



## Friends of Venus Bay Peninsula Inc

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### Plant of the month: Rounded Noon-flower *Disphyma crassifolium* subsp. *clavellatum*



Rounded Noon-flower *Disphyma crassifolium* is a prostrate perennial subshrub, rooting at the nodes, with stems up to 2 metres long. The rounded, succulent leaves are clustered along the stems and grow to around 4 cm long, bright shiny green, often with a red or yellow tinge. Purple daisy-like flowers with a white throat occur on long stems from October to February. What appear to be petals are sterile stamens or staminodes. The fruit capsule dries as it ages and contains oval seeds. Rounded Noon-flower is found throughout Australia apart from the Northern Territory, in Coast Banksia Woodland, on sea cliffs and coastal and inland saltmarsh, with good examples around Anderson Inlet.

Rounded Noon-flower will adapt to most soils in full sun. The foliage is fire-retardant, and the plant is an effective ground cover to combat soil erosion. Propagation is from stem or leaf cuttings, or seed. Aborigines ate the juicy leaves raw or cooked.

*Disphyma* belongs in the Aizoaceae or Pigface family. The genus name *Disphyma* from the Greek '*dis*' meaning twice and '*phyma*' meaning a tubercle, tumor; referring to the double lumps at the ovary apex. *Crassifolium* is from the Latin '*crassus*' meaning thick and '*folium*' meaning a leaf; referring to the species succulent fat leaves. The sub species name *clavellatum* is from the Latin '*clavellatus*' meaning little-clubbed; referring to the shape of the fruit.

Photo: Lorraine Norden.