



## Friends of Wireless Hill Newsletter Summer 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

Although most of the orchids and Kangaroo Paws are over for this year, other colourful flowers have replaced them. Scattered in the bushland, are blue flowers such as *Dianella divaricata* (Flax Lily), *Lechenaultia floribunda* (a small shrub) and the striking *Arnocrinum preissii*. Mauve/purple flowers include *Hemiandra pungens* (Snake Bush), *Dampiera linearis* and *Patersonia occidentalis* (Purple Flag) all seen along the Wildflower Walk.

### FORTHCOMING ACTIVITIES

As the weather gets warmer, removal of weeds must continue before they shed too many seeds that may overwhelm the native species. The Friends remain responsible for the area between Telefunken Drive and Davy Street. We have now extended our hand-weeding to the area east of this, to the Council offices, thanks to grants that pay for 2 enthusiastic workers, Tracy Evans and John Maliunas provided by SERCUL.

### OTHER NEWS

A number of environmental students from local schools and universities have been carrying out projects on Wireless Hill. One group from Notre Dame University has been looking at Veldt Grass; another from Murdoch University has been following up publicity for Wireless Hill and school students have been surveying Balgas and also planting in degraded areas. We thank all these people for their interest and look forward to seeing their reports.



*Patersonia occidentalis*



*Dampiera linearis*

(Photos Margaret Matthews)



*Arnocrinum preissii*



*Lechenaultia floribunda* (photos by M Matthews)

## REPTILES ON WIRELESS HILL

The Bobtail (*Tiliqua rugosa*) is the reptile seen most frequently at Wireless Hill by visitors and members of the Friends group. Last summer a large Bobtail was seen on several occasions, feeding on flowers of the Snake Bush (*Hemiandra pungens*) opposite the car park, ignoring people taking photographs.

The Bobtail belongs to the worldwide Skink family (Scincidae), well represented in the Perth region. The Bobtails are the largest of the local skinks. A smaller, darker subspecies can be found on Rottnest Island. Bobtails feed on snails, insects, flowers and fruit. When alarmed, they face the threat with wide open mouth, hissing. Usually 2 live young are produced each year.

Dragon lizards (family Agamidae) have 3 local species, including the Western Bearded Dragon (*Pogona minor*). They are about in the daytime, and can be seen basking in the sun. Their skin can change from grey to brown as they become warm. They have long, slim tails, and can run fast. The young hatch from eggs.

Snakes, including Dugites (*Pseudonaja affinis*), also live in the Park. Dugites vary in colour from pale to dark brown, or olive to black. They are active in the daytime and on hot summer nights. Eggs hatch in late summer to autumn. Juveniles are pale with black heads. Dugites avoid people, so are not a threat. Dogs are susceptible to snake venom and should always be kept on a leash and on the path.

Reference: Bush, Maryan, Browne-Cooper, Robinson: A Guide to the Reptiles and Frogs of the Perth Region (UWA Press) 1995.

**Nora McWhinney**



Bobtail (*Tiliqua rugosa*) on *Hemiandra* photo Sheena Heath Western Bearded Dragon (*Pogona minor*) photo Deb Cook