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~ JANUARY 2008 NEWSLETTER ~

~ MEETINGS AND FIELD TRIPS ~

We meet on the third Thursday of the month at 7:30 pm. Following the TENPS general meeting, the speaker will commence at 8pm. Tea & coffee are available during the meeting. The venue for the meeting is Marrara Christian College, on the corner of Amy Johnson and McMillan Drives. All welcome. Bring plants to swap, sell or have identified.

~ Next GENERAL MEETING Thursday 17th January ~

Speaker to be Mike Braby about plants that butterflies feed on.

~ FIELD TRIP- Fred's Pass Saturday 19th January ~

A request has been received from Olive Fracking, secretary of the Fred's Pass Management Board Inc. The board is applying for a grant from Australian Conservation volunteers to establish a 5.2km walking track around the lake and surrounding vegetation at the lake at Fred's Pass Reserve. They have asked if we would provide a letter of support indicating our willingness to provide some plants for the project and be included in an initial survey and identification of plants already existing in the area.

TENPS are willing to assist and has forwarded an appropriate letter of support. Hence, the January field trip will be at Fred's Pass ON Saturday morning to identify plants and conduct this initial survey. **Details will be given out at the general meeting or contact Russell Dempster 8983 2131.**

~ Summary of ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING November 2007 ~

Our Annual General Meeting was held, as advertised, on Thursday 15 November and very well attended. Minutes of the meeting are included in this newsletter and indicate the names of those on the committee for 2007-08.

Unfortunately nominations were not received for the positions of Librarian and Publicity Officer and these remain vacant. Neither office is overly demanding and members are urged to consider applying to fill one of these positions. It will be noted that the annual membership subscription remains unchanged.

The AGM was followed by the usual Members Monthly Meeting. Nicholas Smith has published a book titled Native Plants for Top End Gardens, which is marketed through Greening Australia. It

is understood that Clare Martin was to launch the book at Greening Australia's nursery on Friday 30 November. A very good discount is offered for bulk orders and TENPS has taken advantage of this offer to obtain 50 books which will be available to our members at the discounted price, with the remainder being used for fund-raising at special events during the year. Thus our copies should be available for members at our next meeting at a cost of \$60 each (undiscounted retail price \$75.90). Another new release through Greening Australia is Native Plants for Central Australian Gardens which has been available for a couple of weeks now.

The monthly meeting was concluded with a talk by Ian Morris on what he called Inspirational Plants or What Did It for Me! Accompanied, as usual, by some amazing photos. Thank you for that Ian, your talks are always a pleasure and are an inspiration in themselves!

Brief Summary of Treasurer's Report 2007: Marj King

- There has been a substantial increase in membership.
- 3 plant sales (Coolalinga, Garden Spectacular & Dale Dixon's Open Garden) during the year have also boosted income.
- The donation of books and a microscope from the late Joyce Stobo has increased our assets.
- A laptop, software and printer were purchased
- A small overall loss was made for the year.
- If anyone who did not make to the AGM and would like to see a full copy of the Treasurer's report please contact the Treasurer.

~ Notes from GENERAL MEETING – November ~

Ian Morris "Plants (and animals) I've known and loved..."

Thankyou to Ian who gave a very interesting talk on many plant and animal species he grew up with and which shaped his future pathways. This is merely a summary:

Ian grew up in the southern parts of Sydney, not far from Royal National Park. He spent his formative years learning about animals and then plants, realising to understand animals, you first



have to appreciate plants. Later in his life, many aboriginal people that Ian worked with reinforced this notion. The Royal National Park has not changed much over the last 40 years and is a fantastic wilderness area which Ian visited frequently, and still does.

Angophora costata is a part of the landscape in the Sydney region, one of Ian's favourite trees. It is a eucalypt relative with spectacular orange bark. Another species, *Gynea lily (Dryanthes)* have long flower spikes with stunning red flowers. *Stenocarpus simatus (wheel of fire)* and *Lambertia* produce copious amounts of nectar to feed birds and animals.

Douglas Baglin (OAM) was a mentor and close friend of Ian's. He was a photographer, a producer of coffee table books and said he would teach Ian how to photograph if he collected animals for him to photograph. **Picture: *Angophora costata***

In 1970, Ian discovered a new species of Bandicoots and Antechinus on Cape York Peninsula. He took them in his backpack down to Canberra to have them identified. Ian then went to the University of NSW School of Botany, but became bored as they were using Canadian textbooks.

Ian's uncle was working on Elcho Island, so he became involved with the people there. They used their knowledge of the bush to their advantage – such as plant and animal food sources are determined by the seasons; mangroves are actually supermarkets, probably the most productive food environments for aboriginal people.

Ian was then asked to look after Sir Peter Scott, age 78. Peter sketched four new fish species and started the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) as well as being David Attenboroughs mentor.

Other associates of Ian's were Bill Cooper and Stan Breeden, plant specialists from North Queensland. Stan has written several books, and Bill is a acclaimed painter.

Ian also covered plants in his talk such as:

- Peanut trees with stunning fruits
- Pimelia (red flowers) is sometimes used as a fish poison plant
- Bristlecone pines, and a picture of one that lived over 3200 years.
- Manbinik, *Allosyncarpia ternate* – one of Ians favourite trees endemic in sandstone regions of Kakadu National Park and Arnhem Land. A new species of goanna has recently been discovered living in the canopy of these trees.
- *Stockwellia* which grows at Mt Bartlefrer and North Queensland forests.

~ Summary FIELD TRIP- November 17th 2007 ~

Marj King

The area on the ridge to the north of Robin Falls is a favourite of mine as the diversity of species is immense. Finding *Eucalyptus jensenii* enroute was a bonus. This is the Territory's only iron bark eucalypt. The area around Robin Falls gets burnt almost every year but the rocky nature provides areas of protection.

The following list is the species that were flowering or in fruit. To list all the species in the area would be a little like writing out the index of Brock.

Species flowering

Corymbia foelscheana
Drosera petiolaris
Eucalyptus brachyandra
Eucalyptus kambolgiensis
Eucalyptus tectifera
Gardenia fucata
Pachynema complanatum
Wrightia saligna

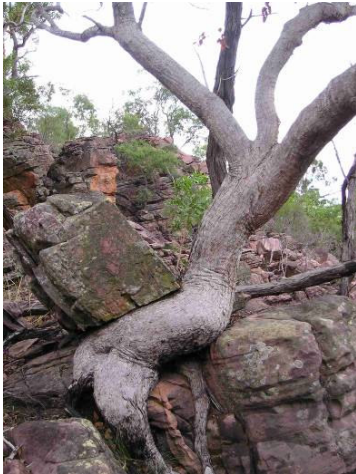
Species fruiting

Buchanania obovata
Corumbia polysciada
Opilia amentacea
Persoonia falcata
Planchonella arnhemensis
Pogonolobus reticulatus

Geoff Gaskell

The highlight of the trip for me was locating *Eucalyptus jensenii*, *E. kombolgensis* and *E. brachiandra* populations on and off the road leading to Robin Falls from Adelaide River, as they were all new to me, along with Marj's commentary on the distinguishing features of the various *Eucalyptus/Corymbia* species along the Stuart Highway. Of the many other species identified by

C brachyandra



Marj and Denise, the yellow/orange flowers of the *Xanthostemon paradoxus* provided the most spectacular show.

After a couple of hours walk on the 4WD track beyond the transmitter station a couple of ridges before Robin Falls, the heat and humidity made a cool bath in a pool below the Falls most welcome, and another opportunity for spotting a variety of rain-forest trees, including several *Syzygium* species.

Louise Harrison

After spending most of my life to date in the arid zone, I am feeling overwhelmed about where to even begin to start to learn some of the plants of the Top End. Anyway, enough procrastinating, and I decided to join the TENP's field trip to Robin Falls, AND decided that my focus for the day would be the Eucalypts (and well...Corymbias). It seemed a reasonable enough place to start...%\$#

Marj responded with great enthusiasm when she learnt that her passenger was keen to learn some new plants, and our first stop was just near the Adelaide River showground where without effort we quickly located 4 relevant species. To get started, I made some quick notes about each of the species as we encountered them, mainly about the bark, habitat and any other obvious features, although I lost track of which ones were variable in appearance – many it seems - according to the experts!

Corymbia polycarpa Long-fruited Bloodwood (10-15m) presently with a mass of cream flowers, old seed pods still retained, grey flaky bark, and grows in woodland or low areas.

Eucalyptus tectifera (5-12m) currently with dainty cream flowers, grey box bark, and growing in open woodland and on stony ridges.

Corymbia polysciada Apple Gum (5-13m) loads of green fruit and red-purple new growth, crocodile skin bark on lower trunk and smooth above, grows in open woodland and on low ridges.

Corymbia foelscheana Broad-leafed Bloodwood (7-10m) large leathery leaves, scaly red-brown bark on lower trunk, grows in open woodland and on low hills.

Further down the road and about 15km from Robyn Falls turn-off, Marj easily relocated a clump of Ironbark and another Eucalypt species was also growing nearby:

Eucalyptus jensenii Ironbark (7-12m) deeply fissured dark grey trunk, grows on rocky ridges, the only Ironbark in the NT.

Eucalyptus alba (5-10m) small roundish leaves, smooth white trunk, grows in open woodland, gravelly hillsides.

Soon after this we arrived at the top of Robyn Falls, parked the cars and enjoyed a great walk along the track. The scenery was beautiful with lots of interesting plants, and after some walking, Marj located the two Eucalypt species with relatively restricted ranges that she had wanted to show us* and some others on the way:

**Eucalyptus kombolgiensis* (7-12m) narrow green drooping leaves, scaly scarf at base and smooth above; rocky slopes.



C kambolgiensis

Eucalyptus apodophylla (10-18m) bluish leaves without stalk, smooth white trunk; open woodland along drainage lines.

Eucalyptus tetradonta Stringybark (10-30m) grey stringy bark; range of habitats.

Eucalyptus miniata Woollybutt (10-20m) dark fibrous bark on lower trunk and smooth above; wide range of habitats.

Corymbia polysiada – as above

**Eucalyptus brachyandra* (5-7m) grey fibrous bark, small leaves, appears to grow out of rocks, rocky ridges.

By the time we returned to the cars we had well and truly earned some lunch by the shady creek where there was only one more species to add to the list before returning to Darwin:

Eucalyptus ptychocarpa Swamp Bloodwood (to 12m) stunning large pink flowers, grey-brown tessellated bark, enormous green leaves, associated with creeks.

E jensenii



One of the highlights of the day for me was not Eucalypts OR Corymbias, but my first sighting of the Vulnerable Partridge Pigeon in woodland above the Falls. After the field trip I later discovered that with only 11 species on my list, this is not even half of the 30+ Eucalypt and Corymbia species found in the Darwin region (to Pine Creek). I will have to tackle all those Salmon gums and others, some other time but at least I have made a start! Many thanks to Marj and others for sharing their knowledge and enthusiasm.

~ December PLANT SALE Coolalinga ~

Once again, this sale was a huge success with a great number of plants sold. Thankyou to those who supplied plants to sell, and/or came along to help with the sales. A big thanks to Russell Dempster and Dave Liddle for their assistance (and expert knowledge) throughout the morning.

Most popular plants sold: *Grevillea dryandri*, *Celtis philippinensis*, *Podocarpus grayii*, *Phaleria clerodendron*

~ Summary XMAS PARTY- December 2007 ~

A good number of people came to Berry Springs for lunch and a swim. The rain held off until lunch was over, but was certainly a factor for an early departure for most!

Thankyou to everyone who contributed to TENPS and put in time over the last year, it is very much appreciated.



~ New Releases - BOOK REVIEWS ~

Native Plants for Top End Gardens – Greening Australia

This publication is focussed on information for gardeners and landscapers looking to plant or establish a native garden. There are almost 300 pages of beautiful images to inspire garden design. The book is indexed with both scientific and common names and also features:

- over 140 Top End native plants,
- helpful gardening tips and advice,
- how to establish bird and butterfly attracting gardens,

Prices: \$75-90 / \$69-30 for Greening Australia members / **\$60 for TENPS members.**

Available for purchase at TENPS meetings or contact TENPS 8983 2131 for more information.

Lost from our landscape. Threatened species of the Northern Territory.

Edited by John Woinarski, Chris Pavey, Raelee Kerrigan, Ian Cowie & Simon Ward

This comprehensive 284 page book on the NT's threatened species is worth a look. It includes 1-2 page descriptions of each of the 72 plants, 23 invertebrates, 10 fish, 17 reptiles, 22 birds, 30 mammals and one frog species listed as threatened in the NT.

These descriptions give the reader an image of the species, a distribution map, a description of the species and its ecology, an explanation of how and why it is threatened and a summary of the conservation objectives and management needed.

The aim is to raise awareness about these species, the processes that threaten them and to help efforts to maintain them. It is available from the NT Museum and Art Gallery and most NT bookshops at RRP \$24-95. It is also available for loan from the DCC library.

~ FUTURE EVENTS ~

TENPS:

DETAILS NEEDED

Field Naturalists:

February 2008 meeting. Wednesday February 13th. Emma Woodward.

Howard River environmental flows and social values project.

March 2008 meeting. Wednesday March 12th. Dale Dixon

Figs and their wasps.

Contact Field Naturalists for more details.

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

TO:

~SUBSCRIPTION FORM MEMBERSHIP DUE 1 JULY 2008~

Please accept my subscription/renewal for membership of the Top End Native Plant Society

My details are as follows:

Name/s (Please print all family member names).....

.....

Postal Address.....Post Code.....

Telephone (work).....(home).....

Email address

Newsletters are now available by email (Acrobat Reader required to read files).

If you would like your newsletter sent by email please tick the box.

Payment Enclosed \$..... (\$20.00 per member/family, \$15.00 unwaged)

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