



Wildflower Society of WA Northern Suburbs Branch

Newsletter - February 2017

Next Meeting :- February 28

7-30pm, Henderson Environmental Centre, Groat St. North Beach

Wayne Merritt

“Flora and Birds of Costa Rica”

Coming Events :-

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| 28 March | Michael Just & Jessica Bruce “ECU Research on Ericaceae & Reedia spathaceae” |
| 25 April | Members’ Photo Night “Where Have You Been” |
| 23 May | Mike Lohr “Emerging Weeds” |
| 27 June | Keith Oliver “Kangaroo Paws” |

Last Meeting’s Guest Speaker

Brian Moyle

“Flora of the Gibson Desert”



Our AGM guest speaker was Brian Moyle, who shared his knowledge and personal experiences of the remote Gibson Desert with us. The Gibson Desert is in the remote north east area of WA, bounded roughly by Wiluna, Warburton and Giles. Anyone who has been there, and there were a few of us on the night, will know that grand-sounding names on the map, like Gun Barrel Highway, Gary Highway and Gary Junction, are in reality rough unsealed tracks which are little used. Brian showed some photos of these ‘grand’, overgrown highways and talked a little about their history.

In the second half of the 19th Century, several explorative expeditions headed out into the unknown, including groups led by Peter Egerton-Warburton, Alexander Forrest and Ernest Giles. Alfred Gibson was one of Giles' party in 1874, and he perished when he went in search of water and food to assist the distressed group. Len Beadell, in the 1950s and 1960s was the last great explorer in the region, when he and his team surveyed and built the roads for the Woomera Rocket Range. The handmade metal signposts (now replicas) which Beadell made for each section of road can still be found nailed to their trees as you drive along the Gun Barrel Highway.



Brian told us that the Gibson Desert bioregion covers 149,784 square kilometres, with a temperature range of 6–40 winter to summer and rainfall of around

200mm in summer, but an evaporation rate of 3,600mm. Like all WA deserts, the Gibson is vegetated with a wonderful array of flora and fauna. The landscape is flat, with evidence of huge wildfires and Brian showed a photo of a fire in September 2012 which was taken from space, showing the vast extent of fire and smoke. The Gibson Desert mostly comprises laterite plains covered with a mosaic of mulga and shrub steppe.



There are ten major vegetation types across the Gibson Desert, including sparse shrub steppe, well vegetated low shrub, flat grassy open spaces, and longer dune systems. The flora is not well collected or documented, with only 671 taxa from the region on Florabase. But Brian showed us an abundance of flora species, including trees such as *Eucalyptus victrix*, *Allocasuarina decaisneana* (Desert Oak), *Corymbia aparrerinja* (Desert Ghost Gum) and *Santalum spicatum* (Sandalwood). Among the smaller flora are *Triodia pungens* (Soft Spinifex), the very widespread *Grevillea wickhamii* with its many different colour forms, low growing pretty pink *Glinus* species (an



annual or perennial herb), the very widespread yellow-flowering shrub *Petalostylis cassioides*, and *Brunonia Australis* (Native cornflower) which Brian said he had not seen this particular form of before.

Brian left us with some safety tips, if venturing out into these very remote areas. For many places, a permit is needed from the



Dept of Indigenous Affairs, and personal safety always needs to be the top priority – plan well, take plenty of water and food, have reliable maps, both digital and paper, and make sure your vehicle is in top condition with plenty of fuel. Most of us were content to be armchair travellers on this occasion, with this great journey into the Gibson Desert very much enjoyed by all.



The 2018 ANSPA (Australian Native Plants Society) Conference will be held in Hobart in January. Early information is now available for the Conference and pre/post conference tours and you can get a copy of the full 3-page Fact Sheet from Christine Curry (randccurry@gmail.com) or keep an eye on the Australian Plants Society Tasmania website at www.apstas.org.au as more conference information goes up on the site.

Northern Suburbs

Free guided nature walks.

Each Month

Run approx 1 hour.

Start at 8am.

1st Saturday Landsdale Conservation Park.

Meet in Landsdale Rd approx 100 metres east of Evandale Rd, Darch.

Contact David 9448 9192

2nd Saturday Koondoola Regional Bushland.

Meet in Koondoola Ave Opposite Burbridge Ave.

Contact David 9448 9192

3rd Saturday Lake Gwelup Reserve.

Meet Scout Hall car park near tennis Courts, Huntriss Rd, Gwelup.

Contact Christine 94472983

4th Saturday Star Swamp Bushland

Meet at the Henderson Centre at the end of Groat St, North Beach.

Contact Christine 94472983

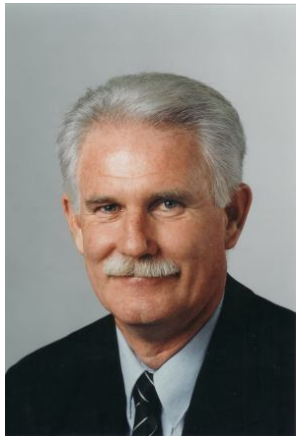
5th Saturday Trigg Bushland

Meet in the car park between St Mary's School and Millington Reserve (off Elliot rd) Karrinyup.

contact David 9448 9192

Your Branch Committee wants ideas from you for any activities, events, speakers or different ways of doing things. If you have any suggestions, please bring them to the 28 February meeting, for a short discussion on things we can do in 2017. Also, the April meeting is on Anzac Day, so instead of a guest speaker, we'll have a members' photo night focussed on 'Where Have You Been?' Perhaps you've been overseas, outback, on an excursion somewhere in Perth, or just into your own backyard. Bring along up to 10 or so photos, or interesting plants, to share at the April meeting.

FROM THE PRESIDENT – FEBRUARY 2017



Another year begins for our branch and we are looking forward to a busy and productive twelve months in our guest speaker program and growing activities at the nursery.

We have set ourselves manageable targets that keep the workload realistic for our volunteers and within our budget. Last year we invested in repair and maintenance to the nursery. In the year ahead, will continue this work to ensure we keep the building not only in good repair but as an attractive location for promoting our plant sales to the public. We are currently looking at ideas to improve our marketing and retail presentation for the nursery.

To do this we are investing in colourful signage to create more awareness of the nursery at the Landsdale Farm School to attract more visitors to see what we have on offer and establish a greater presence in in the wider community. A visit to the Farm School will hopefully leave people with memories of not only a pleasant day enjoying the attractions of Landsdale but knowing the wildflower nursery is on site and open for business when they next think of planting in their garden or referring to friends.

We will also be looking to how we can increase membership through media coverage of our activities using the nursery as the focal point for members of the public with an interest in gardening or WA native flora. Having an attractive nursery to promote our growing activities hopefully will encourage interest.

We do need to think ahead to the next AGM where we will need to elect a new president. We are giving this a high priority as a management committee and need the support of our members to help recruit candidates for the position. There are good people out there who I am sure would take on the role but getting them involved with our branch is the priority to have a smooth transition in the management team. If you know of anyone who might fit the bill or can help by introducing new members to the branch we would more than welcome your assistance.

The April Plant Sale is coming up and the nursery volunteers are busy getting the plant stock ready. If you have a little time to spare and would like to help out on

Thursdays or Saturdays your assistance will be very much appreciated. Don't forget to tell friends about the sale and come along to what is always a very enjoyable day.

Our February guest speaker is Wayne Merritt speaking on the flora and birds of Costa Rica. Wayne is well known to members and will have a lot to tell and show about his trip. In March, our ECU sponsored students will be giving presentations on their research findings and for the April meeting start getting your photos together for the Members' Photo Night.

If you have any ideas for guest speakers or activities or excursions please let us know as we are keen to plan our activities with the interests of members in mind.

Richard Curry
President

Northern Suburbs Branch Nursery

**Planting time is nearing. Come and see us to plan now.
Continue to Increase the biodiversity of your patch with WA flora**

Beautiful blues of Goodeniaceae



Includes *Dampiera lavandulaceae*, *D coronata* and many more.

Scaevola thesioides, *S globulifera* and *S crassifolia* forms.

Other colours of *Goodenia* spp,
Lechenaultia laricina,
L floribunda and *L superba*.

Hardy *Eremophila* species for all parts of the garden.

Blues and Mauves for Insects *Eremophila weldii*



Reds, Pinks and Yellow for birds,
Eremophila glabra forms, *E splendens*

Spectacular *Verticordia*

Select your feather flowers for a rainbow of colour all year round
Verticordia plumosa forms, *V halophylla*, and *V galeata* and lots more interesting species.

Small flowered *Grevillea* sp for

small birds

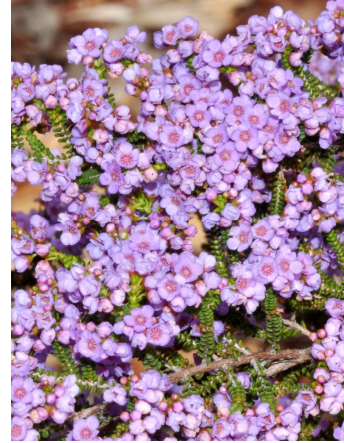
Special selections *Grevillea thelemaniana* Cooljarloo,
G. pinaster dwarf.



Drought resistant and colourful Mini Myrtles

- too many to list.

Thryptomene, Scholtzia, Baeckea and Hypocalymma spp with masses of mauve, pink or white flowers. Butterflies and moths love the early winter display



Brilliant colours

Selection of Pileanthus spp, Chorizema spp, Beaufortia elegans, Eremaea pauciflora and Calytrix fraseri and Hibbertia spp and more.



Plants for shade

Thomasia spp, Lasiopetalum spp and others

Hardy salt tolerant plants

Contrasting foliage and flowers for sandy gardens. Assorted Frankenia, Atriplex and Rhagodia spp. Tecticornia spp for interest and the occasional salad.

Feature plants for pots and

raised garden beds

Special novelty plants of Triggerplants or Stylidium



Strappy plants for buzz and bird pollination

WA Dianella brevicaulis , Patersonia occidentalis, Orthrosanthus laxus Conostylis spp and more

Woolly Plants for class and contrast

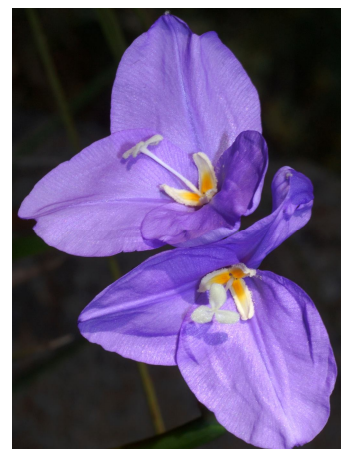
Dicrastylis and Dasymalla spp - Be quick!

Small selection of Eucalypts, Hakeas, Banksias with more coming on.

Lots and Lots more with new things coming throughout the year.

Loads of advice on your choice
Growing information care sheets
Friendly conversation.

- Hazel





*Wildflower Society of WA
Northern Suburbs Branch*

PLANT SALE

Assorted tube-stock

from \$3-00

Saturday April 22nd

9-00am to 3-00pm

at

*Landsdale Farm School
Cnr Landsdale and Evandale Rds
Darch*

***Grow with us &
Link with Nature***





Western Australian Native Plants
for your gardens and planter pots
available from the

Wildflower Society of WA Northern Suburbs Nursery

at the **LANDSDALE FARM SCHOOL**



**Cnr. Evandale / Landsdale Roads,
Darch**
open every Saturday, 9am - 3pm
and Thursday, 10am - 3pm

Choose from a huge range of local and other WA
interesting colourful and unique species

Trigger plants Calytrix Hakea Grevillea
Thryptomene Scholtzia Thomasia
Hypocalymma Eremophila Dampiera
Hibbertia Scaevola Verticordia

Strappy Plants including Conostylis Dianella
Laxmania Orthrosanthos and Sedges.

and many many more.

Come along for advice on how to
set up your garden and grow
plants for your minimal maintenance
and froggy boggy gardens

