



September 2021

Alice Springs Field Naturalists Club Newsletter



Gompholobium polyzygum, with no common name, is in the Fabaceae or pea Family. It was encountered by Barbara Goodwin, on rocky slopes near Mt Liebig, one evening in late August. More interesting plant photos on page 10.

Meetings are held on the second Wednesday of the month (except December and January) at 7:00pm at the Olive Pink Botanic Garden.

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NEWSLETTER

The next newsletter will be October 2021.
The deadline for the October newsletter will be 23 September.
Please send your contributions to Barb Gilfedder: bjfedders@gmail.com

ALICE SPRINGS FIELD NATURALISTS CLUB

Annual subscriptions are now due. See below.

Wednesday 8 September at 7.00pm – General Meeting at Olive Pink Botanic Garden - **Joe Schofield** will talk about 'Understanding and working with fire to sustain ecological health at Newhaven'.

Sunday 12 September - Walk from Emily Gap to Jessie Gap (8.5 km) – Marg Friedel, 0417 849 743. See page 3 for a pre-view.

Saturday 25 Sept - Anett Weisheit – Anzac Hill geology – Contact: Barb Gilfedder.

Saturday Oct 9 - Serpentine Gorge walk for morning tea – Leader: Neil Woolcock.

Wednesday 13 October at 7.00pm – General Meeting at Olive Pink Botanic Garden - **Lisa Nunn** will talk about and show great photos of some of the "Best Australian wildlife watching locations, part 2". This talk will include the Mitchell Plateau and Iron Range National Park.

AUSTRALIAN PLANTS SOCIETY - ALICE SPRINGS

apsalicesprings@yahoo.com.au

Wednesday 1 September 2021, 7.30pm - General Meeting at Olive Pink Botanic Garden. **Bec Duncum** will be showing photos of wildflowers of the Chewings Range (Section 5 of the Larapinta Trail – Birthday Waterhole to Hugh Gorge)

ALICE SPRINGS LANDCARE

Sunday 5 September – Landcare - Buffel weeding at Whitegums via Honeymoon Gap. 8am to 11am. "We will pull out Buffel Grass on the hillslopes. Most clumps at the worksite are small and they are scattered through the native bush. Bring waterbottle, gloves, sturdy walking shoes, and a sunhat. There is a 20-30minute bush walk from the Whitegums car park to the worksite." **Contact Keith Castle if you have queries 0418 898 095 or Jocelyn Davies by email: s.jocelyn.davies@gmail.com**
Jocelyn can help with transport for a couple of people and will be leaving town for White Gums at 7:30am.

ALICE SPRINGS DESERT PARK and BIRDLIFE CENTRAL AUSTRALIA

Sept 2 – 5 Red Centre Bird Festival – There is a full program on Alice Springs Desert park website.

SUBSCRIPTIONS TO ASFNC

Payments for 2021-2022 are now due.

Please pay by cash or cheque at a meeting or by post ...or by direct deposit.

**Family \$30, Concession \$25,
Individual \$20, Concession \$15,**

Life membership - Ten times normal fee.

Email Newsletter Only for interstate Members who have previously had full Membership \$10.

Westpac bank details: BSB. 035303, Account # 100981. Please include your name as a reference on the transaction.

Alice Springs Field Naturalists Club

Committee Members

President	Barb Gilfedder	8955 5452
Vice-President	Margaret Friedel	0417 849 743
Secretary	Connie Spencer	0429 966 592
Treasurer	Neil Woolcock	0428 521 598
Property Officer	Claire Norman	0448 341 795
Members	Lee Ryall	0417 401 237
	Rosalie Breen	0458 155 141
Public Officer	Anne Pye	0438 388 012

Other Club Responsibilities:

Newsletter – Barb Gilfedder bjfedders@gmail.com
Facebook Organiser – Meg Mooney moon3@iinet.net.au
Website controller - vacant

**Proposed walk for Sunday 12 September 2021:
Emily Gap to Jessie Gap - Marg Friedel**

Earlier this winter, a group of early morning walkers (all keen ASFNC members) tried out the new track from Emily Gap to Jessie Gap. The temperature was a chill 3 deg. C and 8 mm of rain had fallen the previous day. Wendy, Rosalie, Connie and Meg tried out the seat near the start of the walk but found the stonework a bit too cold for their liking. This seat and its equivalent at the Jessie Gap end are wheelchair accessible, but not recommended for freezing mornings.



We were intrigued by the flow patterns crossing the track, following the rain, and a little concerned that the runoff had affected the track so soon after its establishment (left). *Ptilotus whitei* was in fine flower in the vicinity and, before the sun reached over the range, every plant was glistening with moisture. Two different ferns were loving the moisture, and lichens and liverworts were thriving. Someone spotted some scratchings on the track, which were attributed to an Echidna.

Below: *Ptilotus whitei*, Perennial *Ptilotus* in fine flower; *Cheilanthes lasiophylla*, Woolly Cloak Fern and *Cheilanthes sieberi* subsp. *sieberi*, Mulga Fern growing together; Echidna scratchings.



While none of the above can be guaranteed in September, the Club has scheduled the same walk for Sunday 12 September. It will depend on the predicted temperature, so we'll keep you posted. The proposed start time is 7.45 am at Jessie Gap for vehicle and people transfers, for an 8 am start at Emily Gap. The distance is 8.5 km, and not too arduous.



Report on 2021 ASFNC Annual General meeting.

The well-attended AGM was held at Olive Pink Botanic Garden on August 11, 2021. Neil Woolcock, our treasurer presented the Club's Financial Report, which Rebecca Duncum had kindly audited. Barb Gilfedder presented the President's report giving details of speakers who had presented at our meetings and trips that had been undertaken.

Thank you to Ian Coleman who then acted as returning officer. Much of the Committee was re-elected although Rosalie Breen resigned as Property Officer. No one was elected to that position but later Claire Norman volunteered. Thanks Claire! Rosalie, Connie Spencer and Barb Gilfedder agreed to go through and sort club property before it is transferred to Claire. We are still lacking anyone to take over our web site, but Robyn Gray-Gardner has agreed to continue adding newsletters to it, for the moment, even though she has moved interstate. Thanks Robyn!

Full minutes of the AGM, already sent out to members, as well as the Financial, Treasurer's and President's reports are on file and available to members from the Secretary.

We then embarrassed long-serving member, Rosalie Breen by singing "Happy Birthday" to her for her birthday the day before.

Rosalie Breen awarded Life Membership.

The Committee then awarded Rosalie a Life Membership of Alice Springs Field Naturalists Club in acknowledgement of her long association with and service to the Club. Rosalie and Barb Gilfedder re-enacted the presentation a few days later for a photo.

This is what it says on the certificate:-

"Life Membership of the Alice Springs Field Naturalists Club is today granted to Rosalie Breen by the Committee and Members with much pleasure and sincere thanks.

Rosalie, you have made an enormous contribution to the Alice Springs Field Naturalists Club.

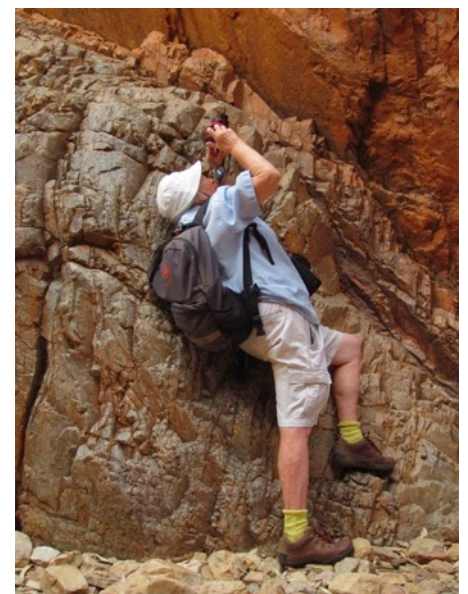
You have served on the Committee in a variety of positions for the past 20 years.

You have organised and led a multitude of field trips and arranged a host of outstanding guest speakers on many stimulating topics, as well as being a speaker yourself on occasion.

You have reliably attended every meeting, event and promotional stall that you possibly could.

We are fortunate to have you as a member, as you generously share your extensive knowledge of geology, flora and fauna, along with your special interest in the aquatic life of central Australia.

Rosalie, your quiet dedication is an inspiration to us all. We appreciate who you are and all you have done and will continue to do, for ASFNC and its members."



Connie Spencer also read out messages of congratulation to Rosalie on her ASFNC Life Membership.

From Connie Spencer

We couldn't fit all that you have done for the Club on the certificate. Here are a few more details.

- The first record of you attending a meeting was in September 1996 (about the same time as Bob Read) then joining in September 1997 about the time Bob became president.
- From February 2001 you organised to have our meetings in the staff room at OLSH school. You opened and closed our meeting venue for 9 years when we then switched to OPBG.
- Since 2006 (that's just the newsletters on our website) there are 102 matches to your name. I started going through older newsletters and got up to 10 matches in a year so gave up as it was too time-consuming!
- On a personal note, you are my local hero. All but one of my overnight hikes you were there. Often, we were at the back of the pack so shared special moments together.
- Congratulations on this well-deserved honour!

From Haydee Adel

Through the marvels of technology, I'm able to join you today from Perth, on this joyous occasion of conferring Rosalie with a Life Membership of the Alice Springs Field Naturalists Club.

I'm Haydee Adel and I was sincerely touched and honoured by Connie's request to say something as Rosalie's long-time friend for this great event.

I joined the club in the mid-nineties when I came to Alice to work at the Alice Springs Public Library and I cannot remember a day in which Rosalie was not around, her enthusiasm greatly infectious and inspiring, always smiling, with a bagful of interesting discoveries, useful information and an inexhaustible warming smile.

I greatly miss the short and long walks up and down the many marvellous places that Alice's geography has to offer, the camping trips and the field excursions. They were all occasions of great camaraderie, fun and learning.

My sincere congratulations to Rosalie for a well-deserved recognition of the huge contribution she has made to the club and our lives over the last 25 years or more. That contribution comes from an outstanding colleague, a talented teacher, an indefatigable researcher, a true professional and a valued and loving friend.

GO Rosalie!

From Jenny Purdie

Great to hear that Rosalie is being recognised with a life membership; she certainly deserves it. Rosalie has been a very active member of Field Naturalists for a long time and has always been willing to share her knowledge with others, especially on field trips.

From Rosalie Schultz

Rosalie is delightfully curious and endlessly enthusiastic about all aspects of nature. When she puts her net in the water you know something magic will emerge. She makes me feel old and stodgy, with her childlike wonder at the unexpected beauty of our world. Congratulations.

From Rhondda Tomlinson

Congratulations and more than well deserved. I will be thinking of you and wish I could be there to give you a big big hug. (The bilby is still on the dash of my car). Lots of love from Rhondda.

From Bob Read

Rosalie is the longest standing member of the Alice Nats, being the only one left from when I joined in 1996. She was one of those who helped to revive the club.

She has provided invaluable support to the club as a committee member, and as a trip leader.

She is also known for her dedication to fighting buffel grass in Spencer Valley, and cactus on the Old Telegraph Station

She has a good knowledge of aquatic life, in particular algae.

She has long been a bushwalker, with impressive stamina and determination. She and some others once climbed to the top of Brinkley Bluff with packs to camp there overnight. At the top she said to me "See, I made it", to which I honestly replied "I never doubted that you would make it".



Members' Night

After the AGM, we had a Members' Night, where anyone was encouraged to bring interesting natural history items to share with others.

Logger Escapees

Mandy Webb had been collecting weird and wonderful shapes and textures from her woodpile that had interested her because of their shape, texture, patterns or colour.

Originally intended for the log burner, but were too good to burn ...for now.

This is just a small selection of what she brought. Each one had an animated story to go with it.

Here we have:-

"Long necked thingy and four other faves"



"Frilly skirt"



"Not a carpet"



"Heiroglyphics"



"Twists and turns"

Marg Friedel showed Field Naturalists a small selection of beautiful photos that she had taken recently on a Newhaven trip. We are unable to share these with you at the moment. Watch for them in our next newsletter.

Barb Gilfedder has been putting together photos of local plants in family groups, from her vast collection of local native plant photos. So far in the collection are Solanaceae, Asteraceae, *Ptilotus* genus in the Amaranthaceae family, and the Scrophulariaceae family, which consists mainly of the *Eremophila* genus. Ian Coleman quickly went through them using the projector, giving everyone a taste - an idea of what the sheets look like. Printed copies might be useful to put in your backpack or glove box when going out bush, along with the more general Flora brochures. Page 6 shows the first page of seven Scrophulariaceae pages. Each species is illustrated with three photos, starting with the whole plant.

If any Members would like digital copies of them, you can organise it with Barb.

Central Australian Eremophilas - From the Greek *eremos* – desert and *phileo* – love

SCROPHULARIACEAE family

Photos by Barb Gilfedder unless otherwise labelled.



Eremophila acrida



***Eremophila alternifolia*, Narrow-leaf Fuchsia Bush**



Eremophila battii

(Pics 1 and 3 from Florabase WA)



***Eremophila bignoniiflora*, Gooramurra**

(Pic 1 by Jenny Purdie)



***Eremophila christophori*, Dolomite Fuchsia Bush.**

Flowers can be blue, mauve, pink or white.

More on the Ellery Creek Big Hole to the Saddle walk

By Connie Spencer (a report with plant and bird lists was in the August 2021 newsletter)

Photos also by Connie unless otherwise credited.

The short steep start to this walk rewarded us with a vista of wondrous rugged country. Although I was up with the first of our walkers to start with, I soon fell behind as I checked out the usual flora suspects on the limestone ridge. The little Hill Sunray (*Anemocarpa saxatilis*) and *Zygophyllum tesquorum*, one of the many Twin-leaves, were in flower as well as an amazing display of the Limestone Pussycats Tails (*Ptilotus clementii*) with its nodding heads.



Anemocarpa saxatilis, Hill Sunray



Zygophyllum tesquorum with small white flowers

Further along we came to jaw-dropping displays of Large Pink Pussy-tails (*Ptilotus exaltatus*) and Horse Mulla Mulla (*Ptilotus schwartzii*) and my all-time favourite *Eremophila*, Dolomite Fuchsia Bush (*Eremophila christophori*).



Ptilotus exaltatus and *Ptilotus clementii*



Eremophila christophori (Photo - Marg Friedel)

As we climbed up to the Saddle, a red brown rock face and large boulders of some sort of conglomerate dominated the landscape to our left. I don't know much about geology, but I remembered that Bob Read had written something about this outcrop in an ASFNC newsletter some years ago.

Once home and using our excellent newsletter index I was able to locate the very article I was thinking of. See article entitled "Tillites" at 2 Mile Saddle?" in the August 2009 newsletter where Bob writes that the rock formation is cemented colluvium. This article is well worth a read.

It has been 12 years since I last did this walk and all I can say is that I had better not leave it for another 12 years if I want to do it again, but do it again I will – soonish! Thankyou Marg.



Cemented colluvium at Two Mile Saddle. Check Bob Read's article in our August 2009 newsletter, for more information. – available on our website.

These two photos of provided by Marg Friedel, photographer unknown, 2017.



More plants from Mount Leibig

"Some beautiful flowering plants encountered by Barbara Goodwin, on rocky slopes near Mt Leibig, one evening in late August".



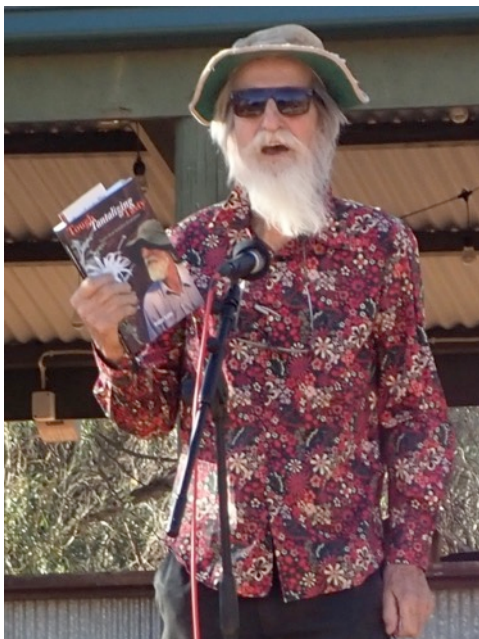
Streptoglossa decurrens – Mint Bush, an Aboriginal medicinal plant that has a strong odour.



Calytrix carinata – Fringe Myrtle, always a stunning plant when in flower.

Don't miss the new book by Peter Latz

"Tough, tantalizing or tasty", the new book by Peter Latz contains a series of chatty stories about Peter's adventures as a botanist. He tells some amusing anecdotes about the interesting desert plants he has studied over many years. He donated the manuscript to Olive Pink Botanic Garden and they have spent much time collecting the appropriate photos to illustrate it. Photographers include Dave Albrecht,



Jenny Purdie, Suzanne Lollback and Barb Gilfedder. A good read and illustrations on almost every page. The designer was Gillian Ward, who also designed the book "Olive Pink: artist, activist and gardener - a life in flowers". It is available at Olive Pink Botanic Garden and Red Kangaroo Books.

At the book launch, Peter Latz spoke about how many of our desert plants may benefit from climate change. With Peter there is always a new and interesting angle on plant-related things.

