

Association of Societies for Growing Australian Plants Inc.
Wallum & Coastal Heathland
Study Group

Native Iris



Patersonia sericea

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AUGUST 2003.

Dear members, and other readers,

Life has been much busier than was anticipated, and as usual, I am chasing time. I had intended that a newsletter go out in June, but with my various commitments - home and family, our business and having to put being secretary for Redcliffe S.G.A.P. first recently - here I am with some last-minute news once again.

In the last newsletter, I outlined coming events, which included a Gold Coast weekend over the 16th & 17th of August - next weekend. However, owing to so many other things to do just now, I've had to cancel that weekend's activity, and postpone it indefinitely. I am very sorry to have to do this, with so little notice, but that is an indication of how busy I've been over the past few weeks. Things have hardly slowed down since late June, and there are local Study Group members who can vouch for that, as they have also been involved in some of the same activities. So please don't head off to Kingscliff on Saturday morning, and if you know of anyone who intended to participate, tell them the weekend has been cancelled.

N.B.

Briefly, this is the programme of events for the coming weeks:

This Sunday there is a wildflower walk on Bribie Island - see Page 4.

Also on that page, there are notices about the Noosa Parks Association's "Wildflower Weekend" at the Environment Centre, Wallace Park, Noosaville on the 23rd & 24th, and the Coolum Wallum Wildflower Show on Sunday 31st of August.

On Saturday 6th of September, the Caloundra branch of the Wildlife Preservation Society of Queensland is having its annual wildflower walks at Currumundi Conservation Park. The day starts around 9.30a.m. with walks at 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. It is usually a very relaxed, low-key day, with a couple of stalls (I put the Study Group on display), and a lot of easy socialising, over morning & afternoon teas and lunch. It all takes place Coongarra Esplanade on the northern side of the Currumundi Lake, turn off the Nicklin Way at Anuna Street (lights) see UBD 2003 Map 90 Ref. G 18 (entry to Park). Bring lunch, etc. (no shops nearby) and other excursion needs, and join us for an educational, but relaxed day.

This Park was a prime achievement for renowned artist and conservationist, the late Kathleen McArthur, and efforts are being made to include her name in the name of the Park, but Governments never move quickly, do they?

Also on Page 4 is a little notice about a Wallum workshop at the Mudjimba Wildflower Garden on Saturday 20th September. On Sunday the 21st, it will be a day for the Study Group members to meet at this garden at 9.30 a.m. Once we've had a good look at it, there may be time to visit some other place of interest in the region. So come along, bring lunch, etc., and see some of the Wallum of the Sunshine Coast (before more of it vanishes).

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"HIBBERTIA INTEREST SECTION"*Hibbertia stricta*

I'm sad to see that the Hibbertia Study Group has been closed due to the lack of a leader. Back in 1989, after attending a N.S.W. SGAP (then) State Conference at Bonny Hills, I applied for leadership of this Study Group, but an SGAP Group down in Victoria were ahead of me, so I missed out. Instead, I became a member, as my interest is very keen, a close second to Wallum. A couple of years ago, I asked A.S.G.A.P. if I could "caretake" the Hibbertia Study Group until a proper leader could be found, but this wasn't possible as I really didn't have enough time to add another Study Group to my present workload.

Now, instead, I am going to include an "Interest Section" in the Wallum newsletter, as there are a lot of Hibbertias in our field of study, and several members who are also interested in this very lovely genus. Hibbertias make excellent garden plants, and I would like to see much more use of them. There are already several available in commercial nurseries, and a few others are grown by Society members. But more use of them should be made, especially by us. Around the Brisbane region, I see a lot of *Hibbertia scandens* being used in roadway plantings, most of them successful and attractive. Only one planting actually died, on Brisbane's northern outskirts at Aspley, why, I don't know. Perhaps it was to do with the soil used in that spot. On the down side, I have found this plant in two local commercial nurseries, one at Closeburn (near Samford), the other at Kallangur, being sold off cheap, presumably to move them. At \$3 for a 6-inch pot, I consider these a bargain, and have bought a large number of them. This plant can be grown as a shrub (tip off the twining shoots), a ground cover, or a well-behaved climber on trellis or lower branches of other tall plants. The reason why they weren't being purchased is probably a lack of decent promotion by nurseries whose staff wouldn't be as dedicated as we are, about our native plants, or don't know much about the plants they are selling, and don't try to educate customers about plants such as *Hibbertia scandens*. This lack of knowledge or interest can do a lot of harm to our native plants and their images. Then we have the hard task of persuading people that our plants are viable garden subjects.

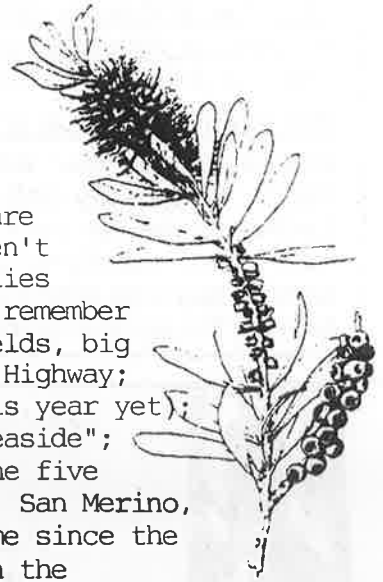
I've mentioned this Hibbertia before, and must write about it again. It is *Hibbertia diffusa*, a plant of which I purchased at our annual Spring Flower Show two years ago. Without any special care, and with irregular watering, it has grown into a lovely low spreading "shrub" about a metre across and half a metre high. I looked at it today, to check on how it is flowering, and at a rough estimate, there would be well over 200, nearer 300, flowers on that one plant. What a treasure it is in my garden, I must grow more of it. (Jan G., you must grow more of them for us to buy at the Flower Show).

Hibbertia vestita is another very worthy garden species, fairly common in various habitats around south-east Queensland, and commercially available. But we find other delightful species out there in our bushland, and should be getting them into gardens. For instance, the local *Hibbertia aspera* will flower and self-seed in my garden, but the one available in some nurseries comes from southern New South Wales, and mine has never flowered, in almost three years. We should be growing the local.

Perhaps some of my Hibbertias will still be flowering in October, when I have set a date for a visit to my garden here at Samsonvale on Sunday the 19th. It could be getting a bit late for many of my Wallum plants, but they will still be here, for members to see what is surviving in conditions very different from their natural "home" in the coastal wetlands and dunes. Things are getting rather dry here, in spite of a green look about the place. The dam is getting low, and we need lots of rain to top it up. Planning a garden visit usually brings on the rain, so October 19th is the day to come. Check with me about any activities in case of changes. Meanwhile write to me about any Wallum and Hibbertias you are growing.

SOME CULTIVATION NOTES 3.

Vanilla Lilies are the "flavour of the month" at present. With the Sowerbaea juncea all bursting into flower, there are bits of mauve and purple around the Wallum areas which haven't been cleared yet. But when I have these lovely scented lilies on display, so many speak of the "drifts" of them they can remember at some place between Brisbane and Noosa. All of these fields, big or small, are now gone - north of Beerwah on the old Bruce Highway; at Redondo Street, Ningi (I haven't looked at that area this year yet); the lost Marcoola field which is now the barren "Town of Seaside"; the smaller patch at the southern end of Marcoola, where the five blocks of holiday/tourist units - Salerno, Discovery Beach, San Merino, Atlantis and Marcoola Beach Resort; Emu Swamp, not the same since the re-routing of roads post-Motorway, and its inclusion within the Noosa National Park (no longer the lovely accessible wildflower patch it was back in the early 1990's).



Wallum bottlebrush
Callistemon pachyphyllus

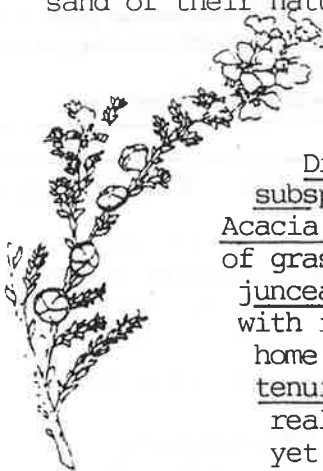
They've all changed or vanished, and we are the poorer for these losses. But,....our native nurseries have started growing Vanilla Lilies and selling them to their customers everywhere. Is this going to be the best thing for our beautiful Sowerbaeas? I am not sure, as a lot of garden soils won't agree with them, and they will die. This sort of thing can ham the image of native plants, and set back our work of encouraging people to use natives. But it is good to see Vanilla Lilies available, as they are so eye-catching, and people want to grow them. Will they be given some decent advice along with the plants? Will there be any feedback from these growers, about the fate of their new wildflowers? I'd like to know just what happens when the Sowerbaeas reach their new homes in suburban Brisbane, whether they grow or die.

Meanwhile, how many Society members are trying out such plants as these, some new garden subjects? I've brought home "rescued" Vanilla Lilies, complete with their clod of natural peaty sand. Those I originally planted out into the garden haven't survived. But the ones I put into pots along with other Wallum plants, have been with me for what is now their second season, and are all looking good and coming into flower. Are they better suited to pot culture, in a controlled soil mixture, and regular watering in a more exclusive manner? I don't like growing too much in pots as these have to be cared for more carefully if I am away. And with a busy working husband who works long hours, watering regularly can be a problem. He tries to do his best, but it is not the same as my care of the potted plants.

Growing Wallum plants is a real challenge, as they appear to prefer that wet peaty sand of their natural coastal wetlands. And I certainly don't have anything like that here. Shaly loam in the hinterland foothills isn't exactly Wallum, so I have to try to bring home some of that special sand from time to time. That can be difficult. But one of my pots presently has the following in flower:

Dillwynia floribunda; Baeckea imbricata; Philothea myoporoides subsp. queenslandicus; Sowerbaea juncea; Leucopogon leptospermoides; Acacia baueri (it was a seedling which came up in the pot); a couple of grasses/sedges. Also in this pot are Goodenia stelligera and Xyris juncea, which flower later. In another pot is a Gompholobium virgatum with its first two flowers of about 30 buds, on a plant which I brought home last as a little seedling. With it are two plants of Westringia tenuicaulis, which is quite difficult to grow as it is a plant of the really wet places. I am proud to have grown 1 Vanilla lily plant, as yet too small to be flowering, but it growing well.

Don't forget, send me your "Cultivation Notes", as we need all the information possible on cultivating Wallum plants.



Wallum lemon-scented tea-tree
Leptospermum liveridgei

From the Bribie Island Environmental Protection Association Inc.:
Phone Bruce Kilgour on 3408 7650 for details.

WILDFLOWER WALK:

Our walk this year will be held in the National Park at White Patch, on Sunday 17th August.
Gather in the car park at 9am near the Ranger Station. Bring a hat, insect repellent and a bottle of water. We have **Barbara Henderson** and **John Ward** as guides.
Bring a friend and enjoy some of Bribie's natural beauty.

Fan Flower



Dampiera sylvestris

SPRING WILDFLOWER WEEKEND 2003

9.30 am to 5 pm

Saturday 23rd and

Sunday 24th August

Over 100 live plant species will be on display, as well as pressed specimens and photographs.

Guided walks will be held on:
Saturday 23rd to the Dry Heathland of Marcus High Dunes,
and on Sunday 24th to the Wet Heath on Noosa's North Shore.

Each walk will start from the E.C. at 9 a.m.

Transport will be available.

Fairbill Native Plant Nursery -
Mother Mountain Bush Foods Nursery
will display and sell their plants.

A photographic show of Noosa's
Vegetation types
Food, Produce and more.



Coolum Wallum Wildflower Show

This year Coolum District Coast Care is presenting the Coolum Wallum Wildflower Show. The day will be a "Celebration of our Natural Heritage" and everyone is invited to come and enjoy it. Put it in your diaries, Sunday 31st August between 9.30am and 4.30pm at the Coolum Primary School, School Road, Coolum Beach.

- You can -
- Learn about the beautiful wildflowers
- Be guided through the National Park
- Be entertained
- Bring the children for some great activities
- Buy a native plant or two
- Enjoy a cuppa or lunch
- Find out more about your environment



We feel it is time to celebrate the addition of a further 300 hectares of our precious and unique bushland to National Park. To do this we are asking all those who have worked to save our natural heritage to come along to the Wildflower Show and be recognised. We also want to invite anyone who has helped in any way in previous Wildflower Shows. The Wildflower Show has been an important social, educational and environmental experience in previous years and we want to thank those who have been involved. For any more information please phone Deb on 5446 1129. We are looking forward to seeing you there.

Deb Voss
Coolum District Coast Care

Coming up... Workshops

- Wallum Wildflower Identification - September 20, 9am - 1pm, Mudjinba Wallum Garden and Mudjinba Community Hall, Trainer is Barbara Henderson, 20 places available

Workshops are free with morning tea provided. To register contact Gavin on 54418263.

Gavin Hammermeister
Greening Australia Officer

Noosa Parks Association Inc.

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Eumundi Road Noosaville
Phone: 07.5474.2486
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The Noosa Parks Association's Environment Centre is next door to the Library in Wallace Park, Eumundi Road, Noosaville - best approached from Eumundi.
Dr. Arthur Harrold usually guides the Sunday walk at North Shore.

Be seeing you
Barbara H.