



Society for Growing Australian Plants Cairns Branch

Newsletter 162

August 2016

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EXCURSION REPORT - EMERALD CREEK FALLS, 17 JULY 2016

Text by Mary Gandini. Photos by Mary Gandini and Rick Wong

Rain was predicted but didn't happen. Clouds prevailed when seven members gathered at the picnic area for lunch. Present were Sharon and Rick Wong, Coralie Stuart, Val and Graeme Carnie, David and Mary Gandini. With lunch and the meeting over we walked the ascending path to the falls. The area was very dry and the granite sand was like ball bearings in places. Mareeba was green but this area had missed the rain with the grasses (except for *Melinis repens* in full flower) very dry and many annuals gone.

Armed with Rob Jago's 2007 list we attempted to spot as many species as we could. In the picnic area there were many *Callitris intratropica*¹ and *Eucalyptus crebra*. Ascending the path, *Bursaria tenuifolia* with its thorny processes was common as was *Melaleuca viridiflora*. Very few species were in flower. *Grevillea parallela*, a couple of wattles and *Wahlenbergia caryophylloides* were exceptions. As Mary's brain got into gear we recognised more species but, as Rob's list used new family names for some, it was a case of page flipping to tick the list.

¹ Editor's Note - There's been ongoing debate about the status of the Emerald Creek *Callitris*. The leaves, cones and preferred habitat differ from the usual *Callitris intratropica* - notice how the Emerald Creek population grows right on the creek, where most *C. intratropica* grow on dry hills. The resolution to this debate awaits someone with the time and enthusiasm to sort it out.

The large trees with the red leaves were *Blepharocarya involucrigera* (Rose butternut). Some *Planchonia careya* also presented red leaves.

Hakea persiehana had produced one large capsule, *Grevillea glauca* had many “clothes pegs” and *Ficus rubiginosa forma rubiginosa* near the waterfall was in fruit. The small *Phyllanthus*? [possibly *Phyllanthus fuernrohrii*] and *Haemodorum coccineum* along the way also had many small fruits. *Canarium australianum var australianum* and *Corymbia erythrophloia* (with red and brown bark) were distinct trees on the side of the path. Red fungus adorned the branches of *Sersalisia sericea*. The falls had a good flow in spite of the dryness of the surrounds. No ferns were observed. Below are the plants we ticked on Rob’s list in alphabetical order.

Emerald Creek Falls species list

Compiled by Mary Gandini and Rob Jago. Names and families used here follow those listed in the Australian Plant Name Index biodiversity.org.au/nsl/services/apni). Species marked with an asterisk (*) are exotic.

Conifers

CUPRESSACEAE

Callitris intratropica

Monocots

ASPARAGACEAE

Lomandra multiflora

HAEMODORACEAE

Haemodorum coccineum

HEMEROCALLIDACEAE

Dianella caerulea var. vennata

PANDANACEAE

Pandanus cookii

POACEAE

**Melinis repens*

Eudicots

ACANTHACEAE



Rostellularia adscendens

APOCYNACEAE



Alyxia spicata

Hoya australis subsp. tenuipes

BIGNONIACEAE

Dolichandrone heterophylla

BURSERACEAE

Canarium australianum var. australianum

CAMPANULACEAE

Wahlenbergia caryophylloides

CASUARAINACEAE

Casuarina sp.

FABACEAE

Acacia bidwillii

Jacksonia thesioides

**Stylosanthes scabra*

Tephrosia sp.

LECYTHIDIACEAE

Planchonia careya

MALVACEAE

Grewia retusifolia

MORACEAE

Ficus rubiginosa forma rubiginosa

MYRTACEAE

Corymbia erythrophloia



Eucalyptus crebra (narrow-leaved ironbark)

Lophostemon grandiflorus

Melaleuca viridiflora

PHYLLANTHACEAE

Breynia cernua



Phyllanthus fuernrohrii

PITTOSPORACEAE

Bursaria incana

Busaria tenuifolia

PROTEACEAE

Grevillea glauca



Grevillea parallella
Hakea persiehania
Persoonia falcata

SANTALACEAE

Exocarpos latifolius
Santalum lanceolatum

SAPINDACEAE

Dodonaea lanceolata

SAPOTACEAE

Sersalisia sericea

THYMELEACEAE



Pimelea sericostachya

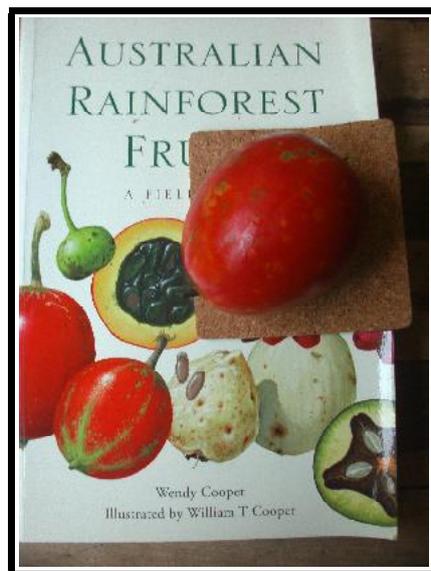


Eastern Yellow Robin (not a plant)

**BEAUTIFUL
 PLANTS OF THE
 TROPICS -
 TRICHOSANTHES
 PENTAPHYLLA**

Don Lawrie

While Pauline was crossing the flooded Russell River on Monday 22 May, a fruiting vine caught her eye: two strings of large, bright red fruit hung down almost to the flood water surface, each string a couple of metres or more long and loaded with fruit. She picked a specimen to bring home and when we got out the books found that the fruit was illustrated on the covers of Cooper's "Australian Rainforest Fruits" and Jones's "Climbing Plants".



Trichosanthes pentaphylla is "a vigorous climber with stems to 6m or more long... endemic to NE Qld". The fruit was ovoid, measuring 80 mm x 55 mm with a smooth red surface – easy to spot in a tree when ripe. The flowers only last half a day but are said to be attractive and there must be plenty of pollinators, judging by the vine that Pauline found. The seeds are embedded in a dark pulpy mess which was difficult to remove. I soaked most of the plentiful seeds overnight, after several changes of water, and will plant them in a seed raising mix.



Others I spread on dry cardboard without cleaning and will plant the cardboard as is. A third lot of seed I left in each of the cut halves of the fruit and filled with mix then put out in a warm shady spot, covered to deter rats etc.

I hope to get a host of young vines – if I do I'll share them with fellow Sgapper's –will report results next month.

EXCURSION REPORT - CAIRNS SGAP FALLS FOR ISABELLA

Don Lawrie

From the files - an unpublished report from 21 February 2016.

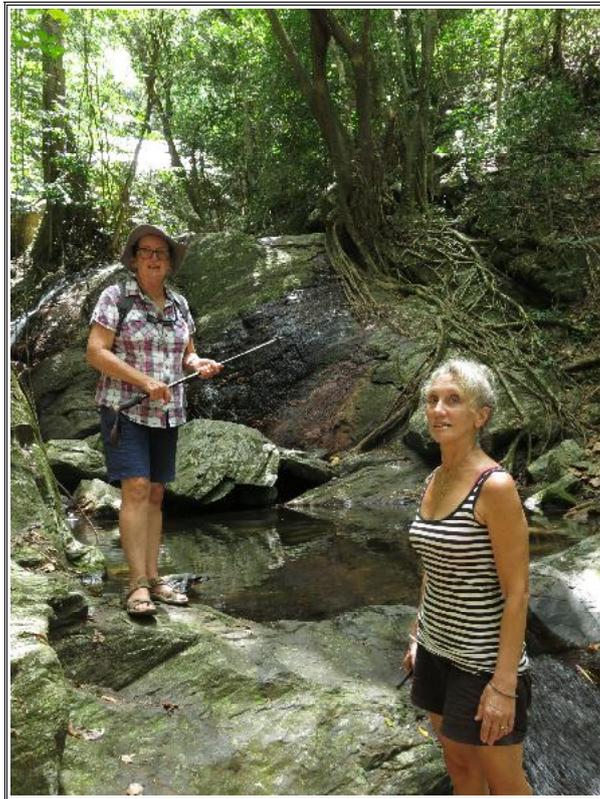
Q: What do Cairns SGAPPER'S do when the temperature is 38 degrees?

A: Find a shady rainforest creek with a trickling waterfall and pretend that we are on a Botanical fact-finding expedition

We had a good roll-up for our first outing of the year and it was good to catchup with old friends after the break. Lunch in a shady spot was accompanied by finds of some interesting trackside plants. A small *Argyrodendron trifoliolatum*, Brown Tulip Oak, must have mature cousins nearby since the winged "helicopter" fruit were plentiful in the waterholes. These light fruit when thrown into the air come spiralling down -as Ing demonstrated to his delighted young son.

Some small vines lined the

track and Stuart pointed out a small specimen of one of the Native Grapes, *Cissus hastata*, which on close inspection had several distinctive features : the leaf base was as expected a broad hastate shape, the stem was not smoothly cylindrical but ribbed. With a



conjuror's flourish, Stuart inverted a leaf and we were treated to an unexpected, pretty dark red underside of the lamina. *Cissus* vines produce a round purple fruit, very similar in appearance to a grape, reputedly edible but not very palatable. Experts are said to be able to identify a *Cissus* species by the degree of unpalatability. (That's not exactly what Stu said, but I won't spoil a good anecdote).

A small clearing appeared to have been made by a too-

vigorous growth of a Climbing Fig, *Ficus pantoniana* which had caused the collapse of its host tree. The Fig vine was fruiting copiously and will be a feast for figivores when the fruit ripen. The track followed the creek bank for a while then

petered out in a line of rocks which formed a series of little cascades which will be a real waterfall when our delayed wet season arrives.

Feature plant of the day was a rare sight: One, two and then a clump of the Cinnamon Orchid *Corymborkis veratrifolia* in flower. This is a terrestrial orchid usually found in the vicinity of a creek bank, but I had never before seen them in flower. The plants grow to about a metre in

height and the flowers were a delight to see for the first time. The cinnamon perfume of the flowers was not apparent and I suspect that it may arise at dawn or dusk when pollinators are likely to be on the wing.

So, another SGAP expedition to enable us to admire and understand our forest surrounds; next meeting is the AGM and members will again be lobbying fiercely for positions of influence.

NOTES FROM TOWNSVILLE BRANCH

Grasses of Townsville

Nanette Hooker says her book,
“Grasses of Townsville” is at

<http://researchonline.jcu.edu.au/44143/>

It is freely available.

Key to Eucalypts

MESSAGE FROM DR BETSY
JACKES

Euclid is now available online -
preliminary version only.

<http://keyserver.lucidcentral.org:8080/euclid/player.jsp?keyId=2>

Upcoming Excursion to the Burra Range, 17-18 September

John Elliott advises:

Townsville Native Plants
Queensland had a good outing a
few weeks ago, and are pleased to
report that the Burra Range is in
good shape [after some quite
devastating recent bushfires],
having had some rain, and is well
on the mend.

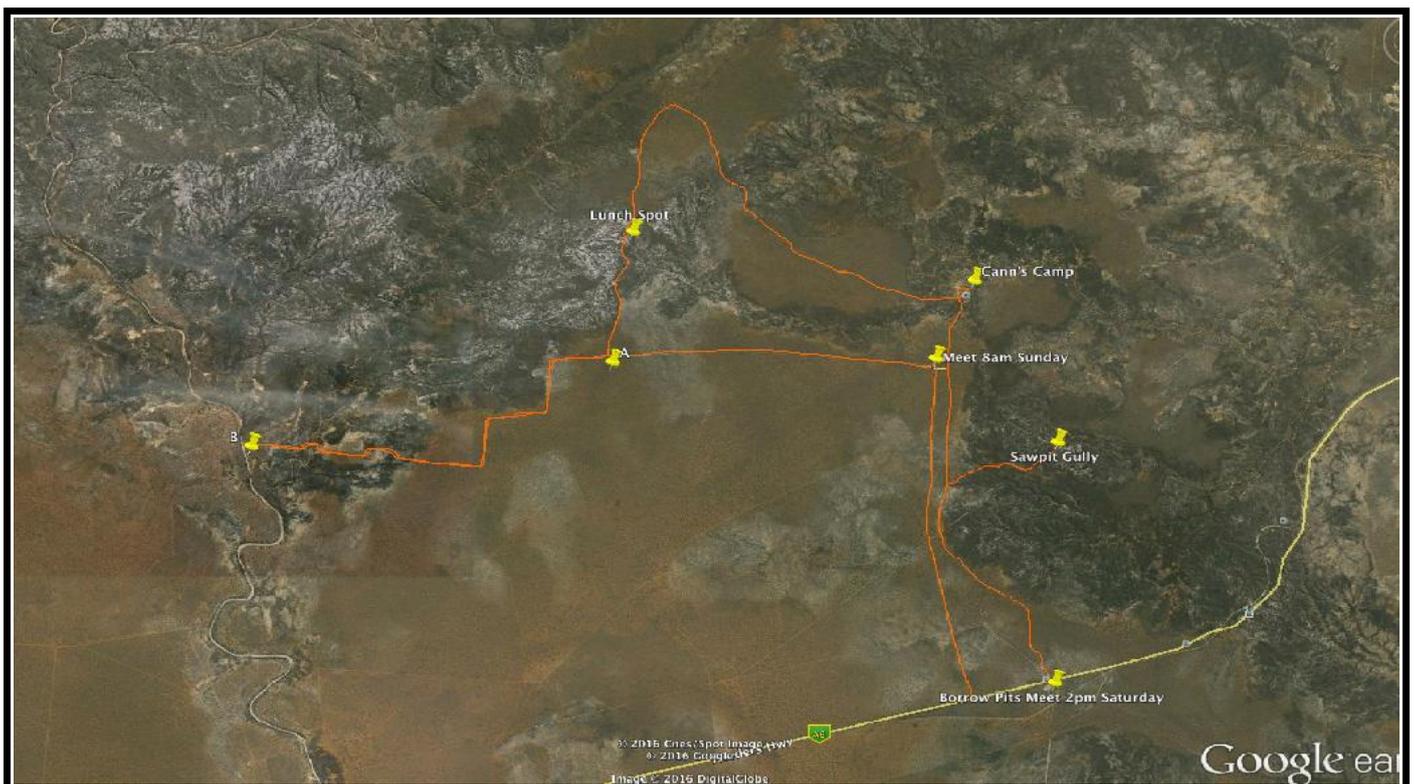
We took advantage of some of the
new tracks that Queensland
National Parks have blazed,
particularly along the fence lines
and ended up driving 45kms in
the park in a large loop. We found
Acacia gnidium which none of our
group had spied before, and
Hardbergia perbrevidens in great
profusion (see
<http://sgaptownsville.org.au/Hardbergia-perbrevidens.html>)

This travelling seriously reduced
our ‘plant’ time and as most of
these areas are new to us we have
decided to have a weekend trip in
September to accomplish some
more exploration, particularly on
what looks like an interesting
track to Torrens Creek over the
sandstone. And there are plenty of
other sites to explore if anyone
wants to stay longer, for instance
Poison Valley.

Attached is a map of our
proposed trip in the park and also
full details of where and when.
Please pass all this on to
whomever might be interested. I
will send the details separately to
the Tablelands branch.

For more information, John can be
contacted directly by email:

jw-elliott@aapt.net.au



WHAT'S HAPPENING

Cairns Branch

Meetings and excursions on the 3rd Sunday of the month.

21 August 2016 – Revegetation sites on Chris Rossi's farm, Alooomba.

Meeting Time: 10.30 for an 11 departure. Meet at the 3rd turnoff to Alooomba, (across the Behana Creek) near the Moller Road turnoff on the Bruce Highway, 11 km S of Gordonvale.

18 September 2016
– Cattana Wetlands, Smithfield

7-9 October 2016 - Yabba Capricorn - see www.sgapqld.org.au/whats-on/biennial-yabba for more details. **Please note that Qld Region are offering to help with the expenses of attendees from this branch**

October 2016 – Jumrun Nature Walk, Kuranda.

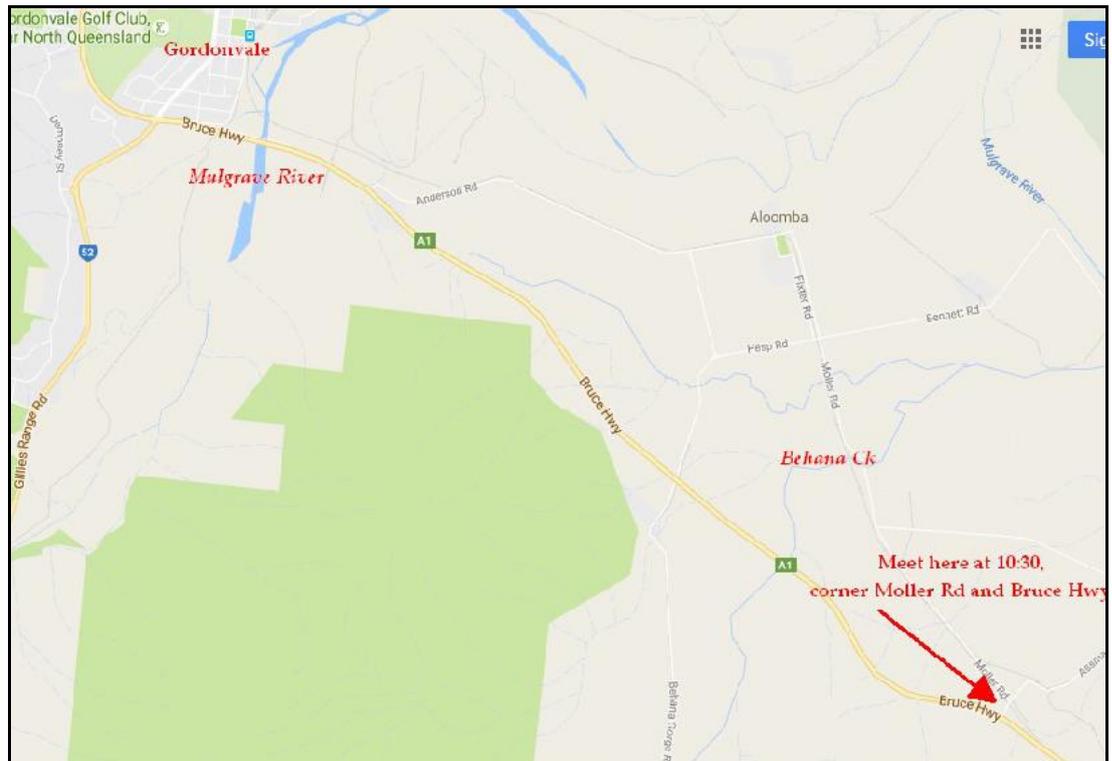
Tablelands Branch

Meetings on the 4th Wednesday of the month. Excursion the following Sunday. Any queries, please contact Chris Jaminon on 4091 4565 or email hjaminon@bigpond.com

Townsville Branch

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

14 August 2016 - Jezzine Barracks, Townsville. Meet at the main entrance (cnr Isley and Mitchell St) at 9:00.



SGAP CAIRNS BRANCH 2016 COMMITTEE

President: Tony Roberts (t.roberts@cairns.qld.gov.au)

Vice President: Pauline Lawie

Secretary: Coralie Stuart

Treasurer: Val Carnie

Newsletter: Stuart Worboys (worboys1968@yahoo.com.au)

Webmaster: Tony Roberts