



NEWSLETTER

Please
note:

September 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 September

Thursday 5th September

Committee Meeting
4.00pm: Octagonal Hall

Tuesday 9th September

Propagation Group and
Plant Learners' Group

Will both start again, 12 noon to 3pm, at the Octagonal Hall.

Friday 27th September

Evening Meeting

"Grasses of the Perth Region"

Una Bell

Grasses are an extraordinarily important family worldwide, but in the south-west of WA grasslands do not dominate vegetation. Instead, the plants are small and often inconspicuous so that they are sometimes hardly noticed. Nevertheless they are an

important and fascinating part of the ecosystem

Una has taught herself to be one of the top grass experts in WA, and has written several books on the family. Come along and be amazed at the beauty and diversity of these plants.

Excursion – Botanical Ramble

Saturday 28th September

Coolgardie Road Granites

10.00 – 12.00 am

Leader: Mitzi Wehlack and Penny Hussey

10.00-12.00noon.

Turn south off Thomas Rd, Mundaring, into Coolgardie Road, and then right (west) into Forrest Avenue. Park at the end.

This is an interesting small block, going from Jarrah/Marri forest on the lateritic plateau down to a creek through granite swards that flows into the Helena River. The walking track is not difficult, though it does have a steepish section.

Future Events October

Thursday 3rd October

Committee Meeting
4.00pm Octagonal Hall

Monday 14th October

Propagation Group and
Plant Learners' Group

12.00 noon to 3pm. Octagonal Hall. Bring your lunch.

Seed cleaning Group

This group is in recess

Thursday 24th October

Excursion – all day

Wildflower Garden at Boddington

Meet 9.00am at the Octagonal Hall. Bring lunch. If there are 12 people who want to go, a bus will be arranged. If not, we could car pool.

If you are going, you must book with the EHB email, see above.

Friday 25th October

Evening Meeting

“A discussion on Western Australia’s Arid Lands”

Wendy Thompson

Dr Wendy A. Thompson is an ecologist and Louisiana transplant in Australia for nearly 20 years, by way of Sydney, Kalgoorlie and Perth. After completing her PhD at the University of New South Wales in Sydney, Wendy found herself undertaking botanical surveys in the deserts of Western Australia. The talk will highlight some of those desert journeys and the importance of biological survey in Western Australia. Since moving to Perth, she’s worked in research, environmental regulation, policy, land management and monitoring, with a keen interest in bridging the gap between science and policy.

Excursion Botanical Ramble

Saturday 26th October, 10.00am

Location to be decided

VALE

Hazel Cole

Hazel Cole passed away 29th August; she was 98. For the last few months she has been in the Capecare nursing home in Busselton with some dementia.

I have known Hazel since the late 90s as an amateur botanist and as an enthusiastic native plant gardener in Eagle Bay and Dunsborough. Over these roughly 20 years, Hazel has been my mentor in learning the WA flora, in seed collecting, in garden design, in cultivating the WA flora but mostly in catching an enthusiasm for the Western Australian flora.

Over the past few years, Hazel had not been able to read, so I have been reading the WSWA newsletter to her, the Zanthorea newsletter (she obtained some of her first plants for cultivation from Jean Hooper), and the Eastern Hills newsletter so that she could keep up with her friends there. Like the propagators for the Eastern Hills’ sales – Janet

Atkins, Joy Collins, others... She will be greatly missed.

Richard Clark, Secretary, South West Capes Branch



Hazel potting at EHB in the 1980s.

Future Events

Friday 22nd November
Evening meeting

AGM

All committee positions vacant

Please note: Almost the entire membership of the current committee has indicated that they will not be standing again in 2020. If we do not have sufficient nominations for a new committee, the Eastern Hills Branch will have to close down.

**Do you want this to happen?
If not, please volunteer to help.
It is not an onerous task!**

QUIZ

What is this? We saw it on the walk!



It forms a medium-sized dense, upright shrub, with noticeably bright green leaves that have hairy margins.

The flowers are yellow or orange, and the back

of the pollen presenter ages to red. The plant grows in heavy shade on south-facing slopes in the Helena and Canning Valleys.

It is classified P4, restricted in occurrence, but not endangered.

[Nb: clue to family, I mentioned a 'pollen presenter'!]

(Answer at end of Newsletter.)

Penny Hussey

REPORTS

Friday 26th July
Evening meeting

"DNA and the Marsupial Mushrooms"

In a clear and beautifully presented talk, Elaine Davison started by explaining what fungi are and where they fit into the (very complicated) 'tree of life'. Some have motile spores with a flagellum – like sperm – and are more closely related to animals than to plants! Although we are most familiar with toadstools, most fungi are microscopic. Worldwide there are some 100,000 named species – mostly toadstools – and some 2-3 million waiting to be described. Lots of work for mycologists!

Many fungi are saprophytic, decomposing dead plant material. These are very important – without them we'd be buried in plant debris. Some however are parasitic, causing disease in living plants and animals, such as the dieback fungus, *Phytophthora*. Many fungi are mycorrhizal; they interact with plant roots, giving them mineral nutrients and receiving carbohydrates in return. These are also 'good guys' and include the amanitas, Elaine's special interest.

Elaine explained that she is currently studying the fungal genus *Amanita*, with the help of grants, including from the WA Naturalists' Club. She first got interested in the genus when searching for a pink-gilled species, *Amanita carneiphylla*, in the sandy firebreaks at Murdoch University during the late 1980s. [Well, folks, here is Elaine on one of those long ago fungal forays!]



This genus includes some extremely poisonous species,

including the red and white-capped Fly Agaric (often pictured with gnomes sitting on top) and the European Deathcap, introduced around the world on oak seedlings. It occurs in Victoria, South Australia and the ACT.

Amanita has about 1,000 species worldwide, but one section, *Arenaria*, only occurs in the Southern Hemisphere, and includes all of WA's kinds. It is a very ancient group, isolated since the Southern Ocean opened up and split Australia away from Antarctica about 33 million years ago.

Elaine thinks there are about 30 species locally. She hopes to produce a field guide and other materials that will help identification and understanding of these fascinating organisms.

Penny Hussey

Saturday 24th August
Botanical Ramble
Moola Road Bushland

Glorious weather, cold but clear, saw 17 people join Mitzi Wehleck for a delightful ramble through forest and shrubland on the northern edge of the Helena Valley. At one point, we were surprised to get a fine view down the valley to the city skyscrapers, some 40 kms away.

First we traversed lateritic plateau with Marri (including some very large trees) and some Jarrah, then we started to drop down the slope and came upon outcrops of granite. One interesting point was observing how the occasional dolerite dyke gave rise to clayey soil, and so the tree cover changed to Wandoo. As we went lower still, we came on the dense, cool, wet vegetation characteristic of south-facing steep slopes in the hills. Because the sun seldom strikes directly here, it is always cooler and wetter than other areas, and supports some different vegetation, such as dense stands of this month's Quiz species.

In the tradition of wildflower wanders, people gathered in small groups to discuss and examine plants of particular interest, and to find the best position for a photograph. The area was particularly rich in Proteaceae; there were nine different Hakeas, for example.

In total, some 100 different species were noted, and it was clear that many more would soon start to flower. Thank you, Mitzi, for leading a superb excursion into our Wildflower Wonderland.

(Nb: if you would like a copy of the flora list emailed to you, please contact the EHB's email address.)

Penny Hussey

PLANT OF THE MONTH

Pimelia ciliata



This small shrub can grow to 1m tall and 50cm across. The small flowers, which are produced between August and November, are grouped in a head surrounded by pale pink bracts. Usually the flowers are white but they sometimes can have a pink tinge or even be wholly pink.

It occurs in gravelly or granitic soils on the Darling Scarp from north of Bindoon to the Porongorup Range. Locally, it is flowering well at the moment on the corner of Thomas and Coppin Roads, Mundaring.

It can be propagated from either seeds or cuttings.

Robyn Rudeforth

NEW BOOK

“Western Australian Plant Names and their Meanings – a glossary”

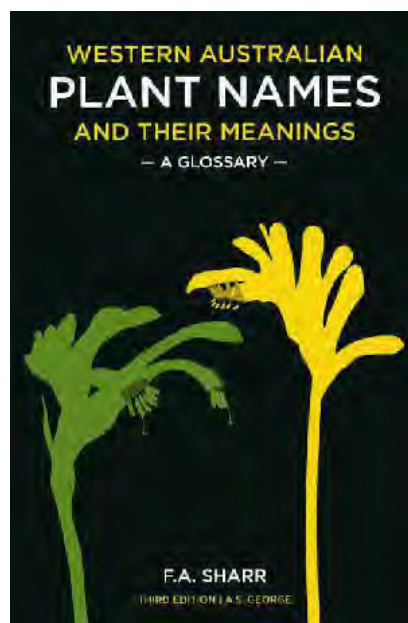
F. A. Sharr: Third Edition, A.S. George

Four Gables Press

\$50.00 in bookstores, \$36.00 from WSWA

If you want to name the wildflowers that you see, it helps to know what the latin words *mean*. What genera, for example, are the

‘turner of hearts’ or the ‘white beard’? When I came to Australia, “Sharr” was the book to turn to, but it has been out of print for years. Alex George has updated it, adding some 2,000 new plants and also subspecies and varieties. There’s lots of other information in there too.



If enough people are interested in buying a copy of this book, Alex will come up an EHB meeting, and you can buy it at the WSWA price. But you must let me know at: penny.hussey@bigpond.com

Answer to Quiz:

It is the unusual and very distinctive *Grevillea pimeleoides*, in the family Proteaceae. (You knew that, of course, because of the term ‘pollen presenter’.)

This plant was first described by W. Fitzgerald in 1902 and the location was given as “...rocky spot on hillside between Smiths Mill and Helena River.” This probably corresponds roughly to the current alignment of the southern end of Hardy Road.

Mitzi Wehleck has grown it successfully from seed, and had some plants for sale at the last EHB Plant Sale event.

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 Australia