

## Fabaceae

### *Platylobium formosum*

handsome flat pea

Ann Moran  
Field Botanist



#### ETYMOLOGY

(plat-ee-LO-bee-um) Greek platys = broad flat + lobos = pod from the shape of the fruits are flat and oblong; The species formosum (for-MO-sum) beautiful, handsome;

#### LIFEFORM

Shrub 50cm-2.5m x1-2m Spread

#### STATUS

Found from SE Qld to Tasmania; Recorded @ >290 Locations (Moran, A 2009)

#### OCCURS

Glasshouse Mountains, SE Qld, NSW, Grampians Vic, Tas

#### QLD DISTRICTS

Moreton, Wide Bay

#### HABITAT

Heath, Blackbutt forests

#### LEAVES

Opposite, 1-9 x 4 cm, stalkless, ovate with cordate base, dark green leathery with raised network of veins & pungent point.

#### FLOWERS

Pea-shaped, 8-15 mm, yellow with red centre, flat upper edge winged valves roll back on long hairy 1-3 cm stalks: **Flowering times** May, Sept, Oct, Nov, Dec

#### FRUIT

Pods, 2-5 cm, hairy, flatten leathery, oblong which splits to reveal satiny interior: Seed weight 6-10mg seed, ant-adapted food body for dispersal (Westoby et al. 1990), Soil-stored seedbank (Fox 1988). **Fruiting times** Oct, Nov, Dec, Jan, July

#### STEM

Erect straggling or prostrate shrub with thin wiry trailing stems.

#### ETHNOBOTANY

Ornamental for gardens, in cultivation with nitrogen-fixing root nodules. Flower only open on sunny days; Useful for shady areas low-level windbreak, improves the soil.

#### TOLERANCE

Drought and frost tolerant

#### WILDLIFE

Flowers pollinated good habitat for native bees, wasps and butterflies.

#### NATIVE BEES

*Tetragonula carbonaria* stingless native bees

#### INSECTS

*Macrobathra obliquata* (Moth) *Eurytoma* sp. (seed predator insect)

#### BIRD

Seeds eaten by Red-rumped Parrot, Turquoise Parrot, Finches.

#### ID FEATURE

Leaves commonly with acute, pungent-pointed lateral lobes + Bracteoles 5-10 mm + Pod flat upper edge winged, valves roll back.