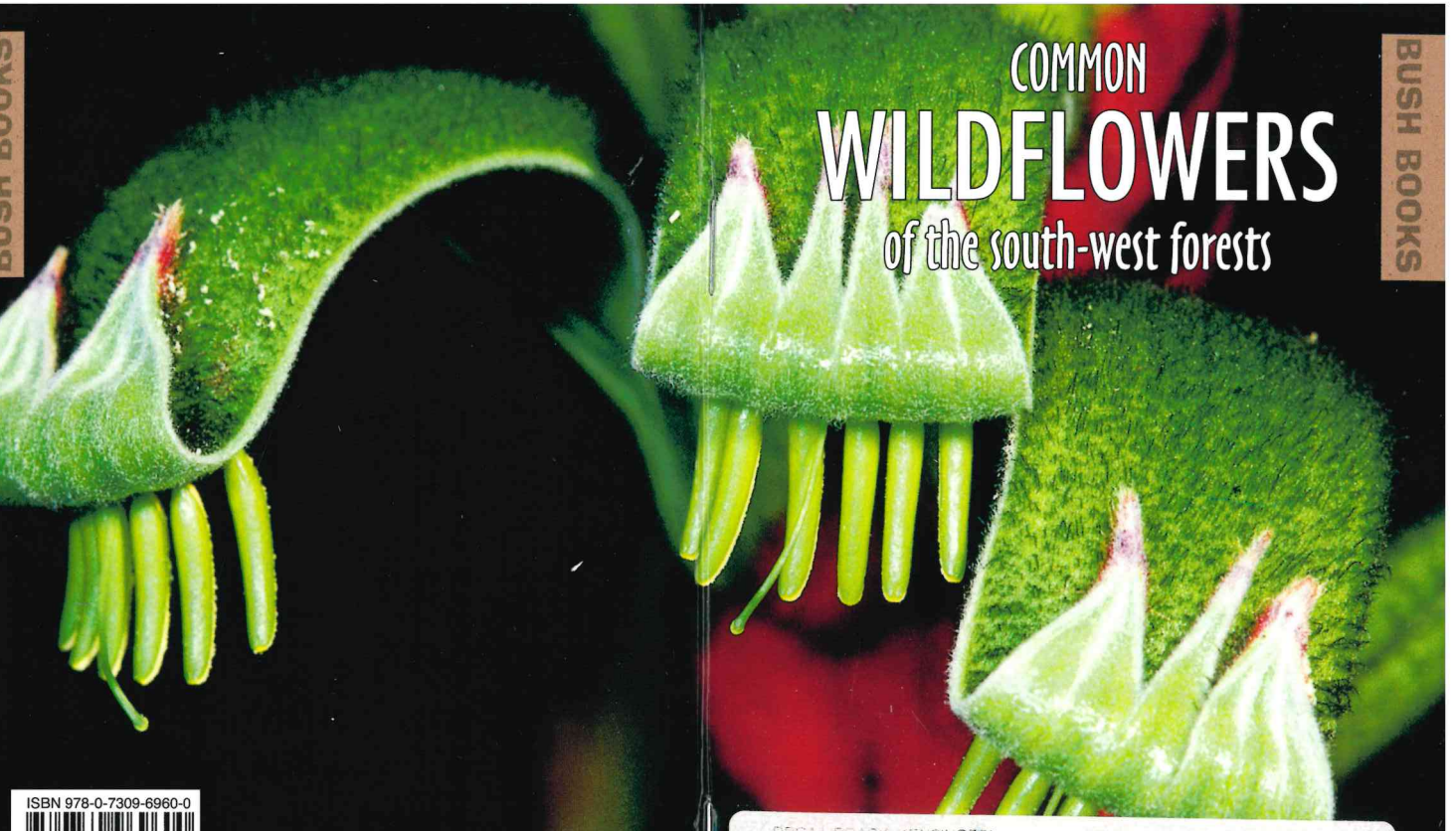
BUSH BOOKS

COMMON WILDFLOWERS of the south-west forests



BUSH BOOKS

ISBN 978-0-7309-6960-0

GOVERNMENT OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Department of **Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions**

Bush Books are a series of practical field guides to help you learn about and discover WA's unique plants, animals and special features, region by region.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Andrew Brown has worked on flora conservation since 1981 for the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA) and its predecessors. Andrew is co-author of *Orchids of South West Australia* and *Western Australia's Threatened Flora*.

Carolyn Thomson-Dans was a senior communications projects officer for DBCA. She has written and edited numerous publications about WA's natural environment and wildlife.

Greg Keighery is one of Western Australia's most eminent botanists. He is a senior principal research scientist in DBCA's Science and Conservation Division.

Publisher: Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions, 17 Dick Perry Avenue, Kensington, Western Australia, 6151.

Visit DBCA at: www.dbca.wa.gov.au

Distributor: WA Naturally Publications, ph (08) 9219 9915 or fax (08) 9219 9839.

Editors: Samille Mitchell (revised reprint).

Technical advisers: Judy Wheeler, Neville Marchant.

Design and production: Tiffany Taylor.

Front cover: Kangaroo paw.
Photo – Lochman Transparencies.

Reprinted 2001, 2006, 2013 and 2018.

ISBN 978-0-7309-6960-0

COMMON WILDFLOWERS of the south-west forests

by Andrew Brown, Greg Keighery and Carolyn Thomson-Dans

GOVERNMENT OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Department of **Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions**

INTRODUCTION

The south-west of Western Australia is renowned for having one of the richest and most diverse collections of flora in the world. The isolated south-western corner of WA, with its Mediterranean climate, is considered among the world's 34 biodiversity hotspots. Many visitors to the State come here just to see our famous wildflowers. Spring, in particular, is a time when the bushland comes alive. There are drifts of blue leschenaultias, red and green kangaroo paws flowering in profusion in areas that have been recently burnt, and masses of small but colourful orchids such as the cowslip.

An incredible 75 per cent of the 11,000 species recorded from WA grow in the south-west corner of the State, and most of these are found nowhere else in the world. Many of them are not only strikingly beautiful but readily discovered on a short drive from Perth. They provide an enduring attraction for tourists and botanists alike.

This book covers a selection of some of the most common wildflowers that you will encounter when travelling through the forests of the south-west. The area covered is between Perth, Augusta and Albany, but many of the species that are illustrated are also found elsewhere.

Photo – Babs and Bert Wells/DBCA

Tawny-crowned honeyeater on a red and green kangaroo paw.

PLANT RELATIONSHIPS

DICOTYLEDONS (plants with two seed leaves)

Dilleniaceae, the native buttercups	*Hibbertia*	(p.6)	shrubs with large yellow flowers
Droseraceae, the sundews	*Drosera*	(p.10)	tuberous herbs or small perennials; sticky leaves
Ericaceae, the Australian heaths	*Lysinema*	(p.12)	shrubs with small, usually white, symmetrical flowers
Goodeniaceae	*Dampiera*	(p.14)	broad, flat leaves; flowers with two fan-like petals
	Lechenaultia	(p.16)	flowers with fan-like petals; needle-like leaves
Lamiaceae, the mintbushes	*Hemiandra*	(p.22)	low or small shrubs with petals forming a glove-like tube
Fabaceae, the wattles	*Acacia*	(p.24)	shrubs or trees with blossoms in fluffy heads
Myrtaceae, the myrtles	*Calytrix*	(p.28)	flowers with bristle-like appendages
	Hypocalymma	(p.30)	flowers with more than 20 stamens
	Verticordia	(p.32)	flowers with feathery appendages; less than 20 stamens
Fabaceae, the peas	*Hardenbergia*	(p.42)	climbers with leaves in threes and blue flowers
	Hovea	(p.44)	shrubs with single leaves and blue flowers
	Kennedia	(p.46)	climbers with leaves in threes and red flowers
	Templetonia	(p.48)	shrubs with notched leaves and long red flowers
Pittosporaceae	*Sollya*	(p.50)	scrambling shrubs with undivided leaves and blue flowers
Proteaceae	*Banksia*	(p.52)	woody shrubs or trees; saw-toothed leaves; flowers in spikes
	Grevillea	(p.58)	flowers white, red or yellow in bunches on the stem
	Petrophile	(p.62)	narrow leaves; flowers in drumsticks
Ranunculaceae	*Clematis*	(p.66)	climbers or herbs; yellow or white flowers; feathery fruits
Rutaceae	*Philotheca*	(p.68)	spindly shrubs; leaves strongly scented when crushed
Stylidiaceae, the triggerplants	*Stylidium*	(p.64)	herbs; leaves usually in whorls; trigger mechanism on flowers

MONOCOTYLEDONS (plants with one seed leaf)

Haemodoraceae, the kangaroo paws	*Anigozanthos*	(p.18) paw-like, densely hairy flowers
Iridaceae, the native irises	*Patersonia*	(p.20) perennial with leathery leaves; three petals; blue or yellow
Orchidaceae, the orchids	*Caladenia*	(p.34) flowers have a central lip-like structure with rows of blunt teeth
	Diuris	(p.36) brown flowers have two upright petals like donkey's ears
	Elythranthera	(p.38) glossy brightly coloured flowers that appear to be enamelled
	Thelymitra	(p.40) striped similar-shaped petals; flowers in tall spikes

CUTLEAF HIBBERTIA

(Hibbertia cuneiformis)

Family Dilleniaceae, the native buttercups

The cutleaf hibbertia is one of the tallest native buttercups in Australia, growing up to 3.5 metres high. Its bright yellow flowers are a common sight in the cool, moist karri forest and often appear at the same time as the bluish-purple flowers of native wisteria and the distinctive flowers of white clematis. The bright orange seeds of this species are displayed on the bushes from December to February. These are eaten by possums, emus and smaller birds. Most other buttercups have small seeds with an oily body which are dispersed by ants. Almost exclusively Australian, hibbertias are a conspicuous feature of the natural bushland of the south-west.

DESCRIPTION This tall species has smooth, shiny, dark green, wedge-shaped leaves and produces large yellow flowers with five sepals, five petals and numerous stamens. The flowers reach up to three centimetres across and appear in spring and early summer.

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES Cutleaf hibbertia has blunt-ended leaves that give the impression of having been cut or torn off at their end. The sepals remain on the plant long after the flowers have finished.

HABITAT AND DISTRIBUTION This plant is common in the karri forest, but also inhabits coastal districts from Rockingham to Esperance.

FLOWERING TIME Usually from September to December, but sometimes as early as June.

USES Cutleaf hibbertia is one of several native buttercups that are commonly cultivated.

Photo – Andrew Brown/DBCA

YELLOW BUTTERCUP

(Hibbertia hypericoides)

Family Dilleniaceae, the native buttercups

The yellow buttercup is one of the most common native plants found growing in the sandy soils between Perth and Albany. In some areas it forms a dominant understorey plant. In the wild, it regenerates after fire from its rootstock. The flowers are pollinated by pollen-collecting bees and, like most hibbertias, produce no nectar. Most of the 100 or so species of hibbertia are unique to Australia and about 60 of them are found in the south-west, where they grow in many habitats. Most are shrubs with large, yellow flowers.

DESCRIPTION This spreading shrub, growing up to a metre high, has attractive typically yellow flowers that may be 2.5 centimetres across.

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES The yellow buttercup is distinguished by its narrow, rounded leaves up to 15 millimetres long, which have a covering of dense, star-shaped hairs beneath. The flowers have five deeply notched petals and sepals that are covered with short hairs.

HABITAT AND DISTRIBUTION The yellow buttercup is common on the coastal plain and in jarrah forest between Kalbarri and Margaret River.

FLOWERING TIME April to November.

USES The yellow buttercup is occasionally seen in specialist nurseries but is difficult to grow from seed or cuttings.

Photo – Andrew Brown/DBCA

PINK RAINBOW

(Drosera menziesii)

Family Droseraceae, the sundews

A carnivorous species, pink rainbow is a member of a group of sundews known as rainbow plants. Species in this group have a climbing or sprawling habit and this often results in them arching over associated plants. This feature, along with the small droplets of liquid on their leaves, which glisten in the morning or afternoon light, gives them the effect of a miniature rainbow. Pink rainbow grows in tightly packed groups in seasonally wet areas. The sticky glands on its unusual leaves act like flypaper, catching small insects and absorbing nourishment from their decaying bodies. More than half of the known species of Drosera grow in WA, and are common in the woodlands and winter-wet swamps of the south-west.

OTHER NAMES Menzies sundew, pink rainbow sundew.

DESCRIPTION Pink rainbow has erect, red stems up to 35 centimetres long. The sticky leaves are scattered along these stems, usually in groups of three. Its beautiful pink to reddish flowers, up to 2.5 centimetres across, appear at the top of each stem in late winter and spring. During the dry summer months the plant dies back to an underground, potato-like tuber and resprouts again after autumn rains.

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES This species can be identified by its large, reddish-pink flowers and red stems with rounded sticky leaves up to four millimetres across. The sepals are red and fringed.

HABITAT AND DISTRIBUTION Pink rainbow is found in many different situations but prefers sandy-clay soils in winter-wet areas between Kalbarri and Esperance.

FLOWERING TIME July in northern areas and as late as October in the higher rainfall lower south-west.

Photo – Andrew Brown/DBCA

CURRY FLOWER

(*Lysinema ciliatum*)

Family Ericaceae, the Australian heaths

Curry flower is the most common of six species of *Lysinema* found only in the south-west of WA. Its unusual white flowers, which have outward curving petals and large brown bracts, are distinctly curry-scented. The fragrance is most noticeable in the morning and evening and attracts a wide range of moths and butterflies, which pollinate the flowers. It is one of many heath-like shrubs found in Australia. Relatives include the beard heaths (*Leucopogon*), with about 100 species confined to the south-west, the andersonias (*Andersonia*), the native cranberries (*Astroloma*) and the paper heaths (*Sphenotoma*). Like most heaths, lysinemas have specialised feeding roots with underground fungi growing inside them. These fungi help the plants extract nutrients from the fairly poor soils in which they grow.

OTHER NAMES Curry and rice flower.

DESCRIPTION Growing up to a metre high, this small, upright, slender shrub has branchlets that vary from smooth to having minute hairs. Its oval-shaped leaves are rather thick and up to eight millimetres long, while each flower is between 12 and 20 millimetres long, with distinctive white petals that curve outwards and often downwards. Large, brown bracts (reduced leaves) surround the flowers.

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES This species is readily distinguished by its curry-scented flowers.

HABITAT AND DISTRIBUTION Curry flower grows in sand heaths and woodlands between Kalbarri and Israelite Bay, with a disjunct occurrence at Eyre on the Great Australian Bight.

FLOWERING TIME July to October.

Photo – Grant Wardell-Johnson

COMMON DAMPIERA

(*Dampiera linearis*)

Family Goodeniaceae

Common dampiera is widespread throughout the south-west and often produces massed displays along roadsides in country areas. It is part of the Goodeniaceae family, whose members usually have flowers with five sepals. The flower is generally split down one side, giving it the appearance of an open fan. Flowers could also be said to look like an open hand and the name of one genus, *Scaevola*, actually means 'left-handed'. Flowers of common dampiera typically have an intense royal blue colour, readily separating them from blue leschenaultia (*Lechenaultia biloba*) and royal robe (*Scaevola striata*), both of which have paler blue flowers. White or pink-flowered forms are occasionally found.

OTHER NAMES Narrow-leafed dampiera.

DESCRIPTION This low, bushy herb is long-lived, but rarely reaches more than 30 centimetres high. Its leaves are quite variable in shape, ranging from narrowly oval to blunt-ended. In winter and spring it produces masses of royal blue flowers up to 16 millimetres across.

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES This species has long stalkless leaves. Each leaf is between 15 and 40 millimetres long, and is smooth and hairless above and below. The stems are not distinctively ribbed.

HABITAT AND DISTRIBUTION As its name suggests, common dampiera is widespread and abundant in a variety of habitats between Coorow and Israelite Bay.

FLOWERING TIME July to November.

USES Common dampiera is occasionally grown by native plant nurseries. Its suckering, spreading habit makes it an attractive garden plant.

Photo – Andrew Brown/DBCA

BLUE LESCHENAULTIA

(Lechenaultia biloba)

Family Goodeniaceae

Aboriginal people are said to have called blue leschenaultia 'the floor of the sky', a most appropriate name as, during spring in areas of favoured habitat, particularly in the Darling Range near Perth, the ground is carpeted with the blue flowers of this magnificent species. The flower is designed for attracting bees, and consists of a blue landing platform with a white centre that helps the bee find the nectar at the base of the tubular petals. To reach the nectar the bee must either pick up or deposit pollen. WA has no less than 21 different leschenaultias.

DESCRIPTION Blue leschenaultia is a small, spreading shrub that rarely grows to more than 50 centimetres high with narrow soft leaves about a centimetre long and a millimetre wide. Its flowers are two to three centimetres across and range from deep purplish-blue through sky blue to pale blue in colour. In many areas it has a suckering habit which enables it to spread over a wide area, resulting in massed spring displays.

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES This plant is readily recognised by its (usually) sky blue flowers and fine leaves.

HABITAT AND DISTRIBUTION Blue leschenaultia is widespread throughout the south-west from the Eneabba area, inland to Lake King and south to Albany. It likes sandy or gravelly areas and is particularly abundant in the jarrah forests of the Darling Range.

FLOWERING TIME July to November.

USES Blue leschenaultia is often cultivated. The flower colour varies greatly according to the source of the plant and the soil type. In poor sandy soils it may be a pale, rather than sky blue, and occasional white-flowered plants are found.

Photo – Andrew Brown/DBCA

RED AND GREEN KANGAROO PAW

(Anigozanthos manglesii)

Family Haemodoraceae, the kangaroo paws

Kangaroo paws are well known for their strange, vividly coloured, velvety flowers. These large, brightly coloured, unscented flowers have a sturdy stem that provides a ready-made perch and makes them an ideal flower for birds. They are pollinated by honeyeaters or wattlebirds, which are often seen clinging precariously to the stem, drinking nectar from each of the flowers in turn. The red and green kangaroo paw is WA's floral emblem and is easily the best known and most famous of all the kangaroo paws. It survives in many areas of remnant bushland near Perth and is common in the sandy coastal plains of the south-west. There are 11 species of kangaroo paws and catspaws, which grow only in the south-west. Other common species include the green kangaroo paw, which ranges in colour from lemon yellow to emerald green and grows in swampy areas, and the catspaw which has smaller flowers of red, orange and gold and flowers in profusion in sandy soils following summer fire.

OTHER NAMES Mangles' kangaroo paw.

DESCRIPTION This stunning plant has long, flattened leaves and brilliant green flowers up to 10 centimetres long, produced in fan-like clusters at the end of long stems. Each flower has a bright red ovary which, with the unusual paw-shaped flowers, give the plant its common name. A rare greenish-yellow form is sometimes seen in the midst of red and green-flowered populations.

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES The red and green kangaroo paw is readily distinguished by its large red and green paw-shaped flowers.

HABITAT AND DISTRIBUTION This species is common in sandy and gravelly soils in shrublands and woodlands between Shark Bay and Manjimup. It is particularly abundant in areas that have been burnt or disturbed.

FLOWERING TIME August to November.

USES This kangaroo paw is commonly grown in gardens.

Photo – Andrew Brown/DBCA

PURPLE FLAG

(Patersonia occidentalis)

Family Iridaceae, the native irises

Purple flag is the most common of the native irises. Its striking but unscented flowers are short-lived, with each bloom opening for just a few short hours in the morning and quickly fading in the midday sun. Fortunately, each plant has numerous flowers, tightly packed in sheathing bracts and awaiting their turn to bloom. Bees visit each flower in turn to vibrate the pollen from the anthers, thereby achieving cross-pollination. The genus has 17 Australian species, 13 of which grow in WA. All are long-lived herbs with tough, grass-like leaves and underground rhizomes. Purple flag is quite susceptible to dieback disease, and its disappearance from the bush is an indication of fungal infestation.

OTHER NAMES Common flag, common wild iris, komma, western patersonia.

DESCRIPTION This tufted plant has numerous grass-like silvery-green leaves between two and 11 millimetres wide and up to 50 centimetres long. They are densely crowded near the base of the plant. The purple flowers are up to five centimetres wide, with three broad, petal-like sepals. The real petals are small and inconspicuous.

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES This species is readily distinguished by its large purple flag-like flowers.

HABITAT AND DISTRIBUTION Purple flag is widespread in a variety of habitats between the Murchison River and Esperance, growing in sandy and granitic soils.

FLOWERING TIME September to November.

Photo – Grant Wardell-Johnson

SNAKEBUSH

(Hemiandra pungens)

Family Lamiaceae, the mintbushes

Snakebush has distinctive white or mauve flowers up to two centimetres across. This sand-loving species is common in the south-west and is particularly abundant in coastal areas. Snakebush is related to rosemary, lavender and mint. There are about eight species of *Hemiandra*, all of which grow only in the south-west.

DESCRIPTION Snakebush is an attractive species that usually develops into a ground-hugging plant up to several metres across and just a few centimetres high. However, in some areas it will grow as a shrub up to 80 centimetres high. Regardless of habit, its leaves are narrow, ridged and spiky. The upper lip of the attractive white or mauve flower is short, with two lobes, while the lower lip is longer, spreading and has three lobes. Each flower has numerous dark spots decorating the throat.

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES This species is distinguished by its prominent white or mauve spotted flowers and sharply pointed leaves.

HABITAT AND DISTRIBUTION Snakebush is common in sandy soils, particularly on the coastal plain between Dongara and Albany.

FLOWERING TIME July to December.

USES Snakebush is a popular garden plant, with prostrate forms being sold at most nurseries.

Photo – Andrew Brown/DBCA

DRUMMOND'S WATTLE

(Acacia drummondii)

Family Fabaceae, the wattles

Drummond's wattle has bright yellow, cylindrical flower heads. These often attract the bright green scarab beetle, which feeds on the pollen and mates on the flowers. These insects fly between the flowers and help to cross-pollinate them. Drummond's wattle is one of relatively few Australian species that have normal leaves throughout its entire life cycle. Most Australian species have dispensed with leaves and instead have modified leaf stems called phyllodes which to all intents and purposes look like, and are designed to act like, normal leaves. WA wattles have normal leaves during their early seedling stage but, in most species, these soon give way to phyllodes as the plant matures. Acacias are found in most tropical and subtropical countries, forming a large genus of about 1,200 species. More than 1,000 of these are found in Australia, with about half growing in WA.

DESCRIPTION This small shrub reaches up to two metres high. It has divided (bipinnate) leaves and yellow flowers held in spikes between one and four centimetres long. Like all wattles, this species produces oblong pods once the flowers are fertilised. The pods are pointed and are two to three centimetres long.

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES Drummond's wattle is the only wattle in WA with a combination of greatly divided, or bipinnate, leaves and yellow flowers borne in cylindrical heads.

HABITAT AND DISTRIBUTION This plant is widespread in forest areas and along streams between Moora and Fitzgerald River National Park.

FLOWERING TIME July to October.

Photo – Andrew Brown/DBCA

PRICKLY MOSES

(Acacia pulchella)

Family Fabaceae, the wattles

Prickly moses produces masses of yellow flower heads in winter and spring. This wattle is particularly abundant in areas burnt by summer bushfire, providing a massed, colourful display in such areas on the coastal plain and Darling Range near Perth. The hard-coated seeds are collected by ants, and stored below the soil surface, thereby ensuring the seed is not destroyed by fire. The dense stands of prickly moses enrich the soil with nitrogen then slowly die off after six to 15 years. The common name is derived from the long, sharp spines found along its branches, while the scientific name *pulchella*, meaning beautiful, refers to its attractive yellow flower heads. The spines deter kangaroos and wallabies from eating the soft, lush foliage. Unlike those of most other plants the leaves are rich in nitrogen, needed by animals to make protein, without which they would not be able to grow.

DESCRIPTION Growing up to two metres high, prickly moses is an open, often spindly shrub with many branches. It has dull green to greyish-green, greatly divided leaves up to five centimetres long. Its yellow flower heads may reach a centimetre in diameter. There are one or two spines at the base of each leaf. The branchlets have fine ribs and the plant produces narrow, brown, oblong pods.

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES This is one of relatively few Australian wattles with true leaves. These are quite complex in structure, being composed of several tiny leaflets which are flat, rather than curved downwards. Prickly moses is usually taller than a similar species, panjang (*Acacia lasiocarpa*), and has a more open growth habit.

HABITAT AND DISTRIBUTION Prickly moses is widespread in a variety of habitats throughout the south-west between Coorow and the South Coast.

FLOWERING TIME May to October.

Photo – Andrew Brown /DBCA

PINK SUMMER STARFLOWER

(Calytrix fraseri)

Family Myrtaceae, the myrtles

Brightening the bushland during the hot summer months, when few other wildflowers are out, this attractive starflower is particularly common in sandy soils near Perth. There are about 75 species of starflower in Australia, with the bulk growing in the south-west.

OTHER NAMES Pink summer calytrix.

DESCRIPTION This upright, summer-flowering shrub grows up to 1.5 metres high. It has small leaves up to five millimetres long and pink to purplish-pink flowers up to 2.5 centimetres across. Each petal is between eight and 12 millimetres long. The five spreading sepals and numerous stamens help to give the flowers a dainty, fragile appearance.

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES The size of the leaves, which are between two and five millimetres long and between one and 1.5 millimetres wide, help to distinguish pink summer starflower from other calytrix species.

HABITAT AND DISTRIBUTION Pink summer starflower is common in sandy soils in banksia woodlands on the coastal plain near Perth, extending north to Kalbarri and south-east to Lake Grace.

FLOWERING TIME All year, mainly November to May, and particularly from December to March.

USES Like other species of calytrix, pink summer starflower is widely grown for its attractive flowers.

Photo – Andrew Brown/DBCA

SWAN RIVER MYRTLE

(Hypocalymma robustum)

Family Myrtaceae, the myrtles
Swan River myrtle produces beautiful pale pink to deep pink flowers over many weeks during spring. There are 12 species of *Hypocalymma*, all unique to WA.

OTHER NAMES Pink myrtle, bush myrtle, wild peach.

DESCRIPTION Swan River myrtle is an open shrub with numerous stems, each growing up to 1.5 metres high. It has smooth, narrow dark green leaves up to 25 millimetres long, held on opposite sides of the stem. Its pink, scented flowers are a little more than a centimetre across and are clustered around the stem. The young stems are reddish-brown.

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES
Swan River myrtle is characterised by its beautiful flowers which feature rounded, pink petals and numerous yellow-tipped stamens. South of Perth the species has smaller leaves and flowers.

HABITAT AND DISTRIBUTION This species is common in sandy woodlands and the jarrah forest between Perth and Albany.

FLOWERING TIME July to November.

USES Swan River myrtle is readily grown from cuttings and is available from specialist nurseries.

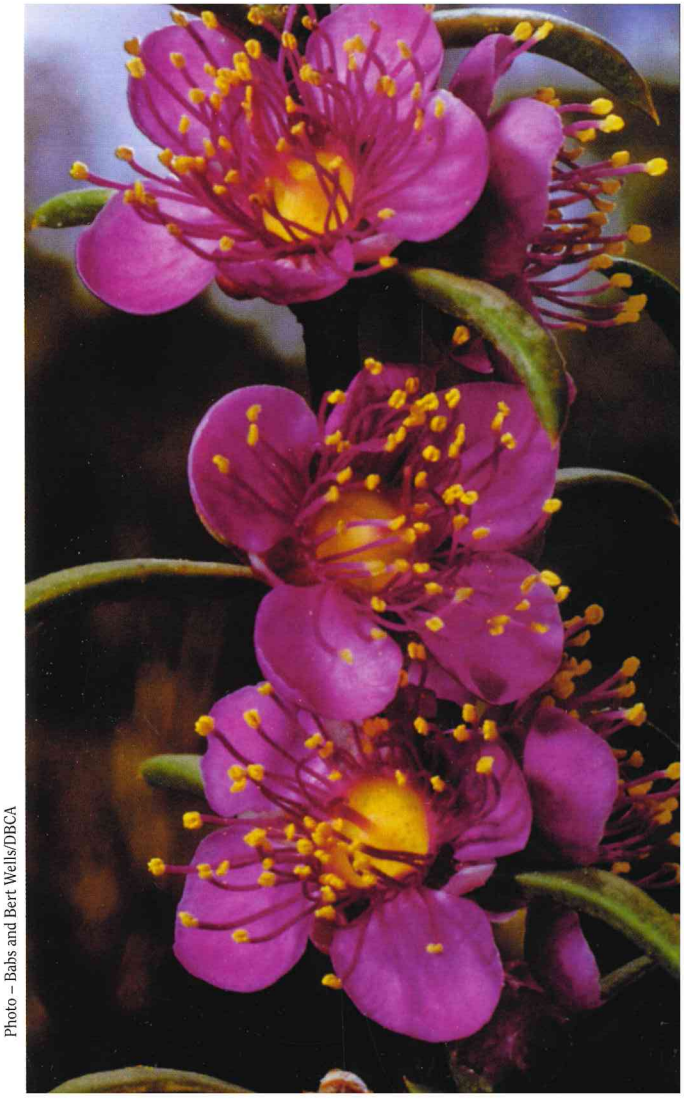


Photo – Babs and Bert Wells/DBCA

GRANITE FEATHERFLOWER

(Verticordia plumosa)

Family Myrtaceae, the myrtles

Granite featherflower – found predominantly on granite outcrops – was the first verticordia to be described. Its brightly coloured flowers are typical of most verticordias and have a fluffy or feathery appearance, due to the outer parts of the flowers being elaborately divided. *Verticordia* flowers are often produced in masses, providing vibrant splashes of colour, especially in sandplain areas during spring and summer. *Verticordia*, which means 'turner of hearts', is a wholly Australian genus of more than 100 species. All but a few of these are found in the south-west of WA. Bees gather oily pollen and later nectar from the maturing flowers, facilitating pollination.

OTHER NAMES Plumed featherflower.

DESCRIPTION This small, erect shrub grows up to four metres high and has narrow, crowded leaves. The pink, bluish-mauve or white flowers are often massed just above the leaves. These flowers are quite delicate in appearance and are eight to nine millimetres across.

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES Granite verticordia has massed heads of pink, bluish-mauve or white flowers. The floral tube within the flowers is hairy throughout.

HABITAT AND DISTRIBUTION This species is usually found on granite outcrops and in winter-wet clay soils between Perth and the South Coast, with an isolated occurrence at Kalbarri.

FLOWERING TIME September to December.

Photo – Andrew Brown/DBCA

COWSLIP ORCHID

(Caladenia flava)

Family Orchidaceae, the orchids

The cowslip is easily the most common and best known of our spider orchids. It is often seen flowering in masses, sometimes with hundreds or even thousands of individual plants growing in dense colonies. Its bright yellow flowers are easily spotted and, as well as attracting our attention, attract several different insect pollinators. On warm spring days, small beetles and native bees regularly visit the flowers. Each clump is a clone of a single original seedling: look closely and you will see that all the flowers in one clump display similar markings that often differ substantially from those of other clumps. Cowslip orchid obtains its name from the unrelated English cowslip, which also has yellow flowers.

OTHER NAMES Primrose orchid.

DESCRIPTION This low-growing orchid has one to four bright to pale yellow flowers, marked with variable red stripes and spots. Each plant has a long, broad leaf that is green on top and tinged with purple underneath.

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES Cowslip orchid is the only yellow-flowered spider orchid found in WA which has short petals and sepals.

HABITAT AND DISTRIBUTION This species is widespread, growing from Kalbarri to Israelite Bay. There are three distinct forms, two of which can be found in the lower south-west forests. One with bright yellow flowers is common in a variety of habitats, while the other has paler yellow flowers, often with white tips on its petals and sepals, and is more or less confined to the high rainfall karri and jarrah forests.

FLOWERING TIME The cowslip orchid has a long flowering period, which begins north of Perth in July and continues into early December in the high rainfall, cooler forest areas along the South Coast.

Photo – Andrew Brown/DBCA

COMMON DONKEY ORCHID

(Diuris corymboso)

Family Orchidaceae, the orchids

Flowering in profusion after summer bushfires, the common donkey orchid persists in many areas of remnant bushland near Perth. It reproduces rapidly by means of underground root tubers and, as a result, often forms large colonies, with dozens or even hundreds of flowering stems. The donkey orchids are among the most well-known orchids in WA. More than 40 species are found in the south-west, many still undescribed. Donkey orchids mimic the flowers of associated peas and are pollinated by insects that have been deceived into searching for nectar in their flowers. Unlike most other WA orchids, which have just one leaf, donkey orchids regularly have two or more leaves.

OTHER NAMES Donkey orchid, wallflower orchid.

DESCRIPTION This small orchid reaches 45 centimetres high and has up to five narrow leaves 12 to 22 centimetres long. Each plant has between two and eight distinctive yellow and reddish-brown wallflower-coloured flowers. The two upright petals of donkey orchids resemble donkey ears and give the plant its common name. The scientific name *Diuris*, means 'double tails', and refers to the narrow, often crossed, side sepals.

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES This species is readily identified by its rich, reddish-brown and yellow flowers and the rather narrow side lobes of the lip.

HABITAT AND DISTRIBUTION The common donkey orchid is equally at home in deep sandy soils of banksia woodlands on the coastal plain and in the heavier soils of the jarrah forest. It often grows on the margins of winter-wet swamps. It is widely distributed between Dongara and Albany, with sporadic occurrences eastwards to the Esperance area.

FLOWERING TIME August to October.

Photo – Andrew Brown/DBCA

PURPLE ENAMEL ORCHID

(Elythranthera brunonis)

Family Orchidaceae, the orchids

Purple enamel orchid is one of WA's most admired, unusual and unique orchids. Its striking, glossy purple flowers, which appear to be enamelled or highly polished, are seen throughout the south-west in a variety of habitats. Its flowering is more prolific in areas that were burnt during summer, possibly because of the production of ethylene gas during fire. There are two species of enamel orchid, which grow only in the south-west of WA. The other is the pink enamel orchid (*Elythranthera emarginata*).

DESCRIPTION This small orchid grows up to 30 centimetres high. It has a single hairy leaf that is green above but tinged with purple underneath and up to three spectacular glossy, purple flowers two to three centimetres across.

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES The glossy purple flowers are very distinctive. Purple enamel orchid can be distinguished from pink enamel orchid by its taller stature, smaller flowers and unusual lip which folds up and back, rather than down, back and then forward. Pink enamel orchid also differs in that it tends to form colonies, rather than growing as scattered individuals.

HABITAT AND DISTRIBUTION Purple enamel orchid is widespread in a variety of habitats between Kalbarri and Israelite Bay. It is particularly common on the coastal plain and in the Darling Range near Perth, especially in recently burnt areas.

FLOWERING TIME Late August to early November.

Photo – Andrew Brown/DBCA

BLUE LADY ORCHID

(Thelymitra crinita)

Family Orchidaceae, the orchids

The striking sky blue flowers of blue lady orchid are a common sight in the bushland during spring. It often grows with morning iris (*Orthrosanthus laxus*), which has flowers of a similar colour, and attracts the same native bees as pollinators. Sun orchids (*Thelymitra* species) rarely open on cool, cloudy days. They wait until the weather is warm and sunny to display their colourful blooms. Sun orchids lack a lip (labellum), an unusual structure evolved from the modification of a petal that is found in most other orchids. Instead, like their distant relatives the lilies, they have a perfectly formed third petal.

OTHER NAMES Lily orchid, queen orchid.

DESCRIPTION This species grows up to 70 centimetres high. It has a single, broad, oval-shaped leaf and between four and 15 bright blue flowers arranged in a tall spike, each flower with similarly shaped petals and sepals and an unusual yellow-tipped column crest. Mauve or pale blue-flowered forms are occasionally found. Like most other WA orchids, the blue lady orchid dies back during the hot dry summer months, surviving underground as a dormant tuber and resprouting after autumn rains.

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES Blue lady orchid is recognised by its beautiful sky-blue flowers and broad, dark green leaf up to 15 centimetres long.

HABITAT AND DISTRIBUTION Blue lady orchid grows in a variety of habitats between Jurien Bay and Albany, extending eastwards in coastal areas to Israelite Bay.

FLOWERING TIME September to early November near Perth, continuing into early December in the cool, wet karri forest.

USES Sun orchids have a fleshy underground, potato-like tuber. Those of some species were eaten by Aboriginal people.

Photo – Andrew Brown/DBCA

NATIVE WISTERIA

(Hardenbergia comptoniana)

Family Fabaceae, the peas

Native wisteria is common throughout the higher rainfall areas of the south-west, particularly in the tangled undergrowth of the karri and jarrah forests where its deep bluish-purple pea flowers form a colourful part of the understorey. This Australian genus has only three species, with just one in WA. All are twining shrubs and climbers.

OTHER NAMES Wild sarsaparilla, false sarsaparilla.

DESCRIPTION Native wisteria is a vigorous twining shrub or climber. Some stems occasionally grow five metres up nearby trees. During late winter and spring it produces masses of bluish-purple pea flowers arranged in sprays up to 20 centimetres long. Each leaf typically has three leaflets up to 13 centimetres long. After flowering it produces cylindrical pods up to 43 millimetres long.

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES This attractive creeper is characterised by its vigorous twining habit, deep bluish-purple flowers and large divided leaves.

HABITAT AND DISTRIBUTION Native wisteria is common in the sandy soils of the coastal plain and, more rarely, in gravelly soils in forests between Green Head and Albany.

FLOWERING TIME June to October.

USES Not surprisingly, native wisteria is commonly grown, and white and pink-flowered forms are often available from nurseries.

Photo – Andrew Brown/DBCA

DEVIL'S PINS

(Hovea pungens)

Family Fabaceae, the peas

With its attractive blue flowers, together with the bright yellow of associated wattle species, devil's pins provide a vivid splash of colour during the otherwise dull winter months. Its typical pea flowers, which are produced in masses during the winter and spring months, are carried in small clusters where the leaves join the stem. Most Australian pea flowers are in shades of yellow, orange, red or brown. Hoveas, along with native wisteria, are the notable exceptions and have flowers in intense blues and purples. These colours are favoured by bees, which pollinate the flowers. Like other members of the pea family, hovea species produce pods once their flowers are fertilised. There are about 12 hovea species, six of them confined to the south-west.

OTHER NAMES Needle-leaved hovea, buyenak, puyenak.

DESCRIPTION This tall shrub grows up to 1.5 metres high, and has narrow, sharply pointed leaves about a millimetre wide and up to three centimetres long. The intensely purple-blue flowers reach up to a centimetre across. Like many other blue-flowered native plants, white-flowered forms are occasionally found.

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES The leaves lack the prickly-toothed margins found on holly-leaved hovea (*Hovea chorizemifolia*) and, unlike common hovea (*H. trisperma*), do not have long, leathery leaves.

HABITAT AND DISTRIBUTION Devil's pins is widespread in areas of coastal limestone and on granite outcrops through the jarrah forests between Mount Lesueur and Albany, and eastwards along the South Coast to the Esperance area.

FLOWERING TIME June to November.

USES In recent years this species has become available from specialist nurseries.

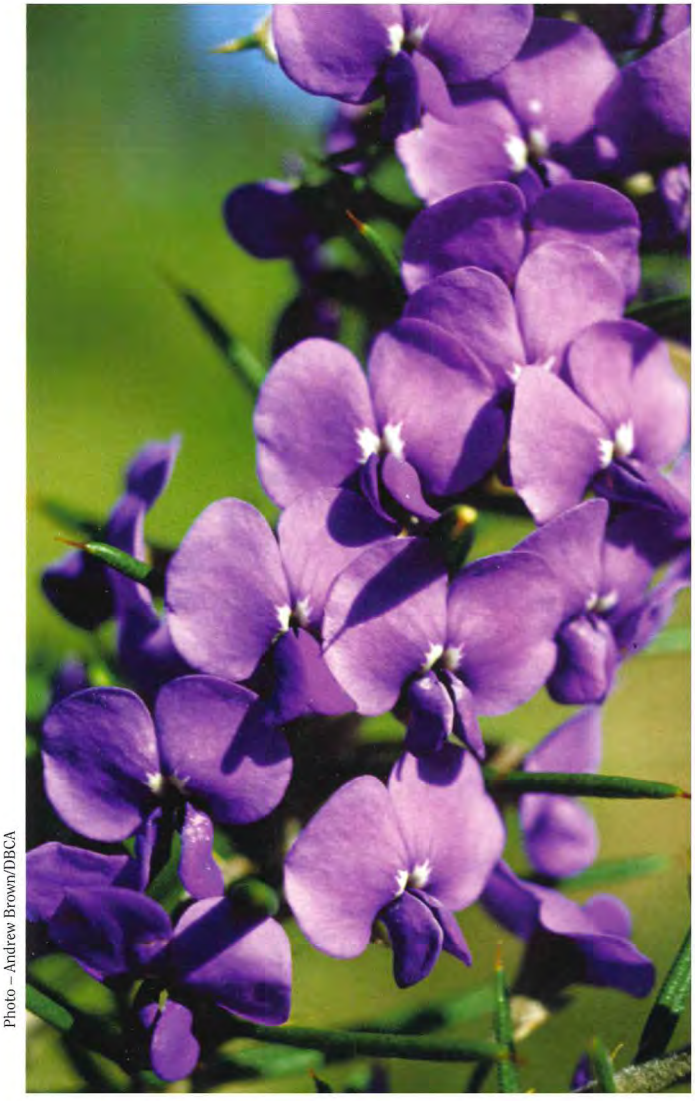


Photo – Andrew Brown/DBCA

CORAL VINE

(*Kennedia coccinea*)

Family Fabaceae, the peas

Coral vine is the most common creeper of the jarrah forest. It produces masses of red, yellow and orange pea-shaped flowers during the spring months. It is particularly abundant in the season after a summer bushfire, creating vivid splashes of red throughout the bushland. *Kennedia* has about 16 species, all unique to Australia. Most of them grow only in the south-west. Many are large flowered and, as they are mostly runners or climbers, make a valuable addition to any garden. Several species are commonly cultivated, including the black and yellow-flowered black cockatoo flower (*Kennedia nigricans*) and the bright red-flowered running postman (*K. prostrata*).

DESCRIPTION Coral vine is a vigorous climber, with leaves divided into three distinct lobes. In spring, it produces attractive red, yellow, orange, pink or mauve pea-shaped flowers, each 10 to 12 millimetres across. Between four and 20 flowers are grouped into dense clusters.

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES Coral vine is one of very few climbing species of *Kennedia* found in the south-west. Most others are low-growing creepers.

HABITAT AND DISTRIBUTION The species is widespread in forests and coastal limestone areas between Eneabba and Albany, and on sand heaths eastwards to Esperance.

FLOWERING TIME August to December.

USES Coral vine is occasionally grown by specialist nurseries.

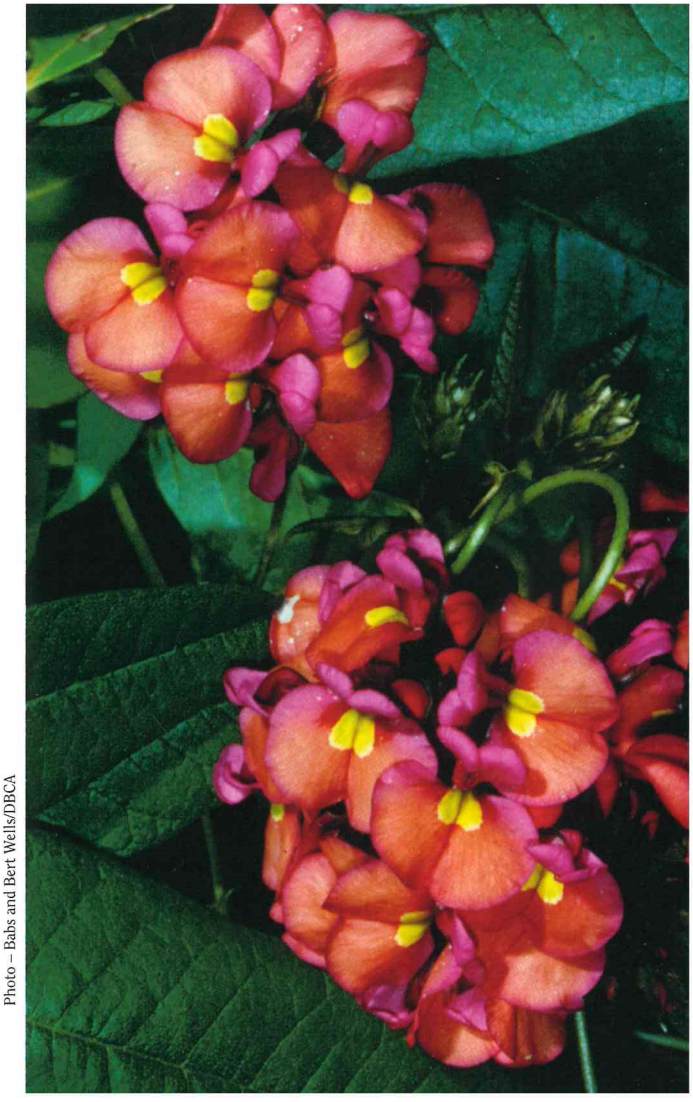


Photo – Babs and Bert Wells/DBCA

COCKIES' TONGUES

(Templetonia retusa)

Family Fabaceae, the peas

The flower of this species has a long wing and distinctive, long, narrow standard which is bent abruptly back, giving it the appearance of a cockatoo's head. This was one of the first WA species shown to be pollinated by birds, by Oswald Sargent. The large red flowers are easily seen by birds and it flowers in winter when insect activity is low because of the cold. Cockies' tongues have typical 'pea' flowers, which all have five petals. The erect upper one, known as the standard, is usually large. With the two side petals, it forms the butterfly-like wings found in all species, while the two lower petals are united into a wedge-like keel.

OTHER NAMES Bullock bush, red-flowered templetonia, common templetonia.

DESCRIPTION This attractive, open shrub grows up to four metres high. In winter and early spring it produces a profusion of red, pink or occasionally creamy yellow pea flowers up to four centimetres long. Oblong pods, each with between four and 12 seeds, appear after flowering.

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES Cockies' tongues has smooth, dark green leaves and brilliant red upside-down pea flowers.

HABITAT AND DISTRIBUTION This widespread species is most common in coastal limestone. It grows from Kalbarri to southern parts of the Nullarbor Plain, and extends to South Australia. It grows among low coastal heath but also under taller vegetation a little further inland. Cockies' tongues persists in many coastal areas near Perth. It is common south of Fremantle on the road to Rockingham.

FLOWERING TIME May to December.

USES Cockies' tongues is readily available from specialist nurseries and will flower within three years.

Photo – Andrew Brown/DBCA

AUSTRALIAN BLUEBELL

(Sollya heterophylla)

Family Pittosporaceae

Australian bluebell is common both in the bush and in gardens, with blue, white and mauve-flowered forms readily available from nurseries. Its flower colour is, however, predominantly intense blue in the wild. Its fleshy fruits are edible when ripe and are said to be quite sweet, with a soft texture. It is the most common of the three species of *Sollya*, which are unique to WA.

DESCRIPTION This small shrub or twiner reaches 1.5 metres high. It has elongated, leafy stems that characteristically twist around themselves and associated plants. Its glossy green, leathery leaves are up to five centimetres long, while the pendulous deep blue flowers, which appear all year round, are generally arranged in loose inflorescences.

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES Australian bluebell is easily recognised by its twining habit, small blue flowers up to three millimetres long and, when mature, fleshy, blue berries up to 2.5 centimetres long.

HABITAT AND DISTRIBUTION This species is widespread, growing in a variety of habitats in the south-west, from Mogumber to Augusta and east to the Esperance area.

FLOWERING TIME Australian bluebell flowers sporadically throughout the year, but mainly from October to February.

USES Australian bluebell is widely cultivated and has even become a weed in south-eastern Australia and New Zealand. The fruits were eaten by Aboriginal people.

Photo – Andrew Brown/DBCA

CANDLE BANKSIA

(Banksia attenuata)

Family Proteaceae

Flowering during late spring and summer, candle banksia provides an abundant food source for honeyeaters and bees when many spring flowering species have finished. It usually grows in association with firewood banksia. The difference in flowering times between these species reduces competition for pollinators and is critical to the survival of many animals such as honey possums, by providing a year-round source of nectar. It is still common in some Perth suburbs, surviving in small reserves, vacant bush blocks and as remnants of the previous bushland in otherwise well-developed home gardens.

OTHER NAMES Slender banksia, candlestick banksia, biara, coast banksia.

DESCRIPTION This tree grows up to 10 metres high. It has thick, reddish-brown bark and narrow leaves about 1.5 centimetres wide and 25 centimetres long. Its flowers, borne in a cylindrical cone up to 25 centimetres long, are greenish-yellow in bud and bright yellow in flower. North of Perth, this species is shorter and more shrubby in habit. It is sometimes confused with swamp banksia (*Banksia littoralis*) or river banksia (*B. seminuda*), but both these species grow in swampy areas or along creeklines. Candle banksia grows in much drier sandy country.

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES The narrow leaves and bright yellow flowers distinguish this species from the other banksias with which it grows.

HABITAT AND DISTRIBUTION Candle banksia grows in deep sand within heath, shrubland and woodland from Kalbarri to Augusta and east to the Fitzgerald River, extending inland to Wongan Hills and Lake Grace. It often forms a dominant overstorey tree with firewood banksia.

FLOWERING TIME September to February.

USES Aboriginal people made a sweet drink by soaking the flower spikes of candle banksia in a hole lined with paperbark.

Photo – Babs and Bert Wells/DBCA

BULL BANKSIA

(Banksia grandis)

Family Proteaceae

All banksias have dense spikes of flowers, consisting of hundreds or even thousands of individual blooms. The bull banksia is a common species in the forests of the south-west, and has the largest flower spikes of all banksias. The species can live from 100 to 150 years. However, it is highly susceptible to the killer dieback disease. Animals such as honey possums, honeyeaters, wattlebirds and silvereyes consume the nectar, while Carnaby's cockatoos and red-capped parrots dine on the seeds.

OTHER NAMES Mangite.

DESCRIPTION Bull banksia usually grows as a thick, rough-barked tree, up to 10 metres high. However, in some windswept coastal areas it is pruned by wind and salt spray into a low growing shrub. It has greenish-yellow buds that blossom into pale yellow flowers. Unlike several other banksias, its fruiting cones do not need to be burnt before they shed their seed, which is done soon after they reach maturity.

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES This species has the largest flower spikes and leaves of all banksias. Its large, pale yellow inflorescences grow up to 40 centimetres long. The deeply cut leaves, characterised by large triangular lobes, often grow up to 45 centimetres long, and are held in clumps.

HABITAT AND DISTRIBUTION Bull banksia grows from Mount Lesueur to Cape Leeuwin and east to Cape Riche in a variety of habitats. It is a common species in the jarrah forests of the Darling Range and coastal tuart woodlands.

FLOWERING TIME Mainly from October to January.

USES Aboriginal people used to suck the flower spikes for their nectar. Beekeepers make use of bull banksia flowers to bridge the gap between the flowering of parrotbush and jarrah.

Photo – Andrew Brown/DBCA

FIREWOOD BANKSIA

(Banksia menziesii)

Family Proteaceae

When it is in flower you cannot miss firewood banksia. Its handsome flower spikes, which attract numerous nectar-eating birds such as honeyeaters, wattlebirds and western spinebills, gradually change from silvery grey through rich pink to orange and pink as they develop. Banksia flowers are generally arranged in crowded, spiralling rows around a thick, woody axis, readily separating them from other members of the family.

OTHER NAMES: Menzies' banksia.

DESCRIPTION Firewood banksia is a tree up to 10 metres high with a rather straggling habit. It has crumbly bark, thickly woolly branchlets and saw-toothed leaves that reach 25 centimetres long. Its attractive flowers, arranged in cones up to 12 centimetres high, are usually reddish-pink, but yellow-flowered forms are not uncommon and coppery-red ones are occasionally found. The large cones have up to 25 follicles. Blistering caused by a rust-fungus can sometimes be seen on the leaves.

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES Firewood banksia is distinguished from sawtooth banksia (*Banksia prionotes*) by its crooked growth form, its rich pink and orange flower spikes and its broader, less deeply and less regularly toothed leaves.

HABITAT AND DISTRIBUTION Common near Perth, firewood banksia is widespread on the sandplains between the Hill River and Pinjarra, with small, scattered populations found north to the Kalbarri area.

FLOWERING TIME March to August.

USES A multi-stemmed, short-leaved form of firewood banksia that originates from between Eneabba and Kalbarri is often planted on road verges in the Perth area.

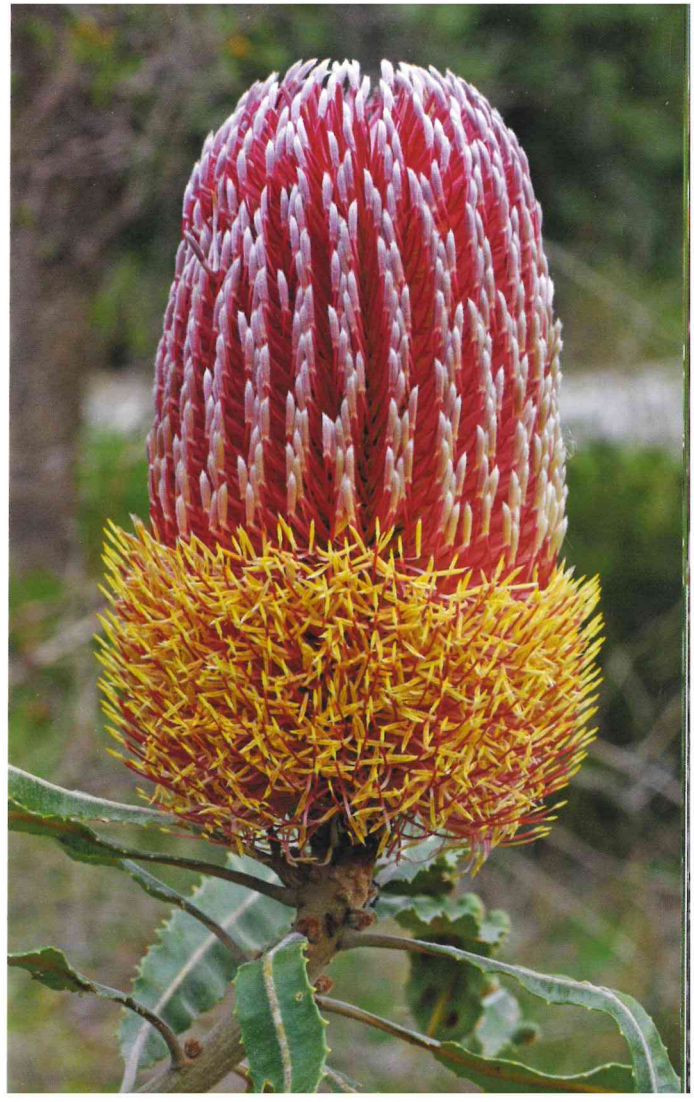


Photo – Andrew Brown/DBCA

FUCHSIA GREVILLEA

(Grevillea bipinnatifida)

Family Proteaceae

Fuchsia grevillea produces attractive clusters of striking red blooms all year round. These are an almost irresistible attractant to native birds, making it an excellent plant for the garden. Grevilleas, sometimes called spider flowers, are related to dryandras, hakeas and banksias. Varying from low-growing plants to tall trees, there are some 300 species in Australia, with 200 of these growing in the south-west. Grevilleas have styles which are long, slender and often hooked and the floral tube usually splits down one side before the flower opens.

OTHER NAMES Native fuchsia.

DESCRIPTION This low-growing, sprawling shrub grows up to a metre high, with clusters of red flowers up to 20 centimetres long. The leaves are deeply dissected into rigid, pointed segments, giving the whole plant a prickly appearance.

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES Fuchsia grevillea is distinguished by its low growth habit, large red flowers and deeply dissected leaves.

HABITAT AND DISTRIBUTION Found between Mogumber and Collie, fuchsia grevillea is a common species in the lateritic soils of the Darling Range above Perth.

FLOWERING TIME January to April.

USES Fuchsia grevillea is one of the parents of the well-known, common cultivar, Robyn Gordon, a beautiful hybrid which is sold in most nurseries. The other parent is an eastern Australian species, *G. banksii*. This hybrid can cause severe contact dermatitis in some people and should be checked before planting.

Photo – Andrew Brown/DBCA

WILSON'S GREVILLEA

(Grevillea wilsonii)

Family Proteaceae

The vividly red, spider-like flowers of Wilson's grevillea are common in the gravelly soils of the Darling Range. They attract attention from some distance and are regularly visited by nectar-seeking birds. After bushfires this shrub, even if burnt to the ground, shoots with fresh new growth and flowers all the more vigorously. Grevilleas are sometimes confused with closely related hakeas, but are readily separated as the fruits are generally thin walled and split along one side at maturity while hakea fruits are usually woody and split along the upper and lower sides, the two sides opening away from each other. The family name Proteaceae is derived from the Greek word *Proteus*, a mythical sea god who could change his form at will, and refers to the amazing diversity found among its members.

DESCRIPTION Wilson's grevillea is a dense, bushy, spreading shrub that grows up to 1.5 metres tall. It has finely divided leaves, two to six centimetres long, with sharp points. The large bright red flowers are arranged in attractive inflorescences up to 80 millimetres long.

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES The bright scarlet flowers of this species are hairless outside.

HABITAT AND DISTRIBUTION Wilson's grevillea is confined to the Darling Range between Bindoon and Yarloop, where it inhabits the gravelly soils of the jarrah forest.

FLOWERING TIME August to February.

USES This species is sometimes grown in gardens, where it attracts native birds.

Photo – Andrew Brown/DBCA

PIXIE MOP

(Petrophile linearis)

Family Proteaceae

Pixie mop has unusual pink, mop-like flower heads which are covered in soft hairs. Although each head superficially appears to be a single flower, each of its segments is actually a separate flower, with its own style and stigma. Native bees collect the pollen when the flower is yellow. After fertilisation the flower changes colour to red, which the bee sees as black and ignores. Pixie mop inhabits many areas of remnant bushland in the Perth region. There are about 40 species of *Petrophile* and more than 30 of these are found in the south-west. Commonly known as drumsticks or conebushes, their flowers range from almost white through cream and yellow to various shades of pink. Petrophiles have large cylindrical flower heads with each individual flower protected by a scale-like bract (reduced leaf). Unlike the closely related isopogons, their fruiting cones are elongated and they have persistent floral bracts.

OTHER NAMES Narrow-leaved conebush.

DESCRIPTION Pixie mop is an open, slender shrub. Although it only grows up to a metre high, it produces large flower heads up to five centimetres across, making it one of our most attractive and distinctive native plants. After flowering, fruiting cones, 15 millimetres in diameter, persist at various points along the branches.

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES This species is characterised by its flat, slender, curved leaves three to 10 centimetres long and felted, softly pink flowers.

HABITAT AND DISTRIBUTION Pixie mop is found in sandy soils between the Hill River and Augusta, where it grows in a variety of habitats.

FLOWERING TIME September to November.

Photo – Babs and Bert Wells/DBCA

CLIMBING TRIGGERPLANT

(Stylidium scandens)

Family Stylidiaceae, the triggerplants

Triggerplants are often seen flowering en masse in moist areas, particularly around granite outcrops and in open areas near winter-wet swamps. They have an unusual sensitive curved column which flicks over at the slightest touch. All triggerplants are pollinated by insects, normally bees, flies and wasps, which are attracted by the colourful flowers. Guided by markings on the petals, they land and probe for nectar at the base of the 'trigger' which, when touched, whips over and showers pollen on them (or picks up pollen from them). The trigger operates best in warm weather and resets in 30 to 40 minutes. You can operate it yourself. Climbing triggerplant grows in the higher rainfall areas. It has a long flowering season and it is not uncommon to find it in bloom at Christmas along the South Coast.

DESCRIPTION Climbing triggerplant trails over associated shrubs for up to two metres, clinging by the unusual curved ends to its leaves. In open situations, however, it grows as a small shrub up to 50 centimetres high. It has pale to deep pink flowers 1.5 centimetres across and whorled leaves with unusual hooked ends.

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES Climbing triggerplant differs from other species in its climbing habit and hooked leaf ends.

HABITAT AND DISTRIBUTION Found from Bunbury to Albany in a variety of habitats, climbing triggerplant is particularly common in the higher rainfall areas near the South Coast.

FLOWERING TIME June to February.

Photo – Andrew Brown/DBCA

WHITE CLEMATIS

(Clematis pubescens)

Family Ranunculaceae, the buttercups

White clematis is a common creeper of the lower south-west forests. It often grows with native wisteria, wattles and coral vine, creating a magnificent display of blue, yellow, red and white. There are more than 250 species of clematis, mainly in temperate areas of the northern hemisphere, with only three species found in WA. These creepers often grow near water and in some countries are referred to by the common name of 'travellers' joy'. All are woody climbers which ramble over shrubs, fallen logs and rocks, clinging by their modified leaf stalks.

OTHER NAMES Common clematis, travellers' joy.

DESCRIPTON In winter and spring this twining creeper produces masses of large white flowers. Plants are either male or female. Each flower has four prominent, pure white, petal-like sepals and male flowers have numerous stamens. The styles of female flowers persist in long feathery plumes following fertilisation. This gives the fruit a beard-like appearance. Leaves are composed of three broad leaflets on the ends of tendril-like leaf-stalks.

DISTINCTIVE FEATUERS The most distinctive feature of white clematis is its large white flowers. Its leaflets are 18 to 40 millimetres wide and much broader than those of the closely related old man's beard (*Clematis microphylla*), which are only three to eight millimetres wide.

HABITAT AND DISTRIBUTION White clematis grows on the coastal plain and Darling Range from Wanneroo to the extreme south-west, and along the South Coast to Israelite Bay.

FLOWERING TIME July to October.

Photos – Andrew Brown/DBCA

PEPPER AND SALT

(Philotheca spicata)

Family Rutaceae

Pepper and salt is common near Perth, particularly in the banksia woodlands of the coastal plain. It has attractive flowers that may be deep pink, mauve, blue or white and is a member of the same family as the commonly cultivated citrus fruits such as oranges, lemons and grapefruit. Many members of the family are indigenous to Australia and include the famous highly scented, brown boronia (*Boronia megastigma*), the native roses (*Diplolaena*) and the unusual *Geleznowia*. All have highly aromatic foliage and prominent oil glands, which can be seen as tiny translucent dots when the leaves are held up to the light. Closely related to the boronias, philothecas differ in having flowers with five, rather than four, petals.

OTHER NAMES Spiked philotheca.

DESCRIPTION Growing up to 60 centimetres high, this slender woody shrub has many branches arising from its base and narrow leaves up to two centimetres long. During winter and spring, it produces upright flower spikes that may reach 15 centimetres long, decorated with numerous beautiful pink to mauve flowers six millimetres across.

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES The colourful pink to mauve flowers are held on upright, leafless flower spikes.

HABITAT AND DISTRIBUTION Pepper and salt is found on sandy and sometimes gravelly soils throughout the south-west from Three Springs, south to Augusta and inland to Coolgardie.

FLOWERING TIME June to December.

Photo – Andrew Brown/DBCA

SIGHTING RECORD

SPECIES	REMARKS
cutleaf hibbertia	
yellow buttercup	
pink rainbow	
curry flower	
common dampiera	
blue leschenaultia	
red and green kangaroo paw	
purple flag	
snakebush	
Drummond's wattle	
prickly moses	
pink summer starflower	
Swan River myrtle	
granite featherflower	
cowslip orchid	
white spider orchid	
common donkey orchid	

SIGHTING RECORD

SPECIES	REMARKS
purple enamel orchid	
blue lady orchid	
cockie's tongues	
devil's pin	
coral vine	
native wisteria	
Australian bluebell	
candle banksia	
bull banksia	
firewood banksia	
fuchsia grevillea	
Wilson's grevillea	
pixie mop	
climbing triggerplant	
white clematis	
pepper and salt	

INDEX

OTHER BOOKS IN THIS SERIES

Animals of Shark Bay
Australian Birds of Prey
Birds in the Backyard
Birds of the Kimberley
Birds of the South-West Forests
Bugs in the Backyard
Bush Tucker Plants of the South-West
Butterflies of the South-West
Frogs of Western Australia
Fungi of the South-West Forests
Geology and Landforms of the Kimberley
Geology and Landforms of the Pilbara
Geology and Landforms of the South-West
Hazardous Animals of North-Western Australia
Mammals of North-Western Australia
Mammals of the South-West
Marine Life of Rottnest Island
Marine Plants of the Perth Region
Orchids of the South-West
Plants of the Kimberley
Plants of the Pilbara
Rare Butterflies of the South-West
Snakes of Western Australia*
Threatened and Rare Birds of Western Australia
Threatened Wildflowers of the Mid-West
Trees of the Goldfields
Trees of the South-West Forests
Waterbirds of the South-West Wetlands
Wattles of the Pilbara
Whales and Dolphins of Western Australia
Wildflowers of Dryandra Woodland
Wildflowers of the Mid-West
Wildflowers of Shark Bay
Wildflowers of the South Coast
Wildflowers of the Stirling Range

Visit the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attraction's online bookshop at shop.dbca.wa.gov.au

* Available as an eBook

20170091-0218.3M