



Parts of the mallee beds (eg sites 3 – 5) may be a bit of a challenge, (even for the plants) on a hot February day, but you can find some shady refuges along the way. Flowers on the prickly fan flower (#4) may well last until the end of February but, if not, you may find fan flowers on a ground cover, probably *Scaevola humilis* 'Purple Fusion', on the path below 4a (see map over page).

See over page for map

*An Australian native

- *1 ***Ficus baileyana*** (now *F. rubiginosa*) Port Jackson fig, rusty fig Mainly eastern Australia
A popular species for bonsai, this impressive tree has sculptured, buttressed trunks that support a spreading canopy of oval leaves, glossy-green above and rusty below. The figs, lined on the inside with many tiny flowers and later fruitlets, provide food for many birds and mammals. The name on the label is for Frederick Manson Bailey, Queensland State Botanist from 1881-1915, and father of our 4th Director (see station 8).
- *2 ***Ficus brachypoda*** (syn *Ficus platypoda*) Desert fig Northern and central Australia
The path (red arrow) around the south end of the lake on Botanic Creek leads into the mallee beds and an even more impressive species of *Ficus*, here usually laden with figs year-round. In central Australia they are restricted to sheltered sites in rocky ranges, the biggest and best specimens near waterholes, sacrosanct refuges people retreated to in dry times. There has been a proposal to reclassify the central populations as *F. desertorum*, but whatever the taxonomic outcome, this sprawling dome is a magnificent shady refuge.
- *3 ***Eucalyptus scoparia*** Wallangarra white gum, willow gum NSW/Qld Border
The term 'mallee' is used to mean a vegetation type, a geographical area or a multi-stemmed eucalypt growing from a lignotuber, (a more or less subterranean woody swelling rich in buds). The tall eucalypt with striking smooth white bark at this site is quite unlike a mallee, but like the vast majority of eucalypts it does possess a lignotuber. The rounded crown of fine green leaves and attractive pattern of white to pale grey or pinkish bark, shedding in strips, make this a popular ornamental tree in south-eastern Australia.
- *4 ***Scaevola spinescens*** Prickly fan flower, currant bush All mainland Australian states
Beyond the bench seat is a spiny, grey-green dryland shrub from the family Goodeniaceae. Its white to cream or yellow fan-shaped flowers produce small purple to black fruits. It was first formally described in 1810, by Robert Brown, the botanist on Mathew Flinders' voyage of the Investigator to map the coastline of Australia, but has long featured in Aboriginal remedies for a variety of illnesses - long-standing knowledge now supported by modern pharmacological research identifying anti-bacterial and anti-viral properties.
- *5 ***Acacia calamifolia*** Wallowa SA north to Flinders Ra, central western NSW
Further along, across the 'T' of a junction with another path, is an erect, leggy acacia with greenish stems and a few typical red-brown legumes hanging in the fine needle-like foliage above eye height. The pale, berry-like fruits on trailing slender stems with equally fine foliage belong to a hemi-parasitic mistletoe, (very like the *Amyema preissii* at 5a), arising from an haustorium about a metre above the ground. Mistletoe fruits are dispersed mainly by mistletoe birds (*Dicaeum hirundinaceum*) which rapidly void the very sticky seeds onto branches of nearby host plants. Spiny-cheeked honeyeaters also feed on the seeds, perhaps spreading them further afield, as passage through the gut is slower. The host plant, wallowa, is usually a compact, rounded bushy shrub (2-4 m high) with reddish stems and smooth grey bark on older stems.
- 6 ***Bauhinia forficata*** Brazilian orchid tree Sub-tropics to tropics South America
This fast-growing, pioneer species from the family Fabaceae (peas/beans) is a semi-deciduous or deciduous small tree with twisted ascending branches that droop at the ends. Its bilobed dark leaves are widely used in Brazilian folk medicine to treat diabetes and cardiovascular disorders. Beautiful, white, showy flowers in spring and summer are pollinated by insects and followed by flat, woody legumes, maturing to dark-brown.
- 7 ***Cupressus macrocarpa* 'Berrigold'** Monterey cypress, lemon cypress Cultivar
Across the path from the NW corner of the seed orchard is a large Monterey cypress with golden-yellow foliage. This cultivar originated as a seedling grown at the Department of Agriculture, Berri, SA, in the 1930s. The scale-like, opposite leaves, have a lemony smell when rubbed. Columnar when young, they generally age to a more spreading, horizontal form. On exposed coastal headlands of its native California, the parent species has much more interesting shapes evocative of the challenging conditions for growth.
- 8 **Bailey's Triangle - The Dahlia Garden.** There is additional information on internal signage
This small garden is named for J.F. Bailey, Director of the ABG from 1917-1932, and former president of the Dahlia Society of SA. In the centre of the colourful display of dahlia cultivars is an Illawarra flame tree, *Brachychiton acerifolius*, a summer deciduous rainforest tree from central NSW to North Queensland. The garden is enclosed by a nearly century-old holm oak hedge (*Quercus ilex*) with its holly-like young leaves. In contrast, the trees at 8a and 8b are two examples of holm oaks left to grow more or less unhindered.
- 9 ***Theobroma cacao*** (the label is a wooden peg) Cacao or cocoa tree Tropical America
In the NW corner of the central (pond) room of the Amazon Waterlily Pavilion is a small evergreen tree with large alternate leaves, and small delicate white flowers growing directly from cushions of tissue on the main trunk and smaller branches, a feature known as cauliflory. Tiny flies (midges) have long been thought to be the main pollinators, but recent research in Colombia identified 11 insect species carrying pollen. Midges and stingless bees were still the most common visitors, the bees in particular carrying large loads of pollen. Its seeds, 'cocoa beans', are used to make chocolate liquor, cocoa solids, cocoa butter and chocolate.