



Friends of Wireless Hill Newsletter Winter 2018

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

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

WINTER FLOWERS

Rain has come at last and some early flowers are appearing, such as *Daviesia triflora*, *Acacia stenoptera*, *Hovea trisperma* and *Calectasia narragara*. Some are a few weeks later than usual but there should be a good show by the peak season in September. This year the annual Wild Flower Walk will be held on Sunday 9 September. There will be no public Planting Day as not enough seeds have been collected to ensure that we only plant seedlings from Wireless Hill parents.

Of course weeds also appear at this time. We have been removing many bags of Perennial Veldt Grass (*Ehrharta calycina*) from the area burnt in March 2016. Now the Gladioli are beginning to show themselves but each year our efforts have reduced them overall in the South East area which includes the Wild Flower path.

We have been identifying several trees and large shrubs that are not native to the area but were planted in earlier times. Examples of these are two popular garden plantings *Eucalyptus caesia* (Silver Princess) and *E. erythrocorys* (Illyarrie). There are also other Eucalypts, Acacias and Geraldton Wax (*Chamelaucium uncinatum*). All these have been dropping seeds and are now spreading in the bushland. We hope to remove them eventually.



Calectesia narragara



Hovea trisperma

Photos by Margaret Matthews

MACROZAMIA "PALMS"

Zamia Palms belong to the family of Cycads (Zamiaceae). These are primitive plants found in tropical and subtropical sandy regions of Africa, Australia, North and South America. The local species on Wireless Hill is *Zamia fraseri*, which has no trunk and a basal ring of narrow to medium strongly keeled leaflets up to 2 metres long. It is often confused with *Zamia riedlei* which occurs in the Darling Range. This has a short trunk and the narrow leaflets are flat or openly keeled.

There are separate male and female plants. Especially after fire, the cones start to appear in May and June within the base of the leaves. The male has up to 3 cones made up of small scales with pollen; in the female there is a single larger cone with stouter scales each with a central point. The pollen is transferred by masses of the *Tranes* genus of weevils. Once fertilised, each scale encloses 2 seeds with a red/orange covering. These are shed in September and October to reveal a dull brown woody seed 3-6 cm long.

The seeds are dispersed by birds (including emus) and rodents. They are said to be poisonous to humans unless soaked in water and heated for several weeks.



Male cones



Female cones



Zamia seeds

Photos by Alison Crofts

Alison Crofts

We look forward to seeing you on Wireless Hill
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