



SGAP Cairns

May 2012
Newsletter 120

Society for Growing Australian Plants (Queensland Region) Inc., Cairns Branch
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April Excursion

Stuart Worboys

April's outing saw about ten members from the Cairns SGAP branch visiting the garden of Don and Pauline Lawie at East Russell.

After exploring the garden, which lies on the western side of the rainforest-covered coastal range, members moved on to Errol Wiles' property, where an interesting variety of native and exotic plants grow side by side. As always, a highlight of the trip to Errol's place is *Nepenthes mirabilis*, one of the southern-most populations of the carnivorous pitcher plant. Ground orchids, including *Spathoglottis*, were also discovered.

Upcoming Activities

SGAP CAIRNS BRANCH OUTING

3rd Saturday of the month

Garden of Anthony Lagois and Brian Moran, Bayview Heights View. See text for more details.

SGAP TABLELANDS BRANCH OUTING.

*Sunday after the 4th
Wednesday*

Any queries please contact
Chris Jaminon 4095 2882 or
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.



Nepenthes mirabilis

Coincidentally, the following Sunday, Tablelands branch followed in Cairns Branch's footsteps. They arrived on Sunday morning to find Don home alone, left behind by Pauline who was attending to grandmotherly/motherly duties further south. Some of the visitors speculated they should have brought care packages of casseroles! After reassuring themselves that Don was not on the edge of starvation, they proceeded with their excursion. When they arrived at the pitcher plant site, Tablelands branch were fortunate to encounter Gary Wilson, a Ph.D. researcher whose project focuses on the ecology of these fascinating plants.

Plant Cuttings

The Chillagoe Upside-Down Tree

An emailed query from an acquaintance in Bowen prompted a bit of puzzling last month. His question concerned the Chillagoe Upside Down Tree. Had I ever heard of it? Did I know what it was?

My friend's cursory internet searches had turned up a few mentions of *Adansonia*, the famous Kimberley Boab, but nothing for the Chillagoe area. My immediate thought turned to the Bottle Trees that occur on the Chillagoe limestone. With a bit of imagination, one might see these deciduous *Brachychiton australis* trees as having their tops buried in the ground and their bare branches as roots waving high in the wind. However, Dr Ing Toh, who's spent a lot of time wandering the Chillagoe landscape, came up with a better suggestion...



Macropteranthes montana – a rare tree of the northern savannas.

Macropteranthes montana is a quite rare tree, restricted mostly to the Petford-Chillagoe area. With its bare, almost skeletal structure, it's always seems to be misplaced – like it deserves to be lost on the African plains being browsed by giraffes and antelopes. But is it the mysterious Chillagoe Upside Down Tree? Your feedback is most welcome.

Beyond Mt Isa

Some photos from a recent work trip to “Lady Loretta” Mine, some 114 km north west of Mt Isa. Although it had been a dry Wet, there

was still enough moisture around to support a few spectacular wildflowers.



The largest flowers I've ever seen on a wattle: *Acacia megalantha*. Each fluffy yellow ball is an individual flower.



Gossypium australe



Sesbania benthamiana



Grevillea wickhamii with lurking assassin bug.



Ptilotus nobilis

Looking back through the files...

The other day, I came across a Cairns Post clipping, dated 1941. Despite the age, I found the article remarkably relevant. The report was devoted to an address by Dr Hugo Flecker, founder of the North Queensland Naturalists Club. The article quotes Dr Flecker addressing a meeting in Innisfail...

“Wherever crotons are planted we find the same things everywhere—crotons in every garden, in every corner. They do not belong to here. I do not say they are not beautiful, but why in the name of fortune is not some consideration given to the really beautiful things actually in the jungle? The palms you have here in the jungle are quite as beautiful as anything you have here cultivated - date palms, coconut palms and various other things. There are other trees besides mango trees. Mangoes do not belong here; neither do coconuts.”

Bill Cooper video

Here is a link to a short video featuring Bill Cooper, the co-author of the magnificent “Fruits of the Australian Tropical Rainforest”. It focuses on his technique for painting birds, but should be of interest to all.

<http://vimeo.com/33327840>

New names

Ongoing progress in botanical science leads to improvements in our understanding of relationships between plant species. Much to the dismay of non-boffins, this leads to name changes. Here’s a few new names that have been published this year:

New South Wales populations of *Pseudoweinmannia lachnocarpa* are now known as *P. apetala*.

Laurie Jessup has named several *Symplocos* species - *Symplocos* sp. Boonjie (B.P.Hyland 2753) is now *S. boonjee*; *Symplocos* sp. North Mary (B.Gray 2543) is now *S. bullata*; *Symplocos* sp. Big Tableland (B.P.Hyland 10582) is now *S. cyanocarpa* var. *puberula*; *Symplocos* sp. Mt Finnigan (L.J. Brass 20129) is now *S. orbesia*.

Wilkiea sp. Palmerston (B.P.Hyland 80) is now *W. kaarruana*, named after the creek on the Palmerston on which it is found.

May Excursion

Meet at 10 am on Saturday 19th May at the property of Brian Moran and Anthony Lagois, 87 Falcon Street, Bayview Heights.

Please bring a chair (and lunch)!!!

Anthony has provided directions as follows:

- Turn off Mulgrave Road / Bruce Highway at the Cairns Gateway Resort/Caravan Park onto Anderson Road.
- Follow Anderson Road about 2 km, through 2 roundabouts after which it becomes Falcon Street.
- Follow Falcon Street until you get to the end cul-de-sac. The driveway for 87 Falcon Street comes off the cul-de-sac.
- **Please park on Falcon Street** and walk up the drive and follow the signs to number 87.
- Please use the intercom button located near the entry gates.

Articles Please!!!

If you have any original articles, or an idea for an article, please send them through.

Suitable material includes:

- Excursion reports
- Book reviews
- How to grow a particular species of native plant
- Advice of name changes
- Photos of plants in your garden that are flowering or fruiting.

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