



Society for Growing Australian Plants (Queensland Region) Inc.

Cairns Branch
PO Box 199
Earlville Qld 4870

Newsletter No. 95
January 2010

Society Office Bearers

Chairperson	Tony Roberts	40 551 292
Vice Chairperson	Mary Gandini	40 542 190
Secretary	Ing Toh	40 310 551
Treasurer	Robert Jago	40 552 266

Membership Subscriptions- Qld Region- Renewal \$40.00, New Members \$45, each additional member of household \$2.00 **Student** - \$35.00, **Cairns Branch Fees** -\$10.00 Full Year

To access our Library for the loan of publications, please contact David Warmington
Newsletter Editor: Andrew Picone andrew.picone@jcu.edu.au

Dates to remember

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

NEXT MEETING Saturday 20th February. Proposed investigation of the vegetation along a northern beach cycleway/pathway. TBC

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

Townsville Branch Outing:

Contact John Elliot: jw-elliott@aapt.net.au

Apology

Firstly I would like to apologise to Andrew for publishing this newsletter behind his back. Unfortunately I was unable to contact him so went ahead myself.

November Meeting

The November meeting was held at the Cairns Botanic Gardens and was quite well attended. Apart from the Christmas break-up function, several other activities occurred.

A short **slide show** was presented, showcasing the wildflowers of Western Australia's south west, focussing mainly on the plants of the Stirling Range. Several members present indicated that they would like a copy of the photos. For those who did not attend and would like a cd full of photos of stunning flowers, please let me know and I'll burn you a copy.

A brief **general meeting** was also held. The main topic of discussion was the fall off in attendance through the year. It was suggested that by choosing destinations closer to home, more members may be willing or able to attend. In addition, it was suggested that closer locations could be more relevant to our branch. Some rather interesting site visits were proposed.

To add interest to the new year a project was proposed. On Sunday 10th June 1770, James Cook anchored the Endeavour in Missionary Bay (just off the coast from where Yarrabah now stands). Banks and Solander went ashore with Cook and collected some plant specimens. Due to Banks' method of recording collection data, the full list of plants collected may never be known, however the identities of around two dozen are. David W has been planning a Banks and Solander garden at CBG for several years now. The proposal is for SGAP to become involved in the garden development from the research and planning to the construction, planting and maintenance. One activity would involve

visiting the site where Cook, Banks and Solander went ashore and investigating the flora of the area.

Following the success of our joint excursion with the Innisfail branch last year, I proposed another **joint venture** for 2010 with our comrades in Townsville. Townsville Branch conducts an annual pilgrimage to **White Mountains National Park**.

From the EPA/DERM Web Site:

"Covering an area of 108,000ha, this rugged wilderness park features spectacular white sandstone bluffs and gorges, and diverse plants and animals. A further 12,000ha are contained in a resources reserve on the eastern side of the park.

The park protects 14 different ecosystems in the Desert Uplands bioregion, making it one of inland Queensland's most botanically diverse parks. Lancewood forests, open woodlands, laterite pastures, heathlands and spinifex grasslands are found around the white sandstone outcrops, and sand dunes and sandy flats occur in the Canns Camp area. Brilliant wildflowers and a host of animals can be spotted throughout the park."

Having been there several times myself I do recommend a visit. The value added by the presence of Townsville members who regularly visit the area would be enormous. Dates have not yet been finalised, but it usually occurs mid year.

After our humble Christmas celebration we walked down to **Saltwater Creek** to view the progress of the mangrove removal. This project is controversial for many reasons, too many to be discussed here. Cairns Regional Council contracted the job of clearing mangroves and sediment from some banks of the creek in order to improve flood immunity for some residents in Edge Hill, Manunda and Manoora. The work was stopped when a pair of Rufous Owls was found to be

nesting in doomed mangroves. Once the hatchling was discovered, dead, the work resumed. Tony R

Garden Design Study Group – new book

As you probably know the Garden Design Study Group published an excellent book in 2002 authored by Diana Snape “The Australian Garden” which gives a comprehensive overview of landscape design for gardens using our native plants. The Study Group now intends to publish a second book, this time specifically covering design for small native gardens. I have been asked to join the team of authors Diana Snape, Chris Larkin and Barbara Buchanan (Melbourne), Jo Hambrett (Sydney), to provide the Queensland coverage. This is a wonderful opportunity for us to ensure that selected native gardens of northern Australia from the coast to the outback, are included in this quality national publication.

Why small gardens?

It is appropriate to focus this book on small gardens given the residential blocks of today where it is common for 300 – 900 sqm blocks to be basically covered by house footprints leaving small narrow spaces for outdoor living and gardens. In some of the recent display villages in Brisbane there are many excellent examples of how to treat these small spaces around and between houses many of which blur the transition from inside to outside, taking advantage of our climate to integrate the house with the garden.

Unfortunately most of these landscapes primarily use exotic species and few if any native plants. Also formal, minimalist approaches seem to be the accepted norm today. The ‘hard landscape’ elements are generally well used, appropriate and basically create the garden ambience or character. Species selections (whether native or exotic) reflect that little thought has been given to

ultimate size and spread of specimens. Generally it will be difficult for ‘new gardeners’ to maintain the initial design form of these gardens which, in most cases, will need careful management and / or replacement with more suitable species over time.

One of the challenges in the subtropics & tropics is the relative absence of small growing native species that can suit small garden spaces. Therefore to identify and review suitable small gardens with related native plants in Queensland will be the principal task. Whatever we come up with I feel sure that the book will discuss and illustrate specialised design concepts for small gardens some of which may be considered as ‘rooms’ within larger gardens – in this way the book will appeal to everyone and offer a range of design choices and applications.

Suggestions invited

The above are a few initial thoughts from the prospective authors which will give you an indication of what is under consideration. It will probably take a couple of years to prepare the book for publication but we have commenced preliminary work. So that the result will be a comprehensive publication of wide interest and value, we are inviting the suggestions and thoughts of Queensland SGAP members. Initially I would like to compile a list of native gardens throughout Queensland and it is intended to progressively visit them as the book is researched. Therefore member’s advice on the location of native gardens (small, large, residential and public) that you have seen or know of would be invaluable. Please send your suggestions to:

Lawrie Smith - Garden Design Study
Group Queensland Coordinator
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Lucid Free Offer

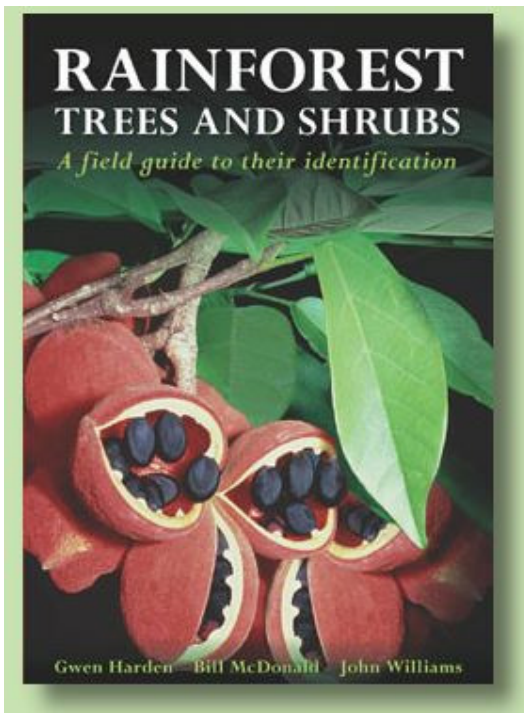


For those with an interest in developing interactive identification keys there is some great news. To celebrate its 10th birthday, CBIT is offering its initial release of the "Lucid Professional identification tool" by providing Lucid v3.3 free. Lucid is a great tool and with a bit of perseverance, interactive identification keys can be developed for almost anything.

Visit the Lucid site at www.lucidcentral.org and click the Lucid 3.3 free offer link. On the site you can also access many keys developed in Lucid and get a feel for how they work.

Book Review

For anyone thinking of having a poke around down south, in the rainforests of mainland eastern Australia south of the tropics, in particular, here are two books of great value:



Most traditional floras or identification guides to plants use flowers and fruits as the main means of identification and recognition as these are the most obvious and stable parts of the plant. However, in

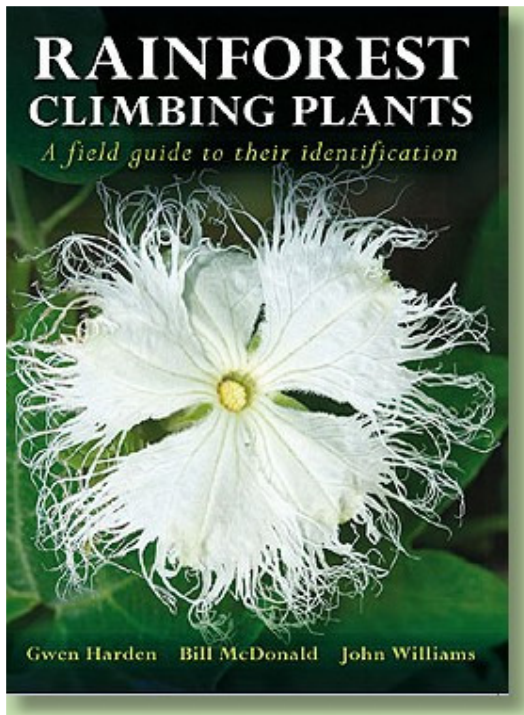
rainforests the flowers and fruits are usually held high in the canopy of the forest and so difficult to collect and thus determine the name of the plant. Also, flowers are usually seasonal and produced on the plants for only a short time each year.

The system used in this guide is based on the details of the leaves and branchlets. Leaves can readily be collected from young plants, from trees on the edge of the forest or picked up from the forest floor. This system was largely developed by the late John Williams (of the University of New England, Armidale). Each species has line drawings of leaves and fruit and a description of its main features, its geographic distribution and the type of rainforest in which it grows.

*This book is the successor to *Trees and Shrubs in Rainforest of New South Wales and southern Queensland* (Williams, Harden & McDonald 1984), which was known by many as the 'Red Book'. This earlier book has been widely used by professional botanists and ecologists, environmental consultants and planners and by rainforest enthusiasts and gardeners.*

This book has now been completely rewritten, while keeping the essentials of the original format. It will enable the identification of rainforest trees and shrubs using vegetative features. It has been brought up to date with additional species and more comprehensive information.

Rainforest Trees and Shrubs includes descriptions of 850 species (an increase of 309 from the earlier 'Red Book'), each with leaf and fruit drawings.



This is a major update of "Rainforest Climbing Plants" (Williams & Harden 1980) and later reprintings with additions. It is known by many as "the Green Book". It has now been expanded to cover mainland Eastern Australia from Victoria up to Rockhampton in Queensland.. Descriptions and illustrations are provided for 265 climbing plant species, somewhat more than double that in the original edition. The new edition includes major rainforest types as well as vine thickets and the drier inland extensions of rainforests.

The book provides a concise illustrated guide to the identification of rainforest climbing plants of subtropical eastern mainland Australia south of the Tropic of Capricorn at Rockhampton, thence down through Southern Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria.

"Rainforest Climbing Plants" is an excellent identification guide based upon the distinctive features of the leaves, stems and branchlets. Leaf characters have the advantage that they are available for study during any season (except for a small number of deciduous species) and in most rainforest species are sufficiently distinctive to permit identification and subsequent recognition of the species. As well as the obvious

points of leaf size, shape and arrangement, there are several finer characteristics such as the presence of oil dots (oil glands), hairs, scales, scaly buds, stipules, latex etc which must be checked. Information about these features is provided in several sections of the book.

Both books are well presented and organised. Instruction on key use, descriptions of rainforest types, special features and rainforest distribution are also included in the publications.

Many professional botanists would not venture into the sub-tropical or temperate rainforests without them, why should we?

Both books are available from:

Gwen Harden Publishing.at:

<http://www.rainforests.net.au/>