



SGAP Cairns

September-October 2012
Newsletter 124-5

Society for Growing Australian Plants (Queensland Region) Inc., Cairns Branch
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Trip Report No. 1 – Ivan Evans Walk, August 2012

This month we have trip reports from two contributors. Thanks Boyd and Don! A species list was prepared by Rob Jago in March 2011, and can be viewed on our website at: www.sgapcairns.org.au/Newsletters/108_Mar11.pdf

Don Lawie

Saturday 18 August was a cool clear sunny late winter day – ideal for a walk in our Great Outdoors. The Ivan Evans Walk runs from Ellen Close in Toogood Road to Pine Tree Close in Bayview Heights, a hilly southern suburb of the City of Cairns. We walked the south-eastern part of the Walk in February 2011 and today we did the north western sector from Pine Tree Close to the lookout.

Upcoming Activities

SGAP CAIRNS BRANCH OUTING

15 September 2012

Garden of Ann Mohun, 30 Lomandra Close Redlynch.

20 October 2012

Djumbunji Ranger Headquarters, East Trinity

SGAP TABLELANDS BRANCH OUTING.

Sunday after the 4th Wednesday

Any queries please contact Chris Jaminon 4095 2882 or hjaminon@bigpond.com

TOWNVILLE SGAP

Meets on the 2nd Wednesday of the month, February to November, in Annandale Community Centre at 8pm, and holds excursions the following Sunday.



"The Crew" – Stuart Worboys, Barb Collins, Liz Lovett, Rob and Bianca Jago, balancing on a steep section of the Ivan Evans Walk.

Last year the effects of the recent cyclone Yasi were much in evidence. Today there were the remains of just a few large fallen trees and it is evident that this side of the ridge was well protected. We met at a convenient parking spot in Toogood Road beside a pretty little creek tumbling through a culvert.

The walk is 700 metres in length and follows the creek for some time then climbs sharply to the Lookout. Altitude here is negligible and we were in a typical hillside lowland vine forest. Visibility was good – the absence of cyclone damage has not caused rampant growth of plants racing for the light coming through a broken canopy. Trees generally grew tall and straight particularly along the very steep creek banks.

The track is a masterpiece of minimalism – narrow, twisting and making much use of natural rocks and tree roots as steps, with occasional strategic blobs of concrete and a short set of wooden steps on a particularly steep pinch. It seems that the track gets frequent usage but we had it all to ourselves except for two dogs and their owner (to whom Liz spoke sternly and they rapidly retreated from sight). There were a few weeds – garden escapees – near the entrance but once we were in the rainforest proper there was no sign of humanity.

Fig trees were a feature, ranging from the root-appressed climber *Ficus pantoniana* through *Ficus congesta* and *Ficus hispida* to many large stately *Ficus variegata* specimens, two of which had grown so closely that their flanged buttresses had

fused making a very suitable photo shot. At ground level, the fascinating parasitic plant *Balanophora fungosa* was much in evidence with large clumps of flowering domes covering the ground.

Rob and Stuart had a field day compiling an extensive plant list and Boyd was fully stretched making notes of their finds. Orchids were not plentiful but there were enough to keep Pauline happy, particularly an abundance of the Cinnamon Orchid *Corymborkis veratrifolia* growing above the creek banks. A small colony of *Pomatocalpa macphersoni*, including a very large specimen and a fallen plant which had attached to a rock, caused comment. The small leaf litter

dweller *Zeuxine oblongifolia* were numerous in places, all with minute pale flower spikes.

An unusual find was a bird-lime tree *Pisonia umbellifera*, usually found on offshore islands. Stuart declared this to be “the ugliest tree in the forest” because of its unusual shape. Any other contenders? And what would be the Most Beautiful? I’ll vote for the *Spathoglottis* Lady!!

Towards the top of the walk was a large nest mound of a Scrub Turkey/megapode which reminded me of the magic day we were taken to a patch of flowering Cooktown orchids – so many that fallen plants had been incorporated into the nest mound.

We took 2 ½ hours to reach the lookout where the view was occluded by trees but it was a good rest stop and I leaned on a large cool trunked Python Tree *Gossia bidwillii* (formerly *Austromyrtus*). The return trip took half an hour including a break for Pauline to photograph the biggest *Corymborkis* we’ve ever seen – taller than her – and we’ll have to return during The Wet to view this plant in flower.



Corymborkis veratrifolia – collected at Smithfield Conservation Park, May 2012. Photo by Gary Wilson.

Trip Report No. 2 – Ivan Evans Walk, August 2012

Boyd Lenne

Our intrepid crew gathered in the car park and looked to discuss the best way forward. Don suggested a cup of tea while we mulled it over, and everyone agreed this was a splendid idea.

So while Rob made logistical plans, plotting our ascent using a 5 m contour map, we glanced around the car park appreciating the *Corymbia citriodora* (lemon scented gum), *Chionanthus ramiflorus* (northern olive), *Mucuna gigantea* (burny bean), *Tarrena dallachiana* (tree ixora), *Trichosperma pleiostigma* (Whitfield ash) and *Carallia brachiata* (freshwater mangrove). Conveniently, the car park had upwards of 40 natives in view, but eventually the biscuits ran out and we had to move on.



Coveniella poecilophlebia – an attractive fern along the track.

Barely inside the canopy, we could see a vast array of seedlings and scramblers. It was enough to keep the most avid botanist busy. *Eleocharis* seedlings, nutmegs and various *Ficus* sp dominated the understory. (my favourite was the *Ficus hispida*, a real sandpapery leaf with a lobed margin in juveniles). We also had clumps of *Balanophora fungosa* (smell that and describe it!! Musty, mildew and rotting meat, but not as bad as the corpse lily). A range of interesting vines in the understory kept us

busy, as we had the delightful milaa milaa vine with a silvered leaf underside. *Pothos* and *Ficus pantoniana* were scrambling over trunk and rock. *Eustrephus latifolius*, the Wombat berry and *Ottochloa nodosa* (a native grass) just crawled along doing its own thing.

As the group continued, the scoured rocky creek we were following started to turn east, and the bank narrowed and steepened. The chunky greywacke boulders were the perfect host for the scramblers, and we were treated to more *Ficus pantoniana*, *Faradaya splendida*, *Piper caninum*, *Hoya potsii* and our first *Corymborkis* orchids. Stuart pointed out the *Agyrodendron peralatum*, with its rocket shaped base, fissured bark and tall canopy. Then we discussed the difference between the native *Ardisias* (when you hold the leaves up to the light, you see thin oil dots like cracks) and introduced *Ardisia elliptica* (mostly round or oval oil dots) which is becoming a major pest in our rainforests [Editor's Note – hold the leaves up to the light and you'll see many small oil dots. *Ardisia elliptica* has clear round or oval oil dots, native *Ardisias* have a mix of long, oval and round oil dots, and sometimes dark reddish opaque oil dots as well]. Also here were *Wrightia laevis*, native *Jasminum* and *Pisonia umbellifera* with its untidy branches and whorled leaf arrangement. The *Syzygium cormiflorum* was interesting with massive trunk scars from its cauliflory branching. Now Stuart showed us the difference between *Calamus radicalis*, or "vicious hairy mary" and *Calamus australis* (slightly less viscious) "hairy mary" with the trunk spikes not aligned in rows.

It was here at the base of the ascent we found a magnificent pair of *Ficus* (??) with broad plank buttresses, just begging Don to take a Kodak moment. A glorious king fern was showing off across the gully. From here we could see Mossman mahogany, Red cedar, ylang ylang, black bean and *Terminalia microcarpa*. *Musa* and *Cardiospermum*

mollucana were noted. Then we compared the habit of the *Polyscias* genus with a *Dysoxylum gaudichaudianum* (see if the wood smells like celery).



Don Lawie vs fig.

Now we climbed out of the valley up the hill. *Cryptocarya*, sassafras and more nutmeg were the main players. The *Corymborkis veratrifolia* were still represented here, and looked healthy. Some rainforest *Calophyllum*, *Hornstaedia scottiana* compared to *Alpina cearulea* and a baby red cedar gave us lots to talk about. Further on we were lucky enough to compare *Melicope rubra* (beautiful butterfly tree) and *Melicope xanthoxyloides* ("ugly, warty thing, ignore it and it will go away" S. Worboys). Even a non-descript laurel could not stop us – *Endiandra longipedicellata* Rob announced with certainty! (good enough for me, I'm convinced).



The smooth, mottled bark of the python tree, *Gossia bidwillii*

Various *Dianella* and *Uncaria lanosa* were also of interest.

Towards the top, and we saw *Paraserianthes toona*, the acacia cedar and various other *Cryptocaryas*.

Gossia bidwillii the python tree (always has a cold trunk), *Polyalthia nitidissima*, *Cupaniopsis foveolata* and the natural variation in the leaves of *Eustrephus latifolius*

the Wombat berry gave us some discussion over lunch.

So, turning for home we called it a day. Still time to look at the keeled trunk on a matchbox bean and the aerial roots on a nutmeg on the way back. After another cuppa and a look around, we all parted ways. Until next time SGAP crew.



End of another successful SGAP trip – Boyd Lenne, Liz Lovett, Pauline Lawie, Barb Collins and Stuart Worboys

Ann Mohun's Garden

Photos by Ann Mohun

In anticipation of this month's visit to her garden, Ann has kindly sent through these pictures of her home in Redlynch.





September Excursion

Ann Mohun's Garden, Redlynch

Meet 10 am on Saturday 15 September 2012.

Directions: Ann's address is 30 Lomandra Close, Redlynch (see map on the next page). Take the back highway to the lights near Peace Lutheran, just before the Stony Creek turnoff and Barron River (if coming from town), turn left up the hill on Daphne Dr., take the first right onto Lomandra Cl. I am the second house from the end on the right. Or, you can come across from Stratford via Lower Freshwater Road and come straight through the lights by Peace Lutheran school up Daphne Dr.

I am told parking in Lomandra Close is awkward, so you may wish to park on Hartley Street.

What to bring: Ann has offered tea and coffee. Bring along some morning tea and lunch.

Ann advises *"The house has lots of trees and a gravel driveway. Some SGAP were here just after I planted everything, about 5 years ago, but I think I have lost what was identified at the time."*

October Excursion

Djubunji Indigenous Ranger Headquarters, East Trinity

As I will be away in October, Boyd Lenne will be organizing our October excursion. As of 8 September, he advises that all is OK for the planned outing. The excursion is to the Djubunji Indigenous Ranger Headquarters, located on Pine Creek Road, East Trinity. They rangers have a large property at the foot of the Grey Peaks Range, and bordering the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area.

PLEASE CONTACT BOYD IN THE WEEK BEFORE THE EXCURSION TO CONFIRM THE EXCURSION IS GOING AHEAD AS PLANNED. BOYDLENNE@HOTMAIL.COM

Meet 10 am on Saturday 20 October 2012.

Directions: The headquarters is located on Pine Creek Road, east Trinity (see map on next page). Head south from Cairns along the Bruce Highway. Cross the Wright's Creek bridge. About 1.3 km further on, turn left towards Yarrabah on Warner Road. 19.3 km from the Bruce Highway intersection you'll see a gravel driveway to the right, heading up a gentle hill. This is the entrance to the ranger headquarters. Follow this road up – there's plenty of parking at the top of the hill.

Boyd advises the Rangers would like us to look at a new walking track they've opened up. I've seen a little bit of the site– there's nice eucalypt woodland woodland with

What to bring: Morning tea, lunch and a sun hat.

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