

SOME COMMON PLANTS AND FLOWERS OF THE RIDGE

Woolly Grevillea (*Grevillea lanigera*). Flowering from spring to summer this shrub is only found from Wilsons Promontory in Victoria to southern New South Wales. This grey-looking shrub grows to about 1 metre high with fine, hairy, woolly leaves and branches. On North Ridge, hybrids between this grevillea and the locally introduced *Grevillea rosmarinifolia* have occurred, resulting in leaf shades ranging from green to grey.



The shrub is reasonably drought resistant and grows well on all parts of the Ridge. The little red and white flowers are attractive to nectar-feeding birds..

Heath (*Leucopogon fletcheri subsp brevisepalus*). This is a small dense shrub (up to 60 cm tall) with small dark green spiky leaves. The bell-like white flowers may be profuse and have a sweet scent.



The shrubs are found in grassy woodland and woodland fringes and flower in spring.



Native Bluebell (*Wahlenbergia stricta*). This pretty little pale blue flower is a perennial herb with soft, linear leaves to about 35-50 cm long. It blooms mainly in spring and summer and is erect on long slender stems. Individual flowers are in the form of open bells, 15 to about 25 mm in diameter with five petals.



North Ridge is ideal for its survival as it prefers well drained soil in either a sunny or semi-shaded situation. Consequently they are easily found and identified in all areas of the Ridge and slopes.

Daisies on the Ridge

Clustered Everlasting Daisy (*Chrysocephalum semipapposum*). This daisy grows to 60 cm tall with stiff stems retained over winter. The leaves are silvery, not woolly, and are scattered along the stems.

The flowers are clustered at the end of each stem, in groups of 20 or more. They can be found throughout the Reserve mostly in the woodland areas and flower from spring to autumn.



Common Everlasting Daisy or Yellow buttons (*Chrysocephalum apiculatum*).



There are several differences between the Clustered Everlasting Daisy and the Common Everlasting Daisy. The Common Daisy leaves are woolly, silvery, more rounded and flowering late spring to summer.

They are usually less than 20 cm tall and their flowerheads are bright yellow and in compact clusters of about 2 to 10 at the ends of the stems.

Sticky Everlasting Daisy (*Xerochrysum viscosum*). This pretty little plant is found throughout the reserve, and has formed spectacular large drifts. It grows to about 0.75



metres high by about 0.5 metres wide. The leaves are narrowly elliptic or linear in shape to about 80 mm long by 10 mm wide and are sticky to the touch.

As with other everlastings, the individual flowers are very small but are formed into a large cluster surrounded by large papery bracts. The overall appearance is that of a large, single 'flower' with the bracts as the 'petals'.

Spiny-head Mat-rush or Basket Grass (*Lomandra longifolia*).



This is a tufted clumpy plant with strap-like leaves to 60cm with 2-3 teeth at the tips. The flowers are small, creamy and scented; clustered on a spiky stem, shorter than the leaves.

The North Ridge is ideal for this plant as it is tolerant to both frost and drought and prefers sandy to loamy soil.

The seed heads remain for several weeks on the flower stalks.

The strappy leaves were used by the Aboriginal people to make strong net bags.

Indigofera (*Indigofera australis*). Two years following the fire hazard reduction in October 2010 the Indigofera display on the northern part of the North Ridge Reserve was spectacular. It flowers in mid-spring.



This bushy shrub can be found in most parts of Australia and grows to about 1 metre high. The typical pea flowers are pink to purplish and the leaves are divided into leaflets.

False Sarsparilla other common names: **Purple Coral Pea or Happy Wanderer** (*Hardenbergia violacea*).



This Australian native is a hardy, evergreen, twining, woody stemmed plant, climbing around the rocks and ground foliage.

Its dark green leathery leaves produce a mass of dark purple pea flowers which make a vivid display in winter and spring. It prefers a sunny or semi-shaded position and well drained soil.

Digger's Speedwell (*Veronica perfoliata*). A low sprawling plant with large, oval, blue-green leaves (similar to some eucalypts), joined around the stem. It flowers in mid-spring, with many slender sprays of soft blue flowers, about 12 mm wide, from upper leaves. The flowers are floppy and tend to ramble through shrubs.



Black-anther flax lily (*Dianella revoluta*). This hardy plant is not only frost and drought resistant but has a wide moisture and temperature range. It spreads underground to form large clumps and drifts. The deep blue to purple flowers rise on wiry stems from compact sword-like foliage. The stems grow well above the height of the foliage and can be easily identified with the flowers blooming in sprays from late spring to early summer.



The fruit is also blue to purple and persists for many months after the flowers. It is usually round in shape and measures from 4 – 10 mm in diameter and contains 3-4 seeds.

Double Tail Orchids, (Donkey-ears Orchid) (*Diuris aurea*, *D. sulphurea*). Amongst the attractive ground orchids of Australia, the Donkey orchids are favourites, with a wide range of colours from white to yellow to orange, with red, purple and brown markings. The two local species have yellow flowers.



The plant has several grass-like leaves, growing from a small underground tuber, which die down each year. These species are found mainly on the Western slope of the North Ridge Reserve and bloom in late spring. The little yellow flowers are strongly spotted with dark brown, especially on the rear surfaces. Their two lower sepals are crossed. The flower stems are 20 – 60 cm high, with 3 – 5 flowers.

Autumn Greenhood Orchid (*Pterostylis revoluta*). This group of ground orchids annually produces a rosette of soft leaves from underground tubers.



The single flower is 2.5 – 3 cm long, partially nodding, and pale green and white.

The stem is up to 25 cm tall with closely sheathing stem leaves.

It can be seen on North Ridge, on the eastern slope and along the drier open forest/woodland of the ridge itself, in early autumn.

