

Neich Road, Glenorie Bushwalk - Saturday 25th July

A group of eleven set out on this walk along the fire trail from the end of Neich Road, Glenorie. To be on the safe side, we all wore face masks. Because of the doubtful weather forecast, the time was changed from afternoon to 9.30am – just as well – and we enjoyed a very pleasant morning in the bush. The main aim was to inspect the endangered species, *Acacia gordonii*, which is known to grow there. This little acacia, usually about 1 metre high, has single, very bright gold flower heads on long stalks.



Acacia gordonii in typical habitat

We were hoping that other species would be starting to flower this early in native plant spring. We were certainly not disappointed. The fire trail runs along a rocky and sandy sandstone ridge top. The sparse tree cover was mostly *Corymbia eximia*. Large areas of rock shelf, with cracks and cervices, spread out on both sides of the track. This is the usual habitat of *Acacia gordonii*, and there was lots of it in small patches, now very obvious amongst other heath species. Out of flower it is hard to pick because most of the local heath plants there have small, thin leaves. One difference is that, on feeling the leaves, *A. gordonii* has hairy, very soft foliage, especially when young.



Rocky sandstone ridge habitat with *Corymbia eximia*

Boronia ledifolia was flowering in abundance. We even found a white-flowered form, and took only photos. Other species well in flower were *Acacia suaveolens*, *Zieria laevigata*, *Hovea linearis*, *Gompholobium minus*, *Lissanthe strigosa* and *Woolisia pungens*. A great many other species were in full bud with the first one or two flowers bursting out. These included *Leucopogon muticus*, *Calytrix tetragona*, *Micromyrtys ciliata*, *Leptospermum parvifolium*, *Kunzea capitata*, various pea flowers and three Grevilleas, *G. mucronulata*, *buxifolia* and *speciosa*. The latter species was the low, spreading form with smaller leaves found in Marra Marra and Dharug National Parks and Maroota.



Boronia ledifolia white form



Boronia ledifolia

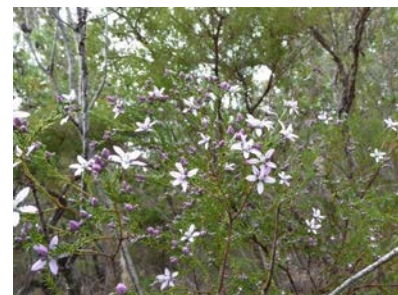


Hovea linearis

At one point the track passed through a more heavily-wooded area, with *Eucalyptus punctata* and *heamastoma*, *Angophera bakeri* and even *Syncarpia glomulifera*. This is not *Acacia gordonii* habitat. Further on, the trees petered out to open onto a large area of low heath. Again the golden pompoms appeared, and these *A. gordonii* plants were especially healthy. It was good to see this species flourishing in a number of areas. One previous area, off the beginning of the track, had been burnt about 18 months ago, probably illegally. It had contained a large localised patch of *A. gordonii* in the past. Now there is just one surviving flowering plant and a few small seedlings. Hopefully more will germinate from old seed in the sand. The area had also previously contained a beautiful mauve form of *Philothea salsolifera*. We found a plant of this further along the track.



Acacia gordonii detail



Philothea salsolifera mauve form

In all this was a very enjoyable and informative activity. It is to be hoped that our little, endangered plant survives the climate and the activities of man. Our propagation group intends to grow some, if possible, to ensure it survives in captivity as well.

Pip Gibian



Zieria laevigata



Boossiaea scolopendria

Species seen with flowers to see

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|-------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <i>Acacia gordonii</i> | <i>Epacria microphylla</i> | <i>Lasiopetalum ferrugineum</i> |
| <i>Acacia suaveolens</i> | <i>Epacris pulchella</i> | <i>Leucopogon microphylla</i> |
| <i>Acacia ulicifolia</i> | <i>Gompholobium minus</i> | <i>Leucopogon muticus</i> |
| <i>Banksia ericifolia</i> | <i>Grevillea buxifolia</i> | <i>Lissanthe stringosa</i> |
| <i>Banksia spinulosa</i> | <i>Grevillea mucronulata</i> | <i>Philotheca salsolifera</i> |
| <i>Boronia ledifolia</i> | <i>Grevillea speciosa</i> | <i>Pimelea linifolia</i> |
| <i>Boronia pinnata</i> | <i>Hakea sericea</i> | <i>Tetradlea glandulosa</i> |
| <i>Boossiaea scolopendria</i> | <i>Hovea linearis</i> | <i>Zieria laevigata</i> |
| <i>Calytrix tetragona</i> | <i>Kunzea capitata</i> | |

Native Plants for Pots and Containers 27-06-20

On 27th June we had our first group meeting via Zoom. Our guest speaker was Brian Roach, from Westleigh Native Plants. With decreasing size of house blocks and increasing numbers of people living in units and retirement villages, this topic is very relevant. It is also possible to grow some of the difficult-to-grow species in a pot because you can control the growing environment more easily than for plants in the ground. There is the chance to grow some of the desirable Western Australian species. Having plants in pots means that you can move them around, to take advantage of sun and light, or move them out of the strongest sun in summer. You can also move that beautiful plant in full flower to a spot where you can see it better and show it off to visitors. Maybe a difficult plant can be left where you can check on it easily and control the watering more closely. There are other containers you can use instead of pots, eg lengths of old clay piping left over from a plumbing job. These can be partly buried to stabilise them.



Crowea saligna

Brian had some practical advice about pots. He especially warned us to avoid the urn-shaped pots which curve in at the top. The curve makes it almost impossible to tip the plant out in order to repot it when it outgrows its pot. He advocated purchasing a native pot mix then adding perlite and cocopeat. Some plants have larger root systems and eventually outgrow any pot. They need to be pensioned off or planted in the garden if appropriate. In general the smaller growing plants are the most suitable.

During the talk Brian showed great photos of the plants he has grown in pots. These included *Pimelea linifolia*, both *Crowea exalata* and *saligna*, some boronias and *Lechanaultia biloba* with its brilliant blue flowers. The latter demonstrates that pot culture can be successful for this prized Western Australian plant, which regularly dies in the ground in Sydney. Other species he featured were *Darwinia taxifolia* ssp *macrolaena*, the native *Rhododendron viriosum* (formally *R. lochiaie*), *Billardia leumanniana* and *Conostylis aurea*. The last two species are also examples of floriferous Western Australian plants. Brian