



# NEWSLETTER

August 2022

## EHB NO LONGER HAS A POSTAL ADDRESS

Use the email, please.

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

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## 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 contact**

(including to individual Committee Members) **please use the WSWA's generic email:**

[eastern.hills.branch@wildflowersocietywa.org.au](mailto:eastern.hills.branch@wildflowersocietywa.org.au)

### Facebook:

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

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## COVID RULES

Covid rules are now relaxed, though you might well decide to still wear a mask when inside. *EHB Committee*

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## Coming Events August

**Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> August**

**Committee Meeting**

3 pm Octagonal Hall

**Seed Cleaning**

In recess

### Propagation Group.

In recess.

### Evening Meeting

**Friday 26<sup>th</sup> August**

The advertised speaker is unable to attend, so instead there will be:

**Retrospective: "Flowers of Morangup Nature Reserve" photos taken by Arthur Blundell.**

The late Arthur Blundell, together with a number of EHB members, organised a survey of Morangup Nature Reserve, east of Noble Falls. They collected, identified and mounted specimens, producing a comprehensive herbarium of the area,

Recently, it has been discovered that he also stored photos on the Branch's laptop computer. We will remember Arthur as we enjoy his excellent photography – and if anyone has memories of him, please share them.

There will also be a quiz and a nature table

### Wildflower Ramble

**Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> August**

**Moola/Glenburn Rd, Glen Forrest**

**Leader: Mitzi Wehlak**

10.00-12.00 am

Meet at Mitzi's place, 1423 Glenburn Rd. Turn west off Moola Road. (Google map will get you there!) The walk will be an easy ramble along tracks. Lots of things should be in flower.

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## Coming Events Sept.

### Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> September Committee Meeting

3pm Octagonal Hall

### Seed Cleaning

In recess

### Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> September

#### Propagation Group

May be in recess – check with Sandy Stone, (08) 0412 608 968

### Evening Meeting

#### Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> September

#### “Orchids along the Bibulman Track” Ian Kininmonth and Helena Studham

Join Ian Kininmonth and Helen Studham as they recall their adventures and find out about the orchids they photographed and recorded.

“Let’s walk the Bibbulmun” Ian suggested to Helen, receiving only a sceptical look in response. The Bibbulmun track, running from Perth to Albany exceeds 1,000 kilometres, so it is more than just a walk in the park. What would they do? See? Talk about? “We’ve got all the gear we need, we’re fit, we have time, and we’ll see heaps of wildflowers”. Detecting a slight softening of Helen’s attitude Ian went in with the final sales pitch. “Plus we’re sure to see lots of orchids”.

Three weeks later they hit the track on the 14<sup>th</sup> August 2020, to start 61 days of walking through country where over 400 species of orchid had been recorded.

### Wildflower Ramble

#### Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> September

10.00-1200am

Leader: Janet Atkins and Robin Rudeforth

Location: tba.

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## REPORTS

### Evening Meeting

Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> July

#### “Dirt-poor soils, pesky parasites and friendly fungi shape plant diversity in south-western Australia”

Professor Hans Lambers, UWA

Prof Lambers explained that when he first came here from the Netherlands, he was interested in plant nutrition and, specifically, why we have such amazing biodiversity on such appallingly poor soils.

Our soils are so poor for plant growth because they are extremely deficient in available Phosphorus (P), an essential mineral. Studies on the coastal plain demonstrated that on the new soils close to the ocean, available P was relatively high, but it declined as you get to the older soils close to the Darling Scarp. Conversely, biodiversity was poor at the coast and fabulous at the edge of the Hills. Not what you would expect!

Perhaps they have mycorrhizal fungi that will help? But no, some of our most iconic families, banksias, roo paws and sedges for example, do not have mycorrhizae. Instead, they develop ‘cluster roots’. (In Proteaceae these look like bottlewashers.) They grow quickly, produce lots of a chemical called ‘carboxylate’, then die. This stuff releases the P that is still there, but bound to soil particles so that the normal roots can’t absorb it. Problem solved!

But what about the other plants that grow here, in the Myrtaceae family, for example? It seems that they, and their mycorrhizae, scavenge the P the carboxylates have released. And since the mycorrhizae provide protection against parasitic fungi, (eg pithium or native phytophthoras) they often grow better than the plants they are

taking the P from. How intricate the web of life is!

The talk ranged over other areas, including why the karri forest is not very biodiverse, and why there are only four species of Woody Pears in Australia, compared with the dozens of banksias, grevilleas, hakeas etc. Can you guess? They don't have cluster roots!

This was a truly superb talk, given by a research scientist who is able to distil complex interactions in such a way that they become understandable to everyone.

The Quiz proved a little harder this time (it even included some chemistry!) but nevertheless one group proved worthy winners with 14 out of 20. Well done! The Nature Table also had some very interesting species

*Penny Hussey*

**Wildflower Ramble  
Superblock, Glen Forrest  
Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> July**

A small group of ramblers (and one very well behaved dog) had a lovely stroll in the Superblock, finding over 50 different species of plants. The forecast had been for rain, but it turned out to be a beautiful day, clear, windless and warm.

We walked first around the edge of the Seed Orchard discussing what it had been like as a working unit. Beyond that area, which had been a gravel pit, we moved into the much lower and more open Jarrah/Marri forest on laterite. The track has markers to denote where Dieback occurs, and we were careful in those parts to walk only on the track.

One of the more interesting plants found was a *Johnsonia*, probably *pubescens*, but we need to see it in flower to be sure. It was also noted that the area was

remarkably weed-free, except in disturbed areas along the edge of the reserve, near roads and houses.



A list of plants seen was kept, and if you would like a copy of EHB's "Superblock Plant List", please ask via the Branch email and it will be sent to you.

Thank you to the six people who joined me for this walk – I hope you enjoyed it as much as I did!

*Penny Hussey*

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## **PLANT OF THE MONTH**

***Baeckea grandis***



This is a small shrub to 1.5m high. Some forms can have a weeping habit. It has small leaves and either pink or occasionally white flowers. The flowers are produced from July through to October.

The plant prefers soils of sandy gravel. It grows from Pindar through and Regans Ford to Kalbarri. It is propagated by cuttings and can be seen growing in the Octagonal Hall garden. It is well worth a place in anyone's garden!

*Robyn Rudeforth*

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## LOOK OUT FOR -

Winter Bells, *Blancoa canescens*.



This beautiful relative of *Consostylis* is in full flower now. It likes coastal plain grey sand under banksia woodland and much of its local habitat has been cleared for roads or housing.

The Darling Range Branch found it in Hawkvale Conservation Area, Maida Vale. If you are looking for a pleasant short walk, park on the corner in Buttercup Crescent, and stroll through the reserve, admiring the Winter Bells on the way.

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## NEWS

The **Mundaring Camera Club** is organising a presentation and **workshop** by wildflower photographer Beth Baker on **Sunday 21 August, 2pm, at the Mundaring Hall** on Jacoby St, opposite the Mundaring Hotel.

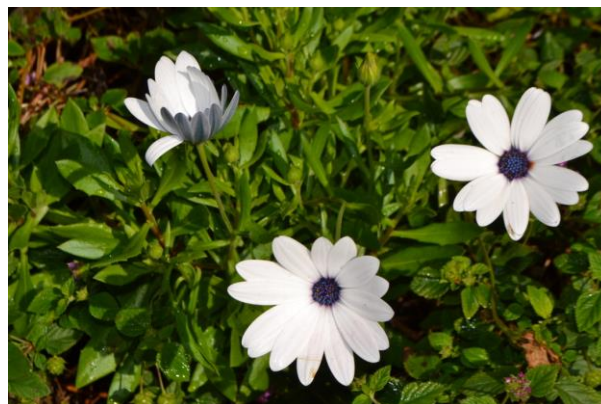
The Club welcome members of the Eastern Hills branch to attend at no cost.

For more info, contact Odile Pouliquen-Young on 0419 178 861 or email: [pouliquen-young@westnet.com.au](mailto:pouliquen-young@westnet.com.au)

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## WEED ALERT

*Dimorphotheca ecklonis* – Veld Daisy



This is a good time to control this bushland invader, which can often be found where garden rubbish might have been dumped. It seeds prolifically, and the seedlings will be large enough to be recognizable.

Just pull it up!

(Ps: Bunnings sells one with purple flowers .....!)

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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.