

Focus on Flora

Native Plants of the Adelaide Hills & Barossa



Kersbrook Landcare Group

Ground Dwellers

Ground dwellers usually have a non-woody stem with most of the plant at ground level. They sometimes have a die back period over summer or are annuals. They are usually less than 1 metre high, provide habitat and play an important role in preventing soil erosion.

Goodenia blackiana, *Kennedia prostrata*, *Glossodia major*, *Scaevola albida*,
Arthropodium strictum, *Gonocarpus tetragynus*



Caesia calliantha



Bulbine bulbosa

Bulbine-lily
Asphodel Family ASPHODELACEAE
LILIACEAE

bul-BINE (bul-BEE-nee) bul-bohs-uh Meaning: *Bulbine* – bulb, *bulbosa* – bulbous

General description A small perennial lily with smooth bright-green leaves and yellow flowers.

Specific features Plants regenerate annually from a tuber to form a tall stem from a base of fleshy bright-green channelled, cylindrical leaves. The flowers have 6 yellow petals with a prominent bright-green mid vein. The fruit is a capsule about 6 mm in diameter

Size To about 50 cm tall.

Community Native grasslands and open woodland.

Flowering time Spring.

Special interest Tubers eaten by Aboriginal people.

Abundance Common.

Well represented at Para Wirra CP but widespread.

Similar species *Bulbine semibarbata*
Annual Bulbine-lily grows much more vigorously, with its smaller yellow flowers having half of their stamens 'bearded'.



Tricoryne elatior

Yellow Rush-lily
Day Lily Family HEMEROCALLIDACEAE
LILIACEAE

triek-uhr-IEN-ee ee-LAHT-ee-or Meaning: *Tricoryne* – three, club shaped, *elatior* – taller

General description Often inconspicuous, this erect branched plant has fine, wiry stems and bears small clusters of yellow star-like flowers at the tips. Some longish leaves present at the base of the plant and up the stem.

Specific features Six petaled flowers are usually more than 1 cm across, with a green tinge on the outside. Flowers have 6 fine yellow tufts on the stamens. At flowering time the stems are almost leafless. Flowers form a striped twist at end of flowering.

Size 20-40 cm.

Community Heath and grassy woodland.

Flowering time Late spring and summer.

Special interest Occasionally scented. Sometimes found growing within and supported by another plant. Seed capsules are very small and oval shaped.

Abundance Common.

Well represented at Hale CP but widespread.

Similar species *Tricoryne tenella* Small Yellow Rush-lily with striated stems.

Bulbine bulbosa (p 6) has a distinct spike of flowers.



Amyema miquelii

Box Mistletoe
Mistletoe Family LORANTHACEAE

a-mie-EEM-a meek-EL-ee-eye Meaning: *miquelii* – after botanist Miquel

General description A semi-parasitic, drooping plant with red flowers, attached to branches of trees or shrubs.

Specific features Grows on host branches from a woody attachment which is often more visible on dead mistletoes. Leaves are similar to the host plant but more yellow-green in colour and arranged opposite each other. Flowers are stalked, orange to bright red and dangle in clusters of 3. The fruit is long and yellowish.

Size Droops in a clump to about 2 m.

Community Woodland and forest.

Flowering time All seasons of the year.

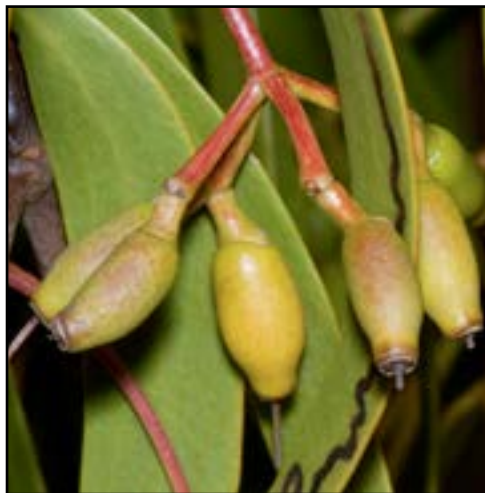
Special interest Found mostly on smooth-barked gums. Also grows on wattles and sheoaks.

Spread by mistletoe birds that feed on the fruit, then deposit their droppings with a glue-like substance to the branch.

Abundance Common.

Well represented at Widespread on roadsides.

Similar species *Amyema pendulum* Drooping Mistletoe mainly found on the rough bark of *Eucalyptus obliqua* but is unlikely to be seen in the region except at Kaiserstuhl CP and the central Hills.



Lysiana exocarpi

Harlequin Mistletoe
Mistletoe Family LORANTHACEAE

lie-see-AHN-uh eks-oh-KARP-ee (eye) Meaning: *Lysiana* – set apart from *Loranthus*, *exocarpi* – outside fruit

General description Spreading semi-parasitic plant with long, flat narrow leaves and upright red tubular flowers with green tips.

Specific features Attached to host plants often sheoaks, sometimes other mistletoes. Flowers sometimes yellow tipped with 6 narrow green petals. Oval fruit red or black when ripe.

Size Depends on age and host plant.

Community Various.

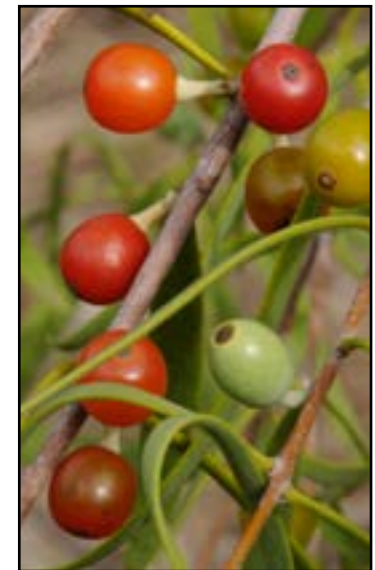
Flowering time All year.

Special interest Various host plants but not *Eucalyptus*. Important bird food with sticky fruit containing the seed, excreted and stuck to the branch where it may later grow. Grows on some non-native species eg fruit trees. Fruit eaten year round by Aboriginal people.

Abundance Common.

Well represented at Sandy Creek CP but widespread.

Similar species Other mistletoe species which have more open hanging flowers with no, or only a partial tube.



Eutaxia microphylla

Common Eutaxia

Peas FABACEAE: FABOIDEAE
LEGUMINOSAE

yue-TAKS-ee-uh mie-kroh-FIL-uh Meaning: *Eutaxia* – well-ordered (leaves), *microphylla* – small leaves

General description Variable habit from prostrate forms to an erect shrub to 50 cm tall but in this area, a much-branched low bush with dark-yellow and red veined pea-flowers.

Specific features Small paired leaves are crowded and close to the stem, usually flattened but appear cylindrical. Leaves are smooth with a stiff spine on the end of each branch.

Size Often to about 50 cm.

Community Woodland.

Flowering time Spring.

Special interest Caterpillars of the Fringed Blue Butterfly feed on this species. As with all hard seeded legumes, the seed coat needs to be cracked before germination can take place.

Abundance Uncommon.

Well represented at Para Wirra CP. (N,C,S)

Similar species *Pultenaea* have a similar shaped pea-flower and colour but can be distinguished by the brown papery bracts (stipules) at the base of the leaf.



Dillwynia hispida

Red Parrot-pea

Peas FABACEAE: FABOIDEAE
LEGUMINOSAE

dil-WIN-ee-uh HIS-pid-uh Meaning: *Dillwynia* – after L. Dillwyn, *hispida* – with bristly hairs

General description Small upright shrub with tiny leaves and orange-reddish pea-flowers on long fine stalks at the tips.

Specific features Usually with narrow hairy leaves. Clusters of 1-5 broad flowers grow on a thin stalk at the end of branches. Fruits are globular pods.

Size To 50 cm.

Community Heathy woodland and forest.

Flowering time Spring.

Special interest Easily grown from seed.

Abundance Common.

Well represented at Kersbrook Reserve but widespread.

Similar species *Dillwynia sericea* Showy Parrot-pea, is hairy with stalkless flowers and found south of Black Hill.



Melicytus angustifolius

Formerly Hymenanthera dentata

Tree Violet

Violet Family VIOLACEAE

mel-ee-SIET-us an-gust-i-FOH-lee-us Meaning: *Melicytus* – honey cave (flowers), *angustifolius* – narrow leaves

General description Variable from low sparse woody plant to more commonly a bushy shrub with many spiny-tipped branched stems. Leaves are small and dull-green.

Specific features Each stem has a pointed tip and leaves in small groups. Small yellow to cream cup-shaped flowers from the woody older stems. Roundish berries turn purple-black when ripe in February to March.

Size To 2 m.

Community Woodland, grassland.

Flowering time August to October.

Special interest Commonly growing beneath red gums from birds excreting its berry seeds. Important shrub for protection of small birds such as wrens. Often seen with lichen growing on it.

Abundance Uncommon.



Well represented at Mt Crawford area but widespread. (N,C)

Similar species Could be confused with Olives* or Boxthorns*, both of which have no spiny stem tips.



Goodenia ovata

Hop Goodenia

Goodenia Family GOODENIACEAE

good-EEN-ee-uh oh-VAHT-uh Meaning: *Goodenia* – after Bishop Goodenough, *ovata* – egg-shaped (leaf)

General description Soft-stemmed leafy shrub with many yellow flowers up the stem. Often grows massed in swamps and wet creeklines.

Specific features Stalked bright green leaves are roughly oval or triangular shaped with fine serrations along the edges. The shiny leaves are thin. Flowers stalked.

Size To 2 m often less.

Community Creeklines and gullies. Also woodlands and forests with higher rainfall.

Flowering time Mostly spring but throughout the year.

Special interest This is a quick growing species. Caterpillar plant food for the Meadow Argus butterfly.

Abundance Common.

Well represented at Kersbrook NFR but much more common and widespread in the central and southern Hills.

Similar species *Goodenia amplexans* Clasping Goodenia which has large long, sticky heart-shaped leaves which clasp around the stems, and a herby smell.



Melaleuca uncinata

Broombush
Myrtle Family MYRTACEAE

mel-uh-LUEK-uh un-sin-AHT-uh Meaning: *Melaleuca* – colors of black and white on branches, *uncinata* – hooked tip (leaf)

General description Dense spreading shrub with upright slender branches growing from a woody base. Small, pale-yellow bottlebrush flowers.

Specific features Fine needle-like leaves with a distinct hooked tip. Fruit fused together in clumps along the stem.

Size 2-3 m.

Community Sandy woodlands.

Flowering time Spring.

Special interest Can grow in dense thickets in some locations. Once used for brush fencing. Prefers sandy soils.

Abundance Scarce.

Well represented in Para Wirra area. (C)

Similar species Can appear similar to *Babingtonia behrii* (p 231) from a distance when not flowering but *Babingtonia* has tiny leaves, tea-tree flowers and does not retain its woody fruits.



Melaleuca decussata

Totem-poles
Myrtle Family MYRTACEAE

mel-uh-LUEK-uh dee-kuss-AHT-uh Meaning: *Melaleuca* – colours of black and white on branches, *decussata* – leaves opposite each other and at right angles to those above and below

General description Medium to large sized dense shrub with mauve-pink small bottlebrush-like flower heads.

Specific features Small blue-green leaves arranged in opposite pairs, each pair facing a different direction (decussate). The woody fruits are embedded in the stems, giving the name 'totem poles'.

Size Size 1-3 m.

Community Creeklines and damp places.

Flowering time Late spring and summer.

Special interest The density of this shrub provides very good bird nesting opportunities.

Abundance Common.

Well represented Mainly in the southern Hills area.

Similar species *Melaleuca lanceolata* (p 225) which does not have the decussate leaves and has white more open flower heads and a dark trunk.



Allocasuarina verticillata

Drooping Sheoak
Sheoak Family CASUARINACEAE

al-oh-kas-yue-REEN-uh vert-iss-i-LAH-tuh Meaning: *Allocasuarina* – other *Casuarina*- *verticillata* – whorl of leaves around stem

General description Tall dark-barked trees, the male with drooping branchlets tipped with yellow flowers (catkins) and the female with erect branches covered in small cones.

Specific features Leaves reduced to 9-12 small brown teeth at the junctions of branchlet segments. Female flowers are red fluffy tufts. Male flowers (catkins) occur at the tips. Fruits are cylindrical, cone-like, covered with small sharp points, with or without a short stalk.

Size To 10 m.

Community Open grassy woodlands.

Flowering time Spring.

Special interest Often in stands, or solitary in forests. Sheoak leaf litter is believed to be important for mycorrhiza fungi. Used to be known as *Casuarina stricta*.

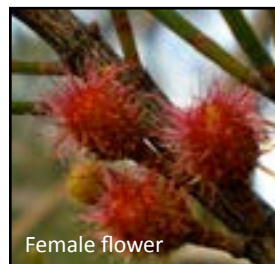
Abundance Common.

Well represented at Para Wirra CP but widespread.

Similar species *Allocasuarina muelleriana* (p 206) is smaller and more compact. Also *Allocasuarina striata* Small Bull-oak. Both of these are shrubs.



Male flower



Female flower



Banksia marginata

Silver Banksia
Protea Family PROTEACEAE

BANKS-ee-uh mah-jin-AH-tuh Meaning: *Banksia* – after J. Banks, *marginata* – margined leaves

General description A tall shrub or tree with numerous heads of dense, very small golden flowers. Leaves mostly smooth-edged except when young.

Specific features Dark-green narrow leaves are smooth above with many fine white hairs below. Flowers golden, clustered in a large dense head that stands upright from the twig or branch. Seeds also clustered into a large cylindrical woody cone-like structure with each small point containing 2 seeds with papery wings. Seed is shed annually.

Size From 1-10 m tall.

Community Heath and open woodland, often in sandy soil.

Flowering time Typically autumn but throughout much of the year.



Special interest

Very attractive flowers provide nectar for birds, insects and possums. This species of *Banksia* is able to sucker after fires, as well as shedding seed into the ash bed. Larger trees can have thick trunks.

Abundance Common.

Well represented at Sandy Creek CP but widespread.

Similar species None in this area.



Cladium procerum

Leafy Twig-rush

Sedge Family CYPERACEAE

KLAD-ee-um PROSS-uh-ruhm Meaning: Cladium – branch, procerum - tall

General description A very tall robust sedge spreading in a large clump from a rhizome, with many jointed cylindrical stems and tough rough and very sharp edged leaves.

Specific features Stems hollow with distinct nodes and leaves to 2 m long but also bearing tufts of these long, hard, rough-edged grass-like leaves. The female flower spike is red-brown and finely branched. It has hundreds of small brownish flowers without petals that develop into tiny brown nutlets.

Size To about 2-3 m tall.

Community River edge in deep water or reservoir margins.

Flowering time Late spring through summer with the flower-head present for much of the year.

Special interest The tallest and most spectacular sedge in the region.

Abundance Scarce.

Well represented Along the South Para River at various places particularly at Glenburnie Water Reserve. (C)

Similar species None.



Carex species

Sedges

Sedge Family CYPERACEAE

KAHR-eks Meaning: Carex – the classical Latin name for sedges, ap-PRESS-uh, brev-ee-KULM-is, ter-EET-i-kawl-is

General description Dense tussock of long or short leaves and stems with small flowers along a flowering spike. Inhabiting moist places. Seed 2-4 mm long.

Carex appressa Tall Sedge

Tall sedge to 1 m, stems triangular in cross-section, solid pith in stems with rough margins.

Leaves long drooping yellow-green, about as long as stems.

Seed enclosed in dry 'bladder'. Found along stream margins, swamps and shallow permanent water.



Carex breviculmis Short-stem sedge

Short triangular stems 15-40 cm. Short flower spikes well below leaf height. Moist areas including damp grassland. Seeds enclosed in a hairy papery layer.



Carex tereticaulis Rush Sedge

To 1 m tall. Leaves frequently absent. Stems grey-green, smooth, hollow, cylindrical but with triangular section below flower head. Damp ground sometimes subject to inundation. Seed within a membranous layer.



Flowering time Mostly spring and summer.

Abundance All common.

Triglochin procera

Formerly Triglochin procerum

Water-ribbons

Arrowgrass Family JUNCAGINACEAE

trie-GLOH-kuhn *PROS-uh-uh* Meaning: *Triglochin* – three-pointed (projections on fruit), *procera* – tall (stamens)

General description Clusters of tubers produce robust aquatic perennials, with long green ribbon-like leaves floating on the surface of pools and rivers. Dense flower spikes grow on stout stems held well above the surface.

Specific features Erect dense flower-spikes of numerous small white or mauve flowers bearing fruits August to April, dying back to tubers when water dries out.

Size Stem 20-50 cm above water, leaves to 2 m.

Community Fresh water.

Flowering time Spring and summer.

Special interest Shape of tubers on the ends of roots, as well as leaves, stem and flower-spike determine the species.

Abundance Uncommon.

Well represented at Roachdale NT Reserve. (N,C,S)

Similar species *Triglochin alcockiae*, with different shaped tubers and narrower leaves with finer stems. Found at Millbrook Reservoir and Birdwood in this area.



Grasses

Grasses in the region are typically deep rooted tussocks living more than 1 year. Size varies immensely with some seed spikes reaching 2 m in good years. Grasses are important food plants for many species of birds and provide habitat for reptiles and insects.

Aristida behriana (foreground) *Themeda triandra* (background)

