

Native Peas of the City of Whittlesea

Egg and bacon plants



PROTECTING BIODIVERSITY ON PRIVATE LAND SERIES



City of
Whittlesea

Acknowledgements

The City of Whittlesea is indebted to Suzi Duncan who provided the text, photographs and line drawings for this booklet. Below is Suzi's description of how this booklet was born out of curiosity and is now a resource for the rural community of Whittlesea and abroad.

My "egg and bacon" journey started as a result of wanting to find out which indigenous egg and bacon plants would work on my property as understorey plants. Easy, yes? NO!!!

*I found it was a lot more complicated than I had anticipated. I started taking photographs of various plants and found that identifying them was yet another jump in complexity, e.g. the leaves of *Eutaxia microphylla* var. *diffusa* can be ovate, oval or lanceolate, the leaves of *Dillwynia* are terete and the apparent leaves of *Daviesia* are phyllodes or scales. I now had to learn the botanical definitions of these words.*



*What started out as one or two photographs per plant often ended up at more than five just to try and identify one from another and multiple trips to the bush. The *Pultenaea* genus being the most complex. I ended up with a significant volume of material.*

It was then brought to my attention through James Booth at the City of Whittlesea that Council had been trying to get a booklet together about the local pea plants for rural landowners but production hadn't quite got off the ground yet and well now here we are!!

Any book/booklet does not come together without a great deal of support from a number of people and I owe a very special thank you to all those who have supported me on this huge learning curve. A very heartfelt thank you to my much loved friends Malcolm and Jane for their belief in me, support and teaching me about botany and some of the quirky aspects of nature. Special thanks also to James Booth and Mark Williams of the Rural and Environmental Planning team at the City of Whittlesea and thank you to those who have proof read the many versions.

Suzi Duncan, 2023

Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners

We recognise the rich Aboriginal heritage of this country and acknowledge the Wurundjeri Willum Clan and Taungurung People as the Traditional Owners of lands within the City of Whittlesea.



Common Golden-tip, *Goodia pubescens*

Egg and bacon plants refer to the red/brown and yellow flowered plants of the very large pea flower family, the Fabaceae.

All species of this family produce seeds in pods or legumes and were originally given the name Leguminosae. Some botanists gave them the name Papilionaceae because of the resemblance of the flower to a butterfly - Papilio.

In the 20th century botanists decided to standardise plant family names and since then family names have been based on the official name of the first species described in that family. For peas this was the broad bean - *Vicia faba* (Latin for faba bean) so the family became Fabaceae, literally the bean family.

In Australia the pea flower family are an extremely colourful group of plants with the egg and bacon group being amongst the brightest, taking their name from the distinctive coloration of the flowers.

The success of all pea flowers, but in this particular case the egg and bacon plants, is their ability to survive ecological disturbances such as bushfires, drought, extremes of temperature and poor-quality soils.

They are often the first to regenerate when conditions improve, especially on road side edges, on cuttings and on gravelly sandy areas.



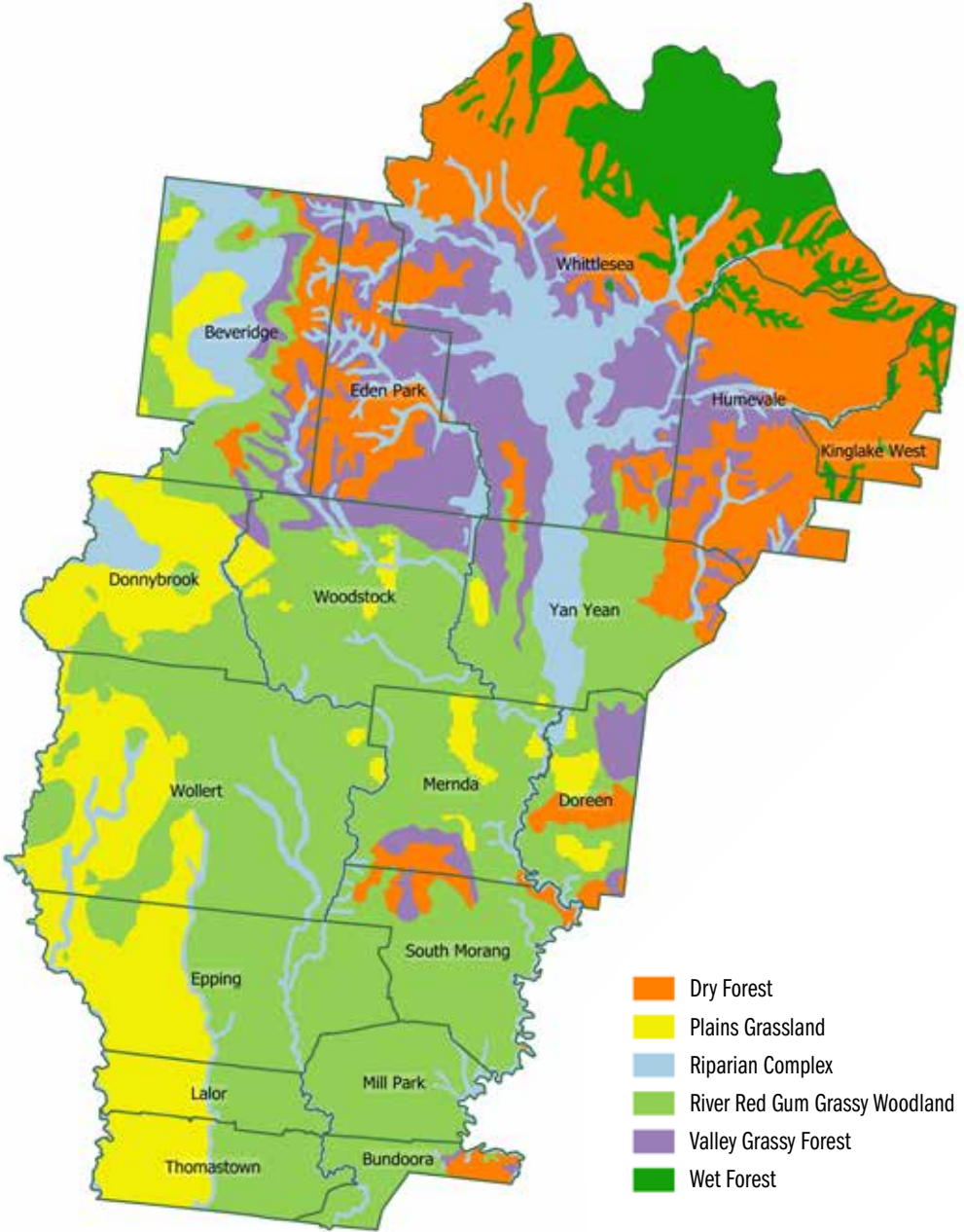
The City of Whittlesea is made up of volcanic plains, dry Silurian hills, and the wetter Kinglake ranges.

The large majority of the land has been cleared for farming and urban development and there are only a few remnant areas of native bush left where native plants continue to flourish, such as the western Kinglake forests, the Plenty Gorge and some small remnants of the volcanic plains grasslands and dry Silurian hills.

This covers a very broad area climatically and geologically, giving us the luxury of a wide variety of these brilliantly coloured and highly variable plants. There are eight genera and 19 species indigenous to the City of Whittlesea.

With further exploration/surveys there could be more. The biggest and most diverse genus being *Pultenaea* of which there are five species indigenous to the City of Whittlesea. The *Pultenaea* species range from prostrate up to three metres high.

Map of City of Whittlesea showing the six broad vegetation communities



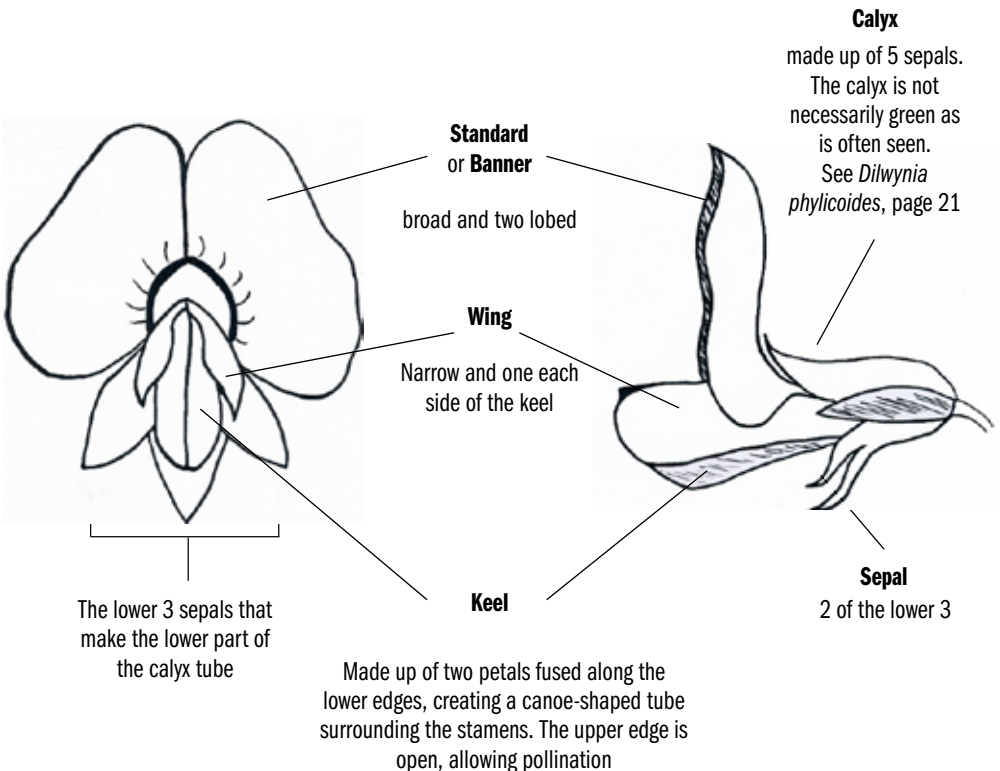
Identifying features of pea plants

Flower characteristics

The flowers have the typical “pea” shape, consisting of five sepals (the calyx) and five petals (the corolla).

The sepals are fused to form a tube with five lobes: an upper pair and lower three making up the calyx.

The petals have different shapes: there is the standard or banner, the keel (two petals) and two wing petals making up the corolla.



Standard or banner

Wing

Keel. Note opening along the top edge



All pea flowers have ten stamens. However, the form the stamens take divides pea flowers into three separate groups. The egg and bacon plants of the City of Whittlesea belong to two of the three groups.

Group 1:

All ten stamens are free to their base and it includes the genera:

Daviesia

Dillwynia

Eutaxia

Gompholobium

Pultenaea

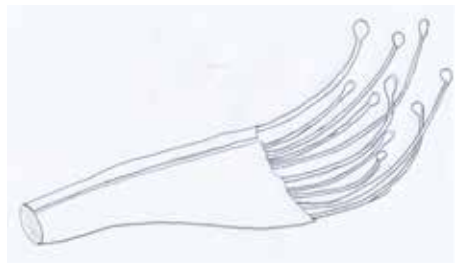
Group 2:

All ten stamens are joined together for the majority of their length forming a tube. The tube is open along its top side. This group includes the genera:

Bossiaea

Goodia

Platylobium



Seed characteristics

Pea plants are capable of producing large numbers of hard-coated seeds from their pods which burst or even explode open at maturity, scattering the seeds some considerable distances. Like many Australian natives, the hard coating on the seeds of the egg and bacon plants needs to undergo pretreatment to germinate. This is often where their ability to survive fire, flood, gravel, etc. comes into play as the fire acts as the pretreatment.

Like many of the pea family the seed controls the germination by a mechanism called "hard seeds". These seeds have a strong hard coat that prevents water reaching the embryo unless they are treated in some way. The easiest is to pour boiling water over the seed, but other techniques such as abrasion, or smoke treatment may also break the dormancy.

The seeds of some species of egg and bacon plants have an aril, that is high in fat which reduces the chance of water penetrating the hard coat. Some ant species collect and carry these seeds to their nests to store where they eat the aril, which is high in energy, thus allowing water to enter the hard coating, germinating the seed.

As members of the Fabaceae family, they are an important group of plants in benefiting the soil. They have bacteria-containing nodules on their roots which fixes nitrogen from the air for use by the plant and are a source of nitrates when returned to the soil as green manure.

NOTE:

Permits apply for collecting native plant material, including seeds from public land, please check deeca.vic.gov.au to find out more.

The aril on top of the developing seed of a Narrow-leaf Bitter-pea, *Daviesia leptophylla* (the aril includes the stem and the fleshy bulge at the junction of the stem and developing seed)



Is this a case of mimicry?

Naturalists have always been fascinated with the evolutionary adaptations of plants and animals. Egg and bacon plants have a bright and striking colour pattern in their flowers and they produce nectar and pollen which is a great food resource for many different insects.

The flowers act to advertise this food resource and the visiting insects unknowingly complete the process of pollination as they move from flower to flower.

A case of false advertising

The flowers of some orchids (e.g. Leopard Orchid, *Diuris pardina*) show a remarkable similarity to those of the egg and bacon plants, however this orchid produces no nectar and it's pollen is not powdery.

These observations have led to the suggestion that the orchid is mimicking the pea in order to attract their pollinators but without the energy cost of producing nectar.



Leopard orchid, *Diuris pardina*



Gorse Bitter-pea, *Daviesia ulicifolia*,
page 17



Narrow-leaf Bitter-pea, *Daviesia leptophylla*,
page 16

Drawings of leaf shapes

top of leaf



convex



Leaf cross section with recurved edges

concave

See *Pultenaea muelleri*,
page 32

top of leaf



Lanceolate leaf with recurved tip.
See *Dillwynia cinerascens* page 19

Wedge shaped or
obovate with a needle-
sharp hard point at apex

Wedge shaped with a notch at
the apex or bilobed

ovate

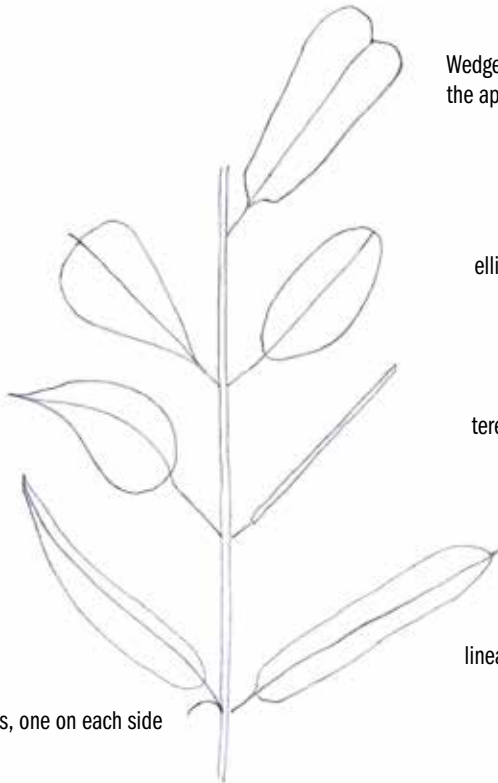
elliptical

terete

lanceolate

linear

Stipules, one on each side



Leaf arrangement on stem

Leaves can be arranged either alternate, opposite or whorled. Leaves can be either simple (one blade only) or compound (two more more leaflets).

Simple leaves



Alternate



Opposite



Whorl

Compound leaves



The trifoliate leaf of e.g. *Gompholobium huegelii* page 25, in digitate form. Each leaf is made of three leaflets.



The trifoliate leaves of *Goodia* see pages 26 and 27

Glossary and definition of terms



Bird attracting plants, providing food and/or nectar



Nectar plants for butterflies

Alternate: arranged singly at different heights on a central axis

Anther: the pollen bearing part of a stamen

Apex: at or on the tip of a structure, e.g. a bud at the tip of the stem or of leaves ending in a short triangular point

Aril: an extra seed covering typically coloured and fleshy or hairy, growing partially or wholly over the seed coat of some seeds

Axil (leaf): angle formed by the leaf and the branch

Axillary: of buds or flowers arising in an axil

Calyx: the outer most coat of the flower, consisting of the sepals

Concave: curves inward

Digitate: branching from a stem or stalk of a leaf, like fingers from a hand

Elliptical: broadest across the middle, narrowing at both ends

Endemic: found only in a specific geographic region

Entire: whole, not toothed or divided in any way

Forest: a dense growth of trees and underbrush covering a large area

Genus (plural genera): a classification of closely related species, e.g. *Pultenaea*

Inflorescence: the flowering structure of a plant

Keel: a ridge, usually on the back, like the keel of a boat; the two fused anterior (front most) petals of the papilionaceous (butterfly like) pea flower

Lanceolate: narrow and tapering at each end, especially the apex. Like a lance

Lateral: arising from the main axis; at the side of

Linear: long and narrow with parallel sides

Mid-rib: the main vein running from the base to the apex of the leaf

Nectar: a sugary fluid produced within most flowers to encourage pollination

Oblong: longer than wide

Obtuse: blunt or rounded at the apex

Opposite: arising at the same level but on opposite sides

Ovate: egg shaped and attached by the broad end

Phyllode: a stem or stalk modified to act as a leaf

Pistil: the female inner whorl of a flower, consisting of ovary, style and stigma

Pollen: dust-like powder produced in the anthers - part of the male organs, the stamens

Prostrate: lying close to or on the ground

Raceme: a long unbranched inflorescence (cluster of flowers)

Recurved: curved downwards or backwards

Reticulate: forming a network

Riparian: of or on a watercourse or drainage line

Scale: any thin membranous body, usually a rudimentary leaf

Sclerophyll: referring to a forest dominated by eucalypts with an understorey of shrubs with small hard leaves, e.g. egg and bacon plants and acacias

Sedimentary: of matter that is carried by water or wind and deposited on land, and may in time become rock

Sepal: one of the lobes that go into making up a calyx

Silurian: is a geological period of 416 million years ago; it is the shortest period of the Palaeozoic era

Species: a group of living organisms consisting of similar individuals; the most basic category in the system of classification, ie. family eg. Fabaceae, genus e.g. *Pultenaea* species, e.g. *P. gunnii*

Stalk: a support for a flower or leaf

Stamen: The male part of a flower producing pollen, consisting of an anther and a filament.

Standard: the large posterior (rear) petal of a pea flower

Stipule: a structure, pairs of which occur at the base of the stalk on some plants

Taxonomy: classification

Terete: cylindrical and slender

Trifoliolate: a leaf with (consisting of) three leaflets

Whorl: an arrangement of three or more parts, e.g. leaves, at the same level around an axis, e.g. as seen with *Gompholobium huegellii*

Woodland: a low-density forest forming open habitats with plenty of sunlight. A woodland may support an understorey of shrubs and herbaceous plants including grasses

Bossiaea

There are 50 species of *Bossiaea* endemic to Australia. They are distributed through temperate regions with good rainfall. They are quite variable in form and range from prostrate to shrubs. The leaves are simple, alternate, opposite, sometimes reduced to scales and can even be absent.

Showy Bossiaea

Bossiaea cinerea

Size: 1-2m x 1-2m

Flowers: August to December

Form: A low dense shrub rounded or spreading



B. cinerea has alternate stalkless, light green triangular leaves. The large yellow-orange and red pea-shaped flowers are on stalks that are longer than the leaves. The stalk of the flower originates in the axil of the leaf and usually singly along the stalk of the plant.

It adapts to most well-drained soils in full sun or dappled light and is found in southern Victoria, in coastal heath and lowland open forest. It responds to hard pruning.



Occasionally there are plants that occur throughout the range in Victoria in which the flowers are uniformly yellow.



Creeping Bossiaea

Bossiaea prostrata

Size: Prostrate – 20cm x 1 - 2m

Flowers: September to November

Form: Spreading or matting ground cover



B. prostrata has small oval to oblong alternate grey-green leaves which can be quite inconspicuous. Leaves on the one plant can be quite variable. Yellow-brown flowers on long stems originate in the leaf axils.

It is adaptable to all well-drained soils in full sun, partial shade or can even tolerate full shade and is suitable for growing under other plants or in rockeries.

It is found in dry and valley sclerophyll forests, grassy low open forest, Red Gum and sclerophyll woodlands and plains grassland.



Flower buds originating in the axil of the leaf



Daviesia | The Bitter-peas

Daviesia, commonly known as Bitter-peas, is a genus of about 130 species of flowering plants in the family Fabaceae, and is endemic to Australia. Plants in the genus *Daviesia* are shrubs or small trees with leaves modified as phyllodes or reduced to scales.

A distinguishing feature of *Daviesia* is the triangular seed pods. They are frequently found as understorey shrubs in open forest where they will tolerate a wide range of soils. They are very prominent in spring with masses of (mostly) yellow and brown pea-shaped flowers.

Narrow-leaf or Slender Bitter-pea

Daviesia leptophylla

Size: 1- 2m x 1– 2m

Flowers: September to November

Form: An open, erect multi-stemmed shrub



D. leptophylla has ribbed branchlets sometimes bare towards the tips. It has stiff, dull-green linear leaves. Clusters of red and yellow pea flowers in spring are followed by ornamental, opaque red-brown seed pods.



It prefers dry, well-drained sedimentary soils in Yellow Gum woodlands.



Gorse Bitter-pea

Daviesia ulicifolia

Size: 1.5 – 2m x 1 – 2m

Flowers: August to November

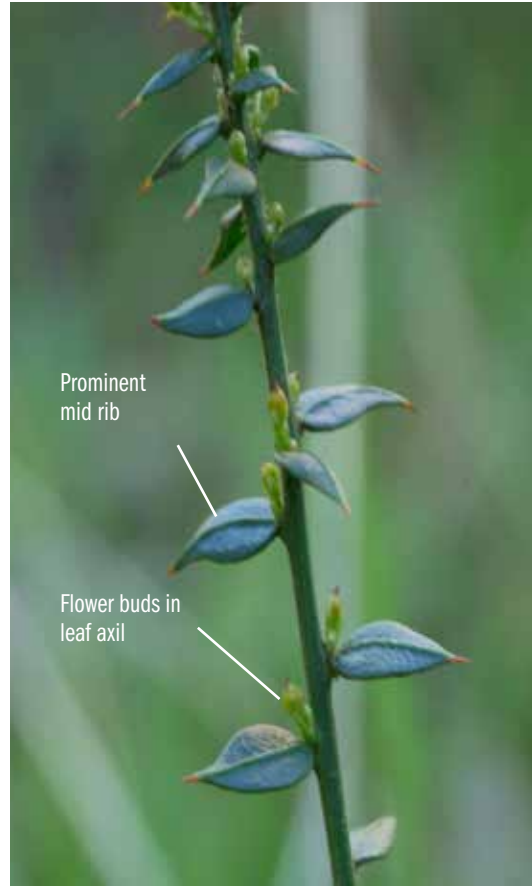
Form: A hardy stiff, tangled prickly shrub



D. ulicifolia has dark green, prickly leaves. The leaves, which are at right angles to the stems, may be oval or elliptical and terminate in a stiff point. The mid-rib of the leaf is prominent. It is covered in yellow and brown pea flowers in late winter and early spring followed by triangular pods. 1 – 3 flowers form in leaf axils.

It prefers sedimentary soils but will grow well in a sunny or semi-shaded position that is well drained. It is found on the edges of plains and the surrounding hills, in dry sclerophyll forest, tea-tree heath and riparian scrub.

It is excellent habitat for small birds and is also protection from predators.



Dillwynia | The Parrot-peas

Dillwynia is a genus of about 20 species of flowering plants in the family Fabaceae, and is endemic to Australia. Plants in this genus are shrubs with simple leaves and bright glowing, yellow, or red and yellow pea flowers.

They are distinguishable from other genera with red and yellow pea flowers by the groove in the upper surface of the leaf (see photograph below). *Dillwynia* also have a quite different flower shape from other genera. The banner/standard is considerably wider than in other genera, i.e. kidney shaped (see diagram below).

The display of showy pea flowers in spring ranges in colour from yellow through to red.

They occur in dry sclerophyll forests or heathland and are tolerant of a wide range of well drained soils. Pruning after flowering is beneficial.



Shape of *Dillwynia* flower (left) compared to generalised pea flower (right). Note much wider banner/standard



The groove in the upper surface of the terete shaped leaves is a distinguishing feature of *Dillwynia*

This photograph is of *D. cinerascens* leaves





Grey Parrot-pea

Dillwynia cinerascens

Size: 0.6 – 1.5m x 0.5 – 1.5m

Flowers: August to November

Form: A small erect or spreading understorey shrub



D. cinerascens has small, fine terete grey-green leaves (see photograph on previous page) with a slightly recurved tip and prominent terminal clusters of yellow and orange pea flowers.

It prefers a sheltered position in dry valley sclerophyll forests and plains grasslands. It



is an adaptable shrub for gravelly positions in partial shade but will also grow in full sun. Pruning after flowering will promote a bushier growth.

It is quite a spectacular species to grow under trees or in rockeries.

Red Parrot-pea

Dillwynia hispida

Size: 0.2 – 0.6m x 0.3 – 1m

Flowers: September to December

Form: A small, slender and erect shrub

D. hispida has dense, terete, green leaves. It has quite spectacular terminal clusters of large orange to red pea flowers.

It is found in tea-tree heath and prefers moist well drained soils in partial sun. It reportedly does well as a pot plant but appears to be difficult to maintain in the garden.



Terminal. or apex, flower bud

Small-leaf Parrot-pea

Dillwynia phyllicoides

Size: 0.5 – 1m x 1 – 2m

Flowers: September to December

Form: A very hardy shrub, quite variable in its habit

D. phyllicoides varies from a short, much branched, spreading shrub to 1 m to an erect bushy shrub 2 – 3 m.

A distinguishing feature of *D. phyllicoides* is the numerous dark green, narrow-linear, spirally twisted leaves. The leaves are occasionally smooth but more often rough and hairy to a variable degree. The sharp tip is often recurved.

The stems of this hardy plant are covered in stiff spreading hairs.

It has vibrant terminal clusters of yellow to orange and dark red flowers on short stalks.

It likes well-drained soil in dry sclerophyll forest and woodland in partial shade. It responds well to hard pruning.



Terminal flower bud

Longitudinally twisted leaves



Showy Parrot-pea

Dillwynia sericea

Size: 0.6 – 1.5m x 0.5 – 1.5m

Flowers: September to December

Form: A small erect shrub



D. sericea has dark green, terete leaves. It has showy cylindrical leafy spikes (branchlets) of yellow and red, apricot or orange flowers in leaf axils. This can appear as a very dense, leafy branch of flowers (inflorescence).

This adaptable plant prefers full sun but tolerates partial shade in well-drained soil. Once established it will tolerate extended dry periods but does thrive with some moisture around the roots, therefore mulching is a good idea.

A light pruning after flowering promotes bushier growth and better flowering the next spring.



Plants are very variable in a number of characteristics; flower colour, leaf size, leaf density and texture are among the variables.

Some of this variability is under revision.



Eutaxia

This is a small genus of about nine species, mainly growing in the temperate regions of Western Australia. There are two growing in south-east Australia. The leaves are usually small and opposite.

Spreading Eutaxia

Eutaxia microphylla var. *diffusa*

Size: 0.5 – 1.2m x 0.8 – 1.2m

Flowers: August to October

Form: A variable shrub with soft branches



The leaves of *E. microphylla* var. *diffusa* can be ovate, oval or lanceolate. The pea flowers are usually pale yellow, often without any red and are scattered/spread along the stems.

All forms of *E. microphylla* var. *diffusa* prefer well drained soils and are very drought tolerant. They prefer full sun but will grow well in partial shade.

All forms are found in Box and Yellow Gum woodlands.

Pruning promotes regeneration and bushier growth.



Small-leaved Eutaxia

Eutaxia microphylla var. *microphylla*

Size: Prostrate x 0.5 – 1.5m

Flowers: September to November

Form: A variable low-growing heath-like shrub



E. microphylla var. *microphylla* has crowded small, fine grey-green leaves. The small branches on older growth tend to become spiny. It has spectacular yellow and red pea flowers in spring.

This common shrub is found in plains grassland, Red Gum and Grey Box woodland. A low-growing form is found in Yellow Gum woodland on sedimentary soil.

This very adaptable ground cover prefers well-drained soils but tolerates most soil. Once established it can tolerate



waterlogging and extended dry periods. It prefers full sun, but again, once established, can tolerate partial and even full shade.

It is a useful plant for helping to control erosion in small areas. It responds well to pruning.

It is useful in rockeries amongst other plants and especially pool edges.



Gompholobium | The Wedge-peas

There are 24 species of this very showy genus endemic in Australia. Only 4 of these grow in Victoria. The remainder grow in south-western Australia.

The leaves can be simple or compound and can be made up of three or more leaflets in digitate form.

Common Wedge-pea

Gompholobium huegelii

Size: 0.3 – 1m x 0.3 - 1m

Flowers: September to February

Form: An attractive spreading shrub



G. huegelii has bluish-green trifoliate leaves, i.e. made up of three linear shaped leaflets in digitate form. The leaves are positioned alternately along the branch.

The terminal, solitary (occasionally a couple) bright yellow flowers are on long stems. The buds and backs of the petals are bronze colour.

This is an attractive plant when in flower, especially when planted in groups, and prefers well-drained soils in partial sun. It is found in tea-tree heath, sclerophyll woodland and dry sclerophyll forest.



The digitate form trifoliate leaves of *Gompholobium huegelii*

Tip pruning encourages bushier growth.

It appears to be quite a variable plant in leaf size and shape and flower size depending on the conditions it is growing in.



Goodia

There are only two endemic species in this genus. The leaves of this spreading shrub are attractive with each leaflet being entire. The flowers are in terminal sprays.

Common Golden-tip

Goodia pubescens

Size: 1 – 5m x 1 – 5m

Flowers: August to December

Form: A showy, fast-growing open shrub



G. pubescens has blue-green, trifoliate, ovate leaves with numerous racemes of fragrant yellow and red pea flowers. The young stems of *G. pubescens* are hairy and older ones become smooth and remain red.

It prefers well-drained soils and is found in damp to dry sclerophyll woodlands and forests in full sun or partial shade. It is often associated with Yellow Gum woodlands and

is found in protected gullies and waterways. It is intolerant of alkaline soil.

Pruning after flowering is important to maintain bushy growth. Hard pruning may induce suckering.



Western Golden-tip

Goodia medicaginea

Size: 1 – 2m x 1 – 2m

Flowers: September to December

Form: A hardy, fast-growing shrub



It has blue-green trifoliolate leaves and interesting little seed pods.

G. medicaginea is covered with yellow-orange and red flowers in spring.

It prefers drier conditions than other *Goodia* and prefers full sun but will grow well in partial shade.

Pruning after flowering promotes a bushier growth.



Platylobium | The Flat-peas

Platylobium is a small genus of 13 species native to south-eastern Australia, occurring in a range of habitats and are closely allied to *Bossiaea*. Following a review in 2011, plants formerly known in Victoria as *P. formosum* have been reclassified as: *P. infercundum*, *P. montanum*, *P. parviflorum*, *P. reflexum* and *P. rotundum*. For the purpose of this booklet, the name *P. formosum* has been retained.

Handsome Flat-pea

Platylobium formosum

Size: 0.5 – 1.5m x 1 – 1.5m

Flowers: September to December

Form: A hardy, wiry, straggly, understorey shrub



The dark-green leathery leaves vary from narrowly ovate to heart shaped with conspicuous reticulate veins on the upper surface.

The flowers are large yellow and red pea shaped on long stalks originating in leaf axils, and have broad, flat, hairy pods.

It can be a difficult plant to find as the flowers only open on sunny days.

It prefers damp, valley sclerophyll forest with moist well-drained soil. It is a useful plant for shady areas but will grow in full sun.

Propagation is relatively easy from seed following pre-treatment with boiling water (similar to other members of the pea family). Cuttings may also be successful from firm, current season's growth.



Pultenaea | The Bush-peas

Pultenaea is the largest group of endemic pea plants in Australia with 126 species and almost half of which are represented in Victoria. Locally there are about 13 species of this large and widely variable family of understory shrubs.

They are a very showy genus with bright orange-yellow and red egg and bacon flowers during spring.

They range from prostrate to tall and erect at over 2 m high, with simple, usually alternate leaves. Their distinguishing feature from other genera is the presence of obvious (large) stipules (see photograph below) which are united behind the leaf stalk.

They all respond to good drainage, pruning and mulching.



The quite large stipules of *Pultenaea pedunculata*

Large-leaf Bush-pea

Pultenaea daphnoides

Size: 1 – 3m x 0.5 – 2m

Flowers: August to December

Form: A hardy, fast-growing, erect, branching shrub

P. daphnoides has large, flat, wedge-shaped dark green leaves. The leaves are paler below and have a midvein longer than the leaf that presents as a stiff point (see photograph below).

P. daphnoides has terminal clusters of large yellow and red flowers throughout spring.

It is found in dry sclerophyll forest and grassy open bush in well-drained soils, tolerating dryness once established. It prefers semi shade but manages full sun if there is some moisture around the roots, so mulching is a good idea. Pruning promotes bushier growth.



Golden Bush-pea

Pultenaea gunnii

Size: 0.5 – 1.5m x 0.5m

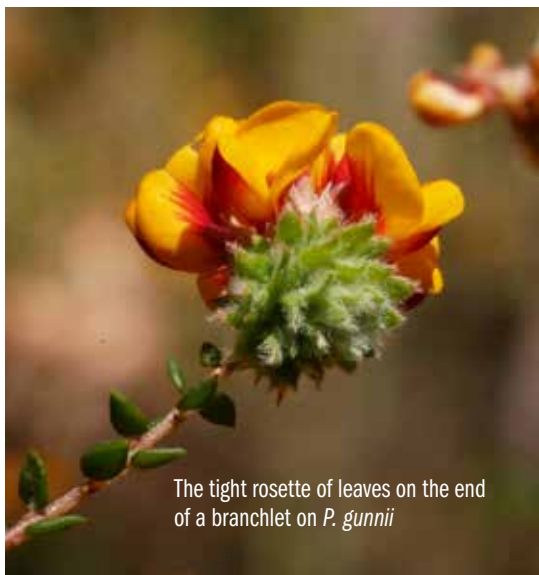
Flowers: September to October

Form: Usually, an erect shrub but occasionally spreading and straggling



P. gunnii has tiny dark green ovate leaves (occasionally lanceolate) with recurved margins. It often has pale green, hairy, tight rosettes of leaves at the ends of branchlets (see photograph below).

Terminal clusters of bright yellow to orange and dark red flowers are quite spectacular in the bush in spring. It is found in damp but well-drained, valley and dry sclerophyll forests and sclerophyll woodlands. It grows well under established trees and other shrubs in full sun and partial shade.



The tight rosette of leaves on the end of a branchlet on *P. gunnii*

Mueller's Bush-pea

Pultenaea muelleri

Size: 1 - 3m x 1 -2m

Flowers: November to January

Form: A tall shrub



P. muelleri has crowded narrow lanceolate leaves. The leaves are green and flat to slightly concave (see photograph below) with a pointed tip. The edges of the leaves are slightly incurved. The stems are terete, covered in pale tangled hairs. They have a solitary yellow and red flower on the ends of the main branch and branchlets.

They prefer moist well-drained soil in partial sun and are found in valley sclerophyll forests.



The covering of pale tangled hairs on the stems of *P. muelleri*



Leaves slightly concave and edges of leaves incurved

Matted Bush-pea

Pultenaea pedunculata

Size: Prostrate x 1 – 3m

Flowers: September to November

Form: Form: A dense layering plant



P. pedunculata has tiny, flat, dark green leaves. The spreading branches sometimes root. The midrib of the leaf is prominent. It has masses of single, axillary, yellow and red flowers on long stalks, towards the ends of lateral branches.

It is found in dry, well-drained soils in sclerophyll forest, and box ironbark woodland. It will tolerate dry periods once established in full or partial sun.



It is an excellent ground cover, useful for soil-binding and looks quite spectacular cascading over rockeries or retaining walls.



Rough Bush-pea

Pultenaea scabra

Size: 1 -2m x 0.5 – 1m

Flowers: September to November

Form: A tall, bushy, hairy shrub variable in hairiness and size of leaves and branches



The dark green leaves are highly variable but are usually wedge shaped and notched at the apex. They are rough and usually have short hairs on the upper surface and are densely hairy below.

P. scabra has masses of orange-yellow flowers in loose terminal clusters.



It grows in full sun to partial shade and prefers damp valley sclerophyll forests in moist, well-drained soil.



Distinct wedge-shaped leaves of
P. scabra



References

Bull, M (2014) *Flora of Melbourne: a guide to the indigenous plants of the greater Melbourne area* (Hyland House: Melbourne)

Australian Plants Society, Keilor Plains Group Inc (2012) *Plants of Melbourne's Western Plains a gardeners guide to the original flora 2nd Ed.* (APS Keilor Plains: Melbourne)

Woolcock, D (1989) *A field guide to native pea flowers of Victoria and south eastern Australia* (Kangaroo Press: NSW)

Further information

The City of Whittlesea has a range of resources to help you care for native vegetation on your property. Visit our website whittlesea.vic.gov.au or call 9217 2170 for more information.



**City of
Whittlesea**

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