



Friends of Venus Bay Peninsula Inc

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Plant of the month: Bidgee-widgee *Acaena novae-zelandiae*



Bidgee-widgee *Acaena novae-zelandiae* is a prostrate, hairy, stoloniferous perennial herb. The leaves are ovate to 11 cm long, with 7-11 leaflets with toothed margins increasing in size up the rachis or leaf stalk. The globular flowerheads are greenish white on stalks to 20 cm, followed by fruits to 25 mm, covered in spines, from September to April. It is a common ground component at Venus Bay and is also widespread in Victoria and from South Australia to Queensland.

Bidgee-widgee is a hardy plant that grows in most conditions. It is useful as a soil binder and ground cover to retain moisture and discourage weeds. The burrs can be a problem for pets and on clothes, so it should be kept away from pathways. Propagation is from seed, cuttings or division.

The genus *Acaena* belongs in the Rosaceae or Rose family and comes from the Greek *akaina*, meaning thorn. The species name *novae-zelandiae* means from New Zealand, where it is also found. For further information please visit FVBP website above. Photo: Lorraine Norden.

