



# The Escarpment Park Friend

July 2024

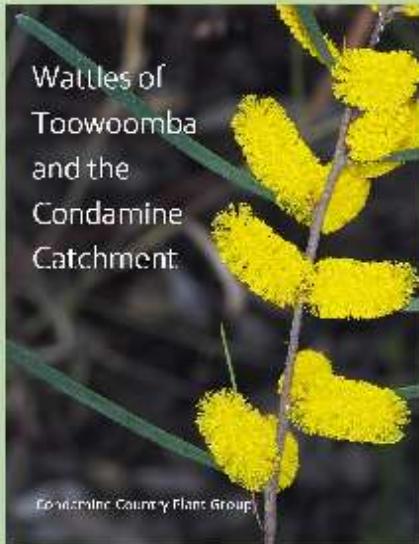
Committed to bushland park care since 1994

[www.fep.org.au](http://www.fep.org.au)

FEP was proud to host the launch of two local plant books

Saturday, 15 June, 1.30pm  
Toowoomba City Library Meeting Rooms

All welcome



## Identify your local wattles

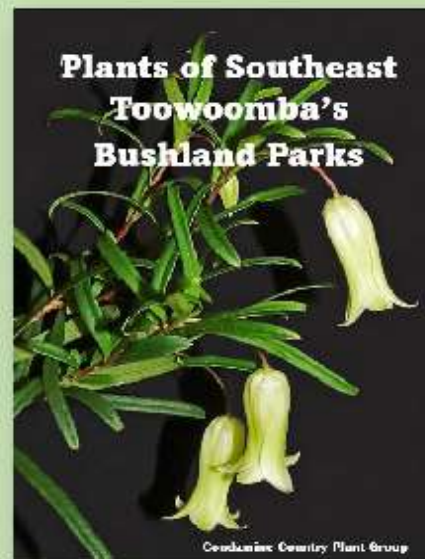
All 84 local wattles, described and illustrated with high quality colour photographs.



## Know your park's plants

114 of your local native plants with full colour photographs and key distinguishing features.

Published by Friends of the Escarpment Parks, Toowoomba.



Both books were written by the Condamine Country Plant Group; Greg Spearritt, Lisa Churchward, Patricia Gardner and Steve Plant.

'*Plants of Southeast Toowoomba's Bushland Parks*' was published by Friends of Escarpment Parks (Inc) and printed with financial assistance from Range Environmental Consultants (Toowoomba and Brisbane) and editorial input from Kym Sparshott (Leaftail Environmental Consultants). Copies are available free for FEP members who would like one; otherwise, the cost is \$15.00 plus postage for non FEP members. Contact [president@fep.org.au](mailto:president@fep.org.au)

On the day, FEP received \$375 in book sales, \$10 (new membership) and \$5 donation.

'*Wattles of Toowoomba and the Condamine Catchment*' was published by the authors, Condamine Country Plant Group Toowoomba, Queensland, and printed with assistance from Toowoomba Field Naturalist Club and Range Environmental (Toowoomba and Brisbane). Kym Sparshott of Leaftail Environmental Consultants donated her services in editorial input. To purchase *Wattles of Toowoomba and the Condamine Catchment*, see, [Publications – Condamine Country](#) and contact [condaminecountry@gmail.com](mailto:condaminecountry@gmail.com)

Also, reference Trish Gardner's blog; [https://toowoombaplants2008.blogspot.com/2024/06/a-new-book-on\\_12.html](https://toowoombaplants2008.blogspot.com/2024/06/a-new-book-on_12.html)

Guest speakers were Cr Rebecca Vonhoff, Lucas Talbot (Range Environmental Consultants), Deb Ford (Field Naturalists Toowoomba), Greg Spearritt and Rob Brodribb (FEP).



Cr Vonhoff brought a spray of *Acacia podalyriifolia* from her property for identification using her new book.

Steve Plant and others brought a comprehensive collection of plant species for display.



Deb Ford from Field Naturalists speaks at the launch.

With approximately 65 plant enthusiasts in the audience, the room was packed to overflowing.



Greg Spearritt, image: Elizabeth Addie



Book authors and guest speakers (left to right);

Greg Spearritt, Lisa Churchward, Lucas Talbot, Deb ford, Trish Gardner, Steve Plant, Cr Rebecca Vonhoff and Rob Brodribb.

Image: Penny McGowan

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*Native plant; Solanum nemophilum* Images: Kelly Kellert



## In memoriam

Founder of Friends of Toowoomba's Escarpment Parks (FEP Inc), Dr John Theodore Swarbrick passed away recently.

Dr Swarbrick is remembered as a noted expert in weed management, having been an associate professor and lecturer in weed science at University of Queensland (Gatton campus). He collaborated with Toowoomba Regional Council in 2014 to produce the book 'Toowoomba's best trees' which can be found in the Toowoomba Regional Library. All of the trees mentioned within its pages are registered on the National Trust of Queensland's register of significant trees. He was a member of Toowoomba Field Naturalists and Landcare Australia.

Dr Swarbrick wrote and co-wrote several guide books for the identification and methods of removal and control of the major environmental weeds of the Toowoomba Region, including the Toowoomba range escarpment.

In the introduction to 'Environmental Weeds of the Toowoomba Region' (1995), we read:

...The control of environmental weeds is usually very time consuming, since they have to be carefully and effectively removed without harming adjacent native plants... This is where our community comes in. Our bushland parks belong to our communities, and local community volunteers are essential in keeping them reasonably weed free...

In the mid 1980's Dr Swarbrick recognised the severe impact of Lantana growth in the Spring Bluff escarpment area - its smothering of native grasses, herbs, shrubs and tree seedlings. With a few friends, he began working in that area, then moved on to J E Duggan Park (Rangeville) and Prince Henry Drive.

Continuing the work till 1991, they were advised to form a local friends group to attract attention at the local Council level, to increase funding from the Bushland Park Management budget and to share their knowledge and expertise with the local councils. The group became an incorporated body on 1<sup>st</sup> September 1994, named the Friends of the Escarpment Parks (Toowoomba) Inc. of which Dr Swarbrick was president and an active volunteer for another 20 years.

From these beginnings, FEP has grown to more than 100 active volunteers and work has extended to a local national park (Hartmann's Bushland Reserve) and 11 local bushland parks, the biggest being Redwood Park on the escarpment. Tens of thousands of hours have been donated by members over the last 30 years and FEP continues to grow, welcoming schools and youth organisations for various special activities.

Dr John Swarbrick's vision was that 'all remnant natural bushland in Toowoomba be weed-free, well managed and valued by the community, vigorous in growth and containing a diverse range of plant and animal species.'

Toowoomba has been lucky to have such a champion of the bush.



## FEP Highfields Falls group annual excursion Jane Butler

Last month, instead of weed pulling The Highfields Falls FEP team went to visit Dougal Johnson at his farm not far from Hampton.

Dougal, who is a FEP member also, is a farmer and a keen conservationist and has melded these two interests together. He was able to show us photos of the progress of regeneration on his farm from photos of maps of the region. The earliest photo taken in 1944 showed a sparsely treed block to a current photo taken in 2018 where corridors and patches of regenerated bush were established surrounding rooms of pasture – a visual example of farming and conservation working together.

We were very impressed with the diversity of plants that had regenerated and took delight in identifying ones we have seen growing in our own park, e.g. the native climber next page. We couldn't help but be pleased but not surprised to hear of the wildlife these corridors supported especially the variety of bird species. Dougal told us that studies on diversified farms supported his observations that a significant subset of bird species can survive and even increase in these situations.

As keen conservationists we were very interested on the vegetation that was allowed to re-establish in a Regional Ecosystem (12.5.6), *(reference)* a zone similar to Highfields Falls. We were fascinated to learn which particular trees although once natural to the area struggle to recover without the protection of surrounding shrubbery, while others were much tougher. So apparently, you can't just presume that a bush once degraded can return to its early state naturally.

Also noted were plants known to be poisonous to stock growing in these corridors, hedging the paddocks where cattle graze. Dougal assured us that the cows weren't interested and there was no need to weed them out!

Dougal told us that there were a variety of native grasses growing in the pasture and was very popular with the stock. The pasture looked lush and I couldn't help think these ribbons of bush engulfing these rooms of grass are ensuring better moisture retention, temperature control and less wind damage.

So we agreed that Dougal has been successful at demonstrating how the vegetation, wildlife and the cattle benefitted from melding his two interests.

So thanks to Dougal for a different and definitely interesting Tuesday morning. I for one came away better informed.



Image: Max Henderson



*Passiflora herbertiana* Image: Max Henderson



Image: Max Henderson

Native climber *Passiflora herbertiana*

One distinguishing characteristic of *Passiflora herbertiana* is the presence of two raised glands at the top of the leaf stalk.

The flowers emerge from the orange bud a creamy yellow and a day or so later become pale orange.

*Passiflora herbertiana* prefers the sunlight available at the forest edge or in partly cleared areas in preference the shade in the centre of a rainforest.

© Australian-Insects.com

#### **Regional ecosystem details for 12.5.6**

According to the Qld Government web page Regional ecosystem details for 12.5.6, this type of ecosystem features; *Eucalyptus siderophloia*, *E. propinqua*, *E. microcorys* and/or *E. pilularis* open forest on remnant Tertiary surfaces.

It is described as occurring usually on deep red soil.

**Weed vine *Passiflora subpeltata*.** <https://weeds.brisbane.qld.gov.au/weeds/white-passionflower>

White passionflower (*Passiflora subpeltata*) is regarded as an environmental weed in Queensland and New South Wales, and was recently listed as a priority environmental weed in at least one Natural Resource Management region. White passion-flower (*Passiflora subpeltata*) contains cyanic acid and is thought to be poisonous to humans and livestock if eaten in sufficient quantities. Unlike many other passionfruit species, its fruit are not edible.

### **Stem and leaves**

The stems are slender, hairless or nearly hairless (i.e. glabrous or sub-glabrous) and grow up to 5 m long. Tendrils are produced at the base of the leaf forks. The alternately arranged leaves are hairless (i.e. glabrous) and borne on stalks (i.e. petioles) 2-6 cm long. Where the leaf stalk joins to the stems there is a two-lobed leafy structure (i.e. stipule) 1-4 cm long, that is somewhat obliquely heart-shaped. Some bush regenerators refer to this as a collar and it does not occur on our native *Passiflora* vine. The leaf blades (3-10 cm long and 4-11 cm wide) are pale green with whitish or bluish-green undersides. They are three-lobed, with the lobes being cut about half-way into the centre of the leaf blade and having rounded tips (i.e. obtuse apices).

### **Flowers and fruits**

The white flowers (4-5.5 cm across) are borne singly in the leaf forks (i.e. axils). These flowers have six petals and six sepals, which are all very similar in appearance. They also have five prominent stamens and an ovary topped with three styles and large stigmas. Flowering occurs during spring and summer. The fruit are pale green to bluish-green or yellowish when mature. These fruit are leathery berries (about 4 cm long) that are egg-shaped (i.e. ovoid) to almost round (i.e. sub-globose) in shape.

### **Control**

For longer vines, cut the areal stem. Then find central tap root and gently pull/lever out along the line of least resistance, being careful to minimise disturbance to neighbouring native plants. (Bradley Method)

Cut stump and spray very large plants. (Environmental Weeds, J Swarbrick and K Jenkinson)



Close-up of the large two-lobed leafy stipule

Bluish-green stems and coiled tendril

(Photos: Sheldon Navie)



<https://weeds.brisbane.qld.gov.au/weeds/white-passionflower>

### Critically Endangered Regent Honeyeater

In exciting news, Regent Honey-eaters were spotted enjoying food in a yellow box tree at Highfields Falls bushland Park last month.

The Regent Honeyeater is found in eucalypt forests and woodlands. It can be seen in blossoming trees and mistletoe and sometimes in orchards and urban gardens. Plants associated with this species include Box-ironbark eucalypt forests (<https://birdlife.org.au/>)



Image: courtesy of Tony Bond, Toowoomba Bird Observers

### Notices

**FEP Annual General Meeting will be held at 9.30am for 10am start on 10th August, at the Darling Downs Environment Council (DDEC) hut. Address: 1a Heller St, Rangeville.**

First an opportunity for an informal catch up and morning tea, commencing at 9.30am. Then formal proceedings will commence with our guest speaker at 10am. The speaker is Ahri Tallon, DDEC Coordinator. (Please see: [https://www.ddec.org.au/our\\_team](https://www.ddec.org.au/our_team)). Formal proceedings will follow. Elections of the 2024 - 2025 executive and committee members will be held. Also we will need to ratify three important legislative changes that we are required to make as an incorporated not for profit organisation. It is anticipated that our AGM will be completed by 11am. Please come and



support your FEP committee, also please renew your annual membership if you haven't already done so.

Family/Individual Membership (includes school aged children) of \$10 per year helps to pay for our running costs and activities that we organise. Members receive a quarterly newsletter and information by email about FEP activities.

You can make a direct payment to the Heritage Bank using the following details: BSB No: 638 070 Account Name: Friends of the Escarpment Parks (TBA) Inc. Account No: 5459567. Please include your initial and surname for reference so that we can identify your payment and send an email to the treasurer indicating that you have paid electronically. [readdison@optusnet.com.au](mailto:readdison@optusnet.com.au)

For more information, see <https://fep.org.au/wp2405/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/fep-membership-form.pdf>

### FEP Bush Care Parks and Groups

Name of Park	Locality	Coordinator Contact Details	Schedule
<b>Charles and Motee Rogers Reserve Highfields</b>	Highfields	Greg 0428 288 077 glukes@bigpond.com	First Friday of the month 9 am – 11:30 am
<b>Duggan Park (Leslie &amp; Collier Streets, Rangeville)</b>	Rangeville	Kaye 0402 183 087 kwoodriley@gmail.com	Second Saturday of the month From 8 am
<b>Echo Valley South Park (Ramsay St)</b>	421 Ramsay St Middle Ridge	Greg 0428 288 077 glukes@bigpond.com	Second and fifth Saturday & First, third and fifth Wednesday at 9 am
<b>Hancock St Park</b>	Rangeville	Bev 0428 623 577	Every Thursday Summer: 7 am – 10:30 am Autumn – Spring: 7 am – 11 am
<b>Hancock St Park Microforest Group</b>	Rangeville	Elizabeth secretaryfep@gmail.com	We meet as required.
<b>Hartmann Bushland Reserve</b>	Rangeville	Greg 0428 288 077 glukes@bigpond.com	Second and fourth Wednesday From 9 am

<b>Highfields Falls Bushland</b>	James Byrne Rd, Highfields	Jane 0423747169 jane.butler@westnet.com.au	Every Tuesday 9 am – 12 pm
<b>Leopard Ash Bushland Park, Kleinton (Near Highfields)</b>	Kleinton	Michael 0417 802 817	First Saturday 9am – 12pm
<b>Nielsen Park (Colman Drv, off Mackenzie St)</b>	Middle Ridge	Rob 0407 124 863	First and fourth Saturday 9 am – 11 am
<b>Panorama Crescent Park</b>	Prince Henry Heights	David panorama.crescent.park@outlook.com	Third Saturday 9 am – 12 pm
<b>Redwood Park</b>	Toowoomba Range	Hugh 0418 748 282 Kaye 0429 424 985 hkrenske@gmail.com	Every Monday and Thursday. Summer: 7 am – 9:30 am. Autumn and Spring: 7:30 am – 10:30 am Winter: 8 am – 10:30 am
<b>Redwood Park Prince Henry Drive FEP Group</b>	Prince Henry Heights	Tom 0438 441 188 tom@tomesplin.com	Every Tuesday 7:30 am to 10:30 am
<b>Skyline Drive Escarpment Park</b>	Blue Mountain Height The worksite is from the end of Rangeview Rd, Blue Mountain Heights	Christel 0448 329 008	First Sunday of the month 8 am – 9 am
<b>Stenner Street Park</b>	Middle Ridge	Claudia Claudia.stephenson@bigpond.com	We meet as required

## FEP Key Contacts

FEP President – Rob Brodribb [president@fep.org.au](mailto:president@fep.org.au)

FEP Secretary - Elizabeth Addie [secretaryFEP@gmail.com](mailto:secretaryFEP@gmail.com)

Escarpment Friend Editor - Penny McGowan [editorfep@gmail.com.au](mailto:editorfep@gmail.com.au)

**Thank you to our contributors;** please send emails to: [editorfep@gmail.com](mailto:editorfep@gmail.com)



FEP Bush care groups are volunteers carrying out bush regeneration activities in our local bushland parks. *Bring your gloves, hat and water.*

FEP is on Facebook. You can *like* any articles you see on there and help lift the profile of FEP in our community.

*Friends of the Escarpment Parks Toowoomba Inc. acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of this region, including the Jagera people, the Giabal people and the Jarowair people, whose song lines traverse this land on which we work. We pay our respects to Elders past and present.*



Regent Honeyeater at Highfields Falls bushland Park. Image: courtesy of Tony Bond, Toowoomba Bird Observers