

A.N.P.S.A. Fern Study Group

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Program for South-east Queensland Region

Peter Bostock/Dan Johnston

Sunday, 3rd July, 2016. Excursion to Ian and Chrissie McMasters' property at 520 Mt Mellum Rd, Mt Mellum, in the Sunshine Coast hinterland. The McMasters is quite a large property with a diverse range of habitats. We will meet at their green shed at 9:30 am. On the Sunshine Coast part of the UBD Brisbane Street Directory it is grid reference E6 on map 105. Directions from Brisbane: take the Bruce Highway and Steve Irwin Way to Landsborough. Turn left at Landsborough and cross the railway and continue to a large roundabout. Turn left into Gympie Road South. Take the first right, Lower Mt Mellum Road. Continue up the winding road for about 3 km. Take the first left into Mt Mellum Road. Continue about 2 km to the end of the bitumen. Go down the dirt road to the left of the No Through Road sign. Just before the large entrance pillars of 'Sagrado', turn right into the driveway of 520 Mt Mellum Road. Continue a few hundred metres to the large green shed (this section is quite steep and narrow but is in quite good condition).

Sunday, 7th August, 2016. Excursion to Fran Middleton's property at 'Wynne', 821 Tomewin Rd, Tomewin, NSW. This is just over 2km south of the NSW/Qld border in the Gold Coast hinterland and about 20 minutes drive from Exit 95 (Currumbin) on the Pacific Motorway. Meet there at 9:30 am. Directions: After exiting the Pacific Motorway at Exit 95 (Currumbin), turn right at the lights to cross the motorway via Stewart Road. Within 1 km turn left into Currumbin Creek Road. After about 8km turn left into Tomewin Mountain Road. Continue about 11km along this road, crossing the border. Watch out for motorcyclists! More information on access & parking etc will be given with my reminder email in mid July.

Fran has offered a bed if people don't want to travel down or back on the same day. Her words: "The spare room can be made up with a king-size or 2 long single beds plus couple of spare mattresses in lounge room if anyone would like to stay overnight." Please contact Fran directly if you think you might like to do this, via mobile 0409 447 335 or email fragrant@ozemail.com.au.

September, 2016. The NPQ Spring Flower Show will be held in September, with setup Friday 16th and the show itself on the Saturday and Sunday, and it is likely the Fern Study Group will field an exhibit this year. Hence there will be no excursion or meeting in September.

October, 2016. To be determined (my suggestion for October is to visit Mt Coot-tha Botanic Gardens' new extension and lake, created following completion of the Legacy Way Tunnel). As the June meeting was cancelled at the last minute due to the severe weather in SE Qld, there has not been a meeting since early May; hence we have not been able to fix venues for October, November and December. I hope to have some firmer suggestions after the July excursion; members who do not have email may register their interest with me by phone and I will endeavour to let each person know of the proposed venues.

November, 2016. Meeting or excursion. Venue to be determined. Suggestions or offers appreciated!

December, 2016. Christmas Party. Venue to be determined.

Program for the Sydney Region

Peter Hind

Saturday 16 July. Meet from about 11 am at The Taylors residence, 16 Elizabeth Crescent, Yagoona. Bring lunch etc. Study of Climbing ferns such as *Lygodium*, *Stenochlaena*, *Microsorium*, *Arthropteris* etc (excluding rosetted and very short rhizomed epiphytes like *Asplenium* and *Drynaria*). Kyrill and Dorothy's phone no. is 02 9644 5531.

Saturday 20 August. Meet from about 11 am at the home of Gayle and George Hardy, our newest members. At 19 Aranda Drive, Davidson (an apparently invisible house?). After lunch a visit to a local Palm Nursery (they have ferns too) led by George. As usual bring a plate for morning or afternoon tea. If lost phone 02 9453 9940.

Saturday 17 September. Meet from about 11 am at the Bankstown Native Garden at Sylvan Grove (left turn if travelling S) off Henry Lawson Drive at Picnic Point. Bring packed lunch & perhaps a folding chair to sit on at lunchtime. This is mostly a wildflower garden, but over the years many interesting ferns have been planted, some of them from North Queensland. It will be interesting to see which ones have survived if any.

Saturday 15 October. Meet from about 10.30 am for 11 am start at The Circular Walk (Waterfall Walk) at Waterfall Creek Picnic area, Mt Wilson. Drive through Mt Wilson settlement to the T junction; turn right into the dead end road to the picnic area on your left. The relatively easy track does have steps into and out of the rainforest and is usually well maintained. Bring picnic lunch and thermos of hot drink and perhaps water as the tanks attached to the picnic sheds are not always reliable. If open, coffee etc may be bought at the Post Office Restaurant. Phone Peter on 02 9625 8705 to register your intentions.

Saturday 5 November. **Note this is the first Saturday!** Meet at Margaret and Peter Olde's Country Residence at 140 Russell Lane, Oakdale at 11 am. Ring Margaret on 46596598 if lost on the way there.

Travel Instructions to the Olde's at Oakdale—Access via M5. Take Picton turn-off, drive approx. 10km to Picton. Turn left at Picton into Argyle St, then first right into Barkers Lodge Road. Drive on Barkers Lodge Road to Oakdale sign (17 km approx.). Russell Lane is on the right at the Oakdale sign. We are on the right just past a very large dam and market garden – 140 – “Silky Oaks”.

No study, please bring a plate to share & as usual we will look around the fern collection and plantings.

December 2015 and January 2016 – No Meetings – MERRY CHRISTMAS.

Saturday 18 February 2017, Meet from about 10.30 am for 11 am start at the home of Peter and Margret Hind, 41 Miller Street, Mt Druitt. Study to be decided plus some more forward planning? Phone 02 9625 8705. Please bring a plate to share for morning or afternoon tea.

Expressions of interest, several days before any of the bushwalks should be given to whoever is leading the walk, by phone, email etc. If no positive indications are received, at least two days, where possible, before the event by the walk leader, the event will be cancelled.

Of course if the weather is bad or there is any possibility of danger, such as bushfire please do not turn up. If personal events change your plans, please let the leader know or send apologies via someone who is planning to go, so that we don't wait for you.

All outings are subject to weather conditions being favourable.

Fern News

Fern fact sheets online...

Peter Bostock

Wendy Johnston has advised that some of her fern fact sheets are available online now: “The Sunshine Coast Branch webmaster, John Dillon, has put some of my sheets up on the Branch website at <https://npqsuncoast.org/extend-your-knowledge/fern-attributes/>. It is a work in progress as John is still working on getting the table looking respectable.”

Excursion Reports

Sydney Fern Group May 2016 Meeting at Steve Lamont's place Steve Lamont

The Sydney Fern Study group met at my place at Castle Cove on 28 May. The study topic was 'putting the right fern in the right place'. I had planned to talk about the topic on a walk around the garden pointing out all the ferns with healthy new fronds among the crunchy brown ones. The crunchy brown fronds are from where the ferns were before we moved them. The new fronds are from where they are now.

We used to live at Kingsford on about 230 square metres with only *Eucalyptus* and *Cyathea* for shade. There, the question with new ferns was not so much about where is the best place but more about where will they fit. At Castle Cove, there is about 800 square metres, the land slopes to the south and there are two large south-facing rock walls and a high south-facing brick wall.

The plan about the topic failed. The group splintered and I think my talk was only really interesting to me. Anyway, I've learned a lot lately about light and shade and watering. There are distinct lines for each of the south-facing walls that divide those sections that get a lot of light but no direct sun and those sections that get some direct sun. This makes positioning ferns pretty easy—most have been very happy with lots of light and no direct sun, some are happy to have some direct sun.

I've also set up automatic watering systems which mean that, no matter how hot it is and no matter how busy (or absent) I am, ferns don't dry out any more.

It also helps that the new house has leopard slugs that don't eat ferns but do eat (or maybe just scare away) other slugs and caterpillars.

When I planted dozens of ferns in a hurry during the move, I ended up with a big pile of soil. That big pile is now covered in *Adiantum* and makes a great wind-break for things like *Sticherus* and *Dicranopteris*.

There are also two rows of glass domes on window sills that were terrific for ferns from Queensland all through summer. I learnt more about positioning when autumn came and the angle of the sun changed and those ferns were cooked. (I'm sorry Nada, the *Oenotrichia dissecta* (now *Lastreopsis dissecta*), the *Asplenium athertonense*, the *A. excisum* and the *Tetraphyllum brightiae* look like they might be okay but I think I'll need to contact you about the *Crypsinus* which is now a bit crispy-*sinus*.)

Other things have been surprisingly happy just stuck into cracks in the rock. Wherever the weeds looked happy during dry spells, I presumed there was seepage and I replaced the weeds with ferns. This has even worked well with *Sticherus* and *Gleichenia*.

I really like our new place. Below are some pictures of ferns (mostly *Blechnums*) with brown Kingsford fronds and green Castle Cove fronds.



Top, from left – *Blechnum camfieldii*, *B. nudum* (Fawcett's feather), *B. articulatum*, *B. moorei*.
Bottom, from left – *B. gibbum*, *B. brasiliense*, *B. triangularifolium* and *Cibotium barometz*.

Manorina, D'Aguilar Range National Park, SE Qld

Claire Shackel

In November 2012, the Brisbane fern group's outing was to Manorina Picnic Area in the D'Aguilar National Park, Brisbane Forest Park. Our aim was to find *Doodia maxima*. At that time, a large patch was found of a quite tall and robust fern, since identified as *D. maxima*, that had some characters of both *Doodia aspera* and *Blechnum cartilagineum*. To some members it appeared in fact to be a hybrid between these latter species. The largest fronds seen at this time were upwards of 90 cm long. For our March 2016 excursion, it was decided to revisit the area to see how *D. maxima* had survived in the dry conditions the area had experienced in recent times.

This is a good fern area—the following ferns were seen in the car park: *Adiantum formosum*, *Doodia aspera*, *Lastreopsis decomposita*, *Pellaea paradoxa*, *Platycterium bifurcatum* and *Pyrrosia confluens*. After morning tea the group started the gradual climb up the Morelia Track that leads to Mt Nebo (the mountain, not the village). Large patches of *D. aspera* lined the track and *Pellaea paradoxa* was scattered throughout. The track follows the contour lines and so wound through open forest on the outside of the ridge with moist gullies in between. In the moister areas *Blechnum cartilagineum*, *Asplenium australasicum*, *Adiantum hispidulum* var. *hypoglaucum* and *Christella dentata* were seen. As the track entered more open forest on the exposed ridges, *Calochlaena dubia*, *Adiantum hispidulum* var. *hispidulum* and *Pteris tremula* were growing. Back into a moist gully and *Adiantum atroviride* and *Doodia caudata* were added to the list. There was a large patch of *Nephrolepis cordifolia* with some fronds with “frilly edges” (for the technically minded, the pinnae were pinnately divided rather than entire in their outer half)—very likely a garden escapee or natural mutation, reported by D.L. Jones and C. Goudey (*Ferns in Australia*, Reed Books, 1981) as *N. cordifolia* ‘Plumosa’.

As we climbed higher, *Lastreopsis marginans* became prominent, *L. microsora* replaced *L. decomposita* and *Davallia pyxidata* was also seen. *Drynaria rigidula* grew on a rocky exposed ridge. Ever upwards into *Cyathea leichhardtiana* country we saw *Arachniodes aristata*, *Arthropteris tenella*, *Microsorium scandens*, *Platycterium superbum* and *Pyrrosia rupestris*.

We had followed the track much further and somewhat higher than on the previous outing, without locating the ferns seen in 2012, so went back slowly looking for the *D. maxima* locations. A few small plants were found at two locations, consistent with GPS records from Nov. 2012, but nothing like the large stand seen on that previous visit. Lantana seemed more obvious on this visit and the dry conditions may have lead to the demise of much of the *D. maxima* population. The total fern list was the same as in 2012, except that on the previous trip *Cyathea cooperi* was seen and this time it was *Christella dentata*.

Tenterfield area excursion April 29 to May 1, 2016

Claire Shackel

Fern Study Group SE Qld members and some guests visited Tenterfield for the May long weekend. The party met up on Friday night for dinner and to discuss the activities for the next day that Neil Fordyce had arranged.

On Saturday morning the group car-pooled into 4WDs and departed in convoy along Billirimba Road to ‘Wingfield’, a property obtained by David and Sarah Caldwell two years ago. Wingfield comprises about 1800 acres with about a third of that planted to *Eucalyptus saligna*. In the deep gullies the natural vegetation had been left while *Pteridium esculentum* was everywhere on the dry slopes among the Eucalyptus trees.

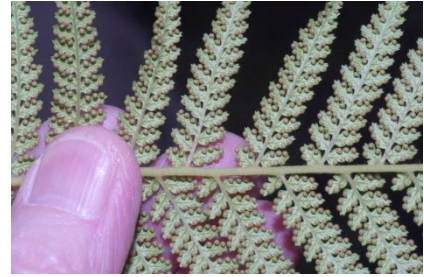
Our first stop for the morning was in one of these gullies along Quigeram Creek. As the party waited for the billy to boil, investigation of the area showed large patches of *Hypolepis glandulifera* in the creek bed and on the slopes, *Adiantum atroviride* in the grass, *Calochlaena dubia* on the steeper slopes and also the tall ‘type’ form of *Pellaea falcata*. The latter is uncommon in Queensland and has been the subject of much discussion as to the identity of what we Queenslanders call *P. falcata*.



Pellaea falcata (type form)



Hypolepis glandulifera – unfurling frond



Dicksonia antarctica

At the next creek crossing, *Adiantum atroviride*, *Asplenium flabellifolium*, *Dictymia brownii*, *Deparia petersenii* subsp. *congrua*, *Pteris tremula* and *Pyrrosia rupestris* were added to the list. In a road cutting above a creek *Polystichum fallax* was an interesting addition to the list, as well as *Cyathea australis*. At the lunch stop near the junction of Wingfield and Imbergers Creeks, some of the party went up the latter creek and some did the more demanding walk down Wingfield Creek to a waterfall. The group going up Imbergers Creek had an interesting scramble and a number of orchids as well as *Asplenium australasicum*, *A. flabellifolium* and *A. polyodon* were seen. The party going down the gorge in Wingfield Creek arrived back nearly an hour later but were excited at having seen *Blechnum minus*, *Doodia caudata* and *Pyrrosia confluens* var. *confluens*.

The track continued along to the western boundary fence of ‘Wingfield’ and gave a wonderful view of a steep slope with a sparse canopy and a dense understorey of *Calochlaena dubia*. *Platycerium bifurcatum* was seen here for the first time. On the return trip David took a different route to show us a stand of *Dicksonia antarctica*. A very enjoyable day thanks to our hosts.

On Sunday Neil and Janet took the group in convoy to ‘Currawong’, the property of Geoff and Claire Robertson not far from Boonoo Boonoo National Park. The property had been heavily mined for gold in the past so it was not entirely a natural landscape but the gullies contained a good assortment of ferns. New additions were *Blechnum nudum*, *Davallia pyxidata*, *Gleichenia dicarpa*, *Lindsaea microphylla* and *Todea barbara*. Here too, *Adiantum aethiopicum*, rather than *A. atroviride*, was in abundance. We also saw a greenhood orchid, *Pterostylis vitrea*, nestling below the granite boulders.

After lunch on the hosts’ patio, Neil took the group to a patch of *Lycopodium deuterodensum* in a swampy/heathy area near Mt Lindesay Road. After a considerable search *L. deuterodensum* was located, as well as *Lindsaea linearis* and *Selaginella uliginosa*. This area was originally quite swampy, kept so by drovers according to Neil, but in recent years forest has been slowly reclaiming the swamp.



Lycopodium deuterodensum, Giant Club Moss



Doodia australis



Todea barbara showing old sporangia

Then it was back to the ‘Tank Traps’ for a walk down the creek towards Thunderbolt’s Hideout. This is a good fern area and *Blechnum cartilagineum*, *Doodia australis*, *Hymenophyllum cupressiforme* and *Hypolepis muelleri* were added to the list. In spite of a kind invitation from Neil for morning tea at their home on Monday morning, most of the group headed for home. The leeches had caused a down grade in enthusiasm for more excursions.

Ferns	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
<i>Adiantum aethiopicum</i>								
<i>Adiantum atroviride</i>	x			x	x	x	x	x
<i>Adiantum formosum</i>			x	x		x		
<i>Adiantum hispidulum</i>		x		x	x		x	x
<i>Arthropteris tenella</i>					x			
<i>Asplenium australasicum</i>				x	x		x	x
<i>Asplenium flabellifolium</i>		x		x			x	x
<i>Asplenium polyodon</i>				x				x
<i>Blechnum cartilagineum</i>								
<i>Blechnum minus</i>					x		x	x
<i>Blechnum nudum</i>							x	x
<i>Calochlaena dubia</i>	x			x		x	x	x
<i>Cheilanthes sieberi</i>							x	
<i>Christella dentata</i>	x	x						x
<i>Cyathea australis</i>			x				x	x
<i>Davallia pyxidata</i>							x	x
<i>Dennstaedtia davallioides</i>						x		
<i>Deparia petersenii</i> subsp. <i>congrua</i>		x			x	x		
<i>Dictymia brownii</i>		x		x			x	
<i>Dicksonia antarctica</i>								
<i>Diplazium australe</i>					x			
<i>Doodia aspera</i>	x	x	x	x	x			
<i>Doodia australis</i>							x	x
<i>Doodia caudata</i>					x			
<i>Gleichenia dicarpa</i>							x	
<i>Hymenophyllum cupressiforme</i>								x
<i>Hypolepis glandulifera</i>	x	x	x	x				x
<i>Hypolepis muelleri</i>								x
<i>Lindsaea linearis</i>							x	
<i>Lindsaea microphylla</i>							x	x
<i>Lycopodium deuterodensum</i>							x	
<i>Pellaea falcata</i>	x	x			x	x		
<i>Pellaea nana</i>			x	x				
<i>Platycterium bifurcatum</i>						x	x	
<i>Polystichum fallax</i>			x			x		
<i>Pteris tremula</i>		x				x		x
<i>Pteridium esculentum</i>	x	x	x			x	x	x
<i>Pyrrhosia confluens</i> subsp. <i>confluens</i>					x	x		x
<i>Pyrrhosia rupestris</i>		x	x	x	x	x	x	x
<i>Selaginella uliginosa</i>							x	
<i>Sticherus flabellatus</i> var. <i>flabellatus</i>							x	
<i>Todea barbara</i>							x	x

Day 1—'Wingfield', ESE of Tenterfield

- A. Morning Tea stop, Quigeram Creek
 B. Tributary of Quigeram Ck
 C. Cutting alongside track

D. Imbergers Creek, upstream from Wingfield Creek junction (lunch stop)

E. Wingfield Creek gorge, downstream from lunch stop

F. Wingfield Creek near western boundary

Day 2—NE of Tenterfield

G. 'Currawong' and vicinity

H. Track from Tank Traps to Thunderbolt's Hide-out, Mt Lindesay Road

Other Articles

Drynaria

Nada Sankowsky

Photos by Garry Sankowsky unless noted otherwise

Drynarias are large, striking ferns that occur from Africa to Polynesia and from Australia to China. There are about 15 species world wide with three species and one hybrid present in Australia. They are sometimes called “basket ferns” as the nest leaves can at times form a natural basket around the rhizomes.

Two of the species are similar while the third is quite distinct from them. The two similar ones are *Drynaria quercifolia* and *D. sparsisora*. However, they are easily identified by examining the rhizomes. The former has large, copious golden scales covering the rhizome, whereas the latter has shorter, sparser scales. In addition, the colour of the fronds is different, with *D. quercifolia* having quite light green, matt fronds while *D. sparsisora* has very dark green, shiny foliage. All species have deciduous pinnae on their foliage fronds, but retain the frond midribs (stipe plus rachis), which can make for an untidy appearance in winter (or the dry season).

Drynaria quercifolia

Drynaria (dry naia ree a) *quercifolia* (kwer see foh lee a) is a lithophytic or epiphytic fern of the tropics. In Queensland, it occurs from Torres Strait to Font Hills (west of Cairns). It is also recorded from the north of Western Australia and the Northern Territory.

Like other *Drynaria* species it produces fronds of two distinct forms. The longer green fronds can be either fertile or sterile while the shorter, usually brown, fronds (nest fronds) are always sterile. The laminae of these nest fronds are thin and papery and persist on the plant for long periods. They shield the rhizome of the plant and as a unit they form a bowl effect by which the plant collects the fallen leaves and twigs of surrounding plants. These plant parts break down and supply the *Drynaria* with nutrients.



Drynaria quercifolia is deciduous in the dry season and the laminae fall away and leave the persistent stipes as bare sticks. The nest leaves and the collected detritus protect the rhizomes and roots and the plant is able to withstand long periods of dry weather. An added bonus for this plant is the thick covering of beautiful golden scales on the rhizome. This gives the rhizome good protection against water loss. It gives the rhizome the appearance of a large bear's foot, and this factor is the easiest way to differentiate between this species and *Drynaria sparsisora*, which is very similar.

Drynaria quercifolia is easy to grow once it is established albeit quite slow-growing. It loves to grow over big boulders. Give it shade in an open area where it gets good light, supply some water, if necessary, in the establishment period, and then let Nature do the rest. It is frost sensitive.

Drynaria rigidula

Drynaria rigidula is usually an epiphyte, at least in the tropics, but can be found growing on rocks or on the ground, especially at the southern end of its range. This is a very common fern that forms large clumps around the trunks or branches of trees. These clumps can become so heavy during the rainy season that they cause branches to snap, and the whole thing plummets to the ground.

In Queensland, distribution of this species occurs on the McIlwraith Range east of Coen on Cape York Peninsula, then from Cape Flattery to northern New South Wales in dry to very wet rainforest and surrounding eucalypt forests.



Drynaria rigidula fronds (left) and sori (centre, note incised pinnae), *Drynaria rigidula* 'Whitei' (right)

Photo: Peter Bostock

The long, green fronds of this species can grow over two metres in length; the plant spends part of the year as a rather untidy mass with the persistent rachises protruding from the nest fronds and the accumulated debris. When the rains begin, the plant sends out new fronds, and in a short time a lovely transformation has taken place.

This fern is very easy to grow, but is sensitive to frost. It can be grown in a large basket, but be aware that over time the plant becomes very heavy. It can be attached to a tree in the garden; ensure that it has room for its large fronds and that it does not encroach on pathways.

Many beautiful forms of this fern have been found including *D. rigidula* 'Whitei' which is the most prized of all.

Drynaria sparsisora



Drynaria sparsisora is a large, handsome fern that can be grown in a variety of situations. It can be terrestrial, an epiphyte, or a lithophyte. It is sometimes found growing in sand. Distribution of *D. sparsisora* is from Torres Strait to Maryborough.

In the garden it can be attached to trees or planted in the ground. It does particularly well as an under storey plant in a rainforest bed and will eventually climb up trunks. Rocks are a favourite site for this fern. It can also be grown as a basket specimen, but needs a very large container.

Somewhat slow to get started, it needs plenty of mulch and an open situation with dappled light. Once it becomes established it forms a beautiful colony.

The Hybrid

Drynaria × *dumicola* is the name given to the naturally occurring hybrid between *D. rigidula* and *D. sparsisora*. The type specimen was recorded from the Goodnight Scrub State Forest (now a National Park) in Central Queensland and a second small population has been found at Hervey Bay, but is under threat from tourist development.

D. × *dumicola* has a lamina shape similar to that of *D. sparsisora*, but the gaps between pinnae are larger and the sinus between pinnae is elongated along the main rachis of the frond; in addition, the sori are quite irregular, somewhat intermediate in shape between the two parent species, often larger than those of either parent, and more or less impressed into the frond.



Photo: Peter Bostock



Photo: Peter Bostock

Editor: The hybrid can be easily distinguished from the similar looking *D. sparsisora* by the presence of small incisions (inherited from *D. rigidula*) occurring on all pinnae margins (these are absent in *D. sparsisora*). Quite a deal of variation has been noted in the hybrid, probably indicating more than one hybridisation event. Spores of the hybrid are occasionally fertile (presumed to be auto-tetraploid, thereby restoring fertility), and have been germinated, but were found to be rather poor growers. They did exhibit one distinctive trait: the frond form was very similar to that of *D. sparsisora*, but the sori were regular, in one row on each side of the pinna midrib, and impressed into the frond, exactly like those of *D. rigidula*.

Ferns of Mt Strezlecki, Flinders Island

text and photos by Dan Johnston

In March of this year, my wife and I visited Flinders Island at the eastern end of Bass Strait with our bushwalking group. Some members of the group including myself climbed Mt Strezlecki, which at 756m is the highest peak on the island. I was impressed with the ferns seen, particularly at higher elevations. Clearly, the location and height of the mountain ensures that it captures regular rainfall. It was often in cloud while we were there, and no doubt this is normal. The peak is about 2km from the western coast of the island, and the well marked track ascends from the Trouser Point Road, essentially at sea level and not far from the coast.



The track initially passes through a strip of farm land before entering Mt Strezlecki National Park. After a few hundred metres, the track crosses to the southern side of the small creek which drains the western side of Mt Strezlecki. Here, we observed *Dicksonia antarctica* (photo at left), *Todea barbara* and *Gleichenia* species. The track then climbs pretty directly up the slope through open forest at some points adjacent to bare slabs before traversing through the open forest back to a side gully off the main creek, which is well to the north. No ferns were observed in the open forest, but it changed dramatically at this gully at a height of about 300m, where there were quite large tree ferns, both *Dicksonia antarctica* and *Cyathea australis*, and the large boulders on both sides of the track were covered in mosses and ferns—*Microsorium pustulatum*, *Hymenophyllum cupressiforme* and *Ctenopteris heterophylla*.

After crossing the gully, the track climbed steeply for a short while through open forest but this soon changed. From here to the top, the track is steep, rocky and rough, although still easy to follow and not technically challenging. The vegetation is mostly shrubby, although the track passes under stunted trees in some places. When the cloud permits, there are good views to peaks to the north and the sea below to the west. Ferns are regularly present, including *Gleichenia microphylla* (photo at bottom left), *Polystichum proliferum*, *Pteridium esculentum*, *Hypolepis* sp., *Microsorium pustulatum*, and lots of stunted *Dicksonia Antarctica*. In one place *Phlegmariurus varius* and *Rumohra adiantiformis* (photo at right) were observed growing out of a crevice in steep rock above us.



The walker eventually reaches a shoulder of the mountain above 700m and perhaps 300m roughly north of the main peak. On the gentle descent from this knoll before the final climb, there was an area of *Blechnum watsii* under some low trees. On the climb again, additional species observed included *Hymenophyllum rarum* (below right) and a *Grammitis* species, probably *G. billardierei*. At the very top, we came out onto bare slabs. We were fortunate that the cloud had cleared and we were treated to spectacular views.



We spent about a week on the island and while we didn't go searching for ferns, we didn't notice any anywhere else including on a walk up Mt Killiecrankie, a 300+ m peak towards the northern end of the island. No doubt a lot more could be found in the considerable area of high country adjacent to Mt Strezlecki, most of which is preserved in Mt Strezlecki National Park.

Thanks to Peter Bostock for identifying many of the ferns from my photos.



