

MEDIA RELEASE

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Stanthorpe's love for wildflowers blooms

The Stanthorpe area is well known for its natural beauty, fertile environment, and prolific wildflowers.

The community has a strong desire to maintain these aspects of their region, too, as was demonstrated by the Botanical Training & Conservation Management workshop held late last year.

The workshop was organised by the Rare Wildflower Consortium, a group of wildflower enthusiasts made up of Stanthorpe Shire Council, Queensland Murray-Darling Committee, Granite Borders Landcare, Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service, World Wide Fund for Nature and Stanthorpe Field Naturalists.

The Consortium hopes to make the training workshop a regular event, aiming to provide locals with access to the expertise of people like botanist Paul Grimshaw, who attended the recent workshop.

The workshop provided much needed information to both community members and Council staff about the threats to wildflowers and ways in which these can be managed.

An interactive session formed part of the workshop and provided attendees the opportunity to consider the often conflicting needs for traffic flow and safety and nature conservation in the road reserves.

Stanthorpe Shire Planner, and Consortium Chair, Jeanette Davis said "an ongoing part of the overall project is to build on the good ideas resulting from the interactive part of the workshop to produce a workable and effective code of practice."

The workshop was part of a larger project funded by QMDC, WWF, Envirofund and Stanthorpe Shire Council in which it is hoped awareness of the threats to and methods of managing wildflowers will be increased throughout the Stanthorpe Shire region.

Other aspects of this project include the annual, very popular Spring Wildflower walks in and around Stanthorpe as well as the Stanthorpe Plateau Flora Recovery Planning project.

The importance of this project is felt by Council staff and local landholders, all recognising that the native flora (especially the wildflowers) around Stanthorpe are a valuable natural asset to the community.

Local landholder Paula Coutts said, "the training course has enabled me, firstly, to properly identify the rare and threatened species that occur on our property, and secondly, to consider what management practices we can put in place to ensure the survival of both the species themselves, and the habitats they live in."

For more information about the annual Spring Wildflower walks, contact the office on 07 4671 7900.

The Stanthorpe Plateau Flora Recovery Planning project will be holding community workshops at the QCWA rooms in Stanthorpe (23 March, 7pm) and the Discovery Centre, Amiens State School in Amiens (25 March, 10am). For more information, contact Paul Donatui on 07 3358 1974.

For more information about future Wildflower Workshops, contact Jeanette Davis, Chair, on 07 4681 5500.

ENDS

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Local landholders and Council representatives learn how to identify native wildflowers with botanist Paul Grimshaw.