

Wednesday Walk — Brooks Hill Reserve, ACT — 9 August 2017

Brooks Hill Reserve consists of 71 hectares of various ecosystems on the Kings Highway seven kilometres from Bungendore on the Queanbeyan side.

We left the carpark through the small entry gate into a woodland area of *Eucalyptus polyanthemos* (Red Box) and *E. melliodora* (Yellow Box) surrounding several extensive open areas. Some of the trees were festooned with large Mistletoes, one of which we managed to reach and identify as *Amyema miquelii*. Nothing much was in flower at this time of the year, but in spring this area is a picture of *Velleia paradoxa* (Spurred Velleia) surrounded by heath plants, daisies and the occasional orchid. All that was flowering this time were a few *Melichrus urceolatus* (Urn Heath), but the *Lissanthe strigosa* (Peach Heath) had a good covering of pink buds too.

In the wide spaces between the tussocks of *Rytidosporum pallidum* (Red-anthered Wallaby Grass) further on, the ground was blanketed with the appropriately-named *Pultenaea subspicata* (Low Bush-pea). This lovely little plant covers extensive areas of the reserve with carpets of bright orange flowers in spring.

We continued along the path towards the back of the reserve, noticing on the way the old dead tree, full of burls and twists, that looks like something out of a child's story book. By this time, we were passing through some tall *Daviesia mimosoides* (Leafy Bitter-pea) before we came across the *Comesperma ericinum* (Heath Milkwort) we'd been looking for. This mauve-flowered shrub is not common in this part of the country but there is a small population of them here.

After a while, we came to the little dam — its water is always very muddy, presumably because it is inhabited by Yabbies. We walked on to the extensive quarry area (now well-vegetated), then up to the railway line, and walked along the path there for a while looking for the low-growing suckering form of *Olearia tenuifolia* which we failed to find this time. We made our way back to the track above the quarry then, and stood for a while beside two rickety wooden seats looking out over the wide vista of open land to the distant hills.

After following a winding track for a while, we had lunch below the railway line in an area of thicker and drier forest consisting mostly of *Eucalyptus rossii* (Scribbly Gum), *E. mannifera* (Brittle Gum) and *E. dives* (Broad-leaved Peppermint). After lunch, we made our way back towards the highway through similar forest along the high edge of the reserve. Some of the Mistletoes on the trees here were *Amyema pendulum*.

Just before we reached the old Kings Highway (which is inside the reserve boundary), we found a few patches of *Coronidium scorpioides* (Button Everlasting) beside the track. At this top end of the reserve, the area between the old and new highways is mostly grassland with the dominant grass being *Themeda triandra* (Kangaroo Grass). There are quite a few other grassland plants there too, the most noticeable being an extensive patch of *Calocephalus citreus* (Lemon Beautyheads).

As we followed the old highway down the hill, there were still a few species we hadn't already seen along the way. There is a large population of *Pomaderris eriocephala* on one side of the track and a smaller but noticeable patch of *Astroticha ledifolia* on the other side. We even found a new one for the list after two of us scrambled up the steep bank to inspect a mat of bright green foliage. It was the little *Acrotriche serrulata* (Honeypots).

Although it was the time of the year when not much is in flower, it was a pleasant walk. And we all agreed that another visit would be a good idea when the peas are flowering in spring.

Jo Walker

Plant List for Brooks Hill – 9 August 2017

? indicates that those present were unsure of the plant name

Acacia buxifolia	Eucalyptus gonicalyx
Acacia dealbata	Eucalyptus mannifera
Acacia decurrens	Eucalyptus melliodora
Acacia genistifolia	Eucalyptus polyanthemus
Acacia gunnii	Eucalyptus rossii
Acacia implexa	Exocarpos cupressiformis
Acacia parramattensis	Goodenia hederacea
Acacia rubida	Hardenbergia violacea
Acaena novae-zelandiae	Hibbertia obtusifolia
Acrotriche serrulata	Hovea heterophylla
Amyema miquelii	Hypericum gramineum
Amyema pendula	Juncus sp.
Aristida ramosa	Lepidosperma laterale
Astroloma humifusum	Leptorhynchos squamatus
Astrotricha ledifolia	Leucochrysum albicans ssp. albicans var. tricolor
Austrostipa scabra ssp. falcata	Lissanthe strigosa
Bossiaea buxifolia	Lomandra filiformis ssp. coriacea
Brachyloma daphnoides	Lomandra filiformis ssp. filiformis
Calocephalus citreus	Lomandra longifolia
Carex sp.	Luzula densiflora
Cassinia longifolia	Melichrus urceolatus
Cheilanthes austrotenuifolia	Microlaena stipoides
Chrysocephalum apiculatum	Poa sieberiana
Chrysocephalum semipapposum	Pomaderris eriocephala
Clematis leptophylla	Pultenaea microphylla
Comesperma ericinum	Pultenaea subspicata
Coronidium scorpioides	Rytidosperma pallidum
Cryptandra amara	Scleranthus fasciculatus
Daviesia genistifolia	Senecio sp.
Daviesia mimosoides	Solenogyne dominii
Dianella revoluta	Stylidium graminifolium
Dillwynia sericea	Themeda triandra
Einadia nutans	Velleia paradoxa
Eryngium rostratum	Veronica perfoliata
Eucalyptus bridgesiana	Vittadinia muelleri
Eucalyptus dives	Xerochrysum viscosum

The Reserve is on the Kings Highway between Queanbeyan and Bungendore with entrances at the top and via a rest area at the bottom. It is quite heavily wooded with some lovely old trees, predominantly *Eucalyptus rossii*, *E. macrorhyncha*, *E. dives* and *E. bridgesiana*. At the top of the Reserve is a lovely patch of themeda grassland with the not so common *Eryngium rostratum* and *Calocephalus citreus*. There is a loop track which goes through most of the different types of vegetation. Of interest is a suckering olearia species which is as yet un-named.



The group; Photo: Jeanette Jeffrey



Lissanthe strigosa; Photo: Jeanette Jeffrey