

Peppy Plants December 2013

by Eleanor Bennett

Oenothera drummondii is commonly naturalized around the coastal foredunes from Jurien Bay to south of Bunbury (see also [Oenothera drummondii](#)). It is a native of northern Mexico and south eastern USA and is now distributed through coastal areas of Australia and is thought to have been introduced in ship's ballast. It is commonly called Beach Evening Primrose as it opens in the evening. *Oenothera* is derived from the Greek, oinothra, the name of a plant used to flavour wine and *drummondii* is the Latinised name of Thomas Drummond (1790-1835) a Scotsman who collected plants in the southern and western United States of America. The plant is a pale grey or white hairy perennial with prostrate stems. The basal leaves are up to 7cm long and 1.5cm wide, but the stem leaves are more egg-shaped, without a stalk and very softly hairy. The flowers are solitary in the axil of a leaf. The hairy flower tube is up to 3cm long, the sepals are up to 4.5cm long and commonly folded back down the flower tube and the yellow petals are up to 4cm long. There are 8 stamens and a 4 lobed style. The hairy fruit, when mature can reach up to 5cm long, eventually splitting into 4 valves.



Prostrate plant of *Oenothera drummondii*.



The flowers last one day and turn orange with age. This photograph shows the sepals folded back down the flower tube.



The large yellow flower has 8 stamens and a 4-lobed style



The leaves and stems of the plant are softly white hairy. This photograph also shows a young hairy fruit which is cylindrical and some what curved. It has 4 distinct tips which will eventually split into 4 valves to release the seeds.

PGBCA has received a second Coast West Grant. This article is a result of that grant. If you are interested in assisting with photographing Peppy's plants for inclusion in the proposed online book please contact Eleanor on 0429329980.