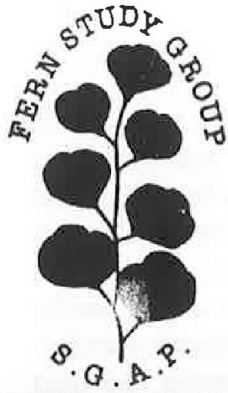


ASSOCIATION of

# S. G. A. P. Fern Study Group



Newsletter Number 93

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E-mail address: nhealy@telstra.easymail.com.au> (N.B. It is *n* not *m*healy)

**SPORE BANK:** Barry White, 24 Ruby Street, West Essendon. Vic. 3040

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## GROWING FERNS IN A TERRARIUM

Contributed by Dot Camp.

On a recent visit to fellow Fern Study member, Rose Bach, I was impressed with the lush effect of her fern terrarium. Rose had used a 2' fish tank with the lighting connected to a timer.

What results have other members had growing ferns in a terrarium? Which ferns do best and no, I wasn't thinking of using *Angiopteris evecta*! Any comments on the type of terrarium, watering, fertilising, etc. would be appreciated. Has anyone tried raising spore in an indoor terrarium, such as a fish tank, using artificial lighting?

## FERN TOURISM IN TASMANIA

Contributed by Ron Wilkins

My wife is a good walking companion and she likes trees and flowers. But not passionately. With a wife who never ventures into the garden, how do you plan a successful trip to Tasmania to look at ferns? Perhaps by using the principles of fern tourism? I have found the secret of successful fern tourism with a non-gardening wife is to mix judiciously the forest and gully walks with visits to the berry farms, vineyards and farmhouse cheese outlets. And sprinkle in some special meals like the lobster at Bicheno.

A great thing about Tasmania in February/March is the pleasant climate. But after years of admiring Peter Dombrovski's exquisite and mysterious rainforest pictures, we were unprepared for the fact that Tasmania, almost everywhere, was in drought. You could catch the water falling over Russell Falls, in the Mount Field National Park, in a bucket, if you wanted to, and the trails were dusty rather than muddy. And everywhere in the forests large patches of sphagnum moss were dry and yellow.

A great help is the fact that relatively few ferns are so prolific and widespread. *Dicksonia antarctica*, *Polystichum proliferum*, *Blechnum nudum*, *Blechnum wattsii* and *Histiopteris incisa* seemed to be almost everywhere. Vast fields of *Gleichenia alpina* in the alpine/sub-alpine areas of the Cradle Mountain National Park were amazing. Even the fern tourist can easily identify these few species - and it's a lot easier to remember kangaroo, finger and filmy ferns on beech, myrtle than *Microsorium*, *Grammitis* and *Hymenophyllum* on Nothofagus. By the end of the trip, I even discovered my wife turning over the leaf of a fern to check the spore pattern!

To be more serious, perhaps our Tasmanian members can do mainlander fern tourists a favour by nominating locations in which ferns exist in greater than normal variety, with a list of nearby attractions to entertain our not so ferny companions. The best area we saw was in the north-east between Stockdale and St Helens. At the Weldborough Pass Scenic Reserve, the 4-5m *Dicksonias* amongst myrtles covered with epiphytes were simply breathtaking. And not far away, the ferns at St. Columba Falls were more varied than usual, this area having the added attraction of the nearby 'Pub in the Paddock' and the Pyengana Cheese factory with its scrumptious cloth bound cheddar. This is one area not to be missed by the fern tourist. But my wife and I are in agreement; our next excursion south will be after some good rain.

## SPORE BANK

### ORDERING SPORE

Spore is available free of charge from Barry White, 24 Ruby St. West Essendon. Vic. 3040

When ordering please include a stamped self-addressed envelope.

The area of collection is available on request.

### CURRENT SPORE LIST

### Contributed by Barry White

Acrostichum speciosum 12/01	Diplazium australe 6/00	Platycterium bifurc. cv.
Adiantum whitei 1/99	Doodia australis 12/99	Roberts /99
Arachniodes aristata 5/00	Doodia media 3/01	Platycterium bifurc. var.
Asplenium australasicum 5/98	Goniophlebium	venosa "Mt.Lewis" /99
Asplenium milnei 5/00	subauriculatum 12/00	Platycterium bifurc. cv.
Blechnum camfieldii 5/00	Hypolepis glandulifera	Willinckii Scofield /99
Blechnum cartilagineum 1/01	12/00	Platycterium hillii /99
Blechnum chambersii 2/99	Lastreopsis acuminata 3/01	Platycterium superbum
Blechnum fluviatile 2/00	Lastreopsis decomposita	11/00
Blechnum minus 6/99	12/00	Platycterium superbum
Blechnum patersonii 8/99	Lastreopsis hispida 2/00	(Cairns) /99
Colysis sayeri 12/00	Lastreopsis microsora	Platycterium veitchii 8/99
Cyathea australis 9/00	12/00	Polystichum australiense
Cyathea celebica 3/99	Lastreopsis rufescens	12/99
Cyathea cooperi 9/00	12/00	Polystichum formosum
Cyathea cooperi 'Brentwood'	Lastreopsis tenera 12/00	6/99
98	Macrothelypteris	Pronephrum asperum 3/99
Cyathea cooperi var.	polypodioides 4/01	Psilotum nudum 8/99
cinnamonia /99	Microlepidia speluncae 5/98	Pteris comans 10/00
Cyathea leichhardtiana 11/00	Ophioglossum pendulum	Pteris tremula 2/01
Cyathea robusta 2/98	2/00	Sticherus flabellatus 8/99
Cyclosorus interruptus 3/99	Platycterium bifurc. cv.	Sticherus urceolatus 3/99
Cystopteris filix-fragilis /00	Hilo /99	
Dicksonia antarctica 9/00	Platycterium bifurc. cv.	
Dicksonia youngiae 1/99	Hula Hands /99	

Thank you to the following spore donors:

Lorraine Deppler, Claire Shackel, Don Simpson, Nev. Deeth & Joan Moore.

**More donations are always welcome, including fresher samples of ones already on the list.**

## THE HEALY'S ALSO VISIT TASMANIA

Contributed by Mike Healy

Whilst agreeing with Ron that our Tasmanian members can do mainland fern tourists a favour by nominating locations in which ferns exist in greater than normal variety, etc. The following outlines some of our discoveries.

By coincidence my wife, Joyce, and I also ventured to Tasmania this year. It seems it was our good fortune that our trip occurred three to four weeks after Ron and his wife's as in the time difference rain had fallen which had been of obvious benefit to the ferns. While signs of the drought were obvious, regeneration was occurring.

Having rushed through the island 18 years ago we planned on having a leisurely time visiting areas we hadn't time to see before. First stop Burnie and off to the information centre to collect every piece of paper within reach. You just can't plan a holiday without enough information to weigh down an elephant can you! Or so Joyce thinks! However, it was at the centre we were told about the **Fern Glade** just outside the town where, if we were lucky, we might spot a platypus. Huge tree ferns (*Dicksonias*), some covered in kangaroo fern others with various filmy ferns, line the banks of the river creating lovely reflections in the late afternoon sun. Leaving Joyce at the car I walked along the track searching for different ferns and platypus, on returning to the car up popped a platypus in the middle of the river.

As Ron and his wife did we were also heading to Cradle Mountain but via Hellyer Gorge. The walking track here is well formed winding through groves of Mother shield (*Polystichum proliferum*) and water fishbone (*Blechnum nudum*) as well as tree ferns, it seems to me that Tasmania does not have a vast variety of ferns but those it does have are present in vast numbers. On to Cradle Mountain where I concur with Ron regarding *Gleichenia alpina* it was astonishing to see clumps seemingly stretching for miles, but I am surprised he didn't mention Cradle Mountain Lodge as a dining place for the non-fern fancier. Joyce, my secretary, after frequently typing *Gleichenia* was amused to discover what she thought was a very exotic fern was simply coral fern. (It helps to be bi-lingual.)

Joyce and I then travelled to Strahan passing large clumps of *Gleichenia* either *dicarpa* or *microphylla* on roadside banks always in full sun and *Sticherus tener* (fan fern) although according to M. Garrett's book<sup>1</sup> there are possibly three varieties of this fern, (always in shade). As well as these plants *Blechnum watsii*, *B. nudum*, *Pteridium*, *Polystichum*, were clearly visible from the car as we drove along. At Strahan there is an easy 40 min. return walk alongside Botanical Creek to Hogarth falls - the walk starting at the end of The People's Park opposite Risby Cove Restaurant. Ferns along this walk were *Blechnum watsii*, I believe *B. watsii x minus*, *Asplenium bulbiferum*, *B. fluviatile*. Apart from a meal at some of the very good restaurants in this region the main bribe would be a trip up the Gordon River to see the natural forest of the area. The reflections on the water are magical.

Leaving Strahan for Hobart we went to Nelson falls and while there were no extra varieties of ferns those previously mentioned were in abundance. No restaurant here though for the flower fancier. On to Hobart and a visit to the Botanic Gardens, beautiful setting, fernery beautifully landscaped but variety of plants disappointing, excellent scenery for every gardening interest. The new sub-antarctic house is fascinating with *Polystichum vestitum* a prominent plant in an environment of 8 degrees celsius - 98% humidity and gale force winds.

I visited Andrew Woolford at his home in Ferntree at the foot of Mt. Wellington he grows all his ferns from spore. He has a good variety of Tasmania's ferns growing well in his garden, Andrew

<sup>1</sup> The ferns of Tasmania. Their ecology and distribution 1996 Tasmanian Forest Research council Inc. Hobart.

hopes someone out there can help him solve a problem he is experiencing. He gets *Cyathea cunninghamii* to the three leaf stage then most die. Can anyone suggest a reason or offer a solution for this problem? If so please contact Andrew at **608 Huon Road, South Hobart Tas. 7004** or email: [Awoolford@kingborough.tas.gov.au](mailto:Awoolford@kingborough.tas.gov.au) Perhaps you could also send me a copy and we will publish it so all can benefit. Remember Andrew has extended an invitation to any member touring Tasmania to call in and see his collection. As for the non fern enthusiast, Joyce was able to pursue her literary interests on Mt. Wellington and in Hobart during this visit.

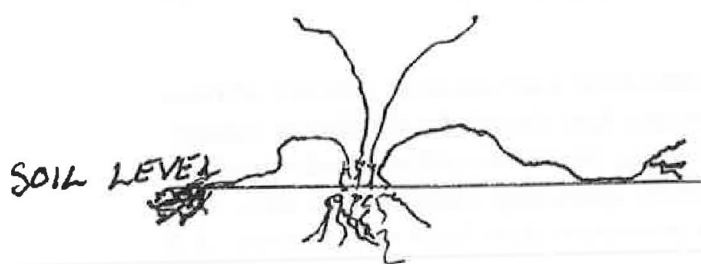
Mt. Field National Park is a must for any visitor with it's huge tree ferns and lovely scenery fortunately more water was cascading over Russell Falls when we arrived. Leaving Hobart we travelled up the east coast and across to Launceston stopping to view St. Columba Falls along the way as Ron says huge tree ferns at the bottom of the gully. Another gully worthy of a look is Notley Gorge about 14 kilometers from Launceston, although showing the signs of drought at the top the ferns at the bottom are surviving well.

### TRYING TO GROW DOODIA SQUARROSA

Contributed by Joan Moore

Some years ago Ross Scott of Kenilworth, Queensland sent to me with his subscription, a small plant of *Doodia squarrosa*. He wrote that he had read in the Newsletter that no one in Sydney had a plant of this *Doodia*, so he was remedying the situation. I should have handed it over to one of our better growers, but selfishly decided to try myself. First I put the little thing in the ground in my shadehouse. It grew fairly fast, but rather messily, spreading in an untidy fashion all over the soil, one frond on top of another. So I took it out and put it in a hanging basket. It began to look much better, the fronds falling gracefully over the sides of the basket - until I forgot to water it and almost lost it. I put the remainder in a wide plastic bowl on the bench. It soon began to grow better and to send out new plantlets. The bowl holds water better than a basket and I also made an effort to keep it watered. So then I took one of the new plantlets and put it in one of those hanging plastic pots with a water reservoir underneath. Here it is fine, its fronds drooping prettily over the sides and lots of new shoots. At last I have enough specimens to begin handing them out to other Sydney members as Ross intended.

*Doodia squarrosa* is described in Andrews, Ferns of Queensland published 1990. but in the Flora Of Australia Volume 48, 1998 it gets no more than a listing in the index in italics, which of course signifies that the name is now obsolete. I am not worrying about its status for the present. This form is in its growth habit distinct from the few other *Doodias* I have. Its fronds, do not stand upright but flop onto the soil as shown in drawing below, and the fronds from the different shoots become all tangled: with each other unlike *D. aspera*, for instance. It needs more water than *D. aspera* and has never had any colour but green in its fronds. But it makes a very good basket plant.



## NOTES FROM S.E. QLD. GROUP - A.S.G.P. FERN STUDY

### Excursion to Joyners Ridge Road Mt. Glorious.

It was decided to take Joyners Ridge rather than the advertised Bryces Road, owing to recent heavy rain. Both start from the same location. By only walking along the road we saw a wide variety of Ferns. It was an area particularly rich in Lastreopsis. Four of the five local species were noticed along the road. Had we ventured down the steep bank to the creek below, it would have been very likely we would have seen the fifth *L. smithiana*. The species noted were *Adiantum atrovirdi*; *A. diaphanum*; *A. formosum*; *A. hispidulum* var. *hypoglaucaum*; *Athropteris tenella*; *Asplenium australasicum*; *A. polyodon*; *Christella dentata*; *Cyathea cooperi*; *C. leichardtiana*; *Davallia pyxidata*; *Diplazium assimile*; *Doodia aspera*; *Hypolepis muelleri*; *Lastreopsis decomposita*; *L. margins*; *L. microsora*; *L. munita*; *Microsorium scandens*; *Pellaea nana*; *Platynerium bifurcatum*; *P. superbum*; *Pteris tremula*; *P. umbrosa*; *Pyrrosia confluens*; *P. rupestris*.

Meeting at the home of Geoff and Merle Goadby. - A study of *Adiantums*. This was a topic which interested us all. Especially as Peter Bostock went to a lot effort to have samples of the three *Adiantums* which seemed to trouble us in distinguishing. They were *A. atrovirdi*, *A. aethiopicum* and *A. capillus-veneris*. We had a good variety of *Adiantum* tabled, but unfortunately no-one had a specimen of *A. hispidulum* var. *whitei*. The study was a long session. After lunch all enjoyed the walk through the Goadby's well graded walk to the gully where they grow a variety of ferns.

Excursion to Stradbroke Island: The S.E. Qld Group had a three day Excursion to Stradbroke Island one of the many Moreton Bay Islands. THERE WAS PERFECT WEATHER Like most of the Bay Islands, Moreton is predominately a sand Island. Not the type of place one would expect to come across thirty four species of native fern. (We had a list compiled by Herbreck(k?).) Of particular interest to us was the very rare *Thelypteris confluens*. This fern has few known locations in Australia - One near Taroom in Qld., on Islands in Moreton Bay and another in Victoria along the Kiewa Valley Highway. It is a lot more common in New Zealand. It thrives in swampy conditions in sunlight. Another swamp dweller was *Lycopodiella serpentina*. This was found after much scrambling through dense reeds, then a bog hopping trek into the swamp, by the intrepid members of our party.

Another fern that was quite hazardous to locate was *Asplenium difforme*. On this occasion it was a cliff scramble on Point Lookout. This fern can be found on rocky headlands from Gympie Qld to Sydney N.S.W. Places of particular interest were Mayora Springs. Absolutely clear water seeped from the hillside into a pool surrounded by lush ferns then was channelled under the road to find its way to the sea, and the Brown and Blue lakes. Our effort to reach what is known as the Fern Gully was thwarted by a bad road. Following is a complete list of the ferns to be found on the Island. Our group do not claim to have found them all for we only visited the northern part of the Island. We were well satisfied with what we did see. Stradbroke Island Fern List (Herbrecks): \* Exotics

*Acrostichum Speciosum*  
*Asplenium difforme*  
*Blechnum camfieldii*  
*B. indicum*  
*Calochlaena dubia*  
*Christella dentata*  
*Cyathea cooperi*  
*Cyclosorus interruptus*  
*Cyrtomium falcatum* \*  
*Davallia pyxidata*  
*Dicranopteris linearis*  
*Gleichenia dicarpa*  
*G. mendellii*

*Histiopteris incisa*  
*Hypolepis muelleri*  
*Lindsaea ensifolia* subsp.  
*Agatii*.  
*L. ensifolia* subsp. *Ensifolia*  
*L. fraseri*  
*Lycopodiella cernua*  
*L. lateralis*  
*L. serpentine*  
*Lygodium microphyllum*  
*Microsorium grossum*  
*Nephrolepis cordifolia*  
*N. hirsutula*

*Ophioglossum gramineum*  
*O. reticulatum*  
*Psilotum nudum*  
*Pteridium esculentum*  
*Salvia molesta* \*  
*Schizaea bifida*  
*S. dichotoma*  
*Selaginella uliginosa*  
*Sticherus flabellatus*  
*Thelypteris confluens*  
*Todea barbara*

## SYDNEY GROUP - MARCH MEETING 2001

In March some of us visited the Sir Joseph Banks Native Garden, set up and maintained by Sutherland Shire Council. The local S.G.A.P. had assisted in its beginnings. It is situated on a rocky escarpment below which runs busy Bates Drive: houses and streets press against its upper boundary, but it is a flourishing bit of bush. The pamphlet available for visitors tells us that "the garden is set in typical Hawkesbury sandstone country with large exposed sandstone rocks and shallow sandstone derived soils. These soils are nutrient deficient and tend to dry out rapidly. The tree cover is natural. There is an area maintained by Sutherland S.G.A.P. and in other parts many additional plantings have been made. These included quantities of ferns. Years ago members of the Fern Group planted some of them.

There are plenty of well-grown tree ferns *Dicksonia antarctica*: *Cyathea cooperi*: *C. australis*: *Asplenium australasicum*: *Macrothelypteris torresiana*: *Microsorium Diversifolium (pustulatum)*: *Angiopteris evecta*. Peter Hind says ferns that probably native to the site are bracken, *Pteridium esculentum*, looking big, healthy and quite attractive, especially near the ponds formed under a small waterfall (the water is recycled); also *Adiantum aethiopicum*: *Doodia aspera*: *Psilotum nudum*: *Gleichenia sp.* and *Histiopteris incisa*.

A full list of those we saw would include also: *Pteris ensiformis*: *Calochlaena dubia*: *Asplenium goudeyi* (from Lord Howe Is) *Davallia solida var. pyxidata*: *Adiantum Hispidulum*: *Adiantum formosum*: *Todea Barbara*: numerous and thriving, *Pellaea falcata*: *Hypolepis muelleri*: *Blechnum sp.* perhaps minus: and *Diplazium melanochlamys*. There were also *Polystichum proliferum*: *Pteris tremula*: *Pteris umbrosa*: *Christella dentata*: *Asplenium bulbiferum*: *Blechnum cartilagineum*. *Blechnum nudum*: *Deparia Peterson*: *Platynerium bifurcatum*: *Platynerium superbum*: *Dennstaedtia davallioides*: *Blechnum wattsi*: and *Nephrolepis cordifolia*

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## FORTH COMING EVENTS

**A.S.G.A.P. STH. EAST QLD FERN STUDY GROUP - JUNE TO SEPT. 2001.**

**Sunday June 3. Excursion to the Knoll National Park.** Mt. Tamborine. Meet 9.30am at the Parking area at the Park entrance.

**Sunday July 1 Excursion to High Tor Maleny.** Hosts Greg and Charmainne Wightman. Directions: Drive to Landsborough. Continue along the Landsborough-Maleny Road. Turn right into Montville Road. Then first right into Sinclair Lane (Zamaz Restaurant on corner). Next right Glens Road. Go through the middle gate to the parking area.

**Sunday August 5. Topic - Fern Propagation by Spore.** Meet at 9.30a.m. at Claire Shackell's home 19 Arafura Street Upper Mt. Gravatt.

**Friday September. 7<sup>th</sup> Set up Fern Display at Annual Flower Show - Mt Gravatt Show Grounds.**

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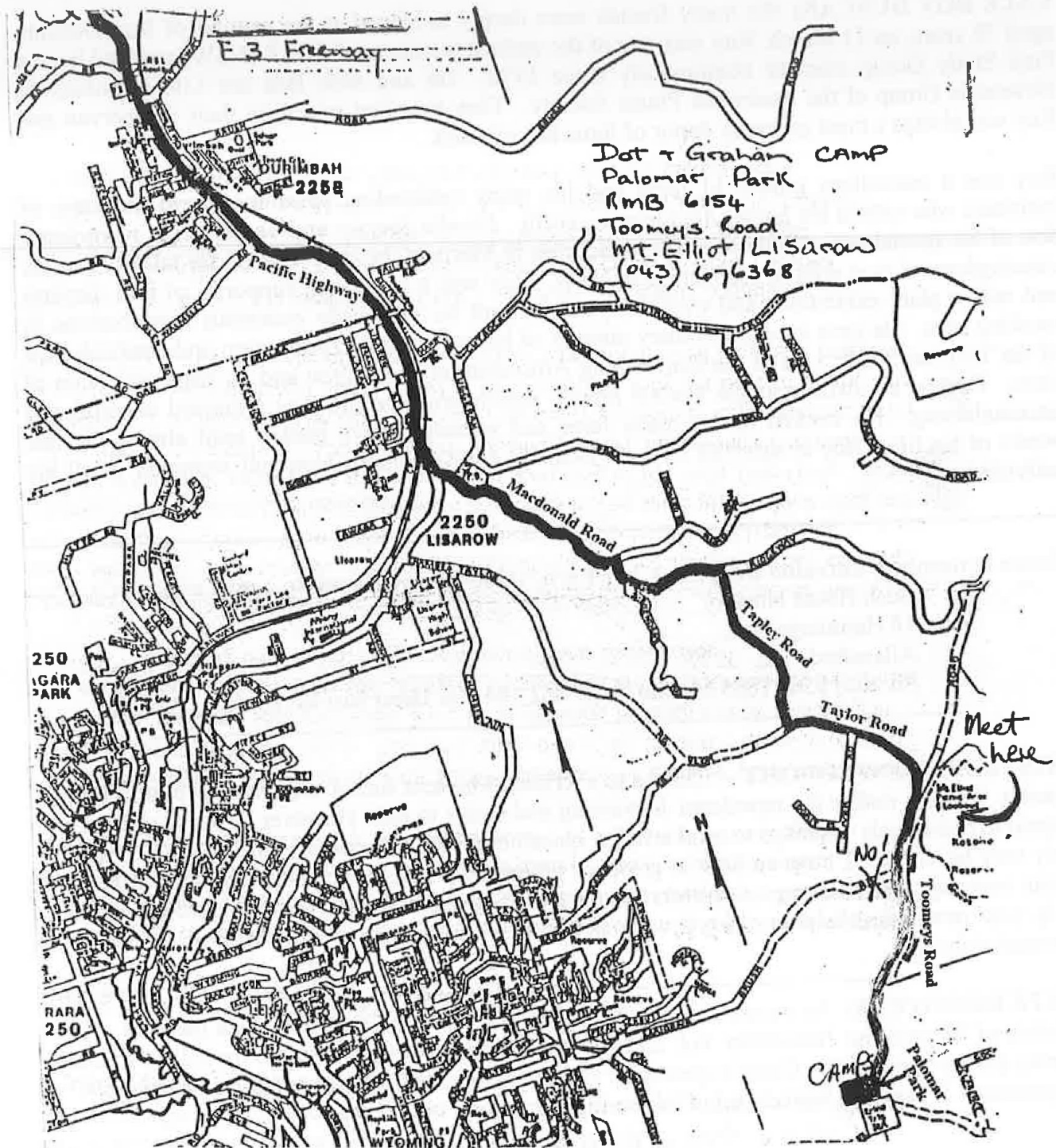
## PROGRAMME FOR SYDNEY GROUP FOR COMING MONTHS

**Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> June 2001 Outing to Mt. Elliot/ Lisarow.**

Meet at 10.30 a.m. at Katandra Lookout Mt. Elliot/ Lisarow. We will take an easy half hour walk in front of the Lookout where there is an abundance of *Todea barbara* growing. From Katandra Lookout we will travel a short distance down the road to Dot & Graham Camp's property 'Palomar

Park' R.H.B. 6154 Toomeys Road Mt. Elliot/Lisarow. Here you can bush walk, view the newly planted rainforest gully or maybe enjoy a seat by the fire!

From Sydney take the F3 Freeway, go past the first Gosford turn, stay on the Freeway until reaching the Ourimbah exit. Travel through Ourimbah, cross the railway line and take the next turn left into Macdonald Road. Follow Macdonald Road into The Ridgeway for about 2 km and you will see Tapley Road on your right. Turn into Tapley Road and at the top of Tapley Road turn left into Taylor Road. Follow Taylor Road to Toomeys Road and you will see Katandra Lookout, Mt Elliot on your left. Enquiries to Dot 02 43676368 (Phone Dot on her mobile 0415512511 if you get lost or are running late on the Saturday.) See Map.



**Sunday July 19th, 2001 : Outing to Wheeny Creek** Coming from Sydney take Bells Line of Road to just past Kurmond, then turn right into Comeroy Road. (When we were last here in September 1996 there was a sign at the turn-off saying 'to Singleton'). Follow this road for 8 km, where the road divides. Don't take Blaxland Road keep left towards Upper Colo and you will soon reach Wheeny Creek. There is an open area and a toilet block to the right. Meet here at 10 a.m. Enquiries to Peter Hind ph.9625 8705.

**Saturday, August 18<sup>th</sup>** : Meet at Betty Rymer's home, 48 Annangrove Road, Kenthurst. from 11-30 a.m. Bring lunch. We will look at Betty's extensive garden and her new plantings. **The discussion later will be on Easy To Grow Ferns.**

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**VALE ROY DUNCAN:** His many friends were deeply saddened at the passing of Roy Duncan, aged 75 years, on 11 March. Roy was one of the earliest members of SGAP (NSW) and had been a Fern Study Group member continuously since 1978. He and wife Bea are Life Members of Newcastle Group of the Australian Plants Society. They travelled widely in their campervan and Roy was always a most generous donor of ferns he collected.

Roy was a marvellous grower of ferns and his many outstanding specimens were the envy of members who visited his home. *Angiopteris evecta*, *Doodia Species* and Tassel Ferns were just a few of his specialities. While at a former address in Morisset, he grew one of the tallest *Cyathea cunninghamii* ever seen in cultivation in NSW. Roy was a wonderful supporter of fern displays and native plant exhibitions and over the years he and his van made enormous contributions to working bees. He gave an extraordinary amount of labour towards construction and establishment of the Tropical Shade Area at the Burrendong Arboretum at Wellington and its large collection of ferns. Despite an awful struggle against rapidly deteriorating health, Roy remained cheerful and uncomplaining. He worked on his many ferns and splendid native garden until almost the last weeks of his life. Roy is survived by wife Bea, his constant companion and supporter in all his activities.

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Notice to members **Lorraine Deppler & her Fern Nursery have moved to a new address:**

Bush House Nursery

18 Hermitage Dve.

Allansford Vic. 3277

Ph: (03) 5565 1665 Mobile 0429 862 184 For latest fern list contact Lorraine.

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**CONTRIBUTIONS SOUGHT** – Thanks to everyone who sent such a wide variety of articles this quarter. It really makes the newsletter interesting and easier to edit. However, I would still like to appeal to individuals or groups to send articles, questions on their favourite plant, an interesting spot they may have visited, a tip on how to grow, or propagate plants, or something you've discovered about watering, light, mixtures, fertilisers etc. Questions have generated a deal of interest in the past. It is your newsletter, help us make it work better for you. It may be something as simple as an unusual sighting

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**LATE DISCOVERY:** As we are about to go to print an article on **TERRARIUMS** in the Fern Society of Victoria Inc. Newsletter Vol. 23 No 2. March April 2001 has come to the Editor's notice. It may answer some of Dot Camp's questions. However we would still like to hear of members experiences. It has been reproduced in full on following page.



# Setting Up A Terrarium

A demonstrated talk by Jack Barrett

Jack recommends a large glass container for a terrarium so it can be left to settle down and the plants grow for as long as possible before they are too big for their setting and therefore have to be removed. It needs to have a close-fitting lid so the microclimate can function continually without interference. Disused aquariums are definitely high on the list but demijohns and very large jars are also useful. Special terrariums, often six- or eight-sided and with ornate decorations and roof-like lids are available and are probably the best.

All plants and other materials that go into the terrarium must be as clean and pest-free as possible as any contamination will enjoy going rampant in the system and could spoil the whole garden. For my growing media I start with a layer about an inch (2.5 cm) thick of reasonably fine scoria to which charcoal has been added, at the ratio of about 10 parts scoria to 1 part charcoal. This creates a nice open layer so water doesn't 'mud' on the bottom, and the charcoal sweetens it.

The next layer is two to three inches (5 - 8 cm) of new, commercial african violet mix, preferably from a just-opened bag for cleanliness. The african violet mix should be moist but certainly not wet. If the terrarium will be against a wall and therefore will have a 'front', the medium can be sloped upwards at the back but if it is to be viewed from all sides either leave it flat or for a bit more interest, mound it in the middle.

Now you need to choose your plants and plan the planting pattern. Aim for some smaller than others, some ground creeping and some more upright, maybe one with variegated or coloured foliage, and get a variety of leaf textures and shapes. Of course, plants that don't grow big quickly and that have small leaves will look better for longer. For his demonstration Jack used small plants of:

*Adiantum*,  
*Humata tyermanii*,  
*Asplenium*  
*aethiopicum*,  
*Selaginella* sp.,  
 A *Pteris*

A Croton for colour and bush moss to mulch and dress up the surface.

Start with the small-

est plants (except moss). Remove as much loose dirt as you can without denuding the roots and plant each one as normal - and don't worry about the lack of media depth, they'll be so spoilt they won't mind.

When you are happy with the arrangement you have created, add more mix and fiddle with it until you are satisfied. A dead flat media surface would be boring so try and create an interesting slope or a bump or two. The thickness of this layer varies, depending on how big the container is and what 'looks right' in it.

Spread bush moss (the low one that looks like velvet and that most of us have somewhere in a garden bed or pot would be good) and add any ornaments you wish to - small rocks, ceramic bridges, figures, frogs . . . whatever you like.

Wipe the glass walls clean and spray your terrarium with a hand held spray bottle adjusted to a fine spray to clean medium off the leaves and ornaments and to moisten the whole ecosystem enough to provide the water the plants need **without drowning them!** You would be surprised how little they need.

Set the lid on a slight angle; prop one end up by inserting something (a match?) until the system is up and running - i.e., with misty sides in the morning, dry in the evening. This should get rid of any excess moisture and also means the water isn't dripping down onto newly planted leaves.

Position your beautiful little indoor garden in a spot which receives good light, preferably a little filtered sun in the morning. If it is in insufficient light your plants will grow leggy very quickly and die or at least need replacing often.

JB



**DEADLINE FOR COPY** – Closing date for material to be included in the September, 2001 Newsletter is AUGUST 15<sup>th</sup>, 2001. Your contributions are valuable – whether as a group or individual. I strongly urge groups from the various States to send articles.

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**If undeliverable return to:  
272 Humffray St. Nth.,  
BALLARAT. Vic. 3350**

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