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Committee Members:	Mark Raines	8928 1330
	Raylene Chandler	8941 8826
	Geoff Gaskell	8945 5825
Newsletter Editor:	Jan Herrmann	8988 9723

tenps@austarnet.com. au

AUGUST 2004 NEWSLETTER

MEETINGS AND FIELD TRIPS

We meet on the third Thursday of the month at 7:30 pm. We attempt to conclude the General meeting by 8:00pm and this is followed by a Guest Speaker beginning at 8:15 pm. There is time for a cuppa inbetween the meeting and the guest speaker. The venue for our meeting is Marrara Christian School, on the corner of Amy Johnson and McMillans Drive. All welcome. Bring plants to swap, sell or have identified.

COMING EVENTS COMING EVENTS COMING EVENTS

~ NEXT MEETING THURSDAY AUGUST 19TH ~

~ GUEST SPEAKER: ~ JARED HOLMES

At our August meeting Jared Holmes from the Threatened Species Network will be our Guest Speaker. Come along and listen to what Jared has to share with us.

~ SEPTEMBER '04 FIELD TRIP ~

EXPLORATORY RAINFOREST FIELD TRIP, PTYCHOSPERMA SURVEY, SUNDAY 5 SEPTEMBER 2004

An exploratory trip in the Howard Springs Hunting Reserve/Shoal Bay Coastal Reserve to search for populations of Ptychosperma, an endangered rainforest palm. Access to some sites will be by foot some come along with sturdy footwear and an expectation of getting some exercise. Long trousers and a long sleeved shirt are recommended for protection from the sun, scratchy bush and biting insects. The usual of water bottle, hat, sunglasses and sunscreen are required. Please bring a cut lunch and small backpack to carry your gear. 4wd vehicles will be required and there should be some seats available for those who do not have access to a 4wd. To assist in logistics please register your attendance with Dave Liddle ph 89994564bh or E-mail dave.liddle@nt.gov.au prior to the weekend. The meeting point will be the carpark at Howard Springs Nature Park 0850 for a 0900 departure.

Please note that this Field Trip replaces the normal August Field Trip. There will be a second Field Trip organised in September following the September meeting.

“IN PURSUIT OF PLANTS” TALK GIVEN BY PHIL SHORT

Phil Short is a taxonomist at the NT Government Herbarium and at our last General meeting he shared his experiences of researching for information, and those of some of the collectors in this recently published book.

The book is a compilation of accounts from journals and records of plant collectors in the 1800's, but reads more like an adventurer's travelogue." In Surinam, plant hunter F.W. Hostmann allowed vampire bats to suck his toe; Thomas Drummond was attacked by a bear in the North America woods; George forest narrowly escaped rampaging lamas in Western China; and, in Fiji, Berthold Seemann recorded which plants cannibals used as an accompaniment to human flesh."

Records from over 30 collectors are included in this book. Some are well known early Australian explorers like Leichhardt, Mueller, and Giles who also collected plant specimens, others are lesser known people who often collected plant specimens to supplement their income or relieve the boredom of the positions they found themselves in.

A copy of this book has been purchased for our library, - join the queue for those who want to read it.

CAN ANYONE HELP? ? ? ? ?

From: "Greg Calvert" <gregor_calvert@hotmail.com>
To: tenps@austarnet.com.au
Subject: Rhamphicarpa australiensis

My name is Greg Calvert and I am currently working with several colleagues to produce a book titled "Needle in a haystack: The rare and threatened plants of the Townsville-Thuringowa region, north Queensland". We are working on this book in a voluntary capacity, with publication funded by an Envirofund grant. Under the terms of the funding, we are meant to have this book completed by November this year and it will be published by our local landcare group (Coastal Dry Tropics Landcare Inc.).

We have 41 species covered in this book and we are now getting desperate for photographs of a last few species. In particular, we have left our run too late to get photographs of a small herbaceous plant Rhamphicarpa australiensis, which is listed as RARE under the QLD Nature Conservation Act.

An internet search showed that your group recently located this species on a field trip to Howard Springs on the 23rd May. I would be very interested to hear from any of your members who may have a photograph of this species that might be suitable for publication in our book. We will willingly give due acknowledgement for the photograph and a free copy of the book to anyone who can supply us with a photo/ photos. We can use high-resolution digital images or scan slides or negatives.

Like many of these small rare plants, there is very little published information about them. Any comments on the ecology, habitat and threats facing this species would also be gratefully recieved.

Thank you for your assistance. I look forward to your reply.

Best regards

Greg Calvert

**NEXT MEETING THURSDAY THURSDAY AUGUST 19TH ~
~ GUEST SPEAKER: JARED HOLMES ~ ”**

**SENDER: TOP END NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY
PO BOX 135 PALMERSTON
NT 0831**

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