

It's not uncommon for there to be a time lag between the first collection of a new species and its scientific publication. Some undescribed species are collected, misclassified and filed away in the specimen vaults at DBCA's Western Australian Herbarium where they await botanical discovery. Others, like *Pimelea* sp. Tarin Rock, are known to us but cannot be scientifically named and described until high-quality collections and additional data are obtained and their taxonomic distinctness confirmed. With this in mind, my colleague Kelly Shepherd and I decided to detour to Tarin Rock on the last day of a broad-ranging field expedition in order to search for the *Pimelea*, which had been collected more than 30 years ago by citizen scientist Eileen Croxford.

We weren't optimistic that our plant hunt would be successful. There wasn't much location information associated with Eileen's collection and we had insufficient time to fully explore the large areas of bushland in the region. However, by querying the Herbarium's specimen database to see what other collections Eileen had made the day she found the *Pimelea*, I was able to build a better picture of her travels and narrow our search area. After several hours of searching, and not before feeling like we were hunting for a needle in a haystack, we spotted a showy *Pimelea* that had large, drooping heads of white flowers and contrasting orange anthers. Although it was unlike any other *Pimelea* we had seen that day, we were uncertain as to whether we had found what we were looking for. We took photographs, made a lovely pressed collection, and popped some fresh flowers in the car fridge before hightailing it back to the Herbarium, eager for our resident *Pimelea* expert Barbara Rye to examine the material. Delight was evident on Barbara's face as she not only confirmed that our collection matched Eileen's but that the species was truly new to science.

Tarin Rock banjine (*Pimelea crucis*) was recently named and described as part of this year's golden anniversary edition of the Herbarium's journal *Nuytsia*.



## Tarin Rock banjine



Since its launch on 10 December 1970, *Nuytsia* has supported five extraordinary decades of botanical discovery during which the number of native plants species formally recorded in Western Australia has increased from 5802 to more than 10,450. Many people have contributed to this extraordinary growth in botanical knowledge by writing, reviewing and editing journal manuscripts, collecting, processing, databasing and curating herbarium specimens, and of course discovering new species. To celebrate this collective effort, 50 new Western Australian species from 50 genera are being published online in *Nuytsia* over 50 separate days this year, each with a corresponding story on the Herbarium's Facebook page.

The golden anniversary edition features botanical novelties from a wide range of habitats across the State and has a strong conservation focus. Most of the included species are threatened or poorly known, with several known only from a single collection or population, or fewer than 50 individuals. Giving names to these species and providing descriptions to aid their identification is a vital scientific step that is likely to stimulate survey and lead to positive conservation outcomes, such as the discovery of more plants in the wild.

**Above** *Pimelea*.

**Inset** Western Australian Herbarium journal *Nuytsia*.

The Tarin Rock banjine is a case in point. Only four plants of this apparent rarity were observed when it was relocated in 2017. Descriptive information and photographs were subsequently sent to citizen scientist Jolanda Keeble, who was known to be actively botanising in the area. Last year Jolanda managed to locate another four plants at a different site following a persistent and extensive survey effort. There are indications that this species is a disturbance opportunist, which will make determining its precise conservation status challenging, but at least good taxonomic information is now available to inform the search for more.

Information on the Tarin Rock banjine and the other species featured in this year's golden anniversary edition of *Nuytsia* (Volume 31) is freely available at [florabase.dbca.wa.gov.au/nuytsia/current](http://florabase.dbca.wa.gov.au/nuytsia/current)

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