

Banksia Bytes

Native Plants Sunshine Coast

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Native Plants Queensland

Newsletter

JULY 2015 Number 2

OFFICE BEARERS....

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DATES TO REMEMBER

- Qld Garden Expo **JULY 10 - 12**
- Native Flower Show and Plant Market
BG Mt Coot-th-a **AUGUST 15 - 16**
- Rosewood Festival Plant sale **SEPTEMBER 5TH**
- Bushland Vibes **SEPTEMBER 6TH**
- ANPSA Conference website anpsa.org.au **NOVEMBER 15 -20**



- Mapleton Community Library fair - plant sale - **Sunshine Coast DECEMBER 2015**



At our June meeting at the home of Ian Ingles, President Ian McMaster chaired his last meeting. He had resigned to devote more time to his new position of Chairman of Native Plants Queensland. Anne Windsor was elected unopposed to be our Branch Chair person. Ian and Anne photo at left.

Triunia National Park



Triunia National Park May 15th

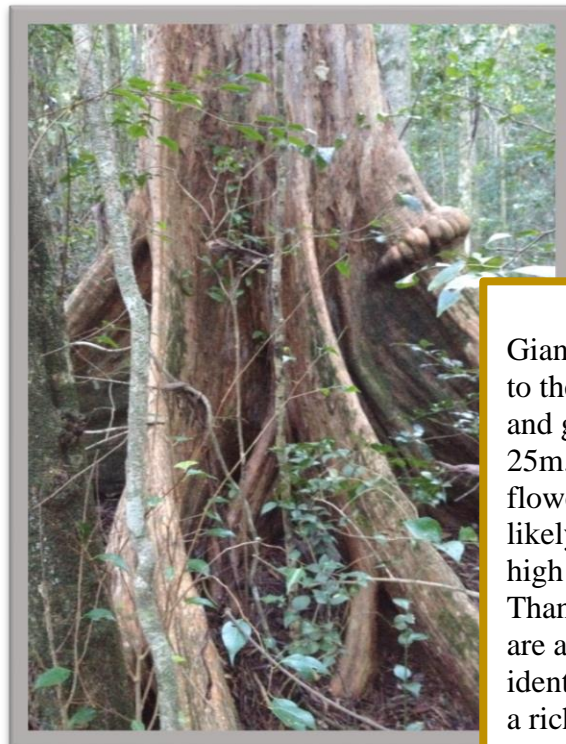
A TRIP TO TRIUNIA NP

Sunday 10 May 2015: There was a slight hiccup at the start of our visit, involving a splinter group of Branch members who, unbeknown to us, had set out before us. Eventually we 5 set off ourselves, after waiting 30 minutes for the others to arrive!

Our first find was a large population of *Macadamia integrifolia* - seedlings were everywhere, although there were lots of empty shells too. Obviously Macadamias are favoured snack for some lucky forest dwellers.

Soon we came to what I would consider to be the highlight of our walk - a grove of Giant Ironwoods, formerly *Choricarpia subargentea*, now *Backhousia subargentea*.

Triunia NP is home to a large number of rare and threatened species, including its namesake, *Triunia robusta*. Unfortunately for us, but fortunately for them, the population of *Triunia robusta* is largely inaccessible.



Giant Ironwoods belong to the Myrtaceae family, and grow to around 25m. They have white flowers, which are likely difficult to spot high up in the canopy. Thankfully, their trunks are a very helpful identifier, for they have a rich rusty red to orange-brown bark with patches of green and cream. Old specimens develop large buttresses at the base of the trunk.



The specimens we found had roots that wandered and wended across the forest floor. These roots would provide a huge amount of stability for the forest floor, and also a nursery for seedlings.

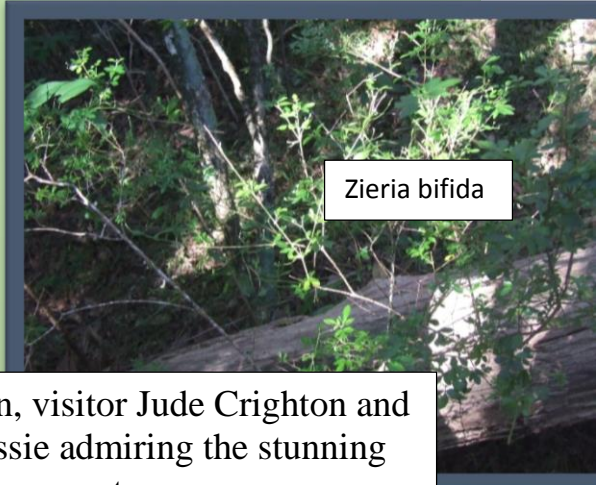
As we moved further through the forest, we finally met up with the first group, on their return. We went on a little further, to where the forest opened up, and found a population of the endangered *Zieria bifida*, and also the Gympie Stinger, *Dendrocnide moroides*, in fruit.



**MORE TRIUNIA
TREASURES**



Cat, Ian, visitor Jude Crighton and Chrissie admiring the stunning trees.



Zieria bifida

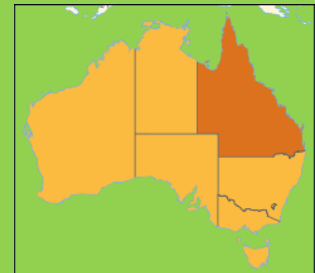


*Ferns
and more
ferns*



Zieria bifida

My Favourite Tree.....



My favourite tree: Marie

What is it that makes a tree my favourite? The answer - beautiful foliage. So my pick is:

Neorites kevediana or Fish Tail Oak - it is not local, it comes mainly from North Queensland with just a few other spots in Queensland it calls home. There seems to be ongoing discussion about its name - something catchy might help raise its profile.

The flowers are small creamy spikes - completely overshadowed by the wonderful showy leaves which are up to 30 cm long in glorious rusty colours when young, turning to bright glossy green as they mature. The leaves are good in floral arrangements.


Neorites is supposed to grow slowly in sub-tropical areas as long as it has "ideal" conditions. My tree was planted 12 years ago on the western boundary of my garden on top of the hill, on hard ground with clay and small rocks in the mix. Life is brutal in my garden - a few waters at the start, some mulch as a real treat and then over to mother nature.


It has coped beautifully, only dropping a few leaves in self-protection in the very extended dry times. It is upright, always showy and is now 6 or 7 metres high, making sure it does not get out competed by its neighbours. It responds well to pruning which increases the amount of stunning new growth.


A total winner - beautiful, reliable, biddable, even useful - its wood has been used in mandolin manufacture.





Future meetings


 **July 12:** No meeting as the Branch is participating in the Qld Garden Expo, Nambour

 **August 9:** Wildflower walk led by Janet Whish Wilson - the wildflowers will decide on the location

 **September 13:** Wildflower walk led by John Birbeck - possibly a return visit to Racemosa Reserve

 **October 11:** Excursion to the Fragile Web in Blackbutt and the Friends of Yarraman Creek rehabilitation site. This will be a full day excursion, organized by Anne Windsor

 **November 8:** Talk and demonstration by Anne Windsor on Water plants at the McMasters' home

 **December 13:** Visit Fairhill nursery for a talk by Nick Hansa and afternoon tea in Elements cafe. \$8.50 per head

Sunshine Coast Branch will have a display and information stand at the Vibes

The date is **September 6th**

Bushland Vibes: Enjoy, Explore, Experience

A day of entertainment, activity, and new experiences for all the family

at **Maroochy Botanic Garden.**

Take in the Art Exhibition and sculpture demonstrations, relax and enjoy the entertainment, join a guided walk, or help weave a green wall.

The Gubbi Gubbi Dance Troupe and Geckoes Wildlife will be there, and you can meet the **Roving Minstrel and the Roving Ecologist.**

To enjoy a unique Gourmet **Bushfood Lunch @ \$35.00 pp, followed by a Bushfood Walk, or to secure a spot in a fascinating Weaving Workshop @ \$20.00 pp, email bushlandvibes@gmail.com to make a booking.**

Coffee, lunches and snacks will be available. A full event program will be available soon on <http://www.friendsofmaroochybotanicgardens.org.au/>

Hi
My name is Alice McNeill and I'm in my honours year at the University of Queensland- studying wildlife science. For my honours project I'm going bush walking through the Gold Coast, Sunshine Coast and North Brisbane to search for areas which dingoes spend a lot of time in. When I come to these GPS points (which we have collected from having GPS collars on the dingoes) I take a vegetation survey. I was wondering if you could share the message that I am looking for volunteers to come walk with me. I mainly go during the week but will be out some weekends. Feel free to spread around my email (alice.mcneill@uqconnect.edu.au) and that I would love some volunteers.
Thanks a lot
Alice McNeill





10th, 11th and 12th JULY

This is a major display and information event for Native Plants Sunshine Coast. A committee of Joan Dillon, Anne Windsor, Marie Livingstone (Sunshine Coast) and Allan Carr (Caboolture) have been busily planning for many months. We have had a great deal of help from Andrew Ryan of Kunara Garden Centre both with information and supply of plants.

The theme for 2014 is *Create a Cottage Garden with Native Plants.*

A handout is done with plant information and tips for creating a successful cottage garden.

There will be a display of native plants suited to a cottage garden, a photographic display to highlight the many stunning native plants that are suited to the small garden and most importantly our knowledgeable members to help promote native plants and enthuse a wide range of gardeners about growing native plants.

Many thanks to all those members who contribute to helping with this event, Bev McCuaig for designing handout cover, George Burgher for printing, the 16 people who have volunteered to help with set-up, pull down and man the information stand for the 3 days of the Expo.

Also thanks to Native Plants Qld regional council who have supported us with funding and Sunshine Coast Council who have included us in their Living Backyard area of the Expo. Come and visit us when you are at the Expo.



Create a
**COTTAGE
GARDEN**
with
NATIVE PLANTS



Native Plants Sunshine Coast
sgapsuncoast@gmail.com



Cost
Adult Entry: \$18
Aged Concession: \$16
Children 15 years and under:
FREE
Groups of 10 or more: \$16 ea
3 Day Pass: \$40
2 Day Pass: \$30
(Saturday & Sunday only)
Parking: \$7 per day

Location
Nambour Showgrounds
Sunshine Coast, QLD



Rare Plants Propagation Project Conservation Group

The Rare Conservers Group has many plants coming along nicely, nearly ready for planting out. Some will be planted back into conservation areas, others not endemic to the Sunshine Coast will be added to the sales stock for the Mt Coot-tha Spring Flower Show. Thanks to Karen and Spencer at Brush Turkey Nursery for caring for them, and to Cat for record-keeping.

As always, the project is limited by access to source material, but we now have some *Medicosma forsteri* and *Zieria bifida* for putting up as cuttings, as well as more seeds of *Leptospermum luehmannii* and *Senna acclinis*. So.....**there is a propagating day**

at Brush Turkey Nursery

on Sunday 21st June at 10 am. Bring morning tea.

It would help to let us know if you're coming; Ian or Chrissie 5494 1149.
If you have questions or need directions, same number.



OUR NEWSLETTER NAME..... Banksia Bytes

From a field of imaginative names, Banksia Bytes was chosen for our Newsletter name.

Why Banksia:

the general consensus was we should have a plant name

the Banksia is in our logo

the Banksia grows from the beach to the hinterland and it is one of the plants widely recognized by its botanical name

the Banksia is readily available for purchase and has forms suited to most gardens.

Why Bytes:

for the computer generation - a nod to modernity

Now is the time to have your say in our little Newsletter.
Photos, stories, plant info and jokes are all welcome.
Send your ideas through to Marie and she will pop them in
our Dropbox.

sgapsuncoast@gmail.com

Information about outings contact....

Marie 0427 152 022

Chrissie 0408 792 227

Gretchen 0400 772 602



Interesting Plants

Interesting Plants and the Spotter's Award....

And the really great thing about SGAP excursions is that it is almost obligatory to learn many new and interesting facts about a plant, many plants, their environment and other aspects of great interest. Take, for instance, our recent jaunt through the Xanthippean rainforest of 'Triunia' at Flaxton.

(For 'Xanthippean', see the allegedly humorous bit below). If we had a 'Spotter's Award' for such outings, on this trip it would surely have to go to Dorothy Tietze for her great observation of seemingly insignificant plants of the Balanophora species. I'm sure I don't need to remind you that in this particular situation our wonderful, plant – passionate guide, Rowena Thomas, would have disqualified herself from the judging due to her apparently endless knowledge and amazing inside information about the dwellers of this forest, as well as other areas under her care.

As we were leaving the site and climbing up a hill worthy of mountain – goat status, Dorothy found these tiny little plants that were almost indistinguishable from the leaf – litter. Quickly identified by Rowena as members of the Balanophora genus, these miniature plants became, while not obviously candidates for horticultural pursuits, objects of interest of yet another 'hidden' species that the Plant Kingdom throws our way – whether we are ready or not.

Searching through available books later for more information was almost futile – save for the Clifford and Ludlow 'keys to the Families and Genera of Queensland Flowering Plants (Magnoliophyta)' which yielded the family description reproduced at side and the fact that there was only one genus within Queensland.

The net produced more information. 'Balanophora' means 'bearing acorns' and the species carries the delightfully inconsistent common name of 'Flowering Fungi'. If you read through the description below, you will very soon obtain a picture of just how strange and, at the same time, how appealingly different, are these plants. They are without chlorophyll and are totally parasitic on the roots of other plants.

So thank you very much to Dorothy and Rowena for introducing us and, if you wish to get a much wider view of the shapes and colours of these plant wonders world – wide , Google 'Balanophora' and click on 'more images of Balanophora'.

Michael

Dorothy Tietze



BALANOPHORACEAE

Flowers usually unisexual; male flowers with a 3-8 lobed perianth; stamens numerous, associated in globular mass; female flowers lacking perianth; ovary unilocular; style 1 ; ovule 1; fruit nut-nutlike; seeds endospermic; fleshy herbs without chlorophyll, parasitic on roots; leaves scale-like.

Single genus Balanophora
Clifford and Ludlow.



Davidson Plum, *Davidsonia pruriens*

Don't you just love the Davidson Plum as a garden tree? It has all the leaves way up top in lovely crowns, ring after ring of them, with the fruit way up there too. The new growth flushes out in serrated compound leaves of soft pinks and light greens, giving a beautiful aura of colour around the top of the long narrow trunk when you look up at it against the sky. The thin trunk allows for lots of planting around the base, as it takes next-to-no-space in the garden. And most striking of all is the gorgeous fruit, a deep purple/bluish colour with a lovely white bloom over the outside, a deep pinkish-red inside, growing off the trunk way up there.

Now I'm not a botanist, just a tree-lover, so the following is taken from various sources; I hope these sources 'know their onions', or in this case, know their Aussie plums.

The Davidsonia genus has three species, *D. pruriens*, *D. jerseyana* and *D. johnsonii*, with the suggestion that the different forms of *D. pruriens* may actually be two different species. *D. pruriens* also goes by the names The Queensland Itchtree and Ooray. If you've felt the tiny hairs from the leaves or the fruit stick into your skin, you'll understand the name Itchtree.

While *D. jerseyana* and *D. johnsonii* are NSW / southern border Qld species, *D. pruriens* is a Qld tree, apparently named after a pioneer NQ cane farmer.

D. pruriens requires a fairly rich soil, loves mulch around its roots, and thrives in shade or partial shade. It doesn't do well with frosts or winds, so needs a fairly sheltered spot. It's a rainforest tree, so make sure it has plenty of moisture. Various reference sources tell me it grows somewhere between 6 and 10 m tall. (Ours didn't read the texts and is about 12 m, having put on five of those metres last year after a falling *Eucalyptus grandis* took its top off.) The flowers form in summer, with fruits forming and ripening over autumn and winter.

The white cockies and yellow-tailed black cockies love the fruit, the fruit bats squabble at night over who should have it, king parrots stake their claim, the rainbow lorikeets try but lose out to the larger birds, and I chase them all away to use the fruit in the kitchen. Harvesting is best done with a saucepan lid over your head for protection; shake the tree, run like steam while the fruits fall, then come back and pick them up. The fruit keeps well in an airtight container in the fridge for a few days, until you have collected sufficient for your next recipe.

We've used the fruit for flavouring yoghurt, for stewing with other fruit for desserts, for jams, chutneys, and my favourite of all, for cordial. I'd expect it to also make an excellent sauce. Eating them straight from the tree can cause a scrunched up face, as they are quite tart!

There's a good article on growing and using Davidsonias on the Australian Native Food Industry Limited Queensland website at

www.anfil.org.au/key-native-species/flavour-of-the-month-april/

Here's my Davidson Plum Cordial recipe.

Chrissie



Davidson Plum Cordial

This cordial, being quite low in sugar, has a tart, sharp taste. It's refreshing when used in small quantities with soda water on a hot day.

Wash the Davidson plums (careful of the ouchy, prickly hairs.)

Bruise and mash the fruit slightly to split the skin and break the fruit apart.

Place in a saucepan and cover with water to twice the depth of the fruit.

Bring to the boil and simmer gently for about ten minutes to release the flavour.

Strain and discard the fruit pulp, skin and seeds.

Measure the liquid, and for each 3 cups, add 1 cup sugar... or to your own taste.

Boil sufficiently to dissolve the sugar.

Bottle in clean, sterilised bottles, just the way your mother taught you.



Please have a laugh



Walking through Triunia N.P. reminded me of what tough vegetation is all about – and also of some verse from one of my father’s poems :

“By aromatic and Xanthippean plants
That chafe the traveller while cicadas chide;
In silence, these three diverse ruminants
Tore themselves free on Middle Harbour side.”

Taken from “A Visit to a Friend”, a poem about an inebriated poet, on an outing to a very rustic setting of a friend, clawing his way through dense thicket on an odyssey to plunge into Middle Harbour, Sydney. There to swim, for the first and last time I ever saw him, and to emerge cut and bruised from submerged rocks and logs, bloodied from sharp oyster shells that make a mess of the unwary. (From “Ballad of Bloodthirsty Bessie and Other Poems” by Ronald McCuaig - published by Angus and Robertson 1961)

But what does “Xanthippean” mean? It is not the easiest of words to track down but Xanthippe, from which I assume the adjective is derived, most certainly is.

Xanthippe was the wife of Socrates. Yes, the famous Athenian one. By many accounts, though certainly not all, Xanthippe was a very harsh a difficult person to get along with, even titled “the hardest to get along with of all the woman there are.” (see Wikipedia: Xanthippe)

Xanthippe means “yellow horse”. This hardly explains the vegetation. One reference suggests that she was next to impossible to negotiate with and was quite impenetrable in demeanour. It is in this sense that the use of the word by the poet in the verse above, rings true. Australian native bush that is almost impermeable. I was only about twelve years old at that day out. In quite dimmed retrospect it seems to me that the bush was more like dry sclerophyll, or perhaps, stretching it a bit, wet sclerophyll forest. ‘Triunia’ would much better qualify as ‘Xanthippean’ since there were some quite difficult segments to negotiate, as I hope the photographs show. And it makes no difference if you know their names!!

There is a delightful apocryphal story told about Socrates/Xanthippe. It is apparently quite hard to confirm but that has not diminished the telling. Thus the Wikipedia entry reads: “An unconfirmed anecdote purports that once Xanthippe was so enraged with her husband that she took a chamber pot and poured it out over Socrates’ head, which – goes the tale on – the philosopher accepted with the allegory “After thunder comes the rain.”

Have a look at the ‘Scientific References’ at the base of the Wikipedia article to read about an asteroid, phoretic mites on palms as well as “Xanthippe’s Shrew”. Michael

