



NEWSLETTER

Please
note:

August 2019

P.O. Box 111, GLEN FORREST, WA 6071

Meet: Octagonal Hall, 52, McGlew Rd., Glen Forrest.
4th Friday of the month. Doors open 7.00pm for 7.30pm

Committee 2019

President: Alasdair Adam

Vice President: Pam Riordan

Treasurer: vacant

Secretary: Sandy Stone

Minutes Secretary: Penny Hussey

Committee Members: John Bates, Lee Roberts,
Fran Kininmonth

Email:

For all email contact to individual Committee Members please use the WSWA's generic email:

eastern.hills.branch@wildflowersocietywa.org.au

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/easternhillswildflowersoc/>

Coming Events July

Thursday 4th July

Committee Meeting

4.00pm: Octagonal Hall

Propagation Group

Plant Learners' Group

Seed Cleaning Group

These groups are in recess

Excursion – Botanical Ramble

Saturday 20th July

Glen Forrest Conservation Area

Leader: Joy Collins

10.00-12.00noon.

Meet at Glen Forrest P.S. car park at the corner of Glen Forrest Drive and Smith Street for 10 am start.

This walk is not taxing.

Friday 26th July

Evening meeting

“Fortescue Wetlands”

Mike Lyons

Many years ago I remember being astonished, flying south from somewhere on the north coast, to see a huge sheet of water and swamp covering the north-eastern part of the Fortescue Valley, north of the Hamersley Range. This is the Fortescue Wetlands, as strange and unusual in their way as the Hamersley gorges themselves (though perhaps not as scenic!).

Mike Lyons will describe and illustrate this extraordinary ecosystem. It has a large number of diverse wetlands, containing unusual biodiversity. Managing them to maintain the flora and fauna presents a unique challenge, especially as it is station country.

While the nearby Hamersley gorges are often visited, these arid area wetlands are not so well known. This should be an extremely fascinating talk. And maybe add an extra dimension to your next visit north?

Don't miss it!

Future Events August

Thursday 1st august

Committee Meeting

4.00pm Octagonal Hall

Propagation Group

Plant Learners' Group

Seed cleaning Group

These groups are in recess

Excursion Botanical Ramble

Saturday 24th August

Moola Road Reserve

10.00-12 noon. Meet and park at Lot 155 Glenburn Road (south off Thomas Road into

Moola Road, then west into Glenburn); there will be a sign at the gate. The walking track has one steep section but it is not difficult. Hopefully there will be a good display of flowers.
Leader: Mitzi Wehleck

Friday 23rd August
Evening Meeting
“DNA and the Marsupial Mushrooms”
Elaine Davison

Fungi are an important food for many of our smaller marsupials, as anyone who has been to Dryandra Woodland and noticed toothmarks in the toadstools will know. Many of the spores consumed remain perfectly identifiable in their scats. DNA technology can now link this bit of the foodchain more closely together, and illuminate the astonishing complexity of our native ecosystem.

Elaine Davison is a plant pathologist who has worked on diseases in native plants and horticulture. She is currently particularly interested in Amanitas (Ooooh! Poisons!!!!)

This will be a fascinating talk, right at the cutting edge of modern technology.

Put it in your diary!

QUIZ

Which Banksia is this? It grows to a small tree on sand or sandy gravel.

We saw it in full flower on sand in Talbot road reserve.



(Answer at end of Newsletter.)

REPORTS

Friday 28th June

Evening meeting **“Bushland Survey at Hamelin Station, Shark Bay”**

Judith Harvey and Sarah Luxton

As part of the Wildflower Society’s ‘Bushland Survey Programme’, for the last three years visits have been made to Hamelin Station, on the south-east corner of Shark Bay. Sarah explained that the station was owned by Bush Heritage, an Australia-wide not-for-profit organisation dedicated to conserving and enhancing Australia’s natural heritage. This area is very interesting floristically as it lies on the boundary between the South-west and the Eremaean Floristic Regions.

Judith then described how the survey works, including what the volunteer surveyors do. She illustrated accommodation and work areas and explained that the weather often determines what can be achieved – annuals are poor during drought, for example, while 2018 was so wet they couldn’t get to some sites!

Illustrations were then shown of the different vegetation types, and some of the plants found within them.



This beautiful small convolvulus, *Duperraya sericuea*, can be found twining up shrubs in the open woodlands under Northern York Gum.



Acacia grasbyi, with its delightful minniritchie bark, is an important component of Open Acacia Tall Shrublands.

This was an extremely interesting talk, opening our eyes to the diversity of species in a little-known area of the State. It might also have inspired some of the audience to join a survey in future!

Penny Hussey

**Saturday 15th June
Botanical Ramble
Talbot Road Reserve, Swan View**

A small group assembled on a grey, overcast morning, to meander gently through the mostly unspoilt bushland in Talbot Road Reserve. It was a very gentle ramble indeed, first through a sandy area, then up a very slight rise onto gravel. This area has obviously been mined for gravel in the past, but most places have regenerated strongly – if in somewhat monospecific stands.



The group included a very young lass, her mum who looked as if she was about to produce a sibling at any moment (!) as well as older

persons, some slightly 'mobility-impaired'; so we meandered along gently, chatting and botanising as we went.

In fact, because of the slow start to the season, not much was yet in flower, but hoveas, leucopogons and various peas kept us smiling. One intriguing small shrub consisted of leafless stems with fat brown buds along their length. Was it a wattle? Then someone spotted that a bud had burst – it was *Daviesia triflora*, Rushy Bitter-pea! We discussed how honey bees, too heavy to use the landing field designed for native bees, robbed nectar from the side so leading to fewer seeds being pollinated.

The extra species noted have been added to EHB's plant list for the area. Please contact me if you would like a copy emailed to you.

Penny Hussey

**Susannah Brook Catchment
Planting Day**

Thank you, Eastern Hills Branch for the loan of the urn, we were lucky enough to have our generator providing the power to keep the urn hot all morning for the many cups of hot beverage required by the volunteers.

The day began showery but by 10 am the sun began to shine, and many seedlings were safely in their planting holes. About 21 adults turned up for planting and there were some hardworking children ready to get muddy and hands dirty to help improve this site.



There were between 1500 and 2000 seedlings and despite the hard work of the volunteers about 500 were left over. City of Swan came to the rescue and provided manpower to complete the job during the next couple of days.

Thank you so much to Lee Roberts who gave up her Sunday morning to help (see photo) and to Robyn Rudeforth who not only grew the

beautiful diverse seedlings but delivered them to site and assisted with planting on Sunday morning.

Susannah Brook Catchment Group are very grateful to all who gave up their time to volunteer and plant tube stock; the planet is in better shape for their persistence.

A BBQ followed on from the busy morning to thank everyone, the children also took part in a treasure hunt.

Sandy Stone

PROPAGATION GROUP – Proposal to change the frequency of meetings

It has been suggested that at the start of this growing season, the Propagation Group should change its current meeting schedule of once a fortnight, to one of once a month.

Members (or occasional attenders) of this group, what do you think? Would this be better?

Please contact Sandy Stone, via the EHB email address, and say whether this would be more suitable.

PLANT OF THE MONTH

Dichopogon (Arthropodium) capillipes
Nodding Lily

WA does not have many bulbous, cormous or tuberous perennials, but one common one is the Nodding Lily, *Dichopogon capillipes*. One reason why so many people notice it is that the plant flowers from November to March, in summer, when not many things are out.

It grows as a leafy tussock, with flowering stems up to 1m tall. The leaves often wither

and die off before the flowers appear. Tubers develop at the tips of the roots.

The flowering stem is branched, the light mauve flowers are in groups of 2-7, and hang downwards.

The plant grows from Geraldton across the south-west to Norseman, on many different soils, from limestone under Tuart, to sand in woodlands on the Coastal Plain, and laterite and granite in the Hills. It is especially common on granites on the Darling Scarp.

Where they co-occur, feral pigs will dig up the plant to consume the tubers.



(photo: Friends of Trigg Bushland)

Robyn Rudeforth

Answer to Quiz:

It is Firewood Banksia, *B. menziesii*.

That was an easy one, wasn't it! Both the leaf shape and the inflorescence colour are very distinctive.

Next month, see how you go with a harder one!

The views and opinions expressed in the articles in this Newsletter are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the Wildflower Society of Western Australi