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Wildflower Press

Summer Edition

December 2005



Newsletter of the WA Herbarium Volunteers- Department of Conservation and Land Management

“ THAT FLORA MAN ” MARCHES ON

Collections of assorted data describing a native Western Australian specimen,

Nevillea scientia, who is leaving the Western Australian Herbarium after 50 years. Best Wishes Neville!

In the mid-fifties Neville left school, after completing his Junior Certificate, to work at the Perth herbarium under the guidance of the legendary Government Botanist, Charles Gardner. The Leaving Certificate was completed through night school at Leederville “ Tech ”, followed by commencing Botany studies at UWA in 1959.

Neville was the “type specimen”, being a few years older than his fellow (politically incorrect???) students, one of whom was Jan Gathe, one of the former co-ordinators of the Regional Herbarium volunteers. This group, under the Professorship of Dr Brian Grieve (*How to Know WA Wildflowers*, Pts 1-4) was the biggest group the UWA Botany Department had experienced to that point in time. Several, including Neville, went on to do Honours, followed by their Masters.

This group of six, with Neville being the most knowledgeable and confident, (thanks to his earlier years at the herbarium), changed the quiet and academically serious Botany Dept into a very lively place. “ As Neville already knew most of the answers and was inclined to play tricks, it was great to have him as an ally in both classroom and on field trips. ”

On one such trip, a “ fungal foray ” to Augusta with Ruth Johnson, a lecturer in Mycology /Plant Anatomy, acres of the morel *Morchella elata* were found so each student returned to camp laden with a feed. N.M. was asked by a staff member where his contribution was, to which he replied “ I’ve left my morels on a moss bed! ” --- very risqué for those conservative times and it caused a good laugh.

The adventuresome spirit came to the fore on many occasions, not only in speech but also by deed. Neville, along with Jan and Bill Loneragan (frequent allies in dashing deeds) went to a Botany conference in the eastern states. The Nullarbor was UNSEALED!!...it was about 110 degrees F “ in the waterbag ”and transport was Neville’s SMALL (and French) Simca.. A real adventure and not even a need to replace a radiator hose or change a tyre.

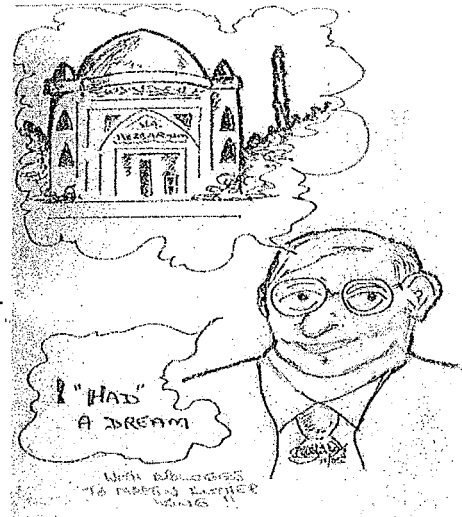
At one motel the three, crammed into the tiny Simca, were carefully checked over by the owner. Upon peering into the car and spotting Bill squeezed in amongst the many belongings on-the back seat, the perfunctory inquiry was, “ Do you need a cot for the child? ”

For a few years prior to his departure to Cambridge to study for his doctorate, Neville’s home was a small flat at the back of UWA. Here several friends would frequently squeeze in for a meal and a drink of “rough red”. The flagon was unceremoniously stored in the bathroom, the only place there was room for such an important possession. Quite a large, noisy contingent of Malaysian students were doing Botany at this time. Thus did Fang Chang Sha, the former, now retired Collections Manager, come into the botanical picture. With this mix, meals were always good and much fun was had by all. These friendships formed all that time ago are still maintained, both here in Australia and in Malaysia.

The Malaysian – Australian Connection

Fang Chang Sha

Frequently in the past, when I told people that I worked at the WA Herbarium, I would be asked if I knew Neville Marchant. Yes, I know Neville Marchant! In fact I have known him for 45 years.....starting from when he was one of my demonstrators in Botany “prac classes” at UWA., up until as he is now....in his element, sharing his knowledge and enthusiasm for our Australian flora. He even made taxonomy fun, not only for me but also many other people. What impresses everyone who knows Neville is his love and extensive knowledge of our WA flora.



Wanting others to enjoy our WA flora typifies Neville. Walking through the bush with him is a memorable and great experience, because he exudes keenness and a passion to conserve our unique flora. Charles Gardner, the indefatigable Government Botanist (1929-1960), would have been proud of his apprentice.

Recently, on a lovely Grampians’ location in Victoria, I enthusiastically pointed out a lovely native orchid to another tourist. But alas, the response I received was that of total disinterest. I was quickly reminded of one of Neville’s mantras...

“Unless people know and care about their flora they will not have any interest or will to conserve it.”

I believe that this approach explains Neville’s commitment to the volunteer program in the Herbarium. In 1984, Neville initiated the first volunteer project at the WA Herbarium, the Reference Herbarium. Encouraged and fostered by his direction, the subsequent evolution of our reference Herbarium as a resource for the use of the public, both professional and amateur, has no equal.

Holding the view that taxonomy need not solely be the province of the experts, instead of deploying volunteers as “spare hands” Neville gave impetus to staff to encourage committed volunteers to develop skills as “parabotanists”. This is unique in herbaria. The results we have seen – images captured for Florabase, over 200,000 specimens mounted for the collection; slime moulds collected and inventoried; weeds encoded with Delta; *Hakea* and *Grevillea* encoded with Delta to produce interactive identification keys, are just a few of the successful outcomes of this involvement and partnership with volunteers.

In 1999, Neville’s vision to involve the community took the form of the Regional Herbarium project. During the height of activity of this program, the Herbarium was swamped with thousands of quality specimens with vital information from over 50 locations. This was very exciting. We had new taxa discovered, priority taxa documented and many range extensions of taxa recorded. Interest groups were able to accurately identify and document the flora of their areas. Out of this, many friendly associations with the community at large were cemented. More than one foreign visitor to the Reference Herbarium have been greatly impressed by the vision of this project.

During Neville’s tenure as Head of the WA Herbarium, the state collection has increased greatly. The cause of conservation has been served faithfully and the botanical community involvement developed, nurtured and strengthened. Indeed the WA Flora conservation effort owes much to his scientific knowledge, vision, dedication and commitment.

For myself, I am privileged to have worked with Neville. Yes! I can really claim that like many, I know Dr Neville Marchant, “that flora man”.

Getting Down and Dirty with the Volunteers!

Pat Angel and Peter Davies remember Neville's exploits - some!!

As a volunteer who has been on several trips with NM, other herbarium staff, regional co-ordinators and regional volunteers attending workshops about making collections, Florabase etc. Pat Angel (Tues/Fri vollie) observed "Neville has a welcoming attitude and shares his knowledge with much enthusiasm. He is unfailingly congenial and most informative. This always extends beyond the flora into the history and geology of the area being visited" (occasionally also insects and other little critters!).

These trips were to a variety of places in WA, ranging from Geraldton across to Albany. Some were also to encourage the farmers to look after their native vegetation areas. Frequently these were camping trips (for the special 1 or 2) or dormitory type accommodation for others... but definitely no 5 Star suites for anyone!

Peter Davies (Image Team Tues vollie) was a direct recruit by Neville. He met up with NM at the Evans sisters' 90th birthday. Upon being introduced to Neville and telling him that he (Peter) was a tour bus driver and close to retirement, he was promptly asked "how would you like to be a Hebarium volunteer and come and sometimes drive a bus for us". "Coming to the Herbarium has been wonderful. Neville has given me the opportunity to work in an extremely challenging environment. I have found him to be very approachable and always interesting, in relation to me as a volunteer or in general matters.

I have found Neville to be an excellent guest speaker, always relaxed and always giving 120%, wherever it may be..... out in the country or at a city art or book launch". A memorable event comes to mind. There we were, near Corrigin someplace, and carted up to a small plateau at the top of a rock; lying on our stomachs alongside a rocky pool in the wind and rain, while Neville, totally oblivious to the climatic conditions, explained the lifespan of the marine invertebrates in the rocky pool!!!



Neville, in the situation many of the volunteers are VERY FAMILIAR with, out in the field sharing his knowledge of the natural world.

Introduction to Western Australia's Reference Herbarium

There is a considerable amount of interest in our State's unique flora which all people who are professionally involved, through work or study, should develop and encourage, if our flora is to be conserved. A recent perusal of visitors to the Reference Herbarium has shown usage by a wide range of people in a variety of professions and agencies. These include botanists, environmental agencies, CALM, UWA Centre for Forensic Sciences, tourists, Regional Herbaria volunteers, landcare members, farmers, researchers, Department of Agriculture staff, pastoralists and horticulturalists. The number of usages exceeded 2000 over the past twelve months, so it would appear that this goal is being achieved, with many very busy days being experienced in the facility.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The idea was first considered in 1983. In February 1984 the Herbarium was successful in receiving a grant from the Community Employment Program (CEP) to fund the Reference Herbarium project. Karina, the Collections Manager, commenced her varied career at Perth Herbarium by being appointed the coordinator of the programme.

Stage 1 of the project involved the extraction of duplicates from the main herbarium. Stage 2 involved field work to supplement and add collections to the Reference Herbarium and the main collection. This project ceased in late 1985.

Since then, specimens have gradually been added to the Reference Herbarium. It is estimated that 80% of W.A.'s 10,000 plus of described taxa are represented.

In 1989, a separate collection, the Verticordia Reference Collection (prepared by the Verticordia Study Group) was incorporated into the Reference Herbarium.

The Reference Herbarium was first located in the basement. After a number of years a re-location was made to the Fungi Wing – behind the Reception area. When it became evident that storage and working conditions were too crowded, history repeated itself, with a transportable being acquired and placed in the area of the seminar room. In 1997 further expansion became necessary with another transportable being purchased and outfitted. This was situated adjoining the first transportable and now caters for all the specimens and tasks of the extremely busy Reference Herbarium.

UPDATE INTO THE 21st CENTURY

Recently Barbara and Bob Backhouse completed a mammoth task to replace old folders in the Reference Herbarium. New folder labels, extra shelving and an upgrade of computers, have been carried out to streamline this essential service that is provided for consultants and CALM staff. To give some idea of the use of the Reference Herbarium and the wear and tear of specimens and folders: over 2,500 "visits" were recorded in the past 12 months. To celebrate the completion of the upgrade there was a special morning tea held on Friday December 2nd 2005.



Barbara and Bob Backhouse in the midst of the re-vamped Reference Herbarium reviewing their hard work.

*Wishing all WA Herbarium Volunteers a Merry
Christmas and a
Happy New Year*

ACTIVITIES OF HERBARIUM VOLUNTEERS – DEC 2005

Last Name	First Name	Tasks
ABBOTT	Gwen	Mounting Team: herbarium specimen mounting and labeling
ANGEL	Pat	Curatorial Support: herbarium specimen incorporation Mounting Team: herbarium specimen mounting and labeling
ARMSTRONG	Stan	Curatorial Support: Type specimen photography
BACKHOUSE	Barbara	Reference Herbarium: management and curation
BACKHOUSE	Robert (Bob)	Reference Herbarium: management and curation
BAKER	Pauline	Image Team: preparing species images for FloraBase
BELL	Una	Taxonomic studies: compilation of field guides to WA grasses
BREIDAHL	Peter	Curatorial Support: reconciliation of specimen labels with field notebook records
BRIMS	Margaret	Taxonomic studies: WA Myxomycetes
BROCKMAN	Garry	Curatorial Support: identification of Orchidaceae
BROWN	Geoff	Regional Herbaria Team: specimen identification
BROWN	Justin	Regional Herbaria Team: specimen identification
BYRNE	Geoff	Field Surveys: collection of specimens and digital images
CARPENTER	James	WIN Team: compiling weed descriptions for Weed Information Network project
CREED	Kate	Mounting Team: herbarium specimen mounting and labeling
DAVIES	Lynette	Image Team: preparing species images for FloraBase
DAVIES	Peter	Image Team: preparing species images for FloraBase
DAVISON	Peter	Urban Bushland Fungi Project: management and support
DUMARESQ	Joanne	Regional Herbaria Team: administration and specimen processing
EDINGER	Daphne	Field surveys: specimen identification and processing
EDWARDS	Maureen	Image Team: preparing species images for FloraBase
ELLERY	Brian	Regional Herbaria Team: specimen identification
FAGENCE	Ella	Image Team: preparing species images for FloraBase
FAIRBAIRN	Vere	Mounting Team: herbarium specimen mounting and labeling Regional Herbaria Team: specimen identification
FOSS	Jonica	Regional Herbaria Team: specimen identification Curatorial Support: incorporation of <i>Eremophila</i> specimens

FRENCH	Denise	Curatorial Support: incorporation of <i>Eucalyptus</i> and <i>Corymbia</i> specimens: marine plant specimen curation
FRENCH	Malcolm	Curatorial Support: identification of <i>Eucalyptus</i> and <i>Corymbia</i> specimens
GEORGE	Elizabeth	Curatorial Support: identification of <i>Verticordia</i> specimens
GURRY	Patricia	Regional Herbaria Team: specimen identification Curatorial Support Mounting Team; mounting and labeling of specimens
HARDING	Janet	Image Team: preparing species images for FloraBase
HARRISON	Gemma	Mounting Team: herbarium specimen mounting and labeling
HART	Rosalind (Roz)	Urban Bushland Fungi Project: support; education officer
HARTILL	Victoria (Vicky)	Urban Bushland Fungi Project: support
HAWKES	Jennifer	Image Team: preparing species images for FloraBase
HEARN	Alison	Image Team: preparing species images for FloraBase
HOLLISTER	Christine (Chris)	Curatorial Support: general curation Taxonomic studies: electronic identification guides to genera in Proteaceae
HUGHES	Jill	Mounting Team: herbarium specimen mounting and labeling
HUTTON	Yvonne	Mounting Team: herbarium specimen mounting and labeling
JOHNSON	Ruby	Regional Herbaria Team: specimen identification
JOHNSON	William (Bill)	Image Team: preparing species images for FloraBase
JOSEPH	Retna	Mounting Team: herbarium specimen mounting and labeling
KENNAIRD	Dominique	Mounting Team: herbarium specimen mounting and labeling
KING	Richard	Regional Herbaria Team: specimen identification
KININMONTH	Frances (Fran)	Curatorial Support: Volunteers' newsletter: marine plant specimen curation: incorporation
KNIGHT	Catherine (Cate)	Curatorial Support: marine plant specimen curation
LARKE	Margaret	Urban Bushland Fungi Project: support
LEHMAN	Helen	Mounting Team: herbarium specimen mounting and labeling
LEWINGTON	Margaret	Curatorial Support: reconciliation of specimen labels with field notebook records
LOVELOCK	Jean	Mounting Team: herbarium specimen mounting and labeling

MACEY	Kim	Image Team: preparing species images for FloraBase
MARSH	John (Gilbert)	Field Surveys: specimen identification and processing
MATTHEWS	Anne	Mounting Team: herbarium specimen mounting and labeling
MEGOW	Janet	Urban Bushland Fungi Project: support Regional Herbaria Team: specimen identification
NAPIER	Kathleen (Kath)	Image Team: team management and preparation of species images for FloraBase
OBBENS	Frank	Taxonomic Studies: Revision of <i>Calandrinia</i>
PALMER	Thelma	Regional Herbaria Team: specimen identification
PERRET	Dorothy	Regional Herbaria Team: specimen identification
PITFIELD	Joyce	Curatorial Support: herbarium Papilionaceae specimen incorporation
PRESTON	Val	Mounting Team: herbarium specimen mounting and labeling
RICHARDSON	Kenneth	Image Team: preparing species images for FloraBase Field Surveys: collection of specimens and digital images
ROBINSON	Bruce	Mounting Team: herbarium specimen mounting and labeling
SEDGWICK	Lindsay	Regional Herbaria Team: specimen identification
SMITH	Gillian	WIN Team: compiling weed descriptions for Weed Information Network project Regional Herbaria Team: specimen identification
SMITH	John	Image Team: preparing species images for FloraBase
SPENCE	Kim	WIN Team: compiling weed descriptions for Weed Information Network project
STACEY	Conway (Con)	Curatorial Support: locating and flagging phytochemistry voucher specimens
van PROCTOR	Rodney	Mounting Team: herbarium specimen mounting and labeling
WEAVER	John	Urban Bushland Fungi Project: support Website management
WEST	June	Mounting Team: herbarium specimen mounting and labeling
WILLIAMS	Alex	Taxonomic studies: revision of genera of Poaceae
WILSON	Margaret	Botanical illustrations
WILSON	Paul	Taxonomic Studies: revisions of genera of Asteraceae Botanical nomenclature
ZAPPIA	Rebecca	Urban Bushland Fungi Project: support



Volunteer News.


Licences to collect Flora.

Volunteers registered at the WA Herbarium requiring a Collecting Licence can collect an application form from Karina Knight, the Collections Manager. The form is already partially completed and you will only need to add your personal details. Please ensure you fill in **all** details requested, otherwise your application will be rejected. Also, the Flora Licencing Officer will only process application forms which the Collections Manager has approved. So return your form to Karina to send for processing.

Read all the paper work such as 'Conditions', 'Further Conditions', 'Information for the Applicant' that arrives with your Collecting Licence as CALM is tightening up its procedures and enforcing the conditions of the licence quite rigorously. The main implication of this tightening is that you must seek **written** approval to collect from most owners or caretakers of the land, be it Crown Land, State Parks, CALM land, Shire reserves, Main Road reserves etc.

If you have any queries about your application or the conditions of your licence please see Karina.

It must be remembered the Licence only gives you permission to **collect**, not permission **where** to collect.



FORM 10
 WEDNESDAY 15 FEBRUARY 2006
 PRICE \$10.00

APPLICATION FOR A LICENCE FOR SCIENTIFIC OR OTHER PRESCRIBED PURPOSES

TO TAKE PROTECTED FLORA FROM CROWN LAND FOR NON-COMMERCIAL PURPOSES

Completed forms should be returned to Department of Conservation and Land Management, 24 Hayman Road, Cooma, 3102, Locked Bag 104 Sandy Quarry Centre, 6003, or to a CALM Reserving Office, together with the prescribed fee of \$10.00

APPLICANT: SURNAME		Given Names
ADDRESS (OR MAIL)		Postcode
ADDRESS (POSTAL)		Postcode
ADDRESS CHANGE YEAR/NO		Date of Birth
CURRENT MAILING ADDRESS		
Day Phone No.	Associated Research Institute (if applicable)	

PURPOSE FOR WHICH LICENCE ISUGHT (CHECK BOX)

Scientific Educational Hobby Non-commercial purposes Personal enjoyment

GIVE DETAILS OF YOUR PROPOSED USE OF FLORA for each checkmark purpose

ACTIVITIES: Taxonomy Inventory Botanical Analysis Rehabilitation Plant Breeding

LAND TO WHICH APPLICATION RELATES - IDENTIFY SEPARATELY

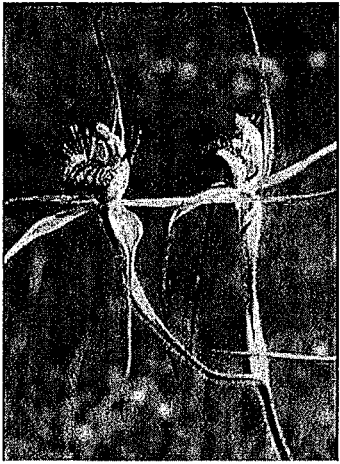
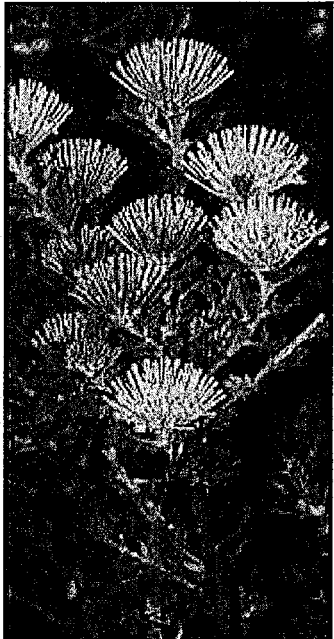
Home of local authority (eg. Shire)	Location of Crown Land (eg. Pasture or Location No. or Name of Park Bush Haven)	Using (Managing) Authority (Government Agency)

FLORA TO WHICH APPLICATION RELATES - IDENTIFY SEPARATELY

Local Name	Common Name (if any)	Part Code (ie. eg. Flowering Stem, Foliage, Seed, Bark, Lign. Cuttings)

If applicable, enter period for which licence will be required:

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AN AMATEUR "VOLLY" BOTANIST AGAIN SAVES THE DAY!

As a botanist revising *Rulingia* and *Commersonia* for Flora of Australia, I could see a quick voyage through the species folders of these genera was definitely in order.

One thing in particular caught my attention, a plant specimen was collected in 1964 (?) by Royce, who was then head of the PERTH herbarium. It was labelled as locality 'Morawa' and identified as *Rulingia loxophylla*. It appeared more like *R. cuneata*, but did not quite match this species as it had simple hairs on the upper surface of the leaf and abundant glands on the pedicel and outer calyx. On closer inspection it was a beautiful new species with a dark pink calyx and white petals, and the only collection of its kind in PERTH herbarium.

"How depressing! An old collection from the wheatbelt!!... most likely extinct before it is even named. Ah well!"

While on a field trip collecting flowers at Paynes Find, an 'executive decision' resulted in a quick (?) trip via Whitewells Station to Morawa, on the wild off chance of finding 'sp. Morawa'. Many unexpected collections were made along the way. The partner 'fieldie' was not a bit surprised by the usual detour of a few extra hundreds of kilometres and tried to overcome hay fever and a headache, while he sat on the side of the road feigning interest, or locking himself in the car to escape pollen.

"Should I continue, or take pity on the 'fieldie'. Nah, onwards!"

A chance drop in at the Morawa 'info' centre was to half-heartedly check on any still untouched known vegetation patches in the area. An amateur botanist, Paul Offszanka, who lives in Canna just north of Morawa, was phoned. He intimately knows all the plants in the area and leads free tours of orchids growing in the area around the Canna dam. He said to call in and he would peruse the photocopy of the plant.

He was knowledgeable about other plants of the tribe that grew in the area and we had a look at his flower photo album. My heart sank as he could not recall the locality of many of the photos of *Lysiosepalum* and *Keraudrenia* species. But then, THERE IT WAS!! A photo of the new species, sp. Morawa. Trepidation was allayed when Paul remembered distinctly the whereabouts of the plant...500 metres down the road on a recently bulldozed road verge!

"Oh dear. Heart sank again."

Imagine my jumping for joy, when there was still ONE FLOWERING PLANT left on the verge. Many of its arms were pulled off as holotype and isotypes. Maybe it can be cloned...to become many plants for translocation to a safer place.



Soul of the Desert

Philippa Nikulinsky

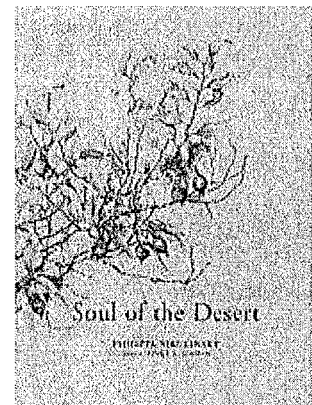
Western Australia's premier botanical artist has created a stunning, long-awaited new title. This lavish hardcover book includes beautiful reproductions of Nikulinsky's paintings, with detailed text and extended captions by the desert botany specialist Stephen Hopper.

Her artworks are laboriously constructed from the source material she gathers on field trips- photographic documentation, sketches, colour notes, diary entries and plant clippings.

A major exhibition featuring the artworks from Soul of the Desert was held recently at the Fremantle Arts Centre.

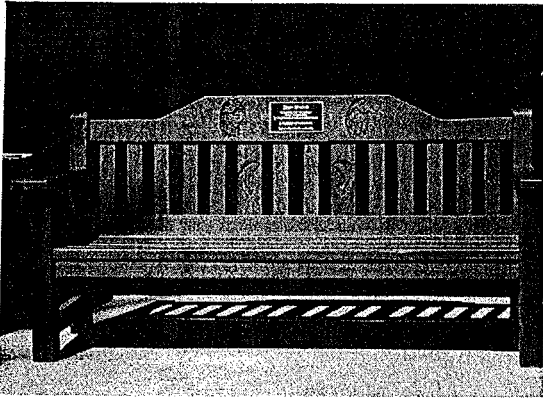


Carol, all smiles, with the rediscovered specimen.



Memories of Marie Mitchell

Dedication at Penguin Island



The memorial seat at the Penguin Island Experience Discovery Centre, dedicated to Marie.

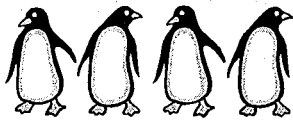
On a balmy, October spring morning, with a gentle breeze moving over the waters surrounding the islands of Shoalwater Marine Park, many family members, fellow associates and friends of Marie, gathered on Penguin Island for a dedication ceremony.

Marie had given a memorable contribution over many years, to the Penguin Island Experience Discovery Centre and other associated, penguin-centered activities. During this time she became aware of Pauline Baker's (a fellow PIEDC vullie) involvement at the state herbarium. Not being a person to let a good opportunity slip by, she also joined our volunteer group.

The algal (seaweed) collection had been languishing in its room behind the Reception area, for many, many years. Marie took on the task of incorporation and improving the folders with enthusiastic diligence and pleasure at being involved in another 'marine-like' project.

Sadly, after a few years of her usual wholehearted attitude to her volunteering, interrupted by a couple of trips overseas on 'penguin matters' (one to a fairly isolated Chilean penguin rookery) Marie succumbed to cancer in April 2003.

Some people, who remembered Marie at her work at the herbarium, were able to attend the speeches and morning tea, held as part of the dedication of a jarrah bench. This is decorated with carvings of dolphins and other island motifs, with a suitably worded plaque fitted into the back-rest of the bench. The bench has been placed on the verandah of the PIED Centre where the dedication took place.



Meriel and Kaye among the family and volunteers gathered to remember Marie and her endeavours.

A heartfelt THANK YOU to all of the people who contributed in any way towards the 'frantic' compilation and publishing of the Summer Edition of the Wildflower Press. Special thanks to Bruce Robinson for the cartoons.



If you would like to contribute to future issues please contact Fran Kininmonth or Meriel Falconer at the Herbarium or email to merielf@calm.wa.gov.au