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Plant of the month: Slender Bush-pea *Pultenaea tenuifolia*



Slender Bush-pea *Pultenaea tenuifolia* is a small, matting shrub with its leaves and stems covered in fine hairs. It can grow to 1 metre tall but on exposed coastal dunes such as at Venus Bay it tends to be much lower-growing. Found in the southern states and Tasmania, it is inconspicuous and uncommon. The clustered, channelled leaves have inrolled margins, appear very fine and have scale-like stipules 2-3 mm long at their base. The sessile or stalkless yellow pea flowers with a red keel are 6 mm across, in pairs or single at the ends of branches, from September to October, followed by a hairy pod containing 1 or 2 seeds.

Slender Bush-pea likes sandy, well-drained soils, is drought and salt resistant and will grow in full or part sun. Like other plants in the pea family, it fixes its own nitrogen and does not need fertilizing. It is butterfly attracting. Propagation is from treated seed or cuttings.

Pultenaea species belong in the Fabaceae or Pea family. The genus name *Pultenaea* was named after Richard Pulteney, an 18th Century English Botanist and Surgeon. The species name *tenuifolia* comes from the Latin *tenuis*, thin or slender and *folia*, leaves.



For further information please visit FVBP website above. Photo: Lorraine Norden.