

Australian Native Plants Society (Australia) Inc.
Wallum & Coastal Heathland
Study Group

Newsletter

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JULY 2012.



Hello, members and other readers,

Half of the year is already gone, and as usual, time is being my enemy, although the weather can take some of the blame. The past week has been beautiful except for a few clouds the last couple of days, but before that, the overcast weather with bits of drizzle were quite hard to take. That sort of atmosphere just doesn't motivate me at all, and the cold hasn't helped. So I'm in a mad rush to get this issue out before next Sunday's outing to Bribie Island. So far, it has been a fairly busy time, and outings to date have been enjoyable, with only March cancelled due to uncertainty about rain. In February, six members and one visitor (my husband Geoff) spent the morning helping Richard & Carole Green at their Toorbul weekender in the "Creation of a Wallum Garden". With the garden prepared and plants waiting, after a social cuppa we soon had the job done in time for lunch, and the chance to relax and observe the wildlife on the adjacent wetlands. Cool breezes from Pumicestone Passage kept us comfortable in the summer heat, and 40 mostly Wallum species found a new home. There has been only 1 casualty to date, with a Grevillea leiophylla not happy in its new home. Latest note from Carole says "The Toorbul garden is ticking along, only the Grevillea leiophylla got too much rain and called it a day." I hope we can have a return visit to monitor progress. This type of garden visit is both pleasant and educational, as we learn about Wallum plants and their cultivation potential. There could be other Study Group members who are managing to grow a few local Wallum plants, but unless I receive any information, I wouldn't know. The planned Bribie Island outing in March lost out to rain, but was shifted to next Sunday - the 15th of July. We are meeting between 9 & 9.30a.m. at the Community Arts Centre, Sunderland Drive (Refidex Map No. 53 Ref. A 4), for morning tea, etc., before heading off to one of Bribie Island's best wildflower areas (at least I hope it still is, as I haven't been there for some time). Bring morning tea and lunch, which we'll have somewhere in that part of the Island. Guard your money/credit card well if you venture into the Arts Centre for a browse, they have some wonderful artwork there. And we might visit the Seaside Museum at Bongaree, as well.

I got ahead of myself there, as I was intending to report on this year's outings to date, and got carried away about Bribie Island, and our forthcoming outing.

Boronia



Boronia falcifolia

Back in April, at the request of member Don Perrin, we went to Redcliffe to see how the Redcliffe Botanic Gardens are progressing, especially the Wallum plantings. With only six present, it was a rather quiet outing, the inspection of the Wallum area showing varied results. Some species, such as the Banksia robur, have been a success, Melaleucas are happy there, but this genus seems to be one of the most forgiving of our native plants, as can be seen in my garden at Moore, they succeed where others fail.

The Redcliffe Botanic Gardens have suffered badly with the bat invasion, with trees in the rainforest section stripped of foliage, and the previously beautiful water feature in a very sad state. But we enjoyed our day there, and checked out plants in the nursery Don works in.

Guinea Flower



Hibbertia stricta

*Boronia falcifolia*

Early in the year, John Birbeck from the Sunshine Coast Regional Council contacted me regarding approximately 100 hectares recently acquired by the Council, to the east of Landsborough and north of Australia Zoo.

He wanted to organise a combined visit by our Study Group and the Sunshine Coast & Hinterland SGAP branch to the area, to compile a list of plants there, in autumn and again around September. So

Sunday 20th May was set down for an excursion for which 23 persons met at Landsborough. A mix of 2WD and 4WD vehicles followed John into the "wilds" along dirt tracks with a couple of rather dubious patches. But we all made it safely, and with a couple of stops, a lot of looking, guessing, conferring and references to plant guides

such as "Mangroves to Mountains", rough lists were made to be checked

back at home. The area was mainly bushland with a small creek, and appears to combine the familiar territory of the Beerwah/Glass House Mountains region we visit a lot, and the bushland of the range at D'Aguilar, another of our "stamping grounds". I think it will need another visit and more consultation between "experts" before a comprehensive list of species will be compiled. The area has been untouched for around 20 years, no fires have been through it, and it is in reasonable condition. Although there appears to be a good selection of flowering plants, I wouldn't call it "Wallum", but it is still very interesting, especially the presence, among the usual golden-yellow brushes of Banksia spinulosa, there were some bushes with dark orange with almost black flowers. I hope we'll return, though those two rough patches might be a bit off-putting to a few drivers.

The June excursion found us back at one of our more regular destinations - Beerburrum. Hoping to see Banksia spinulosa in bloom on a low ridge at the northern base of the mountain, we parked at the tiny cemetery, had morning tea, then took the "upper" track which leads to a small disused quarry. The "lower" track was temporarily quite impassable due to some large full puddles, and comparing plant lists after the outing, I noted that there are fewer small flowering species on the "upper" track. And the Banksia, while in flower, were nothing like the spectacle presented back in June 2006. However, we found enough to give us another day of learning.

Within our Sunday travelling range, true Wallum with open spaces of coastal heaths covered with low-growing flowering plants is much reduced, even from what there was when I started this Study Group 20 years ago. While much of it has been developed, and some made inaccessible through road changes, gates at National Park entrances and other restrictions, there are human factors involved. Like myself, long-term and faithful members are all 20 years older, and no longer inclined to dash off to some Wallum patch on the Sunshine Coast, as we did in the 1990s. Sunday traffic can be a bit intimidating, and is certainly not the pleasant "Sunday drive" it once was. So I have to rack my brains when planning a programme of outings, and we do seem to be spending a lot of our outing days back off the coast, away from the wet Wallum. The Beerwah Scientific Area 1 is still there, but rain has made most of the tracks a bit "wild", and regulars will know the problems I have trying to unlock the gates and get access. The Study Group has a "Group Activity Permit" at a cost of \$27 for the year, allowing us to access the Scientific Area, and other places. At times I begrudge the cost of the permit, especially when we can't open a gate to take our cars in. Yes, we can walk in easily, but it is a large Area, and there is a lot of it which members have never seen. However, I live in hope that one day we'll get there.

The Scientific Area is our destination on Sunday the 19th of August, when Beerwah should be at peak flowering, especially Pultenaea myrtoides and villosa, contrasting their gold pea flowers with white Pimelea linifolia and purple Patersonia sericea, if we are lucky enough to get a "Patersonia Day". We'll have morning tea and a comfort stop at Matthew Flinders Picnic Park as usual, between 9 & 9.30a.m., before heading off the Scientific Area. Bring lunch which we'll have somewhere peaceful and quiet, to the tune of trail bike engines. But don't let that put you off. August will be a busy month for me, although the Wallum Study Group isn't committed to any involvement in this year's Sunshine Coast Spring Wildflower Festival. I have no further information on the Festival other than the article on P. 12 of the Qld. Region June Bulletin. I had hoped that the colour brochures would have been ready to

enclose with this newsletter, but due to the lack of cooperation from some Sunshine Coast groups in having their events ready, the brochures, at this time, haven't been prepared. There is a website for information, but unfortunately many of today's technology devotees don't stop to think that there are still people out there who don't have computers, etc., and can't access websites. I am one of them, and am constantly told "to get a computer", and several of my Study Group members are in the same position. So if anyone wants more details about the Wildflower Festival, you can contact me on 54247073 - that's if you are another dinosaur.



I'll be helping with the wildflower morning at Keith Royal Park, Marcoola on Friday 31st August, after doing the Wallum plants I.D. workshop on Thursday the 30th. On Saturday 1st September, there will be the Currimundi Lake (Kathleen McArthur) Conservation Park walk guided by members of the Sunshine Coast and Hinterland (ex-Caloundra) Wildlife Preservation Society - phone Jill Chamberlain on 54442707 for details. I plan to give them my time that day. Sunday 2nd September, there's a wildflower walk at Coolum Beach at 8.30a.m. from near the Primary School, phone 54461635 for details, I plan to do that walk this year. Those are just a few activities with which I will be involved, but I hope before the Festival starts in 7 weeks time I'll have more information. There are no bookings being made this year.

You will have seen in the June Bulletin that S.G.A.P. Qld. Region lost two of its long-term members. Our own Dot Brown hadn't attended any of our activities since May 2006, due to deterioration of her health, and about 3 years after that, she went to live in a nursing home at Deception Bay. Shirley Flinn visited her regularly, taking some flowers from her garden, one being the Grevillea 'Dot Brown', a hybrid from the many Grevilleas grown by the late Ena Duggan, well-known to Caboolture and Pine Rivers SGAPPers. Ena and Dot were my first two Study Group members, probably equal first to sign on, and Ena was famous for her Grevillea seedlings (I have one in my garden here). Grevillea 'Dot Brown' was of course named for Dot, but there aren't many still around. Anyway, back in November last year, Shirley phoned me to say she wouldn't be able to visit Dot any more, as "the light had gone out", and that final visit was too distressing (see my Heathland Ramble in the March 2012 Bulletin). Anyway, not long after I sent out the February newsletter, Dot's son Geoffrey phoned to tell me that she had left us, on the 29th of February. That date, of course, is the extra day in this, a Leap Year, and it is almost as if she chose that date, so we would only have to remember her every four years. But I'm sure that all of us who knew Dot won't have to wait until the 29th February every 4 years - we'll think of her in between, and remember her passion for Wallum and other native plants. Not so many of you would have known Pat Shanahan, whom I met only a few times, mostly at the "Wallum Yabba" State Conference at Coolum Beach in September/October 1987. Even back then there were concerns on the Sunshine Coast over various development plans. On one of our day excursions, we looked at the northern end of Emu Swamp at Woodland Drive, Peregrin Beach. This was before Lot 160 on the edge of the Swamp ended up with five houses built on it, and from there you looked across the flat swampland towards the bulk of Mount Coolum to the south. I'll never forget Pat's remark some time later when I was involved in the work to save Emu Swamp from a theme park development. He'd dreamt that the top of the Mountain had been quarried and used to fill the Swamp. He was a really lovely man.

We belong to the Society for Growing Australian Plants/Australian Plants Society due to various reasons - a love of gardening; a fascination with the amazing range of forms and colours of our Aussie plants; a need to try to conserve plant communities in danger of destruction and extinction; many reasons. Personally, I love the little wildflowers, maybe because at 150 cm. tall it is easier to look at the small plants. But I think the Wallum wildflowers are simply beautiful, even if they are shy than those gorgeous W.A. flowers, and don't jump up and grab you. Choosing Wallum has been a challenge, because they are almost impossible to cultivate, and they grow in places along our coasts where people want to live and enjoy the beaches. Over the years I've collected notebooks, diaries and calendars illustrated with collections of gorgeous Australian wildflowers photographed by skilled people such as Steve Parish, to name one.

Beautiful and dazzling as these pictures are, there is an absolute minimum of flowers from Queensland or eastern Australia in general. One calendar has, on its cover, five shots, one of which is actually Ricinocarpos pinifolius, our lovely Wedding Bush, three others are W.A. flowers, the last one - do we have Wild Lupins in N.S.W.? Inside is a shot of Proteas, another labelling a W.A. Banksia as a Protea, but I suppose it doesn't really matter as the calendar is labelled as "Wildflowers". When I see this sort of thing on sale, I wish we had someone who would do calendars, diaries and notebooks for the general trade, with our Queensland flowers on them, just to show that we have them.

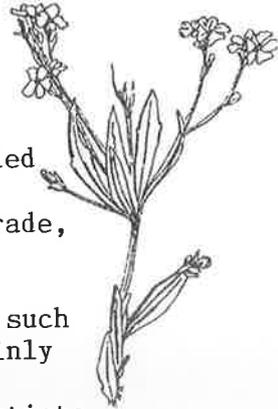
On the other side of the coin, sometimes little treasures can be found, such as a "Wildflowers in Watercolour" Journal I bought years ago. It is mainly Western Australian wildflowers, done by an artist who does the most exquisite work - Philippa Nikulinsky. I know we have many wildflower artists locally, and we can purchase their productions if we go to the right places. This little Journal has around 50 illustrations which are a delight to look at. If only such beautiful work was available at ordinary retail outlets.

I often lament that there aren't many Wallum plants in cultivation, except for those which have been around for years, such as Melaleuca thymifolia. I realise that it needs dedication, patience and persistence to discover the secrets of some of these plants, and the time to devote to the work. Looking for content for this newsletter, I found a paragraph in the Grevillea Study Group newsletter No. 89 June 2011, in similar vein. Included in the meeting report by Helen Howard is the following: "I wondered why we have not seen Grevillea quadricauda, floribunda and G. singuliflora in numbers for sale in south-east Queensland, even a Grevillea scortechinii is fairly rare in the average garden. So I see plenty of work for the future of Grevillea research and distribution". Yes, there is a long way yet for all of us to go.

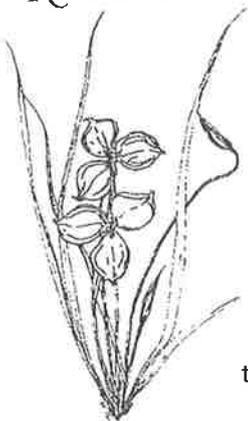
Many of us belong to other nature-based organisations, and the Wildlife Preservation Society of Queensland is one of those. This year W.P.S.Q. celebrates 50 years since Kathleen McArthur and three like-minded friends decided it was time our State had an organisation to care for its wildlife, which also includes the plants. Around the world there are many places under threat from human development and the destruction that follows it. Reading various publications, you discover that Australia isn't the only country which is having to deal with the changes which are taking place. Some years ago, I had two conversations which about wildflowers elsewhere in the world. Dot Brown and I had spent a couple of days on the Sunshine Coast, and stopped off at the Environment Centre at Mary Cairncross Park, to see an exhibition of Kathleen McArthur's work. Also there were some paintings by Janet Hauser, and a young man from California, who wanted to purchase a picture to send home to his mother in America. Seeing us looking at the artwork, he asked if we could tell him the names of the flowers in Janet's painting of some Wallum flowers. I gave him the names, and told Dot that I'd like to give him some of the Wallum information I had in the car, to help him look at some Sunshine Coast wildflowers.

There he was, parked next to us in the carpark, and we were able to have a talk to him, during which he told us of the Californian wildflowers, and how they regenerated following those wildfires they have. The second conversation was with someone in the Sydney office of our Insurance Company, somehow we got talking about wildflowers, and it transpired that he was from South Africa. He told me of that country's "fynbos" on the western coast, and told me to look at it if I ever had the chance. Now, I read three Scottish magazines (learning all I can about my father's homeland), and there on the opening pages of the February 2012 issue of "The Scots Magazine" this advertisement I've included on Page 5. It would seem that South Africa's "fynbos" has more than its share of trouble. All over the world, flora and fauna is "copping it", not just our Wallum and other plant communities.

Fan Flower

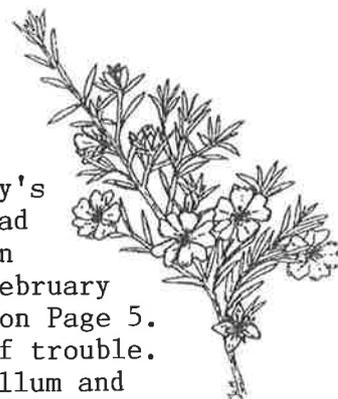


Native Iris



Patersonia sericea

Guinea Flower



Hibbertia stricta



15 fynbos plant species per square mile are in danger of extinction, and this is in a habitat which has been reduced by 96% from land clearance, alien plants and building.

Scientists issue warning about the mounting scale of destruction of the world's most important botanical habitat – now only 4% of the original habitat remains.

January 2012: A global appeal has been launched to purchase an initial 1,000 acres containing the greatest concentration of rare plant species on Earth in the highly threatened but little known fynbos habitat.

Conservationists from Fauna & Flora International (FFI) have surveyed the areas where the rarest fynbos plants grow and are now seeking donations to purchase 1,000 acres.

Help is now being specifically sought from readers to prevent the destruction of this place that scientists have designated as the most important botanical habitat on Earth.

Readers are urged to use the coupon attached or to call the fynbos hotline on +44 (0)1223 431991 to help buy 1,000 acres, which will help prevent the loss of this endangered plant species.

The fynbos habitat in which they grow is known to gardeners and conservationists but few others. Fynbos is found only in a small area of South Africa around Table Mountain.

Yet, it has a higher concentra-

tion – or anywhere else on Earth.

But fynbos is rapidly vanishing under a combined attack from farming, forestry, building, and invasive alien plant species.

The pall of smoke, which signals more fynbos is being burnt to make way for vines or cattle, hangs heavy over the region.

Now only 4% of the original habitat remains.

Some of the plant species needing protection are so unique that they only exist in a tiny area.

The conservation work of Fauna & Flora International is crucial to the survival of *Polhillias* and thousands of other species.

Without your help these ultra rare species, like *Polhillias*, will become extinct.

Alarming, within the 1,000

acres, 15 plant species are in danger of extinction per square mile.

With more fynbos species listed in the Red Data Book (the global list of threatened species) than anywhere else on the



***Polhillias*: A plant genus where four out of the seven known species survive in a tiny area that needs purchasing and protecting in its entirety.**

planet, this area is in desperate need of protection – and voluntary donations are the only way it will be protected.

It is astonishing that 70% of plants that grow in this small area of South Africa grow nowhere else. But the pressure on land here is immense. Land is cleared for dairy farming and big wine companies are ripping up vast areas of fynbos to plant vines. Then there is pressure for new homes.

All this is happening in the world's most important botanical habitat, which has a unique scientific value for two main reasons.

Firstly, the fynbos plants are remnants from a much earlier era when Earth's landmass was unified in one giant continent.

Secondly, there are five plant kingdoms in the world (groups of plants that share similar characteristics) and this Western Cape region of South Africa is

the only one where the plants are contained not just in one continent but also in one small region.

The high number of species is due to a wide variety of micro-habitats resulting from the range of elevations, soils and climatic conditions, including the co-existence of winter-rainfall species with summer-rainfall species.

Gifts from readers will help in many ways to put into place a plan to protect more areas of fynbos. Firstly, they will help to directly protect 1,000 acres of fynbos, where the most endangered plants grow.

Secondly, they will provide employment to local people who might otherwise be involved in the destruction of fynbos for their livelihood.

Work like clearing alien species and sustainably harvesting some species will play a major role in conservation. (In contrast to past uncontrolled



"I am proud to be associated with what I regard as the doyen of all conservation societies."

**Sir David Attenborough
OM, FRS
FFI Vice-President**

harvesting which destroyed many rare plants.)

The FFI team in Overberg, South Africa are eagerly awaiting the outcome of this appeal. With enough help thousands more rare plant species can be saved.

Cut this coupon to help buy 1,000 acres of the most important botanical habitat on Earth or go to www.FFIfynbos.org or call 01223 431991.

I will give: £35 to help buy and protect one acre
 My choice of contribution is £_____ (Multiples of £35 will be received with much thanks as they will enable us to protect many more acres).
 £5,500 could help protect the area where *Polhillias* grows, the incredibly rare group of four related plants species, that exist nowhere else.

Title _____ First name _____ Last name _____

Address _____

Postcode _____

Email _____ Phone No _____

I enclose a cheque payable to Fauna & Flora International OR I wish to pay by credit/debit card

Type of card: Visa/Amex/Mastercard/Maestro/CAF

Card No: _____ Start Date: _____

Expiry Date: _____ Issue Number _____ (Maestro only) 3 digit security code: _____ (Last three digits next to the signature)

Please return to: FREEPOST RRRHG-GBGG-CAGG, Fauna & Flora International, Fynbos Emergency Appeal, Jupiter House, Station Road, Cambridge, CB1 2JD.

You can call 44(0) 1223 431991 to donate now.

Or go to: www.FFIfynbos.org to donate online.

Registered Charity No.1011102. Registered Company No. 2677068.



PR-FYNM

From another of my Scottish publications, more about conservation in the British Isles. A little paragraph from a regular writer in "The People's Friend", which is a bit like some of our popular magazines were like many decades ago - 2 serials, 7 short stories, a wide variety of articles of general interest, 2 pages of cooking, no film stars and their scandals, and little interesting bits and pieces. Willie Shand writes about places he visits, mainly in Scotland, and the following came out of Wester Ross Shire, north-west Scotland in the January 29th 2011 issue. "Together they form one of our finest wilderness areas. There aren't that many left now, and you might reasonably deduce every care would be taken to safeguard it from development. However, as we've recently seen in other parts of the country, conservation is a nicety that can be conveniently brushed aside on occasions." Sounds a bit familiar, doesn't it?

It is a busy weekend coming up, with what looks like a very interesting morning at C.R.E.E.C. on Saturday 14th July, and our Bribie Island excursion on Sunday 15th. I plan to go to both, so I hope there is no rain either day.

There will be no Study Group outing in September, the SGAP Flower Show is on at Mt. Coot-tha on the weekend of the 15th & 16th, and I'm planning a photographic display.

 Newsletter No. 258 - July 2012



WILL HOST A MEETING

To hear Gabriel Conroy (Faculty of Science Health and Education, University of the Sunshine Coast) speak about the effects of Fire and Fragmentation on two Threatened Coastal Heath Species

Acacia baueri and *Blandfordia grandiflora*.



When: Saturday 14th July at 9.30 am

Morning Tea to follow

Enquiries: Helen - email thomash@skymesh.com.au or phone 38866132.

ALL WELCOME

At this point, I haven't thought much about what to do in October. I'll have to see if John Birbeck has plans for a return to the Landsborough property. and when.

I still have several plant lists to tidy up and compile from our excursions, plus a few dates in my private life. With Geoff returning home this week, there are a few things to attend to.

But please call me evenings on 54247073 if you have any information relating to Wallum, or any queries.

For directions to the Arts Centre on Bribie Island, see map in the February 2012 newsletter.

This newsletter has been put together in a bit of a rush, so excuse any typos, and "crazy" content. I get some wonderful ideas for the newsletter, but they all vanish when I sit down to put it all together. It is quite surprising just what comes to mind when I lie there trying to go to sleep, and it is just far too cold to get out of bed to make notes.

So, from "FROSTBITE FLAT"

Barbara H.