERE:** YORK ON LILYDALE, York Road MT EVELYN VIC
- **WHAT:** Seminar sessions focus on agronomy, soil testing and health, weed control, plant maintenance and pruning, site visit to Larkman Nurseries Wandin property. TALGA Committee update on activities to members.
- **BOOK NOW ONLINE:**
<https://www.trybooking.com/CPIAN>

See below for delegate fees.



We are pleased to announce our major in-person event for 2024, and invite Members, Affiliates, and Associates to book now to attend. The event will include:

1) President's Welcome and Association Update on Activities to Members

- *Morning tea (included)*

2) Speaker – Tim Manders, Agronomist, Browns Fertiliser.

Tim has grown up watching his parents develop Warratina Lavender Farm in Wandin and has developed a solid understanding of intensive horticulture of lavender, tree and vine crops by working in Australia and the UK. Tim works with clients to develop farming regimes for optimal soil health leading to positive crop outcomes and long term sustainability.

Tim will focus on advice on growing regimes and targets to grow a healthy crop and help plants tolerate extreme weather conditions, stimulating root development and microbial activity, soil testing regime, and broad advice on options for weed control.

- *Lunch (included)*

3) Panel Discussion – Post Harvest Plant Care – Pruning Techniques and Regional Advice

What care and attention does your lavender need after you harvest? Three lavender growers will discuss pruning, nutrition, and possible problems. Q&A session.

- *Transfer to Field Site at Wandin (a quick fifteen minutes by car)*

4) Visit to Larkman Nurseries, Wandin Propagation Nursery.

Clive, Di and Simon will host our group to inspect their propagation facilities. Clive will discuss lavender varieties and their suitability for climate zones and end uses. Q&A.

Don't delay, the time to book your tickets and accommodation is NOW!
Book your place online at <https://www.trybooking.com/CPIAN>

Cost: Member/Affiliate \$80; Associate \$90; Non-members welcome \$110
(there is a small booking fee charged by Trybooking, GST not applicable)

Venue: The venue York on Lilydale is a casual local hotel with conference and accommodation facilities on the doorstep of the Yarra Valley, east of Melbourne CBD.

Accommodation: We recommend you book your accommodation at the venue as soon as possible, follow this link to view room options: <https://www.yorkonlilydale.com.au/accommodation>

Contact me via email president@talga.com.au or Fiona admin@talga.com.au if you have any questions.

We are looking forward to seeing many of you at Mt Evelyn/Wandin in April!

Cheers!

Louise Bickerton, TALGA President
M: 0409 717 899

MEMBER BENEFIT: WEBINAR SERIES

UPCOMING WEBINAR: 'ID AND MANAGEMENT OF PHYTOPHTHORA' (NEW!)

DATE: 13 MARCH

TIME: 6.30PM AEDT

Our webinar series continues with TALGA organising the first one for 2024 in March, to be held on **Wednesday 13 March at 6.30pm with the topic of 'Identification and management of Phytophthora'**.

Our guest presenter for this topic is Sarah Dunstan, a soil nematode research specialist who also has knowledge of other plant diseases after working at the Royal Botanic Gardens in Sydney in the plant disease diagnostic unit as well as with Sydney University in the Faculty of Agriculture in Plant Pathology.

She has a broad knowledge of fungal diseases and will talk about how to identify water moulds, especially phytophthora, management and control of this common soil pathogen that can severely affect our lavender crops.

A link to the webinar will be sent to all members closer to the date, so put it in your diary/phone now!



'HARVESTING LAVENDER' WEBINAR LINK NOW AVAILABLE TO VIEW

Towards the end of last year (in November), as part of our webinar series, and hosted by NZLGA, Keith Brown, owner of Harvester Solutions in NZ and long time lavender grower and master distiller of lavender essential oil, discussed options for harvesting lavender if you grow only a few plants to large scale commercial harvesting.

Keith presented all ways to harvest lavender from one bush to one million bushes! The Q&A and participant discussion was most informative and we thank NZLGA for organising Keith to speak.

Click [here](https://youtu.be/vPsuZYhpa-g) to watch the recording or copy and paste: <https://youtu.be/vPsuZYhpa-g>

**As always, these links are not to be shared or posted as this content is for TALGA/NZLGA members-only, we hope these opportunities to learn and ask questions are a valuable element of your TALGA membership.*

Stay tuned for upcoming webinars, and let us know if you'd like to suggest areas of interest to cover.

MONARO COUNTRY LAVENDER COOP 30th Anniversary Celebrations

- By Fiona Glover

Monaro Country Lavender Coop celebrated their 30th anniversary on the Tuesday 23rd January and Wednesday 24th January this year at Bombala, NSW.

The Monaro Country Lavender Association was formed 30 years ago amongst a group of lavender farmers located in the South Eastern region of NSW on the Southern Monaro Plains. The Coop was registered 22 years ago. It offers workshops, and distillation services for members at the old railway station premises at Bombala.

TALGA member Jan Illingworth lives at Bombala and is amongst the early members of this group. (Jan attended and was part of a panel discussion at the Field Day at Chin Chin Farm in 2022. Jan is a wonderful source of information on growing and propagating Lavender (Extract from the Lavender Journal, 2022).

These two days in late January featured workshops for prospective growers, a visit to the delightful lavender farm Semperfields at nearby Bibbenluke owned by Eric & Sherrida Edgecombe, a lavender inspired dinner menu by local chef Adam McLean and distillation demonstration at the Coop's distillery, housed in the old goods shed at the historic Bombala Railway Station.

Other attractions for travellers in the area like myself, were the Platypus Reserve and a visit to the Old Hut at Delegate, site of the first settlement in this area 1840's. Perfect weather for travelling from Victoria with the countryside so green from recent rains.

Since returning it is very nice to learn that Eric and Sherrida Edgecombe have just joined TALGA. Their farm was picture perfect as they had held back harvest until the event was over. I look forward to meeting up with them at the next lavender event!



THE DISTILLERY at Snowy River Lavender

- By Sharon Goldsworthy | Snowy River Lavender www.snowyriverlavender.com.au

In a boutique distillery, 'the still' is viewed as an artisan's tool which is central and ultimately decisive in the character and quality of essential oils produced. Distillation is not a rigid process, instead, beyond the accommodation of basic principles, offers many choices from which to craft a protocol of production.

The following are some of the choices we have made in setting the parameters and protocols which determine the character, quality and yield of lavender and lavandin essential oils produced by the distillery at Snowy River Lavender.

1. Distilling is a manual process at every level.
2. Flower phase at harvest is predominantly 60% spent 40% fresh and budded (see timing harvest)
3. Flower is primarily distilled as single cultivar charges. Occasionally we do distilled blends this is a fully recorded process registering both the cultivars included and their ratio in the still charge.
4. Dedication to recognising and maintaining species diversity in the distillation process. This done by developing new cultivars and through our population lavender program.
5. Flower is distilled whole and predominantly fresh (we sometimes also distil dry flower but prefer to work the harvest close to distillation). The condition of flower in every charge of the still is recorded, with the oil produced, traceable back to the cellar stock.
6. The still is stainless steel with a 440 litre steam capacity /100 -125 charge capacity; and an offset steam source.
7. Water source is roof harvested rain water, pH 7. In dry years the distillery sometimes necessarily operates with spring water pH 6 – 6.9. The pH of steam entering the still is the pH of the source water and is checked and recorded at regular intervals across the distilling season.
8. The distillery's location altitude is 1140 metres.
9. The length of distillation for lavender flower is 2 hours, and for the higher yielding lavandin, the duration is 2 ½ hours. For hydrosol the end of the collection is determined by a shift in the pH away from the desired acidity. The shift in the pH is an indicator that the phyto-chemistry of the hydrosol is spent and it is returning to the base neutrality of water. We find that the hydrosol maintains its acidity for the full duration of our essential oil distillation. We rarely have to cut it short.
10. Record keeping has allowed us to pursue our commitment to tracking the seasonal quality and character of our essential oils across time. Since distillation started at Snowy River Lavender in 2003, we have kept full record of every still charge, noting everything from date, cultivar or distilled blend, time started and finished, essential oil yield, farm location, harvest time, condition of flowers and seasonal aberrations. Through this data we have built a farm history to which constant reference is made. Hydrosols are also part of this record making, keeping notes on pH levels as well as those of yield and other information as per the essential oils. Since 2013 we have refined our recording system so that every still charge is fully traceable back to a bottle or cube in the cellar. In this way we maintain the integrity of what happens in the still and also the distinctiveness of the source plant and its specific conditions of existence.

11. Essential oils and hydrosols need time beyond distillation for their true aromatic character and refinement to emerge. We give our hydrosols 6 - 12 months cellaring before being released for sale. Our essential oils are capped and cellared after distillation then allowed to settle for about 3 months before they go through what we term the drying out process, where minuet residues of hydrosol in the essential oil is removed. The dry essential oil is again bottled in a dark glass bottle under nitrogen vapour, and re-cellared to be released for sale after 12 months.

Note: We seek to full distil our oils and hydrosols. This is a decision not based on quantitative considerations but qualitative. It has been observed, both visually and aromatically, that the oil emerging at the beginning of the distillation is not the same as that emerging at the end. This would indicate a progression in the emergence of the plant chemistry across the duration of distillation based on the volatility of individual compounds. While most of the essential oil comes through in the first 45 minutes, or even faster in more industrialised systems, a longer distillation time allows the less volatile compounds to also be distilled and a more complete essential oil and hydrosol is produced.

Distillation time is an active area of farm research which has developed anecdotally from observations and trialling over a number of years. We are in the process of formalising some experimental research which will explore more fully our observations.

MEMBER FARM UPDATES

Glenvalley Lavender (VIC) | Cate and Neil

Despite having so much rain in Central and East Gippsland we only lost some baby plants but all the are thriving apart from just the odd one that just died in amongst very healthy plants.

We had a very successful weekend at the International Rose Garden Festival in Morwell; it was very tiring as it went into the night on the Saturday and then we were back again on Sunday, but well worth it.

Looking forward to doing this event again in 2024.

We harvested early, as flowers were out earlier this season.

We harvested our angustifolia Bee and put it through our still.

We learnt a lot about oil distillation and production by attending the conference and we didn't run our still as long as we did last time.

It was well worthwhile attending the conference.



We had a lot of rain throughout December and January, we lost a small amount of plants. We got a good harvest though, and are very pleased with oils we produced this season.

We also got a call from a professional photographer who was coming down to Traralgon from Ballarat for a holiday and asked us if she could do some pet photography at our place. We had done 95% of our harvesting so there wasn't much flowers left.

We had a double row of Grosso that we had left with flowers on, although the Bees had a good go at. However, the photos this lady took were magnificent. Hope everyone had a good Christmas. A Happy New Year everyone and hope you had a good harvest.

Warratina Lavender Farm (VIC) | Annemarie Manders

A promotional poster for 'Dog Day' at Warratina Lavender Farm. The top left features a sprig of lavender. The center has the text 'WARRATINA lavender farm' in a serif font, with 'Dog Day' in a large, orange, cursive script below it. A photograph of a small, fluffy, light-brown dog sitting in a field of lavender is on the left. To the right of the photo, a purple box contains the event details: 'Sunday 18 February 2024', '10.00am to 4.00pm', a QR code, and the text 'SCAN ME TO BOOK NOW'. Below the photo, text lists activities: 'Best In Show, Best Catcher and Best Behaved, agility competitions and specialised training classes. PLUS a doggy market full of beautiful gifts for your pup and professional pet photography sessions!'. The website 'warratinalavender.com.au/dogday' is listed below that. At the bottom, it says 'Entry \$15, Children under 12 free'. The footer of the poster includes 'WARRATINA LAVENDER FARM', the address '105 Quayle Road, Wandin Yallock - 03 5964 4650', and a small lavender sprig graphic.

The harvest season has been very busy for us with huge tourism interest. Our visitation was mainly from Indian, Asia, Singapore & some local residents. We ran half to hourly talks and demonstrations together with self-guided garden walks around the homestead followed by a lavender ice-cream.

Sadly the leasing of the Tea Room has been extremely difficult hence the reason I am now running it as from the week before Christmas.

This was an added unexpected load and drain on my energies.

We got through and now look forward to the last event of the season being a Dog day and Market on 18th February.

The farm and Tea Room will then close until the next lavender season.

Our Online Shop will continue as will a package offering the use of the café facilities for rent, not lease.

This will be on an hourly, daily or multiple day usage. Keep your eyes on our website for further details. From early March we will commence the cut back of all the lavenders.

All our lavenders will have received their tonic of Go Go Juice in February as a boost after their work in producing their flowers. We will then give them some fertilizer and continue with the never-ending weed control. Happy Lavender growing, and enjoy slowing down a little after the season.

Wine Country Lavender (NSW) | Karen McRae

In December we harvested our angustifolia, which flowered earlier than usual with all the hot dry weather we've had this season.

We have continued with our weed steaming process, which has been great, but due to the lack of rain, we are currently running very low on irrigation water.

We have had one of the hottest summers yet and our dam is pretty much empty! Temperatures have been in the low 40s on several days, and only dropping to about 26 degrees Celcius on some of the warmer nights.

We also harvested some intemedias, resulting in some beautiful long stemmed bunches.

After harvest, we distilled some of the lavender, and we also dried some bunches. We are certainly looking forward to some cooler weather and some showers!



FOR SALE

Lavender Business For Sale

- ⇒ Perfect opportunity to take this well-established business of 20 years and take it to the next level
- ⇒ All raw materials, packaging, existing made products, labels, gazebo and tables, sewing machines, bottling apparatus, website, recipes (intellectual property) etc included in the business (Purchase of Toyota Hi-Ace can be negotiated)
- ⇒ Producing a range of over 80 quality lavender-based products
- ⇒ Sound customer base, consistent website orders, markets, retirement village visits and talks to Probus/Gardening/Other Clubs make a good income stream
- ⇒ Would suit a working lavender farm with the potential to open a shop to customers or can be run without having the lavender grown on site – all raw materials to make the products can be purchased from TALGA members
- ⇒ Suit working from home – all products hand-crafted at home
- ⇒ Ideally suits one person, although 2 people at markets is easier - sewing skills needed and ability to follow recipes
- ⇒ Figures available on request

Contact: Ros and John | Ph: 0404805310 | www.zephyrfarm.com

WOMEN & LEADERSHIP | AUSTRALIA

WOMEN IN FARMING AND AGRICULTURE ELIGIBLE FOR LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT SCHOLARSHIPS

Women & Leadership Australia has announced new scholarships to enable more women to access world-class leadership and workplace skill development programs. By combining cutting-edge leadership theory with practical application, and a flexible part-time delivery, Women & Leadership Australia offers an unparalleled learning experience designed to fit into your busy schedule

Available Now: **Partial scholarships for women in Farming and Agriculture ranging from \$1,000 to \$5,000 per person**, for one of four leadership and workplace skill development programs. These scholarships are aimed at encouraging more women to increase their impact at work, progress their career, and step into leadership roles.

Registrations of interest close on **22nd March 2024** via: www.wla.edu.au/industry/farming/

Through work with key associations and organisations like the ALGA, Women & Leadership Australia's objective is to raise awareness and take action to achieve gender equity. Your support helps us to create development opportunities and make scholarships available for the women in your industry.



“Australia has a rich and diverse native flora containing a vast number of essential oil-bearing plants. A primary barrier to the expansion of production of these oils is a lack of formal characterisation and standardisation of Australia native essential oils.

For the first time, AgriFutures Australia has addressed this barrier by commissioning this project, which describes the methods and outcomes of research required to establish industry standards and regulatory documents for emerging Australian native essential oils.

This project has also resulted in the establishment of an R&D database to facilitate availability of this information to growers, traders, buyers and consumers of Australian native essential oils, as well as products containing them.

The creation of industry standards for emerging Australian native oils will facilitate trade and increase demand for these products by allowing buyers and traders to confirm the oils' authenticity, quality and consistency.”

Click here to download the report (free digital copy):

<https://agrifutures.com.au/product/developing-industry-standards-for-australian-native-oils/>

This project is the outcome of EOPAA's goal to establish a standards programme to support the promotion and trade of Australian Native oils.

The standards will be reviewed annually and all feedback is formally noted and included as part of the review.



UPCOMING EVENTS OF INTEREST – Click images to read more.



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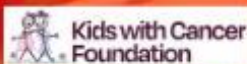
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FLOWER AND
GARDEN SHOW**

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High Tea - Final Tables Available





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Jane Edmanson

meet Jane
at her Plant Clinic

Yarra Valley Autumn Plant Fair & Garden Expo

April 20 & 21, 2024 - 10am-5pm

125 Quayle Road, Wandin VIC

www.yarravalleyplantfair.com.au

Discounted Tickets Online

f @yvplantfair



Stephen Rhyan

MC

Introducing >>

The Australian Perennial Plant Collection by Phillip Vaughan

- Begonia Display will be created by Peter from the Tuberous Begonia Garden
- 50+ vendors offering perennials, natives, iris, succulents, fruit trees, indoor, rare & old fashioned plants + many more.
- Kids potting, drawing and other fun activities. All kids receive a FREE plant.
- Sunday rare plant AUCTION raising funds for the Kids with Cancer Foundation
- Meet Jane Edmanson at the Plant Clinic with your garden questions
- Landscape installations and advice
- Orchid potting demonstrations
- Plant Crech attended by the Kids with Cancer Foundation volunteers
- Quality garden tools, garden art and furniture
- Devonshire tea, yummy local cakes & food trucks, local wines & beer
- Lucky Door prize drawn every hour

Dogs on a leash welcome - FREE onsite parking - Wheelchair friendly



Yarra Valley Autumn
**Plant Fair
& Garden Expo**

Ficus dammaropsis
(Highland Breadfruit)

TICKETS

from \$13 online
or \$15 at the gate

For 10+ tickets
contact Clive on
0414 242 710

f @

