



NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER 2018

AUGUST WALK

As we gathered at the council car park waiting to head off on our August walk our conversation centred on whether we were mad to be going out in such drizzly, overcast and icy weather. Not to be deterred we moved on and by the time we arrived at the Joadja Nature Reserve corner on the Wombeyan Caves road a vast sunny blue sky was nudging the last cloud out of the way and some members were applying suntan lotion before our walk!



Eucalypt woodland made up the initial part of the walk. Sydney red gum (*Angophora costata*) with smooth grey trunk is left of centre.

We began the walk along a cleared path under power lines which yielded a large number of shrubs benefiting from the lack of tree cover along the track. We then turned into a thickly vegetated area with a variety of tall eucalypts, *Eucalyptus haemastoma* (Scribbly gum), *Eucalyptus punctata* (Grey gum) and the sweetly named *Eucalyptus piperita* (Sydney Peppermint). This *E. piperita* is characterised by its grey short fibrous bark but with the higher branches shredding bark in long ribbons. A specimen was collected in 1788 by Surgeon General John White and sent to England where it was named by botanist James Smith because of its scent being similar to English peppermint. Another beautiful tree identified was *Angophora costata* which has a grey/pink trunk. Under all these trees was a mass of Acacia undergrowth. The bright green leaves of *Persoonia levis* and *Persoonia linearis* stood out in the filtered sunlight. There was a wide diversity of plants with *Pomaderris lanigera*, prickly-leaved *Grevillea ramosissima* (Fan grevillea), *Leucopogon lanceolatus*, and the tall

Isopogon anethifolius with its attractive cone fruits amongst many others. The track took us down a scree-covered slope where we came to the narrow sandstone ridge under which the Bullio tunnel had been gouged out in 1899. Tall *Banksia serrata* were growing on the edges of the bank over the tunnel. Some members went down a side road to check out the tunnel. A steep climb to the other hill side took us to an open area with a view over a deep valley where we stopped for lunch. From here we could see the rocky outcrop at the end of the track. The track continued to rise gently through more dense foliage until we came to the open wide rocky outcrop with a steep cliff on one side. Two metal rings embedded in the rock just over the cliff side indicated that climbers abseiled down this sheer cliff. On this outcrop we saw Aboriginal axe grinding hollows. Flowering *boronias* were scattered along here. The end of the track was a short walk away and from there we had more of the magnificent view of the Wollondilly valley and beyond.



The flowers of *Leucopogon setiger* hang down. This characteristic is shared with a few other members of the species.

This was a pleasant walk, it was not too challenging and produced a great range of plants with 59+ species identified.

Thanks to Celia for that description of our walk (ed.)

NEWBIES

On the Bullio walk, we met a few plants we had not run into before. There are some unfamiliar names on the species list (last page). One of these is the tea-tree *L. arachnoides* - which definitely has some connection with spiders. I did a bit of a search to find the connection but did not find any. It may be related to the form the species has - the branches rise but then

level out and arch down. It did not exceed 50 cm in height where we saw it. That may be connected with the site - a cliff top - really exposed to westerly winds. Its prickly nature would make it a useful refuge for small birds and the like.

One of the specimens I looked at following the day looked initially like *Acacia terminalis*. I wondered why I had finished up with a specimen of a relatively common wattle. On a second look, it emerged that the leaflets were much further apart in this specimen than they were in *A. terminalis*. The specimen had yellow buds and there was a difference here too with *A. terminalis*.



On the left is *A. terminalis* and on the right *Senna barronfieldii*. Note the closer leaflets in the wattle. Also in the wattle, the buds are in tight round heads; on the right there are fewer buds per head and are not packed but fairly separate.

The buds on typical wattles are tightly clustered into round heads and for many wattles the resulting flowers heads are spherical. In the specimen I was looking at, the buds were not tightly clustered at all but they were a typical wattle-yellow. Then the penny dropped and I suspected that the specimen belonged to a subfamily of the Fabaceae. This family includes three sub-families: the wattles and the pea plants (to give them their common names) are two of the sub-families. The third sub-family does not have any familiar name - for the record it is *Caesalpinioideae*. A feature of all three is that the seeds are formed in pods. Using the identification keys within this group led to the name *Senna barronfieldii*. Even the species name of this *Senna* is a bit strange and I do not know its origins. *Cassia* (not to be confused with *Cassinia*) is also a genus in the same sub-family. As you would expect, *S. barronfieldii* does look superficially like a wattle.

Finally, two *Boronias* appeared on the list. Both were seen towards the end of the walk as we approached the Wollondilly Lookout and were growing on very shallow soils over the sandstone. We have not seen either of these on previous walks although *B. rigens* - a low growing rigid sub-shrub does grow on the Bushbottom conglomerate but is more readily seen towards Brayton rather than Bushbottom itself. Both species had a mix of buds and flowers.

MORE MEANINGS

We meet *Leucopogon* fairly frequently on our walks and the word can be broken up into 'leuco' and 'pogon'. We also have *Leucochrysum albicans*, the nationally-endangered daisy that occurs locally. When 'leuco' appears in a plant name, it means

'white'. In *Leucochrysum*, most species have white bracts (sometimes incorrectly called petals) - some are yellow. The 'leuco' in *Leucopogon* refers to the white hairs that are present inside the tubular flowers on that genus. These hairs can be seen to resemble a beard, the Greek word for which is 'pogon'. So *Leucopogon* literally means white beard. Seeing white hairs inside tubular flowers is a fairly definite sign that you are looking at a *Leucopogon*.

While we are on *Leucopogon*, we will mention *Isopogon* with which we are familiar and we see *I. anethifolius* and *I. anemonifolius* from time to time - mostly on sandstone terrain. The 'pogon' in *Isopogon* comes from the fruits. The fruits are round in shape (giving rise to the common name 'drumsticks') and hairs are equally distributed over the surface: the 'equal distribution' explains the use of the 'iso'; think of isobars, isotherms etc.

SPRING HOPE

With the widespread lack of rain being deplored every day, our thoughts turn to the kind of Spring that might be in store for us. In recent days, however, we have been fortunate to get some falls of rain - as meagre as some of them were.

The signs of Spring are starting to appear, however and there may be some cautious optimism. Some new growth is appearing in pots as well as on the ground. On my place, the green new growth of Scaly buttons (*Leptorhyncos squamatus*) have appeared. The rain can bring a mix of things; in another paddock, there are signs of new growth of the dreaded St John's wort.

PLANT SWAPS?

I was recently reading the newsletter of the Armidale Group and it referred to a plant swap session that was on their calendar. Quite often, when plants are propagated, the numbers may be in excess of requirements and getting rid of them could be done in a plants-swap session. Whether this would be a goer or not for our group would depend on what we are propagating for ourselves. As well, of course, our wetlands propagation continues to use up the time and effort of propagators and plant carers. Apart from having swap sessions as part of something else, there might be scope to have a 'swap list' on our website so that members can see what is available and make contact with another swapper.

CALENDAR

Sat Sept 1	Walk - Nattai National Park
Thu Sept 13	Propagation
Sun Sept 16	Propagation
Sat Oct 6	Walk - Nadgigomar West Nature Reserve
Wed Oct 24	Wetlands Garden Maintenance
Sun - Tue Nov 11 - 13	Walks - Nature Reserves near Mudgee
Sat Dec 1	End-of-year function + AGM

Acacia longifolia - Sydney Golden wattle

Acacia parramattensis - Sydney Green wattle

Acacia terminalis - Sunshine wattle
Acacia ulicifolia - Prickly Moses
Acacia suaveolens - Scented wattle
Allocasuarina littoralis - Black she-oak
Amperea xiphoclada - Broom spurge
Angophora costata – Sydney Red gum
Banksia serrata - Old Man Banksia
Banksia spinulosa - Hairpin Banksia
Boronia microphylla - Small-leaved Boronia
Boronia rigens - Stiff Boronia
Bossiaea obcordata - Spiny Bossiaea
Brachyloma daphnoides - Daphne heath
Bursaria spinosa - Native blackthorn
Calytrix tetragona - Common fringe myrtle
Caustis flexuosa - Curly grass
Clematis sp - Old man's beard
Correa reflexa - Common Correa
Dampiera purpurea - Purple Dampiera
Daviesia ulicifolia - Gorse bitter pea
Dianella sp - Flax lily
Dillwynia sieberi
Elaeocarpus sp
Epacris sp
Eucalyptus agglomerata - Blue-leaved stringybark
Eucalyptus haemastoma (?) - Scribbly gum
Eucalyptus piperita - Sydney peppermint
Eucalyptus punctata - Grey gum
Eucalyptus sieberi - Silvertop ash
Gonocarpus tetragynus - Common raspwort
Grevillea ramosissima - Fan grevillea
Grevillea triternata
Hakea dactyloides - Finger Hakea
Hakea sericea - Silky Hakea
Hovea pannosa
Isopogon anethifolius - Narrow-leaf drumsticks
Lasiopetalum ferrugineum - Rusty petals
Lepidosperma laterale - Variable sword sedge
Leptospermum arachnoides – Spider tea tree
Leptospermum polygalifolium - Yellow tea-tree
Leptospermum trinervium - Flaky-bark tea-tree
Leucopogon lanceolatus - Lance-leaved beard heath
Leucopogon setiger
Lomandra longifolia - Spiny-leaved matrush
Lomandra obliqua - Fishbone mat rush
Lomatia silaifolia - Crinkle bush
Olearia viscidula - Wallaby weed
Persoonia laurina - Laurel geebung
Persoonia levis - Broad-leaf geebung
Persoonia linearis - Narrow-leaf geebung
Petrophile pedunculata - Stalked cone-sticks
Pimelea sp - a rice flower
Pittosporum undulatum - Mock orange
Podolobium ilicifolium - Prickly shaggy pea
Pomaderris betulina (?)
Pomaderris lanigera - Woolly Pomaderris
Pomaderris ledifolia
Pomax umbellata
Poranthera corymbosa
Prostanthera rugosa - Mint bush
Pteridium esculentum - Bracken fern
Pultenaea flexilis
Scutellaria humilis - Dwarf skull-caps
Senna barronfieldii -
Solanum pungetium - Eastern nightshade
Stypantra glauca - Nodding blue lily
Stylidium laricifolium - Larch-leaf trigger plant
Xanthorrhoea sp - Grass tree
Xanthosia pilosa
Zieria pilosa - Hairy Zieria
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