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~ JUNE 2007 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.

Summary of the last Committee Meeting

- Cultivation - plants for sale at Garden Spectacular, and for Dale Dixon's open garden. Committee members to coordinate amongst themselves.
- Library budget should be discussed. Librarian should recommend books to committee for approval before purchase.
- Library is already quite full, so purchasing new books may be a problem. We may need handles to move the library around room as it is heavy.
- Committee agreed to cull or give away old magazines in the bottom shelf of library
- Fence signage – Raylene suggests “NT Native Plants” with *Grevillia longicuspis* emblem. Raylene to discuss logistics with sign people. To print 400 because of costs.

~ NEXT MEETING THURSDAY 21st JUNE~

Cyclone Monica, which crossed the NT coast in April 2006, was the most intense cyclone ever recorded in the southern hemisphere. Unlike Cyclone Larry which hit north Queensland, no substantial funding has been allocated to understanding Monica's impact and implications for northern Australia. This is because the cyclone did not severely affect any major population centres. Nevertheless, Cyclone Monica has deforested about 7000 km² degrading wildlife habitat, altering hydrology, altering fire regimes and increasing the potential for invasion of weeds particular exotic grasses. When the logs of the fallen trees burn, they will release about 77 000 Gg of CO₂, roughly equivalent to the annual CO₂ emissions from the Australian transport sector.

Cyclones could be a hitherto unrecognised driver of vegetation dynamics within 100 to 150 km of the coast across northern Australia. Examination of the spatial patterns of fallen logs will improve the understanding of wind patterns as the cyclone decayed overland. This has important implications for improved protection of the built environment in cyclone affected north Australia. Garry Cook from CSIRO will be presenting the findings to date of his research into the impacts of Cyclone Monica on vegetation.

Meeting the third Thursday of the month at 7:30 pm at Marrara Christian School Library

~ FIELD TRIP- SATURDAY 23rd JUNE ~

Marj King and Denise Goodfellow will lead a walk along the Palmerston escarpment. This is an interesting remnant patch of open woodland with a great diversity of species. Meet at 9 am about half way along Mannikan Court. To get there from Chung Wah Terrace, turn into Lambrick Avenue, and Mannikan Court is the first on the left.

~ FUTURE EVENTS ~

Our Library is being improved

We are updating the TENPS Library. To do this we need all *books to be returned*. If you are holding any of TENPS books please either bring them to the June meeting or let Sally Jacka know the title and author by phone: 8988 5654 or email sally.jacka@hotmail.com. A *Library working bee* will be held before the June General meeting. Members' assistance any time between 4pm and 7.30pm will be greatly appreciated.

Dry Season Native Plant Sale

Saturday 30th June 2007

Hundreds of native plants are for sale at Greening Australia's nursery. Come along between **9am and 1pm** and green up your space. Members receive a 15% discount. Bring your membership card or join on the day.

~ PAST EVENTS ~

Plant Propagation Techniques

Woodland Species - Marj King

Many seeds need soaking especially acacias. Adjust water temperature according to the thickness of the seed coat. Large seeds with a thick coat e.g. *Acacia dunnii* need boiling water in which to soak. It is helpful to also scratch the aril on concrete or similar or to clip the aril end off with nail clippers. *A. dunnii* take 4-5 days to sprout. Nail clippers can be used to help remove the seed coat from the emerging leaves. Indeed, a useful technique for many seeds is to just squeeze the coat with nail clippers e.g. *Cochlospermum fraseri* or rub the aril end between the fingers, or scratch or nick the seed coat. The aim is to permit water to move through the seed coat so germination can take place. For small seeds e.g. *A. nuperrima* use warm, not boiling water.

Grevilleas germinate quicker if the wide end of the seed is nicked, and then planted in full sun. Fresh seed comes up better, but they still can take several weeks to germinate.

Pre Wet is the best time to propagate many seeds as this fits with natural patterns of germination. Some may need special treatment e.g. *Alphitonia*. Soak for an hour, then put in the sun and the outer seed coat will pop open to expose little grey seeds with a red coat that need to be nicked.

In trials *Petalostigma* has shown a 70% successful germination rate when placed in potting mix but poor germination when incubated. There appears to be symbiotic relationships between soil organisms and other influences, which affect the germination of many plants.

Eucalypts and melaleucas will release seed easily if the fruit is mature. Place in a bag in the sun on a dry day. Generally only half a day is needed to achieve this.

Potting Mix

Marj uses cocobricks with no additives i.e. fertilizer. She mixes cocopeat, with twice as much sand, and adds some soil, as this cuts down watering and holds the mixture together, especially for woodland species. Prior to placing in the potting mix she puts soaked, compressed mulch material in the bottom of the pot.

Germinate by burying the seed to the depth of the seed. Place a double layer of paper toweling into the bottom of the tray before adding the mix. For very fine seed place in trays and cover with a light layer of sand. Water with a very fine spray or from the bottom of the tray. Prick out the strong seedlings to grow on. If unsure of the growing point of seeds, plant on their sides to allow the roots to grow out and down.

Rainforest/Monsoon Forest species - Russell Dempster

Rainforest fruit needs to be germinated soon after it ripens. Peel or cut away flesh or coating from seeds. Some seeds need to be scraped out of the pod. Some species may take three weeks or more to germinate. Russell places pots on wet felt inside polystyrene or plastic boxes to keep them moist. We looked at several seed species including *Phaleria Clerodendron*, *Aidia*, *Mimosops* and *Sophora* species.

Potting Mix

Russell uses 50/50 sand and peat moss. Peat moss is available at N.T. Stockfeeds, Coolalinga or Barnyard Trading. He adds perlite or vermiculite to give more aeration and hold moisture. When planting he puts blood and bone into the bottom of the pot, fills the pot with mix and then adds fertilizer on top as well.

Thanks to Ruth Peck for this summary

May Field Trip

Home to Jane, Blair and Deni and gentle and affectionate dogs, this garden of young trees and shrubs is destined to become a sheltered and secluded area of tropical rainforest. Dominant amongst the trees, are two *Nauclea orientalis*. Grevilleas and acacias decorate the side garden and the nature strip, and *Vitex* sp. thrive alongside the driveway while a couple of *Calytrix exstipulata* will soon be in flower. It will be interesting to see this garden grow and develop.

Marj's large block was once home to huge African mahoganies, now all gone and replaced with a wide variety of acacias, grevilleas and other plants (see list below). The rear of the garden is devoted to rainforest species which are thriving. Open woodland species along the side garden blend beautifully with the many grevilleas planted on the nature strip. An extraordinarily tidy and lush vegetable garden enjoys full sun at the front.

Raylene's garden slopes gently down from the front. Grevilleas and acacias provide a decorative screen from the road. A well-grown *Verticordia cunninghamii* drew oohs of admiration although Raylene assured us it had not been hard to grow and she has since raised plants from its seeds.

Secluded at the rear of the garden is Raylene's well-organised and shady potting area.

Thank you for sharing you gardens with us.

Felicity.

Marj's Garden

Ablemoschus moschatus

Abrus precatorius

Acacia alleniana

Acacia multisiliqua

Acacia nuperrima

Acacia simsii

Acacia sp 1

Acacia sp 2

Acacia spectra

Acacia stigmatophylla (limbata)

Acacia translucens

Acacia yirrkallensis

Aidia cochinchensis

Allosyncarpia ternata

Dolichandrone filiformis

Emmenosperma cunninghamii

Erythrina vespertillio

Ficus scobina

Ganophyllum falcatum

Gardenia megasperma

Gardenia sp 1

Gardenia sp 2

Grevillea agrifolia

Grevillea aurea

Grevillea benthamiana

Grevillea decurrens

Grevillea dryandrii

Grevillea formosa

Leptospermum madidum

Livistona humilis

Margariteria sp

Miliusa brahei

Mimosops elangi

Murraya paniculata

Myristica insipida

Opilia amentacea

Peltophorum pterocarpum

Pittosporum moluccanum

Planchonia careya

Polyalthia australis

Pouteria sericea

Schefflera actinophylla

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Bossia bossiaeoides
Buchanania obovata
Calytrix exstipulata
Calytrix brownii
Cyclophyllum schultzei
Canthium sp
Carallia brachiata
Carpentaria acuminata
Celtis philippensis
Cochlospermum fraseri
Cordia subcordata
Cupaniopsis anacardioides
Cycas angulata
Cycas armstrongii

Grevillea goodii
Grevillea heliosperma
Grevillea longicuspis
Grevillea parallela
Grevillea pteridifolia
Grevillea versicolor
Haemodorum coccineum
Hakea arborescens
Helitropium longifolium
Hibiscus meraukensis
Hibiscus sp.1
Hibiscus sp.2
Hoya australis
Hypoestes floribunda

Solanum sp
Strychnos lucida
Syzygium forte
Syzygium fibrosum
Syzygium nervosum
Tabernaemontana orientalis
Templetonia hookeri
Vavaea australiana
Verticordia cunninghamii
Vitex rotundifolia
Xanthostemon paradoxum
Xanthostemon psidioides

Raylene's Garden

Ablemoschus moschatus
Acacia conspersa
Acacia nuperrima
Acacia valida
Aidia cochinchinensis
Barringtonia acutangula
Calytrix brownii
Calytrix exstipulata
Choriceras tricornis
Cleodendrum floribundum
Crotolaria novae-hollandiae
Crotolaria verrucosa
Cymbopogon bombycinus
Diospyrus maritima
Dodonea platyptera
Eucalyptus phoenicia
Grevillea benthamiana
Grevillea decurrens
Grevillea dryandrii
Grevillea formosa
Grevillea longicuspis

Grevillea versicolor
Grevillea wickhamii
Leptospermum madidum
Livistona inermis
Macaranga involucrata
Melaleuca triamphalis
Micromelum minutum
Petraeomyrtus punicea
Phaleria clerodendrum
Pittosporum moluccanum
Polyaulax cilindrocarpa
Pouteria sericea
Sarcostema australe
Tabernaemontana orientalis
Verticordia cunninghamii
Vitex glabrata
Vitex rotundifolia
Wrightia saligna
Xanthostemon paradoxum
Xanthostemon psidioides

Jane's Garden

Acacia dunnii
Acacia stigmatophylla (limbata)
Calytrix brownii
Calytrix exstipulata
Carallia brachiata
Cochlospermum fraserii
Curcuma australis
Erythrina vespertilio
Eucalyptus alba
Eucalyptus herbertiana
Grevillia aurea
Grevillia decurrens
Grevillia formosa
Grevillia refracta
Millusa brahei
Minuspos elengi
Nauclea orientalis
Phaleria clerodendron
Polyaulax cilindrocarpa
Vitex rotundifolia
Vitex sp. (tree form)
Wrightia pubescens

World Environment Day

Geoff Gaskell

The Environment Centre NT did a great job of organising World Environment Day celebrations this year. There was a huge number of stands representing most if not all environmental organisations in the NT, and some very interesting talks and great music was available. Ian Lowe, President of the Australian Conservation Foundation, was the special guest and impressed all with his analysis of sustainability issues.

The TENPS stand, manned by Geoff Gaskell, Russell Dempster and Melina, was very popular, with a number of native plants supplied by Russell on display and some beautiful photos of native plants on the display board. Out of 60-70 visitors we got 5 new members. Many others expressed an interest in growing more native plants in their gardens, including Marion Scrymgeour, Minister for Lands, Environment and the Arts who visited the stand and declared that she wanted to get rid of her palms and grow natives instead.

We shared our stand area with the Field Nats and thanks go to Fiona Douglas for the photo.

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Gunn Peninsula Site Inspection

23/24 Jun.

by Grusha Leeman

The NT Government plans to spend hundreds of millions of dollars to clear 40 square kilometers of mangroves, rainforests and woodlands to make way for heavy industry. This will involve constructing a new port at Glyde Point, infilling 15 square kms of ocean and dredging a 5km shipping channel. Their plans include a large new residential estate at Murrumujuk Beach (between Tree Point Reserve and Gunn Point Reserve) to service the industry. They also plan major infrastructure corridors from Darwin to Glyde Point including arterial roads, powerlines, water and gas pipelines.

So on Saturday 23rd June we will be traveling to explore the beauties of Glyde Point and camp under the huge old hibiscus at beautiful Murrumujuk Beach. A flotilla is being organized as the Glyde Point area is surrounded by coastal and marine reserves, pristine fish, dugong and turtle habitat and coral reefs.

If you are interested in coming, register with Peter at the Environment Centre on 89811984 or coordinator@ecnt.org. More info can be found at http://www.ecnt.org/html/cur_marine_glydepoint.html. We'll be needing more boats and 4wds and of course there can never be too many people who can point out some of the lovely things to be found in the environment.

Boronia quadrilata Survey



From April 20 to 26, I had the wonderful privilege of being a volunteer and participating in a *Boronia quadrilata* survey in Arnhem Land. *Boronia quadrilata* grows in harsh, protected sites on sandstone in this rugged country. It is a relatively small bush with single or multiple stems, at times reaching 4 metres tall. Its distinctive characteristics, unusual in NT boronias, include sharply 4-angled stems and waxy, hairless, broad, bright green leaves.

Russell and Melina McDowell with *Boronia quadrilata*

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The known distribution of the species is less than 10 square kilometres, found about 10 minutes by helicopter East South-East of Jabiru, in the East Magela Creek gorge.

Boronia quadrilata is listed as vulnerable under the Commonwealth Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) Act 1999 and the Territory Parks and Wildlife Conservation Act 2000. A 2004 survey of *Boronia quadrilata* gave a population estimate of only 2644 plants!!

Eleven circular plots of 10 metre radius were established in September-October 2006 with plants within this area tagged, measured and described. We used this baseline data and repeated the plant assessment, also recording any missed plants or plants that had germinated over the wet season. There were 4 of us there (project leader Dave Liddle, botanist John Westaway and volunteers and TENPS members Melina McDowell and myself), and we were joined by 2 indigenous rangers from Gunbalunya (Kevin and Zack) for the last 3 days. We also set up a twelfth site and completed environmental studies and a floristic analysis.

I had a fantastic time with my colleagues exploring some beautiful country, not only seeing these and other special plants, but some rarely seen animals as well. Dave will be speaking at a TENPS meeting later in the year about the results of the project.

Russell Dempster

The Arnhem Land trip was an amazing experience and gave me the opportunity to see and learn about many plant species previously unknown to me. The first species which struck me and became a sentimental favourite was *Templetonia hookeri*. This is a slender shrub with needle like leaves. At a glance *T. hookeri* looks like an acacia, however the leaves are compound with two, or more usually three, leaflets. It is a member of the pea family and has yellow peaflowers. However most of the plants we saw were not flowering but had pods at various stages; either yellow-green or brown. These pods are pendulous and flat and make a sound similar to a rain stick when you shake a fruiting branch.

Another species which was a favourite of the trip (particularly of the photographers) was *Petraeomyrtus punicea* (formerly *Melaleuca punicea* or *Regelia punicea*) – see right. This species is endemic to the Arnhem Land escarpment and is described as a small sprawling tree. The word sprawling is unfortunate as the *P. punicea* that I saw seemed to me to be one of wisdom and grace. The word sprawling does not quite convey this! However, I can not find an adequate word so it will just have to do.



There were many, many more plants seen in the course of a week. The following is a short list: *Allosyncarpia ternata*,

Asteromyrtus magnifica, *Boronia lanuginosa*, *B. laxa*, *Dubouzetia australiensis*, *Eucalyptus phoenicea*, *Gardenia faucicola*, *G. fucata*, *Grevillea dryandri*, *G. formosa*, *G. pungens*, *Gompholobium subulatum*, *Hibbertia brownii*, *Hibbertia* 'low lepidote', *H. oblongata*, *Hibiscus* sp., *Patersonia macrantha* and *Platysace arnhemica*.

I was extremely fortunate to have such knowledgeable and patient teachers in Russell, John and Dave. I thank them for a great week.

Melina McDowell

**SENDER: TOP END NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY
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