

NEWSLETTER

March 2022



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

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

Committee 2022

President: Penny Hussey
Vice President: Alisdair Adam
Treasurer: Peter Day
Secretary: Janet Atkins
Committee Members:
June Barkman
Mal Myers
Maxine Tyler
Robin Rudeforth

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/>

COVID RULES

Please have masks and inoculation certificates at hand ready for whatever covid rules might be in place at the time of the meeting.

EHB Committee

Coming Events March

Thursday 3rd March
Committee Meeting
3pm Octagonal Hall

Wednesday 9th and 23rd March
Seed Cleaning
9am Octagonal Hall

Monday 21st F March Propagation Group.

Octagonal Hall, 12 noon.

Evening Meeting Friday 25th March “Adaptations in the Southwest Australia flora”

Byron Lamon

Byron Lamont is Emeritus Professor of Biology at Curtin University with thousands of research papers to his name. He is currently very interested in how plants communicate with their pollinators. But he is a mine of information on all sorts of stuff – so have your questions ready!

“We will examine the geological history of Western Australia from when it was attached to Antarctica 150 million years ago. The climate has oscillated between tropical paradises to bleak deserts but the mediterranean climate commencing 10-20 million year is the most notable. No other group of plants is better adapted to extreme summer droughts or dry-season fires, to the world's most impoverished soils and to unique pollinators and herbivores. The outcome is a unique flora that currently accounts for one-third of all species in Australia within an area that covers just 4% of the continent.”

There will be a quiz and a nature table.

Coming Events April

Thursday 7th April
Committee Meeting
3 pm Octagonal Hall

Wednesday 6th and 20th April

Seed Cleaning

9am Octagonal Hall

Monday 18th April

Propagation Group

Octagonal Hall, 12 noon.

(Note: this is Easter Monday. Date may change!)

Evening Meeting

Friday 22nd April

“Investigating the impacts of climate change, drought and heat on forest die-off”

Katinka Rithrol

The forests that occur in the South-west of WA have, over millennia, become finely adapted to our difficult climate. But extremes can cause widespread damage – even death – and it could take the forest a long time to recover. Extreme droughts, or extreme frosts, may kill large areas of tree canopy. Increasingly, we are becoming aware that the climate is changing, and these extreme events are becoming more frequent and more severe.

Katinka is conducting research in DBCA and UWA to study, and try to predict, what effects climate change will have on the ecology of our forests. Will the flora and fauna be resilient enough to survive? Or is a massive extinction even inevitable? Horrifying? Come along and find out.

Due to Covid

the EHB Plant Sale is CANCELLED

However, plants will still be on sale from the individual growers. Details of how to do this will be given in a later Newsletter.

Hall Cleaner wanted

We need someone to clean the Hall once a month. This is not an onerous job. Is there anyone who could take this on? Remuneration rate negotiable.

EHB Committee

REPORTS

Evening Meeting

Friday 25th February

“Nutritional Ecology of Carnivorous Plants”

Laura Skates

Laura Skates started by reminding us that there are 800 carnivorous plants in the world, from several different families, and one third of them occur in Australia. The whole idea of plants eating animals has long fascinated scientists, and indeed Darwin wrote a book on them, while here in Western Australia Rica Ericson wrote and illustrated “Plants of Prey in Australia”.

WA is a global hotspot for carnivorous plants, especially Droseras, 90% of them occur here. We do have other genera as well; she illustrated the aquatic Waterwheel Plant; the mostly aquatic Bladderworts; *Byblis* and, of course, the Albany Pitcher Plant.



Byblis gigantea, Rainbow Plant. Found at Eneabba, also Swan Coastal Plain, inc Swan and Kalamunda Shires. (Florabase)

Laura’s work has confirmed that it is the presence of proteins (containing nitrogen)

that induces Drosera's sticky tentacles to move and trap the prey, and showed that it is the species with long narrow leaves, held up in the air, that absorb most nitrogen.

Some fauna are not eaten, but work with the carnivorous plants, to exchange resources. For example, in Malaysia, a bat roosts safely in the pitcher, and its droppings provide nutrients to the plant. Closer to home, Sundew Bugs climb all over the plant without being trapped. Do they clean up the undigested remains, and leave their droppings as fertiliser?

The main threats to this group of plants are habitat loss and poaching. Avid collectors search out rarities, and remove them.

Despite two short interludes of rain, everyone listened enthralled to Laura's clear and informative presentation. It is a pity there were not more members present to appreciate it.

The Quiz concentrated on plants that flower during summer, and one group 15 out of 20 answers correct – well done folks! The hot weather meant that no-one had brought anything for the nature table.

Penny Hussey

OPPORTUNITY! WANT TO ATTEND A CONFERENCE? EHB WILL SPONSER YOU!

There are often conferences and seminars run by various organisations in WA that are relevant to the aims of the Wildflower Society, attendance at which would help to increase the knowledge and skillbase of our members. Such event topics might include wetland management, plant identification, fire management, revegetation techniques etc. Sometimes they are free, but sometimes there is an entrance fee.

The EHB Committee has decided to offer to pay such fees for EHB members, with the proviso that you describe the main findings of the event at the next a Branch meeting.

If you would like to take advantage of this offer, write to the Committee, giving details of the event and, briefly, how you think it would

help you to know, grow, conserve or enjoy wildflowers better.

PLANT OF THE MONTH

Beaufortia macrostemmon

Beaufortia



This is a spreading undershrub often forming an almost circular mat 20-50cm high and 50cm wide.

The flower colour is principally from the stamens, which are green at the base with red or orange tips. It flowers from spring through to summer, attracting birds with its nectar. It is propagated by seed or by cuttings.

This species requires good drainage. It occurs on the eastern side of the Coastal Plain and gravelly soils on the Darling Scarp and Range from Dwellingup northward. Locally, look along Yarra Road and Glenburn Rd.

Robin Rudeforth

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 WesternAustra