



# SGAP Cairns

September 2011  
Newsletter 114

Society for Growing Australian Plants (Queensland Region) Inc., Cairns Branch  
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## September Activities

### SGAP CAIRNS BRANCH OUTING

#### Saturday 17 September

See the new Cairns Botanic Gardens visitors centre.

Meet for lunch at midday at the old visitors centre, near the nursery (McCormack St, Edge Hill entrance).

### SGAP TABLELANDS BRANCH OUTING.

#### Sunday 25 September

Any queries please contact Chris Jaminon 4095 2882 or [hjaminon@bigpond.com](mailto:hjaminon@bigpond.com)

### TOWNVILLE SGAP

Meets on the 2nd Wednesday of the month, February to November, in Annandale Community Centre at 8pm, and holds excursions the following Sunday.

## Ellie Point Excursion – Cairns Airport, 21 August 2011

Stuart Worboys

A fine August day saw a great turnout for our Cairns Airport excursion. SGAP Cairns Branch was joined for the excursion by a small group from James Cook University, who were also keen to check out the normally inaccessible mangrove and dune flora of the Barron River delta. The goal for the trip was Ellie Point, a sandy protuberance marking the far eastern point of the delta.

The whole excursion was made possible with the permission of Cairns Airport, and we were escorted on our explorations by the airport's environmental officer, the ever-enthusiastic Kerry Evans. Kerry opened the access gate, allowing us to avoid a 1.5 km walk through mangroves and coastal vine thicket.

Parking on a low sandy rise, we slipped through to the beach, where a pleasant and surprisingly mosquito free lunch/meeting was enjoyed. After lunch, we proceeded through the mangroves, paralleling the beach for some distance. Luckily for all, the tide was low, the mosquitoes and sandflies were few, and the crocodiles were hunting elsewhere.

The near coastal flora in the Cairns Airport mangroves contained is relatively simple. As with any tropical mangrove system, the species composition varies with elevation, freshwater availability and exposure to tides. At our lunch spot, we were surrounded by *Lumnitzera*, *Excoecaria agallocha* (blind your eye mangrove), *Xylocarpus moluccensis* (cedar mangrove) and the infrequently encountered myrtle mangrove, *Osbornia octodonta*. Just inland, and a little lower in elevation, the system was dominated by a tangle of *Rhizophora* and *Bruguiera*. Heading south, eroded dunes and accreting beaches reminded us that this is a constantly changing landform. The very highest points carried a mix of vine thicket and coastal species – *Cocos nucifera* (coconut), *Melaleuca leucadendra* (weeping paperbark), *Terminalia catappa* (sea almond), *Ximenia americana* (yellow plum), *Cordia subcordata* (sea trumpet) and *Ipomoea pes-caprae* (goats foot morning glory). We were surprised to find a prickly pear (*Opuntia monacantha*) growing in the scrub. Further on, however, we

discovered more weeds – *Sphagneticola trilobata* (Singapore daisy) and thickets of *Sansevieria trifasciata* (mother-in-law's tongue). The day was brightened by brilliant sprays of golden orchids (*Dendrobium discolor*) – growing at eye level rather than high in the tree tops, however we did not find any pencil orchids despite them being quite common further inland.



*Crinum pedunculatum* (mangrove lily)



*Xylocarpus moluccensis* (cedar mangrove)



Rosemary Hill and daughter, Cairns in the background.

After enjoying some pleasant views of Cairns from an unfamiliar vantage point, we headed back to the cars. The species list compiled for the day (see below) was not particularly rich, however if we had spent time in the vine thickets just a couple of hundred metres further inland, the count would no doubt have been substantially more. Rob expressed some concern that one particular species, an unusual bauhinia with a vine growth form (*Lysiphyllum binatum*) had not been seen. So he went around a corner and immediately found the plant! A good end to the day.

Once again, thank you to Kerry for allowing us to visit an exciting part of Cairns that few get to see.

## Species List for Ellie Point, East of Cairns Airport

R.L. Jago

### FERNS & ALLIES

#### Aspleniaceae

*Asplenium nidus* Birds Nest Fern

#### Polypodiaceae

*Drynaria rigidula* Basket Fern

*Platycterium hillii* Northern Elkhorn Fern

### FLOWERING DICOTYLEDONS

#### Aizoaceae

*Sesuvium portulacastrum* Sea Purslane

#### Anacardiaceae

*Euroschinus falcatus* var. *falcatus* Blush Cudgerie or Pink Poplar

#### Apocynaceae

*Cynanchum carnosum*

*Tabernaemontana orientalis* Eastern Gondola Bush

#### Asteraceae

\* *Praxelis clematidea* Praxelis

\*C3 *Sphagneticola trilobata* Singapore Daisy

#### Avicenniaceae

*Avicennia marina* subsp. *eucalyptifolia* Grey Mangrove

#### Boraginaceae

*Cordia subcordata* Sea Trumpet

#### Cactaceae

\*C2 *Opuntia monacantha* Drooping Prickly Pear

#### Caesalpinaceae

*Caesalpinia bonduc* Nicker Nit

*Lysiphyllum binatum*

\* *Peltophorum pterocarpum*

\* *Tamarindus indica* Tamarind

### PLANTS-

Capparaceae

Capparis lucida Coastal Caper

Casuarinaceae

Casuarina equisetifolia subsp. incana Horsetail She Oak

Chenopodiaceae

Suaeda australis Seablite

Clusiaceae

Calophyllum inophyllum Beach Calophyllum

Combretaceae

Lumnitzera racemosa White Flowered Black Mangrove

Terminalia catappa Sea Almond

Convolvulaceae

Ipomoea pes-caprae Goat's Foot Morning Glory

Ebenaceae

Diospyros compacta Australian Ebony

Euphorbiaceae

Excoecaria agallocha Milky Mangrove

Fabaceae

Canavalia rosea Sea Bean; Coastal Jack Bean

\* Crotalaria pallida var. obovata Streaked Rattle Pod

Derris trifoliata Coastal Derris

Millettia pinnata Pongamia

Sophora tomentosa subsp. australis Silver Bush

Goodeniaceae

Scaevola taccada Cardwell Cabbage

Lamiaceae

Clerodendrum inerme Sorcerers Flower's

Clerodendrum longiflorum var. glabrum Witches Tongues

Premna serratifolia Coastal Premna

Vitex trifolia var. trifolia Common Blue Vitex

Lauraceae

Cassytha filiformis Dodder

## Loranthaceae

Amyema glabra Mistletoe

Lythraceae

Sonneratia alba Pornupan Mangrove

Malvaceae

Hibiscus tiliaceus Cottonwood

Thespesia populnea Pacific Rosewood

Meliaceae

Xylocarpus moluccensis Cedar Mangrove

Mimosaceae

Acacia crassicaarpa Brown Wattle

Acacia oraria Coastal Wattle

Acacia polystachya Ellis Beach Wattle

\* Mimosa pudica var. hispida Common Sensitive Plant

Myoporaceae

Myoporum acuminatum

Myrsinaceae

Aegiceris corniculatum River Mangrove

Myrtaceae

Melaleuca leucadendra Tea Tree

Osbornia octodonta Myrtle Mangrove

Olacaceae

Ximenia americana Yellow Plum

Oleaceae

Jasminum simplicifolium subsp. australiense Native Jasmin

Plumbaginaceae

Aegialitis annulata Club Mangrove

Rhamnaceae

Alphitonia excelsa Red Ash

Alphitonia petriei Pink Ash

Colubrina asiatica var. asiatica Serpent Vine

Rhizophoraceae

Bruguiera exaristata

Bruguiera gymnorhiza Orange Mangrove

Bruguiera parviflora

Ceriops tagal Yellow Mangrove

Rhizophora apiculata

Rhizophora stylosa Stilt Mangrove

Rubiaceae

V Myrmecodia beccarii Ant Plant

Psydrax banksii Canthium

Santalaceae

Exocarpos latifolius Native Cherry

Sapindaceae

Cupaniopsis anacardioides Tuckeroo

Dodonaea viscosa subsp. viscosa Sticky Hop Bush

Jagera pseudorhus var. pseudorhus Foambark

Sapotaceae

Mimusops elengi Red Coondoo

Planchonella obovata Yellow Boxwood

Sterculiaceae

Heritiera littoralis Looking Glass Mangrove

Sterculia quadrifida Peanut tree

Amaryllidaceae

Crinum pedunculatum Swamp Lily

**FLOWERING PLANTS -  
MONOCOTYLEDONS**Arecaceae

\* Cocos nucifera Coconut

Commelinaceae

Commelina ensifolia Sailor's Purse

\* Tradescantia spathacea Moses-in-the-boat

Cyperaceae

Bulbostylis barbata

Cyperus pedunculatus Pineapple Sedge

Cyperus scaber

Fimbristylis acicularis

Dracaenaceae

\* Sansevieria trifasciata Mother-in-laws Tongue

Flagellariaceae

Flagellaria indica Supplejack

Orchidaceae

Dendrobium discolor Golden Orchid

Poaceae

Imperata cylindrica Blady Grass

Lepturus repens Stalky Grass

\* *Megathyrsus maximus* var. *maximus* Guinea Grass

*Sporobolus virginicus* Saltwater Couch

*Extracted from database 20th August 2011*

\* *Introduced naturalised exotic species*

*C2 Class 2 Pest Plant under the Land Protection (Pest & Stock Route Management Act) 2002*

*C3 Class 3 Pest Plant under the Land Protection (Pest & Stock Route Management Act) 2002*

*V Vulnerable under the Nature Conservation Act 1992*

*All names used for Families, genera and species are as recognised in the Census of the Queensland Flora 2010 Edited by Peter D. Bostock & Ailsa E. Holland.*

## SGAP CAIRNS 2011 COMMITTEE

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