

Peppy Plants August 2013

by Eleanor Bennett

One of the delicate flowered plants growing at Peppy Beach is *Thysanotus arenarius*, a member of the Lily group of plants (see also [Thysanotus arenarius](#)). *Thysanotus* is derived from the Greek **thysanotos** meaning fringed in reference to the fringed inner petals of the flowers and *arenarius* from Latin, meaning growing in sand. This species has no specific common name but all *Thysanotus* are commonly called Fringed Lilies. The plant is a wiry, sprawling perennial up to 70cm tall, sometimes producing roots at the nodes. The leaves are produced annually at the base of the plants but wither before flowering so are not obvious unless the exact location of the plant is known. The flowering stems are loosely branched with 2-4 flowers occurring together. The flowers are typically purple but occasionally white flowering plants are seen. It occurs in coastal heaths from Shark Bay to Albany and flowers from spring to early summer.



The wiry plants are often not obvious amongst the surrounding vegetation except when in flower.



The flower has 6 free petals 12-16mm long. The outer 3 are narrow and the inner 3 are broad with a fringed margin which gives the plant its common name. There are 6 anthers, 3 long (up to 9mm) and 3 short (3-6mm long) and the ovary with a thread-like style in the flower centre.



All the flowers in the flowering head do not open together. This flowering head has 4 flowers, 1 in flower and 3 in young fruit.



Short anthers
Long anthers

This closer view of the 6 anthers illustrates their size differences.



An example of the less common white flowered *Thysanotus arenarius*. It has the same flower structure as described in the next section.



This fruiting head illustrates how the stalks are recurved when in fruit but are upright in bud and flower. The finished petals remain on the fruit. The fruits are 3-celled with several seeds.