

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

Newsletter

25.

AUGUST 2008.

ISSN 1038-7889

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Pultenaea paleacea

Hello to members and other readers, as always I am racing against the clock to get everything done, and this year's Sunshine Coast Spring Wildflower Festival is looming much too close for comfort. It seems such a short time since we just starting to plan it, and now there are a mere 3 weeks to the launch on Friday 15th August!

And I'm breaking-in a new typewriter as well - the old one developed problems with printing, and probable overuse. Today has been wet & miserable, but the rain is needed everywhere, so no complaining. This will be rather a shorter newsletter than usual, for several reasons, the main one being the need to get necessary information out regarding the Festival. A programme of the events of the two weeks is included, plus a reminder about your 2008/9 membership renewal. I'm amazed at the number of different places where we can still see examples of coastal vegetation communities, despite the losses which have been experienced due to urban progress and pressures on the Sunshine Coast. I'm sure there will be somewhere of interest on the Festival programme.

Also in this issue, there's information on coming activities of the Study Group until the end of the year, and a review of the past couple of months. In June, we gained a new member - Deborah Knott, who belongs to Brisbane Western Suburbs SGAP, and joined us in a lovely morning's ramble on one of the tracks of the Beerwah Scientific Area 1. We hope Deborah will enjoy her membership.

I've chosen Pultenaea paleacea, the Chaffy Bush Pea, as our feature wildflower for this newsletter, as it will be brightening coastal Wallum wetlands in the coming weeks, along with many other pea flowers. You can read about this LYPF, little yellow pea flower, and several others, in my September "Heathland Ramble" in the Bulletin. Along with Boronia falcifolia, Sowerbaea juncea, Burchardia umbellata, Epacris obtusifolia, Dillwynia floribunda, Aotus lanigera, to name just a few, this Pultenaea always provided a spectacular show across the open Wallum areas of Marcoola before housing development took over. On low rounded shrubs, masses of golden pea flowers with red markings on and under the petals, attracted so many bees that the plants themselves appeared to be humming. It is a species found only in the wet Wallum areas, and so far has defied all attempts to successfully relocate or propagate & cultivate it, unlike another Pultenaea - P. villosa - which can be grown in gardens with some degree of success. In the new, combined edition of "Mangroves to Mountains", launched on June 5th, the picture of P. paleacea doesn't seem to do justice to the flower I've seen so often on the Sunshine Coast, but perhaps that is due to the fact that it was photographed in an area to the south of Brisbane, and there could be some difference between the two forms of the plant. But it is a beautiful Pultenaea, and would be an attractive addition to a wildflower garden, if we could just discover the secrets of cultivation. The drawing at the top of the page was the work of my older daughter, from one of my photographs back in 1997, when she produced 16 drawings for me. Perhaps plants of Pultenaea paleacea can be found in the Mudjimba Wallum Wildflower Rescue Garden, one of the places included in the Wildflower Festival.

Coming activities include the Wildflower Festival, which begins on Friday 15th of July, at its launch at the Maroochy Bushland Botanical Gardens from 10a.m. to Noon. From then until Sunday 31st of August, there is a wide range of places to choose from. Study Group members should make special note of 2 particular dates, which will be part of our coming activities.

Sunday 17th of August is the annual B.I.E.P.A. wildflower walk at Bribie Island, and members are invited to participate. I have not committed us as guides, but decided it would be convenient to make this our annual Bribie Island Wallum Day. Following the walk, our members will meet at the Bribie Island Community Nursery, courtesy of John Ward (as we have done for several years now), to have lunch and a discussion on Wallum. We could be joined by some B.I.E.P.A. members or other walkers, if they are interested. The Community Nursery is on the right, past the sports fields, on the main road to Woorim, meeting time 12 noon.

Thursday 21st of August is the Study Group's "day" within the Festival, when we will be the guides on the walk in the Beerwah Scientific Area 1. We are to meet at 9.00a.m. roadside near the Rural Fire Brigade shed on Roys Road, near the former Beerwah Field Study Centre. Coming from Brisbane, turn off the Bruce Highway towards Beerburrum, continue towards Beerwah, turning right into Roys Road just over Coochin Creek, and opposite the turn-off into Beerwah township. Follow Roys Road around a left curve, and look for buildings on the left. We have chosen a track for the walk, and hope it meets our expectations on the day. Don't worry about whether you know all the flowers, there will be a couple of basic "guide books" available - small photo albums of the most common species to be seen. Bring a picnic lunch for afterwards.

On Sunday September 21st, we'll visit the Redcliffe Botanic Gardens, as Don Perrin would like to show us the results of his efforts to cultivate some of the Wallum plants of the region. Although some of you (from Caboolture SGAP) will be there on the 3rd of August for the "What's Cooking?" event, this will be a better opportunity to have a good look at the plants. Meet at the George Street entrance between 9 and 9.30a.m., bring morning tea and lunch.

We'll travel a little further north on Sunday 19th of October, to visit the Ewen Maddock Artificial Wetlands north of Landsborough, on the Glass House Mts. Road. Find Ref. B 12 on Sunshine Coast UBD Map 97, where you turn left into the carpark for the Wetlands, where a man-made waterway flows towards the waters of the Ewen Maddock Dam (which you cross just beforehand). A path follows the watercourse, and is planted with a mix of local and introduced Australian native plants. This Wetlands is a dual concept which didn't quite fulfil its original planned purpose. It was part of a project by the former Caloundra City Council, many years ago, to establish native gardens in several places around the city. In addition, it was to be part of a water treatment system, using the wetlands around the Dam. However, neither project was finalised, but we were left with a very pleasant venue for a Sunday walk. Meet there by 9.30a.m., as usual with morning tea and lunch. We can return to an attractive park at the Landsborough (northern end) turnoff, to have lunch if preferred.

I've discovered an SGAP member who is propagating & growing Wallum plants in pots mainly, and members of our Study Group would be welcome to visit. Many years ago, he collected propagation material on the Sunshine Coast, and I obtained

Vanilla Lily



Sowerbaea juncea

Trigger Flower



Stylidium graminifolium

Sun Orchid



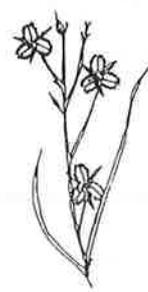
Thelymitra pauciflora

Wallum Tea-Tree



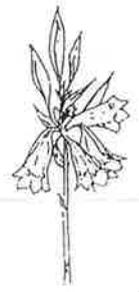
Leptospermum semibaccatum

Fringed Lily

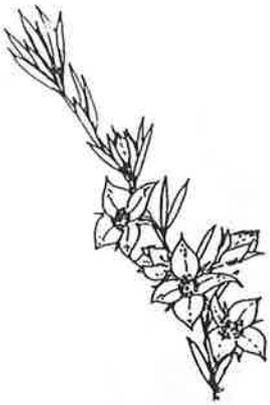


Thysanotus tuberosus

Christmas Bells



Blandfordia grandiflora



Boronia falcifolia

a few examples of his successes. Whatever his "magic" touch is, I don't know, but I still have healthy Leptospermum microcarpum (prostrate form), Melaleuca thymifolia and Phebalium woombye growing in the garden at Kobble/Samsonvale. The Phebalium was threatened last summer by scale & soot, but I got Geoff, in my absence, to clear around the base of the plant, scatter some ant granules and spray the plant with Confidor for the scale. At my last inspection, the Phebalium was still alive and well, and I hope to see it flower as usual this spring. Anyway, I am planning for us to visit the Beachmere garden of this clever person for our November outing, on either the 9th or the 23rd of November. So far, I haven't been able to make contact to organise a visit, but will confirm plans at a later date - watch for the September Bulletin, or our next newsletter. Meantime just make a note on your calendar for November.

I won't go into any detail about the Wildflower Festival programme, except to say that the variety is marvellous, and I have visited most of the places mentioned. The members of local groups involved will do their guiding work well as they, like me, just want all of the visitors to enjoy the beauty of the Coast and its flowers. The many walks probably do a better job of introducing the public to the Wallum than the restricted displays at the Coolum Wildflower Show. Taking people right into the natural habitats gives them the best view possible, hands-on and up close & personal. As well as my "duty" stints at Bribie Island and Beerwah, I hope to spend Saturday 30th August at Caloundra "doing" Kathleen McArthur Conservation Park and Ben Bennett Botanical Park. Maybe I'll meet some of you in the Wallum?

March, April, May and June outings are now in the past, although the Mt. Mee visit in May was cancelled due to the inability of members to attend. In March, we went to Raaen & Chambers Roads at D'Aguilar to check out what was offering. Flowering was sparse, but we found some wonderful understory vegetation, regrown after fire possibly about 18 months earlier. This section of Eucalypt forest contains a lot of Syncarpia glomulifera - Turpentine or the UFO Tree. Look at the unusual seedpods to understand the 2nd name. We decided to return to this bit of understory in July (this month) in the hope of finding some of the pea flowers in bloom. There was some disappointment on finding only the purple Hovea acutifolia flowering, plus Pultenaea villosa and P. petiolaris. A few tiny yellow Hibbertia aspera were down at ground level, but in general, the vegetation was still mostly green. Acacia myrtifolia was seen at Raaen Road, and there was quite a debate about whether the tiny "things" on some Acacia longissima were buds or seed pods forming. I think it was agreed that they were the latter. This part of the country isn't exactly Wallum, but the species there are either also found nearer the coast, or are closely related. April found us along Caves Road on the southern side of Tibrogargan Creek, with local Glass House Mts. residents Bill & Jane Thompson as company when we "did" the John Ferris Track. This is a loop track on the southern side of Caves Road, and took us to a small lookout from which there is a marvellous view of one of the smaller mountains - Mt. Tiberowuccum, which is usually hidden by the much larger Mt. Tibrogargan. Bill & Jane live nearby, and work with National Parks staff in choosing where walking tracks would be best placed. The John Ferris Track meanders through Eucalypt forest with Banksia and Persoonia shrub understory, plus other open forest species and grasses. It is a lovely place to wander, or should I say - ramble? I first met Bill back in the 1970's when he and my brother were computer engineers with a firm in Brisbane, until Bill opted out and moved to the Glass House Mts. to establish an avocado orchard. Eventually he became interested in the local environment, replaced much of his orchard with Australian natives, and started to enjoy a quieter life. His wife Jane is a wildflower artist with some of her work on signs along the walking tracks. With work going ahead on straightening the rail line between Beerburrum and Landsborough, their peace is being severely disturbed with the loss of part of their property, along with several others. They are also seriously concerned about the loss of some of the area's lovely natural habitats and plants. We hope to have their company more often on our Glass House rambles.

In June we were back in the magical atmosphere of the Beerwah Scientific Area 1, rambling along one of the shorter tracks. Not a lot of flowers, June seems to be the "holiday" time for the Wallum, but we found a couple of plants of Grevillea humilis (previously called leiophylla which is the more or less suckering form) in flower. This species has an upright growth with stiffer leaves, and flowers can range from a pale pink to the lovely mauve usually seen. We decided this track would be ideal for the Wildflower Festival walk, and hope it behaves for us, to burst into bloom for the 21st of August.

So we've been spending some time away from the very coastal Wallum, but will be returning with the Bribie Island day on Sunday 17th of August - please try to come along if only for lunch and the session at the Community Nursery. Bribie Island seems to be "under siege" lately, so I'm looking forward to seeing for myself what is happening.

Acacia suaveolens, on the right, has been flowering, so I'm told. A pale cream flower on a very sparse upright plant, this species isn't very prominent until the unusual but lovely oval-rectangular seed pods appear in large clusters. They are a deep purply-grey often with a bloom, and are the real feature of the plant which occurs in coastal Wallum wetlands, and is found at Beerwah.



I attended the June 5th launch of the newest edition of "Mangroves to Mountains" by the Logan River Branch of SGAP. Combining the two original editions, it is larger, of course, and a bit heavier to carry, so makes a good reference book for looking at after a walk, when you search for all those plants you want to identify. I found that the Coastal Heath section differs little from that in Volume 2, and was sad to see that my picture of the Ninghi Wallum has been replaced by Wallum on North Stradbroke. It is ironic that the area in my photo has also vanished, replaced with houses and roads. So it is probably not much use having a picture of an area no longer in existence, it's just funny that the Ninghi Wallum and the picture in the book have both gone at the same time. Quite a number of plant species I associate with the Wallum are in the Eucalypt forest section, and we do often find these plants in both habitats. The evening of the book launch, at the Mt. Coot-tha Gardens Auditorium, was a lively affair, with many others besides myself meeting up with people they hadn't seen for some time. For me, the time passed far too quickly until it was time to go home.

The covers on the new book are very appropriate - the front cover has a lovely shot of Bruguiera gymnorhiza/Orange Mangrove, while on the back cover is a beautiful view of some of south-east Queensland's mountains - truly "Mangroves to Mountains".

On our recent outing to Raaen Road at D'Aguilar, there was an excellent chance to see the difference between 2 of our Patersonia species. In south-east Queensland's coastal Wallum wetlands and woodlands, and the adjacent Eucalypt forests, we have 3 species of Patersonia or Native Iris. They have a tendency to provide what we call "Patersonia" or "Iris" days, when all the flowers bloom on the same day. In addition, each bud contains 2 or 3 flowers which open a couple of days apart. On our D'Aguilar day we were lucky, they were in bloom. Our 3 species are: fragilis, which is the smallest, always in wet Wallum or dunal heath, and with a light brown calyx; glabrata, similar in size to P. sericea, but with a smooth brown calyx, and a different growth habit where the main stem growing up to about 3 or 4 cm. before the leaf blades open out, and it occurs only in the hilly hinterland while P. sericea with its almost black calyx/seedpod covered in fine silky hairs, is found from the wet Wallum right through plant communities into the hills. At D'Aguilar we found glabrata and sericea almost side-by-side, enabling me to get good photos of both species.

And that's your blooming lot, to quote Pete,
See you somewhere in the Wallum soon,

Barbara H.