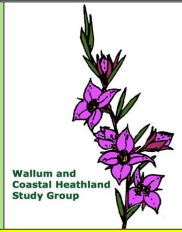


WALLUM

AND COASTAL HEATHLAND STUDY GROUP



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Previous Newsletters are available for reading or downloading at:-

<http://anpsa.org.au/wallumSG>

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Dillwynia retorta at JC Trotter Memorial Reserve in November

Our November 2021 Excursion

On a warm Sunday morning ten members met at the Koala Bushland Visitor Centre, Burbank. (There were ten apologies too!) After a short discussion about future excursions, we proceeded to JC Trotter Memorial Reserve for a walk on the trail to Tingalpa Reservoir and back. One observant walker spotted a Koala along the way.

Some plants flowering or fruiting were *Boronia rosmarinifolia*, *Cyanothamnus polygalifolius* (was *Boronia*), *Cyanthillium cinereum*, *Dipodium Variegatum*, *Goodenia bellidifolia* subsp. *argentea*, *Hibbertia aspera* subsp. *aspera*, *Laxmannia gracilis*, *Philydrum lanuginosum*, *Phyllota phyllicoides*, *Pigea stellarioides* (was *Afrohybanthus* and before that, *Hybanthus!*), *Platysace ericoides*, *Schenkia australis*, *Trachymene incisa*, *Xanthorrhoea macronema* (at the Koala Bushland Visitor Centre) and those in the photos on this page.

Thank you John M & Ann H, our leaders for the day. *Allan C.*

Excursion - Sunday, 15 May 2022

In May we will return to Beerwah Scientific Area No. 1, last visited in March 2020. For some history see Newsletter 46 and a plant list from that excursion see Newsletter 47. (Both available on our Study Group page, ANPSA website)

9.00 am Sunday, 15 May

- Meet at Mill Park, BEERWAH. (UBD SC Map 106:C19)
- Then a walk at Beerwah Scientific Area No. 1 from Mawson Road (UBD SC Map 116:N5)
- We will have our BYO lunch there or back at Mill Park.

Be mindful of COVID-19 requirements

Allan C.

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Haemodorum austroqueenslandicum at JC Trotter Memorial Reserve

Baeckeas

In July, it's planned that the Wallum Study Group will be visiting Noosa North Shore for a walk on a wet heath wildflower plain in the Arthur Harrold Nature Refuge. One plant amongst many we could look out for, is *Baeckea imbricata* but it is a little hard to spot. As its common name, spindly baeckea implies, there's not much of it and it's seldom more than 50 cm high. The species name *imbricata* has its origin in the Latin for "tile" due to the overlapping nature of the plant's leaves.



Baeckea imbricata
[Allan Carr]



Arthur Harrold
Nature Refuge

A second member of the genus more commonly seen in wet heath is *Baeckea frutescens* or weeping baeckea. When encountered in such places, it is often less than a metre high, dwarfed by the soil conditions: high water table, low fertility and low pH. Growing in more favourable circumstances, however, the plant lives up to its common name by being a 3 m shrub with beautiful, fine weeping foliage.

It is possible to confuse *Leptospermums* with *Baeckeas*. A good way of differentiating them is to observe the arrangement of their leaves. *Leptospermums* have alternate leaves while those of *Baeckeas* are opposite or sub-opposite.

We used to have four *Baeckeas* in the Sunshine Coast region but the genus has undergone a revision. *Baeckea linearis* (shaggy baeckea), a small shrub from the dry heath, became *Ochrosperma lineare*. The more well-known *Baeckea virgata* (twiggy myrtle), however, was split into two species. They were *Babingtonia bidwillii* (north coast twiggy myrtle) occurring north of Caboolture, and *Babingtonia similis* from Brisbane and the Gold Coast, but were re-renamed and are now *Sannantha bidwillii* and *Sannantha similis*. *Baeckea stenophylla* is now *Baeckea frutescens* but the insignificant *Baeckea imbricata* has somehow slipped between the cracks and retained its old name, bless it. Thank the botanical gods for small taxonomic mercies.

Robert Price

Baeckea frutescens
[Robert Price]



Baeckea frutescens

Wallum Plants for the Garden

Austromyrtus dulcis – midyim (or midgen) berry

Species in the genus *Austromyrtus* are little gems: perfect for gardens of various styles and sizes, with delicate white (sometimes pink) flowers, attractive foliage with bronze new growth, and edible grey, speckled fruit. Despite being heath plants they grow in a variety of soil types (even in the heavy clay of my garden), and form sprawling mounds up to 1 metre high. A little light pruning can help to keep them in shape. As with many small plants, I think they look their best when grown in massed plantings (as they occur in nature). Although quite slow-growing they are tough little plants and very drought tolerant.

Being in the family Myrtaceae they are of course susceptible to infection with Myrtle Rust. If it were to happen on a large scale it would be a tragedy.

Two species occur naturally in south-east Queensland: *Austromyrtus dulcis* and *A. glabra*. *A. dulcis* is the species that most of us are familiar with, as it is widespread on coastal sandy soils throughout the region. I have not seen *A. glabra* (forest midyim) growing in the wild, but according to Mangroves to Mountains it is found on rocky soils at Chermside and in the Sunshine Coast hinterland.

I have both species growing in my garden. They can be distinguished by the discolourous leaves of *A. dulcis*; those of *A. glabra* are green underneath. They also have different flowering periods; *A. dulcis* flowers in Spring, whereas *A. glabra* flowers later in Spring and Summer. The third species of *Austromyrtus* growing in Australia, *A. tenuifolia* (narrow-leaved myrtle), is found in sheltered, damp situations in the Sydney Basin of NSW.

Two cultivars are also available from nurseries: *Austromyrtus* ‘Copper Tops’ and *Austromyrtus* ‘Blush’. Both have apparently originated from *A. dulcis* and have discolourous leaves with reddish new growth.

Austromyrtus ‘Copper Tops’ is reputedly a hybrid between *A. dulcis* and *A. tenuifolia*, with narrower leaves than *A. dulcis* but with the taller, more upright habit of *A. tenuifolia*.

Austromyrtus ‘Blush’, a new cultivar, has slightly broader leaves (with “soft, pink flowers”, according to the label). I have just bought one from Nielsen’s Native Nursery, and it will be interesting to see how it develops.

Ann Huthwaite



Austromyrtus dulcis flowers and fruit harvest from cultivated plant



Austromyrtus tenuifolia flower and fruits



Austromyrtus sp. massed planting [Ann Huthwaite]



Austromyrtus dulcis new leaves [Allan Carr]

Where are all the Mistletoes in our Coastal Heathlands?

As at April 2016 Australia had 90 described and a further 4 or 5 undescribed species of mistletoes in the two plant families Loranthaceae and Viscaceae [the latter are sometimes included in the root parasite family Santalaceae which actually has one true mistletoe itself]. As I have not heard of any current taxonomic work on the group that number is probably still accurate today. About 36 of these can be found in South-East Queensland and northern New South Wales, in a number of habitats, predominantly along the coast, but some occurring further inland in drier areas.

As our Wallum Study Group frequents mainly coastal and subcoastal heathlands, with only occasional visits to montane heaths, I thought it would be interesting to look at the plant list data from a number of these areas to ascertain any recorded mistletoe species. The lists I looked at were compiled by a number of native plant groups [both within and without NPQ], natural history societies, catchment groups as well as lists generated by individuals. What I found was somewhat unexpected, insofar as there appears to be a dearth of records from wallum heaths in particular. Even local government generated lists and the Qld Government WildNet Data Base were lacking in wallum and heathland records in general.

In my opinion this mystery can only be explained by a few simple alternative reasons. Firstly, there actually may not be many species or individual plants in situ, perhaps due to an unsuitability of the host trees or the sandy substrate, or possibly even the absence of the birds and mammals involved in seed dispersal. But this is unlikely and is inconsistent with my observations in the coastal, wallum dominant, Billinudgel Nature Reserve, north of Brunswick Heads in northern NSW. There I found many individuals of six or seven mistletoe species, in association with acacias, banksias, casuarinas, melaleucas and eucalypts (with other species in adjacent littoral and mangrove forests). Another site, Couran Cove on South Stradbroke Island, visited by our Logan River branch in November 2019 was overrun with mistletoes! [See Glenn Leiper's photos at left] Nevertheless, at those sites there appeared to be a common theme, which was little or no evidence of bushfires! It is now known that mistletoes can take many years, even decades, to recover from hot fires. Wallum sites, such as at Bribie Island and Beerwah Scientific Area No.1, which we often visit, would be expected to be relatively rich in mistletoe species and individuals. But both these areas have been burnt frequently with the result that, in the case of Bribie Island, only three mistletoe species were seen during two visits, and only two species found during two visits to the Beerwah Scientific Area No. 1. Therefore I believe that too frequent fire is the probable reason for mistletoe depletions in coastal heaths and associated forests of our region.

Another factor, as to why mistletoe species don't appear on native plant lists, is to do with the ability of potential observers to actually recognise mistletoes, and identify them to species with confidence. Some knowledge about which trees and shrubs play host is important in first locating the mistletoes.

continued on next page



Amyema cambagei, *Lysiana maritima* & *Notothixos subaureus* on *Casuarina glauca* at Couran Cove [Glenn Leiper]



Lysiana maritima (coastal mistletoe) on *Casuarina glauca* at Couran Cove [Glenn Leiper]



Notothixos subaureus (golden mistletoe) on *Casuarina glauca* at Couran Cove [Glenn Leiper]



Dendrophthoe vitellina on *Melaleuca quinquenervia* at Bribie Island [Leith Woodall]

from previous page

It is more difficult if the mistletoe is not in flower or fruit as is often the case when they are seen, particularly at some height in the host tree. But, in theory, there is no reason why this should be any different from identifying species in any other plant group.

These days there are a number of good native plant reference books to guide people with correct identifications of mistletoes. In our local area the most comprehensive book most of us use, *Mangroves to Mountains*, has a separate nine page section, which describes and illustrates foliage, flowers and fruit of 30 mistletoe species, including all those potentially occurring in coastal heathland. The most recent edition of this book is available from the NPQ Logan River branch.

A book which I co-wrote and published in 2016, *The Mistletoes of Subtropical Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria*, has full descriptions and illustrations of 51 species. Useful general background information includes details of plant hosts and further interesting full colour information on the butterfly and moth denizens. This book is still available from the Butterfly and other Invertebrates Club via their website. (online shop address below)

<https://boic.org.au/shop/>

John Moss



Notothixos subaureus (golden mistletoe)
on *Melicope elleryana* at Couran Cove
[John Moss]



Multiple mistletoe species
on *Casuarina glauca* at Couran Cove
[John Moss]

For your Diary

9.00 am Sunday, 17 July

Robert Price and Joan Heavey will be our Leaders

- Meet at Noosa River Ferry, Moorindil Street, Tewantin.
UBD Sunshine Coast Map 8:C6
- Then a walk at Arthur Harrold Nature Refuge, Noosa North Shore.
UBD Sunshine Coast Map 2:L18. BYO morning tea/ lunch.
- We will have our BYO lunch there or back at Ferry Terminal.

9.00 am Sunday, 18 September

There are no plans for this excursion yet.

Do you have a suggestion?

**(for which you are prepared to lead,
investigate accessibility and other details
such as available trail/s, plant list etc.)**



Dendrophthoe vitellina



A big thank you to our contributors to this newsletter

Wallum Hotspot

Keith Royal Park is located adjacent to Sunshine Coast Airport at Mudjimba (Midyimba = place of midyim, see *Wallum Plants for the Garden* on page 3). This area was regularly mown by Council staff.

Barbara Henderson stated in her Bill Tulloch Memorial Lecture of 2013, “A dedicated (to Wallum) local of 80+ years managed to have a corner of Keith Royal Park enclosed with a bollard fence, keeping the mower out, but allowing people in for a careful look at what is in flower through the year.

The Airport was once a Wallum field and still has large areas of heathland within it.”

“The more clearly we can focus our attention on the wonders and realities of the universe about us, the less taste we shall have for destruction.”

- Rachel Carson



Betty Sykes, the local of 80+ years at Keith Royal Park [Barbara Henderson]

Barbara continued - “We've found two new plant species there within the past two years (2012-13). One is *Centrolepis strigosa* a tiny grass-like ephemeral, which I've not seen in 30 years in the Wallum. The other was what I simply listed as *Pultenaea myrtoidea* a really spectacular form of it, but I've been corrected and it is actually *Pultenaea robusta*, and what a beauty it is.”

Allan C.

Reminders

Check page 1 for details of our next excursion
9.00 am Sunday, 15 May



Membership payments - \$5.00
(Due on 1 July 2022)

to: **BSB: 064 164**
Account number: 10005970
Use your surname as Reference
or: **Cheque** made out to:
ANPSA Wallum Study Group



Hibbertia stricta

Do you have an appropriate garden or travel story for us?

Send it for inclusion in our July 2022 newsletter.



Leucopogon pimeleoides
at Keith Royal Park [Allan Carr]



Leptospermum semibaccatum
at Keith Royal Park [Allan Carr]