

S.G.A.P. ~ Fern Study Group ~ Newsletter

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DEAR MEMBERS;

I think a small area of ferny rainforest near Coffs Harbour, may have captured their hearts, as this is not far away, I hope we will be hearing from Molly, from time to time, in the future.

I hope to be able to carry on, where Molly left off, but will only be able to do this with the assistance and co-operation of all members.

BADGES:

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Irene Cullen, a member from Rochedale, South East Queensland writes;- We had the good fortune, that a recent visit to Sydney, coincided with a Fern Study Group outing to the Green Frond Nursery at Maraylya. Most members wore name badges;

" S. G. A. P. FERN STUDY GROUP
FRED FERN "

These badges are engraved white on black background are fitted with pin, and can be supplied by Phyll Brown at a cost of two dollars which includes postage.

I strongly advise members to obtain a badge for identification, when planning a trip, as this could enable the joining of a study group outing.

One advantage of the identification badge, particularly for new members or members from other areas, is as a means of recalling the names of other members at group meetings or outings.

EXCURSION.

On Sunday, 23rd October, a group of about 30 Sydney members visited the Sydney Royal Botanic Gardens. The outing commenced with a casual stroll through the giant glass pyramid and then down to the glass house area where our guide Peter Hind was waiting to show the group through two large fern glass houses.

Large baskets of *Schellolepsis* and *Nephrolepis* were hanging from the ceiling with the long weeping fronds metres long. The exposed rhizomes of *Davallia solida* and *D. pyxidata* almost covered the wire baskets. The remainder of the very large collection of native ferns, too numerous to mention here, were in pots on benches and on the floor.

All the ferns make a glorious sight, growing luxuriantly in optimum conditions of controlled heat, water and humidity and protected from winds and insect pests.

Two members travelled long distances to be present; Lyn Millington travelled by train from Newcastle whilst Peter Althofer drove from Burrendong Dam near Wellington. However, to make Peters trip worthwhile, John Lee presented him with a cheque for \$2200-00, which was the proceeds from the raffle of the water colour painting referred to in the previous newsletter. This money will be used in the second stage of the Burrendong Arboretum Shade Area. Two members very much involved with the operation of the raffle, Molly and Bill Murray could not be present, at the presentation.

Outside the glass house area, in what was once a water lily pond, are now two large specimens of fern allies;- *Marsilea drummondii* and *Marsilea hirsuta*. Other ferns growing in the gardens are;- *Cyathea cooperi*, one with a trunk at least 6 metres tall, *Dicksonia antarctica*, *Cyathea medullaris* (New Zealand species), *Angiopteris evecta* and *Marattia salicina*. The last two species are growing unprotected in full sunlight.

THE GREAT PYRAMID APPEAL.

A previous newsletter referred to the proposal to construct two additional pyramid glasshouses, one of which would be used for the display of ferns and fern allies. Recently the Extension Officer, Royal Botanic Gardens advised the appeal has raised \$120,000-00. This has been a slow response, but as the donations are now a tax deduction and are being matched, dollar for dollar, the much needed community support may eventuate.

AVAILABLE FROM THE SPORE BANK.

ADIANTUM sp. S. E. Qld.	5/83.	DOODIA aspera	11/83.
ALLANTODIA australis	6/83.	LASTREOPSIS munita	6/83.
AMPELOPTERIS prolifera	6/83.	" acuminata	9/83.
ASPLENIUM australasicum	10/83.	" decomposita	11/83.
BLECHNUM cartilagineum	6/83.	MACROTHERYPTERIS	
" fluviatile	2/83.	polypodioides	6/83.
" indicum	3/83.	" torresiana	6/83.
" minus	2/83.	MICROLEPIA speluncae	6/83.
" nudum	6/83.	OENOTRICHIA tripinnata	10/83.
" wattsi	11/83.	OPHIOGLOSSUM pendulum	10/83.
CYATHEA australis	11/83.	PLATYCERIUM superbum	11/83.
" celebica		POLYSTICHUM australiense	11/83.
" cooperi	3/83.	" formosum	2/83.
" leichhardtiana	3/83.	" proliferum	11/83.
" rebecca	11/82.	PRONEPHRIUM asperum	2/83.
" robertsiana	12/82.	PSILOTUM nudum	9/83.
CYCLOSORUS interruptus	4/83.	PTERIS comans	1/83.
DICKSONIA antarctica	11/83.	" tremula	11/83.
" youngiae	11/83.	" vittata	1/83.
DIPLAZIUM assimile	11/83.	RUMOHRA adiantiformis	
DIPLAZIUM species ?	11/83.	STENOCHLAENA palustris	
		TODEA barbara	10/83.

Members requesting spore, from the spore bank, should forward a stamped, self addressed envelope. The spore is free to members.

COLLECTING FERN SPORE.

The most important aspect of collecting fern spore is to decide when the spore is ripe.

There are exceptions but the following should assist;-
Green sporangia indicates the spore is not ripe.
When the sporangia appears swollen and shiny and coloured dark brown or black, the spore is ripe.
Dull, furry or frayed sporangia has already shed the spores.

Supplies of fern spore are desperately needed to maintain sufficient spore to meet all requests. Can any members assist, please?

COMPLAINT BY MEMBER.

How often have you entered a plant nursery or garden centre and found a fern bearing a name tag which read simply "FERN". Would you expect to enter a car yard and see a motor car with a large placard reading simply "MOTOR CAR"?

Surely it is not too much to expect the grower or the retailer to ensure, at least, the genus of the fern appears on the identification label.

The following is an extract from a letter written by Helen Moriarty, a member from Mt. Nebo, west of Brisbane.

"We were on Mt. Lewis, which is to the north of the Atherton Tablelands, and were at a high altitude of about 4000 feet, looking for *Rhododendron lochae*, which has apparently been reported from this area. It was getting late and we had found no trace of the *Rhododendron*, and it looked as if we would have to turn back soon. Mervyn decided to press on alone and see if he could get to the 'edge' of the ridge, which appeared to be a likely place to find a small *rhododendron* growing. Well, he didn't find a *rhododendron* on the rocky ledge, but he did return with this rare fern. I had no idea what the fern was, until it produced a fertile frond."

Helen also forwarded a frond of the *Polystichum fragile*.
Polystichum fragile Watts.

The letter from Helen prompted some research into this fern;-

Rhizome tufted, covered with large, pale coloured scales. The upper portion of the rhizome covered with papery tissue through which the fronds emerge. Fronds erect, triangular, bipinnatifid, proliferous buds absent. Pinnules dark shiny green above, dull green and hairy on the underside. Pinnule margins rounded, indusium bilaterally attached.

This fern was apparently first recorded, in 1913, growing as an epiphyte, in an *Asplenium nidus*, close to Ravenshoe, Atherton Tablelands, North Queensland.

References :- Encyclopedia of Australian Gardening, volume 2.

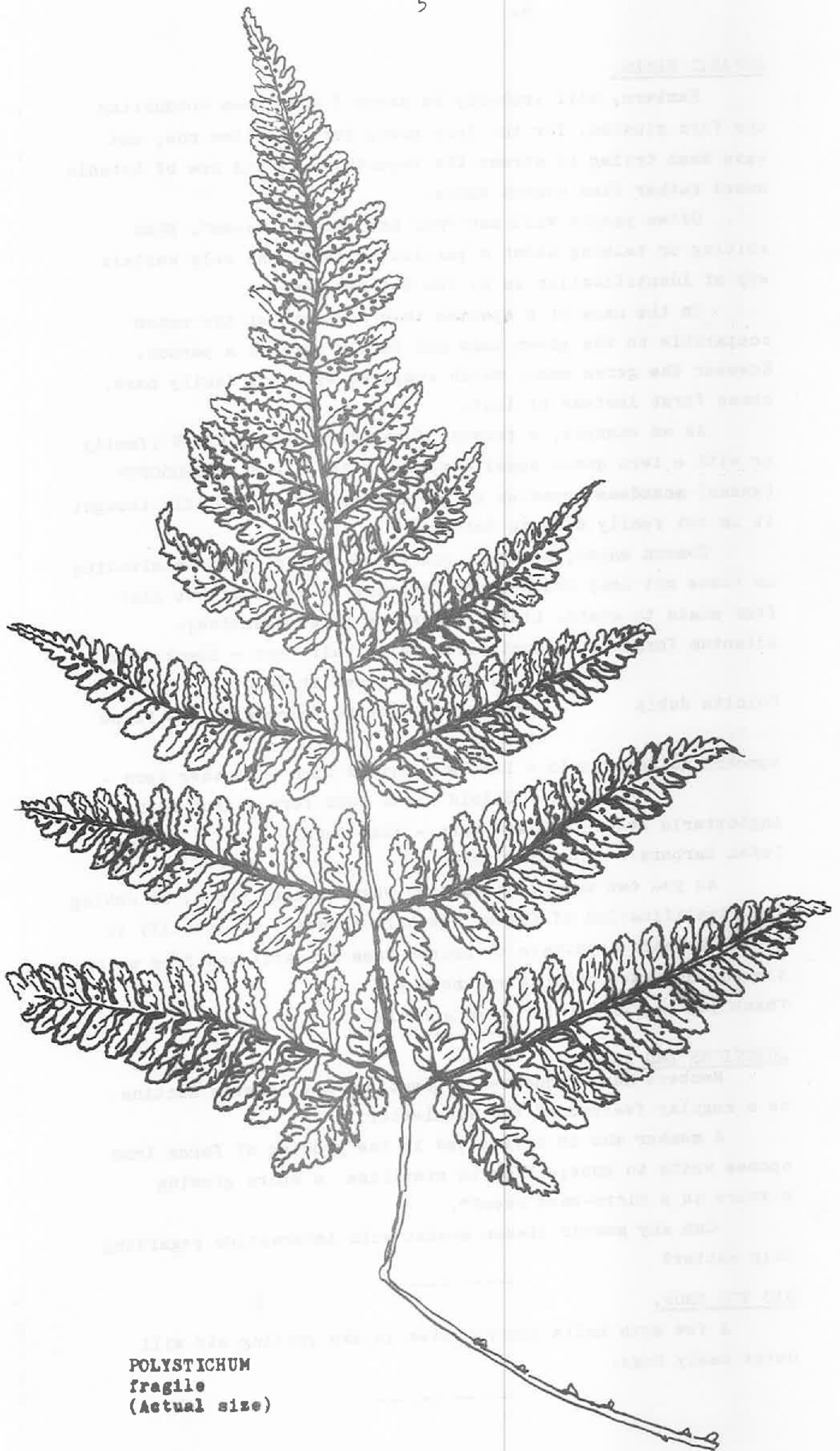
Ferns, Fern Allies and Conifers of Australia,
H. T. Clifford & J. Constantine.

HELPFUL HINTS.

By Courtesy W. A. Fern Society. Extract from letter written by Jill Graham Manjimup.

"My mother had a plague of mealy bugs on her ferns. She started off dabbing the mealy bugs with a cotton bud soaked in methylated spirits. After two hours, she had made little progress, so decided to put the methylated spirits (undiluted) in a sprayer and sprayed the ferns. The ferns never looked better and the mealy bugs have completely disappeared."

Please supply any hints you may have, which could be helpful to other members.



POLYSTICHUM
fragile
(Actual size)

BOTANIC NAMES.

Members, will probably be aware I have been conducting the fern studies, for the fern group for some time now, and have been trying to stress the importance of the use of botanic names rather than common names.

Often people will ask "Why use botanic names". When writing or talking about a particular fern, the only certain way of identification is by its Botanic Name.

In the case of a species this consists of two names comparable to the given name and family name of a person. However the genus name, which compares with the family name, comes first instead of last.

As an example, a person, John (given name) BROWN (family or with a fern genus name) compares with a fern, MICROSORUM (genus) *scandens* (species or given name). With a little thought it is not really hard to follow.

Common names, however, can be so confusing and misleading as these not only change from district to district but also from state to state. Listed below are a few examples;-

Adiantum formosum - Australian maidenhair fern - Black stem fern, Giant maidenhair fern.
 Culcita dubia - Common ground fern- Rainbow fern - False bracken.
 Rumohra adiantiformis - Leathery shield fern - Leather fern - Shield hares foot fern - iron fern.
 Angiopteris evecta - Giant fern - King fern.
 Todea barbara - King fern.

As you can see by the above, when writing about, or asking for identification of ferns, the only true way to identify is by the botanic name. This of course does not stop you from using the common names amongst yourselves.

Thank you Les Taylor for this article.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

Members have requested a Questions and Answers section be a regular feature of the Newsletter.

A member who is interested in the growing of ferns from spores wants to know;- "How to sterilise a spore growing mixture in a micro-wave oven?".

Can any member please assist with information regarding this matter?

DID YOU KNOW.

A few moth balls incorporated in the potting mix will deter mealy bugs.

NEW MEMBERS.

A membership list, current to August, 1983, has been included with this newsletter.

We wish to extend a warm welcome to the following members who have joined the group since that date;-

PROGRAMME.Sunday, 25th. February, 1984.

Meet, at 10.00am, at the home of Mrs. M. Wood, 23 The Outlook, Bilgola Plateau. Please bring your lunch and a 'plate' for afternoon tea. The study of Asplenium ferns will be continued. After lunch, the group will move on to the home of Mr. Peter Grey, 337 Lower Plateau Rd., Bilgola Plateau.

Saturday and Sunday, 24th. & 25th. March, 1984.

Burrendong Arboretum. Tropical Shade Area.

Some members will probably arrive on the Friday afternoon. The Tropical Shade Area will be visited on the two days. Generally weeding of the fern areas will be carried out, so bring along your gardening gloves. There will be a discussion of some of the ferns growing in the shade area.

There will be the usual bar-b-que at the caravan park, on Saturday night.

Members are requested to make their own accommodation arrangements. The following accommodation is available at the Burrendong Dam Caravan Park;-

8 - 6 berth onsite caravans. These caravans need to be reserved.
76 drive through powered caravan sites.

A large number of unpowered caravan and tent sites. The caravan sites cannot be reserved and are issued on the first-come basis.

Reservation of the onsite caravans can be by telephone to Manager, Mumbil 467435 or by letter to Manager, State Recreation Area, Burrendong Dam Road, Mumbil. 2820.

There is Motel and Caravan Park accommodation at Wellington which is 27km. from the dam.

Sunday, 29th. April, 1984.

Vacant. Advice regarding this outing will appear in the March Newsletter.

SUBSCRIPTIONS - 1984.

Your subscription, to the Fern Study Group, is to cover the cost of printing and distribution of the Newsletter. Because the printing, stationery and postage costs have increased, there is a need to increase the subscription to \$3.00.

BUY * SELL * EXCHANGE.

It has been suggested, space could be made available, for members who have ferns, they want to buy, sell or exchange. This could assist members who are trying to obtain a fern, which they have been unable to find.

Please send along your requests for inclusion in the next newsletter.

FERN NURSERIES.NEW SOUTH WALES.

"Groves of Ferns"
63 Glenhaven Rd.,
Glen Haven 2154.
6346081.
Judy Marley,
5 Seaview St.,
Mt. Kuring-Gai. 2080.
4579168.

Hibiscus Gardens,
Pacific Hwy,
Tyndale. 2463.
476415 Closed Tuesdays,

Stricklands Nursery,
32 Kelton St.,
Cardiff. 2285.

Tates Nursery,
Beach Rd.,
Dunbogan. 2443.

Fern Nursery,
6 Nelson St.,
Thornleigh. 2120.
842684.

VICTORIA.

Norma's Fernery,
Carboor. 3678.
50 km. from
Wangaratta.
Closed Fridays.
No Mail orders.
(057) 295516.

Inn Fernery,
Main Rd.,
Monbulk. 3793.
No mail orders.

Fernsgalore,
The White House,
1 Higgins St.,
Wangaratta. 3677.

The Fern Farm,
Kangaroo Flat. 3555.
(054) 478807.

Fern Frond 7,
391-393 Maroondah
Hwy., Doncaster. 3108.

QUEENSLAND.

Barrier Reef Nursery
Bruce Hwy.,
Deeral. 4870.

Summit Hill Nursery,
P. O. Box 3.,
Mt. Nebo. 4520.

Morans Highway Nursery
Keil Rd.,
Woombye. 4559.
1 km. north of big
pineapple.

Victoria Point Nursery.,
Victoria Point. 4163.

This is a short list of fern nurseries. Members are requested to send along the names of fern nurseries which they have found to be satisfactory. Perhaps there are members who have nurseries and who wish to be included in the lists.

This is the last Newsletter for 1983 so I will take this opportunity to wish all members a MERRY CHRISTMAS, A HAPPY AND HEALTHY NEW YEAR. IF YOU ARE MOTORING OVER THE FESTIVE SEASON, PLEASE DRIVE SAFELY.

Phyll. Brown
(Mrs.) Phyll. Brown.- Leader,
Fern Study Group - S.G.A.P.