



## Friends of Wireless Hill Newsletter Spring 2013

The Friends meet on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of each month at the Capital Radio Room, Wireless Hill Park at 7.00pm.

Weeding/planting activities are at 8.30am on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday.

### FLOWERING NOW

Any visitors on the Wild Flower Walks on 8 September will have been impressed by the variety of flowers to be seen. Over 40 native species were identified – the most spectacular being the expanses of red and green Kangaroo Paws (*Anigozanthos manglesii*) and of yellow and purple Donkey Orchids (*Diuris corymbosa* and *D. magnifica*). The yellow of the Buttercups (*Hibbertia* spp) and the small Cotton heads (*Conostylis* spp) and the mauve of *Hybanthus* and *Calectasia* gave a good contrast. Scattered along the walks were odd specimens of about 7 other orchid species.

### FORTHCOMING ACTIVITIES

In the next few months many new flowers will appear including Fringed lilies (*Thysanotus*), Trigger plants (*Stylidium*) and shrubs such as *Melaleuca*. Following the rains of winter, the weeds also flourish and will involve many hours of work by the Friends. We concentrate on the South-East area (including the Wildflower paths). No herbicide spraying is allowed there and weeds are removed by hand. Target plants are Perennial Veldt Grass (*Ehrharta calycina*), *Gladiolus* and *Freesia* all from South Africa but a variety of daisies (Asteraceae), peas (Fabaceae) and other introduced grasses must be tackled.

### OTHER NEWS

The walks on 8 September were a great success. The weather was ideal with clear, blue sky and temperature of about 21°C. About 65 people came to see the display which was at its best. We would like to thank the members of the Wildflower Society of WA who were guides on some walks.

**Please note that it is illegal to pick wild flowers in WA**



Kangaroo Paws (*Anigozanthus manglesii*)



Donkey Orchid (*Diuris magnifica*)

(Photos Margaret Matthews)



Cats paws (*Anigozanthus humilis*) (photo by M Matthews)

Fringed lily (*Thysanotus*) (Photo by Sheena Heath)

### FLOWERS ON WIRELESS HILL

Spring is a special time in South Western Australia – the oldest part of the Australian land mass. Many of our plants have ancient origins, and are found nowhere else in the world. We can see some of this unique flora in Wireless Hill Park.

The Wildflower Walk will soon have new descriptive panels to help identify nearby plants. Kangaroo paws (*Anigozanthus manglesii*) and Catspaws (*A. humilis*) are favourites, so are yellow buttercups (*Hibbertia hypericoides*). Milkmaids (*Burchardia congesta*) and Fringed lily (*Thysanotus* spp) are easily seen, as is their giant relative, the Grass trees (*Xanthorrhoea* spp).

Many visitors come just to see the orchids (Orchidaceae) – Cowslip, Pink Fairy, Spiders, Donkey, Dancing Bee, Jug and more. The Banksia family (Proteaceae) includes Hakeas, Grevilleas and the pink-flowered Petrophile. Sadly, the drying climate has claimed several mature Banksia trees.

The brilliant orange flowers of the WA Christmas Tree (*Nuytsia floribunda*) usually appear in November. It is named for a passenger on a Dutch ship which visited WA in 1627.

The insect-eating Sundews (*Drosera* spp) are always interesting, with their dewy hairs that attract and trap insects. The Park has many plants of the easily recognisable pea family (Fabaceae), and the Myrtle Family (Myrtaceae), famous for its beautiful flowers, which include Eucalyptus, Melaleuca and Swan River Myrtle.

We are so lucky! Come and enjoy a walk in Wireless Hill Park.

**Nora McWhinney**



Spider orchid (*Caladenia arenicola*)

*Banksia ilicifolia* (Photos by M Matthews)