



ENDANGERED!



MERRALL'S TRIGGERPLANT

Merrall's triggerplant was first collected in 1888 from near Lake Brown north-east of Toodyay, by Edwin Merrall, a gold prospector. The plant material was sent to the famous Victorian botanist Ferdinand von Mueller, who described it as *Candollea merrallii* in October 1888. It was transferred to the genus *Stylidium* in 1896.

For more than a century, the collecting locality and identity of the plant was to remain an enigma. Thought to have been destroyed by clearing for farmlands, it was presumed to be extinct and gazetted as such in 1991.

The original collection is in the Herbarium of the Royal Botanic Gardens in Melbourne. It consists of two fragments, one with a rosette of leaves conveying the false impression that the plant was related to the group known as creeping triggerplants.

In 1976, Basil and Mary Smith of Wongan Hills sent the Western Australian Herbarium part of an

inflorescence of a triggerplant collected in the state's eastern Wheatbelt. This specimen remained among the many unidentified plants in the Herbarium until 1991, when Allen Lowrie examined it and suspected it might be the long lost *S. merrallii*.

In 1992, Dr Syd James, of the University of Western Australia's Botany Department, collected non-flowering material of an unknown triggerplant from a granite rock. Examination of this material by Allen Lowrie confirmed it was identical to the material collected by the Smith's.

On the basis of the Smith and James collections, extensive fieldwork was conducted in 1992 and 1993 in the eastern Wheatbelt by Allen Lowrie, Daphne Edinger and Kevin Kenneally. Populations of what were believed to be *S. merrallii* were located and collected. The rediscovery was confirmed by matching the original Merrall material from Melbourne against the new collections.

Merrall's triggerplant is a perennial herb, arising from a rootstock and producing a basal rosette of leaves and long, spreading, flowering shoots. It flowers continuously throughout summer. In late January, it produces adventitious rosettes of leaves along the flowering shoots, which take root on touching the ground.

Merrall's triggerplant is endemic to Western Australia and is restricted to the aprons of granite rocks in the eastern Wheatbelt. Although the plant is protected within the Yanneymoon Hill and Walyahmoning Rock Nature Reserves, further surveys will need to be conducted to establish the extent of the species on other granite rocks in the eastern Wheatbelt.

Genetic studies suggest Merrall's triggerplant may be one of the most primitive triggerplants.

**Kevin Kenneally
and Allen Lowrie**

LANDSCOPE

VOLUME TEN, NO. 2 SUMMER ISSUE 1993-94



The galah is just one of the many bird species that visit our urban and suburban gardens. 'Birds in the Garden' shows us how we can attract more.



In spring, the Wongan Hills are ablaze with wildflowers, but this 'island' sanctuary is also a home to a wide variety of animals. See page 21.



Yanchep National Park is having a facelift. Our story on page 28 examines the history and rebirth of one of Perth's closest and most visited national parks.



Banksia gardneri var. brevidentata is one of a number of plants named in honour of Charles Gardner. See 'Gardner's World' on page 41.



The Pinnacles is one of several destinations for licensed tours operating in WA's national parks. See 'Travel Companions'.

FEATURES

BIRDS IN THE GARDEN ALAN BURBIDGE	10
THE 'REAL' BEES OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA JOHN ALCOCK	17
WONGAN HILLS: AN ISLAND SANCTUARY SUZANNE CURRY	21
YANCHEP: THE REBIRTH OF A NATIONAL PARK ROD ANNEAR & DAVID GOUGH	28
FASCINATING PHASCOGALES SUSAN RHIND	35
GARDNER'S WORLD ROB BUEHRIG & KATE HOOPER	41
TRAVEL COMPANIONS GIL FIELD & KATE HOOPER	46

REGULARS

IN PERSPECTIVE	4
BUSH TELEGRAPH	5
ENDANGERED MERRALL'S TRIGGERPLANT	27
URBAN ANTICS	54

COVER

Hyleoides zonalis is a solitary bee and one of the native bees described in our story about the 'real' bees of Western Australia on page 17. The illustration is by Philippa Nikulinsky.



Managing Editor: Ron Kawalikak
Editor: David Gough
Contributing Editors: Verna Costello, Kate Hooper, Carolyn Thomson
Scientific and technical advice: Andrew Burbidge, Roger Underwood
Design and production: Sue Marais, Stacey Strickland
Finished art: Gooitzen van der Meer
Illustration: Sandra Mitchell
Cartography: CALM Land and Information Branch
Marketing: Estelle de San Miguel ☎ (09) 389 8644 Fax: 389 8296
 Colour Separation by Prepress Services
 Printed in Western Australia by Lamb Print
 © ISSN 0815-4465 All material copyright. No part of the contents of the publication may be reproduced without the consent of the publishers.

Published by Dr S Shea, Executive Director
 Department of Conservation and Land Management,
 50 Hayman Road, Como, Western Australia 6152.