



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

Cairns Branch  
PO Box 199  
Earlville Qld 4870

Newsletter No. 101  
July 2010

## Society Office Bearers

<b>Chairperson</b>	Tony Roberts	40 551 292
<b>Vice Chairperson</b>	Mary Gandini	40 542 190
<b>Secretary</b>	David Warmington	40 443 398
<b>Treasurer</b>	Robert Jago	40 552 266

**Membership Subscriptions- Qld Region-** Renewal \$30.00, New Members \$35, each additional member of household \$2.00 **Student** - Renewal \$20 New Members \$25.00, **Cairns Branch Fees** - \$10.00 Full Year

To access our Library for the loan of publications, please contact David Warmington  
Newsletter Editor: Tony Roberts [travelling\\_botanist@yahoo.com.au](mailto:travelling_botanist@yahoo.com.au)

## Dates to remember

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

### NEXT MEETING AND EXCURSION

**17 July TBA. Please see note below.**

**Tablelands Branch Excursion**– Sunday following the meeting on the fourth Wednesday of the month. Any queries please contact Chris Jaminon 4095 2882 or [hjaminon@bigpond.com](mailto:hjaminon@bigpond.com)

### **Townsville Branch**

**General Meeting** Please contact John Elliot: [jw-elliott@aapt.net.au](mailto:jw-elliott@aapt.net.au) for more information

## Crystal Ball

Aug - Redden Island

Sept – Upper Harvey Ck

Oct - Barron Falls' boardwalk/Kuranda

Nov - Ellie Point

## July

Our official July excursion was to White Mountains/Burra Range. As only one member was able to attend, a second excursion is being offered on Sat 17<sup>th</sup> July. If you would like to attend, please contact Bob Jago. Once numbers are ascertained, a local destination will be selected by consensus.



MELBOURNE AUSTRALIA | 23-30 JULY 2011

The eighteenth International Botanical Congress is being held Melbourne in July next year. It is a massive event, held only once every five years. In excess of 4000 delegates are expected, with over a thousand presentations covering all aspects of botanical sciences. For more information, check out their website: [www.ibc2011.com](http://www.ibc2011.com).

The presentations at the IBC are structured around themed “symposia”, where a number of presentations will be given concerning a particular topic. For example, there will be symposia concerned with plant evolution, others with plant genetics, plant ecology, food production and adaptations to climate change.

Before the conference even starts, a very influential committee will meet to make decisions concerning the International Code of Botanical Nomenclature: the set of rules which governs the scientific naming of plants. The decisions of this committee are not just esoteric ramblings of scientists locked away in their ivory towers – they can have far-reaching implications. This year, one of the questions for consideration is whether the Australian wattles should retain the name *Acacia*. The name *Acacia* was first applied to African trees, then later to similar trees in Australia. However recent scientific work has determined that the Australian wattles, although appearing similar, actually belong to a different genus to the African group. The African group was named first, and should theoretically retain the name *Acacia*. But, there are only a few dozen *Acacias* in Africa, and hundreds of economically important species in Australia. Recognising this, five years ago, the decision was made to retain the name *Acacia* in Australia, and call the African species *Vachellia*. But there have been rumblings of discontent in the wider botanical community, and next year the question may be considered again, which might lead to a reversal of the decision. Imagine the consequences of changing the name of just about every Australian *Acacia*...

Of the thousands of plant nuts visiting from overseas, at least some will want to explore the botany of the place they’re visiting. The IBC has offered up a vast array of pre- and post-conference tours for visiting delegates, including trips to every state (why anyone would want to explore the Tasmanian rainforest in the dead of the southern winter, I cannot imagine). However, there will be several tours to northern Australia, including Cairns. Three tours will be fanning out from Cairns – a pre-conference trip to various places of botanical interest to the north, west and south of Cairns, to be repeated after the conference, and a more substantial post-conference trip to Cape York.

Tour organisers are busy bedding down the logistics of the pre- and post-conference trips at the moment, but may require assistance with the day to day operations of the trips when they happen. If you think you might be willing and able to help out in July-August next year, please contact Stuart Worboys on [worboys1968@yahoo.com.au](mailto:worboys1968@yahoo.com.au).

### COOKTOWN WORK PARTY JUNE 2010

This year ten people travelled to Cooktown to work in the Botanic Gardens, the majority being from the Tablelands Branch of SGAP. It was a pleasure to see the Gardens looking better than they have before, with the major pathways covered in sandy-coloured gravel. Every year there are big disappointments with losses of species donated by the SGAP Branches and this year was no different. However, the overall appearance of the Gardens has improved each time. The predations by wallabies has been reduced so effectively, by the absence of the person who used to feed them and the incursion of dingoes into the area, that it has been possible to remove some of the garden fences, a most pleasant result.

Tablelands Branch, as is usually the case, brought with them a host of desirable plants, many of them supplied by Yuruga at “donation prices”, and they set about getting those into the ground. This was an arduous task with plenty of muscle and the use of a crow bar on a fairly hot, sunny Saturday. The plants generously supplied by The Friends of the Cairns Botanic Gardens were also planted. Once the SGAPers had worked their magic on the native plants at the Gardens, we set about planting out a heap of exotics into the dry beds and the “Enchanted Rainforest” area.

The mulch available this year was of superior quality from the trimming of low hanging branches and the removal of some trees, but it was still no mean feat to place truckloads of it around the new plantings and into the SGAP garden, as well as around those specimens remaining in the Banks and Solander garden. It has become apparent that the Banks and Solander plants, collected originally from varied habitats, were just not going to be successfully grown together, so in future individual plants will find a home more in keeping with their preferred micro-climate throughout the garden.

Our Saturday lunch was enjoyed at Nature’s PowerHouse where we were joined by Loretta Sullivan representing the Vera Scarth-Johnson Friends, and we were able to visit the exhibition of the Banks Florilegium prints side by side with Vera’s paintings – an excellent exhibition curated by Sandy Lloyd.

Sunday afternoon’s outing to the Golf Course, where we had lunch, was a real hit. The groundsman, Graham, is a first class wildlife and landscape photographer and his many photo albums were pored over and large canvas prints much admired. We made our way through a swamp with interesting plants unaffected by human activity, then walked through the course towards the beach. The wind was so vicious that we admired the foaming sea from a distance and kept inside the shelter of the beach-side trees. A fitting end for a good week-end

## Meet the Locals

**Casuarinaceae** consists of 4 genera (3 in Australia) and approximately 90 species (66 in Australia) of trees and shrubs native to the Old World tropics, Australia, and the Pacific Islands. Members of this family are characterized by drooping, equisetoid (meaning "to look like *Equisetum*") twigs, are evergreen, and monoecious (male and female flowers are produced on the same plant) or dioecious (male and female flowers are produced on separate plants). The roots have nitrogen-fixing nodules that contain the soil actinomycete (fungus) *Frankia*.

The genus name is derived from the word Cassowary in reference to the similarity in appearance between the plants' drooping branchlets and Cassowary feathers.

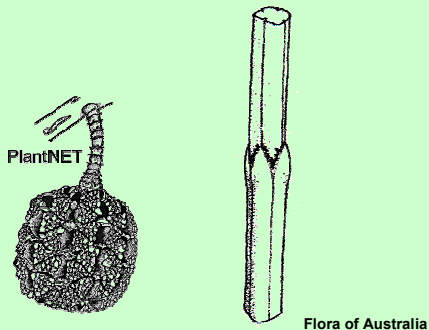
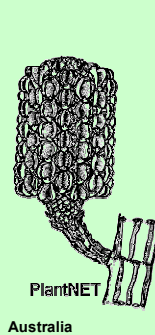
Common names for Casuarinaceae species include Sheoak, Ironwood, Bull Oak and Beefwood.

The Casuarinaceae have branchlets that look superficially like pine needles. Each branchlet is made up of sections that are easily separated from each other (articles). The articles are ribbed and topped with teeth (reduced leaves); one tooth per ridge on the article. The number of teeth (or ribs) and the form of the teeth are a useful tool in the identification of taxa down to the species level.

**The Casuarinaceae of Mt Whitfield** Two species of Casuarinaceae occur on Mt. Whitfield; they occur in a single genus *Allocasuarina* and both are trees.

***Allocasuarina littoralis***, Black Sheoak is a dioecious tree, 5 to 25m tall. It occurs from Cape York, south to the Otway Range in Victoria and along the east coast of Tasmania in woodland & heath in poor soils.

The branchlets grow to 200mm (-350mm) long, made up of articles 4 – 10mm long topped with usually 6 – 8 (5 – 9) teeth.



***Allocasuarina torulosa*** Rose She Oak; Forest She Oak or Black Sheoak is a dioecious tree, 5 to 20m tall. It occurs from the Mcllwraith Range, to just south of Sydney on coastal hills and ranges, as an understorey plant in open forest.

The drooping branchlets grow to 140mm long, made up of articles 5 – 6mm long topped with usually 4 or 5 teeth.

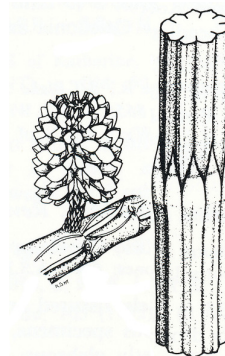
## Other indigenous Casuarinaceae of the greater Cairns area

Not Illustrated

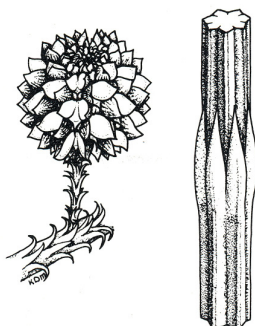
***Allocasuarina* sp. Shaw Island (G.N. Batianoff+3360)**

***Casuarina cunninghamiana*** River She Oak is a dioecious tree, to 25m tall. It occurs from Laura in Qld to Bega in NSW and inland, along permanent, freshwater streams.

Branchlets erect or drooping comprising articles 6 – 9mm long, topped with 8 – 10 teeth.



Flora of Australia

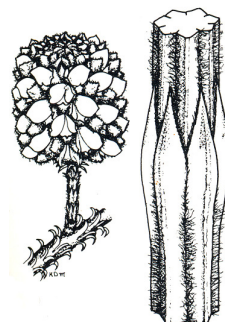


Flora of Australia

***Casuarina equisetifolia* subsp. *equisetifolia***

Horsetail She Oak is a monoecious tree growing 7 – 35m tall. It occurs along the coast from about Darwin to about Cairns and overseas.

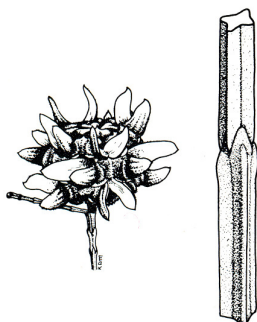
Branchlets to around 300mm long comprising articles 5 – 8mm long .5 - .7mm diameter, topped with 7 or 8 teeth.



Flora of Australia

***Casuarina equisetifolia* subsp. *incana*** Horsetail She Oak is a monoecious tree 6 – 12m tall. It occurs from tropical Queensland to mid coastal NSW along the coast and on some Pacific Islands.

Branchlets to around 300mm long comprising articles 7 – 13mm long .7 - 1mm diameter, topped with 7 or 8 teeth.



Flora of Australia

***Gymnostoma australianum*** is a Rare, small monoecious or dioecious tree, 4 to 7m tall. Its distribution is limited to Thornton Peak and nearby rainforest.

Branchlets to 130mm long comprising articles 2 – 4mm long, topped with 4 teeth.

## Note

I will be absent from next weekend until early September. Stuart has kindly offered to take over the roll of Newsletter Editor in my absence. For any other issues, please contact Mary or Bob. Regards Tony.