

Wednesday Walk – Mount Majura Nature Reserve – 28 June 2017

The reason for our walk on Mount Majura was to find a patch of mysterious daisy bushes that Mike had discovered some years ago. We began our journey from the gate on Ian Nichol Street in Watson and walked for some time along the lower slopes almost parallel to the Federal Highway.

The *Acacia genistifolia* was putting on a great display of masses of cream flowers, but not much else was flowering there in mid-winter. In places, we passed through extensive populations of *A. parramattensis*, the dominant wattle there — although later we did come across a few Silver Wattles (*A. dealbata*) and Hickory Wattles (*A. implexa*). The eucalypts on the lower slopes were mostly Blakely's Red Gum (*E. blakelyi*) and Yellow Box (*E. melliodora*), but there were also some Apple Box (*E. bridgesiana*). One of the Apple Box trees near a small creek had a low horizontal branch exhibiting beautifully the distinctive tessellated bark patterns.

After a while, we began to move up the open slopes dotted with small outcrops of crumbling rocks where we found a few ferns. They were mainly Rock Ferns (*Cheilanthes austrotenuifolia*), but there were also a few little Necklace Ferns (*Asplenium flabellifolium*) nestled amongst crevices in the rocks.

There were some sizeable populations of *Chrysocephalum semipapposum* in places and a few *Xerochrysum viscosum*. And we found all three species of the local New Holland Daisies — *Vittadinia muelleri*, *V. gracilis* and *V. cuneata*. Heath plants were represented mainly by Daphne Heath (*Brachyloma daphnoides*), some of them obviously very old plants. Urn Heaths (*Melichrus urceolatus*) were bearing heavy loads of cream buds, some just opening, and the tubular cream flowers of *Styphelia triflora* caught our attention several times.

As we came to the higher slopes, we were walking amongst Brittle Gums (*Eucalyptus mannifera*) and Scribbly Gums (*E. rossii*), one of the latter a magnificent old tree that called for a group photo.

After passing through a small forest of Drooping Sheoaks (*Allocasuarina verticillata*), we continued the steep climb under the power-lines. And, then, there they were — the mystery daisy bushes! And we could see blue flowers. They were *Olearia tenuifolia* (Narrow-leaved Daisy Bush). Although there are scattered populations elsewhere in south-eastern New South Wales and Victoria, it is a rare plant. We have seen it on Mount Tennent in Namadgi National Park growing in a similar landscape, a steep rocky slope with dry-looking soil. They do need extremely good drainage to flourish — or even survive. I lost two large plants at my place, growing in what looked like well-drained soil, after two days of heavy rain. The Mount Majura population seemed very healthy, and there was an extensive area of small plants emerging.

We didn't see much wildlife, but a dozen or so Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoos treated us to a fly-past. And, amongst the rocks, there was a large green-blue centipede with long curved yellow legs.

Although we only covered a small area of the Nature Reserve, we saw an array of interesting plants and the re-discovery of the *Olearia tenuifolia* really made it a day to remember.

By Jo Walker; Photos: Brigitta Wimmer

Plant List for Mt Majura from Antill St – 28 June 2017

Acacia dealbata
Acacia genistifolia
Acacia implexa
Acacia paradoxa
Acacia parramattensis
Acacia rubida
Acacia ulicifolia
Acaena ovina
Allocasuarina littoralis
Allocasuarina verticillata
Amyema miquelii
Aristida ramosa
Asplenium flabellifolium
Astroloma humifusum
Austrostipa bigeniculata
Austrostipa densiflora
Austrostipa scabra var. falcata
Bossiaea buxifolia
Bothriochloa macra
Brachychiton populneus
Brachyloma daphnoides
Bulbine bulbosa
Bursaria spinosa subsp. lasiophylla
Calytrix tetragona
Cassinia longifolia
Cassinia quinquefaria
Centipeda cunninghamii
Cheilanthes austrotenuifolia
Chrysocephalum apiculatum
Chrysocephalum semipapposum
Clematis leptophylla
Convolvulus angustissimus
Craspedia variabilis
Cryptandra amara
Cymbonotus lawsonianus
Daviesia genistifolia
Desmodium varians
Dianella revolute
Dichondra repens
Dillwynia sericea
Einadia nutans
Eryngium ovinum
Eucalyptus blakelyi
Eucalyptus bridgesiana
Eucalyptus mannifera
Eucalyptus melliodora
Eucalyptus rossii
Exocarpos cupressiformis
Galium gaudichaudii
Geranium solanderi
Glycine clandestina
Gonocarpus tetragynus
Goodenia hederacea
Hardenbergia violacea
Hibbertia obtusifolia
Hovea heterophylla
Hydrocotyle laxiflora
Hypericum gramineum
Indigofera australis
Juncus sp.
Lepidosperma laterale
Leptorhynchos squamatus
Leucochrysum albicans var. tricolor
Lomandra filiformis ssp. coriacea
Lomandra filiformis ssp. filiformis
Lomandra multiflora
Luzula densiflora
Lythrum hyssopifolia
Melichrus urceolatus
Microlaena stipoides
Olearia tenuifolia
Opercularia hispida
Persicaria prostrata
Poa sp.
Pteridium esculentum
Pultenaea subspicata
Rytidosperma pallidum
Rytidosperma sp.
Schoenus apogon
Scleranthus diander
Senecio quadridentatus
Solenogyne dominii
Stackhousia monogyna
Stellaria pungens
Stypandra glauca
Styphelia triflora
Themeda triandra
Tricoryne elatior
Triptilodiscus pygmaeus
Vittadinia cuneata
Vittadinia gracilis
Vittadinia muelleri
Wahlenbergia communis
Wahlenbergia stricta
Xerochrysum viscosum



Steep rocky path



Hibbertia obtusifolia



Eucalyptus rossii photo shoot



Acacia paramattensis glands



Astroloma humifusum



Cryptandra amara



Euc bridgesiana trunk



Goodenia hederacea



Leucochrysum albicans



Olearia tenuifolia



Opercularia hispida



Styphelia triflora



Vittadinia cuneata closeup



Wahlenbergia stricta



Centipede (*Scolopendra* sp.)



Photoshoot by a *Eucalyptus rossii*