



## Friends of Venus Bay Peninsula Inc

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### Plant of the month: Kangaroo Grass *Themeda triandra*



Kangaroo Grass *Themeda triandra* is a perennial tussock grass with reddish flowering stems to over 1 metre high and limp, flat or channelled bluish-green leaves to 50 cm. The attractive bronze inflorescence or flowering structure contains fertile and infertile spikelets enclosed in a sheath on branched stems, from September to March.

Kangaroo Grass is a dominant species of grasslands that used to cover wide areas of Australia, but are now critically endangered due to land clearing, weed and grazing pressures with less than 5% of the original grasslands remaining in Victoria. Several significant patches



remain at Venus Bay and these should be preserved and protected. Unlike exotic weedy grasses that dry out in early summer and constitute a fire hazard, Kangaroo Grass grows over the summer period and remains green over the hot dry months, posing little fire threat.

Clumps of Kangaroo Grass make interesting garden or rockery plants with their nodding heads. It is adaptable to most soils and conditions. Maintenance is not necessary but if slashing is done this should be done in early spring. Propagation is from seed or division of older clumps. The Aborigines used the stems and leaves to make string and nets and the seeds were ground to make cakes.

Grasses belong to the Poaceae family, one of the largest in the world, and are found in almost every habitat. *Themeda* comes from the Arabic 'thaemed' a clay pan and the genus *triandra* comes from the Greek 'tries' meaning three and 'aner', man. For further information please visit FVBP website above. Photo:

Lorraine Norden.