



Society for Growing Australian Plants (Queensland Region) Inc.

Cairns Branch
PO Box 199
Earlville Qld 4870

Newsletter No. 72
OCTOBER 2007

Society Office Bearers

Chairperson	Ing Toh	40 310 551
Vice Chairperson	Mary Gandini	40 542 190
Secretary	Greg Keith	40 981 130
Treasurer	Robert Jago	40 552 266
Librarian	David Warmington	40 443 398

Membership Subscriptions- Qld Region- Renewal \$35.00, New Members \$40, each additional member of household \$1.00

Cairns Branch Fees -\$10.00 Full Year

To access our Library for loan of books, please contact David Warmington

Dates to remember

Cairns Branch Meetings and Excursion – third Saturday of each month.

20 October **Earl Hill, Trinity Beach.** See directions below. Meet at midday for lunch or 1pm for the walk. BYO packed lunch.

Tablelands Branch – Sunday following the meeting on the 4th Wednesday of the month.
Any queries please phone Ian Evans 4096 5770.

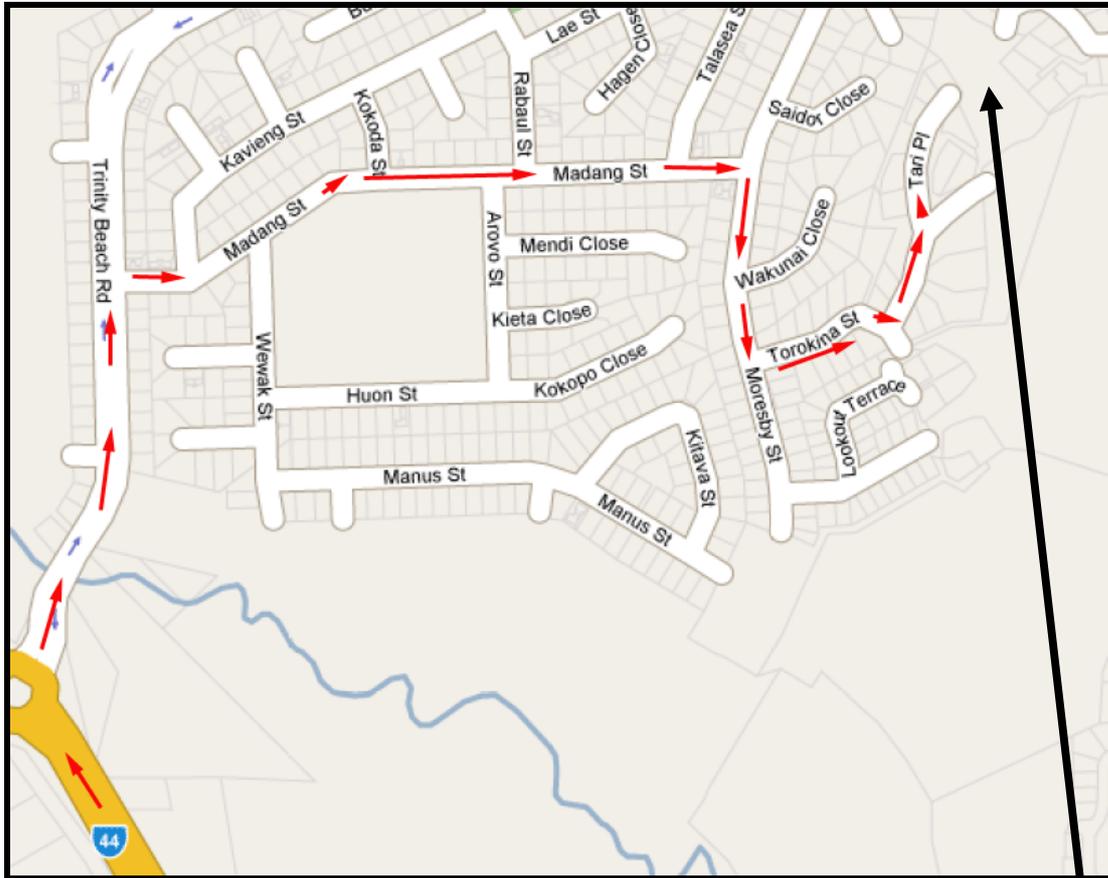
Directions for this month's meeting and excursion

The full address is
19 Trinity Circle,
7 Tari Place
TRINITY BEACH

Take the Captain Cook Highway turning off at the Trinity Beach roundabout

- take first right into Madang Street going up hill
- take right turn at T junction into Moresby Street
- turn left into Torokina Street (the second street on left)

- Follow Torokina street uphill into Tari Place
 - enter gate to Trinity Circle using gate code (2793#)
 - follow road around the hill to the turning circle at eastern end. Park there
- No 19 is top of the hill with only one extra parking place and little room for turning. We can ferry people up in one car easily as the road up is steep but short.
- The map below should get you to Tari Place*



ORCHIDS OBSERVED ON SGAP OUTING TO MOSSMAN GORGE

Mary Gandini

Mossman Gorge is part of the Daintree National Park . Although it is south of the Daintree River it is still an area of high diversity with a well developed rain forest that receives abundant rainfall. With the river flowing through it, a shady, moist microclimate is assured providing ideal conditions for orchids. Several orchids were seen on our SGAP walk to the water intake further up the gorge where we had lunch.

Along the road side someone observed two, often over-looked, terrestrial orchids. These were *Hetaeria oblongifolia* (Fig.1) and *Zeuxine oblonga* (Fig.2). Both orchids are comprised of single stems with a few spaced leaves, the lower ones dead at flowering time. The flowering spike is an extension of the stem and at a glance the orchids look like slender brown grass leaves. They are very similar in appearance and one must look closely to determine the differences.

Leaves of *Hetaeria* are thin with longitudinal veins, while those of *Zeuxine* are fleshy with the lateral veins forming a chequered pattern. *Hetaeria* flowers are tiny and crowded along the stem. They are green with white lips hooded by the lateral sepals, and have long ovaries. *Zeuxine* flowers have green hairy sepals with white petals and lips. The top sepal and the petals form a hood. The lateral sepals are rounded and project forward giving the appearance of ears.

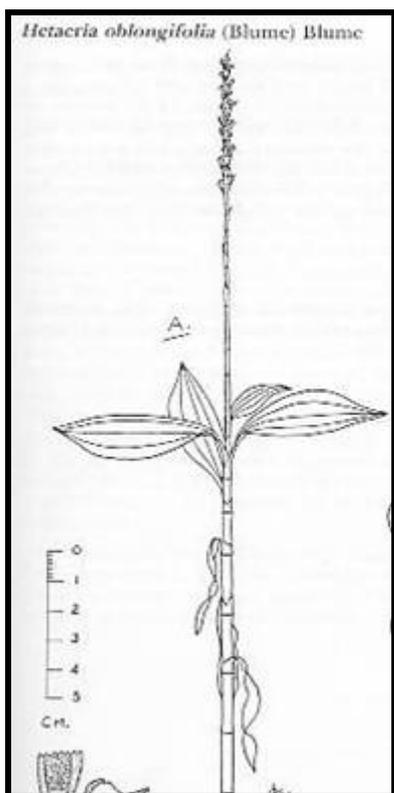


Fig.1. *Hetaeria oblongifolia*

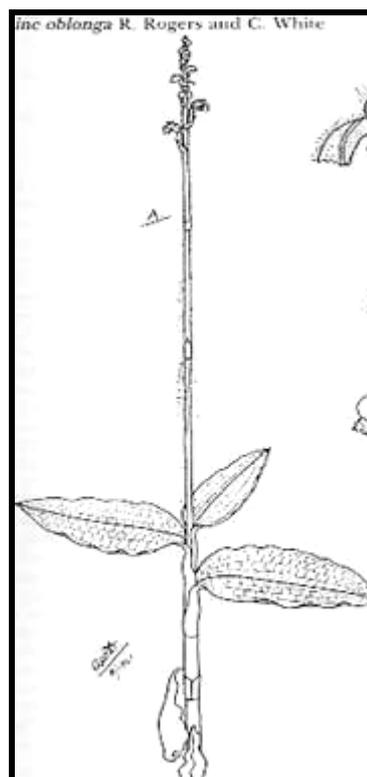


Fig.2. *Zeuxine oblonga*

Altogether 9 orchids species were observed. There are many more species to be found in the area but the day was not just about orchids. Unfortunately none of the other orchids we observed were flowering. I have scanned line drawings of them from *Australian Indigenous Orchids*, Volumes 1 & 2, by A. Dockrill (1992), Surrey , Beatty & Sons in association with SGAP – NSW.

One large orchid we had observed growing on rocks at the previous outing was *Pholidota imbricata* (Fig. 3). This can become a very large orchid with pleated leaves to 45 cm. The pseudobulbs are pear-shaped and sometimes angular. Each pseudobulb bears one leaf. The inflorescence arises from the base of the bulb and the thin, wiry peduncle becomes pendulous. Many small white/cream/green flowers crowd at the end of the stalk.

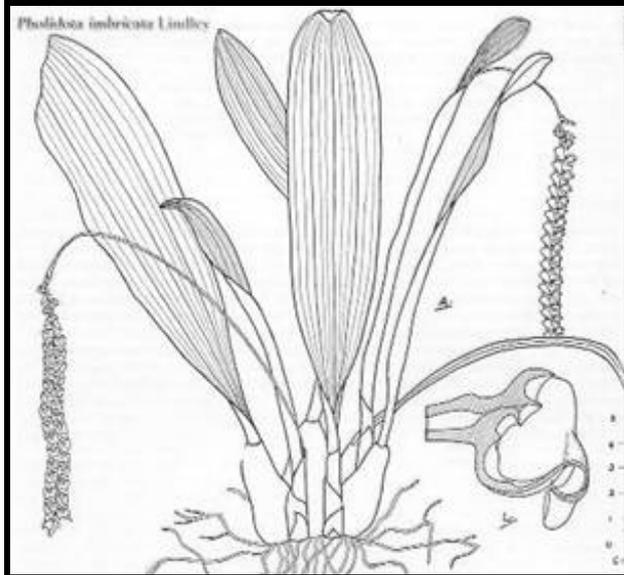


Fig.3. *Pholidota imbricata*



Fig. 4. *Eria queenslandica*

Tree branches that over-hung the water were loaded with masses of a light green orchid amongst the ferns. This orchid was *Eria queenslandica* (Fig.4). Tapered, cylindrical pseudobulbs bore 2 leaves each. This orchid produces short racemes of dingy white/cream flowers.

A small orchid on the tree trunks in this moist area was *Dendrobium prenticei* (Fig. 5). This name causes some controversy. It is considered to be a leaf variation of *Dendrobium lichenastrum* by Dockrill (1992) and others. *D. lichenastrum* has small rounded flat leaves, but, *D. prenticei* has terete leaves with a shallow groove present. Calling this form *D. prenticei* identifies it. Leaves are distichous on single strands but the orchid often forms extensive mats.

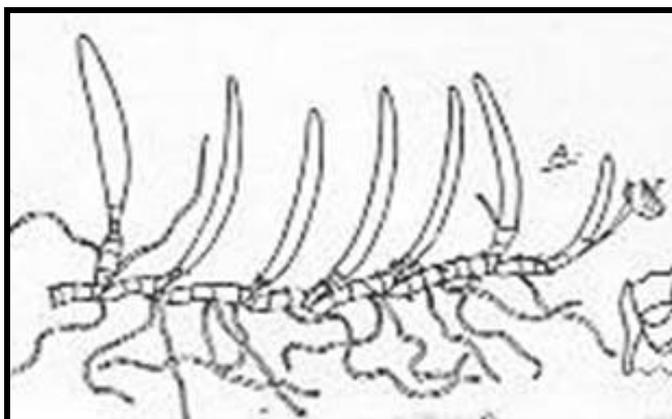


Fig.5. *D. prenticei*

A peculiar fan-shaped plant also in these trees was an orchid. This orchid is *Phreatia micrantha* (Fig. 6). The whole orchid is flattened with the folded leaves twisting to open out away from the

main stem. A large plant can reach 35cm long. Inflorescences emerge from the upper leaves and bear numerous small white flowers. The lower leaves break off leaving the petioles.

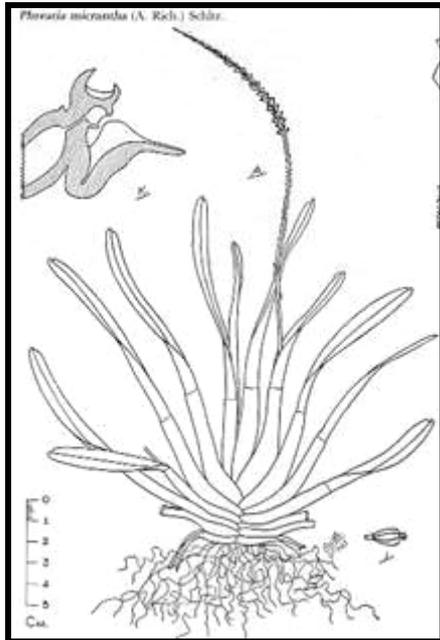


Fig. 6. *Phreatia micrantha*



Fig. 7. *Bulbophyllum radicans*

Another orchid of the sheltered moist spots was *Bulbophyllum radicans* (Fig. 7). This orchid is usually a bunch of pendulous stems with brown, papery bracts. Many fine roots cling to the host and many are aerial. Leaves are narrow, thick and curved. Flowers are solitary from the base of the leaves, pink/cream with dark red stripes and yellow labellum.

At the bend in the road where we went down to the water intake, there were broken strings of a large-leaved orchid together with a sick ant plant (*Myrmecodia platytyrea*). This orchid is very common on trees and rocks on water courses throughout the north, even near the beach.

Bulbophyllum baileyi (Fig. 8) grows in long brittle strands rooting at the nodes along its length. Pseudobulbs are prostrate on the stems amid sheathing hairy bracts. Erect leaves are thick, often yellowish. The solitary flower is white/cream with red/purple spots and turns pink with age.

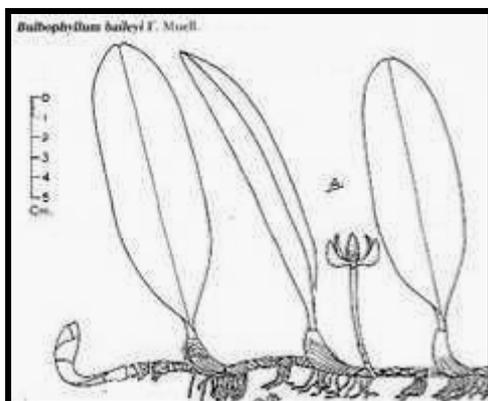


Fig. 8. *Bulbophyllum baileyi*

Last but not least, a *Micropera fasciculata* (Fig. 9) was observed in the area. This is an erect plant with large, straggling stems and many thick, aerial roots that are whitish green when new.

Thick, unequally emarginate leaves clasp the stem initially and then flatten out. The inflorescence has several small, white/cream flowers.

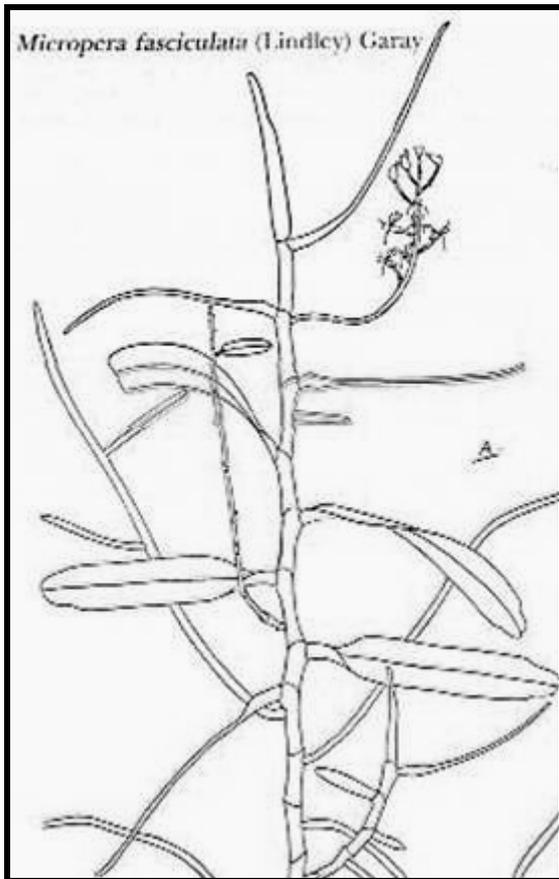


Fig. 9. *Micropera fasciculata*

Addenda.

We also captured a couple of shots of interesting, non-orchid species.



Harpullia rhyticarpa



Our destination



*A two headed *Lepidozamia hopei**