

PUBLISHED BY THE SOCIETY FOR GROWING AUSTRALIAN PLANTS IN 11,000 COPIES

Australian Plants

Registered for posting as a periodical—
Category B

MARCH, 1971

Vol. 6, No. 46

Volume 6 will comprise issues 45-52

Price: 30c



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HOW TO GROW WESTERN AUSTRALIA'S WILDFLOWERS

HOW TO GROW TERRESTRIAL ORCHIDS—ALSO PROPAGATION FROM SEED

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN WILDFLOWERS

This issue has been compiled principally by West Australian members and presents their flora and its application to horticulture. The introducing article opposite is followed by:

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PAST ISSUES OF "AUSTRALIAN PLANTS" AVAILABLE

Because of the vast wealth of our flora there is very little repetition of previous information.

VOLUME No. 1, issues 1-12, no longer available bound but issues 1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 are available at 45c each, \$2.85 incl. postage.

VOLUME No. 2, issues 13-20, all available only fully bound at \$6.00 plus 20c postage.

And in this volume is also "A Descriptive Catalogue of Western Australian Plants".

VOLUME No. 3, issues 21-28, all available only fully bound at \$6.00 plus 20c postage, including also "Catalogue of Cultivated Australian Native Plants" valued at \$3.00.

VOLUME No. 4, issues 29-36, all available only fully bound at \$6.00 plus 20c postage, including "Western Australian Plants for Horticulture—Part 1" valued at \$3.00—see below.

VOLUME No. 5, issues 37-44 all available only fully bound at \$6.00 plus 20c postage including "The Language of Botany", a valuable reference to words and terms.

Please excuse the delay in despatch of volume 5, it will be sent by end of April.

Other Books by the Society

WEST AUSTRALIAN PLANTS FOR HORTICULTURE is the latest book by this Society available from the editor for \$3.00 plus 20c postage. The format of the book generally is to have simple but adequate descriptions (using simple features that anyone can distinguish) of three species in one genus with a full colour plate of one of them on the opposite page. Directions as to cultivation are given for each species. Hundreds of West Australian wildflowers are also described. This is the style of book we recommend and is excellent value at this low price. It is proposed to produce more in this series on wildflowers from other states if readers will support us by buying the first one, providing the money to produce the next one.

"West Australian Plants"—A Descriptive Catalogue (2nd Edition)

This fine book was one of the first produced by the Society and has been so widely acclaimed and received that a reprint has been necessary. The number of colour plates has been doubled but the real value of the book even for those who have a copy of the first edition is that fully revised. It is the only reference ever produced to the entire flora of Western Australia. New additions include the grass and fern families but the many hundreds of species added and names revised make this book a must for anybody interested in growing the western wildflowers.

Available from the Editor, 860 Henry Lawson Drive, Picnic Point, 2213 for \$3.00 plus 20c postage.

THE LANGUAGE OF BOTANY by C. N. Debenham

Price \$1.50 plus 20c postage

The first edition of this book was so widely sought after that it sold out. It became a reference text to not only all Universities and Colleges studying botany and was especially valuable to horticultural classes at the layman level. It defines in clear terms every botanical term you are likely to meet. The second edition has been fully revised and expanded threefold to include such things as the meaning and origin of plant names and all facets of the biology of plant life.

WEST AUSTRALIAN WILDFLOWERS

AN INTRODUCTION by J. S. Beard

We are often asked, how many varieties of West Australian wildflowers are there? As there does not seem to be any satisfactory definition of a "wildflower", this question cannot be exactly answered. Many curious claims are made in tourist literature. We can only reply that our "Descriptive Catalogue of West Australian Plants" (second edition 1970) lists 5802 species. This is the sum total of known flowering plants and grasses but a great number are inconspicuous in themselves or have inconspicuous flowers and so are certainly not "wildflowers".

About 1445 species are thought to occur in the Northern Province, 1822 in the Eremaean and 3611 in the Southwestern Province (as many species occur in more than one province, the total of these figures exceeds 5802). Northern and Eremaean plants tend to range across the continent, but the flora of the Southwest is to a high degree endemic, that is to say, unique to that area. A recent check has revealed that 86% of the flowering plant species of the southwest occur nowhere else (Beard 1969), and it is this quality of uniqueness which is the special feature of the southwest. On a continent, such as Australia, such behaviour is abnormal. Local uniqueness is normally expected in oceanic islands such as Hawaii or Mauritius where species have undergone changes in isolation from continental populations. Southwestern Australia is in effect an island, isolated from the well-watered east by the desert. Unique plants are bound to be of special interest. When so many of them are of outstanding natural beauty, interest is redoubled. It is easy to understand, therefore, that Western Australia possesses in the southwest a floral heritage of a very special character whose preservation is of world-wide importance.

Commencing on page 50 the different climatic regions of the southwest have been described, with their principal plant communities. This is also a convenient way to deal with the distribution of species and wildflower areas for the visitor. The karri forests of the extreme southwest with their giant trees are a spectacle in themselves, for many of the finest stands are preserved from timber cutting in national parks. The weather there is apt to be cool and even rainy throughout the year, and spring is late with flowers at their best in October. At a certain stage after fire the undergrowth is dominated by great masses of white-flowering *Clematis pubescens*, purple *Hovea elliptica*, and *Kennedia coccinea*, or by the yellow pea *Bossiaea laidlawiana*, giving outstanding colour effects. In this region *Boronia megastigma* has its natural habitat in swamps, so too the pitcher plant *Cephalotus follicularis*, and *Beaufortia sparsa* which is summer flowering.

Understory plants in the karri forest are mostly soft leaved. On entering the jarrah and wandoo forests of the adjoining region however a sclerophyll flora makes its appearance, and leaves are harsh and prickly. Most of the jarrah forest is still intact, growing as it does on solid laterite, and roads crossing the Darling Range pass through the forest for about 30 miles, with displays of wayside flora. From here comes the state emblem, the Kangaroo Paw, *Anigozanthos manglesii*, and other species, *Grevillea wilsonii*, *Isopogon dubius*, *Lechenaultia biloba*, and *Conospermum amoenum*. On the sandy coastal plain around and north of Perth the forests are replaced

