



BOX VALE WALK

Once again, a small group gathered on a warm Saturday morning to travel to the outskirts of Mittagong. It became clear fairly quickly that we were not the only people who were doing this walk. In fact, numerous times throughout the day people went past - often family groups with children and dogs. This was very different to our previous trips. The track goes through a reserve but the reserve is not managed by NPWS but by the local shire. The strict rules that apply in NPWS-related nature reserves do not apply here. By the end of the day, motorbikes and other powered vehicles traversed the track - allowed in this area. It seemed to me also that the vegetation near the track bore the brunt of the increased traffic - not as neat as you would find in a nature reserve or national park. Still, we enjoyed the walk. On a future walk, however, I think we would see more if we got off the track at least in some places to get to relatively-undisturbed vegetation.

Near the parking area we came across the NSW waratah, *Telopea speciosissima* but not in flower. One of the prickliest tea-trees you could find is *Leptospermum arachnoides* - good for human/animal traffic control. We saw this near the Wollondilly walk maybe two years ago - and the branches arch over to give something of a 'spidery' look - hence the name. *Acacia rubida* (red-stem wattle) and *Grevillea arenaria* are common in our own area and grow near the start of the track.



Peter was the photographer for the day and he concentrated more on the ambience of the place rather than individual plants. The tranquil pool shown here is an example. Even by this pool, the sound of the highway traffic was audible.

One of the species in this area was *Baeckea linifolia* - a very symmetrical shrub with a weeping form. The brightest flowers on the day were those of the pea plant, *Mirbelia*

platylobioides. This grows down our direction also. It was quite abundant and the best forms were seen on bare ground areas.



Mirbelia platylobioides - this specimen is a 'garden' plant - the offspring of a previous specimen which died and left three offspring - of which this is one. This specimen is on the sheltered side of a grevillea.

It is a low scrambling plant. Some of the specimens we saw were up to a metre long and half a metre wide.

Along the track and as we negotiated a slight rise, we came across a colony of *Boronia anemonifolia* - a species I had been 'promising' for some time - first at Bushbottom and then in the Belanglo Forest - so triumph here at last! The plants were in flower with a pale pink colour and growing in a well-drained situation.

Part of the track was wet from recent rains and we had to scramble up the banks. We did not follow (I think) the same route as before - I think we cut out one of the cuttings. We certainly did not see *Dracophyllum secundum*, an easily recognised epacrid - a plant of sheltered sites - and this track is the only place we have seen it. In the wetter areas, the widespread epacrid *Epacris microphylla* was prominent. Another *Epacris* species was *E. calvertiana*; this is a medium-sized shrub with softer foliage. We have seen this only once before - on Jan and Steve Green's property near Taralga - but this would be before the time of many of our current members.

On our list is *Eustrephus latifolius* - this may be the first time we have run into this species. It is a climber with distinctive leaves having several quite visible narrow veins; the common name is Wombat Berry. *Pteridium esculentum* is the common bracken fern; *Doodia aspera* is another small fern with attractive new growth that is pink. *Todea barbara*, the King Fern, is one of the larger ferns. With many sheltered spots, the track would be a fern lover's paradise.

The walk was interesting but I would suggest that if it takes place again, we might concentrate on the bush away a bit from the track and less on getting to the end.

PROPAGATION

Sessions were held recently on a Thursday and the following Sunday. It was pleasing that some 'new' members were able to attend. A number of tasks was carried out, preparing new plants and potting up existing ones. There is no certainty yet as to whether the Riversdale Rare Plant sale will go ahead. Members have been emailed our current sale list with plants for sale at a very reasonable price.

WHERE IS THAT PLANT?

In recent weeks, Bob and myself have been involved in making plant species' natural occurrences more easy to access. First, not everybody may be aware that you can via the internet find out what native (plus introduced) plants are to be found in a particular area. A brief description follows; if a member wishes to find out more, I'm sure that if you email us, further detail can be given if needed.

Using the Australian Virtual Herbarium, you can find out what plants have been recorded in an area. For example, if you want to find out what plants grow near Marulan, you are able to enter Marulan in a search box and then select how far around Marulan you wish to go; there are three preset radii - 2.5, 5 or 10 km. You can also type in the coordinates of an area you wish to find out about and up comes a list. An NSW APS member has taken it on himself to refine and improve the search method. Bob has been involved in assessing the layout and ease of use of the improved system (for are area from about Mittagong to about the Shoalhaven); I had to decide which areas went together based on the species' distributions - a bit complicated. I would expect that the new system will be explained in the *NATIVE PLANTS* publication or the e-newsletter.

COMMITTEE MEETING

The committee usually meets once a year but an extra meeting has been called. A lot of discussion (within the committee) takes place via email but that is not suitable for a more complex matter. Issues relating to how we get our message out and the use of the newsletter and digital media (e.g. Facebook) will be up for consideration.

CALENDAR

Sat Oct 3	Bango Nature Reserve
Sat Oct 10	Wetlands Working Bee
Sun Nov 8	Rare plant sale Riversdale tbc
Sat Nov 21	Bundanoon area walk
Sat Dec 5	AGM and end-of-year lunch

BOX VALE TRACK LIST

Acacia falciformis
Acacia longifolia
Acacia mearnsii

Acacia rubida
Acacia terminalis
Allocasuarina littoralis
Aotus ericoides
Baeckea linifolia
Banksia marginata
Banksia serrata
Banksia spinulosa
Boronia anemonifolia
Bossiaea obcordata
Cassinia aculeata
Cassinia laevis
Caustis flexouosa
Cryptandra amara
Dianella longifolia
Dillwynia ramosissima
Dodonaea multijuga
Epacris calvertiana
Epacris microphylla
Eucalyptus globoidea
Eucalyptus mannifera
Eucalyptus punctata
Eucalyptus sieberi
Eustrephus latifolius
Exocarpus strictus
Gompholobium minus
Goodenia hederacea
Goodenia ovata
Grevillea arenaria
Grevillea baueri
Hakea dactyloides
Hardenbergia violacea
Hovea linearis
Indigofera australis
Isopogon anemonifolius
Leptospermum arachnoides
Leptospermum juniperinum
Leptospermum polygalifolium
Leptospermum trinervium
Leucopogon lanceolata
Leucopogon setiger
Lomandra longifolia
Lomatia ilicifolia
Lomatia silaifolia
Mirbelia platylobioides
Olearia viscidula
Persoonia levis
Persoonia linearis
Platysace lanceolata
Podolobium ilicifolium
Polyscias sambucifolia
Pomaderris lanigera
Pteridium esculentum
Pultenaea hispidula
Senecio diaschides
Stypantra glauca
Telopea speciosissima
Todea barbara
Wahlenbergia gracilis