

SGAP Cairns

Society for Growing Australian Plants Inc., Cairns Branch
Celebrating our 40th year

NEWSLETTER 205 OCTOBER 2020



September Excursion

Stuart Worboys

Nandroya Falls

Our September excursion destination was a little bit further from Cairns than usual - to the rich rainforests of the Wooroonooran National Park. Situated on fertile basalts west of Innisfail, the complex mesophyll vine forests of the Johnstone River valley are amongst the most diverse and best developed vegetation communities in Australia.

A small group of us met at the Henrietta Creek campground. A little wander around the carpark and campground revealed a couple of neat surprises - a massive *Alstonia scholaris*, hiding just a couple of metres into the forest, and a glorious tassel fern dangling high up in a tree right in the middle of the public area.

After lunch we headed up the track toward Nandroya Falls. The forest has recovered well from the damage wrought by Cyclones Yasi and Larry. The path descended into the delightful, fern filled

dell of Silver Falls, overhung by a massive *Angiopteris evecta* and handsome tick ferns, *Diplazium proliferum*.

Further along the path we began to hear the roar of our target - Nandroya Falls. Here Douglas Creek, an important tributary of the Johnstone River, plunges through a narrow cleft in a basalt cliff, falling into a broad cold pool. Cold-tolerant tourists were making the most of the swimming opportunities, but we tropicalised locals stayed firmly on dry land. The pool was surrounded by steep rocky slopes covered with wild taros, *Colocasia esculenta*, and we speculated on their origin - possibly cultivated by Aboriginals.

Being frequented by foot traffic, and often disturbed by floods, the area at the base of the falls was quite weedy. Growing amongst the weeds was a species that that none of us had seen growing in the wild in 20 years of SGAP excursions - *Cannabis sativa*. Although only only a couple of centimetres tall, the plant was unmistakable. We left it there for the next observant plant lover to discover and appreciate, and headed back to the cars.



SOCIETY FOR GROWING AUSTRALIAN PLANTS INC., CAIRNS BRANCH

Email: secretary@sgapcairns.org.au

Website: www.sgapcairns.org.au

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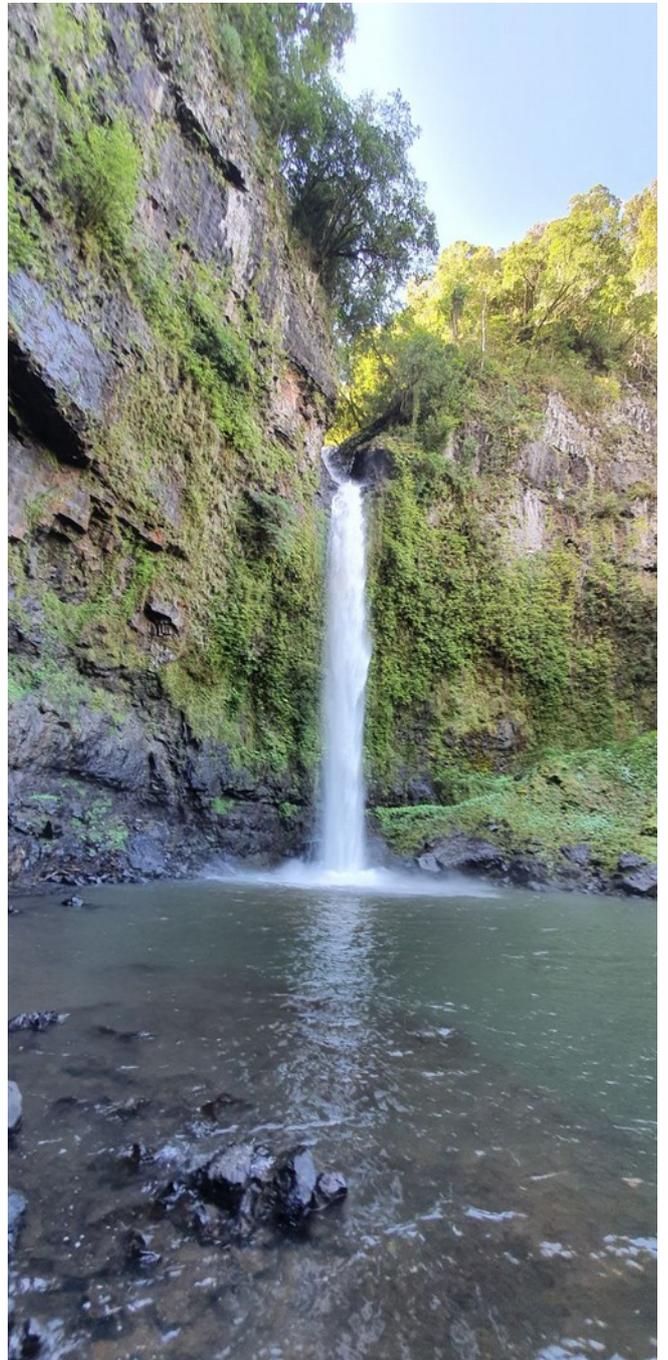
Secretary: Matt McIntosh (secretary@sgapcairns.org.au)

Treasurer: Val Carnie

Webmaster: Tony Roberts

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





Nandroya species list

Flowering Plants	Family	Species	Common Name
	Actinidiaceae	<i>Saurauia andreana</i>	
	Apocynaceae	<i>Hoya australis</i>	Hoya
	Apocynaceae	<i>Hoya pottsii</i>	
	Araliaceae	<i>Polyscias mollis</i>	
	Asteraceae	* <i>Ageratum conyzoides</i>	Bluetop
	Balanophoraceae	<i>Balanophora fungosa</i>	
	Cannabaceae	* <i>Cannabis sativa</i>	Indian hemp
	Connaraceae	<i>Connarus conchocarpus</i>	Shell vine
	Cucurbitaceae	<i>Diplocyclos palmatus</i>	
	Cunoniaceae	<i>Karrabina biagiana</i>	Northern brush mahogany
	Elaeagnaceae	<i>Elaeagnus triflora</i>	Millaa Millaa Vine
	Elaeocarpaceae	<i>Sloanea</i>	
	Euphorbiaceae	<i>Codiaeum variegatum</i>	
	Euphorbiaceae	<i>Rockinghamia angustifolia</i>	
	Fabaceae	<i>Mucuna gigantea</i>	Burney Bean
	Gesneriaceae	<i>Cyrtandra baileyana</i>	
	Lamiaceae	<i>Callicarpa longifolia</i>	
	Lamiaceae	<i>Oxera splendida</i>	October glory
	Malvaceae	<i>Argyrodendron peralatum</i>	Tulip oak
	Melastomataceae	* <i>Tristemma mauritiana</i>	Juicy fruits
	Meliaceae	? <i>Dysoxylum pettigrewianum</i>	
	Menispermaceae	<i>Tinospora smilacina</i>	
	Moraceae	<i>Ficus congesta var. congesta</i>	Red leaf fig
	Moraceae	<i>Ficus pantoniana</i>	Climbing fig
	Myodocarpaceae	<i>Delarbrea michieana</i>	Blue nun
	Myrtaceae	<i>Gossia shephardii</i>	
	Myrtaceae	<i>Syzygium graveolens</i>	Cassowary satinash
	Oxalidaceae	* <i>Oxalis debilis</i>	Pink woodsorrel
	Pittosporaceae	<i>Pittosporum rubiginosum</i>	
	Proteaceae	<i>Helicia nortoniana</i>	Norton's oak
	Proteaceae	<i>Hollandaea sayeriana</i>	Sayer's silky oak
	Rosaceae	<i>Rubus queenslandicus</i>	
	Rubiaceae	<i>Atractocarpus hirtus</i>	
	Rubiaceae	<i>Lasianthus chlorocarpus</i>	Blue rubi
	Rubiaceae	<i>Neonauclea glabra</i>	
	Rubiaceae	<i>Psychotria sp. Utchee Creek</i> (H.Flecker NGNC5313)	
	Rutaceae	<i>Brombya platynema</i>	
	Santalaceae	? <i>Notothixos subaureus</i>	Golden mistletoe
	Sapindaceae	? <i>Diploglottis pedleyi</i>	
	Sapindaceae	<i>Guioa lasioneura</i>	
	Sapindaceae	<i>Synima cordierorum</i>	
	Symplocaceae	<i>Symplocos puberula</i>	White hazelwood
	Urticaceae	<i>Debregeasia australis</i>	
	Urticaceae	<i>Dendrocide photinophylla</i>	Shiny leaf stinger
	Urticaceae	<i>Pipturus argenteus</i>	
	Vitaceae	<i>Leea novoguineense</i>	Bandicoot berry
Monocots			
	Araceae	<i>Alocasia brisbanensis</i>	Cunjevoi
	Araceae	<i>Colocasia esculenta</i>	Taro
	Araceae	<i>Gymnostachys anceps</i>	
	Araceae	<i>Pothos longipes</i>	

Araceae	<i>Rhaphidophora</i>	
Areaceae	<i>Calamus radicalis</i>	Vicious hairy mary
Areaceae	<i>Linospadix minor</i>	Walking stick palm
Asparagaceae	<i>Cordyline manners-suttoniae</i>	
Commelinaceae	<i>Pollia macrophylla</i>	
Flagellariaceae	<i>Flagellaria indica</i>	Supplejack
Hypoxidaceae	<i>Monileria capitulata</i>	Weevil lily
Musaceae	<i>Musa banksii</i>	Wild banana
Orchidaceae	<i>Bulbophyllum</i>	
Orchidaceae	<i>Corymborkis veratrifolia</i>	Cinnamon orchid
Orchidaceae	<i>Dendrobium prenticei</i>	
Orchidaceae	<i>Dendrobium toressae</i>	
Orchidaceae	<i>Dockrillia calamiformis</i>	Rats tail orchid
Orchidaceae	<i>Eria</i>	
Orchidaceae	<i>Oberonia complanata</i>	
Orchidaceae	<i>Zeuxine oblongata</i>	
Pandanaceae	<i>Benstonea monticola</i>	Mountain pandan
Pandanaceae	<i>Freycinetia excelsa</i>	
Zingiberaceae	<i>Alpinia arctiflora</i>	
Zingiberaceae	<i>Alpinia modesta</i>	
Zingiberaceae	* <i>Hedychium coronarium</i>	Butterfly ginger
Zingiberaceae	<i>Pleuranthodium racemigerum</i>	Orange-fruited ginger
Basal		
Austrobaileyaceae	<i>Austrobaileya scandens</i>	Austrobaileya
Lauraceae	<i>Beilschmiedia tooram</i>	
Lauraceae	<i>Cinnamomum laubatii</i>	
Lauraceae	<i>Cryptocarya mackinnoniana</i>	Mackinnon's walnut
Lauraceae	<i>Endiandra sankeyana</i>	Sankey's walnut
Lauraceae	<i>Litsea leefeana</i>	
Myristicaceae	<i>Myristica globosa subsp. muelleri</i>	Native nutmeg
Piperaceae	<i>Peperomia enervis</i>	
Piperaceae	<i>Piper umbellatum</i>	
Conifers		
Podocarpaceae	<i>Podocarpus dispermus</i>	Brown pine
Zamiaceae	<i>Bowenia serrulata</i>	
Ferns		
Angiopteridaceae	<i>Angiopteris evecta</i>	King fern
Angiopteridaceae	<i>Ptisana oreades</i>	
Athyriaceae	<i>Diplazium proliferum</i>	Tick fern
Blechnaceae	<i>Oceaniopteris cartilaginea</i>	Gristle fern
Polypodiaceae	<i>Lepisorus mucronatus</i>	
Pteridaceae	? <i>Antrophyum plantagineum</i>	
Selaginellaceae	? <i>Selaginella longipinna</i>	
Tectariaceae	<i>Tectaria confluens</i>	

Spring on the Russell River

Photos supplied by Patsy Penny



Dendrobium discolor var. *broomfieldii*



Dendrobium mirbelianum



The massive fruiting heads of *Pandanus* sp. Russell River reach 45 cm in length and 25 cm in diameter, probably the largest of any Australian *Pandanus*. Work is underway in Geneva Herbarium to describe and name this spectacular plant. This species differs from other Australian pandans in having large glossy leaves, abundant pups along the trunk, large fruits, short spines on the trunk, and trunk lacking appressed ascending rootlets (a few may be present).



Dendrobium smilliae



Pandanus sp. Russell River

Cape York Trip

Patsy Penny

In August 1976 an opportunity to drive and fish Cape York arose and we jumped at it. We knew our vehicle at the time, a SWB Toyota Landcruiser, would be up to the task. In the other vehicle - Dennis Kitchner and Trevor Jack. Kitch had a keen affection for native plants, particularly orchids. My knowledge of native plants extended to softwoods and hardwoods being milled in our sawmill!

And so began an interest in living native plant life.

In August 2020, we decided to revisit the Cape in our much more comfortable Prado with our camper in tow. Of the course the road was much wider but in some places, no better.

On the way up we detoured into Oyala Thumotang National Park. Above our camp, in the shade, on the banks of the Coen River were Banana orchids, *Dockrillia rigida* and *Eria fitzalanii*. Along the river were many trees, some of which would have parents in the far away McIlwraith Ranges to the East. Wompoo pigeons gurgled in the tree tops, sea eagles swooped and kites whistled. The bird life was prolific and besides catching a barra or two, many hours were spent walking and watching.



Coelospermum decipiens

Our next stop north was an old Main Roads camp where the bypass road crosses the old Telegraph Track (the track we took in 1976).

This spot proved ideal. We were solitary campers and the regrowth after clearing was diverse and fascinating. The ubiquitous *Coelospermum decipiens* with its eye catching white bracts, as well as *Lomandra banksii* and many small acacia trees, had begun their slow takeover of the camp.

Next morning we stopped in at the very regulated and organised Fruit Bat Falls. In 1976 the road crossed Elliot Creek just on top of the falls. At that time we stopped for a snorkel to look at the beautiful Saratoga which inhabits the creek. This time we were intrigued by the *Nepenthes mirabilis* which adorned the banks. Several species of sundew or *Drosera* were happily existing in the spray from the falls.

I would have loved to have picked a stalk or two of the beautiful tassel cord rushes which would look great in a vase!

Bromheadia venusta orchids peeping up from the many ferns on the banks of the creek.

We continued our journey north where we crossed the Jardine by ferry. Now we were in new territory as there was no ferry in 1976. We spent 10 glorious days camped in Seisia exploring the beaches and rainforest of the country around Bamaga. Everywhere we went we saw *Deplanchea tetraphylla* in magnificent blossom. The Lockerbie forest proved a great surprise where old giant trees held bunches of epiphytes in their arms.



Deplanchea tetraphylla in full bloom

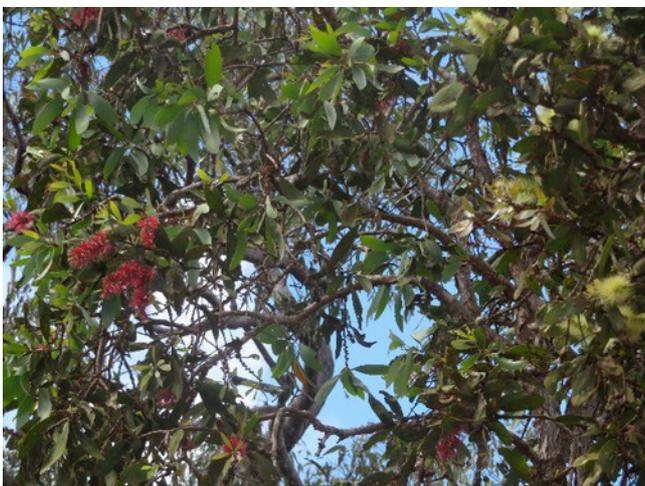
Very little evidence is left of the Jardine family in and around the area of Somerset. Nature and the wilderness slowly overtakes. We had a wonderful trip on the Jardine in a tinny with

Peter Atwell whom you will remember from our trips on the Russell. Besides catching a delicious barramundi we were enthralled by the unusual *Pandanus lauterbachii* with its brilliant cluster of fruit, the delicate *Dischidia ovata* and *Dischidia nummularia*, the weird and wonderful *Myrmecodia* and *Hydnophytum moseleyanum* (ant plants).



Decorative chains of *Dischidia nummularia* and *Dischidia ovata* on the branches of *Dillenia alata*

We drove along the Laradinya Creek where we came across *Leptospermum madidum* with their twisted trunks and weeping foliage. Surprisingly, there was a small stand of *Atalaya variifolium* waving in the breeze. We found a flowering *Pandorea pandorana*. Near where the creek enters the sea we found a wongai plum with ripe fruit – *Manilkara kauki*. Nearby was a *Capparis quiniflora* in flower and *Guettarda speciosa* (a beach gardenia) in flower and fruit. Out on the hot sand was *Sterculia quadrifida* in fruit (peanut tree).



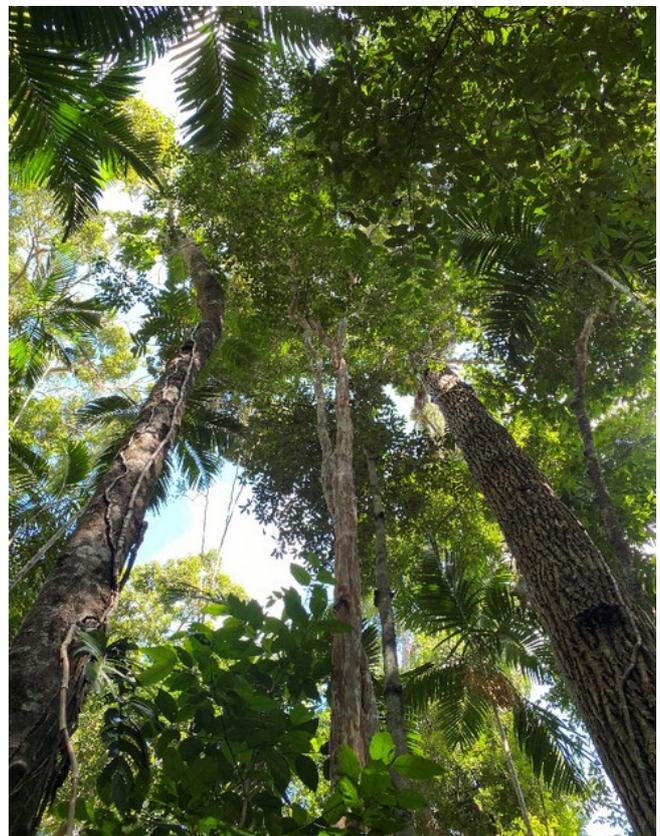
Red and yellow-green flowered *Melaleuca* growing side by side

We spent a wonderful day on Thursday Island revisiting for the first time after teaching there in the early 70s. It was a day for memories and reminiscing.

It was time to head south. The nights were warming up.

We couldn't come home without spending a few days in Iron Range National Park. The forest had been thrashed by Cyclone Trevor in 2019. The canopy was quite open as the tops of the trees had not yet grown back. It was there we found the curious *Pandanus zea* with its fruit like a corn cob. There were many trees fruiting, some of which were *Mimsops elengi* but lots of others which are unknown to me! A visit to Chilli Beach on a very blustery day satisfied us that we were camped in the right spot. The bird life once again was prolific with wompoos, catbirds, trillers, kingfishers and many other songs of the bush.

It was a memorable trip enhanced by what little knowledge I now possess of our incredible plant life. I must thank Stuart for his help in naming some of the photographs. I now possess a small reference log of plants from the trip.



The dizzying heights of the Cape York rainforest canopy

Upcoming events

Townsville

Meetings of Native Plants Queensland - Townsville Branch on the 2nd Wednesday of each month at 7pm, Annandale Community Hall - Annandale Centre. Excursions the following Sunday.

Wednesday 14 October. Dr Greg Calvert will talk about Mamu Rainforest Canopy Walkway.

Sunday 18 October, 9 a.m.: Anderson Gardens - Cape York section. 9am.

Website: www.npqtownsville.org.au

Tablelands

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.

Cairns Branch

Sunday 18 October, 10 a.m. 175 Jensen Street, Edge Hill, Cairns: Garden visit - members only. Members are invited to enjoy the garden of Jan McLucas and Bradley Smith. Their house was designed by Charles Wright as an exploration of modernist architecture for life in the tropics. The house won the Australian Institute of Architects far north Queensland regional house of the year in 2013 as well as a Queensland state award and commendations for design and sustainability at the national AIA awards.

The house sits on a 1,600 square metre block with an ephemeral creek at the rear.

The garden was designed and built by the owners with over 50% of the plantings grown by Ms McLucas from seeds or cuttings. The emphasis is on endemic species of the wet tropics along with a variety of herbs, vegetables and fruit. The owners are not fans of tropical gardens with faux Balinese or Brazilian elements preferring the more subtle juxtaposition of greens and leaf structure. The garden is also intended to be functional with herbs and vegetables grown in raised beds 2.5 metres from the kitchen bench.

The owners seek to retain as much green and dry garden waste on the property through extensive composting and mulching. Water management of the garden is assisted by a 45,000 litre underground tank harvesting rainwater from the roof.

