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JULY 2004 NEWSLETTER

MEETINGS AND FIELD TRIPS

We meet on the third Thursday of the month at 7:30pm. General meetings conclude by 8pm and are followed by a guest speaker beginning at 8:15pm. There is time for a cuppa between the meeting and the guest speaker. The venue for the meeting is Marrara Christian School, on the corner of Amy Johnson and McMillan Drives. All welcome. Bring plants to swap, sell or have identified.

~NEXT MEETING THURSDAY 15 JULY~

~GUEST SPEAKER: PHIL SHORT, NT HERBARIUM~

IN PURSUIT OF PLANTS: THE EXPLORATION AND COLLECTION

OF PLANTS THROUGH HISTORY.

This should be a great opportunity for all those who are fascinated by plant taxonomy and the excitement of finding and collecting plants, especially rare and endangered ones (and TENPS is going to get more involved in this in the future). Phil's expertise and interest in this area (demonstrated by the publication of a book of this title) should make for a very interesting evening.

~JULY FIELD TRIP~

We are mounting a display at the Greening Australia Open Day on Saturday 17 July from 8:30am onwards (see below for more details) and we are hoping to arrange a trip to the George Brown Botanic Gardens on the following day, Sunday 18 July. Details will be provided at the General Meeting.

~GREENING AUSTRALIA OPEN DAY~

Greening Australia will be conducting an Open Day at their premises on the corner of Dinah Beach Road and Tiger Brennan Drive, Stuart Park, from 8:30am onwards on Saturday 17 July. TENPS has been invited to put up a display and we will have the opportunity to recruit new members and generally promote ourselves. Greening Australia will have a plant sale, plant propagation workshops, bush tucker talks and more, so it should be very informative. Members who want more information should phone Liza on 8981 1344. The committee would appreciate any volunteers to assist on the display on a roster basis. Please contact Marj King on 8985 6885 or email topendseeds@octa4.net.au.

~TROPICAL GARDENS SPECTACULAR~

This is another reminder that the Tropical Gardens Spectacular will be held in its usual location at the Botanic Gardens on 7-8 August. Again volunteers are wanted to assist on the display with sales of plants and advice on choosing and planting native plants that is always much appreciated by members of the public. Members who want to sell plants should contact Russell, and Marj has the TENPS labels that can be produced in advance for your plants if you get in contact with her early enough.

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~MORE NEWS ABOUT CITRUS GRACILIS~

It was brought to our attention that there is another population of this near threatened plant. A small group met on a recent Saturday morning in an area adjacent to Tivendale Road (near the Prison). The areas where the two separate populations are located have been badly affected by fire as well as vehicles driving through the area. The tallest plants are little more than a metre high but there are quite a large number of smaller plants. There was considerable discussion about the role TENPS could have in preserving this area. Questions and comments that arose on the morning, and subsequently at the last General Meeting, included:

- Is this population worthwhile saving?
- Has the land already been earmarked by the Government for development?
- TENPS does not have the resources to manage this area, therefore who would (suggestions – a Landcare Group, Green Corps, Prisoners)?
- The nearby creek system could be of conservation interest.
- Could TENPS better put its resources elsewhere?

Interested members may wish to raise this matter again at the next General Meeting.

~PLANT SPOTTERS ARE ABOUT!~

An observant member has noted that the *Maranthes corymbosum* plantings around Darwin are flowering earlier than usual. Any theories on why this might be would be welcome at the July General Meeting, as would any other interesting observations. The Field Naturalists make a point of asking for these at the beginning of every meeting and perhaps this would be a good idea for us also.

A less successful plant search was undertaken by Jared Holmes from the Threatened Species Network, with a small team that included Beth from the Herbarium, her friend Jane, and Joyce, Geoff and Linda from TENPS. The Plant Spotters can be seen below.



We set out on Saturday 21 May along the Arnhem Highway and turned off about 3 Km

before the Fogg Dam turnoff, parked our cars and walked for a short distance before reaching Daminmin Jungle. Our goal was to find several endangered species including a fern (*Aureum* sp), an orchid and a *Crotalaria* sp. (apologies for the non-specific names – Ed). However, we failed miserably (we think due to it being the wrong time of year, but perhaps we were too distracted by the mozzies and the leeches).



Ptychosperma bleeseri at Daminmin Jungle

We did succeed in finding a large population of *Ptychosperma bleeseri* that Dave Liddle says is probably the best in the Top End, and we will be visiting this site later in the year with Dave to investigate further.

~ NOTES FROM TENPS GENERAL MEETING 17 JUNE ~

Unfortunately, we had no guest speaker on this occasion but instead those present had a very good discussion on the future direction of TENPS. Some of the matters discussed and activities planned (resources permitting) were:

Flora Surveys

- Establish a database of plants (especially rare and endangered species?) with locations (using the TENPS GPS device) and photos.
- There are 30-55 plant species in Litchfield Shire that are classified as endangered and the location of these could be included in the Land for Wildlife magazine.
- We could use government's services to do plant surveys in existing Reserves such as Knuckey's Lagoon where there is a new Landcare group and many interesting plants. (The information and photos accumulated by Joyce Stobo would be of great value here, and could even result in a publication).

Monitoring

There is considerable scope to monitor the status of particular species of plants of interest

(endangered or otherwise), and this could be done with a schedule of visits to sites by interested groups of members. Examples are:

- *Ptychosperma bleeseri* (2 trips/yr)
- *Citrus gracilis* (1 site 3-4 trips /yr)
- *Nervilea* sp (Charles Darwin NP) 3 sites unburnt, annual burn, tri-annual burn
- Leanyer MVF group
- *Cycas armstrongii* (CDNP)

Land Management

We can contribute to the survival of particular species or populations by weed control or other measures eg the *Citrus gracilis* population in Sayer Road.

Submission Writing

We can have an impact on government's plans by submissions that address the status of native plants eg the Parks Master Plan and the Integrated Natural resource Management Plan (see below for more details of this).

Lobby Group

In conjunction with other groups eg Greening Australia, Landcare, we can lobby government on matters of concern and interest.

~ THE NT PARKS AND CONSERVATION MASTERPLAN & INTEGRATED NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN~

The Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Environment are in the process of formulating two plans, of which both could have major impacts on the natural environment and may be of interest to TENPS members. Community consultation is encouraged for these plans. The following information is a brief summary of the plans and information on how you can become involved.

The purpose of the Parks & Conservation Masterplan project is to provide a vision and blueprint for the conservation of the Northern Territory's variety of plants and animals over the next 20 years.

The key objectives of the Masterplan include:

- Enhancing and protecting our current Parks and Reserves system
- Enhancing the role of Aboriginal people in parks and conservation across the NT

- Strengthening conservation initiatives on lands other than parks and reserves.

Further information on the plan and how people can become involved can be obtained through their website at <http://www.parksmasterplan.nt.gov.au>

A joint Federal and Northern Territory Government project is now under way to develop an Integrated Natural Resource Management Plan for the NT – a blueprint for achieving sustainable use and management of our natural resources so they remain in good shape for the future.

The project will involve extensive public consultation and public exhibition phases, and the NT Government is inviting us and all interested persons and organisations to present our views on natural resource values, issues and management. Between May and July 2004 our views will be used

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to develop a draft plan that is scheduled to be completed by September 2004, giving us another opportunity to comment on its content.

Public forums will be held to provide information on the plan and hear views on natural resource values, issues and management

- Thursday 15th July from 1.30pm to 5pm
Timor Room, Level 2, Harbour View Plaza, McMinn Street, Darwin.

- Thursday 15th July from 6pm to 8.30pm
Lakeview Hall, Freds Pass Showgrounds

TENPS Members may also wish to attend the **EPA Inquiry Public Hearing** on Monday 19th July at 5pm at the Palmerston City Council Chambers. Further information on the plan and how people can become involved in the planning process can be obtained through the new plan website at <http://www.inrm.nt.gov.au/> or you may wish to contact Kath Nash, the Darwin member of the Planning Team directly on 8999 3493.

~TENPS WEBSITE REMINDER~

Remember the TENPS website at <http://tenpsnt.tripod.com> for past copies of Newsletters and other useful information. It would be great if we had more member input into the site; as previously stated, Mark Raines, the site designer and manager, would appreciate any contributions by email at rain0021@optusnet.com or to the TENPS email address tenps@austarnet.com.au.

~CORRECTION~

Joyce Stobo would like it to be known that in the article in the June 2004 newsletter entitled 'The Botany of *Stylidium* sp of the Family *Stylidiaceae*', she gave the date of publication of Rica Erickson's book 'Triggerplants' as 1985. The correct date is 1958.

~SPACE FILLER~



What to do with an old bathtub?



Nymphaea violacea



Azolla pinnata



Pistia stratiotes

A young Litoria bicolor



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'IN PURSUIT OF PLANTS; THE EXPLORATION AND
COLLECTION OF PLANTS THROUGH HISTORY'.**

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

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