

Native Ground Cover Plants of Kholo Creek Catchment

Paul Grimshaw



Acknowledgements

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“The number of Ground Cover Plant Species included in this booklet is not exhaustive. I am sure that many more species could be added given time. It is my hope that any publication of this article will be of some help to residents when maintaining and restoring their property’s native vegetation and to vegetation restoration contract workers conducting work in the coverage area.” – Paul Grimshaw

Traditional Owners

The author and Kholo Creek Catchment Group respectfully acknowledge the Jagera and Turrbul people as the Traditional Owners of the land where we live, work and play. We pay our respects to elders past, present and emerging, honour their culture and connection to land, water and community and thank them for sharing their cultures and traditions.

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Some Native Ground Cover Plant Species

Naturally Occurring in the Kholo Creek Catchment Area, Mt Crosby Karana Downs & Kholo Areas

Introduction

Not all ground cover plant species spread to cover the ground as such but are plants that occur in that part of the plant world referred to in a vegetation terminology as the ground stratum or lower stratum.

Ground cover plants are essential to prevent erosion by wind and water, and native ground cover plants also provide food for wildlife –insects, mammals, birds and reptiles – and help keep non-native plants contained, making them particularly useful for weed control. No matter how small or insignificant ground cover plant species may seem, they all have an important role within the various ecosystems and niches in which they exist.

This booklet contains images and descriptions of some native ground cover plant species that naturally occur in Kholo Creek catchment and adjacent areas, including Karana Downs, Lake Manchester and Kholo. Most are also likely to occur in adjoining Pullen Pullen and Moggill Creek catchments. Many of the species included are found on the author's property in Mount Crosby and known associations with butterfly species are noted.

Being able to recognise and tell the difference between native ground cover species and non-native ground cover species (particularly weeds) is important to maintaining and restoring wildlife habitats.

Soil type is a key factor in determining where plants will grow, with no or minimal human interference, and there are at least four soil types in the Kholo Creek catchment and surrounds. Some native groundcover species are specific to one soil types, while others are not so fussy and occur widely in most of them. Soil types include soils derived from metamorphosed sediments (incredibly old, altered sandstones known as Neranleigh Fernvale beds); soils derived from silts, sands, and muds (found along creeks and rivers and known as alluvium); soils derived from volcanics (old basalts known as Brookfield Volcanics and diorites known as Karana Quartz Diorite); and soils from younger sediments (sandstones known as Ipswich Coal Measures). Also, some of the ground cover plants are specific to certain habitats or plant communities.

Development of this booklet was prompted by a successful joint application by Kholo Creek Catchment Group and Pullen Pullen Creeks Catchment Group to the Australian Government, for funding to find, restore and enhance the habitat of a small legless lizard, the Collared Delma, *Delma torquata*. Collared Delma is listed as a vulnerable species under the Queensland *Nature Conservation Act 1992* and the Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*. The catchments of Brisbane's western suburbs are a stronghold for the species.

The priority threat to the Collared Delma is past and ongoing loss and modification of habitat, particularly the removal of surface rocks (which provide critical habitat) during urban or agricultural development or landscaping activities. Rock removal takes away protective refuges for Collared Delma from fire and predators such as cats, foxes, snakes and birds. Invasive weeds, particularly ground covers such as Creeping Lantana (*Lantana montevidensis*), are also a key threat when they cover and shade rocks used by Collared Delma, preventing these rocks from being heated by the sun and reducing the lizard's capacity to thermo-regulate.

Coincidentally and importantly, weed-free, typical Collared Delma habitat is shared by three uncommon ground-dwelling bird species: Painted Button Quail, Spotted Quail-thrush and White-throated Nightjar. And also similar to Collared Delma, a major threat to these birds' existence in the western catchments of

Brisbane is habitat degradation through proliferation of dense, ground cover weeds, such as Creeping Lantana, Corky Passion Vine, Tradescantia spp., Basket Asparagus, introduced grasses such as Green Panic and Signal Grass, and various other non-native ground cover weeds, and predation by cats and foxes.

In Brisbane's western suburbs, it is essential for property managers and contractors to be able to distinguish between exotic ground cover plants (weeds) which threaten Collared Delma and other native flora and fauna, and native ground cover plants which can help to keep weeds in check and provide wildlife habitat and food.

The native ground cover plant species in this booklet are broken into five groups according to their life form (below) and presented in alphabetical order by common name, with scientific name provided in italics and with family name capitalised:

1. Grasses, grass-like and lily-like plants (grasses, sedges, mat-rushes, and flax lilies)
2. Herbaceous creepers (creeping pea flowers and others)
3. Low woody shrubs (low pea bushes etc.)
4. Soft upright ferns (maidenhair etc.)
5. Upright herbaceous plants (various forbs with non-woody stems)

For each species, key identification features and differences between similar plant species are provided and known associations with wildlife noted.

GROUP 1 - GRASSES, GRASS-LIKE AND LILY-LIKE PLANTS

Common Rush Lily – *Tricoryne elatior*

JOHNSONIACEAE

A small wiry stemmed erect plant to 50 cm. It occurs in grassy woodland habitats in our local catchments. It is usually supported by accompanying grasses due to its weak tall stems. Flowers are bright yellow to 20mm with 3 petals and 3 narrower sepals giving the impression of 6 petals.



A Creeping Beard Grass – *Oplismenus aemulus*

POACEAE



Spreading, matting grass, to 30cm tall, puts out lateral shoots and roots at intervals. Leaves hairy with a wavy surface, to 3cm x 18mm. Flowering spikes to 6cm tall. Useful carpeting grass in shaded areas. In south east Queensland, it is an important larval food plant for three butterfly species: Wonder Brown (*Heteronympha mirifica*), Lilac Grass-skipper (*Toxidia doubledayi*) and White-brand Grass-skipper (*Toxidia rietmanni*).

A Creeping Beard Grass – *Polemen's hirtellus* (previously *O. imbecillis*)

POACEAE

Spawling, spreading grass to 30cm tall. Usually grows in similar shady places to another Creeping Beard Grass (*O. aemulus*), from which it can be distinguished by its narrower leaves (8cm x 10mm) and purple leaf undersides. Flowering spikes to 6cm tall. Also a probable food plant for the same butterfly species larvae as *O. aemulus*, namely: Wonder Brown (*H. mirifica*), Lilac Grass-skipper (*T. doubledayi*) and White-brand Grass-skipper (*T. rietmanni*).



GROUP 1 - GRASSES, GRASS-LIKE AND LILY-LIKE PLANTS

Golden Weather Grass – *Hypoxis hygrometrica* var. *villosisepala*

HYPOXIDACEAE



Uncommon grass-like plant with similar looking yellow flowers to Common Rush Lily (*T. elatior*). Leaves much shorter 20cm x 4mm. Flowers yellow, 4-6 petalled each to 20mm wide on stems to 20mm long. Grows from tubers and occurs in open short grassy patches in Eucalypt woodlands and open forests.

Graceful Grass – *Ottochloa gracillima*

POACEAE



Slender spreading grass to 40cm high forming a dense mat in well shaded areas. Leaves smooth and narrow to 7cm x 6mm. Flower spikes to 6cm long. Useful cover grass around edges of rainforest communities. Larval food plant for at least four butterfly species in south east Queensland: Lilac Grass Skipper (*T. doubledayi*), White-brand Grass Skipper (*T. rietmanni*), Brown Ringlet (*Hypocysta metirius*) (very common at Mt Crosby) and Wonder Brown (*H. mirifica*).

GROUP 1 - GRASSES, GRASS-LIKE AND LILY-LIKE PLANTS

Many-flowered Matrush – *Lomandra multiflora*

LAXMANNIACEAE



Female plant



Male plant

A tall, tufted plant with tough narrow, smooth leaves to 90cm x 3mm. Male flowers are usually a branched spike whereas female flowers are unbranched spikes. Leaves have single blunt tip.

This Matrush species is the larval food plant for at least five Ochre (Hesperiidae) butterfly species in south east Queensland: Black-ringed Ochre (*T. petalia*) (common at Mt Crosby), Yellow Ochre (*T. luteus*), Brown Ochre (*T. iacchus*), Orange Ochre (*T. eliena*), and Heath Ochre (*T. phigalia*).



Black-ringed Ochre (*Trapezites petalia*)

Nodding Hedgehog Grass – *Echinopogon nutans*

POACEAE

Thin-stemmed tufted grass to 60cm. Leaves bluish green to 21cm x 4mm. Stems and leaves rough to touch. Distinctive bristly seed heads reminiscent of a hedgehog or Echidna. Occurs in Eucalypt open forests. Probable larval host plant to the White-banded Grass-dart butterfly in south east Queensland.



GROUP 1 - GRASSES, GRASS-LIKE AND LILY-LIKE PLANTS

Pygmy Panic – *Panicum pygmaeum*

POACEAE

A low spreading grass up to 20cm high. It creeps and roots from nodes forming a dense ground cover. Leaves and stems usually covered in stiff hairs. Leaf blades alternate, to 4cm x 8mm. Seed spikes to 6cm, with individual seeds narrow ovate, to 2mm long. *Panicum pygmaeum* can often be mistaken for *Ottochloa gracillima*, which usually has longer and narrower leaf blades. *Panicum pygmaeum* often grows in rainforest margins or shady eucalypt forests.



Short-flowered Flax Lily – *Dianella brevipedunculata*

HEMEROCALLIDACEA



Erect clumping plant to 70cm tall. Leaves to 80cm x 2cm. Purple flowers to 10mm on tangled, much-branched stems and almost hidden near bases of leaves. Round berry-like, purplish fruit to 10mm. Found in Eucalypt open forest. Possible larval food plant for Dingy Grass-skipper (*T. peron*) butterfly in Southeast Queensland.

Slender Flat-sedge – *Cyperus gracilis*

CYPERACEAE

Densely tufted grass-like sedge with bright green foliage growing to 30cm tall. Small green flower spikelets 5-10 in a stalkless cluster or head 8-30-flowered are held on stems above the foliage in spring and summer. The fruit is a dark brown to blackish nut to about 1mm in diameter. The species prefers moist, semi-shaded situations.



GROUP 1 - GRASSES, GRASS-LIKE AND LILY-LIKE PLANTS

Raspy-leaved Sedge – *Scleria mackaviensis*

CYPERACEAE



Slender tufted sedge to 30cm in shaded places in Eucalypt open forests and woodlands. Pubescent leaves, rough and raspy to touch to 20 cm x 2mm. Leaves are channelled and raspy with a few faint longitudinal veins and a prominent mid-vein. Flower stalks with 1 or 2 terminal clusters of spikelets, each about 1cm, with a leaf-like bract. Nutlets white and pubescent, to 2.5mm, with a cylindrical beak. This sedge species is common in undisturbed habitats. It is the larval food plant for three species of Sedge Skippers. One of these skippers is the rare Grey Sedge Skipper (*Hesperilla furva*).



Grey Sedge Skipper (*Hesperilla furva*)

GROUP 2 - HERBACEOUS CREEPERS

Clearwing Swallowtail Creeper – *Aristolochia meridionalis* ssp. *meridionalis* ARISTOLOCHACEAE



Vine in flower



Vine with seed pods

This slender, delicate vine has stems to 1.0 m long (often much shorter), usually scrambling across the ground amongst grasses and other ground cover species on stony hillsides. Leaves alternate, to 9cm x 5cm but usually smaller. Single greenish brown flowers to 22mm long in summer to autumn. After pollination oblong, ribbed fruit form to 20mm x 16mm. This vine is the prime larval food plant for the Clearwing Swallowtail butterfly in Southeast Queensland. This butterfly's larvae will often devour all the plant until there is nothing of the plant remaining above ground. However, the vine has an under-ground tuber, from which it regrows after good seasonal rains.



Clearwing Swallowtail, *Cressida cressida*, male right and female left

Dwarf Morning Glory – *Evolvulus alsinoides* var. *decumbens*

CONVOLVULACEAE



A delicate trailing plant to 40cm width, widespread and often in opens spaces. It can have prostrate to ascending stems. Leaves narrow, alternate to 30mm x 5mm. Blue to purplish-blue flowers to 8mm across in spring to autumn. Round seed capsules to 4mm. There are other varieties, which have broader leaves and a more upright form, but *decumbens* is the variety in this catchment.

GROUP 2 - HERBACEOUS CREEPERS

Emu Foot – *Cullen tenax*

FABACEAE



Chequered Swallowtail butterfly (*Papilio demoleus*)

A weak-stemmed prostrate or scrambling plant found in grassy open patches within Eucalypt woodlands and open forests. Fan-shaped leaves on long stems up to 15cm long, comprising 5-7, smooth-margined sparsely hairy leaflets, dotted with minute glands on both surfaces. Spikes of small bluish or mauve-purple pea flowers on long stems. Emu Foot is the larval food plant for the **Chequered Swallowtail butterfly – *Papilio demoleus***.

Ivy Goodenia; Grey-leaved Goodenia – *Goodenia hederacea*

GOODENIACEAE

Weak-stemmed, prostrate herb, usually on rocky soils in drier, Eucalypt open forests. Leaves alternate, margins often toothed, variable in shape and sometimes greyish green, to 12cm x 25mm. Flowers in spring to 20mm. It occurs naturally in the Kholo Creek catchment but is uncommon.

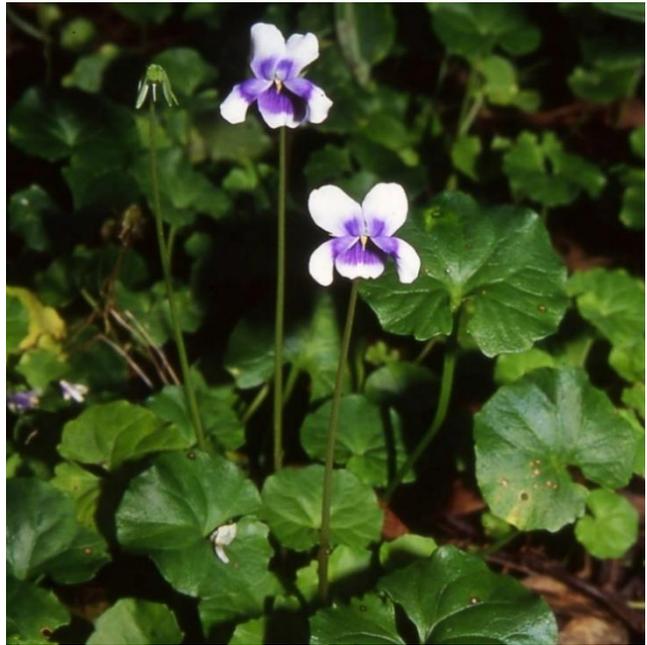


GROUP 2 - HERBACEOUS CREEPERS

Ivy-leaved Violet – *Viola hederacea*

VIOLACEAE

Herbaceous ground covering plant found in sheltered moist sites in Eucalypt forests and rainforests. Can be glabrous or hairy. Leaves variable in shape, to 20mm x 30mm with margins toothed or untoothed. Mauve/purple and white flowers to 15mm, spring to summer, and edible. Similar-looking *Viola banksii* can be confused with this species. However, the lower middle petal on *Viola hederacea* is broader.



Pennywort – *Hydrocotyle acutiloba*

ARALIACEAE

Prostrate, creeping plant, a common species in shaded moist areas and open places in woodland and open forest. Hairy leaves, 3 to 7 lobed, to 4cm across. Flower heads to 3mm are greenish and insignificant. Pennywort thrives after good rainfalls and is often considered a weed in some situations. However, in spells of dry weather the species dies back until the next bout of heavy rain.



Scurvy Weed or Native Wandering Jew – *Commelina diffusa*

COMMELINACEAE

A weak-stemmed spreading herb, often on moist shaded sites. Leaves alternate smooth or sparsely hairy, stem-clasping, to 7cm x 15mm. Delicate, 3-petalled blue flowers to 25mm in spring to autumn. The equal-sized petals distinguish it from non-native species. Fruit 5-seeded with brown seed 2 to 3mm long. It thrives after rain and can become rampant and weed-like, but this reduces when the ground dries. Terminal buds and leaves were eaten by early colonists to ward off scurvy and it is still used as a medicinal plant. Some native fauna, such as wallabies, have been observed browsing it at certain times, possibly for control of intestinal diseases and parasites.



GROUP 2 - HERBACEOUS CREEPERS

Slender Bindweed – *Polymeria calycina*

CONVOLVULACEAE)

Prostrate creeping plant with alternate variable width leaves, which are arrowhead shaped, to 6cm x 20mm. Some forms have much narrower leaves. Flowers in spring to autumn, pink to 15mm across and 4-8 lobed. Seed capsule flattened, globular to 6mm. When not in flower this species can be mistaken for *Aristolochia meridionalis* – Clearwing Butterfly Vine, which has similar shaped leaves.



Small-leaved Pennywort – *Hydrocotyle peduncularis*

ARALIACEAE

A slender mat-forming herb often in moist areas. Leaves alternate, circular with multiple lobes, to 12mm across. Leaves and stems finely hairy. Flowers greenish, and insignificant. Like the similar looking *Hydrocotyle acutiloba* it thrives after good rainfalls and because of its spread it can be considered a weed in some situations, but it does die back in dry weather.



Small-leaved Poranthera – *Poranthera microphylla*

PHYLLANTHACEAE



Much-branched, delicate herb to 30cm on stony or sandy soils, sometimes in disturbed areas. Leaves soft, alternate, to 11mm x 4mm, spaced along stems. White or pinkish, separate male and female flowers to 3mm, in short, dense terminal bunches, in spring to autumn.

GROUP 2 - HERBACEOUS CREEPERS

Twining Glycine – *Glycine clandestina*

FABACEAE



Common twining or scrambling vine, rooting along trailing stems. Stems and flower buds rusty hairy. Leaves in three leaflets, to 4cm, leaflets all have short stalks of equal length. Flowers pink to mauve, 7mm in tight 11cm bunches, most of the year. Seed pods straight and flattened, to 30mm x 4mm, sometimes hairy. This twining species can climb amongst grasses and often climbs into the lower shrub layer.

Variable Glycine – *Glycine tabacina*

FABACEAE

Common, prostrate or scrambling vine, rooting along trailing stems, stems and leaves silky hairy. Leaves of three leaflets. Leaflets to 5cm, central leaflet with longer stalk. Leaflets often much broader in young plants. Flowers pink aging to purple, sometimes clustered along long stems. Seed pods straight, flattened, to 30mm x 3mm and sparsely hairy.



Winter Apple – *Eremophila debilis*

SCROPHULARIACEAE

Prostrate mat forming plant. Leaves opposite, toothed near base but occasionally toothed entirely, to 10cm x 10mm. Flowers growing from leaf axils to 10mm across, most of the year, can be white, pink, blueish, or mauve. Fruit edible, whitish to 8mm. Formerly known as *Myoporum debile*.



GROUP 2 - HERBACEOUS CREEPERS

Zornia – *Zornia muriculata*

FABACEAE



A delicate, prostrate species, often overlooked when not in flower spreading for up to 40cm. Alternate leaves with two leaflets each to 30mm x 4mm. Attractive yellow flowers on long stems with bright red markings on the flower standard. Seed pods are constricted between each seed, usually with 4 or 5 seeds per pod. Zornia usually grows in open areas with short grasses.

Native or False Sarsaparilla – *Hardenbergia violacea*

FABACEAE

Prostrate or twining vine. Can sometimes grow into the taller understorey. Leaves alternate, leathery, prominently veined, very variable in length and width to 10cm x 5cm. Flowers purple to 10mm in clusters in spring. Pods oblong, flattened, to 4.5cm x 5mm. Occurs in Eucalypt open forest throughout the Kholo Creek catchment.



Trailing Speedwell – *Veronica plebeia*

PLANTAGINACEAE

Creeping, slender groundcover herb found in moist, shaded areas. Leaves are opposite, coarsely toothed to 2cm long. Stems covered with short, soft white hairs. Flowers 4 petalled, purple, mauve, pale pink to white, 4mm across, in spring to autumn. This slender creeper occurs naturally in western catchments of Brisbane as well the adjoining D'Aguilar Range area, where there have been frequent sight recordings.



GROUP 3 - LOW WOODY SHRUBS

Brush Sophora – *Sophora fraseri*

FABACEAE

This classified **vulnerable**, woody shrub can grow up to 2m tall but is usually much smaller. The compound leaves are alternate with 31 to 39 leaflets per leaf and are pubescent. Bright yellow pea flowers are often in long narrow sprays 10cm long, in spring to autumn. Seed pods are cylindrical, to 10cm. x 8mm and constricted between each seed. Brush Sophora usually grows in ecotonal areas in rainforest margins.



Bushy Cryptandra – *Cryptandra longistaminea*

RHAMNACEAE



Dense twiggy shrub to 1m tall. Small leaves 4mm x 2mm, alternate, smooth above finely hairy below. White 5-petaled flowers to 5mm in spring but can flower at other times after heavy rainfall. Grows on poor soils on stony slopes in parts of Mt Crosby, typically grows in small tight colonies.

Spreading Pea Bush – *Pultenaea microphylla*

FABACEAE

Erect low spreading shrub usually to 50cm tall. Young branches white hairy. Leaves alternate, to 10mm x 2.5mm, each leaf terminating with an abrupt down-turned point. The orange-yellow flowers are in terminal clusters to 13mm in late winter and early spring. Inflated seed pods to 5mm. This uncommon plant grows in open forest in a Council Bushland Reserve off Lake Manchester Road, Mt Crosby, and in Moggill Conservation Park near the Anstead entrance.



GROUP 3 - LOW WOODY SHRUBS

Netted Olive or Forest Olive – *Notelaea ovata*

OLEACEAE

Low spreading shrub to 1m. Young stems finely hairy. Leaves opposite, to 14cm x 6cm, netted veins prominent. Creamy yellow flowers to 3mm in clusters from leaf axils. Typical black, olive-like fruit to 10mm. It occurs in Eucalypt open forest on stony slopes of a Brisbane City Council Bushland Reserve off Lake Manchester Road, Mt Crosby.



Spiked Sida – *Sida hackettiana* (decumbent form)

MALVACEAE

Spreading hairy shrub to 30cm, only in the low growing (decumbent) form. This low form and the tall form widespread and common, particularly in disturbed sites. Leaves alternate, hairy, toothed and discoloured, to 10cm x 4cm. Flowers 5-petalled, axillary to 8mm, summer to autumn.



GROUP 4 - SOFT GROUND FERNS

Bristle Cloak Fern – *Cheilanthes distans*

ADIANTACEAE

Small, tufted ground fern to 15cm usually on exposed rocky surfaces and shallow soils. Fronds white hairy above and more so towards the tips. Golden brown spore scales below on fertile fronds.



Mulga Fern – *Cheilanthes sieberi*

ADIANTACEAE

Small tufted wiry hairless ground fern often on stony surfaces. Immature fronds light green mature fronds darker to 40cm but usually much less depending on soil depth. A common fern in shaded Eucalypt Forest areas.



Maidenhair Fern – *Adiantum atroviride*

ADIANTACEAE

Common ground fern of rainforests watercourses and moist shaded areas. Grows to approximately 40cm tall, forming dense clumps of erect or drooping fronds. It spreads by short rhizomes. Thin wire-like stems are smooth and black. Often seen on creek banks where moisture and shade are plentiful.



GROUP 4 - SOFT GROUND FERNS

Rough Maidenhair Fern – *Adiantum hispidulum* var. *hispidulum*

ADIANTACEAE

Clumping ground fern, of shady rainforest sites, moist areas, and rock surfaces along water courses. Rhizomes short creeping. Fronds erect, to over 30cm tall. Stems dark brown to black. New fronds shiny, pink, or bronze and older fronds dark green and shiny.



Binung – *Christella dentata*

THELYPTERIDACEAE

Tufting fern to 1m on creek banks and moist swampy areas. Brown spores on the back of fertile fronds. Seen in moist places along Cameron's Creek and Kholo Creek. It can survive occasional inundation from flooding.



Small Rasp Fern – *Blechnum rupestre* - Formerly *Doodia media*

BLECHNACEAE



A small, tufted fern in moist parts of Eucalypt open forests along creek banks and sometimes in margins of rainforests. Fertile fronds often longer and narrower than non-fertile fronds to 35cm long. Either side of the mid-vein on the undersides of fertile frond are caterpillar-like white spore cases, which turn brown as the spores mature. All parts of the fronds are raspy and new growth can be pink or red.

GROUP 5 - UPRIGHT HERBACEOUS PLANTS

Austral Bugle – *Ajuga australis*

LAMIACEAE

Upright, herbaceous, hairy plant, in moist, well-drained soils, often with multiple flowering stems are 30cm or taller. Its base has a rosette of soft, hairy leaves. Flowers pink or pale mauve are whorled around the main stems and are to 2cm long.



Narrow-leaved Cudweed – *Euchiton sphaericus*

ASTERACEAE

Herbaceous upright plant to 50cm tall. Stems covered in fine white hairs. Leaves alternate 7cm x 15mm, hairy white on undersides. Dense clusters of whitish, pinkish, or sometimes straw-coloured flowers, throughout the year. Found on moist well-drained soil in riparian, foothill and mountain forests and woodlands and sometimes colonising disturbed soils in semi shade.



Dietrich's Marsh Cress – *Rorippa dietrichiana*

BRASSICACEAE

Uncommon herb to 30cm in moist areas. Pinnate leaves thin, soft with lobed leaflets to 30mm in a basal rosette. Racemes of 4-petaled, white flowers turning pale mauve before they die, spring to summer. Cylindrical seed pods to 5cm x 2mm. Grows in moist clay loam sometimes in seepage areas.



GROUP 5 - UPRIGHT HERBACEOUS PLANTS

Shade Plantain – *Plantago debilis*

PLANTAGINACEAE



An erect herb in open areas. Leaves hairy, margins with widely spaced teeth, leaves 17cm x 5.5cm forming a basal rosette. Flowers alternate on long stems to 30cm, whitish to cream on bulbous spikes to 2mm, flowering throughout the year. Plants occur in open spaces in open forests and can either grow individually or in dense colonies.

Forest Daisy – *Brachyscome microcarpa*

ASTERACEAE



A weak-stemmed herb to 20cm, amongst short grasses on well-drained sites in Eucalypt open forests. Leaves lobed, broad, and rounded at the tip to 4cm x 2cm, leaves smaller on the stems closer to the flowers. Flowers white with yellow centres to 20mm across, spring to summer. Occasionally flowers can be pale mauve.

GROUP 5 - UPRIGHT HERBACEOUS PLANTS

Warty New Holland Daisy or Fuzzweed – *Vittadinia pustulata*

ASTERACEAE

An erect native herb to 40cm high. Leaves alternate narrow at the base and usually widening at the tip with three lobes, to 15mm x 5mm. Leaves and stems covered fuzzy white hairs. Flowers heads white or mauve with yellow centres, to 8mm across. Seed heads fluffy with individual seeds becoming windborne. This daisy species can grow in dense colonies hence the term weed used in its sometimes-common name.



Hairy Oxalis – *Oxalis chnoodes*

OXALIDACEAE

Herbaceous plant with weak trailing stems to 40cm. Trifoliolate hairy leaves to 15mm across. Leaf stem to 3cm long. Flowers yellow, 5-petalled to 2mm across in summer and autumn. Edible stalks, flowers and leaves, but eat in small quantities and cook due to presence of oxalic acid. This Oxalis species can be mistaken for the similar looking exotic weed species *Oxalis corniculata*. *Oxalis chnoodes* is hairier and the seed pods are egg shaped with a wispy tuft at the top, whereas *Oxalis corniculata* has longer narrow pods, lacking the wispy tuft.



Little Cockspur Flower – *Coleus australis* (formerly *Plectranthus parviflorus*)

LAMIACEAE

Herb to 70cm tall but sometimes much less. Has a swollen tuberous base. Leaves opposite, bluntly toothed, to 6cm x 4cm, densely hairy above sparsely hairy below. Not aromatic, unlike other native *Coleus* spp. Pale blue or mauve to purple flowers to 10mm in spikes to 15cm, most of the year. Occurs in Eucalypt open forests.



GROUP 5 - UPRIGHT HERBACEOUS PLANTS

Love Flower – *Pseuderanthemum variable*

ACANTHACEAE



Sparingly branched herb to 30cm in well-drained shaded areas and sometimes in rainforest. Leaves opposite variable in shape and size but generally to 7cm x 4cm, dark green and often purple below. 5-petaled flowers to 10mm, can be white, pink, or mauve, spring to autumn. Larval food plant for at least five butterfly species including the Australian Leafwing – *Doleschallia bisaltide*, whose larvae have been observed feeding on Love Flower plants in Mt Crosby in February 2022. Other butterflies which use this as host plant are Blue Argus – *Junonia orythya albicincta*, Blue-banded Eggfly – *Hypolimnys alimena lamina*, Danaid Eggfly – *H. misippus*, and Common or Varied Eggfly – *H. bolina nerina*.

Narrow-leaved Pink Tongues – *Rostellularia adscendens*

ACANTHACEAE



An attractive, weakly upright plant to 25cm tall on well drained stony slopes. Branchlets 6-angled. Leaves opposite. to 4cm x 10mm. Flower spikes, compact terminal, white to pinkish with darker pink markings, individual flowers to 7mm, spring to summer. Plants tend to die back in dry periods and mid-winter. However they grow back prolifically after good seasonal rains and will even recover after very occasional slashing.

GROUP 5 - UPRIGHT HERBACEOUS PLANTS

Narrow-leaved Rattlepod – *Crotalaria montana* var. *angustifolia*

FABACEAE

Upright, twiggly plant to 50cm, but often smaller, on rocky slopes. Stems and leaf-margins white-hairy also leaves hairy below, Leaves, greyish-green, alternate, to 4cm x 8mm. Flowers, bright yellow, to 10mm, summer to winter. Pods dark grey to Black, to 8mm.



Native Pennyroyal or Native Mint – *Mentha satureioides*

LAMIACEAE

Spreading, suckering herbaceous plant with erect stems, to 30cm, often mat-forming. Leaves opposite, to 25mm x 12mm, highly aromatic. 4 to 5-petalled 4mm white flowers in clusters, all year, although in dry seasons it will die back. Flowers occasionally tinged with mauve or pale pink. The species is usually found on stony slopes and ridges.



GROUP 5 - UPRIGHT HERBACEOUS PLANTS

Native St John's Wort – *Hypericum gramineum*

CLUSIACEAE

Small upright herb to 20cm in open, short-grassy places in open forests and woodlands. Leaves opposite, to 13mm. 5-petalled 10mm golden-yellow flowers, spring to summer. A common and widespread plant, but often overlooked due to its small size and being hidden amongst grasses.



Pineapple Daisy – *Pterocaulon redolens*

ASTERACEAE



Tall woolly, ephemeral herb to 1m, on slopes with well-drained soils. Stems winged. Leaves alternate, to 5cm x 20mm, aromatic when crushed. Pink to mauve, tufted flowers in cylindrical heads to 6cm long, spring to autumn. Plants die back in winter but grow back in the following spring and summer seasons from seed remaining in the soil from the previous season's plants.

Spade Flower – *Pigea stellarioides* (formerly *Afrohybanthus stellarioides*)

VIOLACEAE

Slender spindly herb to 30cm in grassy open forests and woodlands. Leaves alternate, occasionally sparsely toothed, to 6cm x 7mm. Flowers, bright orange, spade-shaped, to 15mm. This spindly plant gains some support from various, taller grass species, which grows with it.



GROUP 5 - UPRIGHT HERBACEOUS PLANTS

Sticky-leaved Plectranthus – *Coleus graveolens* (formerly *Plectranthus graveolens*)

Lamiaceae

Vigorous tall herb to 1m on rock slopes, ledges, and outcrops. Leaves to 8cm, opposite, soft, toothed margins, covered in downy hairs, very aromatic when crushed and often sticky, and edible. Flowers bluish to purple to 13mm on long spikes to 25cm long, throughout the year. This species can form dense colonies in semi-shaded locations in open forests.



Tufted Bluebell – *Wahlenbergia communis*

CAMPANULACEAE

A common bluebell species and many-branched erect herb to 40cm, hairless or sparsely hairy. Leaves alternate, to 6cm x 6mm, sometimes minutely toothed. Blue 5-petalled flowers, each flower to 20mm, spring to late summer. Oblong papery seed capsules to 9mm. As the species name indicates this species can form dense clumps or communities, particularly in disturbed areas.



Twin-leaf Bedstraw – *Asperula geminifolia*

RUBIACEAE

Uncommon, herbaceous, thin-stemmed plant to 60cm, growing amongst grasses for support, usually on rocky slopes. Stems quadrangular and slightly roughened. Leaves opposite, hairless, usually in pairs (or twinned as alluded to by the species name after the Gemini twins of the Zodiac sign). Flowers white, 4-petaled, to 2mm, usually in terminal clusters about 5mm across in winter to spring. This species is easily overlooked when not in flower.



GROUP 5 - UPRIGHT HERBACEOUS PLANTS

Vernonia – *Cyanthillium cinereum* (formerly *Vernonia cinerea*)

Asteraceae



Upright lanky, widespread herb to 1m. Leaves alternate, hairy, usually serrate, greyish green or sometimes dark green. Leaves can be very variable in width and length, as there appears to be two separate forms. Flowers pink to purple, in heads throughout much of the year. When in full flower it attracts various butterfly species including the Zebra Blue – *Leptotes plinius* (see above).

Yellow Buttons – *Chrysocephalum apiculatum*

ASTERACEAE

Herb to 40cm, common and widespread in western Brisbane catchments, often forming broad mats. Stems and leaves soft and white hairy. Leaves to 5cm x 25mm, paler below. Flower heads to 10mm, in terminal clusters, most of the year. Can be variable in appearance due to at least two distinct forms.



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