

Society for Growing Australian Plants Cairns Branch

NEWSLETTER

November 2019

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Excursion report October 2019

BEHANA CREEK

Stuart Worboys

Sunday 20 October was reliably warm and humid in the lowland Wet Tropics. A modest group from SGAP Cairns gathered in the shade of the tall trees at Smithy Holmes Park, just south of the tiny canefields village of Aloomba. The park echoed with the gurgling calls of orioles, and the *Castanospermum australe* were in full flower, attracting hordes of excited rainbow lorikeets.

Smithy Holmes Park lies on the southern side

of Behana Creek, just a kilometre or two from its confluence with the Mulgrave River. The creek here is clean, shallow and sandy, attracting local families for a swim in the cool, crocodile-free waters. The creek is shaded by a narrow band of replanted forest, largely native, which recreate the "simple-complex semi-deciduous notophyll to mesophyll vine forest on lowland alluvium" which was once extensive along all the lowland creeks and rivers in this part of the world.



Old man fig (Ficus virens) with its roots in the shallow waters of Behana Creek.

During our slow wander through the park we found a surprising diversity in such a small area. Massive old figs, notably *Ficus virens* and *Ficus benjamina*, had clearly slowed raging floodwaters that are common in this part of the world, as their roots were full of mud and debris to a height way above our heads. Another spectacular large banana fig, *Ficus pleurocarpa*, may have been

planted on site. *Terminalia microcarpa* was prominent in the canopy, resplendent in its shiny new spring flush.

We stopped on the creek to look at epiphytes. The poor *Vittaria* ferns were in a sorry, drought-stricken state. We managed to find some Golden Orchids (*Dendrobium discolor*) and the ubiquitous pencil orchids, *Dendrobium calamiforme*.

We crossed the causeway and climbed away from the creek's frequent flood zone. Along the roadside here we found a whole new mix of trees: *Neolitsea brassii*, *Rhysotoechia robertsonii* and *Adenanthera pavonina*. The northern blood-vine, *Austrosteenisia blackii* festooned the edge of the forest with its pink-crimson flowers, and the grapes *Tetrastigma nitens* were offering their fruits to passing birds. At this point, Bob made the best find for the day - a small *Canarium acutifolium* tree. An attractive modest-sized plant with large leaves, this tree is listed as Vulnerable in State legislation.

The afternoon ended with a cup of tea back at the park, before heading home.

Species list

Sharren Wong, Tony Roberts, Rob Jago and Stuart Worboys

Ferns and Allies

ASPLENIACEAE

Asplenium nidus

LYGODIACEAE

Lygodium reticulatum

OPHIOGLOSSACEAE

Ophioglossum pendulum

POLYPODIACEAE

Platyserium hillii

Pyrrosia longifolia

PTERIDACEAE

Vittaria ensiformis

Conifers and Allies

ARAUCARIACEAE

Agathis robusta

PINACEAE

**Pinus caribaea*

Ancient Flowering Plants

LAURACEAE

Beilschmiedia obtusifolia

Cryptocarya murrayi

Cryptocarya hypospodia

Cryptocarya triplinervis var. *riparia*

Litsea leefeana

Neolitsea brassii

Neolitsea dealbata

PIPERACEAE

Piper hederaceum var. *hederaceum*

Monocots

ARACEAE

Epipremnum pinnatum

**Syngonium podophyllum*

ARECACEAE

Archontophoenix alexandrae

**Caryota urens*

Ptychosperma elegans

ASPARAGACEAE

Lomandra hystrix

FLAGELLARIACEAE

Flagellaria indica

ORCHIDACEAE

Dendrobium calamiforme

Dendrobium discolor

Eudicots

ANACARDIACEAE

Euroschinus falcata

**Mangifera indica*

APOCYNACEAE

Ichnocarpus frutescens

Parsonsia sp.

APIACEAE

Centella asiatica

ARALIACEAE

Polyscias australianum

Schefflera actinophylla

BURSERACEAE

Canarium acutifolium

Canarium australianum

CLUSIACEAE

Calophyllum sil

COMBRETACEAE

**Combretum indicum*

Terminalia catappa

Terminalia microcarpa

CUCURBITACEAE

**Momordica charantia*

DILLENIACEAE

Tetracera daemeliana

Tetracera nordtiana

ELAEOCARPACEAE

Elaeocarpus grandis

EUPHORBIACEAE

Alchornea thozetii

Macaranga tanarius

Macaranga subdentata

FABACEAE

Acacia celsa

Acacia mangium

Adenanthera pavonina

Austrosteenisia blackii (pictured)



Castanospermum australe

Mucuna gigantea

Pongamia/Millettia pinnata

LAMIACEAE

Clerodendrum floribundum

Oxera splendida (pictured)



LECYTHIDIACEAE

Barringtonia calyptrata

MALVACEAE

Commersonia macrostipulata

MELIACEAE

Dysoxylum gaudichaudianum

Melia azedarach

Toona ciliata

MORACEAE

Ficus benjamina

Ficus congesta

Ficus hispida

Ficus opposita

Ficus pleurocarpa

Ficus virens

Trophis scandens

MYRISTICACEAE

Myristica globosa

MYRTACEAE

Melaleuca leucadendra

Rhodamnia sessiliflora

Syzygium cormiflorum

Syzygium tierneyanum

Tristaniopsis exiliiflora

OLEACEAE

Chionanthus ramiflora

PHYLLANTHACEAE

Cleistanthus apodus (pictured)



Glochidion philippicum

PROTEACEAE

Darlingia darlingiana

Helicia nortoniana

RHAMNACEAE

Alphitonia oblata

RHIZOPHORACEAE

Carallia brachiata

ROSACEAE

Rubus moluccanus

RUBIACEAE

Nauclea orientalis

RUTACEAE

Citrus x jambhiri

Melicope elleryana

Melicope rubra

SAPINDACEAE

Castanospora alphandii

Guioa acutifolia

Rhysotoechia robertsoniana

Toechima erythrocarpum (pictured)



SAPOTACEAE

Pleioluma xerocarpa

THYMELAEACEAE

Wikstroemia indica

VITACEAE

Cissus hastata

Leea novoguineense

Tetrastigma nitens

XANTHOPHYLLACEAE

Xanthophyllum octandrum



Rob points out a *Ficus pleurocarpa*, probably planted at the site



BONES KNOB AND BARNEY'S SPRINGS

Stuart Worboys

On 26th October, Sharren Wong and myself joined SGAP Tablelands for their monthly outing. I've been visiting and exploring the forests and backroads of Atherton Tablelands for 25 years, and yet the two sites visited, both within cooee of Atherton, were places I've never visited. Both sites were botanically diverse, and, as they were both on basalt, of some geological interest.

The first site visited, Bones Knob, is an old volcanic cone which overlooks Tolga. It's peak, now privately owned, was the site of a radar station during the second world war, and is covered with well-maintained but aging infrastructure from that period. The owners advised us the site was heritage listed.



Ajuga australis

A large group of about 25 marched up to the peak for a fantastic view over nearby farmland and Mt Emerald. On the peak, *Lophostemon suaveolens* was flowering, and a short blue-purple flowering spike of *Ajuga australis* was showing off amongst the long molasses grass. We suspect one of the gum trees near the peak was *Eucalyptus lockyeri*, a relatively rare relative of the red gums restricted to the ranges on the western edge of the Wet Tropics.



Lost in the bamboo

From here we followed a path through tall bamboo, passing orchid-festooned fruit trees down to a patch of dark rainforest. *Dysoxylum parasiticum* was common here, made obvious by its bunches of fruits poking out of the trunk.



One of the heritage-listed structures on Bones Knob.

Upland rainforest on basalt is unfamiliar to me, and I was delighted to be introduced to many species I'd not seen before: *Dichapetalum papuanum*, *Aglaia ferruginea*, *Carronia protensa* and *Clausena brevistyla* were just a few.



Enjoying lunch on the peak of Bones Knob, surrounded by heritage structures.

After a lunch with a view, shared with our hosts Marco and Tammy, we departed for the next site, Barney's Springs. This hidden wonder sits in the bush behind the Rocky Creek RV park. At this point, huge amounts of water bubble out of the ground in a field of basalt rocks. Sadly, the site is

littered with abandoned pipework and poorly built concrete weirs, showing the careless disregard with which this peaceful site has been treated.



One of the ponds at Barney's Springs.

Council signs told the story of the springs:

"A very sparse shrublayer comprising... a diverse... variety of ferns which is dominated by several species of Figs [*Ficus racemosa* and *Ficus virens*] is characteristic of the unusual type of riverine rainforest that surrounds Barney Springs. Barney Springs is just one of the many spring systems located in the area. ... [O]riginating from an underground aquifer, the spring structure of basalts is variable and includes massive structural layers of vesicular basalt and cinder material... Flowing at an estimated [54-62 litres/second], Barney Springs is of great importance in maintaining the dry season base flow in the middle sections of the Barron River... The localised rainforest flora and fauna depend on the equilibrium and stability of this habitat and its conservation is deemed of great ecological importance."

Species List

A group effort. BK indicates species observed at Bones Knob, BS Barney Springs. * indicates an exotic species. Plant names are those recognised in the Australian Plant Name Index.

Ferns and Allies

ADIANTACEAE

Adiantum hispidulum (BK)

ASPLENIACEAE

Asplenium nidus (BK)

BLECHNACEAE

Stenochlaena palustris (BS)

DENNSTAEDTIACEAE

Pteridium esculentum (BK)

LOMARIOPSIDACEAE

Nephrolepis biserrata (BS)

POLYPODIACEAE

Drynaria rigidula (BK)

Microsorium punctatum (BS)

Platynerium bifurcatum (BK)

Platynerium superbium (BS)

Pyrrosia longifolia (BS)

PTERIDACEAE

Pellaea paradoxa (BS)

Pteris tripartita (BS)

TECTARIACEAE

Arthropteris tenella (BK)

THELYPTERIDACEAE

Ampelopteris prolifera (BS)

Christella dentata (BS)

Conifers and Allies

ARAUCARIACEAE

Araucaria cunninghamii (BK)

Araucaria heterophylla (BK)

CYCADACEAE

Cycas media

PINACEAE

**Pinus caribaea* (BK)

Basal flowering plants

ANNONACEAE

Huberantha nitidissima (BS)

Uvaria leichhardtii (BK)

LAURACEAE

Cryptocarya hypospodia (BK)

Neolitsea brassii (BK, BS)

Neolitsea dealbata (BK)

**Persea americana* (BK)

PIPERACEAE

Peperomia blanda (BK, BS)

Monocots

ARACEAE

Alocasia brisbanensis (BK) (pictured)



Pothos brownii (BK)

ARECACEAE

Calamus caryodoides (BK)

ASPARAGACEAE

- **Agave* sp.
- Lomandra confertiflora* (BK)

CYPERACEAE

- **Cyperus involucratus* (BS)

HEMEROCALLIDACEAE

- Dianella caerulea* (BK)

HYDROCHARITACEAE

- Ottelia alismoides* (BS)

ORCHIDACEAE

- Dendrobium calamiforme* (BS)
- Dendrobium linguiforme* (BK) (pictured)



- Dendrobium racemosum?* (BK)
- Plectorhiza tridentata* (BK)

PANDANACEAE

- Freycinetia scandens* (BS)
- Pandanus cookii* (BS)

POACEAE

- **Urochloa* (BK)
- **Melinis minutiflora* (BK)

PIPERACEAE

- Piper* sp. (BS)

SMILACACEAE

- Smilax australis* (BS)

ZINGIBERACEAE

- Alpinia caerulea*

ANACARDIACEAE

- Euroschinus falcata* (BS)
- **Mangifera indica* (BK)

APOCYNACEAE

- Alstonia scholaris* (BK)
- Parsonsia latifolia* (BK)
- Tylophora benthamii* (BK)

ARALIACEAE

- Polyscias elegans* (BS)
- Schefflera actinophylla* (BS)

ASTERACEAE

- Cirsium vulgare* (BK)

BIGNONIACEAE

- Pandorea pandorana* (BK)

BORAGINACEAE

- Cordia dichotoma* (BK)

CANNABACEAE

- Aphananthe philippensis* (BK)
- Trema tomentosa* (BK)

CELASTRACEAE

- Euonymus australiana* (BS)

CONVOLVULACEAE

- **Turbina corymbosa* (BS)

DICHAPETALACEAE

- Dichapetalum papuanum* (BK)

EBENACEAE

- **Diospyros nigra* (BK)
- Diospyros* sp. (BK)

ELAEAGNACEAE

- Elaeagnus triflora* (BK)

ELAEOCARPACEAE

- Elaeocarpus grandis* (BK)

EUPHORBIACEAE

- Codiaeum variegatum* (BK)
- Croton insularis* (BS)
- Macaranga involucrata* var. *mallotoides* (BS)
- Mallotus philippensis* (BK, BS)
- Mallotus polyadenos* (BK)

FABACEAE

- Acacia ?aulacocarpa*
- **Bauhinia monandra* (BK)
- ?*Derris* sp. *Claudie River* (BK)
- Flemingia parviflora* (BK)

LAMIACEAE

- Ajuga australis* (BK)

MALVACEAE

- **Triumfetta rhomboidea* (BS)

MELASTOMATACEAE

Memecylon pauciflorum

MELIACEAE

Aglaia ferruginea (BK)

Dysoxylum parasiticum (BK) (pictured)



Melia azedarach (BK, BS))

Toona ciliata (BK)

MENISPERMACEAE

Carronia protensa (BK)

Stephania japonica (BS)

MOLLUGINACEAE

Glinus lotoides

MORACEAE

Ficus congesta (BS)

Ficus opposita (BS)

Ficus racemosa (BS)

Ficus septica (BS)

Ficus virens (BS)

Maclura cochinchinensis (BK)

MYRTACEAE

Corymbia intermedia (BK)

Corymbia tessellaris (BS)

Eucalyptus crebra

Eucalyptus leptophleba (BS)

Eucalyptus lockyeri subsp. *exuta* (BK)

Eucalyptus platyphylla (BS)

Eucalyptus tereticornis (BS)

Lophostemon grandiflorus subsp. *riparia* (BS)

Lophostemon suaveolens (BK, BS)

Melaleuca/Callistemon viminalis (BK)

Rhodamnia sessiliflora (BK)

Syzygium australe (BS)

Syzygium cormiflorum (BK)

OLEACEAE

Chionanthus ramiflora (BK, BS)

Ligustrum australium (BS)

OPILIACEAE

**Rivina humilis* (BK)

PHYLLANTHACEAE

Glochidion harveyanum (BK)

Glochidion philippicum (BS)

POLYGALACEAE

**Polygala paniculata* (BK)

POLYGONACEAE

Persicaria attenuata (BK)

PRIMULACEAE

Myrsine variabilis (BK, BS)

RANUNCULACEAE

Clematis pickeringii (BS)

RUBIACEAE

Eumachia frutescens (BK)

Gardenia meriken (BK)

RUTACEAE

Acronychia acidula (BK)

Clausena brevistyla (BK)

Melicope elleryana (BS)

Melicope rubra (BK)

**Murraya paniculata* (BS)

Zanthoxylum ovalifolium (BK)

SALICACEAE

Casearia dalachii (BK)

SAPINDACEAE

Arytera divaricata (BK)

Castanospira alphanthii (BK)

Cupaniopsis anacardioides (BS)

Guioa acutifolia (BK, BS)

Mischocarpus lachnocarpus (BK)

Sarcopteryx martyana (BK)

Toeckima erythrocarpum (BK)

SAPOTACEAE

Pouteria myrsinodendron (BK)

SOLANACEAE

**Cestrum nocturnum* (BS)

**Solanum lycopersicum* (BS)

THYMAELAEACEAE

Phaleria octandra (BK, BS)

Wikstroemia indica (BK)

URTICACEAE

Pipturus argenteus (BK, BS))

VERBENACEAE

**Lantana camara* (BK)

VITACEAE

Cissus hastata (BS)

Cissus oblonga (BS)

Cissus reniformis (BK)

Leea novoguineense (BS)

Tetrastigma petraeum (BS)



Vale BERNARD CROW

1941-2019

It is with great sadness that I write of the recent passing of Bernard Allan Crow, President of our local SGAP group since its inception in 2006, and stalwart of many conservation groups, including Johnstone Region Landcare (of which he was President for many years), Johnstone Ecological Society and the Innisfail Community Gardens.

Bernie had an extensive knowledge of local native plants – entirely self-taught – an interest developed when starting as a Volunteer at the Community Revegetation Nursery in 1999/2000. He soon became an “authority” for collecting and propagating seeds and, for some reason developed a passion for native grasses, (and even weeds), often sending samples – which he couldn’t identify – to the Queensland Herbarium.

A highlight of his time in Landcare came, finally, in March 2013, with a



Clearing vines, early days, at Backyard Blitz site

lease agreement for the maintenance of Backyard Blitz (part of the old High School), signed with the local Council – who had taken over the site as Trustees in 2011. This has allowed community groups involved in natural resource management to organise working bees and funding to restore the site to its former glory with the aim that it would be of benefit to future generations.

During many outings over the years – of which he missed few, until illness interfered – he has always retained his good humour and been willing to share his knowledge with others. He has certainly left a “hole” – we will miss you Bernie.

Anne Foggitt
Secretary, Innisfail Branch



WHAT'S HAPPENING...

Cairns Branch

Cairns Branch has voted to delay its end-of-year excursion. The date preferred by most is Sunday 8 December. There will be no excursion on Sunday 17 November.

Three possible destinations have been offered by our members:

- the home of Rick and Sharren Wong at Palm Cove
- the newly upgraded Greenpatch Reserve on the Mulgrave River at Gordonvale
- the home of Peter and Patsy Penny at East

Russell.

Please email your preferred option to
secretary@sgapcairns.org.au.

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.

Sunday 1 December 2019

Orchid-viewing excursion!
Destination to be advised.

Contact Chris Jaminon to confirm details.

Saturday 14 December 2019

Tablelands Christmas breakup at the home of Chris Evans, 47 Danzer Drive, Atherton, 5.30 p.m. BYO plate to share, cutlery, cup, plate and chair. Also, bring a \$10 wrapped Christmas present to give away - bring one gift for each person in your party.

Please confirm with Chris on (07) 4091 3082.

Sunday 26 January 2020

Tablelands start of year meetup at the home of Peter Radke.

1 Shaban Drive (off Ray Road), Mareeba, between Mareeba and the Airport, 11 a.m. BYO plate to share, cutlery, cup, plate and chair.

All welcome!



Old Ficus virens at Barney's Springs

Society for Growing Australian Plants, Inc.
Cairns Branch.

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secretary@sgapcairns.org.au

2018-2019 COMMITTEE

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