

Society for Growing Australian Plants Cairns Branch

NEWSLETTER

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Excursion report August 2019

ROAMING THE RUSSELL WITH CAIRNS SGAP

Don Lawie

They say that getting there is half the fun; we took the scenic route from Bellenden Ker landing to the beach village of Russell Heads on our August excursion. Admiral Patsy marshaled her Dunkirkian small boat fleet for the trip with herself and Coralie leading the expedition and three follow-up boats skippered by husband Peter, son Jack and nephew Peter.

We commenced with a short trip upstream to Junction Creek in search of a reported

sighting of the Stag/Elk horn *Platycerium bifurcatum*, a Tableland species rarely sighted in this vicinity where the dominant *Platycerium* species is *P. hillii*.



Boating down the Russell River estuary, with the magnificent Bellenden Ker Range forming a backdrop.

We took the opportunity to admire the confluence of the creek and river encircled by oversize crops of the Mangrove Lily *Crinum pedunculatum* which prompted Sub-inspector Johnstone to name this creek Crinum Creek on the occasion of the first European penetration of this area in 1873. I caught a good sized flathead here many years ago, fishing from a sandbank in the time BC - Before Crocodiles became a menace.



An oversize crop of *Crinum pedunculatum*.

We made our way down river, pausing frequently to observe the riverside vegetation. First flowering plant was a White Hazelwood *Symplocos puberulum*, the small tree covered in white blossom. This plant has been renamed from the former, truly glorious title of *Symplocos cochinsinensis subspecies jonesii forma pilioscula*. It took me a long time to learn that and now it is redundant,



There were frequent pauses along the river for plant inspections.

There was a big fishing competition for the weekend and the associated heavy boat traffic had caused the normally ubiquitous crocodiles to withdraw deep into their swampy retreats. Good-oh, says I as our compliant captain showed us several favourite croc sighting areas. The Golden, Pencil and Bottlebrush orchids which festoon the riverbanks later in the year were not yet in flower but we did sight one small flowering Pencil *Dendrobium teretifolium*, (Yes Mr editor I am sadly behind the taxonomic times [Editor: It's *Dendrobium calamiforme*!]) in a mangrove tree, possibly a *Lumnitzera* species, along with flowering Golden *Dendrobium discolor*, *Cymbidium madidum* with its sweetly perfumed winter flowers and the

enchancing fairy fan flowers of an *Oberonia complanata*. Such collections are not uncommon when a tree that is epiphyte compatible takes on a garden of orchids, and often ferns as well.

We eventually arrived at the Heads, a delightfully informal settlement of holiday and retirement homes with no roads or fences but with peace and friendliness in abundance. We were treated to the now legendary Penny family hospitality as we gathered around tables and chairs in the front yard and enjoyed morning tea. (Who made those delicious little cupcake type things?). A mild sunny winter day, an onshore breeze, shade from a diverse treed canopy, good company and interesting conversations - we could have spent the afternoon there but Patsy cracked the whip and we set off for a botanising walk along the intake track.



The beach at Russell Heads is littered with logs.

First plant was a Cowley Myrtle *Lithomyrtus obtusa*, formerly *Myrtella obtusa*, which occur in dense drifts in the cleared space below the powerline. These pretty plants have garden potential but are nearly impossible to grow from seed or cutting. The track is over a kilometre long, just inland from the beach. It traverses patches of

light open forest marked by the wattles *Acacia crassicarpa* and *Acacia flavescens* and Carbeen *Corymbia tessellaris*, mangroves stranded in beach sand as a result of a cyclone-induced tidal surge, and patches of rainforest understorey plants. Numerous flowering and fruiting specimens of Banana Bush/Gondola Bush *Tabernaemontana orientalis* caught the eye with their vivid fruit and we found one specimen of the larger-fruited *T. pandacqui*, formerly *Ervatamia pandacqui*. A single sighting was made of Native Arrowroot *Tacca leontopetaloides* all brown and ready to return underground to await the end of year storms.



The sweetly scented flowers of *Cymbidium madidum* were spotted.

A small grove of the well-named Cassowary Plum (I have removed as many as six *Cerbera* fruit from a Cassowary scat to plant), *Cerbera manghas* is about to flower and fruit, and occasional ground hugging patches of the Comb Fern *Schizaea dichotoma* clumped in the dark sandy soil. Dr Bob told us that this plant was collected by Banks and Solander in 1770 and is difficult to grow since it relies

on a symbiotic fungal relationship.

At this stage Pauline and I cut back to the beach and strolled back to Penny's, enjoying the beach, the view of Frankland Islands (named by Cook) and the frontal vegetation. Frequently seen were fruiting Beach Pandanus *Pandanus tectorius*. There are two species of *Pandanus* trees growing upriver one of which is *Pandanus* sp Russell River for the time being. The other has the peculiar habit of not having female plants - it reproduces by producing male Pups on the trunk which when the time is right plunge into passing floodwaters and float until they find a new home. Bob says that the confused taxonomic situation of the Pandan Group can only be resolved by a study trip to New Caledonia and New Guinea as well as Queensland Wet Tropics. I think that this is a perfect subject for Crowd Funding-shall we discuss?

A late lunch was enjoyed and vice-president Pauline conducted an informal business session, welcoming Tableland members Chris, Renee and Peter. Arrangements were made for a reconnaissance mission of a Woopen Creek Refuge and members expressed concern that the proposed Yabba 2020 arrangements had not taken into account the considerable amount of research made by our members. Tina had good news re her dogged investigation of the legalities of collecting native plants.

Species List - Bellenden Ker Landing to Russell Heads

Rob Jago

FERNS AND ALLIES

ASPLENIACEAE

Asplenium nidus Birds Nest Fern

POLYPODIACEAE

Drynaria rigidula Basket Fern
Platynerium bifurcatum Elkhorn Fern
Platynerium hillii Northern Elkhorn Fern
Pyrrosia longifolia

PSILOTACEAE

Psilotum nudum Skeleton Fork Fern

PTERIDACEAE

Acrostichum speciosum Mangrove Fern

GYMNOSPERMS

ARAUCARIACEAE

Agathis robusta Queensland Kauri Pine

PODOCARPACEAE

Podocarpus grayae Weeping Brown Pine

FLOWERING PLANTS - DICOTYLEDONS

ANNONACEAE

**Annona glabra* Pond Apple

APOCYNACEAE

Alstonia scholaris Milky Pine
Alyxia spicata Chain Fruit
Hoya australis subsp. *tenuipes*

ARALIACEAE

Polyscias australiana Ivory Basswood
Schefflera actinophylla Umbrella Tree

CAESALPINIACEAE

Caesalpinia crista
Cynometra iripa Wrinkle Pod Mangrove

CELASTRACEAE

Hippocratea barbata Knott Vine
Salacia chinensis Lolly Berry

CLUSIACEAE

Calophyllum sil Blush Touriga

COMBRETACEAE

Terminalia sericocarpa Damson

DILLENIACEAE

Dillenia alata Red Beech
Tetracera nordtiana var. *nordtiana*

ELAEOAGNACEAE

Elaeagnus triflora Milla Milla

EUPHORBIACEAE

Excoecaria agallocha Milky Mangrove

FABACEAE

Austrosteenisia stipularis
Millettia pinnata Pongamia
Ormosia ormondii Yellow Bean

LAMIACEAE

Clerodendrum inerme

LECYTHIDACEAE

Barringtonia racemosa Mango Pine

LORANTHACEAE

Dendrophthoe curvata Mistletoe

MALVACEAE

Hibiscus tiliaceus Cottonwood

MELIACEAE

Xylocarpus moluccensis Cedar Mangrove

MIMOSACEAE

Acacia celsa Black Wattle
Entada phaseoloides Match Box Bean

MORACEAE

Ficus virens var. *virens* White Fig

MYRSINACEAE

Aegiceras corniculatum River Mangrove

MYRTACEAE

Acmena hemilampra subsp. *hemilampra*
Osbornia octodonta Myrtle Mangrove
Syzygium tierneyanum River Cherry

PROTEACEAE

Darlingia darlingiana Brown Silky Oak

RHIZOPHORACEAE

Bruguiera gymnorhiza
Bruguiera parviflora
Rhizophora apiculata

RUBIACEAE

Atractocarpus fitzalanii subsp. *fitzalanii*
Myrmecodia beccarii Ant Plant

STERCULIACEAE

Heritiera littoralis Looking Glass Mangrove

SYMPLOCACEAE

Symplocos puberula White Hazelwood

FLOWERING PLANTS-MONOCOTYLEDONS

AMARYLLIDACEAE

Crinum pedunculatum Swamp Lily

ARACEAE

Epipremnum pinnatum Native Monstera

ARECACEAE

Archontophoenix alexandrae
Hydriastele wendlandiana Water Palm
Licuala ramsayi Queensland Fan Palm

FLAGELLARIACEAE

Flagellaria indica Supplejack

ORCHIDACEAE

Cymbidium madidum Giant Boat-lip Orchid
Dendrobium discolor Golden Orchid
Dockrillia calamiformis

PANDANACEAE

Pandanus solmslaubachii Swamp Pandan
Pandanus sp. (Russell River RFK 7031)

Species List - Russell Heads to Freshwater Creek Walk

FERNS & ALLIES

ASPLENIACEAE

Asplenium nidus Birds Nest Fern

NEPHROLEPIDACEAE

Nephrolepis oblitterata

POLYPODIACEAE

Drynaria rigidula Basket Fern
Platyserium hillii Northern Elkhorn Fern

SCHIZAEACEAE

Schizaea dichotoma Branched Comb Fern

GYMNOSPERMS

CYCADACEAE

Cycas media subsp. *banksii*

PODOCARPACEAE

Podocarpus grayae Weeping Brown Pine

FLOWERING PLANTS-DICOTYLEDONS

ACANTHACEAE

Pseuderanthemum variabile

ANACARDIACEAE

Buchanania arborescens Satinwood
Euroschinus falcatus var. *falcatus*
Semecarpus australiensis Tar Tree

ANNONACEAE

Melodorum leichhardtii Acid Drop Vine
Polyalthia nitidissima Canary Beech

APOCYNACEAE

Alstonia muelleriana Hard Milkwood
Alyxia spicata Chain Fruit
**Catharanthus roseus* Periwinkle
Cerbera manghas Dog Bane
Gymnanthera oblonga Harpoon Bud
Hoya australis subsp. *tenuipes*
Melodinus australis Bellbird Vine
Parsonsia velutina Velvet Silkpod
Tabernaemontana orientalis
Tabernaemontana pandacaqui

ARALIACEAE

Polyscias australiana Ivory Basswood
Polyscias elegans Celerywood
Schefflera actinophylla Umbrella Tree

ASTERACEAE

Coronidium rupicola
**Praxelis clematidea* Praxelis
**Sphagneticola trilobata* Singapore Daisy
Wollastonia uniflora Beach Sunflower

BIGNONIACEAE

Neosepicaea jucunda Jucunda Vine

BURSERACEAE
Canarium australianum var. *australianum*

CAESALPINIACEAE
Intsia bijuga Kwila

CASUARINACEAE
Casuarina equisetifolia subsp. *incana*

CELASTRACEAE
Hedraianthera porphyropetala
Hippocratea barbata Knott Vine
Salacia chinensis Lolly Berry

CLUSIACEAE
Calophyllum inophyllum
Calophyllum sil Blush Touriga

COMBRETACEAE
Terminalia catappa Sea Almond
Terminalia muelleri

CONNARACEAE
Rourea brachyandra Water Vine

CONVOLVULACEAE
Erycibe coccinea
Ipomoea pes-caprae subsp. *brasiliensis*

ELAEOCARPACEAE
Elaeocarpus grandis Silver Quandong

EUPHORBIACEAE
Codiaeum variegatum var. *moluccanum*
Macaranga involucrata var. *mallotoides*

FABACEAE
Austrosteenisia blackii var. *blackii*
**Crotalaria pallida* var. *obovata*
Derris trifoliata Coastal Derris
Erythrina vareigata Coral Tree
Millettia pinnata Pongamia
Vigna marina Dune Bean

GOODENIACEAE
Scaevola taccada Cardwell Cabbage

LAMIACEAE
Clerodendrum longiflorum var. *glabrum*
Premna serratifolia Coastal Premna

LAURACEAE
Beilschmiedia obtusifolia
Cryptocarya cunninghamii Coconut Laurel
Cryptocarya hypospodia Northern Laurel
Cryptocarya laevigata Glossy Walnut
Cryptocarya vulgaris Northern Laurel
Litsea fawcettiana Bollywood

LECYTHIDACEAE
Planchonia careya Cocky Apple

MALVACEAE
Hibiscus tiliaceus Cottonwood
**Sida cordifolia* Flannel Weed
Thespesia populnea Pacific Rosewood

MELIACEAE

Melia azedarach White Cedar
Vavaea amicornum Vavaea
Xylocarpus granatum

MENISPERMACEAE
Hypserpa laurina
Pycnarrhena novoguineensis
Stephania japonica var. *discolor*

MIMOSACEAE
Acacia crassicaarpa Brown Wattle
Acacia flavescens Red Wattle
Acacia polystachya Ellis Beach Wattle

MORACEAE
Ficus benjamina Weeping Fig
Ficus congesta var. *congesta*
Ficus drupacea Red Fig
Ficus microcarpa Small-fruited Fig
Ficus opposita Sandpaper Fig

MYRISTICACEAE
Myristica globosa subsp. *muelleri* Nutmeg

MYRTACEAE
Corymbia tessellaris Moreton Bay Ash
Lithomyrtus obtusa Beach Myrtle
Melaleuca leucadendra Tea Tree
Syzygium cormiflorum Bumpy Satinash
Syzygium forte subsp. *forte*

NYCTAGINACEAE
Pisonia umbellifera Cabbagewood

OLACACEAE
Ximenia americana Yellow Plum

OLEACEAE
Chionanthus ramiflora Native Olive
Jasminum elongatum Native Jasmin

PHYLLANTHACEAE
Breynia cernua Fart Tree
Cleistanthus apodus

PIPERACEAE
Piper hederaceum var. *hederaceum*

PITTOSPORACEAE
Pittosporum tinifolium

PROTEACEAE
Darlingia darlingiana Brown Silky Oak

RHAMNACEAE
Alphitonia excelsa Red Ash
Colubrina asiatica Serpent Vine

RHIZOPHORACEAE
Carallia brachiata Corky Bark

RUBIACEAE
Aidia racemosa Archer Cherry
Atractocarpus fitzalanii subsp. *fitzalanii*
Cyclophyllum multiflorum
Morinda citrifolia Rotten Cheese fruit

SALICACEAE

Scolopia braunii Flintwood

SAPINDACEAE

Cupaniopsis anacardioides Tuckeroo
Cupaniopsis foveolata White Tamarind
Guioa acutifolia Glossy Tamarind
Jagera pseudorhus var. *pseudorhus*

SAPOTACEAE

Palaquium galactoxylum
Planchonella obovata Yellow Boxwood
Pleioluma xerocarpa Blush Coondoo

STEMONURACEAE

Gomphandra australiana Buff Beech

STERCULIACEAE

Sterculia quadrifida Peanut tree

VERBENACEAE

**Stachytarpheta jamaicensis* Blue
Snakeweed

VITACEAE

Cissus vinosa Purple Leaf Grape

FLOWERING PLANTS-MONOCOTYLEDONS

AMARYLLIDACEAE

Crinum pedunculatum Swamp Lily

ARECACEAE

Archontophoenix alexandrae
Calamus caryotoides
**Cocos nucifera* Coconut

COMMELINACEAE

Commelina ensifolia Sailor's Purse

CYPERACEAE

Cyperus pedunculatus Pineapple Sedge

HEMEROCALLIDACEAE

Dianella bambusifolia Flax Lily
Dianella caerulea var. *vannata*

LAXMANNIACEAE

Cordyline manners-suttoniae
Eustrephus latifolius Wombat Berry

ORCHIDACEAE

Cymbidium madidum Giant Boat-lip Orchid
Dendrobium discolor Golden Orchid
Dockrillia calamiformis

PANDANACEAE

Pandanus tectorius Beach Pandan

POACEAE

Eriachne pallescens var. *pallescens*
Imperata cylindrica Blady Grass
Ischaemum muticum

SMILACEAE

Smilax australis Sarsaparilla Vine
Smilax blumei

TACCACEAE

Tacca leontopetaloides

News

Cairns Botanic Gardens

After 30 years of service, David Warmington has retired as curator of the Cairns Botanic Gardens. Dr Charles Clarke is acting curator until a replacement is found. Dr Clarke, who has spent many years in south-east Asia researching *Nepenthes*, has been working as nursery manager.

Dogs balls renamed

Some may have noticed an ABC news article recently, reporting the renaming (or, more correctly, recircumscription) of *Grewia retusifolia*. Australian specimens are clearly different from overseas specimens, and have been redescribed as *Grewia savannicola*.

Marsdenia araujacea rediscovered

This years edition of the Queensland Herbarium's technical journal, *Austrobaileya*, reports on the rediscovery of the vine, *Marsdenia araujacea*. Long believed extinct, this species was first recorded from the vicinity of the Kamerunga research station. It has now been identified in dry rainforest near Hopevale.

BEAUTIFUL PLANTS OF THE TROPICS

Stuart Worboys

White flowered Grevilleas and Hakeas of northern Queensland

At this time of year, roadsides on the Tablelands and beyond are brightened by the flowering of native *Grevilleas*. They're all dripping with nectar, and hugely popular with honeyeaters and lorikeets. The most common of these is the brilliant orange fern-leaf grevillea (*G. pteridifolia*), but there are several white-flowered species are also common and which can be difficult to identify. I've thrown together the following key to help identify the various white flowered *Grevilleas* and *Hakeas* that are found along the coast and ranges northwards from Townsville¹.

1	Most leaves > 1 cm across	2
	Most leaves < 1 cm across	7
2	Rainforest trees	3
	Tree or shrubs of woodland or savanna habitats	4
3	Undersurface of mature leaves covered in silky brown hairs, giving the surface a glossy brown appearance (young leaves may be silvery-grey). Fruits 13-19 mm long.	<i>Grevillea baileyana</i>
	Undersurface of mature leaves covered in silky white hairs, giving the surface a silvery-grey appearance. Fruits 17-26 mm long.	<i>Grevillea hilliana</i>
4	Leaves length:breadth ratio < 10, elliptic (oval shaped).	5
	Leaves length:breadth ratio > 10, falcate (crescent moon shaped) - e.g. Figure 1.	6
5	Shrub. inflorescences and fruits in short-stemmed axillary clusters, much shorter than leaves. Leaves glabrous with several pale longitudinal veins. Fruit brown and elongated, with a prominent	<i>Hakea benthamii</i>

¹The key is adapted in part from Bean, A.R. (2017). Species of *Grevillea*, in: KeyBase: Flowering plants of Queensland, <keybase.rbq.vic.gov.au/keys/show/6776> [Seen: 10-09-2019], and Bean, A.R. (2019). Species of *Hakea*, in: KeyBase: Flowering plants of Queensland, <keybase.rbq.vic.gov.au/keys/show/9640> [Seen: 12-08-2019].

	beak (Figure 2).	
	Shrub or tree. Inflorescences approximately equal in length to the leaves. Leaves hairy with a single prominent midvein. Fruit dark brown and round (bushman's clothespeg).	<i>Grevillea glauca</i>
6	Leaves with a distinct midrib. Bark dark, papery or flaky. Flowers yellow, singly or in pairs in leaf axils.	<i>Persoonia falcata</i>
	Leaves lacking a distinct midrib. Bark dark, corky, fissured. Flowers creamy white, in many-flowered terminal panicles.	<i>Grevillea mimosoides</i>
7	Leaves terete (round in cross-section).	8
	Leaves flat.	9
8	New growth rusty-hairy. Mature plant a well-formed small tree 8-10 m tall.	<i>Hakea persiehana</i>
	New growth without rusty hairs. Mature plant a gnarly shrub rarely more than 3 m tall.	<i>Hakea lorea</i>
9	Leaves entire or pinnately lobed with few to many slender lobes, the leaves (or leaf lobes) more than 20 times longer than wide.	10
	Leaves, leaf lobes or leaflets less than 20 times longer than wide	12
10	Leaves entire or pinnately lobed, leaves or leaf lobes 0.5-4 mm wide (Figure 1, Figure 3).	<i>G. parallela</i>
	Leaves entire, 4-10 mm wide.	11
11	Leaves 20-50 cm long, with 7-13 longitudinal veins; mature fruits 15-18 mm long.	<i>Grevillea striata</i>
	Leaves 9-21 cm long, with 1 or 3 longitudinal veins; mature fruits 25-28 mm long.	<i>Grevillea mcgillivrayi</i> (formerly <i>G. coriacea</i>)
12	Leaves on mature plants pinnatisect (Figure 4), pinnate or	<i>Grevillea sessilis</i>

bipinnate. Leaf undersurface much paler than upper surface.

Leaves on mature plants usually entire, lacking a distinct midrib, same colour on both sides. Bark dark, corky, fissured.

Grevillea mimosoides



Figure 1. Leaves of *Grevillea parallela*.



Figure 2. *Hakea benthamii*



Figure 3. *Grevillea parallela*



Figure 4. Pinnatisect leaves have deeply lobed margins.



Figure 5. *Grevillea sessilis*

WHAT'S HAPPENING...

Cairns Branch

If you intend to attend this excursion, please RSVP to secretary@sgapcairns.org.au

Sunday 15 September 2019.

Working bee at the garden of Mary and David Gandini. Sadly, Mary and David can no longer maintain the garden, and we will be working to ready one of Cairns' best native gardens for sale.

What to bring:

- your usual gardening

safety gear (gloves, knee pads, sun protection)

- tools such as weeding forks and small spades
- something to share for morning tea

When: 10 am (note earlier starting time).

Where: 3 Moowooga Street, Earlville. Starting at Stockland Shopping Centre, turn onto Balaclava Road. Drive to the end of Balaclava Road - at the end it will turn sharply left into Bauhinia Avenue. Take the first left into Croucher Street. This turns sharply to the right and becomes Moowooga Street. Follow Moowooga to the roundabout at its end. Number 3

is accessed by a steep, well-shaded driveway that leads off the cul-de-sac at the end of the street..

Townsville Branch

Meetings on the 2nd Wednesday of each month at 7pm, Annandale Community Centre. Excursions the following Sunday. Website: www.npqtownsville.org.au

Tablelands Branch

Meetings on the 4th Wednesday of each month at 7:30 pm, Tolga CWA Hall. Excursions the following Sunday.

Excursion officers: Bert and Chris Jaminon, 40914565.



Society for Growing Australian Plants, Inc.
Cairns Branch.

www.sgapcairns.org.au

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2018-2019 COMMITTEE

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