



SGAP Cairns

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Society for Growing Australian Plants (Queensland Region) Inc., Cairns Branch
PO Box 199 EARLVILLE QUEENSLAND 4870. www.sgapcairns.org.au

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Information for new members

Stuart Worboys

Welcome, new members, to the Cairns Branch of the Society for Growing Australian Plants. You're fully paid up branch members, which entitles you to receive this newsletter and vote on decisions affecting the branch.

The next step is to joint up with the State organisation. Membership of the SGAP Queensland Inc. entitles you to:

- Attend monthly meetings.
- Take part in excursions to study plants in cultivation and in their natural habitats.
- Obtain free seed from the SGAP Seed Bank.
- Borrow books from the SGAP Library.
- Receive quarterly issues of the Queensland Region "Bulletin", which carries details of activities and articles of interest to Queensland members.
- Join an ANPSA Study Group to learn more about a particular group of plants or plant communities.
- Attend Conferences in Queensland and interstate to meet with members from other areas, listen to interesting talks and take part in tours and day trips to places of botanical and scenic interest.

Upcoming Activities

SGAP CAIRNS BRANCH OUTING

21 April 2012

East Russell. Properties of Don & Pauline Lawie and Errol Wiles. See page 5 for more details.

19 May 2012

Bayview Heights. Garden of Anthony Lagois and Brian Moran.

SGAP TABLELANDS BRANCH OUTING.

Sunday after the 4th Wednesday

Any queries please contact Chris Jaminon 4095 2882 or hjaminon@bigpond.com

TOWNSVILLE SGAP

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



Banksia spinulosa var. collina
SGAP Qld emblem.

Your membership of the Queensland group is vital – they carry the insurances that permit your participation in excursions. I've attached the membership form to this newsletter – please print this out and send through with cheque or money order.

Please visit the SGAP Qld website for more information:
<http://www.sgapqld.org.au/Welcome.html>.

Excursion to Goomboora Park, November 2011

Don Lawie

Goomboora Park

Goomboora is one of Cairns' parks which have been developed along the course of Freshwater Creek as it flows from the Copperlode Dam outlet to its mouth at Kamerunga. The park is extensive, with well kept, large grassy areas, barbecues, picnic shelters and a toilet block. Trees have been planted along fence lines and in strategic places in some of the open areas, leaving plenty of room for ball games and for kids and dogs to run free. Freshwater Creek here marks the division between urban area and farmland and the riparian growth is just wide enough to be a healthy refuge area for some of Cairns' original vegetation to survive.

We met for lunch at noon as usual, and chose a picnic shelter and table at the north end of the park. Unfortunately we had selected the dog-exercise part of the park and our lunch was accompanied by many dogs and their owners, shouts, whistles, barks and a dreadful moment when a child was knocked from his bike by a savagely snarling large dog. The dog owner shouted, the child ran off screaming in utter terror, and it was all over before we could think of interceding.

A Christmas walk

This was our Christmas outing so we enjoyed a shared lunch and a lucky door prize lucky dip, then headed off for an amble along the creek-side track. We have visited this park several times over the years, the walk totals a couple of kilometres of mixed lowland forest containing some unexpected gems of the plant world. Rob Jago was in top form, not just naming the plants we saw but giving us an easy lecture on their attributes and uses. The path is easy going, wide and smoothed by the passage of many hundreds of feet and paws. Many people of all ages were taking

advantage of the creek to swim and cool off, and we were impressed by the utter lack of litter and the way that everybody was behaving in a civilised manner.



SGAP at Goomboora Park. Left to right: Barbara Collins, Rob Jago, Mary Gandini, Coralie Stewart, Bianca Jago. Don Lawie is behind the camera.

The early part of the walk through a swampy area dominated by large figs (*Ficus spp.*), Milky Pines (*Alstonia scholaris*) and Alexandra palms (*Archontophoenix alexandrae*) was accompanied by the sound of Torres Strait (Pied Imperial) pigeons calling and giving us glimpses of their white/black plumage as they foraged in the trees, possibly for the fruits of *Ficus variegata* which are an ideal size for frugivorous birds. We saw some really large old trees which must be a considerable age. Notable species were Milky Pine Sovereign Wood/Damson Plum (*Terminalia sericocarpa*), Leichhardt Pine (*Nauclea orientalis*), Black Bean (*Castanospermum australe*) and a remembered massive Poison Peach (*Trema orientalis*) now resting its giant, twisted trunk on a neighbour, and probably not looking forward to more than another hundred years or so of life. Nearly all large trees showed scars of missing limbs due to the regular storms that the area enjoys – a natural form of pruning asymmetrical plant growth.

The mid-layer of plants included numerous trees that have the potential to replace the old giants when their time comes.

Beilschmedia obtusifolia, *Carallia brachiata*, *Endiandra longipedicellata*, *Ganophyllum falcatum*, *Dysoxylum gaudichaudianum* will all be there in a hundred years to impress a new generation of SGAPPers. A Tar Tree (*Semecarpus australiensis*) with a columnar trunk about 30 cm diameter stood in a creek bank clearing surrounded by its fallen leaves which may have killed off any undergrowth that had germinated in the vicinity. Also known as Australian Cashew, the Tar Tree exudes a black caustic sap from any injuries in leaves or branches and is a good tree to avoid.

Some smaller plants could have a good future as garden plants, in particular *Phyllanthus cuscutiflorum* which can be grown as a metre-high hedge with attractive leaves, and masses of pendulous flowers. Another which Rob pointed out was *Aphananthe phillipensis* with sandpapery, serrated, holly-type leaves and stems which carry masses of small red fruit. *Diplazium dietrichianum*, a small tree fern grew in a large mass across the creek making a most attractive show. This fern should be a part of any garden in the Wet Tropics.

No orchids

Also on the creek bank in a more open area was a Cluster Fig (*Ficus hispida*) with hanging bunches of ripe fruit, just waiting for a Cassowary to come along... Creek Cherry (*Syzygium tierneyanum*) grew to a large size in the same area and carried masses of flowers which is a good sign that The Wet will not start for a while yet – these trees disperse their fruit in floodwaters and it is my long experience that ripe *S. tierneyanum* fruit always signal an imminent flood.

A surprise for the day was the total lack of orchids, even with our orchidophiles Mary and Pauline in the group. Pencil orchids (*Dendrobium teretifolium*) are quite common in the greater Cairns area and have a particular affinity with both Milky Pines and Sovereign Wood. We expected to see clusters

of Pencils high up in the older specimens of these trees but not a one was seen.

We ended the outing as usual with a cuppa and a chat and a recap of what we had seen while Rob regaled us with a horror story of Piranha fish in the Sepik River in PNG. If these fish ever found their way to Cairns' Northern Beaches the name of Yorkey's Knob may have to be changed...

Excursion to Stratford, February 2012

Stuart Worboys

In the Wet Season, it's always safer to restrict excursions to venues where it's just a short sprint to shelter. February 2012's excursion paid heed to this rule, visiting two gardens in leafy Stratford.

The first meeting of the year was well attended, and we were pleased to welcome two new members. After a barbecue lunch in the carport of my home, we moved across the road to inspect the garden of Mark Harrington.



Neofabricia myrtifolia

Mark, a researcher with the Australian Tropical Herbarium, has an interesting and eclectic mix of native plants, food plants and some exotics. He lead us on a tour of the garden, pointing out some interesting Cape York plants in the front garden (*Neofabricia*

myrtifolia, *Lomandra banksii*, *Dodonaea dodecandra*, *Brachychiton* sp, *Hoya macgillivrayi*, *Syzygium puberulum*).

At the rear of the house, several neatly ordered beds were devoted to vegetables. The boundary fence supported a large *Aristolochia tagala*, waiting to be shredded by Cairns Birdwing Butterfly caterpillars. Mark also has a nicely set up shadehouse, full of orchids of varying provenance and other interesting species.

After thanking Mark and his partner Christine, I was able to give the group a quick tour of my modest garden before breaking up for the afternoon.

Excursion to the Australian Tropical Herbarium – March 2012

Stuart Worboys (Project Officer with the ATH)

March 2012's excursion took us to centre of botanical research in north Queensland – the Australian Tropical Herbarium. Based at James Cook University Cairns Campus, the herbarium is a joint venture between CSIRO, the Queensland Government and James Cook University.

The excursion started off with the Cairns Branch Annual General Meeting in the comfortably air-conditioned tea room at the herbarium. New office bearers are listed in the text box at the end of this trip report.



The Australian Tropical Herbarium

The herbarium, which is essentially a museum collection of plants, houses over 150 000

specimens, and is growing all the time thanks to the efforts of professional and amateur botanists across the tropical north. Amongst the collections there are some of substantial historical significance. The herbarium holds three specimens collected by Banks and Solander during their enforced stay at the Endeavour River in 1770. There are also the substantial collections of the North Queensland Naturalists Club, the collections of Len Webb, Geoff Tracey, Bernie Hyland, Tony Irvine, Bruce Gray and Andrew Ford.

The herbarium is also home to numerous “type” specimens – the reference specimen that is cited when a new plant is described. As type specimens represent the gold standard for taxonomic research, they are treated with special care, and rarely see the light of day.



Preparing specimens for the herbarium – plant press, jar for preserving specimens, notebook and newspapers.

Identifying plants of north Queensland

It's worth mentioning here that the Australian Tropical Herbarium has a set of reference specimens available to other researchers, the public and special interest groups to assist in the identification of north Queensland's plants.

This Public Reference Collection aims to represent all the native and naturalised plant

species of north Queensland. Specimens will be added and replaced to ensure the most representative and accurate selection of specimens remains available.

April 2012 Excursion

Meet at **10 am** at the property of Don and Pauline Lawie, East Russell. We'll look at gardens, fine lowland rainforest, and the agroforestry plot of Errol Wiles.

To get to East Russell, you head south to Babinda. When you enter town, take the first left turn across the railway line, then left again, following Howard Kennedy Drive north up to Clyde Road. Turn onto Clyde Road, then follow Don's directions given below.

Don suggest the following plan:

Our property is located on Kruckow Road, at East Russell Rural Number 606 *i.e.* 6.06km from Clyde Road bridge over Russell River. (To be pedantic, the Clyde Road bridge has been under the Russell River for 17 of the last 19 days). A big set of bagpipes out the front above the street number.

We could meet 10 am as suggested, smoko, chat then explore next door creek below and above road until late lunch then go to Errol's after lunch for *Nepenthes mirabilis* (pitcher plants) and creek - it's on the way home so that seems like a good flow.

There's possibility of ticks, leeches and scrub itch, and certainty of mosquitoes and waitawhile so appropriate clothing required. I hope that we find some interesting plants washed from the mountain and germinated in the creek fan. It's also crocodile country. The landowner is very supportive of visit.



SGAP CAIRNS 2012 COMMITTEE

Chairperson

Rob Jago

Vice Chairperson

Mary Gandini

Treasurer

Stuart Worboys

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The recently described *Melaleuca pyramidalis*, endemic to the Bellenden Ker Range. An attractive shrub formerly known as *Callistemon polandii* subsp. Walsh's Pyramid.

**Society for Growing Australian Plants
(Queensland Region) Inc.**

NEW MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

Please complete & return this section only to:

Membership Officer, SGAP Qld
P.O. Box 5702 Brendale BC Qld 4500
AUSTRALIA

Total Region Fees Being Paid \$
(by Cheque/Money Order payable to SGAP Qld Region
- **DO NOT SEND CASH BY MAIL**)

Branch Membership is an option available only to Region members. Branch fees vary. Contact your Branch for details.	
BRANCH USE ONLY	
Branch Fees	\$
Total Region plus Branch Fees	\$
Pay to Branch - DO NOT SEND TO REGION	

Title First Name/s

Last Name

Extra Person(s)

Postal Address

Postcode

Residential Address

(if different from Postal Address) Postcode

Telephone No. (Home)

Telephone No. (Work)

Mobile No:

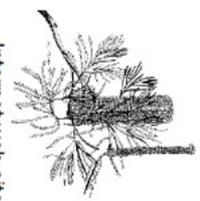
Facsimile No.

Email Address

I agree to abide by the Constitution and By-laws of the Society.

Your Signature

Any other comments (e.g. your interest / skills / knowledge on native plant topics - add extra page if needed).



SOCIETY FOR GROWING AUSTRALIAN PLANTS
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General email: secretary@sgapqld.org.au
Membership email: membership@sgapqld.org.au

Note: The Society is NOT registered for GST

SUBSCRIPTION FEES (WITHIN AUSTRALIA) for the 2011-12 membership year are:

ORDINARY MEMBERSHIP - within Australia.

This covers 1 person or organisation
Full Year (From 1 April '11 to 31 March '12) \$40-00
Half Year (From 1 October '11 to 31 March '12) \$22-50

STUDENT MEMBERSHIP - Full-time Student in Australia. This covers 1 person
 (Please supply proof - e.g. photocopy of student card)
Full Year (From 1 April '11 to 31 March '12) \$28-00
(Student Half Year Not Available)

EXTRA PERSONS - per person at same address
 (Please supply full names for both insurance and membership purposes) \$2-00

Notes:
 New members receive an "Information pack" including Constitution, Library list, Information booklet, brochures and sample Bulletin.

ALL memberships become due for renewal on 1st April each year. You will receive a personalised membership renewal form with your March Bulletin.

You are invited to join one (or more) of our Branches throughout Queensland. Branch membership is available **ONLY** to SGAP Region members as an **OPTIONAL** addition to Region Membership. Contact your local Branch for details.

NOTE: RENEWING members should use their personalised renewal form (or deduct the \$5 joining fee from the above fees).

✂ Please Cut along line ✂

Society Membership offers:

- The Queensland Region magazine, the **Bulletin** - June, September, December & March issues (half year memberships receive the December & March issues)
- Free seed from our Seed Bank - a wide range of species
- Involvement in meetings and activities of Branches of the Society
- Involvement in Study Groups to further your knowledge of specific groups of plants
- Free access to an extensive Library
- The opportunity to attend Conferences at State and Federal level and meet members from all over Australia.

Note that the national journal, **Australian Plants**, is no longer included in Membership. Members seeking this journal (for issues **AFTER** March 2010) should contact the Australian Plants Society NSW Ltd directly.

Visitors are welcome to attend our Region and/or Branch meetings. Branches in Queensland are:
 Brisbane - Daytime, Brisbane - Southside, Brisbane - Western Suburbs, Caboolture - Daytime, Cairns, Gladstone, Inistail, Ipswich, Kingaroy & Districts, Logan River, Mackay, Pine Rivers, Rockhampton, Samford, Sunshine Coast & Hinterland, Tablelands, Townsville and Warwick. Contact our honorary secretary, membership officer or phone 07 3870 8517 or 07 3285 3322 for branch contact details, meeting dates, times, venues or other information. See our website (www.sgapqld.org.au) for additional information.

SGAP (Queensland Region) Inc. respects the privacy of its current and past members. Details of our members are used solely for legitimate society purposes in accord with the society's Aims and Objectives. Details will be disclosed to SGAP Region Councilors and to SGAP Branch executives in your area. Details may also be disclosed to Queensland based Study Group Leaders. Summary details (name and district only) of new members will be published in our Bulletin. Additional details are available on request.

