



## Society for Growing Australian Plants (Queensland Region) Inc.

Cairns Branch  
PO Box 199  
Earlville Qld 4870

Newsletter No. 80  
August 2008

### Society Office Bearers

<b>Chairperson</b>	Ann Mohun	40 394 942
<b>Vice Chairperson</b>	Mary Gandini	40 542 190
<b>Secretary</b>	Greg Keith	40 981 130
<b>Treasurer</b>	Robert Jago	40 552 266

**Membership Subscriptions- Qld Region-** Renewal \$39.00 (\$29.00 concession), New Members \$44, 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 Excursions – third Saturday of each month.

#### NEXT OUTING

August 16<sup>th</sup>

**Bramston Beach:** from Cairns head south down the highway and turn left at Miriwinni and follow the Bramston Beach Road. Meeting time: **11:00** See page 6 for more details.

#### NEXT MONTH

September 20<sup>th</sup>

**Mount Lewis.** Details to be advised.

#### Tablelands Branch

Sunday following the meeting on the 4th Wednesday of the month.

Any queries please contact Chris Jaminon on 4095 2882 or [hjaminon@bigpond.com](mailto:hjaminon@bigpond.com).

#### JCU Public Lecture Series

#### WILDLIFE IN AUSTRALIA'S TROPICAL RAINFORESTS

By Dr Martin Cohen Date: Wednesday 06 August 2008

Time: 5.30pm for wine and cheese, lecture starts at 6.00pm

Place: Crowther Lecture Theatre, James Cook University, Cairns

*Dr Martin Cohen - an expert in the region's wildlife – presents this informative talk featuring his stunning, award-winning photography combined with fascinating information on many of the rainforest's rare, threatened and significant animals. Martin also presents current research into the impacts of climate change on the biodiversity of this unique wildlife.*

# Thala Beach Report No. 1

Words and photos from Ing Toh

We showed up, all three of us comprising Barbara, Andrew and myself, at the front steps of the very plush Thala Beach Resort and were soon ushered into comfortable wicker armchairs. Despite our ragged looks (thongs and all) we were welcomed and made comfortable as we waited for the troops to marshal. Ann and Lyn showed up next and for a bit we thought that was the end of the story. However reinforcements in the form of Bob and Bianca and Greg and Arwen showed up before long. The miserable windy and rainy weather which had beset Cairns region for the past week blew away leaving a scatter of puffy white clouds in the blue sky.

As Bob mentioned, Thala stands for the majestic Sea Eagle in the local Irikandji language. This was most certainly the feeling we got with the large Cooper painting of a



Lunch and meeting location (above). Looking at a rocky headland before heading into the rainforest (below).



pair of White-breasted Sea Eagles overlooking us from their lofty perch in the reception lobby. However we soon retired to the serious business of lunch beneath some coconut trees on the beach.

After a laid back lunch and with a short SGAP meeting behind us we got down to exploring the local vegetation. We got past the past the Beach She-oaks (*Casuarina equisetifolia*) and were stepping over the Goats-foot Convolvulus (*Ipomoea pes-caprae*) and Salt Couch when the group fragmented based on different interests. Bob got stuck into the extremely interesting geology of upthrusting and folded partially metamorphosed mud and sand stone while Barbara was busy looking at the shoreline shells. The rest of us were rather enjoying the light breeze and warm beach conditions. We made rather slow progress even for an SGAP group with much discussion on the broken headland of schists, Greywacke, Beachrock and Quartz dykes interspersed with beach worn fragments of shells including Cowries, Cones, Drupes, Strombs, Moon snails and Limpets. Some interesting plants we did encounter along the way included the Oak-leaved Basket Fern (*Drynaria quercifolia*), the Gidee Gidee Vine (*Abrus precatorius*) and the low flowering strandline Goodeniaceae shrub *Myoporum acuminatum*. With the multitude of littoral distractions we did not progress to the front dune vine scrub till some time later.

This once common beachfront vegetation community is type has been much reduced by human activities and is now mostly restricted to remoter beaches. Thus it was a pleasure to walk through a rather well developed community locally dominated by large trees (to 15 m, taller in the swale and gullies) of Red Coondoo (*Mimusops elengi*), the Tar Tree (*Semecarpus australianum*) and a variety of other dry vineforest trees. *Miliusa brahei*, *Capparis quiniflora*, *Diospyros compacta*, *Cupaniopsis anacardioides*, *Tabernaemontana orientalis* and *Polyalthia nitidissima* were common shrubs. Bloodvine

(*Austrosteenisia blackii*) and Burney Bean (*Mucuna gigantea*) snaked their way through the canopy and across the ground as did *Uvaria concava* although we did not see its

splendid flowers. The interesting root parasite *Balanophora fungosa* was also in flower.

It was indeed a pleasant and interesting walk with the bonus of there being no noticeable mosquitos or sandflies. As we departed the vinescrub we saw a brilliant red fruit of the Lacewing Vine (*Adenia heterophylla*) hanging in the afternoon light.

The outing was rounded off with afternoon tea on the deck Thala Resort

perched atop the hill. The breathtaking views looking south included the slopes of the McAllister Range, Pretty Beach with incoming tide lapping on exposed reefs and stretching all the way down to the out-thrusting headland at Palm Cove and Double Island.

*“Upthrusting and folded partially metamorphosed mud and sand stone” (top left), Red Coondoo Mimusops elengi (bottom left), Myoporum acuminatum along the rocky shore (top right) and a quartz seam (bottom right).*



## Thala Beach Report No. 2

Words and photos from Barbara Collins

It was a delight to visit this eco resort for this outing. The ascetic drive in approach wound through bush interspersed ascetically with selected Grevillea, Pandanus and Palms, the driveways and paths were lined with natural rock walls and paving. Isolated cabins surrounding the resort sat unobtrusively amongst the vegetation and from the top deck overlooking the canopy of *Eucalyptus platyphylla*, the southern view encompassed Double Island, the sweep of Trinity bay and Fitzroy Is in the distance. From the dining area the northern view took in the offshore reefs of Yule Point and beyond. In the foyer hung Cooper's wall sized impressive painting of sea eagles, so detailed and lifelike, you expected the birds to take flight. A large Crinum flowered in the courtyard.



We had a perfect day, clear and sunny and were met by Carl who



escorted us through the grounds onto the track to the beach. We passed by a tree in which a pair of Papuan frogmouth sat so motionless and were camouflaged so well, both imitating a rotten piece of wood against a branch they were barely discernable. A well appointed picnic table near the beach amongst Casuarinas was chosen for a snack and our meeting.

First off was a jaunt around the rocky headland with the sweep of Oak beach in the background. This sedimentary rock has tilted and fingers run out into the sea, some quartz seams ran through in zones and a variety of vegetation clung tenaciously to the exposed rock faces. *Clerodendron inerme* was

amongst these. On the adjacent cliffs some specimens of *Grevillea parallela* were in flower. The beach shrub with tiny white flowers *Myoporum acuminatum* clung to the rocks.



Some intricate weathering on rock faces created interest for the photographers amongst us. In other places patches of beach rock conglomerate were slowly eroding and giving up their colourful pebbles (pictured above) for which the adjacent "Pebbly Beach" is well known.

A few bushes of *Mimusops elengi* beachside sported spherical orange fruit and a Giddy Giddy *Abrus precatorius* vine exposed its brilliant red and black seeds in decaying pods. We briefly discussed the toxicity of these colourful seeds and the Aboriginal lore concerning them.

At low tide the rock strewn area is a popular oyster gathering spot and Indigenous people also collect the spiny black sea urchins which burrow into rock crevices extending into the ocean

Our intended trek however was through the remnant vine forest on the perimeter of the resort land. There is very little similar forest remaining between the Daintree River and Cairns because of the coastal development. Vine forests are a protective buffer between the sea and the mountain range. At Thala, the remains of a former coconut plantation is maintained abutting the highway.

Where the canopy is more open the fern *Drynaria rigidula* is the dominant

groundcover, scattered about are also patches of *Pseuderanthemum variabile* which would look like white snowflakes on the ground when in flower.

True to form, the vine forest is exactly that... vines and root systems intertwined. The track was well marked with flagging tape and ran roughly parallel to the beach, behind the frontal dunes and flanked by an intermittent creek. This creek forms a lagoon at the northern end of the residential area of Oak Beach and cuts through to the sea only during the wet season. Some very large and obviously old trees, *Syzygium ramiflorum* and *Castanospermum australe* form a closed canopy and the understorey is quite open. A Tar tree *Semecarpus australianum* was close to the track.

We also saw a couple of huge nesting mounds created by the orange-footed scrub fowl from the abundant leaf litter. In several patches abundant *Balanophora fungosa* was evident (*below*).



Where the track crosses the creek, some specimens of Wrinkle Pod Mangrove, *Cynometra iripa* were situated and nearby, a stand of young *Carallia brachiata* trees with their distinctive corky bark. Larger papery barked *Melaleuca* trees also indicated the creekline.

We exited in a clearing and then traversed an area which could only be described as a grove of umbrella trees (were they planted?). These fascinated Liz and I and she commented on the coppiced stems. One plant in particular was exceptional.

Rob as usual gave his very professional commentary and Ing diligently recorded the names and notes. Rob had initially done a survey, so that would be a great adjunct to our excursion list. We were all very appreciative of the opportunity to visit this special patch of preserved coastal vine forest. Whilst we were enjoying a sumptuous afternoon tea, the resident Osprey nesting nearby flew over with its catch.



*View from the resort restaurant (top) over a woodland of Eucalyptus platyphylla. Thala Beach (below).*

*On behalf of SGAP Cairns Branch thanks to Carl Johansen for his time and support on the day.*

*And thanks to Ing there is a species list attached for the Thala Beach outing.*

## Check out this palm tree!



What looks like a regular *Archontophoenix alexandrae* has mutated into a palm tree with branches. This palm is found in Barbara's garden in Machans beach.

Palms, of any species rarely branch. I have seen the odd Golden Cane Palm have a branching stem but as far as I know this is relatively unheard of in *Archontophoenix*. Has anyone else seen anything like this?

Andrew

### **Bramston Beach Outing**

Pauline has suggested a walk along the beach towards Tom's Rock. Its low tide at around 3pm. There will be some rock scrambling but mostly a beach walk.

I hope meeting at 11am sounds good to everyone.

Don't forget if you want to offer seats or get a lift with anyone get in touch either directly or through Andrew.

**Any book reviews, pictures, notes on growing tropical Australian plants or trip reports you'd like published in this newsletter, please send them to Andrew Picone: [andrew.picone@jcu.edu.au](mailto:andrew.picone@jcu.edu.au) with SGAP marked in the subject.**

Family	Status	Botanical Name	Common Name	Fore Dune Vineforest	Beach strand line	Rocky beach outcrops
Acanthaceae		Pseuderanthemum variable		x		
Anacardiaceae		Buchanania arborescens	Wild Mango	x		
Anacardiaceae		Semecarpus australiensis	Tar Tree	x		
Annonaceae		Miliusa brahei	Raspberry Jelly Tree	x		
Annonaceae		Polyalthia australis		x		
Annonaceae		Polyalthia nitidissima		x		
Annonaceae		Uvaria concava		x		
Apocynaceae		Alstonia muelleriana	Hard Milkwood	x		
Apocynaceae		Alyxia spicata	Chainfruit		x	x
Apocynaceae		Ichnocarpus frutescens		x		
Apocynaceae		Parsonsia velutina	Hairy Silkpod	x		
Apocynaceae		Tabernamontana orientalis	Banana Bush	x		
Apocynaceae		Tylophora benthamii		x		
Araceae		Epipremnum pinnatum	Native Monstera	x		
Araliaceae		Schefflera actinophylla	Umbrella Tree	x		
Arecaceae		Cocos nucifera	Coconut		x	
Arecaceae		Ptychospermum elegans	Solitaire Palm	x		
Asteraceae	*	Ageratum conyzoides	Bluetop	x		
Asteraceae	*	Praxelis clematidea	Praxelis	x		
Asteraceae	*	Sphagneticola trilobata	Singapore Daisy		x	
Asteraceae	*	Syndrella nodiflora	Syndrella Weed	x		
Balanophoraceae		Balanophora fungosa		x		
Bignoniaceae	*	Spathodea campanulata	African Tulip	x		
Burseraceae		Canarium australianum	Scrub Turpentine	x		x
Caesalpiniaceae		Cynometra iripa	Wrinklepod Mangrove	x		
Capparaceae		Capparis lucida				x
Capparaceae		Capparis quiniflora		x		
Casuarinaceae		Casuarina equisetifolia	Beach She-oak		x	x
Celastraceae		Elaeodendron melanocarpum	False Olive	x		
Celastraceae		Maytenus disperma	Orange Boxwood	x		
Combretaceae		Terminalia muelleri	Australian Almond	x		x
Combretaceae		Terminalia sericocarpa	Dead Dog Tree	x		
Convolvulaceae		Ipomoea pes-caprae	Goats-foot Convolvulus		x	
Cyperaceae		Fimbristylis dicotoma				x
Ebenaceae		Diospyros compacta		x		x
Ebenaceae		Diospyros hebecarpa		x		
Euphorbiaceae		Alchornea thozetiana		x		
Euphorbiaceae		Glochidion harveyanum		x		
Euphorbiaceae		Macaranga involucrata		x		
Euphorbiaceae		Macaranga tanarius		x		
Euphorbiaceae		Mallotus philippinensis	Red Kamala	x		
Fabaceae		Abrus precatorius	Gidee Gidee			x
Fabaceae		Austrosteenisia blackii	Bloodvine	x		
Fabaceae		Castenospermum australe	Blackbean	x		
Fabaceae		Crotolaria pallida		x		
Fabaceae		Derris trifoliata		x		
Fabaceae		Mucuna gigantea	Burney Bean	x		
Flacourtiaceae		Scolopia braunii	Scolopia	x		
Flagellariaceae		Flagellaria indica	Supplejack	x		
Goodeniaceae		Scaveola taccada	Beach Cabbage		x	
Hemerocallidaceae		Dianella caerulea	Blue Flax Lily			x
Hippocrateaceae		Salacia disepala		x		
Lamiaceae	*	Hyptis capitata	Knobweed	x		
Lauraceae		Beilschmiedia obtusifolia	Blush Walnut	x		
Lauraceae		Cryptocarya exfoliata		x		
Lauraceae		Cryptocarya hypospodia	Northern Laurel	x		
Lecythidaceae		Planchonia careya	Cockey Apple			x
Leeaceae		Leea indica	Bandicoot Berry	x		
Loranthaceae		Ameyma conspicum?	Mistletoe			x

Loranthaceae	Unid mistletoe on <i>Capparis lucida</i>				x
Lygodiaceae	<i>Lygodium flexuosum</i>		x		
Lygodiaceae	<i>Lygodium reticulatum</i>		x		
Malvaceae	<i>Hibiscus tiliaceus</i>	Coast Cottonwood	x		
Malvaceae	<i>Thespesia populneoides</i>	Pacific Rosewood		x	x
Meliaceae	<i>Aglaia elaeagnoidea</i>	Coastal Boodyarra	x		
Meliaceae	<i>Dysoxylum gaudichaudianum</i>	Ivory Mahogany	x		
Meliaceae	<i>Dysoxylum peltigrewianum</i>	Spur Mahogany	x		
Meliaceae	<i>Polyscias elegans</i>	Celerywood	x		
Menispermaceae	<i>Pachygone ovata</i>		x		
Mimosaceae	<i>Acacia calyculata</i>		x		x
Mimosaceae	<i>Acacia oraria</i>	Coastal Wattle			x
Mimosaceae	<i>Acacia polystachya</i>	Wattle	x		x
Moraceae	<i>Ficus congesta</i>	Red Leaf Fig	x		
Moraceae	<i>Ficus microcarpa</i>	Small-fruited Fig	x		
Moraceae	<i>Ficus opposita</i>	Sandpaper Fig	x		
Moraceae	<i>Ficus rubiginosa</i>	Rockbreaker Fig			x
Moraceae	<i>Maclura cochinchinensis</i>	Cockspur	x		
Moraceae	<i>Trophis scandens</i>	Firevine	x		
Myoporaceae	<i>Myoporum acuminatum</i>			x	x
Myrsinaceae	<i>Myrsine variabilis</i> (formerly <i>M. Clifton Beach</i> )		x		
Myrtaceae	<i>Acmena hemilampra</i>		x		
Myrtaceae	<i>Corymbia clarksoniana</i>	Clarksons Bloodwood			x
Myrtaceae	<i>Corymbia tessellaris</i>	Moreton Bay Ash	x		x
Myrtaceae	<i>Melaleuca leucadendra</i>	Weeping Paperbark	x		x
Myrtaceae	<i>Melaleuca viridiflora</i>	Broad-leaved Teatree			x
Myrtaceae	<i>Syzygium cormiflorum</i>	Bumpy Satinash	x		
Oleaceae	<i>Chionanthus ramiflora</i>	Native Olive	x		
Oleaceae	<i>Jasminum didimum</i>	Native Jasmine	x		
Oleaceae	<i>Jasminum simplicifolium</i>	Native Jasmine	x		x
Opiliaceae	<i>Opilia amentacea</i>	Opilia	x		
Pandanaceae	<i>Pandanus tectorius</i>	Screwpine		x	x
Passifloraceae	<i>Adenia heterophylla</i>	Lacewing Vine	x		
Passifloraceae	* <i>Passiflora foetida</i>	Stinking Passionflower			x
Passifloraceae	<i>Passiflora suberosa</i>	Corky Passionvine	x		
Phyllanthaceae	<i>Cleistanthus apodus</i>		x		
Phyllanthaceae	<i>Phyllanthus cuscutiflora</i>		x		
Phyllanthaceae	<i>Phyllanthus virgatus</i>				x
Piperaceae	<i>Piper haderaceum</i>		x		
Poaceae	<i>Cyrtococcum oxyphyllum</i>		x		
Poaceae	<i>Heteropogon contortus</i>	Black Speargrass			x
Poaceae	<i>Heteropogon triticeus</i>	Giant Speargrass			x
Poaceae	* <i>Megathyrsus maximus</i>	Guinea Grass	x		x
Poaceae	<i>Setaria surgens</i>				x
Poaceae	<i>Sporobolus virginicus</i>			x	
Poaceae	<i>Themeda triandra</i>	Kangaroo Grass			x
Poaceae	<i>Urochloa distachya</i>				x
Polypodiaceae	<i>Drynaria quercifolia</i>	Oak leaved Drynaria			x
Polypodiaceae	<i>Drynaria sparsisora</i>		x		
Proteaceae	<i>Grevillea baileyana</i>		x		
Proteaceae	<i>Grevillea parallela</i>				x
Rhamnaceae	<i>Alphitonia petriei</i>		x		
Rhamnaceae	<i>Colubrina asiatica</i>	Beach Berry Bush		x	x
Rhamnaceae	<i>Rhamnella vitiensis</i>	Murtillam	x		
Rhizophoraceae	<i>Carallia brachiata</i>	Freshwater Mangrove	x		
Rubiaceae	<i>Atractocarpus sessilis</i>		x		
Rubiaceae	<i>Cyclophyllum multiflorum</i>		x		
Rubiaceae	<i>Ixoria timorensis</i>	Native Ixora	x		
Rubiaceae	<i>Morinda citrifolia</i>	Cheesefruit			x
Rubiaceae	<i>Tarenna dallachiana</i>		x		
Rutaceae	<i>Glycosmis trifoliata</i>	Pink-fruited Glycosmis	x		
Rutaceae	<i>Melicope elleryana</i>	Spermwood	x		

Rutaceae	Microeleum minutum	Lime Berry	x	
Santalaceae	Exocarpus latifolius	Broad-leaved Cherry	x	
Sapindaceae	Cupaniopsis anacardioides	Beach Tamarind	x	x
Sapindaceae	Elattostachys microcarpum		x	
Sapindaceae	Guoia acutifolia		x	
Sapindaceae	Jagera pseudorhus	Pink Tamarind	x	
Sapindaceae	Pleiogynium timorense	Burdekin Plum	x	
Sapindaceae	Synime cordierorum		x	
Sapotaceae	Mimusops elengii	Red Coondoo	x	x
Sapotaceae	Pouteria castanosperma	Satin Boxwood	x	
Simaroubaceae	Brucea javanicus	Macassar	x	
Smilacaceae	Smilax australis	Sarsaparilla	x	
Sterculiaceae	Argyrodendron polyandrum	Red Tulip Oak	x	
Tiliaceae	* Triumfetta rhomboidea	Triumfetta	x	
Ulmaceae	Trema orientalis	Poison Peach	x	
Ulmaceae	Trema tomentosa		x	
Verbenaceae	Clerodendrom inerme	Scrambling Clerodendrum		x
Verbenaceae	* Lantana camara	Lantana	x	
Verbenaceae	* Stachytarpheta jamaicensis	Snakeweed	x	
Vitaceae	Cissus vinosa		x	