



Society for Growing Australian Plants (Queensland Region) Inc.

Cairns Branch
PO Box 199
Earlville Qld 4870

Newsletter No. 86
Mar 2009

Society Office Bearers

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| Chairperson | Ann Mohun | 40 310 551 |
| Vice Chairperson | Mary Gandini | 40 542 190 |
| Secretary | Greg Keith | 40 981 130 |
| Treasurer | Robert Jago | 40 552 266 |

Membership Subscriptions- Qld Region- Renewal \$39.00, New Members \$44, each additional member of household \$1.00

Cairns Branch Fees -\$10.00 Full Year

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

Dates to remember

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

NEXT MEETING will be the AGM which will be held at Rob & Bianca's place, 43 Behan St, Stratford. Please meet at 1200 for a BBQ lunch followed by the AGM and an ordinary meeting.

PLEASE NOTE. The AGM is being held on of 14th March, the second Saturday of the month.

Tablelands Branch – Sunday following the meeting on the 4th Wednesday of the month. Any queries please contact Chris Jaminon 4095 2882 or hjaminon@bigpond.com

Townsville branch General Meeting—8.00pm Wednesday 11th February, Community Centre–Annandale Shopping Centre.

21Feb09 Ordinary Meeting

Cairns Botanic Gardens

Several important issues were discussed at this, our first meeting of the year. Some important points for those who were not in attendance:

AGM.

The AGM is due to take place next month, March. Several members present at the meeting, expressed their apologies for not being able to attend the meeting if it were held, as usual, on the third Saturday of the month. In order to alleviate the possibility of a quorum not being achieved at the AGM, the members agreed to hold the AGM on the second Saturday of March the 14th. The AGM will be held at Rob & Bianca's place, 43 Behan St, Stratford. The meeting will be preceded by a BYO BBQ lunch. BBQ and Esky provided.

The members discussed the arrangements for the transition of committee positions at the AGM. It was suggested that incoming members should be given a comprehensive handover of the position and it was agreed that the best way to do this was for current office bearers to provide a brief of what their office entails and points to carrying out the job correctly. Consequently, current office bearers are requested to provide these details one week prior to the AGM so that they can be vetted against the Constitution and distributed to interested parties.

Excursions

Suggested destinations for upcoming excursions were taken from the floor. They are listed below.

The failure to achieve planned excursion destinations during the past year was also discussed. The members agreed that the decision of the members should hold and that no single member should be able to override planned outings agreed upon by the majority. For this year a list of destinations has been produced and agreed upon. The dates for each outing have not been set in concrete to allow for wet weather and other contingencies.

Four overnights have been proposed, though most will be within easy driving

distance of Cairns allowing day trippers to return home at a reasonable hour.

- Noah Beach
- Chillagoe (August/September)
- Cooktown (June) , &
- Mt Windsor

It was suggested that the members nominating specific destinations be responsible for planning the outing and be the single point of contact for that outing.

Day excursions nominated were:

- Yarrabah
- Fitzroy Island (optional O/N)
- Josephine Falls (invite Innisfail SGAP to attend)
- Ella Bay (invite Innisfail SGAP to attend)
- Yuruga Nursery

Two wet weather etc contingencies were proposed:

- peruse the various bike/pedestrian paths in the Cairns region
- Visit rare/extinct plant sites in an attempt verify said plants existence.

Wet Tropics Plan Review

The Wet Tropics Management Authority is now in the final stages of reviewing the *Wet Tropics Management Plan 1998*. The Authority is proposing a number of amendments to the Plan and is inviting public comment.

At the meeting it was suggested that members take a few minutes to peruse the proposed plan and submit comments. In particular members might like to view the list of Undesirable Plants accessed from the web page:

http://www.wettropics.gov.au/mwha/mwha_planreview.html

It would appear that some environmental weeds have been left off the list, eg *Syngonium*.

Fern Tour

Toward the end of March, a group will be visiting the Far North to look at our native ferns. There might be an opportunity to partake in some of the group's outings. Stay tuned!

Vale Tony Irvine AM

By Pauline Lawrie

On 21 January 2009 seven members of Cairns Branch of SGAP joined well over 200 others in a tree planting memorial tribute to Tony Irvine. The invitation asked people to be there at 9.30 for a 10 o'clock start. When we arrived on time all the off road parking was already full, so vehicles then parked on both sides of the highway and for some distance down Thomas Road opposite.

National Parks and TREAT provided approximately 800 trees which were planted on the north west corner of the Curtain Fig National Park at Yungaburra. This appeared to me to be a part of the Park which had previously been cleared for some reason or other. I have never been to a TREAT planting before and was extremely impressed with the preparation. The trees to be planted were resting in pre-dug holes which included some expanded water crystals and pelletised fertiliser. Trowels and gloves were provided and bales of mulching hay placed nearby. Back up at the off road parking site there were hand washing facilities, including nail brushes, at a convenient height, with fresh water to replenish the basins. The provision and serving of smoko was equally impressive.

Helen shared many details of Tony's life and their daughter Sophie gave a very personal account of Tony as a Dad. Other speakers included a traditional owner, a representative of National Parks, Nigel Tucker, Joan Wright, Ann Radke, and several others. We heard of Tony's involvement in the birth of TREAT, Tablelands Branch of SGAP, his work with CSIRO, the naming of Mabi Forest, the finding of the Foxtail palm and his sheer love of tropical forests. Everything said showed Tony to be the same giving, patient man in all aspects of his life, private and public.

Helen was never a tree person; she is a writer. She and I often brought up the rear of SGAP outings led by Tony, finding the people more interesting than the trees. We didn't miss too much; Tony would patiently repeat his pearls of wisdom as many times as he was asked. He once told me he thought it most inappropriate to give a woman a bunch of reproductive organs – a bunch of flowers.

Helen sometimes said she wished she were as rare and threatened as the trees that captured so much of Tony's attention, but it was he who was rare and threatened. There will never be another

Tony Irvine, but one can only surmise that all the cutting and splinters he gave of himself so generously will grow and prosper



Don and I planted an *Omalanthus populifolius*, a pioneer species; it was a seedling which had obviously had a hard beginning, but we reckon it will grow into a big strong tree with some eye catching red heart shaped leaves in its crown.

Web Site Review

What's its name?



The WIN Website has been around for quite a few years now. This interactive site allows you to check the names of plants against the Australian Plant Name Index (APNI) database. The advantage of using WIN over APNI is that it provides plant name that are currently recognised by the Australian National Herbarium (ANH). I should point out:

- The WIN database is being constantly updated to reflect revisions and consequently will lag behind the true nomenclatural status of the Australian flora, and
- The Queensland Herbarium does not strictly follow plant names used by ANH

<http://www.anbg.gov.au/win/>

Cooktown Orchid Theft

Sent in by Andrew

In a letter to the Editor, Sandy Lloyd has reported in the *Cooktown Local News* the theft of our State's floral emblem from the Botanic Gardens.

“One of the Cooktown Orchids that SGAP had adhered to the upper branches of trees was noticed flowering out of season, but was stolen the following weekend in late January this year. The orchids, as Sandy points out, have been pilfered from most easily accessible locations. It's disappointing to hear that someone would go to the trouble of stealing a Cooktown Orchid from the Cooktown Botanic Gardens. Most people will not get a chance to see one elsewhere.”

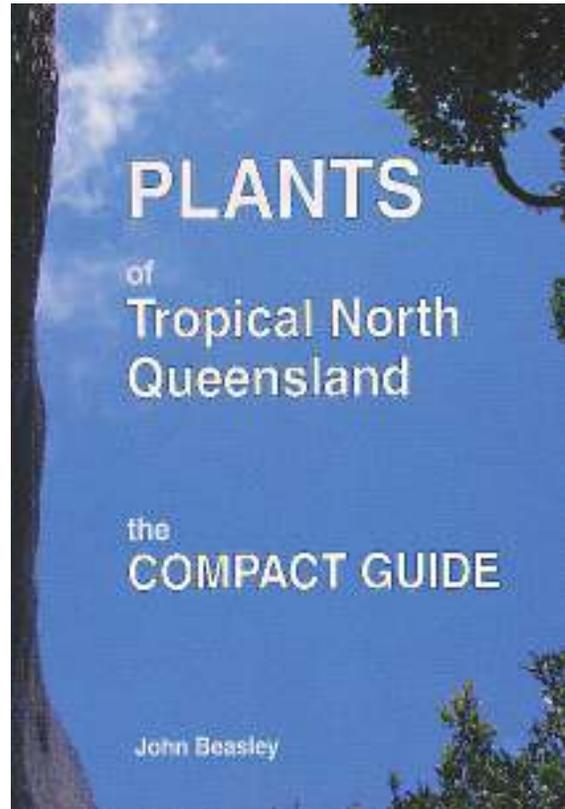
Thanks, Sandy, for writing in to the newspaper.

Book Review

Plants of tropical North Queensland: the compact guide by John Beasley

A compact guide with lots of information in a back-pack size book. Identifying 485 key plants using photographs and vegetation zones. This book is for everyone interested in the plants of Far North Queensland.

This easy to read book illustrates some of the more obvious plants that occur around our region. The entries are divided into the ecosystems within which they occur and are accompanied by photographs. This is a great guide to the local flora for novice plantos.



**If you have any book reviews, pictures, notes on growing tropical Australian plants or trip reports you'd like published in this newsletter, please send them to me: Tony Roberts—
email travelling_botanist@yahoo.com.au**